



LUND UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Social Sciences

Graduate School

Master of Science in Social Studies of Gender

Major: Sociology

Course: SIMV21

Spring 2016

Supervisor: Diana Mulinari

Queer Migrants in Sweden: Subjectivities and Spatiotemporal Multiplicities

Author: Hansalbin Sältenberg

Abstract

Author: Hansalbin Sältenberg

Title: Queer Migrants in Sweden: Subjectivities and Spatiotemporal Multiplicities

Master of Science in Social Studies of Gender

Major: Sociology

Course: SIMV21; Spring 2016

Supervisor: Diana Mulinari

Lund University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Graduate School

Departing from the field of queer migration, the aim of the thesis is to grasp the experience of queer migrants in Sweden. Inspired by Les Back's notion of sociology as an art of listening that engages critically with research participants, and guided by feminist sociologists' methodological contributions, the study is carried out through in-depth interviews with twelve queer migrants from different countries of origin. Through a theoretical dialogue between political philosopher Judith Butler and sociologist Stuart Hall which is in turn located in relation to sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein's critique of European universalism and cultural geographer Doreen Massey's call for recognising modernity's spatiotemporal multiplicities, the study examines how identities are handled and subject positions are occupied by the interviewees in relation to racial and sexual societal structures. The thesis tentatively argues that in the accounts of the interviewed queer migrants, racial structures give rise to a more dyadic organisation of subject positioning, whereas sexual structures make possible a wider range of subject positions. It is further argued that while identities related to cultural belonging are restrained by racist representations of the cultural background of the interviewees, the fluidity of identities related to sexuality has partially been made possible by the relative success of the LGBTQ-struggle in Sweden during the past decades. Moreover, it is argued that the intersection of these types of identities indicates an unequal relationship between "race"/ethnicity and sexuality that is structured by binary notions of Western and non-Western sexualities. Finally, the thesis suggests that recognition of queer migrants' heterogeneity in relation to sexual identities undermines - in the realm of sexuality - the dyadic representation of the West and the rest of the world, which historically has been inherent to modernity.

Key words: queer migration; subjectivity; identity; racism; heteronormativity

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest and most sincere gratitude towards the people who have dedicated their time and energy to share their experiences with me, and without whom this thesis would not have been possible. Thank you for your stories, laughter, anger, and tears. Moreover, I am in debt to those of you who have provided contacts with potential interviewees. Thank you all.

Warm thanks to my supervisor Diana Mulinari for continuous support, endless inspiration, and for taking my dreams seriously.

Last, but not least, thanks to my family and friends for having given me permanent love during this process. You give me hope.

Table of contents

Abstract	1
Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	4
Aim of the thesis, research questions and disposition	5
Research review	7
The field of queer migration	7
Sexuality before the Law	8
The subjectivities of queer migrants	9
The Swedish context – between “equality” and racialisation	11
Methodological framework	13
Sociology as a listener’s art	13
Terminological definitions	15
Selection of interviewees and encountered dilemmas	16
Theoretical framework	20
I. Thinking time and space in an unequal world	21
A critique of European universalism	21
Grasping modernity’s multiplicities	22
II. Subject formation and identity	24
Althusser’s subjected subject	25
Butler’s turn away from identity	27
Hall and the necessary contextualization of the subject	29
Final reflections	30
The encounter with Sweden	30
Meeting racism	31
Disappointment	34
Ambivalent feelings of freedom	35
(Re)acting within racial societal structures	38
Aligning oneself with the Swedish nation state	38
Distancing oneself from Swedish society	40
Political resistance	42
Transcending sexual boundaries: multiple identities and time-spaces	44
Religion and sexuality	44
Challenging Western notions of sexuality	47
The non-unity of queer identity	50
Concluding remarks	52
References	55

Introduction

A quick gaze at the European political landscape directs the attention to migration politics as being of great importance for contemporary public debates. The success of right wing populist and xenophobic parties (Cornelis & Van Hiel 2015), the harshening of migration laws (Schierup et al. 2006), the presence of racist and neo-Nazi violence (Goodey 2007; McGowan 2014), the hostility towards Islam in the political debate (Foner 2015), the militarisation of the borders of the European Union (Thomas 2014), and the uncountable number of people risking their lives in the Mediterranean (Fargues & Bonfanti 2014) are social phenomena identified by social scientists as indications that the topics of migration and national belonging constitute a *sine qua non* if one wishes to understand today's Europe. This thesis has emerged from a concern with this development in general, and from a concern with the situation of LGBTQ-migrants (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer) in particular.

Queer scholars (Roseneil et al. 2013) emphasize that during the last years, several Western states have seen important changes concerning the situation of LGBTQ-people. This has resulted in legal protection from discrimination, a legitimisation of forms of same-sex intimacy, and the right for same-sex couples to contract marriage, which in turn has improved the lives of many people significantly. As a parallel phenomenon, more people have been able to come out of the closet as LGBTQ (Manning 2015). However, while the success of the LGBTQ-struggle has been impressive, scholars argue that these processes of inclusion also open up for new dilemmas. For example, the success of the LGBTQ-movement has taken place within an increasingly unequal world-order, in which commodification of sexuality partly frames the inclusion of LGBTQ-people. According to Hennessy (2000), the increased visibility of gays and lesbians during the past decades has implied that non-normative sexualities have become adapted to the logic of the market, including companies branding their merchandise as gay-friendly in order to increase economic growth. In relation to these processes, Lisa Duggan uses the concept of "new homonormativity" (Duggan 2002: 179) to identify depoliticised practices, such as domesticity and consumption, which have contributed to the incorporation of LGBTQ-people into heteronormative culture. Moreover, Peter Drucker (2015) argues that this homonormativity, among other things, includes an increasing integration of LGBTQ-people into the Western national community. This implies a process of boundary making between accepted and non-desirable LGBTQ-communities, which takes place between urban and rural spheres (Halberstam 2005), between the majoritarian society and minoritised racialised groups in the Global North, and between the Global North and the Global South.

Given the unequal world-order in which the success of the LGBTQ-movement in the West has taken place, scholars suggest that what they identify as a metropolitan gay model has been constituted through narrow discourses on sexualities, which represents non-Western sexualities as traditional and non-civilised. For example, postcolonial scholars have shown how images of European modernity are at the core of this construction and that there has been an instrumentalisation of the discourse on sexual diversity, on behalf of Western states, in a context of global inequalities (Skeggs 2004). In this respect, Jasbir Puar (2007) argues that the discourse of promoting tolerance vis-à-vis LGBTQ-communities has been used by the US government in order to justify its imperial wars in the Middle East. While the West has historically depicted the “Orient” as sexually depraved due to forms of organizing sexuality that transcended the heteronormative bourgeois family ideal of 19th century Europe (McClintock 1995), the same “Orient” is now regarded by the West to be sexually depraved due to its heteronormativity. Although the ideas on sexuality in relation to the “Orient” – here regarded as an empty signifier - have been reversed, the importance of sexuality for the ideology of Western supremacy vis-à-vis the rest of the world, seems to be stable. In this respect, the notion of liberal tolerance is based on a civilisational discourse between a progressive (Western) us, and a problematic, fundamentalist, patriarchal (non-Western) Other (Brown 2006). It is this context of significant, yet contradictory, changes for LGBTQ-people in several Western states, within the context of an unequal world-order and at a moment where the topic of migration plays an important role for European public debate, which has led me to approach the field of queer migration.

Aim of the thesis, research questions and disposition

The aim of this explorative thesis is to grasp the experience of queer migrants in Sweden, a group which has not been previously studied. In order to escape from a dyadic notion of a progressive and LGBTQ-friendly West and a heteronormative and backward “rest of the world”, I wanted to explore the subjectivities of those who can be claimed to be at the border between these two positions. Therefore, I decided to turn to LGBTQ-people who have migrated from the Global South to Sweden. Thereby, I hoped to gain a deeper understanding of how the intersection of “race”/ethnicity and sexuality operates at the individual level, in order to theorize how these categories relate to one another at a more general level in contemporary Swedish society. Moreover, from these stories of queer migrants, I hoped to encounter ideas on how it would be possible to escape out of the logic that - at the moment -

places LGBTQ-people within a discourse on “Western values” and in opposition to those who pay the price for a Eurocentric world-order.

In order to reach these multiple purposes, I formulated the following main research question:

- *How do queer migrants in Sweden navigate between racist representations of their cultures, and narratives of the West as the embodiment of “tolerance” vis-à-vis LGBTQ-people?*

Moreover, I worked with the following sub-questions:

- *What kind of strategies do queer migrants develop towards the majoritarian society, LGBTQ-communities, and their countries of origin?*
- *How do they create identities at the crossroads between Swedish secularism and their religious backgrounds? How do they read the tension between religion and LGBTQ-rights?*
- *How is the hegemonic discourse on Western progress and non-Western backwardness in terms of sexuality handled in the stories of queer migrants?*

After the introduction outlining the *raison d'être* of this thesis, and after having described the aim of the study and the research questions, I will now proceed with the research review, which will present an overview of the field of queer migration, as well as scholarly contributions within this field that are of special importance for the thesis. Thereafter, the context of the Swedish racialisation regime and discourses on Swedishness will be briefly presented, in order to situate the empirical material of the thesis. After this, the methodological framework will be presented, including the notion of sociology as an art of listening and a reflexive discussion about the research process. We will then turn to the theoretical framework, which consists of two main parts: a theoretical dialogue on subject and identity, which is preceded by a critique of modernity's Eurocentric features with the purpose to situate this dialogue. Thereafter, we turn to the bulk of the thesis, consisting of three analytical chapters, in which the empirical material of the thesis is analysed and related to the theoretical framework and to previous research. Finally, some concluding remarks are presented.

Research review

The field of queer migration

The emergence of the field of queer migration in the late 1990s can be seen as the result of theoretical challenges evolving from three different fields of study. Firstly, some scholars formulated a critique of the unwillingness of migration studies to take into consideration the importance that sexuality plays for people's decision to migrate within and between states. According to queer migration scholars, this invisibility was the result of a heteronormative gaze within migration studies that ignored "the connections among heteronormativity, sexuality, and immigration" (Luibhéid 2004: 227), due to the prevailing idea that people's sexuality belong to the realm of the private and is hence not of political or social interest. Queer migration scholars have therefore shown how power structures, which operate at the level of sexuality, are linked to the political economy and the unequal world-order. Moreover, they have systematically argued that sexuality must be analysed as an integral part of migration as an object of study (Mai & King, 2009).

Secondly, the field of queer migration can also be seen as an intervention within feminist scholarship. To a large extent, feminist research on migration has been informed both by a binary understanding of gender categories, i.e. the dichotomy man-woman, and by a binary understanding of sexual categories, i.e. the dichotomy hetero-homo. While binary categorisations obscures the internal differences within categories, queer migrant scholars have regarded the dichotomous reading of people's gender and sexual identities as a Eurocentric analytical imposition that ignores the variety of people's experiences of gender and sexuality worldwide. Moreover, they have argued that these dichotomies cannot contribute to an analysis of how sexuality regimes that have been developed outside Europe interact with Western sexuality regimes as a result of processes of global migration. Queer migrant scholars have shown that "non-Western sexual ideologies do not follow a unilinear assimilative process into Western modern sexual ideologies but rather are involved in syncretic processes that create alternative sexual politics, cultures, and identities" (Manalansan 2006: 230). Thus, the field of queer migration can be seen as a call for exploring and theorizing how global migration influences the continuous construction of notions of gender and human sexualities beyond the hegemonic Western gender and sexuality regime that is based on the dichotomies of man-woman and hetero-homo.

Finally, the field of queer migration also implies a contestation of queer studies and its inability to explore the intersections between "race"/ethnicity and sexuality. For example,

queer migrant scholars in the United States have challenged the implicit assumption that “all the immigrants are heterosexual”, whereas “all the queers are U.S. citizens” (Luibhéid 2004: 233). Such an assumption obscures the racist structures within the LGBTQ-communities in Western countries and fails to analyse how global racial structures and Western migration policies regulate sexuality. Therefore, queer migration scholars have analysed how Western countries promote certain discourses on sexuality in a world that is characterized by unequal global relations, and how these discourses relate to the migration practices of the Western states (Lewis & Naples 2014; Luibhéid 2008). To summarise, queer migration scholarship is a contribution to migration studies through its focus on the centrality of sexuality, it is a contribution to gender studies through its further development of the analytical categories of gender and sexuality, and finally a contribution to queer studies through its emphasis on the role of the category of “race”/ethnicity in the construction of sexual regimes. It is within this tradition that I would like to locate this study.

Sexuality before the Law

The scholarly work in the field of queer migration has been dedicated primarily, albeit not exclusively, to an exploration of how non-heterosexuals, fleeing from sexual persecution in the Global South, experience and handle the legal procedures of seeking asylum in Western states (Lewis & Naples 2014). Several studies (Chávez 2013; Howe 2014; Lewis 2014; White 2014) suggest that while the possibility to apply for asylum on the ground of one’s sexual orientation has been an important struggle for the queer and refugee movement in many Western countries, only a limited number of people have sexual narratives that correspond to the legal requirements to gain asylum. In order to be granted asylum, the asylum seeker must fit into the Western sexual classification system, for example identifying as homosexual. To the extent that the asylum seeker expresses alternative forms of understanding sexuality, the migration authorities may regard the applicant as less trustworthy and thus reject the application. Therefore, having a biographical narrative that fits to the requirements of the Western sexual classification system becomes necessary for queer migrants to be read as intelligible before the law and gain asylum (Berg & Millbank 2009; Luibhéid 2014).

The scarce research that has been done in Sweden within the field of queer migration has likewise been centred on the legal matters that queer asylum seekers confront. For example, Wikström (2014) has found that the Swedish migration board attributes little authority to the asylum applicants’ stories of the sexual and gender-based persecution they have experienced, if these stories challenge the Swedish predominant perception of sexuality,

gender and culture, since the stories are then regarded as less credible. According to Wikström, the Swedish Migration Board departs from a one-dimensional view on culture, which conceals the internal dynamics of the culture of origin of the asylum applicant, and the complexities of the persecution that a person fleeing from gender-based violence has been facing. This “further demonstrates the inability [of the Swedish Migration Board] of grasping the meaning of gender as anything but an immutable difference between men and women” (Ibid: 213), which in turn leads to an overestimation of the possibility of the applicant to find protection from persecution within their country of origin. Thus, ideological preconceptions of gender, sexuality and culture determine the verdicts of the Swedish Migration Board in a way that denies the need for protection of many asylum seekers.

The subjectivities of queer migrants

Beyond legal matters, some queer migration scholars have focused on the experiences of queer migrants in relation to societal structures after the formal migration process has concluded. While I have not found such research in the case of Sweden, scholarly work in this direction has been done in other countries. In his ethnographic work on non-heterosexual Mexican migrants in the United States, Cantú found that “sexual norms, behaviours, and identities among Mexican men and women are... transformed through migration” (Cantú 2002: 143). Mexicans, who migrate to the United States due to a belief that they will be able to express their sexuality freely there, do not only find that heteronormativity prevails in US American society, but they are also confronted with everyday anti-Hispanic racism, which results highly disappointing. Moreover, US American gay tourism to Mexico affects the Mexican sexual regime and creates forms of sexual hybridity, which in turn affect the self-understanding of non-heterosexual Mexicans and the ways that sexuality is organized in Mexico. Cantú therefore argues that it is necessary to take into consideration the unequal economic and political relations between Mexico and the United States in order to grasp the ever-changing landscape of sexual identities. In order to transcend a binary perception of how sexualities are organized in the United States and Mexico respectively, Cantú suggests that sexual identities should be regarded as non-monolithic and intersecting with various power structures (Ibid: 159).

White (2013) remarks that many queer migrants, who have migrated to Canada, reproduce the hegemonic narrative of the West as a locus of sexual emancipation in contrast to the sexual oppression they have experienced in their countries of origin. In doing so, many of White’s interviewees express gratitude towards Canada and emphasize their willingness to

contribute to Canadian society. White analyses this in relation to the Lacanian notion of desire as always being the "desire of the Other", and interprets the gratitude these queer migrants express as a wish to receive love and acceptance from the white Canadian society in return (White 2013: 39). Despite this feeling of gratitude, however, migrants at the same time express disappointment with the heteronormativity and racism they have encountered in Canada. This in turn, White argues, implies a profound psychic ambivalence towards Canadian society on the part of queer migrants.

Another example of how reflections on "race"/ethnicity and sexuality are influenced by the migration process is the relation between religiosity and queer migrants' self-awareness. In the cases of Belgium and the UK, Peumans (2014) and Giametta (2014) found forms of ambivalence in the role that religion play for Muslim queer migrants' reflection on their sexuality in relation to religious morality. Despite the West's hegemonic view of Islam as a religion hostile to queer people, some migrants stressed the importance of their religious faith as a way of creating a sense of belonging after having been dislocated from their country of origin. In doing so, some of them challenged Western sexual categories and tended to view their sexuality as somewhat fluid and difficult to label, and hence not in contradiction to those parts of the Quran that can be interpreted as condemning same-sex practices. Instead, others adopted a stable gay identity and regarded their homosexuality as a creation of God and thus in accordance with their religious beliefs. Both scholars therefore argue that the ambivalent ways that Muslim queer migrants handle their religious faith in relation to their sexuality must be analysed taking into consideration the racism and Islamophobia that they face in the Belgian and British societies.

In Germany, Kosnick (2015) has shown, through case studies in the cities of Berlin and Frankfurt, how queer and Muslim populations often are portrayed in the mass media and in queer political action as being oppositional to one another, constituting a "clash of subcultures", following Samuel Huntington's famous notion of a "clash of civilizations". Therefore, it is argued, the neoliberal city constitutes a decisive framework for how sexual and anti-racist struggles are conceptualised, but it is also the ground for dialogues between different urban populations and sub-cultures and for a possible deconstruction of the queer political struggle perceived as being threatened by "immigrants".

A study carried out in Turkey (Shaksari 2014) suggests that the category of the queer refugee is dependent on certain notions of time and space. It is argued that the Western hegemonic discourse on non-normative sexualities presupposes a unilinearity of time, which is expressed both in the unequal relations between the Western world and the Global South, as

well as in the relation of non-heterosexuals to their own sexual identity. Since the West is thought to embody the notion of progress, whereas the Global South as seen as the embodiment of backwardness, queer people's migration to the West becomes synonymous with a journey towards freedom and enjoyment of rights. This in turn presupposes transhistorical and fixed sexual categories and identities, such as homosexuality, which queer migrants are thought to embody. Moreover, the universality and fixity of sexual categories imply a certain temporality that non-heterosexuals are supposed to experience *within* themselves, through an inner journey from repression of one's sexuality towards self-acceptance and emancipation. However, it is argued, the lived experiences of queer migrants from the Global South often contradict these Western spatiotemporal preconceptions.

For this thesis it is relevant to consider the intersection of sexuality and other analytical categories, such as that of "race"/ethnicity, which has been discussed by queer migration scholars, and to reflect on how this intersection produces ambivalent feelings among queer migrants after the formal migration process has concluded. Moreover, the studies on queer migrants' religiosity will be important in relation to how queer migrants handle their religious background in the context of Swedish secularism. Finally, the critique of Western notions of fixed sexual categories and of temporal unilinearity in the realm of sexuality will be relevant when discussing how queer migrants understand themselves in relation to their spatial dislocation.

The Swedish context – between “equality” and racialisation

In order to understand the societal context of my empirical material, I think it is useful to start with a brief overview of the Swedish political economy in relation to the changing racialisation regime in Sweden and to discourses on national belonging. Thereby, it will be easier to situate the experience of queer migrants in Sweden.

Sweden has often been described both as a country with comparatively small class differences, as a consequence of its historical social-democratic welfare regime, and as being a relatively gender-equal country, due to the political project of state feminism (Borchorst and Siim 2002). However, since the late 1980s and early 1990s, and decisively since the right-wing parties won the elections in 2006, the welfare state has been successively dismantled, which has had serious impacts on women in their role as caregivers (Belfrage and Ryner 2009; Kuisma and Ryner 2012). At the same time, the discourse on Swedish gender equality has played an important role within the Swedish racialisation regime, which currently is

undergoing rapid changes. For a long time Sweden was internationally known as the model of a multicultural welfare state which extended substantial citizenship, welfare and labour rights to all¹ within its borders (Schierup et al. 2006). However, under the pressure of neoliberalism and the EU's commitment to "managed migration", Sweden has continuously and significantly eroded this exceptionalism (Schierup & Ålund 2011). This change has gone hand in hand with politicians (especially from right-wing parties, but at times also from the Social Democratic party) arguing for policies aimed at connecting citizenship rights with cultural assimilation, sometimes linking immigrants with welfare "cheating", criminality and failure to identify with "Western values" (Hubinette & Lundström 2011). An important aspect of what has been named "new assimilation" policies is a strong emphasis on gender equality as a national cultural symbol and as an essential aspect of "Swedishness", which is portrayed as conflicting with immigrants, especially immigrants with a Muslim background (de los Reyes, Molina & Mulinari 2002). In the realm of sexuality, the notion of Swedish sexual values has also been used to define boundaries between "immigrants" and "Swedes" and to advocate for the necessity of immigrants to adapt to what is portrayed as enlightened sexual values of Swedishness (Bredström 2009).

When it comes to the political representation of the extreme right, the Sweden Democrats successfully entered the Swedish parliament in 2010 with 5.7% of the votes, and in 2014 it more than doubled its support to 12.9 %. Some scholars explain the birth and growth of the Sweden Democrats as linked to a tradition of Scandinavian right-wing populism and to the extreme right party New Democracy of the early 1990s (Rydgren 2006). Other scholars emphasise the roots of the Sweden Democrats in the Neo-Nazi social movements of the 1990s (Larsson & Ekman 2001; Deland & Westin 2007; Gardell 2015). Given the notion of certain Western values tied to the concept of Swedishness, the political targeting of Islam and Muslims by the Sweden Democrats occurs in a context in which anti-Muslim racism has been present in varying degrees through mainstream public discourse (Listerborn 2010), linked to a general Western demonisation of the Muslim Other (Morgan & Poynting 2012).

In sum, the experience of queer migrants in Sweden that is captured in the empirical material of the thesis takes place in a context of a rapidly changing Swedish racialisation regime, in which notions of gender equality and enlightened sexual values are tied to an idea of Swedishness. In the hegemonic discourse, the cultural values of non-Western immigrants

¹ This has not been the case for undocumented/irregular immigrants in Sweden (Sager 2011).

in general, and of immigrants with a Muslim background in particular, are perceived as conflicting with the notion of Swedishness.

Methodological framework

In order to grasp the experience of queer migrants in Sweden and to explore how they handle racist representations of their cultures in relation to the notion of the West as embodying “tolerance” vis-à-vis LGBTQ-people, I decided to conduct in-depth interviews with twelve queer migrants. In this chapter, I elaborate on the methodological underpinnings of these interviews. Firstly, I discuss the vision of sociology as an “art of listening” and reflect on how this has inspired the thesis. Thereafter, I define certain terminological concepts, which have been of central importance for the research process. Finally, I discuss the selection of interviewees and some dilemmas encountered in the course of conducting the interviews.

Sociology as a listener’s art

During the process of conducting the in-depth interviews, I was inspired by British sociologist Les Back (2013) and his notion of sociology as a “listener’s art”. His explorative stance on qualitative methods is a vision of a sociology that pays careful attention to what the informants have to say, that strives for getting an understanding of their universe and of the structures of power their agency is embedded in. This in turn presupposes a vision of the researcher as someone who is aware of the political state of the world, who is willing to listen to the reality of those whose voices have been silenced by the current world-order, and who is committed to social change:

We live in a dark time of bombs and war where acts of violence are met by flowers of commemoration and mourning. Geopolitical insecurity, political violence and deepening social and economic divisions provide the context and the need for the development of a global sociological imagination. The task of sociology is to cast doubt on the public understanding that prevail – be they about the ‘war on terror’ or the nature of ‘immigration policy’ – and invite other voices to be heard and reckoned with. (Ibid. 152)

This “global sociological imagination”, which Back is calling for, moreover seeks to understand the interconnectedness of global and local phenomena. In order to become truly global in that sense, Back argues that our sociological imagination must question simplistic visions of time and space. In doing so, our imagination can come closer to what the social reality, both at the macro-level as well as at the micro-level, actually looks like:

A global sociological imagination offers the possibility of refiguring the relationship between the past and present and the near and the far. The past refuses to stay in its place that is behind us, it is unstable. Equally the present cannot simply explain what is past from the point of view of now... Similarly, I am arguing for a rethinking of the relationships between the near and the far... [The] oscillation between the near and the far is to my mind the scale of global sociology. It is not just between people and places – it is also within us. Our own biographies contain traces of global history, whether we are conscious of it or not. As C. Wright Mills pointed out over half a century ago, we are also strangers to ourselves. (Ibid. 23)

However, this wish to transcend the binaries of near/far, past/present, demands not only a theoretical effort for social scientific research, but also a self-reflexivity of the researcher, who must be willing to change their own glance at the world. When this self-reflexivity is successful, the researcher manages not only to make the voices of the “unheard” heard, but manages also to take the people they listen to “as seriously as we take ourselves” (Ibid. 166). Such a vision of social scientific research seriously trying to understand the worldview of the informants and at the same time critically engaging with it, is the sociological imagination that, according to Back, renders a authentic “listening” possible:

Sociological listening is needed today in order to admit the excluded, the looked past, to allow the ‘out of place’ a sense of belonging. This is not some quick or blithe or romantic ‘one world’ ethos in which the wretched are listened to and heard. I am suggesting something much more difficult and disruptive: a form of active listening that challenges the listener’s preconceptions and position while are the same time it engages critically with the content of what is being said and heard. It also means entering into difficult and challenging critical dialogue with one’s enemies as well as one’s allies. (Ibid. 23)

It should be mentioned that within feminist sociology, there is a long tradition of scholars who share this ideal, and who have developed arguments similar to those presented by Back (see e.g. Smith 2005, Collins 2013, Smart 2002). Nevertheless, one could argue that this scholarly ideal might be hard to fully ever attain, since any ideal, i.e. an abstract image that we strive towards, per definition is unrealisable. This, however, does not in make ideals – intellectual or other– less important. On the contrary, I believe that the challenge that Back’s ideal of sociology as a “listener’s art” envisions can serve as a motor that pushes us forward, motivates us to get out of our own provincial thinking in order to better pursue our somewhat futile task as finite beings to grasp the infinitude of the social.

In my case, I started the work with this thesis with the clear aim to criticize the Eurocentric and racist features of modernity within the realm of sexuality. While I still believe that such an aim is laudable, the encounter with the field made me realize that things were more confusing than I previously had calculated. In the beginning I thought that adopting Back’s vision of a “global sociological imagination” to my thesis would be rather

easy, since my concern with social inequality, my desire to listen to those silenced by Eurocentric public discourse, and my desire to theorize on questions of time and space fitted well into the first half of the ideal of sociology as an art of listening. The second half though, to engage in a critical dialogue with “one’s enemies and allies”, i.e. to contest my own preconceptions of what the social world looks like, proved to be a lot more challenging. Whereas I wanted the interviewees to inform me about how Eurocentric ideas of sexuality limited their scope of action at a personal level, so that I could then formulate a critique against the wholeness of the modern project, their actual accounts were a lot more ambiguous than I had suspected. This is not to say that they did not present a critique against a world-order that is organized around a European epistemic centre - many times their critique was indeed very severe - but the heterogeneity of the interviewees meant also that there was a great deal of ambivalence vis-à-vis Eurocentric modernity; an ambivalence that sometimes was repeated internally within the critique that some of the interviewees made. Thus, in this surprising encounter with the confusing social reality that the interviewees presented me, Back’s vision of sociology as an art of listening, forced me to challenge my own ideological preconceptions in order to become a better listener (and hopefully a better sociologist) and try to understand what the interviewees actually had to say. I acknowledge that this was tough, but I am grateful that it did happen. I believed it permitted me to come closer to the social reality I was seeking to explore and it fed back on my theoretical underpinnings, which in turn enriched my analysis and helped me to at least partially transcend binary structures (do we ever get completely rid of them?) in my own thinking.

Terminological definitions

The term “queer” can be used in two main ways: either as a sexual identity that entails a vision of sexuality as something fluid, ever-changing, and hence not possible to clearly categorize, or as an analytical category that entails a heterogeneous group of people who may adopt a plurality of identities but who have in common that they all embody non-normative sexualities (Kosnick 2015). When I speak of queer migrants in this thesis, it is in this latter sense of the word that I use the term queer. Beyond embodying a non-normative sexuality, it was not of my interest how the queer migrants I interviewed actually chose to identify in terms of sexuality, nor did I explicitly ask them about this, albeit they in most cases spontaneously clarified their sexual identity in the course of the interview.

When I use the term “queer migrant” in this thesis, I refer to people who have migrated from a country in the Global South to Sweden, and for whom sexuality in one way or the

other played an important role for their decision to migrate. Since I am not focusing on the legal process that queer asylum seekers have to confront in Sweden, I did not regard the experience of asylum seeking as a requirement for the category of people I wanted to interview. Indeed, several of the interviewees had either been granted asylum or were still in the process of seeking asylum based on persecution due to their sexuality or gender identity. Others, however, had moved to Sweden for the sake of their university studies, but their non-normative sexuality contributed decisively to their decision to do so. Still others moved to Sweden since they had fallen in love with a Swede; their sexuality was thereby inherent to their decision to migrate. An important contribution of the field of queer migration is the recognition of the importance of sexuality for the decision of many people to migrate (Luibhéid 2004). That is to say, what appears to be a decision to migrate merely due to studies, economic reasons, or political activities, can conceal a deeper desire to migrate due to sexual oppression.

In this thesis I use the concepts of racism and heteronormativity. Following sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein (in Balibar & Wallerstein 1991), I define racism as an ideology inherent to the capitalist world-system, with the basic function of facilitating processes of capital accumulation. Emerging out of the division of the world into core and periphery, created through the project of European colonialism, racism is socially justified through ideas and institutional practices that in a flexible manner identify groups of national, ethnic and religious belonging, and that create hierarchies among people according to their degree of inclusion/exclusion within these groups. Moreover, racism is linked to the global social and geographical division of labour, since it renders those parts of the labour force that occupy the lower positions within the racial hierarchy less expensive, thereby increasing capital accumulation. Following queer theorist Michael Warner (1991), I define heteronormativity as a feature of modern societies that creates sexually organised hierarchies through ideas and practices by institutions such as the family, the state, and the educational system, and that is linked to the *modus operandi* of the capitalist mode of production. It is based on a binary division between men and women, and between heterosexuals and homosexuals, in which the former occupy the privileged position. Moreover, heteronormativity implies that heterosexuality and homosexuality are socially perceived as reified categories.

Selection of interviewees and encountered dilemmas

The intention with conducting in-depth interviews was to look for heterogeneity among queer migrants in Sweden. I hoped that by observing differences in experiences and reflections I

would find underlying sociological patterns in their accounts. Typically, an in-depth interview is a research method that is suitable when “the research question involves highly conflicted emotions, [and] where different individuals [...] have complicated, multiple perspectives on some phenomenon” (Johnson 2001: 105). Moreover, the in-depth interview is of relative long duration and is characterized by face-to-face interaction and a certain intimacy in the conversation between the interviewer and the informant (Ibid: 103). While there is no clear definition of how long an in-depth interview is supposed to be, mine were between 60 and 100 minutes of duration. Interviewees were found through contacts with LGBTQ-organisations and my own extended network. The interviewees I contacted in the beginning of the process provided me with additional interviewees among their own personal contacts, in accordance to the research idea of “snowball sampling” (Atkinson & Flint 2004). Before each interview, I provided the interviewee with a document assuring them that I followed the ethical guidelines of the Swedish Research Council, which includes informing the interviewees about the general purpose of the research, that the interviewees are guaranteed anonymity, and that they can interrupt the interview at any moment without any negative consequences for them (Vetenskapsrådet 1990). The interviews were conducted in English, Swedish or Spanish.

Due to the sensitivity of the themes discussed in the interviews and in order to protect the anonymity of the interviewees, I will not give biographical information of each and every one of the people I interviewed. Instead, I will proceed by giving a general description of the interview sample as a whole. The interviewees had migrated to Sweden from various countries in the Americas, Africa and Asia, although the Middle East was better represented. Altogether, the interviewees came from the following countries (some interviewees were from the same countries): Argentina, Cuba, Egypt, Iran, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Nigeria, and Turkey. When it comes to gender representation, ten out of twelve interviewees were men (nine cis-men, one trans-man), whereas two were women (both cis-women). Although it could be argued that this unequal representation of gender among the interviewees reflects a pattern of possible male-dominated international queer migration, I cannot exclude that the male domination is also a reflection of my own bias as a self-positioned gay man: it turned out easier for me to get in contact with other men. Sometimes, I got the impression that me being a man made some women hesitant to accept my interview request. I believe a more equal gender distribution among the interviewees could have had positive effects for my empirical findings, in the sense that more accounts from the positions of women could have contributed to further reflections on how gender relations affect subjectivities in relation to

global migration. Moreover, at the moment of the interviews, the interviewees were between 20 and 50 years of age - a majority between 25 and 35 years - and they had been living in Sweden between 20 years and six months. They were currently living in the cities of Lund, Malmö and Stockholm. When it comes to social class, a few of the interviewees came from working class or peasant families, most however grew up with parents who were white-collar workers. Most of them had to a varying degree studied at university prior to migration to Sweden. This relative middle class-bias in the sample probably reflects my own class-position – it was easier again for me to get in contact with people sharing a background similar to mine -, but I think that this, to a certain degree, also reflects the economic and cultural capital that in many cases is needed in order to migrate from the Global South to Europe, not least when sexuality is at the core of the decision to migrate.

In feminist research, particularly in sociology, there has been much debate on what importance the social position of the researcher has for the research result. According to DeVault and Gross (2006:181), “feminists must maintain a reflexive awareness that research relations are never simple encounters, innocent of identities and lines of power, but, rather, are always embedded in and shaped by cultural constructions of similarity, difference, and significance”. While there are different opinions on how to handle the researcher’s identities in relation to those of the research participants, Doucet and Mauthner (2006) argue that it is not enough to acknowledge the social locations of the researcher and the research participants, but it is necessary to actively reflect on how these locations affect the research process and result. In my case, I already mentioned my reflections on how my position as a middle-class gay man affected the sample I got access to. Moreover, in the course of the interviews, I asked myself what impact my position as white had on what the interviewees chose to tell me, not least in terms of experiences of racism. My remaining impression is that those interviewees who had reflected a great deal on racism and who seemed to embrace an antiracist ideology, did not withhold their experiences of racism; they rather seemed eager to tell me about them. On the contrary, those interviewees with a less pronounced antiracist worldview might have been more willing to share their experiences of and reflections on racism with a researcher not positioned as white, since that might have affected the power dynamics of the interview situation in a positive way and might have made them feel more comfortable than with me. Moreover, one could also argue that my position as European affected the willingness of the interviewees to talk about experiences of heteronormativity in their countries of origin, since such accounts risk being used in a way that reinforces European supremacy vis-à-vis the Global South. I tried to counter this risk by informing the interviewees that my choice of

research topic had grown out of a concern with the current political situation in Europe and the growth of racism, and as a critique of Eurocentrism more generally.

It also became necessary for me to reflect on the vulnerability of the interviewees. Many of them had traumatic experiences of heteronormativity, in some cases very severe ones, and it became clear to me that they had had varying possibilities to handle those traumas in an adequate way. Moreover, there was the trauma of racism, which in most cases was something they had not experienced prior to their arrival in Sweden. Since talking about traumatic experiences can imply an increase in psychological suffering (Sherlock & Thynne 2010) - this might be especially true for those who had applied for asylum due to sexual persecution and who already had been forced to repeat their traumatic experiences before the Swedish authorities – I reflected on how to handle this risk, and I found two solutions. Firstly, and in accordance with the idea that gatekeepers can play a helpful role in providing information on which potential informants might be too emotionally vulnerable to participate in research (Ibid.), the gatekeepers in the LGBTQ-organisations I was in contact with did initially help me with guidance concerning whom it would be wise or unwise to interview, depending on their degree of vulnerability. Secondly, I decided to adopt a very careful stance in the interview situation, albeit some of the interviewees told me that they felt comfortable sharing their experiences and that it actually helped their psychological healing. This in turn meant that I partially had to revise the interview guide that I had previously done. In order not to revive traumatic experiences, I did not explicitly ask questions on experiences of neither heteronormativity nor racism, but I informed them that I was interested in themes related to racism and heteronormativity, and I framed questions in a way that opened up for a possibility for the interviewees to talk about such experiences according to their own willingness to do so. To the degree they wished to talk about this I followed up with further questions; in other cases I observed the omission of the account of such experiences. For example, before I started conducting the interviews I was very interested in how the interviewees handled their sexuality in relation to their families, in order to see how economic dependency on family bonds in a context without a strong welfare state affects the willingness of coming out. Very quickly, I became aware of the difficulty to explore this theme in the way I had pictured. In some cases, the pain that was evoked when the word “family” was uttered was almost palpable. Therefore, I quickly decided not to explicitly ask about how the interviewees handled their sexuality in relation to their families. Instead, I asked what reflections they had on the process of coming-out more generally. In some cases the interviewees voluntarily brought up their own family in relation to this question, in other cases the family was omitted. However,

the rephrasing of the original question made it possible to discuss to what extent and in what context the process of coming-out is desirable, which in turn turned out to be of analytical importance for the thesis.

The vulnerability of the interviewees, which in some cases includes a precarious legal situation in Sweden, has influenced also the way I deal with quotes from the interviewees in the analytical chapter of the thesis. In relation to the quotes, I will reveal very scarce information about the interviewees. In most cases I will only refer to the person I quote as “the interviewee”. Sometimes, however, the usage of pronouns reveals the gender of the interviewee, when I judge that is not harmful for the integrity of the person quoted. In a few cases, the quotes have been lightly changed in order not to reveal the country of origin or the mother tongue of the interviewee. However, when some additional information about the interviewee is necessary for the reader to grasp the meaning or context of a certain quote, that information will be given if it is not judged as a risk for the interviewee. Furthermore, it is important to reflect on the vulnerability of the interviewees in relation to the quotes also in another respect. Sometimes, the interviewees shared very painful experiences with me. While I do not wish to exploit the suffering of others, in some cases I found it necessary to reproduce the account of these experiences in order to make clear the reasoning of the interviewees. In other cases I make only brief descriptions of what the interviewees told me. Thereby, I hope to have reached a moderate balance where I do not overexploit the pain of others, but still stay true to their accounts in order to fulfil the analytical purposes of the thesis.

Theoretical framework

Given the aim of the thesis to grasp the experience of queer migrants in Sweden and in order to explore how they navigate between racist representations of their cultures and narratives of the West as the embodiment of “tolerance” vis-à-vis LGBTQ-people, I have found it useful to divide the theoretical framework of the thesis into two main parts: the first one criticising modernity’s binary categorising in relation to notions of time and space in a context of global inequality, and the other one dealing with subject formation. While the latter tries to trace the tension between the realms of necessity and that of liberty of the subject, the former aims at locating that very discussion within a framework that is aware of the globally structured inequalities that characterise the past and present of modernity. Bringing these two parts together will hopefully provide a theoretical basis that allows us to understand how the

interviewed queer migrants reflect upon themselves in relation to their spatial dislocation, and which strategies they employ vis-à-vis the societal structures of inequality that they have encountered.

I. Thinking time and space in an unequal world

Sociology can sometimes be described as the academic discipline that has modern society as its object of study. Partially in debt to Enlightenment thought, already Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, in their quality of “founding fathers” of sociology, explored the contradictory nature – to a certain degree liberating, yet in some respects incarcerating – of Western European modernity, in comparison to previous modes of organising society (Lemert 2011). In this section I wish to explore certain aspects of this ambiguous feature of modernity, in order to frame some of the dilemmas that queer migrants are confronted with as a result of their migration from the Global South to Sweden. I first turn to Immanuel Wallerstein for a critique of modernity’s Eurocentrism, particularly its tendency to create binary categories that locate the non-European world in a disadvantageous position. Thereafter, I discuss Doreen Massey’s call for exploring modernity’s multiplicities through alternative conceptions of time and space. Hopefully, this part of the chapter will provide us with a framework that situates the following discussion on subject formation and identity making, in order to deepen our analysis of the subjectivities of the interviewed queer migrants.

A critique of European universalism

In his book *European Universalism – The Rhetoric of Power*, US American sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein (2006) argues that modernity has been a Eurocentric project whose aim historically has been to achieve processes of capital accumulation for centres of power in Europe, and later North America. In order to justify the social system that has been constructed around this quest for capital accumulation, a certain kind of ideological underpinnings has been necessary, according to Wallerstein. While this ideology has the form of a universalism, in theory applicable everywhere and in all times, Wallerstein claims that this universalism is a form of provincialism that is specifically European in its historical roots. Moreover, he argues that this universalism serves to guarantee “Europe” (a concept which for Wallerstein includes North America) a privileged economic and geopolitical position in the world. Therefore, he denominates it “European universalism”.

One of the characterizing features of this European universalism is the notion that the social world is structured through reified, binary categories (Ibid. 42). While these binary categories exist in various dimensions of the social, Wallerstein contributes special

importance to those dichotomies that are related to geopolitical relations and that emanate from the European colonial enterprise. Wallerstein argues that through the modern project, the cultural values and epistemological systems of the dominating groups in Europe have attained the status of universalism, whereas the cultural values and epistemological systems among groups in the non-European world have been regarded as forms of particularism. Thereby, an epistemic dichotomy between Europe and the rest of the world has arisen, reifying these two entities. Moreover, since this dichotomous relationship is intrinsically unequal, it implies that the non-European world becomes systematically underprivileged vis-à-vis Europe. Typically, today this implies notions of Europe embodying qualities such as civilization, democracy and human rights, whereas the rest of the world is associated with brutality, authoritarianism and non-respect for human rights (Ibid. xi-xiii).

Despite his critique of “European universalism”, Wallerstein does not deny the importance of the notion of universalism *per se*. On the contrary, he argues that universal values are of vital importance for the future of humanity, but that we cannot take for granted that we already have the answers for what this kind of universalism shall be. For Wallerstein, a universalism that is more than just European, but truly universal, is yet to be constructed:

It is not that there may not be global universal values. It is rather that we are far from yet knowing what these values are. Global universal values are not given to us; they are created by us. The human enterprise of creating such values is the great moral enterprise of humanity. But it will have a hope of achievement only when we are able to move beyond the ideological perspective of the strong to a truly common (and thus more nearly global) appreciation of the good. Such a global appreciation requires a different concrete base, though, a structure that is far more egalitarian than any we have constructed up to now. (Ibid. 28)

For the sake of this thesis, Wallerstein’s critique of European universalism will serve as a base from which to further analyse how the interviewees handle their dislocation from the Global South to Sweden in terms of the dichotomous relationship between a Europe and a rest of the world that are perceived as two reified categories. Through the conceptualization of “European universalism” as a specific form of ideological domination, it will be explored to what degree the interviewees, within the realm of sexuality, align themselves with this universalism, and to what degree they distance themselves from it.

Grasping modernity’s multiplicities

In her book *For Space*, British cultural geographer Doreen Massey (2005) argues for the necessity of the social sciences to analyse time and space as interrelated and inseparable concepts. She argues that the social sciences, and indeed the entire modern project, have been

characterised historically by an inability to think space at all, and an inability to perceive more than just one temporality. According to Massey, European colonialism was partly ideologically justified by a linear conception of time, according to which nations moved from backwardness towards progress. In this scheme Western Europe (and later North America) was always perceived as embodying the most progressed point in this temporal continuum. However, such a worldview did not take into account the locality of different places, since such a spatial consciousness, and the consciousness of local history that would have implied, would have challenged the modern unilinearity of time and therefore the legitimacy of the colonial project. According to Massey, the opening up of the history of modernity for a spatialisation and a decentring of Europe - something that has been done by many post-colonial scholars - makes possible a history of modernity that is sensible to the racism, the colonial plague and the profound inequalities that were created by Europe's imperial conquests and its subsequent policies in the 21st century (Ibid. 62-64).

Despite her criticism of this aspatial and unilinear understanding of the social world that she argues has characterized modernity historically, Massey is likewise critical of the postmodern turn. According to Massey, the postmodern discourse is characterised by the notion that everything is related to space (exemplified by the much repeated talk about globalisation, flows, migration, etc.), but where time seems to be absent beyond the mere instantaneousness of the Internet. Moreover, such a conception of space does not take into account spatial inequalities, but rather creates the illusion of a distribution of power resources that are equally distributed around the globe. The "depthlessness" of the postmodern conception of time similarly conceals the differences in experiences of local histories beyond the illusion of global time. Even though this postmodern turn is partly legitimised by the claim that it is truly global and non-Eurocentric, Massey argues that the lack of consideration given to global inequalities reinforces Eurocentrism. (Ibid. 76-80)

Thus, being critical of both Eurocentric modernity and postmodernity, what Massey proposes is an attempt to avoid both Scylla and Charybdis by trying to navigate along a path that would transcend them both:

This is a change in the angle of vision away from the modernist version (one temporality, no space) but not towards a postmodern one (all space, no time); rather towards the entanglements of configurations of multiple trajectories, multiple histories. (Ibid. 148)

What is important to acknowledge here, is that the recognition of these multiple trajectories/histories does not imply a relativist standpoint, since Massey emphasises the

interrelatedness between these trajectories/histories, and argues that the power relations between them should be acknowledged. Rather, Massey's point should be seen as a call for recognising the multiple time-spaces that she argues have always been present within modernity and that together form the social totality. Even more, the move beyond a unilinear perception of time does not imply that progress ceases to exist, but rather entails a notion of progress that rejects teleology and hence becomes open to the future:

Such a view does not eliminate an impetus to forward movement, but it does enrich it with a recognition that movement be itself produced *through* attention to configurations; it is out of them that new heterogeneities, and new configurations, will be conjured. This is a temporality which is not linear, nor singular, nor pre-given; but it is integral to the spatial. [...] But this also means insisting on space *as* the sphere of relations, of contemporaneous multiplicity, and as always under construction. (Ibid. 147-148; italics added by the author)

For the sake of the thesis, Massey's call for recognising modernity's multiple trajectories and histories, i.e. her claim for a plurality of modern time-spaces, implies taking into account the specificity of the trajectories of the interviewed queer migrants and how their individual subject positions interrelate with the global structures of inequalities that characterize the historical and current state of the world. This implies being sensitive towards particular stories, but never ceasing to analyse how they are all part of a larger whole – however difficult it might be to define this totality with its multiple and intersecting structures of power –; a whole whose future is open-ended.

II. Subject formation and identity

Within sociological debates on identity, different approaches have been made to conceptualise and make understandable how and why individuals create, establish and act upon specific individual and collective identities. Often related to discussions on the relationship between individual agency and social structures, sociologists have sometimes regarded identity as a set of characteristics that the individual carries with itself, sometimes as the outcome of complex processes of interdependency (Powell & Dépelteau 2013). As an example of how identity has been conceptualised in relation to societal power relations, it is worth mentioning Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus as a way to explore how identities and symbols can have the function of aspects of social class positions (Lawler 2005). It is within this very broad sociological quest to understand how and why individuals relate to themselves in modern society that I locate the following theoretical discussion.

In order to explore the subject positions that the interviewed queer migrants occupy in relation to societal structures, I have chosen to use this part of the chapter to discuss the

different perspectives that political philosopher Judith Butler and sociologist Stuart Hall employ when they explore subject formation and identity making. I believe the combination of their different views is useful for the purpose of the thesis, not least given that they as theorists have worked extensively on the two main social structures that I wish to explore how the interviewees position themselves in relation to: sexuality (e.g. Butler 1990) and “race”/ethnicity (e.g. Hall 1992). Brought together, their views could be complementary in order to understand how the interviewees handle the intersection of these structures. However, since both theorists to a large extent discuss their views on subject formation in relation to Louis Althusser’s classical text on the subject and subjection, I find it necessary to first begin with an overview of his theory, before turning to Butler and Hall.

Althusser’s subjected subject

In his essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” (1971), French political philosopher Louis Althusser discusses how class relations are reproduced in the capitalist society. In Althusser’s view, a given state’s Ideological State Apparatuses, among which he mentions the school system, the mass media, the religious institutions, and the family, uphold a core position in the reproduction of class relations, and are hence necessary for the survival of the capitalist mode of production. The importance that Althusser attributes to ideology, leads him to explore how ideology forms subjects, who become docile to the *modus operandi* of class society.

Central to Althusser’s theory of subject formation is the concept of interpellation. According to Althusser, interpellation is to be understood as an everyday act that turns individuals into subjects. This process is both the result of the operation of ideology and at the same time constitutive for the existence of ideology (and hence for the reproduction of class relations). Althusser exemplifies this with a famous scene, in which a police officer (i.e. an agent of the state apparatus) interpellates, or hails, a man in the street. The hailed pedestrian recognises himself in the interpellation, and turns around to the police officer. Thus, the interpellator creates the individual man on the street as a subject through the process of interpellation. However, the only possibility for this individual to recognise himself as an interpellated subject is, Althusser argues, by having been constituted as such a subject *a priori*. If the interpellated individual had not already been a subject, he wouldn’t have recognised himself in the police officer’s interpellation and thus he wouldn’t have turned around. Therefore, individuals are “always-already” subjects who make ideology possible,

which in turn makes subjects possible. Without subjects, no ideology, and vice-versa. (Ibid. 174-176)

In order to further explain how ideology operates in relation to subject formation in any society, not only in modern capitalism, Althusser provides us with the example of the Christian religious ideology. From his perspective, Christianity – perceived as a societal ideology – interpellates individuals as Christian subjects who are responsible for their deeds before God. God thus appears as an “Other Subject” to which all other subjects must submit. Without this divine Subject (written with a capital S), Christian subjects cannot exist as such. At the same time the Christian God would not be able to exist without his subjects. Althusser exemplifies the necessity of this interdependency between the subjects and the Other Subject with the biblical scene in which God calls Moses during his wandering through the desert. In this scene, God calls Moses’ name, i.e. interpellates him, Moses recognises himself in the interpellation, responds to God and declares himself as God’s servant. Thereafter, God confirms that he really is God and later gives Moses and the Jewish people the Ten Commandments:

And Moses, interpellated-called by his Name, having recognized that it 'really' was he who was called by God, recognizes that he is a subject, a subject of God, a subject subjected to God, a subject through the Subject and subjected to the Subject. The proof: he obeys him, and makes his people obey God's Commandments. (Ibid. 179)

Thus, through the process of interpellation, the individual Moses is turned into a subject that is submitted - *subjected* - to the God (the Other Subject) that interpellates him. Here, Althusser deliberately plays with the ambiguity of the meaning of the word “subject” in order to make his philosophical purpose explicit. Although a “subject” usually is roughly understood as a person equipped with a certain dose of free will, which permits that person to act relatively freely, Althusser claims that there cannot be a subject that is not at the same time subjected, and thus restricted in its agency. This subjection is intrinsic to subject formation. When subjection functions well – and Althusser claims it mostly does – subjects “work by themselves”. That is to say, through the *modus operandi* of ideology individuals are constituted as subjects and as such they become subjected to ideology. Only rarely are “bad subjects”, i.e. those who refuse to subject themselves to interpellation, encountered, since subjection is necessary for individuals to exist at all *qua* societal subjects. (Ibid. 181-182)

For the sake of this thesis, the important thing to retain here from Althusser is the core idea of the mutual constitution between ideology and the subject, the notion that a subject –

which we otherwise perceive as a someone acting relatively freely – by necessity is subjected to an Other Subject, indeed it can *only* exist by and through this subjection, and the belief that the subject must recognise itself when interpellated by the Other Subject, if ideology is to work smoothly.

Butler's turn away from identity

Although Althusser discusses subject formation in relation to the reproduction of capitalist class relations, and even though the purpose of his elaboration on the subject's subjection is to explore how ideology works together with society's economic infrastructure, it is possible to use his subject formation theory in a somewhat broader way in order to explore how societal subjects are constituted more generally, and in a manner that transcends Althusser's usage of the concept of ideology.

US American political philosopher Judith Butler (1997) departs from Althusser's fundamentally pessimistic view on the subject in order to further explore the ambiguity that resides within the idea that the subject's agency is only possible through its own subjection. In doing so, she replaces Althusser's concept of ideology with a more loosely defined and Foucault-inspired "Power", or sometimes with a Lacan-inspired "Law". Basically, Butler laments the subject's subjection vis-à-vis Power. Since she agrees with Althusser's idea that subjection is constitutive for the existence of the subject, what she really laments is somehow the subject *per se*. In her view, its existence is intrinsically tragic. Moreover, she notices that Althusser turns to the Bible – the episode with Moses in the desert - to find an eloquent example of how interpellation and subject formation work. She believes that this religious example was not accidentally chosen by Althusser, but rather testifies to subject formation being "inseparable from condemnation" (Ibid. 113). This is a profoundly negative view of the subject and its existence.

However, Butler wants to explore what potentiality the subject has to exist under less tragic conditions. She remarks that in Althusser's interpellation scene with the police officer, the interpellated pedestrian turns around to the policeman after being hailed. This "turning around" of the subject towards the interpellator (i.e. to "Power" or to the "Law") is attributed great importance in Butler's account, since it is this moment of turning wherein in the subject has its greatest agency:

It is important to remember that the turn towards the law is not necessitated by the hailing; it is compelling, in a less than logical sense, because it promises identity. (Ibid.108)

Thus, the subject's turn towards the law is not an absolute necessity; there is a certain degree of free will in this event. It seems that the subject somehow wouldn't have to turn towards the law, but does so due to the promise of identity that the law makes to the subject under the condition that it recognises itself in the interpellation. In that sense, identity appears as bait used by the law/power in order to subject the subject. Consequently, the concept of identity acquires the same intrinsic negative connotations as the subject does. However, Butler insists on the degree of liberty that the subject seems to possess in the very moment of interpellation. Since she fundamentally agrees with Althusser - Butler recognises that the turning of the subject might be inevitable -, she does not suggest that the subject refuses to turn around, but argues that what is at stake is rather *how* or *whither* the subject turns:

Is there a possibility of being elsewhere or otherwise, without denying our complicity in the law that we oppose? Such possibility would require a different turn, one that, enabled by the law, turns away from the law, resisting its lure of identity, an agency that outruns and counters the conditions of its emergence. Such a turn demands a willingness *not* to be – a critical desubjectivation – in order to expose the law as less powerful than it seems. (Ibid. 130)

In the above quote, Butler thus recognizes that the subject is formed by the law, but also that it has the potentiality of exceeding the law, turning away from it, becoming what Althusser calls a “bad subject”. The condition for succeeding in this attempt, however, is a willingness to pay the price for rejecting identity. Only by refusing to be what the law defines, can the subject exceed its own subjection. This, in turn, would then open up for the possibility of a new political horizon:

Such a failure of interpellation may well undermine the capacity of the subject to ‘be’ in a self-identical sense, but it may also mark the path toward a more open, even more ethical, kind of being, one of or for the future. (Ibid. 131)

Butler's basic perspective is thus that Althusser is fundamentally right when he defines the subject as being subjected to an Other Subject/Law/Power. Butler laments this inherent tragic condition of the subject, since it entails that the subject's agency only resides within its subjection to the rules established by Power. However, she believes that there is a possibility for at least a partial salvation: to the extent that the subject manages to turn away from power, to exceed the law, reject identity and become a “bad subject”, the agency of the subject increases and it becomes less subjected to Power. For the purpose of the thesis, Butler's theoretical perspective will be used to see to how the interviewed queer migrants handle their identity and to what degree they submit to Power or try to avoid subjection to Power.

Hall and the necessary contextualization of the subject

British sociologist Stuart Hall (1996) adopts a different perspective on the question of identity and subject formation than Butler. Whereas the Butlerian-Althusserian notion of the subject is profoundly pessimistic - their subject being defined by the interpellating power to which the subject is subjected -, Hall suggests a more optimistic view and rejects the notion of the monolithic character of both the subject and of the power that interpellates it. Moreover, while Butler regards “identity” as bait that the law/power uses to make the subject recognise itself in the interpellation process, Hall perceives identity as an on-going negotiation between discursive practices and subjects:

I use ‘identity’ to refer to the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to ‘interpellate’, speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be ‘spoken’. Identities are thus point of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us. [...] The notion than an effective suturing of the subject to a subject-position requires, not only that the subject is ‘hailed’, but that the subject invests in the position, means that suturing has to be thought of as an *articulation*, rather than a one-sided process, and that in turn places *identification*, if not identities, firmly on the theoretical agenda. (Ibid. 5-6; italics added by the author)

The processual character of subject formation and the temporality of the subject position that the term “identification” suggests, entails an understanding of the subject that goes beyond Althusser’s notion of subject formation as something defined “from above” (recall Moses’s dialogue with God!) and Butler’s view on identity as something that lures the subject into subjection. Hall’s usage of the word “suture” rather seems to indicate a conceptualisation of identity as something that emerges out of two or several directions, as the momentary locus where different societal forces melt together.

Although Hall rejects an “overestimation of disciplinary power” for subject formation – a critique of Foucault that can also be read as a critique of Althusser’s concept of ideology -, he also warns for an overemphasis of the intentionality of individuals in their attachment to particular identities (Ibid. 14). Nevertheless, the observation above that the subject “invests” in a subject-position seems to invite us to seek to understand *why*, *how* and *which* subject positions are perceived as attractive for the subject. However, in order to do so, it becomes necessary to step out of the micro-cosmos of the interpellation scene and regard subjects and their identities as parts of a greater web of social interaction:

The concept of identity deployed here is therefore not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one. That is to say, directly contrary to what appears to be its settled semantic career, this concept of identity does *not* signal that stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all

the vicissitudes of history without change; the bit of the self which remains always-already ‘the same’, identical to itself across time. [...] Though they seek to invoke an origin in a historical past in which they continue to correspond, actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. (Ibid: 3-4; italics added by the author)

Thus, Hall urges us to contextualize identity within the temporal framework in which they occur, and, what more is, to regard identities as relational. Instead of being put on us one-sidedly from “up above”, an identity seems to indicate a position that the subject wishes to reach vis-à-vis other subjects. Dismissing an essentialist notion of identity, Hall’s concept of identity appears then as something that is always in the making, as something that reflects both societal power structures and the ways the subject *qua* social being handles those structures. Consequently, the subject must employ different identities in different contexts, depending on the particularity – i.e. the characteristics of the power relations - of each context.

Final reflections

To summarise, Butler and Hall offer two very different conceptions of subject formation and identity. While the Althusserian-Butlerian concept of the subject is inherently tragic, its agency only being possible through its subjection to an Other Subject or Power, Hall regards the subject position as a process of negotiation between the individual and societal structures. Therefore, when identity appears to Butler as bait within a dyadic power relation luring the subject into subjection and thus something that the subject should attempt to transcend, Hall is more interested in exploring *how* the subject employs identity in an ever-changing web of power relations. For the purpose of the study, these two very different understandings of the subject and identity offer the possibility to explore how the interviewed queer migrants position themselves as subjects in different ways in different contexts. We will see that as a result of the unequal relationship between “race”/ethnicity and sexuality in the particular spatiotemporal context in which the interviewees find themselves, Butler’s and Hall’s different notions of identity become complementary in the exploration of how the interviewees make usage – or not – of identity in relation to given societal structures.

The encounter with Sweden

It has now become time to turn to an exploration of the empirical material, which has been divided into three analytical chapters, each divided into sub-sections. At the core of these chapters is the diversity of stories among the interviewees, with the hope that this

heterogeneity will reveal patterns of inequality, but also of resistance, which are of sociological interest. In this first chapter, "The encounter with Sweden", I discuss how the interviewees first encountered Swedish society and how this encounter relates to the representations and fantasises they had of Sweden prior to migration. In the second chapter, "(Re)acting within racial societal structures", different strategies that interviewees adopted when handling racism in Sweden are discussed. In the third and concluding chapter, "Transcending sexual boundaries: multiple identities and time-spaces", ambiguous strategies that some of the interviewees adopted in relation to structures of heteronormativity are outlined and contrasted with the strategies they adopted when confronted with racial structures.

Meeting racism

Many of the interviewees, when asked about what had surprised them the most when they arrived in Sweden, brought up experiences of racism, both in the Swedish society in general, as well as in the gay community in particular:

Racism within the gay community was a shock, a huge shock. It didn't take me one week, before I got the first hate message on Gay Romeo [a gay dating website], when a person sent me a message out of the blue, we never spoke, I didn't know him: "Just an other retarded in town, go back to your country, we don't need retarded Arabs in our country". So I was like, "Oh, this is from week one. How will it be after a while?"

This interviewee, who had fled to Sweden from persecution due to homosexuality in his country of origin, described the astonishment he felt when confronted with racism in the Swedish gay community. Escaping from one form of social oppression he was suddenly confronted with another, which he had not experienced before and had not expected to meet. The description of this racist calling in the milieu of online-dating is an eloquent example of an interpellation à la Althusser, in which the subject recognizes itself as the "retarded Arab" in a hailing "out of the blue". The question that the interviewee directs to himself at the end of the quote implies a quest for a strategy to handle the racist gaze and the stigma of being a person of colour in a white-dominated society (Burman 2015); although the interpellation comes from the outside, the subject has no choice but to act by somehow responding to it.

Beyond this type of racial interpellations, interviewees from the Middle East reported that they often became interpellated as Muslims, regardless of their own religious faith and despite the diversity of their ethnic and national origins. The following quote grasps this experience, when one of the interviewees visited London for the first time and was directly

classified as a Muslim by the person who hosted him. Although this experience did not take place in Sweden, I believe it is an illustrative example of the tension between religion and secularism that many of my interviewees were confronted with:

I thought of Europe as secular. No religious symbols anymore, religion doesn't play a role in people's life and then you are faced with that... He would say really hateful things about Muslims, and it was really difficult for me, because he was the host where I was living, he was much older than me so I couldn't really argue, but he said really hateful stuff. He would talk about women wearing "burqa", he used this word, I think they love it in the UK... And it was so funny, because at that time I didn't identify as a Muslim, it was a more atheist part of life, but then he would always regard me as a Muslim, interrogate me and tell me, "Hey, I brought you food from the halal-store".

In this quote, there is a noteworthy moment of surprise that the interviewee experienced when he as a self-identified atheist, on his first visit to Europe, was perceived as a believing Muslim, since he was confronted with the religious interpellation he thought he had left behind in his country of origin. In a European context, though, he perceived this interpellation as intentionally hateful. Although he insisted on being a non-believer, his British host continued to declare him a Muslim through the repetitious talk about the burqa and halal-food. This type of anti-Muslim interpellation echoes a study (Foner 2015) that argues that, to a certain degree, Islam in Europe is similar to "race" in the United States, making the situation of Muslims in Europe – despite substantial differences – comparable to the situation of the black population in the United States. Moreover, in the account of the interviewee, the notion of European progress tied to the idea of secularism is seriously challenged, since religion continued to haunt the atheist interviewee, but this time paradoxically through the intermediary of a Europe that prides itself with its own secularism. For him as a Middle Eastern, dislocation to Europe did not appear as a possible way to leave religion behind since the islamophobic atmosphere in London supposed him to be a Muslim, although he was in a context without the same strong religious institutions as in his country of origin. Furthermore, the fact that he was systematically targeted as a specific category, Muslim, had a serious impact on his notion of self; an impact that is mirrored in his shift from being an atheist to currently defining himself as a Muslim.

Besides these illustrations with focus on racist naming (the first quote) and racist classification (the second), interviewees would also reflect upon how their identity as LGBTQ-people sometimes would have an affect on their position in Sweden. The following quote describes a situation in which the police apprehended the interviewee in question, at a moment when he was living without legal documents in Sweden:

All of a sudden someone came from behind and grabbed my phone and started... it was in the summer... it was in a public place, it was apparently legal. He started asking for my documents and said I looked suspicious. I mean, I look suspicious? [chuckles] I am very short, I had long hair. They said I looked suspicious, they needed to check me and that's why they needed my document. And I was without papers at the time, so I had to tell them and they took me to a migration camp. But both... they started smiling at me since they learnt I am an LGBT-refugee... Racism has really weird forms here... But maybe they thought that queer people don't look like terrorists or whatever. That's the way people would treat me.

This interviewee told me that, according to his experience, people in Sweden - both representatives from the state and society more generally - treated him in a better way when they realised that he is queer. Thus, he concluded that he was in more favourable position than straight migrants. The reason for this, according to the interviewee, is that queer people are at the moment perceived to be more Western-like and thus not thought of as potential terrorists. Thereby, his queerness would imply a higher social status in the Swedish society. This recalls the argument made by several scholars (Drucker 2015; Puar 2007), that queers in the West have been incorporated into the nation. Nevertheless, this somehow positive affect of being a queer migrant in comparison with being a straight migrant seems to be valid only in a heterosexual context. As we already saw an illustration of in the beginning of this sub-section, interviewees repeatedly got back to how being racialised as non-whites continuously put them in a lower social position within the gay community. Sometimes this racialisation would mean that they were perceived as non-desirable, sometimes the same process implied being exoticised for sexual purposes:

Dealing with fetishisation in sexual experiences and the kind of comments I receive on dating websites or in real life is quite disturbing. Images, comments, things like "I am interested in Arabs". Comments are very objectifying and in that way very dehumanizing and that is really difficult to deal with... It affects my trust in people, trying to be open, in dating people, it really affects my trust, because I am afraid those experiences will be repeated, that I cannot really talk about my racist experiences, of my feelings about things, without people being defensive or in denial, which is oppressive, because my story is not really believed basically. And it also affects my body image or my image of myself. Because it feels like you are not seen as a human and in some way that affects your relations to yourself and you feel uncomfortable with yourself.

In this quote, the interpellation as an "Arab" within the context of gay dating was experienced as a sexual objectification that severely affected the interviewee's capacity to socialise within the gay community, due to the fear of dehumanizing practices, but also due to the fear of not being believed by white gay men when he shared these painful experiences. This (and many similar narratives I collected) testifies to the contradictions and dilemmas that queer migrants, having migrated to Sweden due to their sexuality, face when they become aware that the enjoyment of the relative sexual

freedom in Sweden is shaped and regulated by what seems to be hegemonic discourses in the gay community interpellating them as “Arabs”. Moreover, it problematises which groups of LGBTQ-people that have been incorporated into the nation (Drucker 2015; Halberstam 2005).

Disappointment

Besides the encounter with Swedish racism, many interviewees also reported a certain disappointment regarding the expectations they had regarding sexual freedom in Sweden:

Now I realize that maybe my image, my expectations were not realistic either. But, at the same time, I expected much more openness in daily life. I never saw any same-sex couple when I first moved in. I started living in Lund, which is a very international and open student-city. Before I came I thought, “Oh, I’m sure there will be many LGBT-people and organisations and whatever”, but there was nothing, at least nothing that gave me a sense of belonging. So the image was totally different. I felt depressed; I felt “did I make the wrong decision? Am I ever going to find this peace and security that I’m looking for in Sweden?” It felt so inaccessible. It was there legally, but there was nothing for me, me as a person who comes from abroad and wants to see the chances of having a future here. There was sort of no access to that legal protection and possibilities for a foreign gay person... I felt that I went back into the closet; that was an interesting thing. I was open to my friends in Istanbul; I came out to them like that year before I moved to Sweden. But then when I met classmates and other people in Lund, like in my corridor or wherever, I never felt comfortable with coming out.

This quote challenges the idea of Sweden (and particularly of Lund as a university city) as the embodiment of tolerance regarding diverse forms of sexuality. Instead of moving towards more freedom, this interviewee’s migration from Turkey to Sweden implied a journey backwards, since he found himself going back into the closet, due to the heteronormative environment that he experienced when he was new in Lund, in contrast to the safer surrounding he had built up with his friend circle in Istanbul. This recalls the argument made by Shakhsari (2014) that the experiences of queer migrants implies a challenge to Western hegemonic queer temporality. Moreover, the interviewee pinpointed that he was particularly susceptible to what I would conceptualise as heteronormativity due to his position as a “foreigner”, since he felt that the existing queer spaces in Sweden were not accessible for him. The accounts of several interviewees coincided in this respect: they had thought of Sweden as a much more open and queer-friendly place than it actually proved to be. Many were surprised not only at the heteronormativity in public spaces and the absence of expressions of same-sex love and desire in Swedish cities, but also at more severe forms of heteronormativity, such as queer people not coming out of the closet to their families due to fear for negative consequences, or queer people being afraid of being attacked in public spaces. Some therefore concluded that Sweden’s reputation as a queer-friendly country was

more of a façade than having real substance. One interviewee even claimed Sweden to be directly backward:

My image was that there would be a lot more freedom. But I could very soon see that was not the case. There was some sort of new moralism that I found uncanny... For example, this way of speaking of sexuality. It is hard to describe... If you had had sex with many people you should not talk about it... That could be tougher for me as a racialised person... I understood quite quickly that I must be careful concerning what I told others about myself. What in Buenos Aires would be seen as an emancipated behaviour was regarded as slutty in Sweden. All of a sudden I was seen in a different light, like "here is a person from another culture, incapable of controlling his sexuality".

This interviewee, coming from the metropolis of Buenos Aires, was surprised by what he described as the sexual conservatism among Swedish gay people, in sharp contrast to the image he had had of Sweden as a queer-friendly country. Moreover, he suggested that this moral conservatism is more difficult for non-Europeans to handle, since their interpellation as “foreigners” implies an idea of being sexually promiscuous. Therefore, talking openly about having multiple sexual partners would imply condemnation, since this, through the lens of racism, is interpreted as a non-civilised behaviour. In this respect, the notion of a unilinearity of time in the realm of sexuality (Shakhsari 2014) is totally blurred. The interviewee’s description of Swedish sexual moralism would rather imply a journey “backwards” in comparison to his country of origin. What this interviewee actually argued was that the place he came from was more sexually emancipated, and therefore more “progressive”, than Sweden, but that racism prevented his progressiveness from being read as such. Instead, it was transformed into a sign of being primitive and chaotic, and thus inferior to a Swedish responsible sexual regime. Cases like these, wherein informants expressed feelings of disappointment after the formal migration process had concluded, coincide with former studies within the field of queer migration (Cantú 2002; Peumans 2014) that stress how racism and heteronormativity give rise to mixed emotions vis-à-vis the country to which queer migrants have migrated.

Ambivalent feelings of freedom

Despite many stories of racism and disappointment concerning the degree of heteronormativity in Swedish society, many narratives focused on other topics. Some described feelings of joy and great liberty in contrast to the heteronormative atmosphere in their countries of origins. However, even these joyful accounts contain elements that nuance the sensation of freedom that migration brought with it. In the following quote, one interviewee describes his first visit to a European country, France. Although this does not

show the interviewee's encounter with Sweden, it is an eloquent illustration of the emotions that migration from the Global South to Europe implied for some of the interviewees:

Everything was totally different. It was kind of a culture shock. But I assimilated very well into society, I found myself slowly blossoming. I felt this sense of freedom, of joy. From the very moment the plane lifted from the soil, I felt this sense of accomplishment. This is what I had been dreaming of since I was a child, this is what I had been working for and it was finally here and I was so excited, so happy. And when I arrived in France it was the realisation of a dream and everything was just so wonderful, in terms of the way people were in the society. People were not necessarily so open, because I was in a small town in southern France, and they are very conservative, so people were very judgemental, but I didn't care [laughter]. I didn't care because I wasn't in my country and I knew that here at least the law is on my side and it is OK to be who I am... I could not go back and live like I lived before, after having tasted this freedom and feeling what it feels like walking on the streets and not feeling uncomfortable or feeling that I am being judged or having to be fearful.

In this very rich description, the interviewee spoke passionately about the joy and freedom that he felt the first time he was in Europe, which later led to his decision to move to Sweden. He described the wonderful sensation of no longer having to be afraid of everyday-heteronormativity and that he finally felt safe since he had the law on his "side", which was not the case in his country of origin. However, by stating that he was in a small, conservative town in southern France, he implicitly acknowledges that he hardly was in a gay-friendly environment. Moreover, being a black man, it seems likely that he would have encountered some forms of racism. But, as he twice claims, he "didn't care". He described that since moving to Europe had been a dream, which he had worked hard to accomplish, he was determined to finally enjoy a sensation of liberty, despite the negative issues he might have experienced in this French town with its "judgemental" inhabitants. The cases of racist and heteronormative interpellations can only be guessed by the reader, and we are left with the impression that he did not respond to them.

Other interviewees described how migration to Sweden had implied an opportunity for them to explore and experiment their sexuality in a way they had not been able to do in their countries of origins, which contributed to their identity as LGBTQ-people:

I found myself in a society that gave me that freedom to explore myself, to find myself, to see other things that I always had been trying to find, but didn't have the possibility to or opportunity in my homeland or with my background. That gave me the consciousness to say that now I maybe consider myself as a bisexual man. [...] In Sweden there is a constitution, it is perfect, but the implementation of the constitution, how does that look like? Do we actually have it in society? Can we see it? For example, when I walk in the city of Malmö, how often can I see two boys kissing each other in the street? And Malmö is considered to be one of the most liberal cities!

In this quote, migration from the Global South to Sweden constituted a journey towards self-exploration and a quest for a stable sexual identity, corresponding to hegemonic narratives of the West as synonymous with progress and sexual emancipation (Shakhsari 2014). Despite this, however, the interviewee was troubled by the prevalence of heteronormativity in Sweden in general and in the city of Malmö in particular, which gave rise to ambivalent feelings (White 2013) towards Swedish society.

In contrast to these openly ambiguous feelings of freedom, the following quote describes a different experience:

I came here at it was really a discovery. I adapted very well, to the climate, to the comfort. I adapted very quickly. I didn't have big problems of... how to put it... repression. I came here with the doors open. I didn't have any social problems, no. I think that a problem can have been with myself though. One unconsciously feels self-discriminated. Coming from a poor country, wanting to get out, you come here, you don't know the language, you have another skin colour [laughter], you are very different, so is your culture. I wasn't very young when I came here so it was hard for me to learn Swedish, to integrate, to find a job. But I didn't feel any sort of discrimination from society. Quite the contrary, everything was very positive... When I speak of self-discrimination, I mean that you discriminate yourself, put boundaries on yourself, create difference, create a ghetto with people speaking your language, and don't integrate very easily... You stay within your circle, because that is where you learn, feel safe, can speak your language, have people who understand you, people who are from your country, and you segregate yourself from society... That happened a bit to me.

In this quote, the interviewee claimed that whatever problem he had encountered as a migrant in Sweden had been his own fault. Although he acknowledged that it is difficult coming to Sweden with “another skin colour”, he denied having been exposed to racism. Moreover, he told me that he hadn't had any problem with heteronormativity in Sweden. Instead of identifying structural forms of oppression, he described the personal problems he has been confronted with as emanating from within himself, as a result of “self-discrimination”. As valid as this description might be for this specific interviewee, contributing to the sensation of freedom and joy that he had searched for when he left his country of origin, the problems that he described having experienced in Sweden do leave the reader with the feeling that the interviewee's sensation of freedom in Sweden is highly ambivalent, particularly regarding his tendency to blame himself for the obstacles he encountered in social relations.

In this chapter we have seen that the encounter with Sweden brought with it an experience of different forms of racism that was novel for many of the interviewed queer migrants, as well as a certain disappointment with Swedish heteronormativity. We also saw that racism intersected with sexuality in different and sometimes complex ways. Although some interviewees did not reflect on these experiences as related to racism and

heteronormativity, many told me that these experiences contributed to changes in their behaviour, way of thinking and self-perception. In the next chapter we shall see what strategies the interviewees adopted as a consequence of the encounter with the intersection of racism and heteronormativity, how these strategies relate to notions of time and space, and to what degree they challenge the idea of European universalism.

(Re)acting within racial societal structures

In the interviews, I found that the interviewees handled what I conceptualise as racist interpellations in two main ways: either by embracing the underpinnings of the interpellations, or by responding to the interpellations in a way that challenged power relations. This second way of dealing with racist interpellations can in turn be subdivided into two different strategies: either producing a distance between the self and Swedish society, or turning the interpellation into political resistance. In this chapter, we shall have a look at these different kinds of strategies among the interviewees.

Aligning oneself with the Swedish nation state

Considering Back's vision (2013) of sociology as an art of listening that must engage critically with those the researcher does not necessarily align themselves with, or even consider an "enemy", I decided, after some hesitation, to include the following quote from one of the interviewees:

I fear mass migration to Europe of these conservative Syrians and Muslims. I fear that will change the demographics and slow down the advancements and freedoms that Europe generally has had.

To be able to analyse this quote, I think it is necessary for the reader to know that it was uttered by someone who identifies strongly as a person of colour and who in the course of the interview told me extensively about many of his painful experiences of racism in Sweden. When asked about the future, however, he reproduced a racist discourse that locates heteronormativity among "Syrians and Muslims", and regards "mass migration" to Europe as a demographic problem threatening European "freedom". To understand this seemingly paradoxical behaviour of the interviewee, I think it is useful to recur to Stuart Hall's (2006) understanding of identity as an object of negotiation between the subject and the societal structures under which the subject lives its life. In a Swedish context this person is interpellated as a person of colour and is forced to act in relation to that interpellation. In a great part of the interview, it seemed that he did so by assuming an antiracist consciousness

and partly by distancing himself from Swedish (heterosexual) society. However, in this quote he internalised racism and reproduced a racist discourse. Through this strategy, as a person not coming from the Middle East, he distanced himself from people who are also subjected to racist interpellations. Thereby, as I see it, he attempted to reach a higher position in the Swedish racial hierarchy. The logic behind this seems to be that although he is not white, he is at least not an Arab. This is a powerful illustration of Hall's notion of identity as something processual that corresponds to a variety of societal "sutures".

Recalling the Lacanian notion of desire as "the desire of the Other", mentioned in the research review (White 2013), I believe this internalisation and reproduction of racism can be interpreted as an expression of desire for belonging to the Swedish national community in a racist context. By aligning oneself with hegemonic discourses in Swedish society, there is hope that the nation will express love in return for the subject's desire and that the subject will be thus accepted by society. A somewhat contradictory, but yet illustrative, example of this can be seen in the following two different quotes by the same interviewee:

I met this guy and his arm was broken so I asked him what happened. He said he was walking down the street with his boyfriend and then some guys started teasing them and then they were beaten. He went to the police, but I don't think he got anything, I don't know... Because he has the LMA-card [a card proving that one is an asylum seeker; not a valid id-card], he is still going through the asylum process, so the police didn't do anything about it.

[...]

I know that now I have my freedom to fight back and just say whatever is going on my mind. Back then I didn't say whatever I was thinking. But now it is much better. At least I know they are not going to harm me, because here in Sweden I think the law plays a role.

What is primarily interesting here is not the fact that the interviewee, who at the moment of the interview was seeking asylum in Sweden, in the second quote experienced a higher degree of personal freedom in Sweden than in her country of origin, but rather that she regarded "the law", i.e. the state, as the guarantor of that freedom. And she did this despite already having described, in the first quote, that the same state does not protect asylum seekers, as the example of the man who had suffered from homophobic violence proved to her. Her strategy, in the very vulnerable situation she was in, seemed to be to adopt an identity that was perfectly harmonious with the same nation state that locates her in that vulnerable situation. Thereby, there seemed to be hope that the nation state would accept her. Through embracing the modern state - an intrinsic part of the discourse on European universalism - as the ultimate guarantor of her freedom, she situated herself in a position where she hoped to escape subjection to racist interpellation. Cases like these among the interviewees illustrate subject formation and identity making as complex processes.

A different type of cases was brought up by interviewees who had migrated from authoritarian religious nation states and who distanced themselves very clearly from the religion of their upbringing:

I think religion is blocking a lot of things and taking us a hundred years back. If we leave it behind, it is the first step towards a peaceful society. Because whatever bad things are happening, when you go to the reasons, it is coming from religion. So I don't know why people are stuck into it. Some find their inner peace in that and they choose to fight each other because of that. And what disgusts me more: I left Islam because I watched these videos on YouTube about how men are fighting and killing each other to go to heaven and be with 72 virgins [chuckles]. Like what the fuck is that?! It is all nonsense.

In this quote, the interviewee embraced a hegemonic secularist version of modernity in order to explain her disidentification with Islam. She described Islam as backward and intrinsically patriarchal, attributed the roots of all social evils to religion, and argued that societal progress can only be attained through secularism. Thereby, the interviewee, in the context of Western anti-Muslim racism (Morgan & Poynting 2012), situated herself as a progressive and enlightened subject and created a distance vis-à-vis people interpellated as Muslims, which can be interpreted as an attempt to escape such an interpellation. While this view on modernity does not necessarily imply embracing the Swedish nation state, I think it is noteworthy that it does not in any way challenge the notion of European universalism (Wallerstein 2006), which partly constitutes the basis of the legitimacy of the Swedish nation state. Moreover, I believe that a reproduction of such a hegemonic secular discourse probably makes it easier to align oneself with the Swedish nation state than to occupy a critical position towards the same.

Distancing oneself from Swedish society

If the interviewees in some cases responded to racist interpellations by aligning themselves with the Swedish nation state, in other cases they adopted the opposite strategy, i.e. distancing themselves from Swedish society:

I have never wanted to become part of the Swedish society and that partly has to do with this feeling that I have left Iran, it is hard for me to accept that, I am still denying it emotionally, but it is also a reaction against this privilege that people have. I don't want to become like them, I don't want to accept their norms and become integrated. I have never felt that I should spend time and energy becoming Swedish, learning how to make Swedish food, or I don't know, learning how to speak Swedish... I have this anger, I cannot accept that people have had things from birth and they feel that they deserve it because they have been working hard or their parents have been working hard, or that they are not lazy or something like that... I have this feeling that I don't want to become European, in the same way that I have wanted to become a man.... I don't want to become a good integrated immigrant.

In this quote, the interviewee expressed a refusal to submit to structures of racist classification. Instead, her strategy was to reject what she defined as Swedish society. In her view, to become “integrated” would imply to be subjected to the interpellating power that located her in unequal position vis-à-vis white Swedes. Instead she responded to the call to become an integrated immigrant by reinforcing the migrant identity that interpellation offers her. By refusing the subject position as a well-integrated immigrant, she tries to confront the interpellating power. Therefore, she builds an identity on being non-Swedish. In doing so, however, her subject position becomes a mere response to the interpellation without the capacity of transcending it. When building an identity on a confrontation against the interpellating power, her scope of action becomes limited by the power that she rejects, as Butler (1997) would argue.

A less rejecting, but yet distancing, view on Swedish society is expressed by an interviewee who migrated to Sweden in the beginning of the 1990s:

I came to Sweden at a very special time. The queer theory hadn't been formulated yet in Swedish, which made the idea of homosexuality and what you should fight for very connected to the old gay-movement. There were certain ideals that homosexuals are like everybody else, that homosexuality is love and all that talk. To resemble the norm as much as possible in order to gain terrain... Now when I try to recall it, it was also connected to some sort of urbanization. Buenos Aires is a big city where you can be completely anonymous. Nobody would spend time trying to evaluate your sexuality or expression; no one has time for that. And I arrived in Gothenburg, that was something completely different. Everybody knew everybody. There was only one place to go to. It was like that. There wasn't any big city in Sweden.

In this case, the interviewee reversed the notion of Europe as the embodiment of progress and of the Global South as being backward. Instead, he contrasted the urban gay life of Buenos Aires with the rural character of Swedish society. Moreover, in his account, Sweden was portrayed as a place to where the queer theory “not yet” had come and where the gay life was out-dated at his arrival. Through this reversal of the modern discourse of time and space, he responded to the racist experiences he had had in Sweden by converting himself into a more progressed subject than white Swedes. Thus, he responded to the Eurocentric vision of modernity by turning it against Europe itself and by proving that Sweden is less modern than it claims to be. Thereby, he situated himself in a higher societal position than if he had accepted the Eurocentric discourse, albeit the notions of progress and the modern remain unquestioned.

Besides these examples, interviewees also distanced themselves from Sweden in a more subtle way:

Everybody [in Sweden] is very open-minded. It is too much, I think. I almost don't like it anymore. Maybe I'm starting to become conservative, but I think it is too much... Sexuality is so open that love disappears. There are saunas, places for hook-ups, things like that. But at the same time, one doesn't feel the same curiosity for sexuality. It is there, take it. If you want to have a tea, have it! If you want to fuck, fuck! And now with the internet, more is being lost when it comes to contacts. Everything is so virtual. Images, fantasies. But it is not only a Swedish problem, it is a problem related to technological development. And that will affect all countries some day. Everything is very open, but at the same time we lose moral values. We lose things. People live alone. They don't need other people. That's something that I miss from my country, solidarity. We needed it. We were poor, so we had to help each other.

This interviewee reproduced the discourse on European progress and sexual freedom, but he did not stop there. Although he acknowledged the good things that he argued progress had brought with it, he also claimed that it has become “too much” and that it had occurred at the expense of losing “moral values” that were still encountered in his country of origin. By doing so, he challenged the notion of modernity as something unequivocally positive and he rescued the values of the less modern. By, at least to a certain extent, undermining the validity of the modern project, he renegotiated his own position as a person of colour in a racist society by questioning the epistemic structures (such as the idea of progress) that legitimise said society. To the degree that society is seen as illegitimate, the subject's position in the social hierarchy, when beforehand attributed a low position by the racial structures of that society, seems to rise in relative terms.

Political resistance

Apart from reproducing racist discourses or distancing themselves from Swedish society, I also encountered stories of interviewees who reacted to racism and heteronormativity in Sweden by forms of political engagement, such as joining social movements or networks working with topics related to sexuality:

I was quite depressed, I realized, socially depressed. And I didn't feel like this is me, I was living some other reality. And then it took... it came quite quick actually, after I got involved. After one summer I really blossomed I think [laughter]. I started going around in Skåne handing out condoms and talking to people about sex in English, in the middle of Skåne [laughter]. I don't know what happened, but I felt secure basically. I was with other people who were also mostly migrants and young gay men doing this, it gave me so much power, that I had a point I could relate to. And people that probably had been going through the same things as me before they came to Sweden.

This interviewee, who during his first years in Sweden had felt alienated in society, managed at a certain point to turn the interpellation of him as a queer migrant into something productive. In his case, it became possible through an organisation that worked to prevent sexually transmitted infections among men who have sex with men, and that had decided to

focus on men with a migrant background and therefore actively recruited the target group among its volunteers. When the interviewee found himself in a context with other people in a situation similar to his and who had gone through “the same things”, he experienced a sensation of belonging that empowered him and brought his depression to an end. The account of this transformative power of being in a group together with other queer migrants was repeated by several interviewees who had joined social movements. In these cases, subjection to the interpellating power by adopting the identity given by power – that of queer migrant - did not appear as a negative phenomenon but rather as the *sine qua non* of the subject’s empowerment, after initial obstacles had been overcome. This contrasts sharply with Butler’s (1997) pessimist view on identity as something that “lures” the subject into subjection.

Sometimes, forms of political resistance also appeared at the individual level:

I don't engage with religious beliefs, but since I'm often asked if I'm a Muslim or people behave with me or deal with me based on that... I cannot say that I am not affected by it, because it is part of my discussions, my interactions. But what role does it play? These experiences of anti-Muslim racism, whether it is happening to me or to other people, it has kind of politicised me around religion and I see Muslim as a political identity here... So it's a bit like using identity politics to point out the contradictions and problems around racist behaviour, because then maybe I am confusing people. Because I say "I am a Muslim" and they see I am very "European-like", I quote, in my lifestyle. Because I still get questions like "Oh, you don't drink alcohol?" or "How come you drink alcohol?" or "You don't eat only halal meat?" or something. So expressing that you are a Muslim is a political statement just to show that people are critical towards Muslims or having a lot of stereotypes and maybe I do it just to confuse them or just to make a point.

In this case, the interviewee was not a believing Muslim, but still chose to adopt a Muslim identity due to being repetitiously interpellated as a Muslim. Instead of rejecting Islam, the racist context in which he lives made him use a Muslim identity for antiracist purposes. Since he behaved in what commonly is regarded to be a secular or a non-Muslim way, i.e. drinking alcoholic beverages or eating pork, he deliberately caused confusion among non-Muslims. Thereby, he troubled the concepts of secularism and religiosity, as well as the notions of progress and backwardness. In this case, the subject did not avoid identity as a mean to escape subjection to power; instead the subject consciously used the identity that the interpellating power attributed to him, in order to deconstruct the meaning of the interpellation itself. He adopted a Muslim identity, but in daily practice he challenged the meaning that certain Western discourses attribute to that very identity.

In this chapter, we have seen that the interviewees responded to racist interpellations and their intersections with sexuality either by aligning with the Swedish nation state in order to escape interpellation, or by embracing the identity as non-Swedish identity attributed to

them by the interpellating power. Sometimes this second strategy was a mere reaction to the interpellation, sometimes it appeared as the base for collective or individual resistance against the interpellation. What is striking, however, is that only two subject positions - aligning oneself with or distancing oneself from Swedish society – seemed to be possible for the interviewees as a response to the racism they are confronted with. As we shall see in the following and final analytical chapter, this limited scope of action in relation to “race”/ethnicity contrasts sharply with the variety of subject positions that the interviewees testified to having in relation to sexuality.

Transcending sexual boundaries: multiple identities and time-spaces

Although some interviewees in the accounts of their experiences in Sweden reproduced discourses echoing Western hegemonic notions of sexuality and sexual identities, many of them also shared experiences and reflections that challenged those hegemonic notions. Often, these were narratives that I personally had a hard time fathoming from my own Western-centric and secular perspective on sexuality. Once again, Back’s claim (2013) that the researcher must be ready to challenge their own preconceptions was a guiding principle that proved to be useful for the analysis of these accounts.

Religion and sexuality

Although we earlier saw examples of interviewees who distanced themselves from religion following the Western secular discourse, surprisingly many of the interviewees - to my great astonishment - adopted a completely different perspective on religious faith in relation to their sexuality. The following quote is an example of this:

I believe my sexuality and my religious identity reinforced each other. My sexuality made me more religious, knowing that God, whom I believe in, loves me anyway. After all, this is my relationship with him and he knows...

This interviewee, who identified as a believing Muslim, told me that he since early childhood had felt attracted to other guys. As a consequence of this very early self-awareness, he deduced that God had created him that way. Although people around him regarded homosexuality as a sin, his personal relationship with God and the conviction that he always had been attracted to other men, made him embrace both a gay and a Muslim identity that were not antagonistic to each other. Eventually he found alternative interpretations of the story of Sodom, retold in the traditions of the Abrahamic religions, which challenged the idea

of God condemning sex between men, and this helped him to theologically come to terms with his sexuality. This vision of a harmonious relationship between religious (Muslim) faith and lived homosexuality has also been found by Peumans (2014). What is interesting with this view on religion is that it completely challenges the Western notion of secularism as a necessary condition for (sexual) emancipation. Instead, a belief in a creating God appears as reinforcing the interviewee's acceptance of his own homosexuality. Many interviewees shared this vision of religiosity as non-antagonistic to a gay identity, since "God loves everyone equally" and "Jesus Christ never preached that you should hate someone", as one Catholic interviewee put it. Several religious interviewees also mentioned the gay-inclusive policy of the Swedish Church as an example of the non-contradictory relationship between religion and non-normative sexualities. Although interviewees were troubled by the heteronormativity of many religious institutions and practices, the importance of the faith for personal strength in a heteronormative environment was often emphasized, as in this quote:

I'm a religious person. I'm in transition. I don't know who is there [pointing upwards], how to call it, how to pray. I don't think it even cares. But I really can consider myself a believing person, I could say I am culturally Muslim, because I grew up in that way, I don't practice it, but I grew up in this culture. I think that's what made it so hard, like self-acceptance... because I had to deal with the real consequences of what religion can cause, can lead to. By itself, I don't think religion is a weapon, but I think it can be used as a weapon, or has been used mainly as a weapon... But I guess that it is important that I had faith from childhood, it gave me strength actually... Because when my parents found out about me, my father bet me up severely and my sister had to take me to a remote village and I lived for like four months in isolation. No TV, not any connection, no phone, nothing. And there I only had these [religious] books to read. And I do believe. But I don't believe in a punishing God. We all want to believe in good things, at least we try, some of us.

In this case, the interviewee acknowledged that the religious cultural context in which he had grown up affected his worldview and the worldview of the people surrounding him in a way that caused him severe psychic and physical damage. Despite this, however, he also argued that the religious faith he has been inculcated as a child had given him a psychic strength that later helped him to survive the very painful episode he described, which in turn led him to identify as a religious person. It recalls the argument made by Giametta (2014) that religion can have the function of a stable point of reference for the individual when the outer world is chaotic. I think this is good example of Hall's notion that subjects negotiate their identities in relation to societal structures in a very dynamic and non-predictable way. In this case, the interviewee saw that he had been oppressed by his religiously influenced upbringing, but at the same time drew strength from that same background and adopted a religious identity in order to make his life more bearable.

Moreover, some Muslim interviewees told me they did not really feel religious, but that they had adopted a Muslim identity nonetheless:

I identify as a Muslim. Or I do believe in the Islamic philosophy in a sense, because it is a big part of my identity, how I grew up. I don't necessarily believe in the practices of the religion, I don't practice it. But I do still identify as a Muslim in that sense, with a lot of criticism of course. As I mentioned, it has been hell going through that process of realisation that what I feel, as I grew up, is totally against what my religion says. But then as I grew and had more strength to discover that part of my life - my sexuality -, I also learnt that it doesn't necessarily has to be mutually exclusive, because many people feel like "if you are gay you can't be a Muslim". That I have heard. But I don't believe in that either.... Maybe that is what I mean, having grown up in a very secular environment, which is also quite homophobic, with religious influences. I think that is another thing that is important to mention. As much as they are secular and not openly religious, especially my father's family, they were a socialist family, very left, very vocal and very political, but still culturally very homophobic and transphobic as well at the same time.

This interviewee remarked that although religious practices and traditions often are heteronormative, that does not necessarily mean that secular practices are less heteronormative, and he gave his own family as an example of that. Thereby he deconstructed the teleological idea of religious backwardness and secular progress, which opened up for a Muslim identity that is in concordance with a sexually emancipated gay identity. Moreover, I think it is remarkable that he so clearly stated his Muslim identity and his belonging to "Islamic philosophy", in spite of not being a practising Muslim. This recalls the earlier example of the man who had adopted a Muslim identity as an antiracist stance. Since I did not to the same degree observe the need to hold on to a religious identity among my Christian interviewees, although they also told me about their religious quests, I believe that the importance of a Muslim identity for some interviewees must be seen in the context of a political landscape in Europe that is characterized by islamophobia (Morgan & Poynting 2012). In this context, it seems that people from the Middle East must choose to either adopt a rather hostile stance vis-à-vis Islam (as shown in the previous chapter), or adapt a Muslim identity. Or to put it otherwise: when the subject is interpellated as a Muslim in the current European context, it must respond to that by either reproducing the hegemonic secular discourse, or by clinging on to the Muslim identity that it has been assigned, in order to challenge power from that position. It seems that any other than those two positions is very difficult to occupy. When the latter position is taken, it gives rise to a possible discussion on the relationship between sexuality and religion in a way that seriously challenges the notion of European universalism (Wallerstein 2006) and that opens up for a variety of ways of living sexuality as a religious person. Therefore, this position echoes Massey's call (2005) for

recognising modernity's spatiotemporal multiplicities, in the sense that it implies an opening-up of modernity to several possible trajectories of emancipation.

Challenging Western notions of sexuality

As mentioned in the research review, Shakhsari (2014) argues that the Western hegemonic version of a queer temporality implies an inner journey of the queer subject, which goes from repression of one's sexuality towards sexual emancipation. Typically, this involves a process of coming out of the closet as queer (Provencher 2011). Although some of my interviewees shared the Western notion of coming-out of the closet as a decisive step in a person's sexual emancipation and self-fulfilment, it surprised me that several interviewees presented various forms of critique against the idea of coming-out. Since the process of coming-out is very much linked to the notion of transhistorical sexual categories, I believe the critique against coming-out also challenges Western notions of sexuality more generally. Moreover, since the strategy of coming-out has been important for the Western LGBTQ-community in order to increase visibility and thereby increase pressure for political changes (Manning 2015), this critique of coming-out has also consequences for LGBTQ-politics.

I don't want people to make jokes and at the end of the day directing those jokes to me in certain way. Being an African, I have had enough of those racist jokes... I feel like if someone thinks I am gay, they will come up to me, and the racist jokes on the table will increase. When you have to be the only African in the gathering, because I hang out with a lot of white people, the black jokes tend to creep in anyways... If I were a Swede, I wouldn't care about coming out. But having to deal with racist jokes and homophobic jokes, that is too much for one person. That is too much for me to deal with.

This interviewee described that the degree of racism that he as a black man is confronted with in his everyday life in Sweden hindered him to come out, since he judged it would be unbearable to be confronted with both racist and homophobic "jokes". He told me that this was a conclusion he had come to after some time in Sweden. When he first moved to Sweden he would be more open about his homosexuality, but the discovery of Swedish racism and heteronormativity made him assume a more careful stance concerning to whom he would reveal his sexuality. However, he claimed that if he had been a white Swede, he would have been openly gay, since not suffering from racism would have created a bigger scope of action. Although he assumed a gay identity privately and with carefully chosen people, being interpellated as a black man prevented him from transforming that identity into a form of resistance against heteronormativity. While this example reveals the necessity to analyse the situatedness of coming-out, i.e. exploring in which situations it is possible or even desirable

for a person to come out, the following quote further reveals the complexity of this situated coming-out in relation to the political struggle of the LGBTQ-community:

I don't think I will ever be out, at least that's how I think now, but I don't know how I will think a year later. Because I still don't feel enough security around me here in Sweden, to be able to come out... Even though I am in the board of this organisation right now, you could say I am a public person, it's open online, anyone can search. But I don't feel safe yet to come out to my family, because it's ruining people's life. If you don't have protection – from legally to socially to economically – you cannot afford to do that. Or it doesn't necessarily make things easier, just because you came out. It actually destroys many people's life. I am not saying that one should not come out or hide one's sexuality, because, as I said before, hiding everything made a lot of problems for me as well... In Sweden, people come out and then what? They are still discriminated. They are having a lot of problems. It is not only about coming out and then resisting, or feeling insecure for some years and then expecting that it's going to be better. No. Society is still very heteronormative and you are still an outsider.

In this quote the interviewee claimed that he would “never be out”, by which he understood that he would never tell his family, whom he at the moment of the interviewee was partly economically dependent on, that he is gay. However, since his family lived in his country of origin, he did not have any problem with being openly gay in Sweden and even engaging in LGBTQ social movements in a way that renders his sexuality visible. Still, however, his vulnerable economic and legal situation in Sweden contributed to his decision not to come out to his family. Although he acknowledged the pain that is associated with not being openly gay in relation to one's family and the psychic pressure that is linked to actively having to hide one's sexuality, he also questions the strategy of coming-out, by asking to what degree heteronormativity actually is pushed back by people being openly gay. His example challenges the notion of a unilinear model towards sexual emancipation, both since his dislocation from one country to another meant a partial and not complete coming-out that was marked by moments when he was hiding his sexuality more than in his country of origin, but also because he questioned the validity and the effectiveness of coming out as an individual and collective strategy for LGBTQ-people. This questioning of the usefulness of coming out as a personal and collective strategy was repeated by several interviewees.

Many interviewees talked about coming-out as a “pressure” that was more intense in Sweden than in their countries of origin. People around them would assume that they had come out to their families and expected them to have a “coming-out story” to share. Although they acknowledged that not being out to one's family also constituted a form of pressure, they felt at unease with what they perceived as an obligation within the Swedish LGBTQ-community to be completely open with one's sexuality. Moreover, some interviewees questioned the notion of coming-out on the ground that it is unfair since heterosexual people

never are expected to declare their sexuality, or sometimes by referring to it as a “trend”, thereby lacking universal value and application. The following quote grasps various of these dimensions:

It is a stupid idea, coming out. This pressure. I mean, I'm interested in movies and there is the category of gay and lesbian movies. And 90 per cent of these movies are coming out-stories. How boring! And people are still watching it, every two years there is a big commercial success of a coming-out story. And I don't really understand why it never ends, it's not like a trend and then over, but you have to confirm this, this ideal of coming out and I think in the end that it is a very commercial thing. You know, when you come out you will confirm a certain kind of identity. And when you have a certain standardised and defined identity you will buy certain products, go to certain places, wear certain kinds of clothes, and hear a certain kind of music. So you have a steady consumption model. This is really what the capitalist society wants from you... I had always a problem with these kinds of categories, like being gay, straight, bisexual, and then the subcategories.

In this quote the interviewee regarded what saw his as a “trendy” pressure to come out as linked to a consumerist model of living one’s sexuality that ultimately serves to reinforce capitalism. This echoes Hennessy’s argument (2000) that the LGBTQ-struggle during the last decades has implied a commodification of gay and lesbian identities. Thus, for this interviewee, it became important to resist the “pressure” to come out in order to resist the current economic order. What more is, the gay identity is questioned and is regarded as not useful for political struggle.

What is mostly interesting in the reflections of the interviewees concerning the process of coming-out is the variety that was found in the ways they handled their sexuality. While some interviewees embraced a Western discourse on sexual emancipation and emphasised the importance of coming-out, many interviewees criticised it. And when they presented their critique they did it from very different perspectives, which also implied giving different meanings to the very concept of coming-out. I believe such a plurality of subject positions reveals a rather high degree of scope of action that the interviewees had at their disposal when confronting structures of heteronormativity. This variety constitutes a challenge for a unilinear model towards sexual emancipation (Shakhsari 2014), as well as a challenge – in the realm of sexuality - for the European universalist binary representation of the Western and non-West (Wallerstein 2006), and it finally highlights a multiplicity of possible paths – recalling Massey’s argument (2005) of modernity’s spatiotemporal multiplicities - for oppressed subjects to wander when interpellated as non-heteronormative.

The non-unity of queer identity

Although I never asked the interviewees specifically about how they defined their sexuality, questions on identity in relation to sexuality were often brought up spontaneously by the interviewees, not least in the discussions on coming-out. In this section I intend to give some examples of the ways the interviewees discussed their own identity within intersecting structures of oppression. As we shall see, this brings up questions of the situatedness of the queer subject, but also the non-unity of non-heterosexual identities.

For me, no political struggle should be prioritized over the other, but the context we are living in pushes us to prioritize some of our identities over others, because this identity is more vulnerable. I am more vulnerable to be kicked out of Sweden because I am black than because I am gay. If I want to live as a gay migrant in Sweden, I first have to defend the migrants' right to exist. Because if we don't have that right, we will all be kicked out. And what will I do with my sexuality then? It is not me who chooses to prioritize the struggle; it is the political context we are in that pushes me to prioritize... I find myself defending conservative Muslims because I am defending their right to exist, I am defending their freedom of expression. I know I don't agree with them, but I have to defend them. But if we weren't in such a hostile society, I would have had my power to defend myself and to argue with these conservatives about my identity. But because we are now all gathered in one camp, we have to prioritize our battles... I have to defend the right of everyone to be in Sweden, no matter what religion they have. And then within these communities, I have to defend the rights of minorities, LGBTQ-rights. But it is part of the context, not a different context. I don't even know if I am clear to myself.

In this quote, the interviewee revealed that he defined himself as a black gay man, as a migrant and a Muslim, and he tried to elaborate on how to relate to those multiple identities. He described that in the current political landscape in Sweden he saw himself obliged to prioritise some identity-based struggles over others. Due to what he perceived as increasing levels of racism and Islamophobia in Sweden, he argued that it was primordial to defend those subjects racialised as non-white, while the defence of LGBTQ-rights occupied a secondary position. This prioritisation moreover led him to defend “conservative Muslims” who promote anti-gay policies, since not doing this would weaken the collective positions of people of colour in Sweden, which the interviewee in turn argued would be a threat to his safety. The phrase “I don't even know if I am clear to myself” testifies to the internal struggle the interviewee found himself in, trying to navigate between a multiplicity of selves and identities. If we bear in mind that this is a person who sought asylum in Sweden due to sexuality-based persecution in his country of origin, it adds more complexity to the situation in which he found himself in Sweden and to his quest to find stable identities to relate to. Besides claiming that a less racist society would make it possible for him not to prioritise one identity-based struggle over the other, he also told me that the relative strength and success of the LGBTQ-movement in Sweden contributed to his choice of prioritisation, since it was not

his homosexuality but his position as a migrant that constituted the biggest threat for his survival in Sweden.

Besides references to the relative success of the LGBTQ-movement in Europe (Roseneil et al. 2013) as something that positively contributed to the interviewees' experiences in Sweden, some interviewees brought up the same success, but argued that it had made their own sexual identity more troublesome. They told me that they were longing for an identity that bore a transformative power and that could contribute to social change, but that the relative success of the LGBTQ-movement had, in their views, ended the transformative power of the movement in Europe. Confronted with this dilemma, these interviewees then turned to a migrant identity, which they argued had a higher potential for the development of a transformative political strategy. While this ability to assume a non-queer identity could be argued to correspond to Butler's call (1997) to challenge the interpellating power by refusing the identity that tempts us in exchange for our subjection, it is noteworthy that the queer identity here is abandoned due to the success of the LGBTQ-movement and not due to the levels of heteronormativity in society.

In line with this argument, there were also interviewees who argued for a renewal of the struggle of sexual emancipation by questioning *which* subject the call for liberation is being directed to:

This upper-class gay guy on the front page of QX magazine [a Swedish monthly gay magazine], I don't know if I have that much in common with him. There are other people not fitting into that picture, people who are completely outside the [gay] community, but with whom I have a lot more in common. There are other sexualities... I think that we also must liberate heterosexuality. And that project hasn't been formulated yet. Let's liberate it. There are stories that haven't been told yet.

In this case, the interviewee consciously deconstructed the unity of the non-heterosexual subject and called for a political struggle that would transcend identity and bring several subjects together. By arguing the necessity of "liberating heterosexuals" he also challenged the notion of a unilinear direction of sexual emancipation linked to a pre-discursive understanding of sexual categories and a binary construction of sexual identities, since the meaning of "heterosexual" becomes unstable when its "liberation" is located in the future and not given a priori. Once again, however, it seems like this relative easiness with which sexual identity was played with in his account, corresponds to a particular time-space in which several of the aims of the identity-based struggle for sexual emancipation already have been fulfilled. It appears that it is this momentum of the LGBTQ-struggle that gives the possibility

for a deconstruction of the subject, and renders possible a call for an alliance of several subject positions in order to foster a struggle beyond identities and towards a political project, which with Massey's words (2005), remains "open-ended".

Thus, we have seen in this chapter that several interviewees handled sexuality and sexual identity with great creativity, which corresponded to a rather big scope of action vis-à-vis the structure of sexual oppression that the interviewees seemed to experience in Sweden, something that many of them attributed directly or indirectly to the relative success of the LGBTQ-movement in Sweden, despite their disappointment with the prevailing levels of heteronormativity. However, this scope of action appeared to be severely restricted by their experiences of racism and their responses to these.

Concluding remarks

The interviews I conducted in order to grasp the experience of queer migrants in Sweden, and to explore how they navigate between racist representations of their cultures and the notion of the West as the embodiment of "tolerance" vis-à-vis LGBTQ-people, constitute a rather small sample which suffers from the limitations previously discussed, not least when it comes to gender representation. To draw general conclusions about the situation of queer migrants in Sweden from this sample would therefore be unwise. Nevertheless, I believe that the relative heterogeneity found in the accounts of the interviewees contributes to grasping the contours of queer migrants' experiences, strategies and reflections in a way that makes it possible to define at least some tentative concluding remarks.

What struck me the most was the very different ways that structures of racism, on the one hand, and heteronormativity, on the other, were confronted in the narratives of the interviewees. The experience of racism among queer migrants in Sweden seems to make only two basic subject positions possible: alignment with the Swedish nation state, expressed through love for and admiration of Sweden, or distancing oneself from the same, by emphasising their migrant identity. The interviewees' experience of heteronormativity, on the other hand, gave rise to a variety of strategies for subject positioning: from reproducing the hegemonic discourse of Western sexual emancipation, to questioning the idea of secularism as the *sine qua non* of individual emancipation, to questioning the validity of the strategy of coming-out, to challenging the notion of the queer subject. That is to say, in my material, responses to racism seemed to give rise to a much more dichotomous set of alternatives of action than responses to heteronormativity. While Butler's call (1997) for turning away from

power by rejecting the identity that interpellation offers was possible when confronting heteronormativity, it was not at all possible in the encounter with racism. In this latter case, the interviewees were left with the option of either embracing the identity offered by interpellation in order to challenge power from that position, or reproducing the discourse of the interpellation and thereby trying to escape subjection to power. When this latter option was made, however, it seemed clear that power itself was in no way challenged, but rather reinforced. The subject's identity in relation to "race"/ethnicity seems in these cases to be more understandable from Hall's view (1996) on identity-making as a processual overlapping of sutures that the subject uses in different ways depending on the specificity of the societal context. That is to say, sometimes a self-identification with the "racial"/ethnic position attributed by the interpellating power seemed to empower the interviewee; at other occasions the empowerment of the subject was sought by evading that same identity.

Moreover, the changes that have taken place in Western countries during the past decades in terms of sexual policy and discourses on sexuality seem to have decisively influenced the way interviewees experienced and handled the intersection of racism and heteronormativity. We saw examples of how, in the accounts of the interviewees, the relative LGBTQ-friendliness in Sweden could enhance the social position of queer migrants vis-à-vis other migrants, but also how racism within the LGBTQ-community attributed a lower social position to queer migrants vis-à-vis white Swedes. We also saw that the relative sexual freedom that many hoped to attain in Sweden was hindered by the experience of racism. This in turn gave in some cases rise to political resistance based on the identity of being a queer migrant. However, this very identity seems to express within itself a non-harmonious relationship between sexuality and "race"/ethnicity. While the sexual part of the queer migrant identity is linked to hegemonic notions of progress and Western values, the racial part of that same identity suffers from the negative consequences of a Eurocentric world-order. This contradiction led some interviewees to question how to prioritise one part of their identity over the other in a context in which the racism they experience seems trickier to handle than heteronormativity; in other cases, it led to a general critique of a political struggle based on sexual identity.

Finally, it seems to me then that the heterogeneity among the strategies that the interviewees adopted when confronted with the intersection between racism and heteronormativity after migration from one spatial point on the globe to another, seriously challenges the notion of a unilinearity of time as far as the realm of sexuality is concerned. On the contrary, their dislocation demonstrates a plurality of trajectories and in some cases a

multiplicity of experienced selves. To the degree that this plurality is recognised, the Eurocentric understanding of time-space seems to be challenged. In that sense, recognition of the multiplicity of subjectivities among queer migrants might help us to imagine a global open-ended future that is yet to be constructed.

References

- Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York and London: Monthly Review Press.
- Atkinson, R., & Flint, J. (2004). Snowball Sampling. In Michael S. Lewis-Beck, A. Bryman, & Tim Futing Liao (Eds.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*, 1044-1045. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Back, L. (2013). *The Art of Listening*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Balibar, E. & Wallerstein, I. (1991). *Race, nation, class: ambiguous identities*. London: Verso.
- Belfrage, C., & Ryner, M. (2009). Renegotiating the Swedish Social Democratic Settlement: From Pension Fund Socialism to Neoliberalization. *Politics & Society*, 37(2), 257
- Berg, L. & Millbank, J. (2009). Constructing the Personal Narratives of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Asylum Claimants. *Journal of Refugee Studies*.
- Borchorst, A., & Siim, B. (2002). The women-friendly welfare states revisited. *NORA: Nordic Journal Of Women's Studies*, 10(2), 90-98.
- Bredström, A. (2009). Sweden: HIV/AIDS policy and the 'crisis' of multiculturalism. *Race Class*, vol. 50 no. 4, 57-74
- Brown, W. (2006) *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*. Woodstock: Princeton University Press.
- Burman, E. (2015). Fanon's Lacan and the Traumatogenic Child: Psychoanalytic Reflections on the Dynamics of Colonialism and Racism. *Theory, Culture & Society*.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1997). *The Psychic Life of Power – Theories in Subjection*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Cantú, L. (2002). De Ambiente. Queer Tourism and the Shifting Boundaries of Mexican Male Sexualities. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 8 (1-2), 139-166.
- Chávez, K. R. (2013). *Queer Migration Politics: Activist Rhetoric and Coalitional Possibilities*. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press.
- Collins, P. H. (2013). *On Intellectual Activism*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Cornelis, I. & Van Hiel, A (2015). Extreme-Right Voting in Western Europe: The Role of Social-Cultural and Antiegalitarian Attitudes. *Political Psychology*, 36(6)
- De los Reyes, P., Molina, I., & Mulinari, D. (2012). *Maktens (o)lika förklådnader : kön, klass & etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige : en festskrift till Wuokko Knocke*. Stockholm: Atlas.
- Deland, M. & Westin, C. (Eds.) (2007). *BRUNT! Nationalistisk & nazistisk mobilisering i vår närmaste omvärld under efterkrigstiden*. Stockholm: Atlas.
- DeVault, M. L. & Gross, G. (2006) Feminist Interviewing: Experience, Talk, and Knowledge. In Hesse-Biber S. N. (Ed.) *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis* (173-197). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Doucet, A. and Mauthner N. (2006). Feminist Methodologies and Epistemologies. In C. D. Bryant and D. L. Peck (Eds.) *Handbook of 21st Century Sociology* (26-32). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Drucker, P. (2015). *Warped: Gay Normality and Queer Anti-Capitalism*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Duggan, L. (2002). The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism. In Castronovo, R. & Nelson, D. D. (Eds.). *Materializing Democracy. Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*. Durham and Oxford: Duke University Press.

- Fargues, P. & Bonfanti, S. (2014). When the best option is a leaky boat: Why migrants risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean and what Europe is doing about it. European University Institute: Migration Policy Centre. October 2014 (05).
- Foner, N. (2015). Is Islam in Western Europe Like Race in the United States?. *Sociological Forum*, 30(4), 885-899.
- Gardell, M. (2015). *Raskrigaren : seriemördaren Peter Mangs*. Stockholm : Leopard.
- Giametta, C. (2014). 'Rescued' subjects: The question of religiosity for non-heteronormative asylum seekers in the UK. *Sexualities* , 17 (5/6), 583-599.
- Goodey, J. (2007). Racist violence in Europe: Challenges for official data collection. *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, 30(4), 570-589.
- Halberstam, J. (2005). *In a queer time and place: transgender bodies, subcultural lives*. New York: New York University Press.
- Hall, S. (1992). The question of cultural identity. In Hall, S., Held, D., & McGrew, A. (Eds.) *Modernity and its futures*. Cambridge: Polity Press in association with the Open University.
- Hall, S. (1996). Introduction: Who Needs Identity?. in Hall, S. & du Gay, P. (Eds.): *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: SAGE Publications
- Hennessy, R. (2000). *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism*. New York: Routledge.
- Howe, C. (2014). Sexual adjudications and queer transpositions. *Journal of Language and Sexualities* , 3:1, 136-155.
- Hübinette, T., & Lundström, C. (2011). Sweden after the Recent Election: The Double-Binding Power of Swedish Whiteness through the Mourning of the Loss of 'Old Sweden' and the Passing of 'Good Sweden'. *NORA: Nordic Journal Of Women's Studies*, 19(1), 42-52.
- Johnson J. M. (2001). In-Depth Interviewing. In Gubrium J. F. & Holstein J. A. (Eds.) *Handbook of Interview Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Kosnick, K. (2015). A Clash of Subcultures? Questioning Queer-Muslim Antagonisms in the Neoliberal City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol 39 (4), 687-703.
- Kuisma, M., & Ryner, M. (2012). Third Way decomposition and the rightward shift in Finnish and Swedish politics. *Contemporary Politics*, 18(3), 325-342.
- Larsson, S., & Ekman, M. (2001). *Sverigedemokraterna : den nationella rörelsen*. Stockholm: Ordfront.
- Lawler, S. (2005). Introduction: Class, Culture and Identity. *Sociology*. Volume 39(5): 797-806. London: SAGE Publications.
- Lemert, C. (2011). A History of Identity. In Elliott, A. (Ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Identity Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Lewis, R. A. (2014). "Gay? Prove it": The politics of queer antideportation activism. *Sexualities* , 17 (8), 958-975.
- Lewis, R. A., & Naples, N. A. (2014). Introduction: Queer Migration, asylum, and displacement. *Sexualities* , 17 (8), pp. 911-918.
- Listerborn, C. (2010). Våld i staden: vardagsrasism och maktutövning i offentliga rum. In Graninger, G. & Knuthammar, C. (Eds.) (2010). *Makten över rummet: tankar om den hållbara staden*. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press.
- Luibhéid, E. (2004). Heteronormativity and Immigration Scholarship: A Call for Change. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* , 10 (3), 227-235.
- Luibhéid, E. (2008). Queer/Migration. An Unruly Body of Scholarship. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* , 14:2-3, pp. 169-190.

- Luibhéid, E. (2014). Afterword: Troubling identities and identifications. *Sexualities*, 17 (8), 1035-1040.
- Mai, N., & King, R. (2009). Love, Sexuality and Migration: Mapping the Issues. *Mobilities*, 4 (3), 295-307.
- Manalansan IV, M. (2006). Queer Intersections: Sexuality and Gender in Migration Studies. *International Migration Review*, 40, 224-249.
- Manning, J. (2015). Communicating Sexual Identities: A Typology of Coming Out. *Sexuality & Culture*, 19(1), 122-138.
- Massey, D. (2005). *For Space*. London: SAGE Publications.
- McClintock, A (1995). *Imperial leather: race, gender and sexuality in the colonial contest*. London: Routledge.
- McGowan, L. (2014). Right-Wing Violence in Germany: Assessing the Objectives, Personalities and Terror Trail of the National Socialist Underground and the State's Response to It. *German Politics*, 23(3).
- Morgan, G., & Poynting, S. (2012). *Global Islamophobia : Muslims and moral panic in the West*. Farnham, Surrey ; Burlington, Vt. : Ashgate Pub.
- Peumans, W. (2014). Queer Muslim migrants in Belgium: A research note on same-sex sexualities and lived religion. *Sexualities*, 17 (5/6), 618-631.
- Powell, C. & Dépelteau, F. (2013). Introduction. In Dépelteau, F. & Powell, C. (Eds.). *Conceptualizing relational sociology : ontological and theoretical issues*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Provencher, D. M. (2011). Coming Out a l'oriental: Maghrebi-French Performances of Gender, Sexuality, and Religion. *Journal Of Homosexuality*, 58(6/7), 812-833
- Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist assemblages: homonationalism in queer times*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Roseneil, S., Crowhurst, I., Hellesund, T., Santos, A. C., & Stoilova, M. (2013). Changing Landscapes of Heteronormativity: The Regulation and Normalization of Same-Sex Sexualities in Europe. *Social Politics: International Studies In Gender, State And Society*, (2), 165.
- Rydgren, J. (2006). *From Tax Populism to Ethnic Nationalism. Radical Right-wing Populism in Sweden*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Sager, M. (2011). *Everyday clandestinity : experiences on the margins of citizenship and migration policies*. Lund : Faculty of Social Sciences, Centre for Gender Studies, Lund University,.
- Schierup, C., & Ålund, A. (2011). From Paradoxes of Multiculturalism to Paradoxes of Liberalism: Sweden and the European Neo-Liberal Hegemony. *Journal For Critical Education Policy Studies*, 9(2), 125-142.
- Schierup, C., Hansen, P., & Castles, S. (2006). *Migration, citizenship, and the European welfare state : a European dilemma*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Shakhsari, S. (2014). The queer time of death: Temporality, geopolitics, and refugee rights. *Sexualities*, 17 (8),. 998-1015.
- Sherlock, C. & Thynne C. (2010). "Research with Vulnerable Groups: Collaboration as an Ethical Response. *Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*, Vol. 7, No 2.
- Skeggs, B. (2004). *Class, self, culture*. London: Routledge.
- Smart, C. (2002). *Personal Life: New Directions in Sociological Thinking*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Smith, D. E. (2005). *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*. Oxford: Altamira Press.
- Thomas, D. (2014). Fortress Europe: Identity, race and surveillance. *International Journal Of Francophone Studies*, 17(3-4), 445-468.

- Vetenskapsrådet (1990). Forskningsetiska principer inom humanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning. Available at: <http://www.codex.vr.se/texts/HSFR.pdf>
- Wallerstein, I (2006). *European Universalism – The Rhetoric of Power*. London and New York: The New Press.
- Warner, M. (1991). Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet. *Social text*, No 29, 3-17.
- White, M. A. (2013). Ambivalent Homonationalisms. Transnational Queer Intimacies and Territorialized Belongings. *Interventions - International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 15 (1), 37-54.
- White, M. A. (2014). Documenting the undocumented: Toward a queer politics of no borders. *Sexualities* , 17 (8), 976-997.
- Wikström, H. (2014). Gender, Culture and Epistemic Injustice. The Institutional Logic in Assessment of Asylum Applications in Sweden. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 4, 210-218.