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Department of Sociology

The Exercise of Power in a Closed Institution
- Case of a Swedish Immigration Detention Centre.

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Master's Thesis SOCM02

30 credits

Spring Term 2015

Supervisor: Kjell Nilsson

ABSTRACT

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The aim of this sociological study is to explore and to understand mechanisms of power being embedded in daily procedures of detention establishment with the focus on the case officers' work tasks. In the study the emic approach is being used in order to understand from within power at detention. Observations, field notes, interviews and written documents constitute the empirical material being collected. Observations took place during the five month long working experience as an officer at a Swedish immigration detention centre. In connection with observations field notes were taken. In-depth interviews with seven case officers were conducted. Moreover, written documents originating from the Swedish Migration Agency were obtained. In order to analyze the findings, theoretical framework consisting of Foucault's concept of power and Weber's ideas on bureaucracy are being applied. As result of the analysis, the following themes are specified. Firstly, visibility is stressed and emphasis is put on the physical environment and daily routines. Next, double role of civil servants is being underlined and specifically their contradictory function as bureaucrats and social workers. Lastly, interaction between the staff and detainees is being highlighted, and the meaning of interaction for maintaining security at detention and striving to achieve higher numbers of co-operation with the Swedish Migration Agency.

Results of the study confirm the knowledge generated by the previous research and point at the "subtle manner" of power implementation at detention. The architectural purpose of detention aims at exposing detainees to the objectifying gaze of the officers. Techniques of power, often described as tools by detention officers, are being embedded in daily routines. Control is also being exercised through various administrative implements. The everyday interaction between the staff and detainees is being influenced by the rationality of the government. Developing relations is aiming to achieve the governmental means such as the increased amount of voluntary returns. Here, bureaucracy is being employed in order to enforce the governmental means in an efficient and organized way.

Key words: administrative detention, bureaucracy, civil servants, detention officers, immigration detention centre, the Swedish Migration Agency.

ARTICLE

The author, Ewa Grabowska, investigates in her sociological study mechanisms of power at a Swedish immigration detention centre. In the research, the perspective of detention officers is being emphasized. The empirical material consists of interviews with detention officers and field notes taken in connection with observations as well as of written documents originating from the Swedish Migration Agency. The author looks at the gathered material through the lens of Foucault's and Weber's theories on power. The results show that power at detention is being embedded in various ways. The architecture of detention facility aims at making detainees visible. During daily routines, detainees become constantly observed and controlled by the staff. Detention officers develop various strategies in order to cope with their assignments that encompass both the administrative and social tasks. Interaction between the officers and detainees plays an important role at immigration detention since power is being intertwined with conversations. As result of daily conversations, safety and co-operation with the Swedish Migration Agency are being increased. It is to be stated in the study that power at detention is not easily delineated since it is embedded in various tools used by detention officers in their everyday work. Bureaucracy is to be seen as an efficient way of implementing the governmental goals. Power being exercised at detention is thus to be understood as influenced by the government.

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Finally, a big thanks goes to my precious children. Due to their positive energy I could keep focused on the study when my dad passed away. Thank you once again.



Yard at an immigration detention centre drawn by a detainee.

The drawing is a gift from a detainee when working as a detention officer.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

Immigration control in general and administrative detention of migrants in particular is not an issue widely discussed by the larger society. However, due to variety of reports, demonstrations and campaigns, the awareness of society about immigration detention still increases. In spite of the fact that many organizations fight for the rights of migrants claiming that immigration detention has a negative effect on detainees and are too costly for the society, the centres are still being run around the world (Webber, 2012: 132). Policy makers explain the rationale of this policy claiming among others that detaining immigrants preserves the order (ibid: 136). The statistics show that in 2015 almost 4000 persons were detained in Sweden while in 2014 their number was 3200 (Migrationsverket, 2016: 192). By looking at detention-related statistics for the previous years, one can notice a rise in the number of persons being detained (Global Detention Project, 2016). The average amount of days a person was kept in detention year 2015 is 21 days, slightly more compared to year 2014 (Migrationsverket, 2016: 192).

Most of discussions regarding immigration detention revolve around the existence of and alternatives to immigration detention centres. There are however not many insights of real life at detention, daily problems of detainees and challenges of the staff. Nevertheless, the “underlife” in other closed institutions and interactions between inmates and staff are often subject of research (see Goffman, 1961). Comparably, there are many studies on life in prison, hierarchy among prisoners and prison officers. However, representations of experiences concerning detainees and professionals working at immigration detention are still being rare (Bosworth 2014, Hall 2012). A documentary film “Förvaret” depicts life from the inside at a Swedish immigration detention centre (Sweden, 2015). Although the aim of this film is not to provide any broader insight of the work tasks of the staff, it is to be noticed that some detention staff members experience an inner battle regarding their role as civil servants. Detention management criticizes their way of conduct that does not match the bureaucratic approach. However, there is no solution to be found in the movie. Instead, multiplicities of questions are being raised – one of them being the role played by detention staff.

Since the body of knowledge about relations between immigration detainees and the staff is not yet being significant, the ambition of this study is to contribute to fill out this gap, discerning patterns of power being constructed at an immigration detention centre.

1.2 Pre-understanding

I heard about the existence of immigration detention centres but I never reflected upon them. It was not until I started looking for an employment that I noticed a vacancy description of a detention case officer. Having learned about the work tasks from the vacancy description made me wish to find out more. After I received a temporary post lasting five months, I asked the head of the immigration detention centre for permission to use any potential material I would collect for the purposes of my master's thesis. However, back then I did not yet know what issue I would write about. I had just started my new job with wide open eyes, being curious of everything. It was first after I completed my work I collected my thoughts and decided the topic of the study.

1.3 Problem definition

1.3.1 Aim of the study

The objective of the study is to explore techniques of power embedded in daily life procedures at an immigration detention centre. The emphasis is put on power mechanisms being built-in within the case officers' work assignments. Researching on how detainees themselves experience structures of power at immigration detention centre and how they resist it would be also worth exploring. However, due to time constraints and limitations of the purpose of the study, this topic is not investigated.

1.3.2 Research questions

- How is power and control being implemented in daily routines and practices at an immigration detention centre?
- How do the case officers understand their role while applying the law?
- How do they view their job tasks?

1.4 Method

Since the aim of the study is to gain knowledge about techniques of power hidden behind routines at immigration detention centre and work tasks of detention officers, qualitative methods are being best suited. Multi-method approach is applied here since it allows gaining a more complex understanding of the problematized area. Observations were conducted while working as a case officer at an immigration detention centre. They contributed to explore the issue at an initial phase. In connection with observations, field notes were taken. Additionally, interviews with detention officers are conducted thus obtaining a deeper understanding of their work tasks. Moreover, written documents from the Swedish Migration Agency are used in the analysis. These qualitative methods complement one other, thus generating a greater comprehension of the issue being studied.

1.5 Theoretical framework

The results of the study are examined through a theoretical framework focusing on power and bureaucracy. These sociological theories constitute Foucault's ideas on power and discipline and Weber's classic theory of bureaucracy.

1.6 Disposition

The investigation is composed of seven chapters. In the first chapter the aim of the study is being discussed. The thesis will endeavor to acquire understanding on the specified research questions. Moreover, concise reasoning about the selection of methods and theories will be presented. The second chapter provides the background information about the chosen topic. The previous understanding will be also highlighted in order to understand its value to the researched area. In the third chapter relevant research will be presented. The following chapter – chapter number four - deals with the methodological considerations in regard to the chosen topic. Here I will provide the reader with detailed information about the outline of the method procedure and data collection. In the next chapter – chapter five - the theoretical framework shaping the interpretation of the study will be presented. In chapter six, the analysis of the results is being based on a close dialog with the theoretical framework. In the last chapter – chapter seven – understanding of the results of the study will be put forward.

2 Background

Detention of migrants is a coercive measure taking form in deprivation of liberty (EMN, 2014). Prior to taking a decision on detention it is necessary to consider whether supervision could be used as an alternative. Supervision is defined as regular reporting to the police authorities or to the Swedish Migration Agency. In 2015 supervision was applied in 421 cases (Global Detention Project, 2016). The Aliens Act (2005:716), chapters 10 and 11 regulate grounds for detention and their duration. The purpose of detention is to keep immigrants available for the Swedish Migration Agency. Placing a migrant in immigration detention is being possible on three grounds. Firstly, if the identity of a migrant is unclear and needs to be examined, a migrant can be detained for two weeks. Secondly, if it is necessary to investigate a migrant's possible right of residency in Sweden, s/he can be kept in detention for 48 hours. Lastly, a migrant can be detained in order to prepare or execute an order of refusal of entry or expulsion. The maximum length of the custody is two weeks if it is likely that a person will not be able to stay in Sweden. If a decision became valid, a migrant may be detained for up to two months. Irrespectively of the ground of detention, a migrant has the right to free legal assistance regarding detention after being detained for three days (Global Detention Project, 2016).

Except the Swedish Migration Agency, there are other authorities having the mandate to take detention decisions. According to Aliens Act chapter 10, it is the specific authority handling the case that has the right to take such decision. Firstly, if a migrant is illegally staying in Sweden or before s/he applies for asylum, it is the police authority that has the right to take decision on detention. Moreover, the police can even be in charge when the Swedish Migration Agency hands over a migrant's case to them if a migrant does not want to leave Sweden voluntarily after the expulsion decision becomes valid. When the migrant appeals against the decision on his right to stay in Sweden, it is then the Migration Court responsible for taking such decision. If decision on detention is taken by them as the first instance, a migrant can appeal to the Migration Court of Appeal. In cases when the government is involved, it is the Minister that takes detention decision (Global Detention Project, 2016). Regardless of authority taking detention decision, it is always police that has the right to use force in order to execute it.

The Swedish Migration Agency took over the responsibility for detention and deportation from the police authorities in 1997 (Khosravi, 2009: 40). Currently, there are nine Detention

Units in Sweden located in five communities: Gävle, Märsta, Flen, Kålleröd and Åstorp. Totally they have the capacity for about 255 accommodations as well as additional 76 emergency places (Migrationsverket, 2016: 192). Since it is the Swedish Migration Agency that runs the detention centres, the facilities being used should remind of those at Reception Units (Migrationsverket, 2011a). In result, they are not operated as prisons.

Sweden's immigration detention system differentiates from systems in other countries (Debono et al. 2015: 24). Firstly, as mentioned above, the centres are run by a state agency in opposite to private for-profit companies (Hall, 2012). Next, centres are small and categorized as low-security units. Swedish centres are run by civilians and the standard in two of them was classified as very high (CPT, 2009). Moreover, the return policy in Sweden prioritizes voluntary return. The term being used here is often criticized because it does not describe the genuine reasons for co-operation with the Swedish Migration Agency. Some migrants might decide to use this option of return because there are no other alternatives. At the same time, they might feel that decision of return is being forced on them (Debono et al, 2015: 27).

The employed staff at detention centre that has daily contact with detainees consists out of three categories of professionals such as supervisors, case officers and team leaders. They work in a team composed of one supervisor, three case officers and one team leader. Supervisors have the social function and it is them organizing recreational activities. In addition, they are responsible for housekeeping. Case officers are mostly occupied with the administrative tasks. Besides handling detention cases, they are in charge of making sure that the detention facilities are safe and secure (Migrationsverket, 2006). At the same time, they work together with supervisors, keeping detainees activated. Lastly, team leaders, above having the same work tasks as case officers, are responsible for organizing team members' work.

3 Previous research

In this chapter I will present previously conducted research that is of high relevance to the area of my interest. These studies partially highlight power structures and relations between the staff and the inmates prevailing at immigration detention centres and in prison. In spite of some structural differences, the research discerns similar outcomes of detention regime. This thesis will build on the already gained knowledge found in the below described studies.

3.1 The (un) humane regime

Shahram Khosravi examines in his ethnographic study the effects of Sweden's asylum policy since the year 2000 (Khosravi, 2009). He argues that a discourse of "caring" used by the detention apparatus works as a disciplinary mechanism by making the asylum seekers responsible for their own detention and deportation. Khosravi uses a term "hostile hospitality" that is based on a complex set of regulations. It aims to describe the detention apparatus in Sweden that according to Khosravi is "partly caring, partly punitive" (ibid: 53). A discourse of hospitality is being highlighted by the focus on safety, dignity and comfort of the detainees. The "rationalizing" and "humanizing" procedures were adopted by the detention apparatus. Highly educated case workers with non-European background were recruited in order to use their cultural competence and language skills to establish communication with the detainees and thus increase the amounts of deportations (ibid: 44). Khosravi found that co-operation to leaving Sweden is being persuaded by social conversation (ibid). As part of this technique, by everyday socializing, building up a "human relationship" takes place. As result of it, the officers gain detainees' trust. Moreover, making detainees believe that they have power over their lives works as a disciplinary technique (ibid: 46). Khosravi states that when conversations succeed and the detainee co-operates in his/her deportation, they are in a Catch 22 situation: if they co-operate, they are deported and if not, they are confined (ibid). Finally, Khosravi compares the immigration detention centre to a pre-modern prison being a site for punishment and the permanent removal of "wasted" bodies.

Alexandra Hall conducted an ethnographic study on an immigration detention centre in the UK (Hall, 2012). In the study she examines the political effects of detention as a home and as a working place. The "micro-political" processes of detention are being shown from the point of view of detention officers. The author stresses the difficult role of the custody staff aiming

to create simultaneously a secure and a humane regime at detention. In effect, the system produces excluded detainees. Detainees are being “de-individualized” and objectified especially in regard to bodily practices. Hall stresses that the routines at the detention centre are objectifying detainees, unable to recognize their individuality. She states that it is to be accomplished by the “organization of distance between action and result”. Although detainees are involved in the “humane regime” including food, association and exercise, they are still denied as persons.

Crewe researched on prisons located in England and Wales and found that power operating there nowadays is to be called as “soft power” since it is largely anonymous and does not require direct staff intervention (Crewe, 2011: 456). Instead of working in an authoritarian and coercive way, power operates mostly through psychological and physical means, through self-interest and self-intervention (ibid). In spite of the fact that it operates more lightly, it works very effectively and intrusively (ibid). Staff - prisoner relationships are more relaxed and harmonious based on the diminished social distance. Prison officers are encouraged to socialize with prisoners because of “dynamic security” (ibid: 457). However, these relationships are rather artificial and it is questionable whether they are authentic and real (ibid). Moreover, soft power has been seen by many prisoners as lacking transparency and unclear (ibid: 460).

3.2 The unprofessional feelings

Mary Bosworth conducted the first ethnographic national study of life in British immigration removal centres (Bosworth, 2014). She depicts regularity of its internal world experienced by detainees and staff, comparing it to a prison with a non-punitive aim. Bosworth states that interactions present in immigration detention show that institutions rely on human relationships. Custody officers seem to have difficulties understanding the purpose of detention. A caring approach towards detainees is being applied, at the same time as the officers facilitate an enforced removal. Bosworth has found that feelings of sympathy towards detainees are seen as emotional and unreliable, thus perceived as unprofessional. However, feelings of a rational empathy are being permitted. Bosworth stresses that paperwork becomes a wall against feelings. In order to cope with their emotions, the custody staff has to keep their distance. Bosworth concludes that power is being embodied through bureaucratic mechanisms.

The objective of the empirical study conducted by Puthooppambal (2015) was to explore experiences of staff working at immigration detention centre being a part of a larger project focusing on the health and well-being of detainees. The material for the purposes of the research was collected in three Swedish detention centres. The results show that the staff needs to manage the emotional dilemma caused by the fact that they need to implement deportation decisions at the same time as they are expected to provide humane service to detainees (Puthooppambal et al, 2015:1). The staff found it challenging to balance the two roles thus causing an emotional dilemma. Acting as a fellow human being could lead to burnout (ibid: 8). Moreover, detention staff fears for their own safety at detention. A limited interaction between detainees and the staff was shown to be a reason for their fear. It is concluded that improvement of interaction between the staff and detainees is to be seen as a solution to this problem (ibid: 9).

3.3 Emotion management

Crawley discusses how the prison officers manage and perform emotion at work (Crawley, 2004). She stresses that prisons are emotional places not only for the prisoners but also for the officers working there. This emotionality is based among others on the high degree of intimacy in prisons. It is because many prisoners stay long periods in prisons during which they suffer traumas, difficulties and disappointments (ibid: 414). During these hard moments they spend a lot of time with prison officers. Prisons, just like other organizations, have rules stating what emotions are appropriate to be expressed by prison officers. In effect, prison staff needs to become engaged into emotion-work and manage their emotions according to the occupational norms (ibid: 412). Crawley sees the language of emotions as a means by which people communicate. Prison officers develop specific emotion-work strategies since they need to choose the right time and place in order to express emotion (ibid: 414). They perform emotion in structured ways since they have to be adjusted to the “feeling rules” present at every organization (ibid: 417). Feeling rules are subtle, unspoken and invisible, and regulate not only behaviors but even feelings (ibid). Prison officers use strategies of de-personalization, detachment and humour in order to manage their emotions. Through humour, the reality is being processed and neutralized thus uniting members of an occupational group (ibid: 419). Due to the strategy of reduction of familiarity, de-personalization, it is possible to be protected against emotional involvement (ibid: 419-420). Finally, de-personalization occurs when the clients are known not by their names but by disease or bed number. A

professional distance from the work is also being developed by detachment strategies. Prison officers are learnt from the beginning not to get too friendly with prisoners since their security can become threatened (ibid: 420).

Nylander, Lindberg and Bruhn conducted a case study in five Swedish prisons and a national survey of prison officers (Nylander et al. 2011). Previous studies show that prison officers have a double task consisting of maintaining safe custody and planning rehabilitation of prisoners and counselling them. Managing this double task is a dilemma for prison officers. Except managing prisoners' emotions, prison officers need as well to control their own emotional display. The study explores how emotions are managed by prison officers. The officers are thought to be "personal but not private" with prisoners. Moreover, they are expected to behave correctly, remain human and respectful but at the same time not to become too emotionally connected to the prisoners. These rules affect officers in the way they act as well as how they think and feel about their interaction with prisoners (ibid: 472). Mutual respect and humour is often being used by the officers in their daily work. The researchers found that in special security wings prisoners were constantly monitored and the staff - prisoner interaction was characterized by distance and detachment although in line with organizational requirements such as politeness (ibid: 473). In other wings however, the officer – prisoner relationship was closer and more natural (ibid: 474). Moreover, the officers had to learn how to remain professional by not being too emotional and not getting involved. However, in certain situations, by suppressing their emotions and keeping excessive distance, officers are not either being "professional" (ibid: 477). The results show the complexity of emotional labour that prison officers perform. They use different strategies in order to manage their displays of emotions causing different sorts of emotional strain. The researchers found that "surface acting" where "the other" is objectified may cause cynicism and alienation. On the other hand, so called "deep acting" caused by excessive engagement may lead to stress and exhaustion.

3.4 Summary

The research being presented above stresses the importance of aiming for a good relationship between the staff and the inmates. Establishing good relations in general does not seem to be a genuine act here but instead it is based on the enforcement of a "humane regime". There seem to be a paradox here since the caring approach being enforced does not match the execution of deportation decisions. Results of the gap being created by the system could be noticeable in

the high price payed by the staff thus causing them an emotional dilemma and burnout. The staff can develop various strategies in order to cope with their emotions at work as well as to adjust to the feeling rules at the working place. Such strategies can however seem inhumane and cruel for the “outsiders”.

4 Method

In this chapter the methodological considerations will be discussed in regard to the nature of the study.

4.1 Emic tradition

Since the purpose of this research is to explore and to acquire a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of power embedded in the routines at immigration detention centre from the perspective of the custody officers, the emic approach is being used. Viewing the phenomenon from this perspective enables understanding variety of meanings. I do not aim to explain these meanings. Instead the objective is to interpret and to understand them from a particular context. The interpretative tradition used in this study aims at understanding the social world from within, rather than explaining it from without (Hollis, 1994:16). Here, the meaning of actions is to be framed and then examined. While using this approach, I am aware of the situatedness of all understanding as stressed by Gadamer (Gadamer in Warnke, 1987:108). It means that observations are not to be possible to see as objective and neutral. Instead, one needs to understand them within a given context (ibid). However, achieving balance between the emic and the etic perspective aiming at understanding the world from without, are to be accomplished by all researchers, no matter their methodological traditions (Sjöberg in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 23).

According to the perspective coming from the social scientific roots of hermeneutics, interpretation allows understanding the reality (Lundin in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 102). Besides interviews, observations and texts, the researcher and the process of the study are to be interpreted (ibid: 102). The researcher's own pre-understanding plays a crucial role here and needs to be seen as a constructive element of this tradition. While preparing for the research, I understood the phenomenon in a subjective way based on my work experience at an immigration detention centre. Later, this knowledge expanded when I explored previous research within the area of my interest. Gaining knowledge from the previous research is another important element of the emic perspective. Pre-understanding should become deepened while doing the research thus resulting in widening of the understanding of phenomenon in question (ibid: 105). Knowledge being gained from the participant observation contributed also in preparing the interview questions. In the emic tradition,

knowledge of the researcher as well as his/her emotional experiences are to be seen as a natural part of preparation before the qualitative interview (Patel & Davidson, 2011: 83).

4.2 Multi-methodology

The ambition of this study is to explore and to gain an understanding about techniques of power embedded in daily routines at an immigration detention centre in Sweden. Such understanding can only be obtained by the use of ethnographic and qualitative methods. In this research various methodological technics are used since such a mode of procedure enables investigating several aspects of a phenomenon (Jacobsson in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 175). Knowledge being gained when using one method can contribute to understanding material being generated by another method. Hence a researcher can grasp a phenomenon from various angles which would allow for more sophisticated analyses (ibid). In this study, I use qualitative methods such as interviews and observations. Besides, investigated are also secondary sources such as written documents originating from the Swedish Migration Agency. These various kinds of methods enable a better understanding of the phenomenon of power at an immigration detention and its various dimensions. The aim of using several methods is not to find a point that is to be truer than the others (ibid: 177). Instead, the goal is to enable identifying some significant fragments in the material. In the end, it would allow for better conditions in interpreting and analyzing the findings (ibid). Using multi-methods approach is a fruitful way for gathering material since it enables perceiving the particular issue from various perspectives (Denscombe, 2000: 102). It also allows understanding the subject in a broader and a more complete way than what it would be possible if only one method was used (ibid: 103).

The above mentioned qualitative methods are selected as the most suitable for this research. They complement each other by providing a broader view of the studied phenomenon.

Interviews with case officers constitute the primary material providing interpretation on the meaning of detention to them. Observations took place while working as a case officer at an immigration detention centre. In connection with observations, I took field notes.

Experiencing detention from the inside gave me the possibility to reflect upon the subject and to formulate interview questions. "Going inside" threw light on things one otherwise would not be able to notice. By seeing it through the everyday experiences, it is possible to challenge the existing assumptions about the studied phenomena (Bosworth, 2014: 53). Sjöberg

suggests that understanding around the qualitatively designed research questions should be achieved by research instruments such as interviews, participant observations as well as by participating in environments and in everyday activities (Sjöberg in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 29). Participation in activities is based on creating closeness to people that are in focus of the research (Persson in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 37). Lack of such participation would not allow gaining an understanding since it would be based on one's subjective analysis (ibid). I believe that if I did not have the opportunity to work at an immigration detention centre, it would not be possible for me to "grasp" it all. Since I would not have the insights from the field, my pre-understanding of the studied area would only be grounded on the previous research. Observations are often being used in order to complement and enrich the insight of what will be studied (ibid: 41). Besides studying what is being said, the meaning of observations is to study what is being done (ibid). Observations can contribute by providing an initial background to interviews or by framing them (ibid: 43). In the study, unstructured observations were used. This type of observation has an exploring purpose and its aim is to obtain as much knowledge as possible about behavior and events occurring in natural situations (Patel & Davidson, 2011: 91, 93). I observed the daily life in immigration detention, including both the everyday routines as well as the unusual events. In the beginning, I perceived everything to be new and exciting. In order not to forget what I saw it needed to be systematically registered. For the purposes of the study I chose notes taking which is a convenient method used in the field. Persson stresses the importance of taking notes of every impression, events and experiences during observation (Persson in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 44). It is necessary to take detailed notes since one never knows if a certain action would be of importance until later (ibid). However, it is to be stressed that field notes never are a complete account for a specific situation and place (ibid: 49). Specifically, using only field notes I would not be able to understand interpretations of case officers. In order to further deepen the understanding, written documents are being selected. These documents originate from the Swedish Migration Agency and constitute a relevant body of information.

4.3 Access to the field and selection of interviewees

My previous understanding based on the work experience allowed me to grasp the notion of immigration detention at an early stage. In order to understand detention, it is necessary to go inside and to find a way of working together with those who run them. Without having the

empirical research acquired by the co-operation with gatekeepers, the picture would be limited (Bosworth, 2014: 56). In this study, observations and field notes collected while taking my first steps as a detention officer are used. Researchers of bureaucratic institutions often discuss difficulties of “getting in”. Even if the access to the field is being achieved, there are some mechanisms used in order to avoid or control access to the research material. For instance, it can be controlled where an investigator can go and with whom s/he may talk to (Berg, 2004: 150). I encountered difficulties when trying to obtain access to interviewees. However, “getting in” into the field was an easy task based on the fact that location of the field work was also my work place. Moreover, I was allowed by detention management to use the material being collected for the aims of this investigation. Here, I decided to choose a category of case officers as my interviewees. It is detention staff having variation in their work assignments since they possess both the social and the administrative function (Migrationsverket, 2006). In order to conduct the interviews with staff representing this category, I needed to acquire access to them. I soon realized that it was not an easy task. Most of the researchers do not address how entry to the field was obtained, thus creating silence over difficulties being encountered (Bosworth, 2014:55). I believe it is crucial that researchers discuss these challenges in order to understand how the sampling procedure was executed. I met some barriers when trying to receive contact with potential interviewees. Out of three managements of immigration detention centres that were contacted through e-mail, it was only one that allowed conducting the interviews with detention officers. The others denied the access to the detention centres by either referring to a heavy burden of work, severe amounts of researching scientists, international visitors and attention of mass media or stating that another student is already conducting a study at a particular detention centre. Moreover, I faced another challenging situation as a researcher: only three case officers expressed their interest in participation in the study. I planned to use a nonprobability sampling strategy of snowball sampling since it is a fruitful method allowing reaching groups otherwise being difficult to get access to (Berg, 2004: 36). I asked those case officers whether some of their colleagues would allow me to interview them. However none of the officers I came in contact with has provided me with the names of other officers. This category of professionals is not a group to be easily found since immigration detention centres are located only in five Swedish communities. That is why I had to use my own social network in order to find interviewees (see Debono, 2015: 37). I contacted those immigration detention officers I knew since before and they expressed their interest in participating in the study. Using a qualitative method and

having a small sample of interviewees does not allow for generalization. Instead, the purpose is to understand the problematized area based on the voice given to a few professionals.

4.4 Collecting the material

The qualitative body of information being collected in form of observations together with interviews and secondary sources such as written documents constitutes the empirical part of the study. As already being stressed, I started the study as a full participator in observations. Since I was new in the field and I only had basic knowledge of what detention was it was easy to notice various characteristics in the beginning of observations. With time a researcher will lose this sensitivity which is a natural thing (Fangen, 2005: 78). It is not possible to show the interest for everything all the time although the researcher would want to keep seeing the unusual even in everyday occurrences (ibid: 78-79). Hence it is important to take notes from the very beginning while in the field. Topics to be described should revolve around what happened, whom you met, how they behaved, what were you surprised about and what was different than what you expected (ibid: 78). Field notes in the study are based on observations that took place when working as a case officer at an immigration detention centre. “Being there” and establishing contacts with staff and detainees made it easy to obtain relevant information. Field notes were taken when the purpose of the study had not yet been specified. However, since field notes comprehend description of the building and routines at detention, they constitute a relevant and ethically correct body of knowledge. Field notes play an important role in participant observation (Alasuutari, 1995: 178). Moreover, having a field diary is fruitful during the research process when the researcher can be taking notes not only of events but also of one’s own impressions (ibid). It is also crucial to depict various feelings when in the field (Fangen, 2005: 94). Intuition and bodily reactions should be reflected upon in the analysis (ibid: 95). Hence, some of the quotations from the field notes refer to description of situations and some revolve around my thoughts about particular subjects. Moreover, field notes should be completed as soon as possible after leaving the field (Berg, 2004: 173). However, there are many options on how to take them. Some investigators take notes while in the field while some wait until they leave (ibid). I used both of the methods based on the fact that I did not always have time to take notes due to the work tasks. Most of the times I only took short notes with key words only and first after leaving the field I completed the notes. Although it is important to depict variety of details, a researcher should be selective – both in observations and in writing (Fangen, 2005: 93).

Seven in-depth interviews with case officers (five women and two men) were conducted individually between November and December 2014. Among detention officers being interviewed, one of them works as a team leader. Duration of the interviews varied between 45 minutes and 105 minutes. Two of the interviews were conducted over the phone because of the long distance. Under certain circumstances, telephone interviews are not only an effective means for gathering information but due to geographic locations, the only possible method (Berg, 2004: 93). Telephone interviews work best when semi-structured interview questions are asked and when the researcher met interviewees before (ibid). In spite of the lack of the face-to-face contact during these telephone interviews, I do believe that since I personally know these informants, they were open when discussing the subject. Another interview took place at the informant's home. Next four interviews were conducted in a quiet room at informants' working places. In two cases the interviews became shortly interrupted in order to change rooms. Before the interviews started, the purpose of the study and the right of remaining anonymous were clarified to the informants. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Swedish and later translated into English. A semi-structured interview consists of predetermined questions and special topics being asked in a systematic order (ibid: 81). Interview questions were prepared in advance in order to make sure all the topics were to be discussed. At the same time the interviews were flexible and I tried to follow stories of my interviewees instead of asking questions in an exact manner. In the qualitative interview the researcher is free to ask the questions in the order s/he thinks would suit best (Patel & Davidson, 2011:81). The most important for me was that the interviewees focused on the topic being discussed. The interviewee should be able to develop her/his thoughts about the issues and discuss them in an open way using his/her own words (Denscombe, 2000: 135; Patel & Davidson, 2011:81). A researcher should have in mind that it is the interviewees that possess information and understanding that is being shared through the interviews. Since the interviews were conducted in Swedish and for the purposes of this study later translated by me into English, the characteristics of speech might be lost in translation. The original quotations from interviews are being attached in appendix. Each quotation translated into English has the same number as its equivalence in Swedish.

Finally, various written documents from the Swedish Migration Agency are used. Official documentary records are produced for some limited audiences and they take various forms such as e.g. written records or files. These documents could be used by investigators in their studies since they can contribute with useful information (Berg, 2004: 214). Documents being

used in this study are easily accessible for the wider public through the internet and the internal publications.

4.5 Analysis

There are two ways to register the interview answers: either by taking notes or by recording the interviews (Patel & Davidson, 2011: 87). In order to tape the conversations, it is necessary to obtain permission from the interviewees (ibid). One of the advantages of such a procedure is that the answers will be registered in an exact order. On the other hand the answers can be affected by the presence of a recorder (ibid). Five interviews were recorded and later transcribed verbatim. Two of the informants did not give their permission to record the interviews, hence notes needed to be taken. Additionally, the text with field notes and documents obtained from the Swedish Migration Agency were used for the analysis. When processing a qualitative body of information, a researcher mostly works with material consisting out of text originating from interviews, books, articles or notes taken during observations (ibid: 120). It is up to the investigator to find a way suiting best in order to receive a readable text (ibid: 122). I started the analysis by reading the various texts repeatedly. Then, in order to categorize the material, I identified main words and found some patterns in the texts. Later, I contrasted these groups with central questions of this research, dividing them into categories. This structure has been refined for the duration of the analysis. I cut out texts with various quotations and connected them with other statements belonging to several themes. Taking a less systematic technique for the analysis of the data, without using any qualitative data analysis package, helps in responding better to unexpected issues (Bosworth, 2014: 82-83). However, by the use of this approach, there is a risk that some elements will be ignored (ibid). I am aware that it also could be the case in my research.

4.6 Ethical reflections

In this section I would like to explain the ethical considerations regarding my research. One aspect regards consideration of the wishes of the interviewees. As I stressed earlier, the interviewees were informed about the possibility to decline recording of the interviews. Two of them determined not to give their consent to the voice recording. Moreover, one of the interviewees decided to withdraw a part of his/her statement. In order to assure this particular interviewee that only the approved parts of the given information are to be used for the

purposes of the study, the text with the authorized fragments was shared with the interviewee in question.

Another issue is a necessity of providing subjects with a high degree of confidentiality and anonymity that is being stressed by all qualitative researchers (Berg, 2004: 65). Especially in a small-scale study like this one, removing any elements that might reveal subjects' identities is very important. Based on the fact that a minor number of immigration detention officers participated in the study, I do not provide any description of their background information in order not to risk disclosing their identity. As not to be able to further identify what parts of quotations belong to a specific officer, the quotes are not marked in any way. Even characteristics of speech are concealed in order to ensure the anonymity of my informants. I am very careful not to indicate the setting or the subjects in the study (ibid).

The purpose for conducting this study was to highlight aspects of power at immigration detention centre that might not be visible at the first sight. I would like to stress that motivation to conduct the research lies in my genuine interest in both the phenomenon of closed institutions as well as in power relations. I find it also important to account for my positionality within this study since as Debono et al. stress, the field of forced returns is highly politicized (Debono et al, 2015: 38). In spite of the fact that I strived to remain neutral, I am still employed at the Swedish Migration Agency. I am aware of the fact that it could affect the way I perceive the empirical material. Moreover, I would like to stress that I am not committed to any politically or ethically involved organizations regarding immigration detention centres. Moreover, having the work experience within immigration detention and staying employed at the Swedish Migration Agency does not automatically make me to choose sides. Nevertheless, I am aware that various power structures could influence my role as a researcher and results of the study (ibid). Although I strived for remaining objective throughout the research, I may not claim that I was not influenced by the above mentioned factors.

4.7 Method discussion

Having the experience of working as a case officer at an immigration detention centre was instrumental in retrieving and understanding the material, otherwise being difficult to obtain without having any pre-understanding. At the same time, this factor could affect the way I

interpret the outcome of the material. A researcher needs to balance his/her engagement connected to the participant observation and the “cold” objectivity that a scientific observation would bring (Denscomber, 2000: 182). Moreover, Sjöberg warns about the state of “going native” taking place when the researcher accepts the native view without questioning it. It jeopardizes the objectivity towards the gathered material (Sjöberg in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 33). In order not to risk such uncritical relation to the studied phenomenon, it is suggested that the researcher takes a break from the study (ibid). I do believe that years that passed since I worked as a detention officer let me gain some distance to the studied area. Additionally, by distancing myself to the issue, I also gained a broader perspective on it.

I am aware that my previous working experience had an impact on the interviews as well. I believe that it affected the interviews in a positive way causing that I received the interviewees’ trust by being seen as one of them. In a qualitative interview it is both the interviewee and the researcher who together create the conversation (ibid: 82). It is important that the researcher knows how to relate to the social context of the interviewee. It is helpful when the researcher “goes native” and uses the same kind of symbols, irony and metaphors that both of them understand (ibid). However, in spite of the same characteristics being shared, there are several factors not being possible to overcome. Factors such as gender, age, social background, ethnicity or sexual orientation could influence the conversation (ibid: 82-83). I do not know in what way factors such as being a middle-age female with immigrant background had influenced the interviews. As I stressed before, I believe that the most important element here – sharing the experience of working as a case officer at an immigration detention centre – was crucial in the sense that it helped to keep the interviewees relaxed and open while sharing their interpretations with me.

The choice of method depends on the selection of theory since theories vary in regard to what shall be studied (Lundin in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008:87). Lundin discusses that the aim of qualitative methods is to approach the studied object in an unbiased way (ibid: 87). However, even the qualitative methods approach the phenomenon based on a particular perspective or theory functioning as a frame of understanding (ibid: 87-88). In result, the theory and method are being closely interconnected (ibid: 89). In the next chapter the choice of the theory will be further discussed.

5 Theoretical framework

As being stressed in the previous chapter, the object of the research is always theoretically defined (Lundin in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 87). Since it is not possible to understand the reality the way “it really is”, one sees the world applying various concepts or theories. Theories function here as frames of our understanding. They are neither “true” nor “false” – instead they are just more or less applicable (ibid: 87-89). Following Lundin, selecting a theory for the purposes of this research is based on the problem definition (ibid: 92). The empirical material in the study is analyzed in the background of the power related concepts borrowed from two prominent sociologists Michel Foucault and Max Weber. Although there are other theoreticians discussing the issue of power, based on the chosen theoretical reasoning it is possible to understand power structures produced at a closed institution.

Considering the material by using a theory allows for discerning new aspects, differences and patterns not earlier being perceivable (Lundin in Sjöberg & Wästerfors (eds.), 2008: 86). A theory is to be seen as an analytical tool necessary to create a deeper, more complex and hopefully a new understanding of the phenomenon being studied. With other words, the chosen theory increases the insight about the own empirical findings (ibid). The concept of power can have many implications and ways to study how power is being exercised vary. Since it is difficult to describe this particular phenomenon, one should focus on certain aspects of power in order to study it (Börjesson & Rehn, 2009: 10). A basic notion of power is being defined that A affects B in some significant way. In order to analyze social relations, this significant manner must be discussed (Lukes, 1994/2005: 30). Definition of power and other related concepts discuss the specific ways of such affecting as being significant. What it follows, diverse perspectives on power will identify power in various regards (ibid). In the conceptual frameworks of Weber and Foucault the emphasis is being put on the role of the state and the bureaucratic power, thus suiting well the purposes of this study. Power is being perceived in various ways in the two frameworks. Foucault examines punishment as a technique for exercising power. He also investigates how the tactics of power refer to knowledge, thus defining thoughts about social relations (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 1). One of the concepts that Weber uses in order to interpret his theory is authority, particularly the legal/rational form of it. He states that power does not come from individuals but from a system. Here, the authority and power are hidden behind the bureaucratic structures

(Börjesson & Rehn, 2009: 60-61). The chosen theoreticians look at power from different angles thus contributing to deepen the problematized area of this research.

In this chapter five related concepts will be discussed. These concepts are: panopticism, docile bodies, objectification, biopolitics and governmentality as well as bureaucracy. After presentation of the chosen concepts, a critical discussion on the theoretical approach will be further developed.

5.1 Panopticism

Foucault describes a model of the disciplinary mechanisms which is accomplished by the use of power. Discipline takes place in an enclosed and segmented space where everyone is being supervised and where all events are being recorded. This omnipresent and omniscient power is being applied to the defined individual (Foucault, 1977: 197). Foucault describes surveillance to be based on a system of permanent registration where every observation being made has to be noted down and communicated with those in charge (ibid: 196-197).

Panopticon is being presented which is a plan for a prison designed by a philosopher Jeremy Bentham. Panopticon represents the architecture of power and is all about the governance of individuals and society (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 2). System of social control applied in panopticon imposes the law on people by guiding them towards self-control (ibid: 3).

Panopticon represents adaptation of various technical and architectural solutions for the uses of invisible implementation of power. Bentham's architecture has been used in various types of institutions in order to exercise power by inspecting prisoners, workers, insane and patients (Foucault, 1977: 200-201). Inside the panopticon the prisoners are made visible and this visibility becomes their trap (ibid: 200). Prisoners are not a compact crowd anymore and by being separated they are easily supervised (ibid: 201). Since the prisoners never know when they are being watched, power exercised in the panopticon is "automatized" and "dis-individualized", and it does not matter by whom it is exercised (ibid: 202). Foucault explains that the panopticon should be seen as the "diagram of a mechanism of power" (ibid: 205). He defines it as location of bodies in space where the channels of power are being placed.

Foucault stresses that the core of the panoptic schema is not the relations of sovereignty but the relations of discipline. The procedure of subordination of bodies and forces will expand the effectiveness of power (ibid: 208). Main strength of the panoptic schema is that it does not intervene, it works quietly and it affects those individuals it is aimed at (ibid: 206).

Panopticon prison is used as the metaphor for remaking of knowledge and institutions in the modern era (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 4).

5.2 Docile bodies

Two major motives of Foucault's work based in his interest of government and the self are power and the subject (McNay, 1994: 2). Foucault did not aim at exploring power as state apparatuses or class relations. Instead, he focused on social relations by which power practices of inequality and oppression are being created and maintained. He understands power by analyzing the everyday aspects that he calls microphysics of power (ibid: 2-3). The body is an object through which power could be implemented. When controlling time, space and movement and implementing diverse methods, body can be manipulated and shaped. In response to the training, body would become obedient (Foucault, 1977: 136). Discipline works in a subtly manner since it is decentralized and scattered. It consists of a multiplicity of minor processes that by repetition would produce a general method (ibid: 138). Foucault explains that the techniques of power are diffused and subtle. They are spread without being noticed because they seem to be apparently innocent mechanisms (ibid: 139). Since all these various factors do affect discipline, Foucault calls the techniques of power for a "political anatomy of detail" (ibid: 149).

Foucault stresses the meaning of dividing space in many sections in order to supervise individuals at any time, to know where they are located and what they are doing. Its purpose is also to break dangerous communications (ibid: 143). Moreover, there is a need to create a functional space so that the individuals can be more useful and the space would become therapeutic for them (ibid: 144). Another aspect of discipline is time and control of activity (ibid: 149). It consists out of three methods such as establishment of rhythms, imposing occupations and regulating repetition. The time has been partitioned in detail and how it should be spent is being specified. The activities are being supervised in order to make sure that the specified time for the performance of a particular activity is being used (ibid: 150). Bringing all the methods together would allow for controlling both individuals as well as groups, called by Foucault for a cellular power (ibid: 149).

5.3 Objectification

Discipline is an efficient means of power based on the use of simple instruments. During the acts of discipline people become both objects of power and tools of its exercise (Foucault, 1977:170). Foucault compares disciplinary institutions with a machinery of control where power constitutes a network of relations (ibid: 176-177). In disciplinary institutions an important role plays the supervising personnel being present in daily activities but remaining distinct from the group (ibid: 174). Moreover, the architecture is used in order to exercise control by making visible those who are observed. This method of gaining control by observing is coupled with assessment called normalizing judgement. It consists of corrective norms and values being learned by repetition, thus becoming normalized (ibid: 177-184).

Foucault explains examination as the mix of the techniques of an observing hierarchy as well as of a normalizing judgement (ibid: 184). By the use of this normalizing gaze, one can classify and punish. Foucault stresses that the examination is ritualized. Moreover, the individuals are being judged after they have been made visible. The power relations consist of the ceremony of power, experiment, force and truth, thus displaying the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected (ibid: 185). The examination is to be exercised through three forms. The first one considers visibility – the subjects have to be always seen while those exercising the power are invisible. Foucault calls the examination as “the ceremony of objectification” (ibid: 187). Secondly, the examination is connected to administrative procedures of registration and documentation (ibid: 189). These techniques contribute to identification and categorization of an individual thus making him an analyzable object (ibid: 190). Thirdly, the use of the documentary techniques causes that each individual becomes a case (ibid: 191). This has become a means of domination since the documentation is not made for future memory but for possible use. However, Foucault stresses that power shall not be seen as something negative since power produces reality and domains of objects (ibid: 194).

Power relations should not be reduced to the analysis of the political. Instead, “this possibility of action on the action of others” is to be noticed in the social relationships when some people become objectified (Foucault, 2000: 345). Foucault discusses that society without power relations and subjects being placed in them, does not exist (ibid: 327, 343). In the process of objectification, human beings are transformed into subjects (ibid: 326). This form of power subjugates by categorizing the individual (ibid: 331). In a power relationship “the other” is

being created (ibid: 340). The exercise of power is not a given structure but it can be elaborated and adjusted to the situation (ibid: 345). Moreover, power relations prevalent in closed institutions have to be analyzed from the point of view of power relations that are to be found outside the institution (ibid: 343).

5.4 Governmentality

Foucault characterizes biopolitics as rationalization of various problems by governmental practice (Foucault, 1994/2000: 73). It concerns the phenomena of group of people within the areas of health, sanitation or race (ibid). Moreover, rationalization is being embedded in social relationships in form of state institutions (Foucault, 2000: 345). The term biopolitics becomes further developed by Foucault when he discusses the constant involvement of the government into the lives of citizens (Foucault, 1994/2000: 219-220). He broadens definition of power by the concept of governmentality since violence, domination and various types of power have been distinguished in a comprehensible way (McNay, 1994: 4). The term governmentality meaning “governmental rationality” covers a variety of techniques enabling the state to exercise its power. Due to this complex process, the state becomes “governmentalized”. Governmentality consists of the cluster of frameworks, practices and knowledge operating at the macro level (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 5). Governmentalization of the state defines what should be seen to be under jurisdiction of the state and what should be seen as a private domain. Citizens are both the subject of the needs being achieved while at the same time they are the object of the government (ibid: 217). E.g. government intervenes into various things, customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking - all that having some kind of connection with people. State is concerned with governing resources, wealth, climate, fertility, epidemics and death - just to mention a few (ibid: 208-209). The system works by the use of variety of means such as tactics or law in order to accomplish certain means:

“(…) with government it is a question not of imposing law on men, but of disposing things: that is to say, of employing tactics rather than laws, and even of using laws themselves as tactics – to arrange things in such a way that, through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved.” (Foucault, 1994/2000: 211).

Governmentality seeks to control deviance by enforcing obedience to the rules through supervising individuals (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 51). Authority implies power and rules constitute it (ibid: 42).

5.5 Bureaucracy

Max Weber analyzes in his writings structures of authority. His interest is authority being the legitimate form of domination. Weber describes domination as a likelihood that orders will be carried out by a specific group of persons (Weber, 1921/1968: 212). Power is separated from individuals. Instead, it is embedded in the transparent rules of the legal system (Börjesson & Rehn, 2009: 60-61). Weber distinguishes three types of authority: rational, traditional and charismatic authority. For the purposes of this thesis I will concentrate on the rational authority, also called legal, that could be exemplified by bureaucracy. Weber has had a strong interest in the way public administration works in the modern state. He has been depicting bureaucracy as an ideal model with a bureaucrat having a particular position (Weber, 1948/2005). Bureaucracy, being a large-scale structure, is characterized by rules such as laws or administrative regulations. Weber stresses that the regular activities taking place are to be seen as official duties of bureaucrats. Written documents, so called files, play an important role here (Weber, 1948/1991: 196-197). Weber stresses the importance of administrative tasks in order to manage the bureau (ibid: 209).

Weber discusses the bureaucratic administration as consisting of a formal and rational objectivity (ibid: 220). Objectivity is based on the fact that bureaucrats need to rationally interpret the law (ibid: 216). Rules, means, ends and matter-of-factness constitute the rational elements of bureaucracy (ibid: 244). Equality before the law is another characteristic of bureaucracy (ibid: 224). Lack of human emotions such as love, hatred and connected to it irrationality makes bureaucracy impersonal and dehumanized (ibid: 216).

Bureaucracy is to be seen as a power instrument since it is an instrument for societalizing relations of power (ibid: 228). Weber describes bureaucracy as an integrated mechanism where an individual bureaucrat has to do his/her own tasks. Weber stresses the force of the system by describing a bureaucrat as being “chained to his activity”:

“(...) he is only a single cog in an ever-moving mechanism which prescribes to him an essentially fixed route of march. (...) The individual bureaucrat is thus forged to the community of all the functionaries who are integrated into the mechanism.” (Weber, 1948/1991: 228).

5.6 Discussion on the theoretical approach

Theories of Foucault and Weber allow for understanding dominance as implemented by the authorities. These theoreticians share many ideas on the relationship between governmentality and subjectivity (Jimenez-Anca, 2012: 37). However, they vary in regard to their standpoint on how to perceive power. Specifically, Foucault's theory of power is monological while Weber has a multidimensional approach to power (ibid: 36). Nevertheless, the analysis of power can be undertaken from different positionalities. Foucault expresses that power is something positive while Weber has a negative view of power coming from the authority. For the latter, power will become more automatized and machine like. This in turn would lead to an even greater dependency on the rational system. Both Foucault and Weber stress the importance of law enforcement by officials using their administrative control. Foucault's ideas recall on Weber's concept of the iron cage of rationality that is both enriching the Western world materially as it simultaneously is weakening the spirit of individuals (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998:4). By investigating the rational administration inside the institutions such as the hospital and prison, Foucault extends and complements Weber's bureaucratic rationality (O'Neill in McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 4). Here, Foucault studies observations and importance of their recording that would make people to become objectified.

Weber defines power as a possibility of an individual or a group to dominate in situations when the others oppose it. Here, power is about enforcing submissiveness and all the historical changes are a proof of it (Börjesson & Rehn, 2009: 57). For Weber, power lies in structures embodied in various institutions. Here, the emphasis is put on the role of bureaucrats who by the use of variety of techniques apply power. Foucault discusses in his works the new form of rationality centered in total institutions and discourses. He presents it as the establishment of new forms of power and powerlessness (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 4). Control through discipline and its objective being the construction of obedient bodies is mostly efficient when it operates through the administrative rules (ibid: 5). Disciplinary power derives from Foucault's ideas but is also implied in Weber (ibid: 38). This concept embraces the normalizing micro-techniques of power which affect not only individuals but also collectivities. Here, surveillance can take variety of forms (ibid).

Foucault sees power both as objectivizing and as subjectivizing. Subjectification is to be understood as a paradox since individuals both lose themselves in regimes of power simultaneously as they are being constructed as subjects by these regimes (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 11). Objectifying is a process in which people are being transformed into

objects or docile bodies. Power controls individuals but at the same it is thanks to power that people can become free. Individuals are constrained not by being repressed but by invisible strategies of “normalization”. In this respect Foucault takes over and continues Weber’s critique (McNay, 1994: 4-5). McNay calls Foucault to be his own critic who overcomes limitations of his own work by challenging himself and directing his thought into new directions (ibid: 10). Power is not coming from above but it is taking place between people (ibid: 12). A new concept introduced by Foucault, governmentality, is a symbol for a changing focus from protecting the state by managing of boundaries to forms of rule regarding the inhabitants of that state (McKinlay & Starkey, 1998: 49). This shift represents a change from external threat to internal regulations. In order to manage it, detailed information about the scrutinized population is being required. That is why it is necessary to construct new knowledge that is rationalizing and legitimizing the process (ibid). One of the messages of Foucault’s theory is that the apparent neutrality and political invisibility of techniques of power makes them so dangerous (Gordon in Foucault, 2000: XV).

As it will be shown in the study, the chosen concepts of power will contribute to the discussion of the research questions. I will take a closer look at techniques of power implemented in the everyday routines at detention centre and discuss them in the background of the above mentioned concepts of Foucault and Weber. Moreover, since Weber and Foucault vary in regard to their standpoint on how to perceive power as being shown above, I believe their ideas on state domination do complement each other, thus contributing to enrich this study.

6 Results and analysis

6.1 Visibility in detention

The issue of visibility inherent in the architectural aim of detention will be displayed in this chapter. Visibility is crucial both in regard to the design of detention centre and to the routines being implemented. The empirical material consists of field notes that are based on observations obtained while working as a detention officer.

6.1.1 Facility

In this section field notes are used in order to depict a detention building from the inside and the outside. The design of a detention centre is being compared with Panopticon, aiming to discuss how power can be perceived in relation to the physical environment. It is necessary to point out that design of detention centres in Sweden varies since most of them were not built as detention facilities from beginning. In the study I refer to a particular immigration detention centre where I collected the material through observations. This is how I perceived the exterior of the particular detention facility:

“The detention building is situated away from the centre of the town, located in a quiet area. From the outside, the detention facility does not remind of a prison. However, gates are locked and the yard is surrounded by high walls. There are no bars in the windows but the windows are blocked, not possible to open.” (Field notes)

Although it does not remind of a prison from the outside for people passing by, immigration detention centre is indeed a closed institution. It could be discussed whether the choice of location of detention facility is strategic since it is placed far away from peoples' ears and eyes. In spite of the fact that indoors people can move almost freely, they are being locked up in the building. In this “enclosed and segmented space” people are kept against their will (Foucault, 1977: 197). Here they are prevented from absconding and their actions are being controlled. They are monitored through various ways, where the most subtle and invisible is the architectural design. Inside, space is divided into areas, being easy to have a look:

“The bedrooms are located in a long corridor. On one level there are a couple of bathrooms and toilets. There are some common rooms such as a few living rooms, a dining room, a prayer room, a smoking area, a computer room and the gym. There are not many pieces of furniture here; it's only the basic items that constitute the

interior. There are tables, chairs, beds, some books in foreign languages and video games.” (Field notes)

Although the architecture of the above described detention centre does not strictly copy Bentham’s plan for prison, the design aims at achieving visibility of detainees. Visibility makes it easier to maintain security. By watching detainees’ bodies, the officers prevent their absconding. Having possibility to make detainees’ bodies visible displays presence of power at detention (Foucault, 1977). Inside the building detainees are free to go wherever and whenever they want except for the office and kitchen that are locked when not in use. Access to the yard is limited and the opening hours are scheduled. It requires that two staff members would assist detainees when they go out. The following field excerpt presents the importance of visibility at the yard necessary in order to prevent the absconding:

“It’s a Sunday morning, not much to do. Detainees are still asleep. The staff is having breakfast and lively discusses the events from the previous morning. A young woman managed to escape from the yard by using a rope thrown from the other side of the fence. A detention staff member that should be watching the yard noticed that from the kitchen window where he went for a while. But it was too late. He managed to catch her leg but then she kicked him so he fell. They say the police still didn’t find her.” (Field notes)

The situation described above would probably not take place if two detention staff members were watching the yard simultaneously according to the established rules. However, visibility at the yard and control seem to be intertwined. Visibility constitutes an inherent element of detention design which Foucault compares to a trap (Foucault, 1977: 200). By being detained, migrants are made available for the Swedish Migration Agency. Since they are prevented from running away, they are made visible during their entire stay and thus reachable for the purposes of the public administration. Moreover, thanks to the architectural conditions they become observable. According to Foucault it is through their visibility and observability that exercising control is being enabled (ibid: 174).

Yet another example depicts the importance of the kitchen design as well as of the regulations regarding this place. Restrictions regarding sharp items prevent detainees from having access to them, thus increasing safety of both detainees and the staff. Here, security arrangements such as locking the knives in a drawer and not allowing detainees to have access to them constitute a strategy applied in order to control the situation. The kitchen in the detention facility looks like a regular home kitchen except that the drawers with knives inside are

locked, as to prevent detainees from having the ability to use them. When not in use by the staff, the door to the kitchen is locked and the key is kept by the kitchen responsible supervisor. The following field note was written when I had to help out with the kitchen chores:

“When preparing the supper, a newly arrived detainee just wanted to ask something as he was about to come in. My colleague asked him to leave the kitchen and explained that detainees are not allowed inside. The man was confused since the door was wide open. He took a step back and said in a silent voice: I don’t understand, I just wanted to ask something. His face turned purple and I realized that an invisible wall just emerged in-between us.” (Field notes)

The strategy of using the facility is crucial for security adjustments. Various restrictions play a significant role in increasing safety of the staff and detainees. When the man took his step backwards, I realized that an invisible wall was just raised. In this moment the man became a stranger, an “other” that is not welcome inside. Migrants staying longer at detention internalize this rule and do not enter either the kitchen or the office even if the door is open. The same happened to the detainee described above. When a few days later I was assisting in the kitchen again, he did not enter but calmly stood outside the door asking for a soda. By specifying the existence of the invisible line that is not to be crossed, detainees themselves are made visible and thus controllable by the system. Their steps are watched not only by the staff but even detainees themselves would become careful of what they do. Here, self-discipline is the most effective form of power (Foucault, 1977). Moreover, using Foucault’s terminology, power to be exercised is “automatized” since they never know when they are being watched (ibid: 202).

By locating bodies in a certain space, power can be easily exercised at them (ibid: 205-206). The issue of the gaze as an act of control and discipline will be further discussed in the following section.

6.1.2 Daily routines

In this part of the chapter I am going to explore power being embedded in daily routines at the detention centre. I will discuss implementation of the rules and stress positioning of “bodies” in time and space in the background of Foucault’s ideas.

As shown in the previous section, the architectural aim of detention is to expose detainees' bodies. Migrants are made visible during their entire stay at detention. However, it is clearly perceivable particularly when migrants enter a detention facility. Here, migrants and their belongings need to be scrutinized by the officers. This is done according to the regulations stating that migrants are not allowed to bring any dangerous items inside the detention facility. I would like to present some notes written in connection to my first experience of the search when a new detainee-to-be arrived:

"I can see that the man is scared; he smells sweat. He doesn't know where he is and what detention is. My experienced colleague talks to him since the detainee speaks English. I put the gloves on and search the man's two bags. I am looking for any sharp and forbidden items. I look carefully into every piece of the wardrobe trying to see if there might be anything hidden in them. I don't find anything. Then my colleague body searches the detainee and finds a lighter and a mobile phone including a camera. We inform the detainee that these things need to be taken into the custody and that he'll receive them when leaving detention. I give the detainee a phone without a built-in camera and he changes his sim-card. Afterwards I write a decision on taking the items into the custody and register it all into the internal system." (Field notes)

In Foucault's terms, by examining detainees, officers exercise authority over them (Foucault, 1977: 184). Searching detainees and going through their belongings constitutes a "ceremony of power, experiment, force and truth" taking place upon their arrival at detention. A detainee becomes exposed when officers scrutinize his/her possessions. Here, combination of methods such as observing hierarchy and normalizing judgement is being implemented. Foucault stresses that the normalizing gaze qualifies, classifies and punishes detainees. Judgement comprises the outcome of the search by taking items into the custody. As Foucault would say, detainees are the "objects becoming subjected and subjects being objectified" (ibid: 185). This ceremony of power is closely connected with the administrative methods such as registration and documentation (ibid: 189). After having conducted the practical part of the search, it is time to document all the proceedings. This regular administrative task constitutes a part of the bureaucrats' work (Weber, 1948/1991: 196-197). In result of the process of identification and categorization, a detainee becomes an analyzable object and a case. During this administrative process, objects are being created and the administrative truth is being born (Foucault, 1977: 190-194).

Discussing daily routines would not be fruitful without considering the administrative procedures. Even here at detention where contacts with people constitute a significant part of

detention staff's work day, variety of registrations are being required. A method called "lean" is implemented at the Swedish Migration Agency. Its two principles, constant improvements and respect for people are being embraced at the institution (Migrationsverket, 2011c: 16). Shortly, lean-thinking encompasses the use of various tools considered as efficient at work. For instance, white boards are being employed in order to visualize the process of a detainee's case at detention. According to lean, white boards are used in order to show divergences and the progress in solving them (Pettersson, P. et al, 2009: 106). Information being noted on the white boards at detention consists of a detainee's name and a number used in detention (containing room and bed number), date of birth, nationality, date of entering detention and grounds for detention, when the time in detention was checked last time and by whom, what kind of conversations took place and when, name of the lawyer and/or police officer handling the case, and lastly a note on eventual nutritious divergence. Moreover, any significant observation being made, incidents taking place and eventual consequences for each detainee need to be noted in the system of internal files. Even notes on planned visitations and medical appointments need to be taken. Information coming from these records is taken up at team meetings. There, officers from the previous shift inform what is on agenda for the day. Then the officers would divide tasks among themselves. Every work shift starts with a team meeting where the events from the previous shift are being summarized. Here comes a note excerpt written in connection to one of the team meetings:

"S/he [the colleague from the other team] looks at the white board and at the computer file. One can see s/he is tired – s/he was up the entire night. S/he drinks her/his coffee and speaks with a monotone voice: 2:3 will be visited by his lawyer at 10 a.m. 3:1 needs to visit a dentist today – don't forget wearing sneakers. 3:3 is going to travel, SPPS [Swedish Prison and Probation Service] will pick him up at 09:30. He wants to be waken up at 08:00. 4:2's family is going to visit him at 1p.m. 6:1 wasn't doing well yesterday, she didn't eat her supper and stayed in her room crying the whole time. Talk to her." (Field notes)

Detainees become dis-individualized by losing their name and by being diminished to a number. In the jargon used among the staff, detainees are not called by their names but by their room and bed number, e.g. 4:1. In this context detainees' personal traits are not interesting. Instead they are reduced to numbers since the work tasks revolve around managing detainees as objects. Foucault stresses that by becoming "dis-individualized" people are supervised (Foucault, 1977: 202). Enforcement of lean-thinking could be seen as a modern form of Weber's bureaucracy model. Here, employment of white boards and internal

files make it easier to transfer necessary information. These panoptical observations together with requirement of documentation transform detainees into cases being easy to manage.

At detention, every practice is being planned. Except detainees' days in the establishment being structured, also tasks of detention officers are scheduled and planned in advance. Controlling the facility, time for meals and the yard's opening hours are permanent activities too. Routines aim at controlling detainees' bodies by looking after them. However, detainees are free to choose if they want to participate in any activity. Staff meetings, meals and the opening hours for the yard are the only regulated routines. The following excerpt of the field notes was written in connection to observations on how detainees spend their time:

“Detainees are allowed to decide what they want to occupy themselves with. Most of them would sleep at daytime, becoming active at night. They would spend time in the computer room or playing billiard or table tennis. Some detainees would not even come for meals.” (Field notes)

Foucault stresses that exercising discipline is possible since it is a seemingly harmless technique but in reality it is a “political anatomy of detail” (Foucault, 1977: 149). Firstly, the enclosed space of detention centre is divided into several areas, thus making it easier to supervise detainees. Secondly, the time-table organizes the day at detention, thus implicitly saying how the day should be spent. The activities at detention are supervised as to make sure that they are used the way it is planned. Foucault describes it as a “micro-physics of cellular power” (ibid: 149). Discipline works effectively, in a subtly manner, when it is being difficult to discern (ibid). However, detainees are not being forced to participation in either activities or in common meals. This tolerance is part of the humane approach giving detainees feelings of freedom and possibility to decide over their own lives (see Koshravi, 2009). Koshravi has found out in his study that these “humanizing procedures” work as a disciplinary mechanism in a detention centre.

Observing detainees, their actions and variety of details is being part of the work routines. In the morning, the yard would be scrutinized. Staff would search for any forbidden items eventually being thrown over the wall. Even the inner checks would regularly take place. The room checks are scheduled three times a day during the main meals while detainees are supposed to eat in the dining room. However, they often stay in their rooms sleeping. Staff tries to talk to those being awake and motivate them to get up and eat. They are not allowed to touch any personal belongings of detainees while performing the room checks. Noticing that

everything looks all right is enough. The checkups are not supposed to come in conflict with detainees' right of privacy. During the room checks, windows are being controlled. Staff needs to check if there is any intervention on the windows which could be an indicator of planning to abscond. Bathrooms, toilets and the common rooms are searched for forbidden items:

“It’s my turn to do the room checks today. I start upstairs, searching the rooms on one side of the corridor while my colleague checks the rooms on the other side. In the first room everything seems all right but one man is still in the bed. He isn’t asleep, he just stares at the ceiling. I try to motivate him to get up and eat the meal being served now. He says he would do that but he stays in his bed. Then I control the windows in the next room. There is a visible intervention on one window. However, it’s an old damage and I let it be. After checking the rooms, I even search bathrooms, toilets and the common rooms for forbidden items but luckily I don’t find anything suspicious.”
(Field notes)

The meaning of this constant observation is to make sure that detainees do not act against detention rules. By applying Foucault’s ideas, one can understand that by observing detainees’ actions, officers exercise disciplinary measures over them (Foucault, 1977). In their daily work, staff needs to follow plenty of routines and security arrangements. By so doing, absconding is being hindered while security of the staff and detainees would rise.

Observations of detainees and the facility play an important role here. For instance, staff would need to make sure that the office and the kitchen doors are being closed as to prevent detainees from getting access to any confidential information or sharp items. Window control and search of hidden items would take place three times a day. Officers have to notice every detail in order to discover deviations from the norm, thus indicating a potential threat to the security. Objectifying detainees takes place while performing these everyday routines.

Detainees thus become objects to be dealt with. Foucault defines power as a possibility of action on the action of others (ibid: 345). In a detention centre, power relations are perceivable during these acts of objectification. Discussions among the staff, scheduled check-ups as well as other sorts of observations aim at controlling detainees. According to Foucault it is the gaze of the staff that objectifies them in time and space. Moreover, discipline would take place in moments like this when time, space and movement are being controlled (ibid: 137).

6.2 Double role of a civil servant

The complexity of detention officers' work is being captured in the narratives of my informants as well as in the excerpts of written documents obtained from the Swedish Migration Agency. Besides having the administrative and formal role, officers are obligated to provide detainees with social service. In their daily work, officers need to balance these two contrasting roles. In this chapter, power embedded in their assignments will be exposed by applying Weber's ideas on bureaucracy.

Although the primary task of detention officers is to execute an order of refusal of entry or expulsion, their tasks also include a social function. According to the Aliens Act, detention staff is available 24 hours a day in order to support detainees at any time (Migrationsverket, 2006). The treatment of detainees is being discussed in the manual for the staff where emphasis is being put on detainees' integrity, human rights and privacy (Migrationsverket, 2008). Regulations emphasize even other related values such as respecting one's dignity, transparency, good living conditions, privacy, outdoor space and leisure activities. Humanity and respecting dignity of the person correspond to Detention Guidelines elaborated by UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees).

Officers together with supervisors would activate detainees by organizing various sport activities. They would also arrange and participate in e.g. billiard tournaments in the evenings and on the weekends. There would be sweets given out on Saturdays according to the Swedish custom. Also other Swedish customs and various religious events would be celebrated by staff and detainees. Finally, staff and detainees would watch TV together or just sit down and drink coffee either in the dining room or in the yard. However, as civil servants, coming detainees too close is not allowed. There is a line that cannot be crossed. An interviewee stresses the importance of being personal while on duty. However, being private should be seen as the antithesis in this context. Being private is explained as getting too close, e.g. by revealing details about one's private life:

“It's a special establishment. And the staff is available all the time in the establishment – twenty four hours a day. We are having the role of civil servants and (...) it's a special challenge to think about the way of conduct towards detainees who are here. One should be kind and personal but not private.” (1)

By continuously stressing the role of a civil servant, officers justify their detachment from detainees and even encourage themselves in so doing. Empathy is being supported; however

their emotions should not recall feelings of sympathy. Distance is perceived to be necessary when performing their duty. Since only rational decisions are being taken at the state institution, any personal involvement is seen as inappropriate. Regarding the regulated way of conduct, officers refer to the role of a civil servant. It provides them with the ethical and moral guidance in their daily encounters with detainees. One interviewee refers to characteristics of a civil servant by stressing neutrality and necessity of keeping a distance in contacts with detainees. The officer says that it can be challenging at times:

“It’s all about the commonsense... Since you are representing the authorities you should act correctly, you shouldn’t get silly with them [detainees], you aren’t their friend. (...) You need to keep a distance. It’s difficult since you have this close contact, you drink coffee together. (...) I don’t talk privately with them. I don’t give anything of myself but I like to listen.” (2)

The values of the Swedish Migration Agency constitute a summary of what the institution endeavors to and how it aims to be apprehended. Three words representing these values such as empathy, transparency and courage are being used (Migrationsverket, 2014). Moreover, the values being embraced should support civil servants in their work (Migrationsverket, 2015). In fact, the officers I interviewed seem to have embraced them and use the value of empathy when narrating their stories. However, the officers are constantly reminded not to cross the line between empathy and sympathy. Disconnection from any deeper emotions towards detainees is thus required since the attachment can lead to misjudgment while applying the law. It can also result in accusations of unethical behavior and misconduct. In order to avoid unprofessionalism, officers are being advised to keep a distance in order not to become “too friendly” with detainees. Focus should be always put on the Aliens Act:

“We, working here, have to understand that we act based on the Swedish legislation.... We can’t feel sorry for someone who doesn’t receive residence permit in Sweden just because we like that person. We have to assume that our decisions [by the Swedish Migration Agency] are correct.” (3)

In order to perform their function well, officers rationalize their job tasks. They reason around law and regulations, thus justifying that what they do is correct. Awareness and acceptance of the limitations of their position makes it easier to detach themselves from detainees. In the following example an officer points out that whatever s/he does at work is being based on the job description and not because of the private beliefs:

“You learn the role you play. You need to understand that it’s my role. It’s my W-O-R-K. It isn’t me, it’s my work they’re sore about, not ME. It’s very important.” (4)

According to Weber, institutions do not embrace emotions because of the risk that fair treatment could be disturbed (Weber, 1948/1991: 224). Bureaucrats should treat everyone the same since in front of the law everyone is equal. Hence civil servants should not experience any deeper feelings - not even feelings of sympathy are allowed. Following Weber’s theory, the officers should be neutral in their way of conduct. However, experiencing empathy does not clash with the Swedish law. On the contrary, connected to the approach of “humanity” employed at detention, empathy is even being encouraged.

Another interviewee is aware of the fact that being detained makes people vulnerable, carrying along negative feelings based on their fear of return. The interviewee would want to provide more assistance, however the officer is aware of the limitations of his/her mission:

“(...) and trying to support and make a positive memory of Sweden. The end became so bad and being able to... trying to... influence... If I make a human being happy one day so it’s enough for me. I feel this way but at the same time as I said before, you have your assignment and you can’t save the world. If you want to save the world, you should be hugging trees and these kinds of things are just in a wrong place. It’s from the frames that we have... what can I do for you so that you can feel better?” (5)

Bureaucrats themselves do not possess any individual power. Instead, power is based on various regulations. Weber points out that the bureaucratic system in which routines are to be repeated on daily basis, reminds of a mechanism in which a bureaucrat is only a “single cog” (ibid: 228). In this mechanism, officers have to follow the rules of the institution while retaining their objectivity and neutrality. In the interviews it is possible to see that this neutrality and objectivity can be disturbed when coming too close to detainees. Although there are no requirements that the officers ought to be social workers, they need to support detainees and show them their consideration. Based on the nature of the officer’s work, achieving balance seems to be challenging.

The Aliens Act directs the guidelines for treatment of detainees, stressing the humane and dignified approach. For instance, the conditions at detention centres should be comparable to those at Reception Units also ruled by the Swedish Migration Agency. The only difference

would be restrictions on the freedom of movement. However, inside detainees can move without constraint. Detainees are entitled to some social benefits such as daily allowance and emergency healthcare. Moreover, they are able to practice their religion and receive visitors (Migrationsverket, 2006). In order to further support detainees, the Swedish Migration Agency co-operates with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (ibid). One officer discusses the importance of incorporation of the concept of humane treatment into daily communication with detainees:

“As a consequence of it [Swedish politics] people don’t have permission to stay in this country - and it’s about making their last time in Sweden as good as possible. We all have right to a respectful and as good as possible stay. And it’s a mission and we, working here, should be proud of having it as our goal. It’s no bullshit we are involved with. It’s a very serious work, at least I think so.” (6)

The need of talking to, listening to and noticing detainees on daily basis is being further emphasized. The objective is to perceive detainees not as a group of detained immigrants but as individuals. However, acknowledging detainees needs to be done in a professional manner since the officers are not detainees’ friends but civil servants:

“It’s important to listen to people. Because it’s what people need. Everyone knows that – when you are upset or you put yourself in a difficult situation that wasn’t well thought-out, then you call a friend who tells you that everything will be fine and then you can tackle the problem. This is how we, human beings, function. Just be a fellow human being. Then of course we don’t need to become their best friends but you can be professional and listen to them. It doesn’t mean that I have to agree with you but I can listen to you.(...) and also try to build up kind of... not confidence in repatriation but... try to help so it would be as good as possible... by listening and by being there and supporting.(...) Those who are here, they know that we aren’t their buddies. In the end they know that we are civil servants. But I’m not that type of person who thinks that one should be forcefully suggesting something or anything like that.” (7)

While performing their work tasks, the officers act in accordance with the Aliens Act and the Administrative Act. Respect, integrity, good judgement and an ethical code of conduct are being stressed as crucial by the Swedish Migration Agency. These qualities are seen as necessary in order to execute decisions in a way that is “competent, impartial and legally correct” (Migrationsverket, 2012). One interviewee stresses the necessity of rationalizing the role of being a detention officer. In spite of feelings of closeness emerging in the staff - detainee relationship, it is stressed that officers ought to separate work from their private life:

"You come very close to detainees since you are with them all the time. When you come back after vacation, they can say that they missed you and that it's nice to see you again. It's nice to hear it for me as a human being because it means that you built up a kind of relation with detainees. Of course not with everyone, you can't be liked by everyone. In spite of the fact that we have the role of a civil servant, it doesn't mean that we shouldn't see another person – quite on the contrary! We work for them and we need to see them. But we can't get involved with their problems too much. We have our own problems at home. We need to separate our job from the private life and I don't think it's anything strange. It's the same as with other professions." (8)

Achieving balance in the role as a civil servant is thus seen as crucial. It is to be accomplished by constant scrutiny of the way of conduct towards detainees. The way of acting should neither be too friendly, nor should the officers remind of frigid androids. Achieving balance is thus an issue which needs to be carefully and constantly weight up:

"We, working at the Swedish Migration Agency, shouldn't be any robots but we also should have a possibility of expressing emotions and showing warmth and joy, etc. However we shouldn't forget that we are civil servants and that we have this role in our work. And being personal with someone, it's that... we should have the possibility to be personal but it takes only one step to become private with someone. (...) You shouldn't be a robot that sees everyone only as boxes that can be moved." (9)

Yet another officer stresses the importance of achieving balance in his/her professional role by neither acting too cold nor being too close in relation with detainees. However, it is not an easy task since it is human beings that the officers deal with:

"You should be careful since it is people... since you are with them all the time. You should learn about this role of the civil servant: come neither too close, nor be too distanced. So it is a question that needs careful weighing... (...) You aren't allowed to come too close to them so it won't become personal... but you can't be too cold either." (10)

Objectivity and neutrality are the typical traits of a bureaucrat according to Weber (Weber, 1948/1991: 216). At work, the officers should not expose their own true feelings since it is the Aliens Act that should be emphasized. Hence, one's own emotions would jeopardize taking or following decisions in a correct way. Detention officers are aware of it and have to constantly

be conscious of how they conduct themselves. Detention officers have thus to learn how to balance their role as bureaucrats and caretakers.

Several interviewees stress the importance of controlling their inner feelings in order to manage their work tasks. It seems to be necessary to suppress emotions although it is difficult to stop thinking of detainees when the shift is over. Officers are being advised to “*leave feelings at home*”. They understand that they have to “switch off” their true feelings in order to manage the duties. And when their work is over, they should not bring home any emotions from work. One interviewee expresses that s/he tries to behave in a humane way although s/he does not allow emotions to take over:

“To feel I leave at my private sphere, if I may say so. However, I can be brotherly, I can see a human being and understand, and feel the sympathy. Being able to understand that a human being has a difficult time, being able to understand another human being... However in your work you can’t blend a feeling, I don’t think so. Because then you can’t manage. Then you collapse. Well, shall you experience feelings of fifty individuals in one day, it’s impossible. Instead you can think that you might have helped someone or listened to someone or noticed someone. You need to embrace the positive aspects that you could have contributed with. Otherwise you would not be able to manage your work.” (11)

Some of the officers stress that detainees sense that the officers are more formal at the daytime, so they would “hide” in their rooms. At the night time on the other hand, when the authorities are closed, detainees would leave their rooms and engage in social life at detention. This is when switching between the roles can become problematic:

“Just because we were having fun playing Ping-Pong... and now you received a decision or rejection on the impediments to enforcement so maybe you no longer think I’m that bright. Then one needs to observe the situation and be prepared to take a step back.” (12)

Following Weberian ideal bureaucrats, officers learn that they should not express their private feelings and opinions. According to Weber, bureaucracy should be dehumanized in order to focus on the regulations (Weber, 1948/1991: 216). It is to be achieved by avoiding the irrationality in form of feelings. In fact, the Swedish Migration Agency acknowledges that difficulties might arise when the officers act as bureaucrats at the same time as they have to build relations with detainees (Migrationsverket, 2014b: 6). According to Weber, bureaucrats

see their clients as objects that need to be treated by the system. Detainees would thus become non-persons since they have to be managed in accordance with the law. Seeing detainees as objects can explain that the officers are able to detach themselves in order to continue with “managing” them. Officers should not develop any deeper feelings towards detainees since emotions are perceived as irrational in the bureaucratic system. Those of the officers, who display any deeper feelings towards detainees, do not play well their role as officers. Weber stresses that the public administration is dehumanized (Weber, 1948/1991: 216). Here it can mean that individuality of detainees disappears in the public administrative system. Officers are expected to act in accordance with the formal regulations without expressing their subjective opinions or emotions. Weberian bureaucrats should treat their clients equally and with respect. The law and various regulations are necessary in order to ensure that the bureaucrat will not act in accordance with his/her private values. Every employee at the Swedish Migration Agency should know what behavior is appropriate and what is not being acceptable. It is especially important while working at an immigration detention centre because of the close physical contact with the inmates.

This chapter reveals a paradox inherent in the job tasks carried out by the officers. While working with detainees, officers need to learn both how to maintain closeness as well as how to create distance. Spending a lot of time under one roof would naturally lead to establishing friendships. However, officers have to develop a strategy in order to preserve distance in relation to detainees. In accordance with the Aliens Act, migrants should be treated in a humane way during their stay in detention. Treatment of detainees with focus on respect and empathy is thus crucial for maintaining good contacts. However, the role of a civil servant is to be seen as dehumanizing the establishment thus creating difficulties in achieving balance between the two. Besides the administrative power based on the ability to control by documenting, power is being manifested when the officers distance themselves from detainees. This practice of transformation from a full of empathy social worker into a neutral bureaucrat encloses mechanisms of power. When following administrative rules and regulations, officers create a gap in regard to detainees. However, distance is seen as a necessary part of implementing the administrative rules. That is why it is to be stated that detachment is only one of the techniques of power being used in order to enable effective implementation of the law. In spite of the humanitarian approach being applied at detention, true human feelings clash with the kind of emotions being allowed. Power is thus to be

perceived not only by administrating the physical bodies but also by keeping the emotional distance from detainees.

6.3 Interaction

In this chapter the meaning of interaction between detainees and staff will be presented. Having good relations with detainees would contribute to a safer environment at detention and it would make it easier to motivate detainees to co-operation with the Swedish Migration Agency. It is to be claimed that interaction and conversation constitute power techniques used at detention. Firstly, interview excerpts are presented in both sections and a summarizing discussion connected to the chosen theory would follow thereafter.

6.3.1 Dynamic security

It is not possible to separate daily interaction between the staff and detainees from the issue of security since one is being intertwined with the other. All the formal rules and unwritten norms being applied at detention are closely connected to the issue of safety. Except conforming to various security routines, safety is being achieved thanks to close relations prevailing at an immigration detention centre.

Officers are aware that there are no safety measures that could rescue them if the atmosphere at detention becomes unfriendly. Instead, it is the establishment of good relations that can protect the staff from potential harm. In order to increase safety at detention, the importance of reading various situations and adjusting accordingly is being pointed out. Showing respect is also crucial when trying to establish relationships with detainees:

“It’s about building up a relation. Well, if you disrespect someone, then... It’s people whose cups are already full. It wouldn’t take so much for them to tip over. If they want to hit you, they would come up on things anyway. They would come up on things... so... they are twenty five, how many are we? Five. Hehehe [laughing].” (13)

Another officer discusses that respect is a necessary attribute of this profession. It is important to accept differences between people but also to be able to approach all these various personalities:

"Because I have a huge respect for every person. Someone maybe cries and is upset during his whole stay at detention and I respect that. And then you try to approach that. But maybe another person is totally aggressive and I understand this too but it can mean danger for the staff or other detainees. And maybe somebody else is totally without... he doesn't react on anything. Or the person is only waiting for being executed [his expulsion decision is to be executed]. It totally, totally varies." (14)

Respect and an empathetic way of conduct towards detainees is a crucial aspect of working at detention. Another officer stresses that the basis for a good conversation is a mutual respect:

"You always talk to them. You talk about respect and how the others experience it and so on. At least this is how I do because I would like to be approached this way myself." (15)

Dynamic security constitutes an important part of good relations since the use of weapon is not practiced at detention. By applying techniques of dynamic security, officers try to maintain a friendly atmosphere. In order to do so they interact with detainees, aiming to approach everyone. Communication constitutes an inherent part of this method. The officers stress that a strict way of acting could be causing conflicts, thus leading to the rise of security risks. This is how one interviewee stresses the importance of interaction and conversation while performing his/her duty as an officer:

"The staff is basically always out there in the establishment. It's what the concept of dynamic security is all about. The staff interacts with those who are out there. If there is anyone who seems to be very frustrated and is on the way to get outburst, then we use conversation as our most important tool. Talking to people... since most of the people... they want... they have a story that they want to tell." (16)

The quality of relations of those living and those working there - detainees and officers - is crucial since interaction and the power of words play an important role. Communication with detainees seems to be the most powerful tool of exercising power at detention. Conversations are used on daily basis and revolve around variety of issues such as rules at detention or a particular case of a detainee. Thanks to regular and friendly conversations it is possible to establish good relations between detainees and officers. In spite of the circumstances, humour is being frequently used. Laughter would bring people together, diminishing distance created by the administrative law. Casual conversations while participating in sport activities have the

same effect. When playing games they are just having good time. Moreover, the importance of conversation as a solution to any problem is being constantly stressed in the interviews. For instance when complains around common issues arise and need to be discussed, e.g. regarding meals:

"In most cases, if the rules aren't followed, it'll be an occasion for the staff to talk to detainees. And a lot of daily interaction between staff and detainees takes place. And because... a detainee feels totally frustrated about his situation. And for instance it'll be so that the food isn't liked, the food isn't good, wrong sort of food, one isn't allowed to decide when it's served, etc... So the food will be an important part one gets angry about. And it's such issues that the staff needs to deal with on daily basis with detainees." (17)

A "good" conversation as a tool is emphasized by one officer. S/he stresses that the technique of learning how to listen is crucial in daily conversations that lies as a ground for maintaining security at detention. This officer sees it as a part of his/her work as a civil servant:

"I personally believe that it's a good way of creating a good contact with detainees. It's again the role of a civil servant: kindness, respect, we should listen to people; it's more about learning how to listen. By asking open questions and by listening, you as a detainee will have possibility to tell how you experience what you see as a problem. It's a very important tool that we have in our encounter with detainees. It has significance for the security and for everything we do." (18)

However, not every detainee wishes to have contact with the officers. Some of them avoid the officers which makes it more difficult to build any kind of relation. The officers have to respect that some of detainees would want to be left alone. However, the officers need to remain observant if a detainee shows signs of being miserable. Length at detention is of importance here as well: the longer a detainee stays at detention, the bigger the risk of feeling worse. Hence the staff needs to pay attention to any signs of harm. Officers have to make sure that detainees are able to cope with their present situation in spite of the circumstances. One officer stresses the importance of conversation especially when a detainee shows signs s/he is not doing well:

"Sometimes they [detainees] are angry, they don't want to talk to anyone, they're angry with the staff. Sometimes some detainees say they would die here. You try to talk to them... It's important to talk to them if you notice that they aren't feeling well." (19)

Officers discuss the meaning of dynamic security in their daily work. Being humble, able to communicate and noticing every detainee as well as conversing with them are being mentioned as the elements that dynamic security contains of:

"How you greet people, stuff like that I believe is more important than how you stand when talking to someone. (...) The thing with security is that you constantly adjust to the situation instead of having any given rules. (...) You make sure you talk to everyone, you make sure you notice everyone. People understand how you walk, how you talk, your body language, what kind of signals you are sending. It's more this kind of stuff. How you behave instead of what rules you follow." (20)

Another officer focuses on creation of a good atmosphere at detention:

"But I believe, the most important is to think about the safety and feel the atmosphere and talk to each-other, communicate - also with detainees." (21)

Lack of prestige is also being stressed as important when working with detainees. A clear aim is not to provoke detainees as not to cause them feel any worse. Otherwise, it is believed that strict rules could lead to safety issues:

"Precisely this lack of prestige, that you don't flash with: I'm working for an authority". So it's enough that I just show myself in the door and show the card: it's me who has the power. They know that. If you were strict and forcefully suggested something, it's gonna be conflicts. It'll be a security issue. So... then you put yourself and everyone else into danger." (22)

Power relationships are rationalized by state institutions which Foucault calls biopolitics (Foucault, 1994/2000: 73). By using a related concept of governmentality, Foucault explains that the state implements various methods in order to exercise power. In this process, even law can be used as tactics in order to achieve certain ends (ibid: 211). By applying the idea of governmentality one can comprehend the meaning of the "tactics" implemented at detention. Exploring the rationality of the government in regard to interaction between staff and detainees would allow understanding the governmental means at detention. Based on Foucault's concept of governmental rationality, it is possible to explore the meaning of interaction at detention. Staff does not interact with detainees only because it is interesting to learn new people. The narratives of detention officers and their actions reveal that establishing

relationships has its purpose. The meaning of interaction is to maintain security at detention since the conversation and the humanity constitute their only tools. Establishing the quality relations with detainees would increase safety of both staff and detainees. It is crucial at an immigration detention centre in Sweden because the officers are civilians who do not carry weapon. The only way they can protect themselves with is their friendliness and empathy. Foucault stresses that in order to make sure that certain ends will be achieved, “things need to be arranged in a certain way” (ibid: 211). In a detention centre, interaction is being used as such means in order to achieve governmental goals. Daily interaction becomes intertwined with security routines which are applied in a variety of regulations and norms followed by the staff. Moreover, the awareness among detention officers regarding their vulnerability is high. They understand that they should actively aim at creating relations with detainees as it is the only means of security at detention. The governmental aim is to be noticeable in the emphasis put by the authorities on respect. Respect is to be shown to detainees since it is the basic component when establishing a relationship. The empathetic approach in the relations with detainees constitutes the governmental agenda. Techniques of dynamic security based on noticing detainees and communicating with them in a friendly, “soft” atmosphere, is to be valued higher than having strict rules. Conversation is thus seen as an important part of this approach. Thanks to daily, casual conversations conducted in a respectful and a friendly manner, ground for relationships can be established. Moreover, conversations and active listening help in resolving problems at detention. Governmental rationality being found behind this complex process exemplified in interaction and conversation constitutes a technique enabling the state to exercise its power in a quite invisible way.

By presenting the government’s involvement in daily interaction between staff and detainees, mechanisms of power at detention are to be further explored. The concept of governmentality as a complex process will be presented in the next section. It will be shown how the intervention of the government is being embedded in the motivational conversations used as a tool of exercising power.

6.3.2 Co-operation

As already stressed, physical violence is not being practiced at the Swedish detention centres. Instead, focus is being put on the application of the humanitarian approach where interaction and communication aim to fulfill the governmental needs. In this section, conversation used

as a tool to motivate detainees to voluntary return will be emphasized. Hence it is to be stressed that conversation constitutes one of the techniques of power being implemented at detention.

The Swedish Migration Agency stresses that conversation and professional treatment of detainees are the most important tools to be used by detention officers in their work (Migrationsverket, 2014b: 4). Correct treatment of detainees, including the non-verbal communication is crucial since based on these tools the officers can influence detainees' attitudes regarding return to their native countries:

“By using a well thought-out and respectful treatment, the staff can partly influence how detainees experience their situation and they can partly influence the handling of a case in a positive way.” (Migrationsverket, 2014b: 5).

The narratives of the officers reveal tell that the aim of most conversations with detainees is to increase the co-operation with the Swedish Migration Agency. Such co-operation would mean that detainees decide to agree on their return to the native countries and provide the authority with necessary identification/travel documents. This collaboration would then result in shorter stay periods, thus Detention Units having the capacity of receiving more migrants:

“It’s just about coming and co-operating so that he can return home as soon as possible. The ideal situation would be if they came today and went home tomorrow. (...) Most of the time they don’t realize that they have to return... until they arrive at detention. (...) They understand that it’s over and that they have to go back home. More detention decisions should be taken so that we would make sure they return home.” (23)

There are two types of motivational conversations being used at detention. Firstly, social conversations are to be performed in an unofficial manner. They aim to discuss a detainee's general situation but still focus on approaching their standpoint on return. Secondly, conversations about return are more formal and focus on discussing their return. Dates of both kinds of conversations are to be registered on the white board since their regularity needs to be under control. As the field excerpt below shows, conversations need to take place often and there is no moment that would be inappropriate. Even sitting in the yard and smoking a cigarette needs to be utilized for this purpose. The following field excerpt was written when discussing work approach with a colleague:

“S/he [the colleague] points out that we [detention officers] should use every possible moment in order to talk to detainees about the return to their native countries. When a detainee sits outside and smokes a cigarette, we should use this opportunity and accompany him smoking, discussing at the same time the return with him. S/he [the colleague] says we have to motivate them [detainees] to return even in informal situations.” (Field notes)

These more personal conversations when drinking coffee or smoking a cigarette together seem to be most powerful in comparison to the official conversations about return. When sitting in the yard, detainees’ options of return are still being discussed and reasoned about. Power comes here unexpectedly, is blurred and difficult to be recognized for detainees. In moments like this detention officers are not bureaucrats in the eyes of detainees. Instead, this conversation reminds of a harmless discussion with a friend. This on first sight innocent mechanism contains the omnipresent power as elaborated by Foucault. The Swedish Migration Agency stresses that conversation aims at understanding a detainee’s situation (Migrationsverket, 2011b: 5). Besides, the objective is to make a detainee to take his/her own responsibility for the situation s/he is in as well as to take his/her responsibility for action (Migrationsverket, 2014b: 5).

By using motivational conversation and by showing respect, people can be influenced in order to make a change (Migrationsverket, 2011b: 3). The aim of MI-conversation methodology is to understand the way a person views his/her situation. It is also aiming at encouraging a person to find his/her own answers and to take his/her own decision but it is the case officer who is in control of the conversation (ibid):

“Listening aims at understanding how a person views his/her situation. You try to enter into a person’s thoughts and reflections about the issue. The person is being encouraged to find solutions for herself/himself. The reflective listening is being experienced as empathic and it is an effective way to create contact and a good climate for co-operation.” (Migrationsverket, 2011b: 4).

In the light of MI-methodology, officers focus on the positive aspects of return thus trying to change how detainees think about return. By the combination of formal and casual social conversations and conversations regarding return, officers try to positively impact detainees’ thoughts and feelings about their return to their native countries:

“You converse with detainees so that they can think about their situation. You say that... it isn’t good to stay your whole life here, you should co-operate with the authorities and e.g. contact the embassy and apply for a passport.” (24)

In spite of the fact that the officers do not know much about detainees' lives in their native countries, they aim at empowering detainees by listening and discussing their future after return. Officers intend to build up detainees' self-confidence by assuring them that they can succeed in their native countries. Together with detainees they try to focus on some important issues for detainees thus activating their thoughts about it. Moreover, in some cases it is possible to apply for financial aid when deciding to voluntarily leave Sweden and return to the native country. At the prospect of return, officers try to help detainees by searching for possibilities of support system in their native country:

"It's difficult for them [detainees] to accept that they have to return. They still hope they will stay here in Sweden. But it's better they understand it as soon as possible so that they can start thinking and planning for their lives in their native country. My job is to explain how return works so that they can understand it and co-operate to a voluntary return. It's always easier to motivate detainees if there is financial aid or other kind of help from an NGO available." (25)

After having participated in conversations focusing on return, I understood their structure and what issues are being discussed. The officers talk with detainees about their family status back in their native countries. In these conversations the emphasis is being put on the family reunion. The conversations aim at pointing out that being locked up makes detainees stay longer away from their families. The field excerpt presented below regards a social conversation with a detainee with focus being put on return. Since sleeping pills at this man's bed were found, a team-leader decided we should talk to him in order to prevent suicide:

*"S/he asks the detainee: - Do you have a wife?
The young man answers: - No.
Then the officer says: You're still young, you should be looking for a wife in your native country, get kids. You've a bright future in front of you, you're young. There's no point staying here. You're only wasting your time in detention.
The detainee doesn't say much during this conversation, only short: yes or no.
Although he smiles a little." (Field notes)*

Officers reason that detainees (mostly young men) should focus on the family life by either finding a wife in the native country or going back to wife and children being left back home. Officers conclude that being locked up in detention should not be seen as an option. These daily conversations aiming at motivating detainees to co-operation are based on the already established relationships between officers and detainees. A tool being used is Motivational

Interviews – a conversation methodology by use of active listening and empowerment. The authorities admit that a respectful way of conduct and MI-adjusted conversations can influence a detainee to make a change (Migrationsverket, 2011b: 3). By entering into a detainee’s world of inner thoughts, a good contact can be created and thus enabling “a good climate for co-operation.” (ibid: 4). Under the guidance of a case officer, a detainee would take his/her own decision to make a change (ibid: 3).

Although not every officer has had accomplished the course in MI, the structure of the methodology is well known since the officers discuss it often with each other. One interviewee stresses the importance of asking open questions in order to start a discussion about return as to prepare for their arrival in the native country:

“You ask open questions (...) so that they [detainees] should activate their thoughts and start thinking about their life and the existing conditions. Hopefully they can themselves take the initiative to move on. Conversations about the return are especially difficult because one needs to ask the question: what will I do when I land at the airport in Kabul? This is the alternative. Not to escape from here or again hand in the impediments to enforcement. Maybe one has already done it a couple of times. But it is: what will I do then?” (26)

Conversations regarding return reflect power relations present in detention. Foucault stresses that power does not need to be a “given structure” but it can be flexible and can adjust to the situation (Foucault, 2000: 345). In immigration detention the conversation becomes a tool used by the government in order to motivate detainees to the voluntary return. According to Foucault, power is to be seen as “possibility of action on the action of others” (Foucault, 1977: 345). In accordance with the regulations, detention officers should help detainees to realize that the best decision would be to return to their native countries, thus influencing the way detainees think about their return. This technique of power defines the underlying goal which is to shorten stay periods at detention. For this purpose, conversations are conducted both in an informal way through so called social conversations and in an official manner through conversations regarding the return. Especially in the arrangement of casual conversations power is not easily to be discerned. By becoming personal with a detainee when smoking a cigarette or drinking coffee together, discussion about the return would seem more natural. Hence influencing detainees’ minds and empowering them would become easier and less suspicious. This ability to influence detainees is being based on the already established relationships between staff and detainees. According to Foucault, power is the most effective when it is most subtle: by being friendly, will of one person can easily be imposed on another

person. By using Foucault's notion of governmentality, one can understand conversation as a means to achieve higher rates of voluntary return. It is the government that imposes "things on men" as an act of exercising power (Foucault, 1994/2000: 211). By trying to manipulate detainees' minds, emotions and thoughts, detainees become both the objects and the subjects of the state (ibid: 217). They become subjects of the governmental needs (ibid) at the same time as they are objectified during daily routines.

7 Conclusion

Based on the previously conducted research, it has been stressed that immigration detention centers are being sites of power expression. The empirical material collected in this study upholds the already gained knowledge. The theoretical framework being applied has structured the outcome of the study: ideas of Foucault and Weber on power employed at state institutions constitute the point of departure for understanding the empirical material. Through this theoretical lens it has been investigated by what means the Swedish immigration detention centre, being a bureaucratic organization, exercises its control. The findings show the “subtle manner” of power implementation at detention. Techniques of power, often referred by the officers as tools, are being embedded in daily routines. They display the governmental purposes in the everyday interaction between the staff and detainees. Besides the safety, their goal is to achieve as many voluntary returns as possible. Moreover, the unceasing observations of detainees aim at subjecting them. Power is being exercised during the act of making detainees visible and behind observing their bodies. It is also embedded in conversations between the officers and detainees. By having established close relations with detainees based on their daily interaction, conversations are used as a mode of exercising power. The governmental means are being achieved by motivating detainees to co-operation with the Swedish Migration Agency.

The officers exercising power employ some of the characteristics of Weber’s bureaucrat. However, Weber’s ideal type of a bureaucrat does not exist in detention – the characteristics of a bureaucrat seem to be applied only as guidance. The empirical material being collected shows that detention officers’ work tasks include contradicting assignments that require ability to balance their emotions. In order to couple a humane approach in accordance with the Aliens Act with the dehumanized role of a bureaucrat as explained by Weber, the custody officers use both closeness and distance in their interactions with detainees. Based on the findings, it has been claimed that both by being close as well as by being detached, power is to be exercised. Officers distance themselves from detainees while performing their role of a bureaucrat. By being neutral and not showing emotions, taking formal administrative decisions and enforcing the law is being enabled. In order to justify their detachment, officers refer to the role of a civil servant stressing that professionals employed at the state institution are obligated to behave in a certain manner and their true inner feelings shall not to be displayed. The officers being interviewed develop various strategies of coping with their

mixed feelings. It would be interesting to further investigate this issue in order to understand the way the officers learn how to handle their emotions.

It is not being easy to perceive the “micro-physics of power” since the techniques of power are diffused and look like apparently innocent mechanisms (Foucault, 2000: 139, 149). As shown in the study, power implementation is being intertwined with the performance of various routines at detention. Daily exercise of control over detainees constitutes an unquestioned part of detention officers’ work tasks since the aim of these practices is to run detention according to the governmental plan. According to Weber, bureaucratic routines being repeated can be compared to a mechanism with a bureaucrat being only a “single cog” (Weber, 1948/1991: 228). Power needs to be examined by explaining the power relations existing outside the institution (Foucault, 2000: 343). Hence it is stated that the bureaucratic procedures are seen as the most appropriate way of applying the objectives of the controlling apparatus. In this bureaucratic structure, detention officers do not possess power of their own. Instead, they exercise power originating from the prevailing political system. In result, migrants become objects during daily routines at detention.

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Appendix

Interview questions in English

1. How long have you been working at detention center?
2. How come you work at detention center?
3. What is the aim of detention?
 - What are the legal reasons for detention?
 - What kind of people is being detained?
4. Describe your work.
 - What qualities does an officer need to possess in order to work at detention center?
 - What is your role as an officer?
 - Are there any rules that an officer needs to obey? Explain.
5. How does an ordinary day look like? Describe.
 - Discuss routines prevailing at detention center.
 - In what way do detainees learn about routines/norms?
6. What rules do detainees need to act in accordance with?
 - What are detainees allowed to do and what is being prohibited?
 - Are there any consequences if a detainee does not carry out the orders? Please describe.
 - In what way are detainees being encouraged to follow the rules at detention center?
 - Can you tell about any extraordinary situations that either you have experienced yourself or that you have heard of from your colleagues?
 - How were these incidents managed by the officers?
7. Can you tell about relation between officers and detainees?
8. Are there any activities taking place at detention?
9. In what way is security being maintained at detention?
10. What kind of decisions is being taken at detention?
 - What impact do these decisions have on detainees?
 - How are detainees being motivated to a voluntary return?
11. What do you think about detainees that you have met at detention center?

12. Can you depict an ideal/exemplary detainee?
13. How do you feel about working at detention?
14. Can you tell about positive and negative sides of your job?
15. What do you think about your job tasks? What are the easy/difficult parts to deal with?

Interview questions in Swedish

1. Hur länge har du arbetat på förvaret?
2. Hur kommer det sig att du arbetar på förvaret?
3. Vilket syfte har förvar?
 - Vilka är anledningarna till förvar enligt lagen?
 - Vilket slags människor kommer till förvaret?
4. Kan du beskriva ditt arbete?
 - Vilka egenskaper behöver en handläggare för att kunna arbeta på förvaret?
 - Vad är din roll som handläggare?
 - Finns det några regler som en handläggare måste ta hänsyn till? Förklara.
5. Hur ser en vanlig dag ut?
 - Berätta om rutiner på förvaret.
 - På vilket sätt lär sig de förvarstagna rutiner och normer?
6. Vilka regler behöver de förvarstagna anpassa sig till?
 - Vad får de förvarstagna göra och vad är förbjudet?
 - Blir det några konsekvenser ifall den förvarstagne inte gör vad han bör?
Beskriv.
 - På vilket sätt uppmanas de förvarstagna till att följa regler på förvaret?
 - Kan du berätta om några speciella situationer som du eller dina kollegor har upplevt?
 - Hur har man hanterat sådana incidenter?
7. Kan du berätta om typen av relation mellan handläggarna och de förvarstagna?
8. Finns det några aktiviteter på förvaret?
9. På vilket sätt upprätthåller man säkerheten på förvaret?
10. Vilka beslut tar man på förvaret?
 - Vilken inverkan har dessa beslut på de förvarstagna?

- Hur motiveras de förvarstagna till ett självmant återvändande?

11. Vad tycker du om de förvarstagna som finns hos er?

12. Kan du beskriva en idealisk/exemplarisk förvarstagen?

13. Hur känns det att arbeta på förvaret?

14. Kan du berätta om positiva och negativa sidor av ditt arbete?

15. Vad tycker du om dina arbetsuppgifter? Vilka delar är lätta/svåra att hantera?

Interview quotations in Swedish

Det är en speciell verksamhet. Och personalen finns hela tiden i verksamheten – 24 timmar om dygnet. Vi är ju där i rollen som tjänstemän och (...) det är en speciell utmaning att tänka på förhållningssättet gentemot de förvarstagna som finns här. Man ska vara vänlig och vara personlig men inte privat. (1)

Det är sund förnuft som gäller. Som myndighetsperson ska man uppträda korrekt, man kan inte tramsa med dem [förvarstagna], man är inte kompis med dem. (...) Man måste hålla distans. Det är svårt för att man har den nära kontakten, man dricker kaffe tillsammans. (...) Jag pratar inte privat med dem. Jag ger inte något av mig själv men jag lyssnar gärna. (2)

Vi som jobbar här måste förstå att vi agerar baserad på svensk lagstiftning. Vi kan inte tycka synd om någon som inte får uppehållstillstånd i Sverige bara för att vi gillar den här personen. Vi måste utgå ifrån att våra [Migrationsverkets] beslut är korrekta. (3)

Man lär sig den roll man spelar. Man måste förstå att det är min roll. Det är mitt A-R-B-E-T-E. Det är inte jag, det är mitt arbete de är sura på, inte MIG. Det är jätteviktigt. (4)

(...) och försöka stödja och kunna vara ett positivt minne av Sverige. Slutet blev så dåligt och kunna... försöka påverka... Om jag får en människa glad en dag så för mig räcker det liksom. Så känner jag men samtidigt som jag sa innan, har man sitt uppdrag och man kan inte rädda världen. Vill man rädda världen, ska man krama träd och sånt där grejer är bara på fel plats. Det är från de ramarna vi har... vad kan jag göra för dig för att du ska må bättre. (5)

Som en konsekvens av det [svensk politik] så har människor inte tillstånd att stanna i landet. Och det gäller att göra den sista tiden i Sverige så bra som möjligt. Vi har alla rätt till respektfull och så bra som möjligt vistelse. Och det är ett uppdrag och vi, som jobbar här, ska liksom vara stolta över att ha det som målsättning. Det är ingen kattskit vi håller på med. Det är ett jätteseriöst jobb, tycker jag i alla fall. (6)

Det är viktigt att höra. För att det är det människor behöver. Det vet man själv – när man är ledsen eller om man satte sig i en knasig situation som inte var så genomtänkt, då ringer man till en kompis som berättar att allt löser sig och sen kan man ta tag i problemet. Så funkar vi människor liksom. Bara vara en medmänniska. Sen givetvis

ska vi inte vara bästa kompis med dem men man kan vara professionell och höra. Och det betyder inte att jag måste hålla med dig men jag kan höra. (...) och också försöka bygga upp nån slags... inte trygghet i återvändande men... försöka hjälpa till så att det blir så bra som möjligt... genom att lyssna och finnas där och stödja. (...) De som är här, de vet om att vi inte är deras kompisar. I slutändan vet de om att vi är tjänstemän. Men jag är inte den typen som tycker att man måste peka med hela handen eller nåt sånt där. (7)

Man kommer väldigt nära de förvarstagna. Man är ju där hela tiden med dem. När man kommer tillbaka efter ledigheten, kan de säga att de saknat en och att det är roligt att ses igen. Det är trevligt att höra för mig som människa eftersom det betyder att man byggt upp ett slags relation med de förvarstagna. Såklart inte med alla, man kan inte vara gillad av alla. Trots att man har den där tjänstemannarollen, innebär inte att vi inte ska se en annan människa – tvärtom! Vi jobbar för dem och vi måste se dem. Men vi får inte engagera oss för mycket i deras problem. Vi har våra egna problem hemma. Vi måste kunna separera jobbet från det privata och jag tycker inte att det är något konstigt. Det är samma som med andra yrken. (8)

Vi som jobbar på Migrationsverket ska inte vara några robotar men vi ska ha en möjlighet att också kunna uttrycka känslor och visa på värme och glädje, osv. Men vi får heller inte glömma att vi är tjänstemän och det är liksom den rollen vi ska jobba med. Och att vara personlig med någon det är att eee... det ska vi ha en möjlighet att vara men det tar ett steg för långt att bli privat men någon. (...) Man ska inte vara en robot heller som ser alla människor som bara lådor som kan flyttas. (9)

Man ska vara försiktig eftersom det är människor... eftersom man är med hela tiden. Man ska lära sig den här tjänstemannarollen, att man inte får gå för nära, att man inte är för avståndstagande. Så det är en avvägning... (...) Man får inte komma dem för nära så det inte blir personligt... eee och sen får man inte heller vara för kall. (10)

Att känna lämnar jag till min privata sfär, om jag får säga så. Men däremot så kan ja va medmänsklig, att se människan och förstå, att ha medkänsla. Kunna förstå att människan har jobbigt, kunna förstå att människan... Men däremot så kan man inte i sitt arbete blanda in en känsla, tycker inte jag. För att då orkar man inte själv liksom. Då går man in i väggen. Alltså ska man uppleva alla femtio individers känsla på en dag, det går ju inte. Utan man får bara ta med sig och tänka att man kanske har hjälpt någon eller hört någon eller sett någon. Man får ta det som är det positiva som man kunnat bidra med. Annars skulle man inte orka med jobbet. (11)

För att bara för att vi hade roligt och spelade pingis... och så har du fått ett beslut eller avslag på din vut [ansökan om verkställighetshinder] liksom – så kanske tycker du inte att jag är så käck längre utan då måste man kunna se och kunna backa. (12)

Det gäller att bygga upp en relation. Alltså är du respektlös mot någon, då... Det är människor där deras koppar är redan fulla. Det krävs inte så mycket att det ska tippa över. Vill de slå dig, då kommer de att hitta på saker ändå. De kommer att hitta på... så att... de är tjugo fem, hur många är vi? Fem. Hehehe [skrattar]. (13)

För jag har otrolig respekt för varje människa. En person kanske gråter och är ledsen under hela vistelsen på förvaret, och det respekterar jag. Och då försöker man bemöta det. Men kanske en person är helt aggressiv och det förstår jag också men det kan innebära fara för personalen eller andra förvarstagna. Och kanske någon annan är helt utan att... den agerar inte eller svarar inte på något. Eller väntar personen bara på att verkställas. Det är helt, helt olika. (14)

Man pratar alltid med dem. Man pratar om respekt och hur andra upplever det, osv. Så gör jag i alla fall för att det är så man själv skulle vilja bli bemött. (15)

Personal finns i princip alltid ute i verksamheten. Det är det som ligger i begreppet dynamisk säkerhet. Personalen interagerar med dem som är ute. Finns någon som verkar väldigt frustrerad och är på väg att få ett utbrott, så har vi samtalet som vårt viktigaste verktyg. Att prata med människor... för att de flesta människor... de vill... de har en berättelse som de vill få ut. (16)

I de flesta fall när man inte följer reglerna, då blir det ett tillfälle att personalen samtalar med de förvarstagna. Och det sker väldigt mycket daglig interaktion mellan personalen och de förvarstagna. Och eftersom ... förvarstagen känner sig oerhört frustrerad över sin situation. Och det t.ex. blir så att maten man inte tycker om, maten är inte god, fel sorts mat, man får inte själv bestämma när den serveras, osv... Så att maten blir en viktig del man får utlopp för. Och det är såna frågor som personalen får ta dagligen med de förvarstagna. (17)

Jag tycker personligen att det är ett bra sätt att skapa en bra kontakt med de förvarstagna. Det är återigen den tjänstemannarollen: vänlighet, respekt, vi ska lyssna på människor, det handlar mer om att man lär sig att lyssna. Genom att ställa öppna frågor och lyssna så får du som förvarstagen möjlighet att berätta hur du upplever vad som är problem för dig. Det är ett jätteviktigt verktyg som vi har i mötet med förvarstagna. Det har betydelse för säkerheten och för allt vi gör. (18)

Ibland är de [förvarstagna] arga, vill inte prata med någon, är arga på personal. Ibland finns det vissa som säger att de ska dö här. Man försöker prata med dem... Det är viktigt att man pratar med dem om man märker att de börjar må dåligt. (19)

Hur du hälsar på folk, såna grejer tycker jag är viktigare än att hur du står när du pratar med någon... (...) Det här med säkerheten det är att man hela tiden anpassar sig efter situationen istället för att ha angivna regler. (...) Du ser till att prata med alla, du ser till att se alla. Folk förstår hur du går, hur du pratar, liksom kroppsspråk, vad sänder du för signaler. Det är mer den biten. Hur du betar dig istället för vilka regler du följer. (20)

Men jag tror viktigast av allt är att tänka på säkerheten och känna av atmosfären och prata med varandra, kommunicera också med de förvarstagna. (21)

Just den här prestigelösheten, att man inte: ”jag är en myndighetsperson”. Så det räcker att jag bara visar mig i dörren och visar kortet: det är jag som har makten. Det vet dem om. Om man vore strikt och pekat med hela handen blir det konflikter. Det blir säkerhetsrisk. Så att... då utsätter man sig själva för fara och alla andra. (22)

Det är väl att komma in och samarbeta så att han så fort som möjligt får åka hem. Det idealiska vore om de kom idag och åkte hem imorgon. (...) För det mesta så inser de inte att de ska återvända... tills de kommer till förvaret. (...) De förstår att det är kört och de ska åka hem. Det borde tas fler förvarsbeslut så att vi ser till att de åker hem. (23)

Man har samtal med de förvarstagna så att de kan tänka på sin situation. Man säger att... det inte är bra att stanna hela ditt liv här, du bör samarbeta med myndigheten och t.ex. kontakta ambassaden och ansöka om pass. (24)

Det är svårt för dem [förvarstagna] att acceptera att de måste återvända. De hoppas fortfarande på att de får stanna här i Sverige. Men det är bättre att de förstår det så snart som möjligt så att de kan börja fundera och planera sina liv i hemlandet. Min uppgift är att förklara hur det fungerar med återvändande så att de ska kunna förstå det och medverka till frivillig återvändande. Det är alltid lättare att motivera förvarstagna om det finns återetableringsstöd eller annan typ av hjälp av NGO. (25)

Man ställer öppna frågor (...) för att de [förvarstagna] ska aktivera tankarna och själva börja fundera kring sin tillvaro och vilka förutsättningar det finns. Förhoppningsvis kan de själva ta initiativ att gå vidare. Återvändandesamtal är särskild svåra eftersom man måste ställa frågan: vad gör jag när jag landar på flygplatsen i Kabul? Det är det som är alternativet. Inte att rymma härifrån eller igen inlämna verkställighetshinder. Kanske har man redan gjort det flera gånger. Utan det är: vad gör jag då? (26)