



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

# **Representation of migration in the Swedish nation branding**

*A qualitative analysis of the representation of migration in the photo exhibition  
'Portraits of Migration' produced by the Swedish Institute*

**Ida Arneson**  
**Master thesis**  
**Department of gender studies**  
**2019**  
**Supervisor: Diana Mulinari**

## Abstract

In this essay, practices of “nation branding” will be explored through the representations of migration, gender (and nation) of the exhibition *Portraits of Migration*, produced by the Swedish Institute and promoted through Swedish embassies and consulates worldwide. Theoretically, the essay is inspired by the tradition of British cultural studies and of feminist postcolonial exploration of nationhood and belonging. Methodologically, it is qualitative inspired, and the overall method applied is discourse analysis. The essays focus lies on an analysis of the exhibition, with a special focus on the ways the different actors that have participated in the production and distribution of the exhibition understand and create meaning regarding this specific cultural product. The findings of this essay shows, that the representation of ‘migration’ in the Swedish nation branding, is constructed in relation to values of modernisation, such as gender equality and secularisation, as well as neoliberal ideas of work and the individuals responsible. Moreover, these values contribute to a discourse of ‘good citizen/migrants’, which are constructed in relation to the question of ‘who belongs to the nation’. The representations are also analysed in relation to stereotypes, where the exhibition, both reproduce and challenge stereotypical representations based on race/ethnicity and gender.

Key words: Representation, Nation Branding, Migration, Ethnicity/race, Gender, The Good Migrant

## **Acknowledgement**

First of all, I would like to thank all of you who participated and contributed to this essay as informants to the interviews. Thank you to employees at the Swedish Institute and other professionals at Swedish foreign missions, and others who, in different ways, been involved in the exhibition of *Portraits of Migration* and for letting me interview you. It was a pleasure. Secondly, I would like to thank Diana Mulinari at the University of Lund for guiding me through this essay. Thank you for your comments. And finally, I would like to thank my loved ones for supporting me through this process of writing.

Ida Arneson

## Table of contents

<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.2 Aim and research question.....	7
1.3 My role as a researcher .....	7
<b>2. Background.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 The Swedish Institute .....	8
2.2 Portraits of Migration .....	9
2.3 The image of Sweden abroad.....	10
<b>3. Previous research .....</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Gender and liberalism in the nation branding of Sweden .....	12
<b>4. Research field .....</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1 British cultural studies .....	14
<b>5. Theoretical framework.....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Representation .....	15
<i>Stereotyping, race and gender.....</i>	<i>16</i>
5.2 Nation, migration and neoliberal values .....	18
<i>Cultural reproduction of nation, citizen and non-citizen.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Community of value.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Constructing the 'good migrant' – values of modernisation and neoliberalism.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<b>6. Methodology .....</b>	<b>23</b>
6.1 Social constructivist approach.....	24
6.2 Feminist epistemology .....	25
<b>7. Methods and data material.....</b>	<b>26</b>
7.1 Material.....	26
7.2 Discourse analysis.....	27
7.3 Images and visual method .....	28
<i>Visual discourse analysis.....</i>	<i>29</i>
7.4 Interviews .....	30
<i>Reflections on the interview.....</i>	<i>32</i>
<b>8. Analysis .....</b>	<b>34</b>
8.1 The representation of the beyond 'chaos and collapse' debate.....	34
8.2 Discourses of humanity: articulation of race/ethnicity .....	36
8.3 National belonging through nationalistic elements .....	37
8.4 Confident women and caring men: articulation of gender .....	40
8.5 Discourses of modernisation and gender equality .....	42
8.6 The working, deserving migrant.....	46
8.7 The representation of Sweden.....	50
<b>9. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>10. References .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>11. Appendix .....</b>	<b>62</b>
10.1 Interviews .....	62
10.2 Interview guide.....	62

## 1. Introduction

*Portraits of Migration* is a photography exhibition produced by the Swedish Institute (SI), a department under the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The material of the exhibition is part of the *Sweden communication* SI produces, which aim to “communicate Sweden and Swedish skills, experience and values in a broad perspective” (SI, n.d, b). This communication, in turn, has its background in the concept of nation branding. According to Jezierska and Towns, the concept of nation branding “aims to create and build a country’s image in order to enhance its international reputation, promote tourism and investments, enhance chances to participate in multilateral projects, and more” (2017, p.56). The exhibition was launched in 2017, and behind the work is the well-established professional photographer Alexander Mahmoud. Since the premiere, the portraits have been exhibited at different Swedish embassies and consulates in several different countries and continents. Work on the project of *Portraits of Migration* started in 2015. During this time, “a lot of disinformation about Sweden and migration was spread across the world” according to the Swedish Institute (SI, 2017, p.1, c.). Therefore, the aim of the exhibition is “*to add new perspectives to the story of Sweden and migration, and to give insights into the current situation in the country. Beyond headlines of chaos and collapse, beyond politics and public authorities, there are people who try to build a life in a new country*” (SI, 2017, g.), and the exhibition aims to show a more “nuanced and realistic image of Sweden today” (ibid). I will give a further description of the exhibition in the background section.

What debate of “disinformation, chaos and collapse” does the subtitle of the exhibition “*Sweden beyond the headlines*” refer to then? Overall, this debate is concerned with the image of Sweden abroad: is Sweden a nation of peace and equality or chaos and collapse? This is an on-going *discursive struggle*. More specifically, the subtitle refers to the recent years ‘negative debate’, or what SI calls disinformation, about Sweden and migration, which has taken place on different international social media platforms (SI, 2019, a). Based on the report of the Swedish Institute, two very different images of Sweden are shared in English articles, and on online platforms. On the one hand, there is an image of Sweden abroad as prominent when it comes to questions of gender, social equality and sustainability. On the other hand, there is an image of Sweden abroad as in chaos due to its situation of migration. These two very different discourses of Sweden and Swedish nationhood are what I will refer to as “the struggle of the image of Sweden abroad”. That is, these different discourses exist

parallel to each other, and both of them are making efforts to hegemonize the public debate. In relation to the aim to go “beyond the headlines of chaos and collapse”, a central framework of this essay is to explore the effort made by the Swedish Institute to construct representations of migration that transcend the (very well-established) stereotypes and prejudices of Western racism and ethno-nationalism. Moreover, this framework opens up for questions such as: from what discourses, norms and power structures are these ‘new’ representations of migrants constructed?

To provide rich material for this discussion, I have interviewed most of the people who have contributed to the work of the exhibition in different ways, both people who are portrayed in the exhibition, the photographer, and employees from the Swedish Institute and from embassies who have exhibited the portraits. Because many of the research subjects were not located in Sweden at the time of the interviews, they have been conducted over phone. The materials for this study are these interviews, the portraits, and as well their captions. The method employed is discourse analysis combined with visual methodologies. The study will be framed within the field of British Cultural Studies, with an overall theoretical framework of representation, focusing on postcolonial theories regarding the construction of stereotypes, national belonging and discourses of the ‘good migrant’. Research of nation branding is not very common in the field of gender and cultural studies in Sweden. Therefore, I wish to bring new insights into the subject.

### **1.1 Problem definition**

The different images of Sweden abroad are part of a broader discursive struggle, where different ideologies want to reach hegemony. The *Sweden communication* produced by SI is a way to participate in this struggle. What values and norms are produced in the representation of migration in the exhibition of *Portraits of Migration*? From what power structures are these representation constructed? Feminist and postcolonial writer hooks refers to filmmaker Parmear, who argues, “images play a crucial role in defining and controlling the political and social power to which both individuals and marginalized groups have access. The deeply ideological nature of imagery determines not only how other people think about us but how we think about ourselves” (hooks, 2015, p.5). Based on this, the exhibition concerns questions of defining who belongs to the nation of Sweden.

## 1.2 Aim and research question

A central frame of this essay is to explore the efforts made by the Swedish Institute to construct representations of migration that transcend the (very well-established) stereotypes and prejudices of Western racism and ethno-nationalism. The aim with this essay is to analyse from what values, discourses and power structures these representations of migration are constructed from, and how these representations contribute to a specific image of Sweden abroad.

*How are 'migrants' and 'the Swedish nation' represented in the exhibition 'Portraits of Migration' by the Swedish Institute?*

- How are race/ethnicity, national belonging and gender articulated and acted upon?
- How are representation of inclusion/exclusion to the imagined nation constructed, in relation to discourses of modernisation, gender equality and neoliberalism?

## 1.3 My role as a researcher

Feminist methodological tradition underlines the centrality of reflexivity during the research process, particularly with regards to the researcher's own location. This is something I will develop in the methodological section. However, I want to provide a short description of my own engagement with Swedish Foreign Policy. I have both focused on these topics within my academic education (global studies and feminist studies) and through my engagement in the global peace movement. I have also been an intern at a Swedish embassy, where I received practical insight into working with the concept of *Sweden communication* and the work of promoting Sweden abroad. These experiences have shaped me in different ways, and I see what I have learned as a strength and developed an understanding of the work of the Sweden's foreign communication, and how one can engage critically in the image of Sweden abroad as well.

## 1.4 Delimitations

The focus of this essay is limited to the study of representation through stereotypes and discourses of values, such as modernisation, gender equality and neoliberalism, concerning the construction of national belonging. I have focused on the content of the exhibition, as well as the life world of the informants who have in different ways been engaged in the exhibition. I will not study the exhibition in relation to the perspective of the audience, the gaze of the photographer, or the physical environment, such as museums or embassies, where it has been exhibited.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 The Swedish Institute

The Swedish Institute is a public agency, founded in 1945, with the mission to promote Sweden abroad and to build international collaborations and relationships (SI, n.d, h, e.). Their work is part of the Swedish nation branding strategy. Overall, it is the Council for the Promotion of Sweden (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, NSU)<sup>1</sup> that coordinates the work of the nation branding of Sweden, and the Swedish Institute is a member of the NSU council (Jezierska and Towns, 2017, p.58). In the parliament's regulation, the mission for the Swedish Institute is defined as following: "The mission of the Swedish Institute is to share information and knowledge about Sweden and the Swedish language abroad and to promote cooperation and long lasting relationships with other countries in the areas of culture, education, research and democracy and community life in general. The activities of the agency aim to increase the global environment's interest and trust in Sweden, increase cooperation in areas close to Sweden and to promote a democratic, equitable and sustainable global development" (SFS 2015:152). The Swedish Institute is divided into four different departments, international relations, *Sweden communications*, strategic leadership and management and digitalisation and communication (SI, n.d, d)

This essay is centred around the Swedish Institute work of *communicating Sweden*, which is introduced as following on their website: "Creating trust in Sweden is an ambition that informs all SI activities. Our task is to communicate Sweden and Swedish skills, experience and values in a broad perspective" (SI n.d, b). The *Sweden communication* is shared through different platforms and activities, for example through the website of *Sweden.se* and *Sharingswden.se* and in collaboration with other Swedish departments (SI, n.d, b). The Swedish Institute also produces 'toolkits' for the Swedish foreign missions: "Sharing Sweden is a web platform with easily accessible material and toolkits that Swedish missions abroad and other actors can use to promote visibility and interest in Sweden as a country. The material is designed to reflect Sweden in a broad perspective, encompassing SI's overarching themes of social development, innovation, culture and creativity and other relevant thematic issues in Swedish government policy (...) Sharing Sweden offers everything from pre-packaged concepts, toolkits, fact sheets and books about Sweden to information about how people can work with the Sweden brand in their communication" (ibid). *Portraits of*

---

<sup>1</sup> NSU is under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



*Migration* is one of several toolkits the Swedish Institute provides for Swedish foreign mission's communication of Sweden.

## **2.2 Portraits of Migration**

The exhibition "*Portraits of Migration- Sweden beyond the headline*" was initiated by SI during the autumn of 2015 and launched in May 2017 (Sharing Sweden, 2017). As mentioned previously, the exhibition of *Portraits of Migration* has its background, according to the tablet of the exhibition, in the *disinformation* which was shared abroad about Sweden and migration, and the aim of the exhibition is to "show, through personal narratives, a nuanced image of Sweden and migration, to generate discussion on migration and integration in Sweden and abroad, and to boost international interest in and understanding about the migration situation in Sweden" (SI, 2017, c). The target groups for the exhibition are "the media, policymakers and shapers of public opinion and citizens interested in Sweden, migration and integration" (ibid). The photographer (as well as author and journalist) behind the portraits is Alexander Mahmoud. He is known for his previous work on themes of racism (SI, 2017, c, g). He photographs for one of the biggest newspaper in Sweden, Dagens Nyheter (DN), and he has been nominated for the big journalistic prize in Sweden (HD, 2018). The exhibition includes twenty portraits, and is described to portray people "who all had to leave their home countries (over the last 40 years) and flee to Sweden at some point in their life. They share their stories of migration to Sweden – personal stories of flight, trauma and hope" (SI, 2017, c, f). All the portraits come with a caption, which are based on interviews Mahmoud have conducted with the portrayed individuals (SI, 2017, f, Personal communication).

The toolkit of *Portraits of Migration* include three main parts, which can be showed separately or together. The portraits are one part. The second part consists of images and texts describing organisations in Sweden working with questions of migration and integration. The third part consist is eight info graphics showing different statistics regarding Sweden and migration (SI, 2017, c). The information about the civil society in Sweden has not been much used by the foreign missions and will therefore not be part of my material (Personal Communication). Additionally, the info graphics will not be part of my material. At the time of writing, the exhibition has been shown in twelve countries (Alexandermahmoud, 2018), for example in the US, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Egypt, Turkey, Poland, Belgium, Deutschland and China (Personal Communication).

### 2.3 The image of Sweden abroad

Feminist scholar Towns reflects on the important pillar in the development of the Swedish nation branding strategy. In the post-war period, the concept ‘modern’ came to form the construction of Sweden’s national identity. This identity was represented through “rationally developed institutions that provide efficient, democratic and just solutions to collective problems” (Towns, 2002, p. 163). The identity construction of the Swedish nation-state has also been framed through a moral axis, and since the Second World War the Swedish state has represented itself as a ‘moral superpower’ and “an ‘ideal’ for other states“ (2002, p.162). Through the self-understanding as a ‘modern state’, Town argues, “Sweden saw itself as the ‘avant garde’ in various regards, post-war Sweden has often represented itself both as an ‘ideal’ for other states that have not come as ‘far’ in their maturity process and as having the moral responsibility to enable such emulation” (2002, p.163). Since the 1990s, gender equality has been an important pillar in the representation of the national identity as well: “the gender equality identity was incorporated into previous Swedish representations of the Self as a ‘model’ state with ‘moral obligations’ to the international community” (2002, p.162). This has of course, paved the way for the Swedish state declaration of the feminist foreign policy in 2014 (Regeringskansliet, 2018). Feminist scholars however, have challenged discourses of the gender equal Sweden. For example, they have analysed how gender equality is shaped as a boundary at the core between us (rational, progressive) Sweden and the rest (patriarchal, traditional) (Martinsson et al., 2016).

However, there are several images of Sweden today, and the image of Sweden as a ‘modern, progressive gender equal nation-state’ is a symbol of intense criticism by, what Paternotte and Kuhar call, the movement of the ‘Global Right’. The authors argue there is a “growing concern for the fate of liberal democracy and fears that fundamental rights might be under threat” (2018, p.7). This concern has been especially expressed in relation to questions of gender equality and sexual rights: “Most of the time, these threats are lumped together, merging phenomena as diverse as populism, far right parties, religious fundamentalism, nationalism, racism, neoliberalism or austerity politics. These are often gathered under the broad umbrella term of ‘Global Right’, which identifies right-wing actors in opposition to the advocates of progressive causes (with whom they generally interact) (...)” (2018, p.7). Besides being anti-gender equality and anti-sexual rights, another central ‘question’ this so-called ‘Global Right’ movement, inspired by ethno-nationalist agendas, has been organised around is anti-migration/anti-refugee. This situation is reflected in the Swedish Institute’s

annual report *The image of Sweden abroad*. One aspect the institute analysis is what ‘positive’ versus ‘negative’ articles about Sweden have been shared, in the form of articles and debates on social media platforms. In the report published in 2018, the so-called ‘positive’ conversations about Sweden was centralised around questions of “innovation, sustainability, equality, the Swedish welfare system and the Swedish nature” (SI, 2019, p.4, a) which are subjects that can be placed in the frame of the image of the ‘modern, progressive, gender equal Sweden’. A conclusion about the ‘negative conversation’ about Sweden abroad on the other hand, in general concerned questions of migration. When migration and Sweden are discussed abroad this tends to, according to the report, “be discussed in relation to violence and criminality” (SI, 2019, p.4, 15, 26, a). These articles have been published on domains, which the Swedish Institute categorises as “alternative media”, namely not traditional news office and editors, but different social platforms such as for example blogs (ibid).

Ethno-nationalist politicians around the world have also reproduced the image of Sweden in chaos due to its migration policy. One event which got more media attention was when US President Donald Trump said at a rally in 2017 that “Sweden been under a terror-attack last night”, and argued it was due to Sweden migration policy (BBC, 2017). One reason the question of migration ends up in the middle of the debate is, according to Westwood and Phizacklea (2000), that the representation of national identity is at the core of the definitions of citizenship, regarding *who belongs to the nation*, for example through constructions of citizen-migrant outsiders. This public debate also highlights how ideas of who belongs to the nation are shaped around ideas of race/ethnicity and strongly connected to ideologies of racism and colonial legacies (Westwood et al., 2000, p.2). Based on this report, two very different images of Sweden are shared in English articles and online platforms today. On the one hand, there is an image of Sweden abroad as prominent in questions of equality and sustainability, and on the other hand, an image of Sweden in ‘chaos’ due to its situation of migration. The analyse of the exhibition *Portraits of Migration* must therefore be seen in the light of this debate, that is, the struggle of the construction of the image of Sweden abroad.

### 3. Previous research

#### 3.1 Gender and liberalism in the nation branding of Sweden

In the article *Taming feminism? The place of gender equality in the 'Progressive Sweden' brand*, feminist political scholars Jezierska and Towns analyse the gender dimensions in the image of Sweden. The authors refer to Pamment, who has argued that “Sweden has come to represent the epitome of progressive liberalism for many in the Anglo-Saxon world” (2017, p.56), and in the nation branding of so-called “Progressive Sweden”, the authors assert that gender equality have become an important pillar (ibid). The authors refer to Nilsson, who argues that the image of Sweden abroad has been a “moral super power”, and a modern state which has come ‘far in modernization’ due to its “rational institutions that provide democratic, just and efficient solutions to collective problems” (Jezierska et al., 2017, p.58). Jezierska and Towns highlight that the inclusion of gender as a key component in the nations branding strategy does not only concern Sweden, but is a trend among several countries (for example Japan, Canada and Iceland). What previous studies on gender and nation branding have shown though, is that these “nation branding practices tend to draw on a familiar repertoire of androcentric representations of women as passive objects of male discovery, desire and/or protection” (2017, p. 57). The authors argue that the narrative of gender in Sweden’s nation branding do not follow this line. Rather it tells a story “that *upends* gender stereotypes”, which includes “economically active women and caring fathers, with a few non-binary and gender fluid inserts. The images about sports, science and innovation often feature women, whereas tabs and imagery with small children almost exclusively feature fathers” (2017, p.60). Jezierska and Towns conclude that the nation branding strategy of the so-called ‘Progressive Sweden’ “is an enticing narrative, extending a vision of a dynamic yet harmonious society of individuals sharing liberal values and moving towards a common and even better future” (ibid.). What is not included in this representation on gender and nation branding? There is recognition that ‘there’s room for improvement’, but little discussion of the struggles between forces moving in different directions on gender equality”, the authors argue (ibid.).

#### 3.2 Exhibition of migration in the Swedish museum sector

In the museum sector, the research of representation of migration, as well as the representation of the nation, has been prominent. In the article “*Including issues of migration*

*and ethnic diversity in museum exhibitions: A reflection on different approaches used in Sweden*” Christina Johansson (2017), explores the development of exhibitions on themes of migration at museums of history and culture in Sweden. She argues that, museums have played a role in the construction nation of the nation-state, by providing a “national narrative” of a homogenous group, to “fostering good citizens, by including civic values and social norms in middle class population” (2017, p.88). The national narrative has come to be challenged by globalisation and the concept of multiculturalism. Based on these developments, museums (mainly in the area of history and culture) have come to focus on narratives around migration and, museums today want, according to the author, to provide “hidden and untold stories”, focusing on inclusiveness and diversity (2017, p.87).

In the article, Johansson discusses four different frames the Swedish museum sector have produced exhibitions about migration, ethnicity and diversity. In the *ethnic frame*, focus is addressed to a specific ethnic group. This frame, in general, puts focus on discrimination, aspects of folklore and interaction between majority and minorities. She argues that exhibitions with these narratives tend to put focus on difference, strengthening a sense of “us and them”, and risk stereotyping the culture by presenting it as essentialist and ‘frozen’. In the *“city district frame”*, focus is directed at so-called segregated areas in a city. Johansson argues that one positive aspect of this frame is that a group, which is normally not represented in museums, is given a voice. However, the participants in the exhibition are always limited to the agendas of the museums. In the *migration frame* museums usually exhibit stories from immigration and the aim is to “broaden the Swedish memory by including the stories of some migrant in the narrative of Sweden” (2017, p.94). Johansson refer König and Ohliger, who argues the narrative of the migration frame “tend to be conceptualized along national borders”. Therefore, exhibitions based on this narrative do not challenge, “the idea of the world being split into nation states, but instead, contribute to the ‘naturalness’ of this idea” (2017, p.94-95). The focus on immigration and the national borders in the migration frame also contribute to a focus on the integration process according to Johansson. In *frames that cross over boundaries*, the approach usually takes mobility as its point of entry. Here global perspectives are in focus, and these exhibitions tend be problem-oriented. Johansson summarises the development and the frames as the museums have “moved from non-representation, to a focus on the stories of separate immigration groups and finally to a focus on diversity and the relation between the majority and the minorities. Recently, to some extent, more global perspectives and the upsurge of cultural hybridity have also come to be

acknowledged within museum sector” (2017, p.96). Johansson conclude that when focusing on ethnicity, “the interactions between groups that give rise to new multiple identity formations should be acknowledged (...) The focus on national lines and integration process is also evident when migrants themselves are involved in the production process, indicating that prevailing assumptions about how migration should be narrated also affects how migrants chose to tell their migration stories. This means that if museums want to do something new and innovative, it is vital that the frames utilized make it possible to tell the stories in new ways” (2017, p.97).

## 4. Research field

### 4.1 British cultural studies

This essay will be framed within British cultural studies (also called just cultural studies). The field is interdisciplinary, and therefore it also consists of variations when it comes to the subjects it investigates, methods and theoretical frameworks. Despite its differences, culture is always the objective in focus. Culture is defined as everyday activities and practices. Or rather, the field is interested in how cultural processes form us as different subjects, for example individuals, migrants, citizens, or member of a specific group (class, gender, race). Graeme Turner (1996) argues that the field of cultural studies “aims to examine the ordinary and is interested in those aspects that are unquestioned of our lives” (1996, p.3). The field has its roots in Marxist debates regarding ideology and power more generally, and more specifically the work of Antonio Gramsci on hegemony. According to Winther Jørgensen et al., “hegemony can best be understood as a process organising our consent. It subordinates our consciousness and is constructed without the use of violence or coercion” (2018, p.39). The critical focus of the field is connected to its focus on the political and social effects of cultural processes, and how this is intertwined with relations of power. A common element in cultural studies is the study of language. The role of language in cultural studies will be developed later in the essay based on theories of representation with Stuart Hall. What can be mentioned here is that language is understood as a social construction, meaning is not naturally given, and “cultural relations are reproduced through language systems” (1996, p.14). The field has developed from studies that previous only studied traditional culture, to a more broad definition of culture, focusing on popular culture. However, I want to emphasise that the exhibition of *Portraits of Migration* is not a product of traditional popular culture, but rather an institutionalized culture product.

## 5. Theoretical framework

The overall theoretical framework takes its point of departure in the concept of representation, which can be viewed as an umbrella over the other theoretical inputs. Through this framework, theories of the construction of the nation, citizen and migrant will be presented. The theoretical section is divided into two parts. In the first section, analyses of representation, with a focus on stereotyping of race/ethnicity and gender is presented. The second part, focusing on the construction of nation, citizen and migrant will be presented through analyses exploring the 'community of value' and neoliberalism, constructing the 'good nation/citizen'.

### 5.1 Representation

The most prominent writer in the field of cultural studies regarding representation is Stuart Hall. Questions of culture, he argues, are concerned with "production and exchange of meanings, between the members of a society or group" (2013, xvii-xxvi). In studies of anthropology, culture can be defined as "shared values or meanings" of a group of society, or as a "way of life of a people, community, nation or social group" (2013, xvii-xxvi). Culture, based on theories by Hall, is understood in relation to the production of meaning and values. The interpretation of meaning in a culture is diverse, and meaning is produced through different actions and processes, therefore, culture is "a set of practices" according to Hall (2013, xvii-xxvi). But how are culture and the production of meaning linked together? Hall argues this takes place through language. It works as a tool, or medium as Hall describes it, to share values and meanings with each other (2013, xvii-xxvi). Although it is not the specific words in themselves that give meaning to things, objects or ideas, nor do the objects have an inherent meaning in themselves: "To be able to interpret the world in roughly the same way, language operates through different representational systems" (Hall, 2013, xvii-xxvi). That is, "representation connects meaning and language through culture. Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully to other people. Representation, that is the production of meaning through language, and it is how we can 'make sense of the world'" (Hall, 2013, p.1-3).

Hall argues that we give "meaning to things, objects, people and events based on how we integrate them in our everyday life, that is, what framework of interpretation we give them" (2013, xvii-xxvi). We think of the world through different concepts of representation, which can be both abstract and concrete, as for example "migrant", "war" or "God". Our different

concepts are in the centrum for our interpretation of the world and for how we create meaning. Hall emphasises how our different concepts of representation is not random, but instead well-organised. Different concepts are established through “the principles of similarities and differences”. For example, we understand “war” as different from “peace”, and the relationship between “war” and “peace” is based from these differences. Hall argues that it is through the system of representation we are managing to “organising, clustering, arranging, classifying of concepts, and establish relationships between them” (2013, p.4). Hall argues for two systems of representation, mental representation and language, and these are “in centrum for meaning-creating processes in culture” (ibid). Mental representation refers to the meaning created processes and when systems of concepts are articulated in our thoughts (ibid). The other system of representation, language, takes place in relation to *signs*. “Language depends on constructing a set of correspondences between our conceptual map and a set of signs, arranged or organised into various languages, which stand for or represent those concepts” (2013, p.5). Sign is the term Hall use for elements that carry meaning. He categories them into visual signs, as for example sounds, images, persons, events, objects, and which “bear a certain resemblance to the element which they refer”, and written/spoken sign as “bear no obvious relationship at all to the things to which they refer. These relationships are arbitrary” (2013, s.7). The link between signs and concepts are *codes*, “they stabilize meaning within different languages and cultures” (ibid). To conclude, Hall argues, “in representation, constructionists argue, we use signs, organised into languages of different kinds, to communicate meaningfully with others. Language can use signs to symbolize, stand for or reference objects, people, and events in the so-called ‘real’ world. (...). Meaning is produced within language in and through various representational systems, which for convenience, we call ‘languages’. Meaning is produced by the practice, the ‘work’ of representation. It is constructed through signifying, i.e meaning-producing-practices” (2013, s.14).

### **Stereotyping, race and gender**

Representation of different concepts can be constructed through stereotypes. Hall argues that stereotyping is a representational practice, and it is especially central in the construction of racial difference. He refers to Dyer’s definition of *typing* and *stereotyping*, namely that typing is a process to make sense of the world. We categorise individuals/objects/events etc. into a classificatory scheme, based from our cultural framework. This categorisation is on the one hand based from what roles people perform, as for example worker, parent, migrant, and on



the other hand we “assign people membership of different groups” based on for example their gender, age, race, class etc. In typing we recognize the characterization. Regarding stereotyping instead, Dyer argues we “*get hold* of these few, simple characteristics about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them” (2013, p.247). That is, “stereotyping reduces, essentialises and fixes ‘different’, and stereotyping also deploys a strategy of ‘splitting’, where it then excludes what does not fit in” by practices of closure (ibid). Hall develops this by arguing that stereotypes “symbolically fix boundaries. Stereotyping is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order. It sets up a symbolic frontier between the normal/deviant, acceptable/unacceptable, what belongs/what does not, insider/outsider, Us and Them” (2013, p.248). This practice of representation contributes to create imagined communities, Hall argues (ibid). When analysing the representation of the Other, Hall, like previous writers, emphasise the importance of studying this construction of difference in relation to power: “Power has to be understood in broader or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way- within a certain ‘regime of representation’. It includes the exercise of symbolic power through representational practices. Stereotyping is a key element in this exercise of symbolic violence” (2013, p.249).

Stereotyping of race is for example produced through dichotomies based on colonial structures. Mudimbe refers to Sach’s term, and argues that these dichotomies are framed through *europocentrism* (or just eurocentrism), namely “a model that dominates our mind and, given its projection on the world system through the expansion of capitalism and the colonization phenomenon, denotes a contemporary culture that produces a strong conditional model for some and forced de-culturalization for others” (1988, p.131). Examples of discursive dichotomies and embodiment of the (colonial) Other are then “traditional/modern, oral/written and printed, agriculture/industrial civilisation, underdeveloped/developed” (1988, p.132). Mudimbe emphasises that this, the construction of Otherness, is a *discursive order*. Representation of the Other is also based on the construction of similarity and difference, and on “classification of beings and societies” (1988, p.133, 136). In dichotomies, one ‘expression’ is more dominant than the other, and in the case of the construction of the ‘colonial Other’, this is constructed from the norm of Western hegemony. Mohanty argues that Othering can only be constructed “on the basis of a particular group as the norm or referent” (2003, p.22). Stereotyping of gender, on the other hand, is generally based on dichotomies of femininity and masculinity, where women are represented as passive/victims/objects and men as agents/protectors/subjects. As mentioned in previous

research, Jezierska and Towns highlight how articulation of gender in nation branding tends to be represented from these stereotyped gender roles (2017, p. 57). For example, anthropologist Loftsdóttir has highlighted in her research how women in the Icelandic nation branding have been represented as passive embodiments of nature. That is, women get to represent the nation through their bodies, motherhood, as sexualised objects, through an association with nature (Loftsdóttir, 2015, p.250, 251, 257). How can one then transcend stereotyping in representation? Wasshede argues that transcending stereotyping (of gender, class, race/ethnicity) “requires that there is something to transcend, that is boundaries” (2010, p.217). However, she argues that when trying to transcend gender stereotypes, this is often done in relation to a frame of the dichotomy of femininity and masculinity, that is, these practises are based on a dichotomous gender model (man/woman) (2010, p.218). hooks argues, when trying to construct less stereotyping and more complex images of black bodies, the discussion have to go beyond what is “good and bad” representation of ‘race’. Instead, she emphasises that this is a discussion of standpoint: “From what political perspective do we dream, look, create and take action? (...) It is also about transforming the image, creating alternatives, asking ourselves questions about what types of images subvert, pose critical alternatives, and transform our worldviews and move us away from dualistic thinking about good and bad“ (hooks, 2015, p.4).

## 5.2 Nation, migration and neoliberal values

### Cultural reproduction of nation, citizen and non-citizen

Through the theoretical framework of representation, theories of constructing the nation, citizen and non-citizen will be presented. The broad narrative that frames *Portraits of Migration*, and in general the Swedish Institute communication about Sweden, is, I would like to suggest, a cultural construction and representation of the Swedish nation. Feminist sociologists Nira Yuval-Davis describes nation-state as following: “The concept of the nation-state assumes a complete correspondence between the boundaries of the nation and the boundaries of those who live in a specific state. This of course, is virtually everywhere a fiction. There are always people living in particular societies and states who are not considered to be (and often do not consider them selves to be) members of the hegemonic nation” (Yuval-Davis, 1997, p.15). Similar to Yuval-Davis’s use of the term fiction, Westwood argues that the production of the nation (and national identities) starts at the imaginary, through the *imagined nation* (Westwood, 2000, p.41). Westwood asserts that

“there is as no such thing as a nation-state, a country and yet it is constantly produced and reproduced through the imaginings of the peoples within and beyond the borders” (2000, p.58). From this social constructivist view, it is not borders that define the nations. Instead nations are an “ideologically constructed space bounded by legally enforceable rules” (2000, p.8). She uses maps to illustrate her argument, which on the one hand mark borders, but on the other hand can be seen as a “representational space into which biography can be inserted, offering a form of correlative imaginary which gives individual nationals a place in the national map”, which put the national identity in focus (2000, p.46). The imagined nations and individual subjects are then interwoven through different discourse practises, for example through national stories. These discourses can be organised around cultural and symbolical artefacts of the nation, as for example “schooling, national days, flags, and monuments” (Westwood, 2000, p.32, 46). Yuval-Davis emphasises that the cultural reproduction of the nation always needs to be situated in its historical context. The construction of the nation also includes specific notions of power and she argues that the “gendered character (of the nation) should be understood only within such a contextualization”, and that “gender, ethnicity and class, although with different ontological bases and separate discourses, are intermeshed in each other and articulated by each other in concrete social relations” (1997, p.4, 7-8). In the construction of the nation, different (nationalistic) discourses are competing against each other for hegemony (1997, p.4). Yuval-Davis develops this by arguing that “cultures have been transformed from static reified homogeneous phenomena common to all members of national and ethnic collectives, into dynamic social processes operating in contested terrains in which different voices become more or less hegemonic in their offered interpretations of the world. Cultural discourses often resemble more a battleground of meaning than a shared point of departure” (1997, p.41-42). The struggle for hegemony in cultural processes works in two ways, Yuval-Davis argues, namely “on the hand for stabilization and on the other hand for resistance and change. Both stem from the close relationship between power relations and cultural practise” (ibid).

It is through the concept of the (imagined) nation that different subject positions, such as citizen, non-citizen and migrant are constructed. In *Citizenship and its other's*, Bridget Anderson and Vanessa Hughes argue that citizenship is constructed from different types of inclusion and exclusion. For example, in terms of legal status they refer to Bauböck who argues, “citizenship marks a distinction between members and outsiders based on their different relations to particular states”, but the inclusion/exclusion of citizenship is also

constructed from different power structures, as for example based on gender, class and race (Anderson et.al, 2015, p.1-2). Laura Brace develops a similar argumentation, and suggests that citizenship “needs to be understood as inextricably bound up with expectations and notions of dependence and independence that inform our understandings of ‘belonging’” (Brace, 2015, p.10). Brace exemplifies this by referring to Rousseau’s theory of citizenship. In his discussion of “freedom, equality and citizenship” he do not mention the French slavery. “This gives the slaves a different kind of emptiness, a radical invisibility that is about repression and refusal, and about racism. The inside/outside binary that structures ideas about citizenship is part of the ‘oppressive logic of colonial modernity’, inextricable from the ‘the dichotomous hierarchy between the human and the non-human’, and central to the process of stereotyping by deploying a strategy of splitting symbolically fixing one set of characteristics, excluding what does not belong” (Brace, 2015, p.12). That is, these different processes of inclusion/exclusion construct binaries of citizen and non-citizen, based on structures of gender, race and class. It is important to recognise that citizen, and who belongs to the nation, can only be produced in relation to its Other. Sharma emphasise that “citizen and their migrant-others go together- they are co-produced” (2015, p.116). Sharma argues that, “throughout its history, the construction of nations and their others has relied on ideas of race” (2015, p.101). Sharma argues, “nations were from the start imagined as threatened communities always vulnerable to destruction by various foreign influences”. The imagined nation was constructed as a good, unified whole, “and integrated around common national norms. Immigrants were said to embody all that was deficient and other to the national citizen, and made into a fundamental threat to the nation and its ‘citizen’” (2015, p.102). Based on this, migrants are constructed as a ‘threat’ in contrast to the ‘good citizen’. To summarise, in order to analyse how the subject position of ‘migrant’ is constructed, I will focus on how different processes of inclusion/exclusion are constructed in relation to ideas of ‘belonging’.

### **Community of value**

Anderson and Hughes challenge the liberal idea that formal citizenship would per se mean full inclusion in a society. Rather, they emphasise the importance of *value* when analysing the construction of citizenship: “modern states portray themselves not as arbitrary collections of people hung together by a common legal status but as *communities of value*, comprised of people who share common ideals and (exemplary) patterns of behaviour expressed through ethnicity, religion, culture or language” (Anderson, et.al, 2015, p.2). The values of the

community are considered as 'good', which also influences the construction of citizen/non-citizen, resulting in binaries as 'good' and 'failed' citizens. The authors refer to Honig, who argues: "The nation is defined from the outside by the non-citizen, but what has passed unremarked is that the community of value is also defined from the inside. Individuals and groups who are imagined as incapable of, or failing to live up to, liberal ideals may be designated as *failed citizens* (...) Taken together, the failed citizen and the non-citizen are *citizenship's Others*" (Anderson, et.al, 2015, p.3). As for all forms of power structures, the "hierarchies of belonging" and the binaries of citizen/non-citizen "are not stable and need to be constantly performed" (ibid). Anderson et.al argues that the construction of the 'Other' comes with "zones of toleration", that is, the 'non-citizen' or 'failed citizen' can be tolerated if they perform the values of the 'good citizen' (Brace, 2015, p.18). Therefore, "citizenship/membership is not a simple dichotomous in-/exclusion relation, but is a system of partial incorporation and progressive inclusion", where an individual can be partially included if she perform the values of a good citizen (Hughes, 2015, p.36). Sharma refer to Anderson, who argues that the inclusion of the community of value is based from structures around race, "one's social worth (in the community of value) is tied to how one has been racialized" (Sharma, 2015, p.99). The representation of citizens/migrants as included/excluded in the imagined nation is constructed based on, not only power structures of race/ethnicity and gender, but also based on different discourses of values. In the next section I develop how the representation of inclusion/exclusion are articulated in relation to values of modernisation and neoliberalism.

### **Constructing the 'good migrant' – values of modernisation and neoliberalism**

A numbers of scholars argue that the 'community of value' is framed today through the dominating discourse of neoliberalism. Bhuyan et al. describe the core values of neoliberalism as following: "a smaller welfare state, whereby governments do less, and individuals and families are responsible for their own social welfare; the commodification of social goods (e.g. health care, education and welfare services); and economic efficiency to enable an unfettered 'free' market" (2015, p.51). Bracke argues that neoliberalism needs to be interpreted not only as a political project, but as a cultural one as well, producing specific structures of relationships and subjects (2016, p.851), such as the 'good citizen/migrant'. One aspect around which the construction of the 'good migrant' is centred is around is *work*. Brace refers to Judy Fudge who argues that migrants who perform skilled work and have good language proficiency are constructed as strong, while migrants performing unskilled work are

constructed as weak (Brace, 2015, p.18). According to Anderson, the construction of the ‘full citizen’ as a worker citizen is not something new, rather there has been a shift in what is most valued. In post-war Europe this construction was based on the “heterosexual, able-bodied man” as a breadwinner (where “women had different access to citizenship through relationship with this working man”), and today the construction is centred around the ‘adult worker’ model. Anderson defines it as “a social system in which all adults are expected to take paid employment in order to secure economic independence” (Anderson, 2015, p.48). It is the responsible, individual subject that is in central to this model, and in general for the construction of the ‘good migrant’. Through “activation individuals will become encouraged to become more employable. The combination of activation and the adult worker model have replaced, in the context of neoliberal culture and economic policies, the principles of rights as central to the organisation of welfare provision with the principle of conditionality” (Anderson, 2015, p.48-49).

In relation to the construction of the ‘good migrant’ as a skilled worker, Andrew Geddes introduces the binary opposition between deserving/undeserving migrants. He argues “the skilled/unskilled distinction works as part of social valuation”, where migrants are identified as “wanted or unwanted depending on their perceived economic contribution” (Brace, 2015, p.23-24). In his own words: “the rational, improving, inviolable status of skilled labour is available to investors and business leaders but not to low skilled, underpaid workers, however much demand there is for their services. They are ‘empty’ in its other, more disturbing sense. These empty others are understood to be undeserving, trespassers without any entitlements” (ibid). Hughes argues that this leads to a situation where migrants are “expected to prove their deservingness to become members of the ‘community of value’”, and this in turn “creates hierarchies of belonging” (Hughes, 2015, p.35, 39). Bhuyan et al. develop a similar argument, suggesting that some categories of migrant-others can be included for the good of the economy, and he refers to Wingard who argues: “Others are the people the nation can ‘save’ or show ‘benevolence’ to by allowing them into the economy and culture of the nation, thus allowing the nation to become multicultural. The ‘other-other’ (on the other hand) is the one who cannot be interpolated into culture. He/she must be expelled, sent away, deported in order for the nation to define and imagine itself, its borders, and its citizenry” (2015, p.51).

The representation of the ‘good migrant’ is also constructed from a discourse of modernity. As highlighted in the section of previous research, the concept of ‘gender equality’ is

important to construct the image of the modern state. The national narrative of the modern, gender equal state has influenced the construction of the 'community of value' in terms of inclusion/exclusion process for 'citizen and its Others'. As Towns argues, "gender equality, in short, has become an important site for negotiating and creating meaning for the people of the new, 'multi-cultural' nation of Sweden" (Towns, 2002, p.165). The construction of the modern, gender equal state (and its citizen) is also closely interlinked with the colonial dichotomy of 'civilised/uncivilised'. In relation to the concept of 'gender equality', Bracke highlights how the colonial discourse of 'civilisation' have come to be constructed in relation to discourses of both homosexuality and secularism. By focusing on the rescue narrative, she highlights how Western discourses have gone from the narrative of Spivak's classic feminist writing on how "white people are saving brown women from brown men" (1988), to a rescue narrative where Muslim women are expected to be 'saved' from their religion (in order to become liberated and civilised') by adopting Western values. This rescue narrative is therefore constructed from the dichotomy of civilised/secular and uncivilised/religious, through specific ideas of gender and Western hegemony. In today's rescue narrative, homosexuality is also included. Gay couples are going to be 'saved' by the West, from the 'non-tolerant, religious Other' (in general, Islam). Bracke argues: "More precisely, homosexuality has switched sides in the familiar dichotomy: from a sign of uncivilization, homosexuality or at least the 'tolerance' or 'acceptance' of (certain modes of) it, has become a marker of civilization" (2012, p. 249). This construction is based from the dichotomy of "the modern secular self" versus "the religious other" (ibid). To sum up, this theoretical section focused on how 'migrants' are represented based on ideals of 'good and failed', which is based on neoliberal values of work as well as values of 'modernisation', such as gender equality and LGBTQ questions. These values are produced in relation to colonial ideas of race/ethnicity, and are interwoven with the construction of national belonging to the 'imagined nation'.

## 6. Methodology

Before sorting out my epistemological standpoint, I want to stress the relation between epistemology and methodology. In general, what can be stated about qualitative research is that it is usually driven by an approach of *understanding*. In qualitative research, there is no distinction between operationalization and theorisation, and the conceptualisation of the research is affected of the research-process in itself, that is, the research design can be

modified during the process (Della Porta, Keating 2010, p.28-30). That is, my epistemological standpoint of constructivism affects my choice of research field, research design, as well as the choice of questions I ask, and the methods I use. The research design in terms of theoretical focus has been affected for example by the collected data material, and was therefore not decided in advance.

### 6.1 Social constructivist approach

Questions of what we know and how we know it, in turn, raises questions of truth, the physical world and meaning. The social constructivist approach (or just constructivism) is based on postmodernism, and Kratochwil (2010) argues that the constructivist approach cannot be seen as one theory, or even as one epistemological field. Instead it raises several meta-theoretical issues, and therefore stretches over both epistemology, methodology and theory. It can also not be seen as one standpoint, since it includes several different interpretations (of reality and knowledge for example). However, Kratochwil identifies two commitments of constructivism, which can be seen as the core of the approach: “One is that agency matters in social life, and therefore agents are not simple throughputs of structures-material or ideal- working behind their backs. A second core belief of constructivists is that if we accept that the human world is one of artifice, then the notions the actors have about their actions matters” (2010, p.86).

Winter Jørgensen and Philips (2018) argues, a common ground for social constructivists, are questions of power and knowledge. One of the most prominent writers in that field is Foucault. He argues that power “need to be seen as a *productive* network, which runs through the whole society, rather than something that are centralised to a few individuals who gain power through oppression where power is mainly a negative force” (Winther Jørgensen et.al, 2018, p.20). Therefore, power produces the social world, and it is closely interlinked with the production of knowledge. “Power produce our social world (and discourses, knowledge, body and subjectivity), and power is both productive and restrictive: it will make it possible to see the social world in some way, while other possibility excludes” (ibid). Based on this, theories of social constructionism are not centralised around questions of truth: instead the analysis is concerned with how the power/knowledge nexus creates ‘representations of truth’ (or regime of truth) in specific discourses (Winther Jørgensen, et.al, 2018, p.21). The approach emphasises that the analysis always needs to be historically and culturally specific, and that “our different view of the social world, leads to different social actions, and the social



production of knowledge and ‘truth’ will lead to different social consequences” (Winther Jørgensen, 2018, p.12). The social constructivist standpoint is highly concerned with questions of language, for example how the power/knowledge nexus works through discourses. Poststructuralist theorists, such as Laclau and Mouffe, also argue that all social practises are discursive. From this aspect, the standpoint of social constructivism has been criticised. The argument that all social practices are produced by discourses has been interpreted as social constructivists reducing everything to a question of language. Laclau and Mouffe argue however, that discourses are material as well. The social worlds are not only constructed linguistically, “instead they are constructed in the physical room as well, for example, through institutions, and these organised rooms/spaces are part of the discourses too” (Winther Jørgensen, 2018, p.42). For Laclau and Mouffe, there exists both social and physical dimension of the world, but it is through the discourses we get access to the physical space (ibid).

## 6.2 Feminist epistemology

Reflexivity takes a fundamental role in feminist epistemological debates. Hesse-Biber (2014), argues, “reflexivity means taking a critical look inward and reflecting on one’s own lived reality and experiences”, that is, to reflect on one’s own “values and attitudes in relation to the research process” (2014, p.200). She develops this argument by referring to the arguments of Mann and Kelly, “like the researched or the participant, the researcher is a product of his or her society’s social structures and institutions” (Hesse-Biber 2014, p.200). First of all, my political worldview regarding social justice affects my critical starting point for this analysis, as seen in relation to the questions I ask, which in turn affects my choice of theoretical framework. My previous experience of working with the ‘image of Sweden abroad’ is also relevant to the research questions I pose. One reflection is that my experience from the embassy, which gave me a pre-knowledge about the material of the Swedish Institute, (and maybe together with my location of middle-class background and that I am classified as “Swedish”) could have contributed to that some of the informants have interpreted me as ‘trustworthy’ (due to similarity) and therefore giving me better access to information. My position as a white, cis-woman has also affected the research process in different ways. For example, the interviews I conducted with the participants with migrant background were shorter, and one reason for this could be that I could not find a way to bridge my position as white and with no self-lived experience of forced migration. My position is interwoven with

the knowledge production I am part of as, once again, are the questions that I ask, but it also affects how I collect, interpret and analyse the data. I am part of producing the discourses I study. By emphasising the “subjectivity” in one’s research, the social constructivist standpoint in general, and the feminist epistemological standpoint specifically, turn away from the position of ‘objective knowledge production’ in science. Haraway (1988), argues the position of an ‘objective gaze’ rather signifies the dominant position of “man and white”, and this position in science have historically been tied to “militarism, capitalism, colonialism and male supremacy” (1988, p.581, 587). Haraway further argues for feminist objectivity, which is situated knowledge: “Feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. It allows us to become answerable for what we learn how to see” (1988, p.581, 583). And she develops: “for politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims” and this view starts from a body, which “always a complex, contradictory, structuring, and structured body” (1998, p.589). Situated knowledge therefore raises questions of the power to see, and from what location one sees.

## 7. Methods and data material

### 7.1 Material

The material consists of the images, documents and interviews. The interviews have been conducted with employees from the Swedish Institute and from Swedish embassies that have exhibited and worked with the exhibition of *Portraits of migration*, the photographer Mahmoud, and with the people who have been portrayed in the exhibition. The materials in terms of documents are the twenty photos, the captions and the exhibition’s introductory text. I will not analyse the other documents which were part of the Swedish Institute’s toolkit for *Portraits of Migration*, namely the info graphics and the information about civil society in Sweden working with integration. This decision is based on information from the interviews with my informants, which is that very few Swedish embassies have chosen to work with the material of the information about the civil society. The overall method is discourse analyse which will be combined with visual method. The approach of discourse analysis is well-suited for to use different types of material, such as text, images, symbols and etc. (Hesse-Biber, 2014, p.46).

## 7.2 Discourse analysis

Winther Jørgensen and Philips define discourses as “a certain way to speak about and understand the world (or sections of it)” (2018, p.7). This analyse will be based on the discourse theory by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. From a poststructuralist standpoint, combined with Marxist theory as well, they argue that “discourses construct the meaning of the social world and that the meaning can never be fixed due to the basic instability of language” (Winther Jørgensen, 2018, p.13, 31). However, discourses always aim, through social processes and practises, to establish a ‘fixation’ regarding definition of (their) meaning for signs, and it is the researchers task to follow these processes of ‘closure’ the definitions. Due to the instability of language, “social phenomenon can never be fully ‘complete’, ‘total or ‘finished’”. When the meaning of signs can never be completely locked down, this opens a space for different worldviews to compete for hegemony, of their definition, in *discursive struggles*: “It is through conflicts, conventions and negotiations in a social room that structures of meaning can be ‘locked’, and this process takes place through placing the sign in specific relationships to other signs” (ibid, p.32). Laclau and Mouffe name this *antagonism*, when different worldviews are in conflict (ibid, p.53). One part of the researcher’s work is therefore to locate what different worldviews are in conflict with one other, and where this discursive struggle takes place.

The overall focus for this essay is the representation of migration and the Swedish nation in the *Sweden communication* by SI. In order to analyse the discursive constructions of these representations, I will use the following tools of discursive theory: nodal points, floating signifiers, master signifiers, chains of equivalence. I will search for the processes where hegemony is trying to be achieved, and where the antagonistic discursive struggles take place. What is included and excluded in the representation of ‘migration’? What meanings and values are attached to the signs in these representations? In order to answer these questions, I will analyse how the discourses are organised, and start to identify the so-called ‘key signifiers’: “nodal points organise discourses (for example, ‘liberal democracy’), master signifiers organise identity (for example, ‘man’). All of these concepts refer to key signifiers in the social organisation of meaning” (Winther Jørgensen et al. 2018, p.57-58). The key signifiers are by themselves ‘empty’, they get meaning by other signs being attached to them. This takes place through *chains of equivalence*. Nodal points refer to when a discourse reaches closure for a sign, and *floating signifiers* refer to signs where there is a discursive struggles, that is, the meaning of the sign is ‘debated’ in an antagonistic conflict. Laclau and

Mouffe conclude, “it is by investigating the chains of meaning that discourses bring together in this way, one can gradually identify discourses (and identities and social spaces)” (ibid). They also emphasise, “non-linguistic practices and objects are part of discourses” too (ibid). Images are a central part of my empirical material, and Rose argues that discourse analysis is well-suited to be combined with visual method, where “the researcher can search for visual patterns” and “how images construct specific views and accounts of the social world, and how those specific views or accounts are constructed as real or truthful or natural through particular regimes of truth” (Rose, 2016, p. 193, 204). I will develop my theoretical ground for the visual method in next section. To summarize, how discourses construct and organise identity and, how representations of a group, have specific social impact on these individuals which are identified to be part of this group, for example in terms of their capacity to act upon in society in general (Winther Jørgensen, 2018, p.63).

### 7.3 Images and visual method

Based on previous discussion of discourse analysis and theories of representation, images are never a neutral or objective part of the world. Rose (2016) argues that images “interpret the world. They display it in very particular ways, they represent it” (2016, p.2). Images are produced through a specific context, as well as specific relations of power, and of “social interactions, norms, conventions, organisations and hierarchies in society” (Sverrisson, 2015, p.191-192). Sverrisson (2015) exemplifies this argumentation by highlight the production of *photos*. This kind of image is always a result of “directing, staging, acting and other activities, and these activities may be more or less well thought through” (2015, p.197). For example, the gaze of the photographer impacts the photo. The photo-shoot and the photo in itself are social processes, and the process usually prerequisite interactions between the portrayed and the photographer, which affects the result and how we interpret the image later on. Furthermore, technical decisions (lighting, angles, distances, colours etc.) during the photographic process also affect the imagery, representation, and language of the image, and therefore it also affects how we interpret the result (Sverrisson 2015, p.194, 199, 204).

In relation to the connection between production, power and images, Rose argues, “visuality can be seen as a sort of discourse too. A specific visuality will make certain things visible in particular ways, and other things unseeable” (Rose, 2016, p.188). Regarding what is made visible/invisible, Rose emphasises the importance of paying attention to “how certain institutions mobilise specific forms visuality to see and to order the world” (2016, p.14). Rose

refers to Fyfe and Law, who argue, “to understand visualisation is thus to enquire into its provenance and into the social work that it does. It is to note its principles of inclusion and exclusion, to detect the roles it makes available, to understand the way in which they are distributed, and to decode the hierarchies and differences that it naturalises” (2016, p.17). Visual methodology based on the approach of discourse analysis, is highly concerned with questions of power/knowledge, social relations and social difference.

### Visual discourse analysis

Rose argues that in general, the “framework of exploring visual material comes at four sites, namely, the 1. *production* (where an image is made), 2. *the site of the image itself* (the visual content), 3. *circulation* and 4. *audience/spectators*” (2016, p.24). Rose develops her argumentation in the following way: “an image may have its own visual effects: these effects, through the ways of seeing mobilised by the image, are crucial in the production and reproduction of visions of social difference: but these effects always intersect with the social context of viewing, with how the image is circulated, and with the visualities spectators bring to their viewing” (2016, p.22). In this essay, I will first and foremost study the visual material in relation to the site of the image itself, which is the visual content of the photos. I will therefore pay attention to the question of “what basic element is used to represent ‘migrants’ and ‘nation’?” (Rose, 2016, p.209). The coding process of the images, based on visual discourse analysis, will start by identifying key themes, which can be “key words or recurring visual images” used to produce the representations of ‘migrants’ and ‘nation’ (2016, p.206, 208). To visualise the key themes and the basic elements of the images, I will combine visual discourse analysis by using some methodological tools based in the field of semiotics. This decision is also stems from my theoretical framework in Hall’s theory of representation, where the study of sign is central. Dyer, whose research concerns photographs in adverts, argues that photos in commercials “depend on signs of humans that symbolise particular qualities to their audience” (Rose, 2016, p.115). Even if the photos in the exhibition *Portraits of Migration* are not advertisements, Dyer’s method is a useful starting point for my analysis. She has a ‘checklist’ “for exploring what sign of humans might symbolise” (ibid), namely “*representation of bodies, representation of manner, representation of activity and props and settings*” (2016, p.115-116). Based on Dyer’s so-called ‘checklist’, I will start asking questions to my visual material in order to visualise the signs. I will then search for patterns in the collected material, which will be organised in sets of codes. Hall defines codes as “conventionalised ways of making meaning that are specific to particular groups of people”

(2016, p.128). The set of codes that appear in my visual material will be interlinked with my other material as well (text and interviews). These sets of codes will constitute different clusters. Rose argues one has to pay attention to “how particular words or images are given specific meaning, and how these can construct meaningful *clusters* of words and images” (2016, p.206). Based on the reading of signs, key themes, basic elements and occurring patterns, I will then organise the sets of codes into different discursive themes, regarding the construction of the subject position of ‘migrant’ and its relation to ‘nation’. I will pay attention to social difference, how the material constructs accounts of truth, and what is visible/invisible in the construction of the position of ‘migrant’. I will also pay attention to the complexity and contradictions in these constructions (Rose, 2016, p.213-214).

#### **7.4 Interviews**

I have conducted ten telephone interviews in total, two interviews with employees from the Swedish Institute, four interviews with employees from different Swedish foreign missions, such as embassies, who have exhibited *Portraits of migration*, one interview with the photographer, and three interviews with people who have been portrayed in the exhibition. The interviews with the people who have worked professionally with the exhibition have been between 25-40 minutes long. The interviews with the people portrayed have been shorter, around 15-20 minutes. The interviews have been in Swedish or English, depending on the preference of the interviewee. Some of the quotes, which are published in this essay, have therefore, been translated from Swedish to English by me. The interviews have been semi-structured. The interview guides have been structured around the same themes, and include small variations and in general different follow-up questions. The interview guide starts with questions regarding the project in general, and then goes into the theme of the exhibition, the portraits, the captions and interviews, *Sweden communication*, and finally the response to the exhibition. There are several limitations with conducting interviews over the phone. I therefore want to emphasise that the interviews are a complement to my other collected material. I will develop my reflections on the interviews further after the theoretical argumentations for using interviews as a method.

The sample for the interviews has been made using the snowball method. I first contacted the Swedish Institute, and thereafter I was put in contact with employees at different embassies, working with the exhibition. I made contact with the participants in the exhibition through a social media platform, based on the contact network of the photographer. The sample of the

interviewees has been made through an active outreach to the Swedish Institute, the photographer and the participants through different platforms, such as email, combined with the snowball method to reach employees at different embassies. Ahrne et al. argues that the snowball method is useful when you want to reach people who are connected through specific phenomenon, as in this case, the exhibition (2015, p.41). One difficulty with this method is confidentiality: the person who gives tips about other people in the network are familiar with each other, which increase the risk that the person will know who are part of the study. In general, the question of confidentiality has been complicated in this study. On the one hand, this is due to the snowball method, on the other hand due to the fact that the name of the photographer and the participants are known from the exhibition. I will categorise the quote of the photographer and the employees from the Swedish Institute with the same title, namely “worked professionally with the exhibition”. This is to increase the anonymity. I will also use the titles “employee Swedish foreign mission” and “portrayed” for the quotes. I will not publish any quote that can reveal the identity of a person (that for example include personal information or local geographical references), to preserve the anonymity of the informants internally as well as for the reader.

Steinar Kvale (1997) argues for the use of the qualitative interview, and he describes the interview as a “professional conversation but built from the everyday-conversation. The purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena” (1997, p.13). During the interview the researcher and the interviewee react and influence each other in several different ways (1997, p.39). Compared to quantitative methods then, the qualitative interview has the possibility to collect diverse and complex perspectives regarding the life world of the interviewee, where the researcher has the possibility to adapt the questions based on what the informant wants to discuss and engage with (Ahrne et al., 2015, p.38). The researcher can never gain knowledge that is ‘pure, real and true’ from the informant or know the ‘objective’ meaning of the informant. Instead, based on a constructionist standpoint, my focus will be directed at the social construction of the world of the informants and their interpretation of meaning in relation to their context (1997, p.45-46, Ahrne et al., 2015, p.54). Kvale highlights how there is a contradictory relation between the postmodern approach and the interview method. On the one hand the interview focuses on the individual, and on the other hand the postmodern approach turns away from individualistic explanations. However, this can be overbridged. Kvale emphasises how the postmodern approach instead argues that the “knowledge

generated by the interview is relational” (1997, p.47). The knowledge production is ”interwoven in a network and it exists in relations between the person and the world” (ibid).

The discussion of knowledge production also leads into a reflection about the positions of researcher-researched. Hesse-Biber highlights how feminists have been concerned about the hierarchal power relation built into the interview situation. That is, the researcher is usually seen as the one “who knows something” and the researched as the one “we can get to know something about”. To deconstruct this relationship, Hesse-Biber argues for reflexivity about one’s own position: “The researcher-researched comes together with different backgrounds in terms of gender, ethnicity and class and this might affect the flow and connection of the interview” (2014, p.209). That is, the research process is affected “by our perception of difference and should therefore include awareness of this difference” (or similarities) (2014, p.210). However, Hesse-Biber highlights how the relation between the researcher and informant can be fluid during the interview, that is, in some questions the researcher and informant may be more similar, and then, more different in other terms of issues (2014, p.214). To deconstruct the hierarchal relationship between the researcher and the informant, Haraway emphasises how foundation in feminist studies is to see one’s informants as actor or agents: “Situated knowledges require that the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor and agent, not as a screen or a ground or a resource, never finally as slave to the master that closes off the dialectic in his unique agency and his authorship of "objective" knowledge” (1998, p.592).

### **Reflections on the interview**

This section offers a reflection over the different stages in the interview process. The choice of conducting the interviews over phone was due not only to the limitation of time but especially due to geographical reasons. I have reached people from different countries and even on different continents through the telephone interviews. This would of course not be possible if I had instead conducted the interviews face-to-face. Therefore, the participation rate of ten interviews completely depends on the choice of telephone interview. Also, compared to the format of a survey, the telephone interviews allowed me the possibility of following the direction of interviewed by asking follow-up questions. As mentioned previously, however there are several difficulties in conducting interview over phone. Hesse-Biber, argues that, “a lack of face-to-face interaction may cause meaning to be lost in the collection of data because nonverbal cues are missing from the interaction, thus perhaps



compromising the ability of the researcher to adequately analyse interactions” (2014, p.222). When body language is not possible to analyse, the use of the voice as a tool becomes even more important. To create a safe space for the informants and to be able to follow their thoughts on the subject, I have therefore listened carefully, not only to their words, but also to their tone and engagement on the subject. I have adjusted my own approach after the approach of the informant, for example if someone has shared more sensitive subjects, we have talked more slowly and with lower voices. A majority of the informants have also been interviewed in their professional role, and my reflection is that this has also contributed to the participation rate, since the ‘risk’ to for example, share personal information was very low. My last reflection concerns the length of the interviews. There are several reasons why the length of the interviews differs. In a few cases, the informants forgot the decided time for the interview, but decided to conduct it anyway when I called. The knowledge that the informant was not in an optimal environment for an interview, has made me avoid asking too many follow-up questions. This was not an active choice, but something I was made aware of during the transcription. In some cases, language barriers have affected the length in terms of getting a ‘flow’ in the conversation. Also the construction of the interview guide has affected the interviews. The questions were better-suited to people who worked professionally with the exhibition. My interviews are based on an informed consent. Before the interviews, all of the participants were sent information about informed consent, the aim of the study and the purpose with the interviews. After the interviews, all of the informants have been sent out the transcription of their interview for approval. Their reading of our interview was of high importance for me, since we did not have had the possibility to meet face to face. Lastly, Ahrne et al. describes how a research situation is always a result of “a specific conversation, at a specific time and place, where what is being said can always have other purpose than what researcher had in mind” (2015, s.54). I have strived to be very transparent with my interpretations, and how I reached the conclusions. The analysis is based on methodological tolerance, that is, according to Grimen and Gilje, “an ability to see that several different perspectives can be possible on the same phenomenon, and an ability to realise that even if one is sure to have the right perspective, one can still misunderstand and others can have the right interpretation” (2009, p.175, 179, 200-201). That is, my interpretation is based on previous researcher’s interpretation, and my interpretation is only one out of several possible to do.

## 8. Analysis

### 8.1 The representation of the beyond 'chaos and collapse' debate

In the introduction text to the exhibition, the Swedish Institute presents the aim with *Portraits of Migration*: “The exhibition aims to add new perspectives to the story of Sweden and migration, and to give insights into the current situation in the country. Beyond headlines of chaos and collapse, beyond politics and public authorities, there are people who try to build a life in a new country” (SI, 2017, g). As discussed in the introduction, ‘*beyond headlines of chaos and collapse*’ refers to a ‘debate’ of the ethno-nationalist movement of the ‘Global Right’, which has been visible in the media, politics and different social media platforms (Paternotte, et al. 2018). In this ‘debate’, they have targeted Sweden and its situation of migration as a negative example. In focus of this section is how the informants have understood this ‘debate’, with a particular focus on stereotypes in relation to race/ethnicity. To better understand the representations in the exhibition, it is of equal importance to understand what these representations are constructed in relation to, in this case, what it aims to “go beyond”. Following are quotes from the interviews, where the informants have described this ‘negative reporting’ of Sweden and migration:

Sweden is some kind of role model in many aspects, one can say (laughter) (...) But questions concerning refugees and migration, we have seen in different studies, are the attitude more negative. They experience that this is something you don't want Sweden as a role model in (...). Back then it was really that they highlighted almost all news about things that happened in Sweden. But it still happens, mostly online, that you see they highlight what happened in Sweden. It is much about this gang crime, and these “no-go zones” that may have received attention.  
(Employee, Swedish foreign mission)<sup>2</sup>

So taken out of that time, it was the media storm. And then we had Trump in the US, who talked about "Last night in Sweden". I experienced it, a bit like, you [the foreign missions] didn't really know how to deal with this. But that you knew that you wanted facts. (...). They [the media storm] talked a lot about the *problems* with migration, the *problems* with integration.  
(Employee, Swedish Institute)<sup>3</sup>

The majority of Sweden's ambassadors in other countries come to Sweden once a year to have a meeting. And then I have talked to some of the ambassadors, and many have said "Yes ...". That is, you notice that they are very careful about using this material [of *Portraits of Migration*]. It is

---

<sup>2</sup> Interview 5, translated from Swedish

<sup>3</sup> Interview 1, translated from Swedish

countries where Sweden has been used as a deterrent in immigration policy. Whatever we do in this area, we will lose the discussion. If we talk about Sweden and migration, it awakens all the trolls (laughter). And so suddenly it is not about migration any more. All of a sudden, it's about crime, rape, and car fires. Things we do not think are related to migration.

(Employee, Swedish Institute)<sup>4</sup>

According to (some) of the informants, the representation of 'migrants' in the 'negative reporting' of Sweden and migration was attached to following signs: "*gang crime*", "*no-go zones*", "*problems*", "*create problems*", "*crime*", "*rape*", "*car fires*", and from the material of other interviews and the text of the captions: "*malicious*", "*large group*", "*foreign people*", "*fires*", "*chaos*", "*collapse*". This representation of 'migrants' is constructed from colonial and racist stereotypes, by attaching signs of violence, criminality, problems and rape to 'migrant'. Hall argues, that stereotypes works through 'splitting' by essentialises one group, which contribute to the discourse of the migrants/refugees as the unacceptable Other. By the splitting and essentialised categorisation of migrant, a symbolic boundary of what belong and not belong (in the imagined community of Sweden/Europe/Global North) is drawn (2013, p.248). Through this construction 'migrant' is homogenized and constructed as a criminal and violently 'threat'. Sharma highlights how this is the fundamental construction of 'migrant' in nationalistic and racist movements, namely to construct the (racialized, postcolonial) 'migrant' as a foreign threat to the unified nation of 'goodness' (2015, p.102). By constructing the 'racialized, colonial' Other as a threat, this contribute to a dichotomy where the white, Western population are constructed as the 'good citizen'. Sharma also emphasise that the construction of 'migrant' as a foreign threat, as the colonial Other, do not only happened to individuals who crossed a border, but is a process of racial embodiment, where people who not fit the norm of the Western white, also can be harmed by this representation of stereotyping (2015, p.100-102). In the informants understanding of the Global Right's 'debate' regarding 'Sweden and migration', *Sweden* was attached to signs as "*problems with migration*", "*problems with integration*", "*a deterrent example*", "*failed example*", "*not a role model*", "*negative*". This image of Sweden, contradicts with the representation of Sweden as a 'role model', which had been an important pillar in the Swedish's work on nation branding, previous research have shown (Jeziarska, Towns, 2017). The reason I present the informants understanding of, what I call the ethno-nationalist debate of the 'Global Right', is because the exhibition is produced in relation to this. It is these racist,

---

<sup>4</sup> Interview 1, translated from Swedish

colonial stereotypes the exhibition aims to go *beyond*. To better understand the representation of ‘migrant’ and ‘nation’ in the exhibition *Portraits of Migration*, it is as equally important to understand what it aims not to be, what it declares distance a from.

## 8.2 Discourses of humanity: articulation of race/ethnicity

The exhibition *Portraits of migration* aims to show ‘real and nuanced’ pictures of migration according to the introduction text of the exhibition (SI, 2017, g). How then is race/ethnicity articulated in the exhibition, when it aims to transcend racist and colonial stereotypes? I will analyse this in relation to how (some of) the informants articulate race/ethnicity based on a discourse of ‘humanity’, or ‘migrants as humans’. In general, ‘migrants’ in the exhibition are represented through an emphasis on ‘universal values’, such as humanity, love and family (SI, 2017, f). In this essay, I will only highlight the representation of ‘humanity’, and will not discuss the representation of the other universal values. The discourse of ‘humanity’ is foremost highlighted in the material of the interviews. Professionals of the exhibition have given the following quotes, and they give their answer in relation to the question of what they wanted the audience to feel or think about the exhibition, or what the aim with the exhibition was.

Migrants are humans. (...). It sounds as a cliché, but it was a driving force.  
(Worked professional with the exhibition)<sup>5</sup>

Maybe you should also feel that these are people just like us. That one-self can also end up in this situation. That these are people who had a life, very similar to what that life we live in Sweden, and so suddenly they had to give up everything and escape. That is nothing you choose voluntarily. It is none of these people who have chosen to come to Sweden. It was something they had to do, and so they have done the best of it. So, it is a little reminder. When the media reports, I think it's easy to just forget that these are people just like us. But who just have had more bad luck.  
(Worked professionally with the exhibition)<sup>6</sup>

“Migrant” is in these quotes attached to signs as “*humans*”, “*people*”, “*like us*”, “*had a life*”, “*similar*”, “*had to escape*”, “*bad luck*”, and also from other quotes: “*individuals*”, “*personal stories*”, “*fates*”, “*give a face to [the refugee crisis]*”. The second informant refers to the ‘reports in media’, when arguing why it is of importance to represent ‘migrant as humans’. The informant argues that the representation of ‘migrants as humans’ is forgotten in the media reporting. First, the quote is an example of how the ethno-nationalist debate of the

---

<sup>5</sup> Interview 3, translated from Swedish

<sup>6</sup> Interview 4, translated from Swedish

Global Right affects the representation of the ‘migrants’ in *Portraits of Migration*. The representation of ‘migrant as humans’ takes (to some extent) its departure from the discourse where ‘migrants’ have been, and still are, dehumanized (for example through racist and colonial stereotypes) in the debate of the Global Right. The representation of ‘migrant’ through the discourse of ‘humanity’ is therefore constructed as an opposite or antithesis. It is visible here how ‘migrant’ are constructed from two different discourses, and how ‘migrant’ is a floating signifier in a discursive struggle between the worldviews of liberal values and ethno-nationalist values of the conservative Global Right movement (Winter Jörgensen et al. 2018, p.53, 57, 58). This discursive struggle is something I will discuss further on in the discussion.

How is the discourse of ‘migrants are humans’ constructed then? The discourse of ‘migrant as humans’, are constructed from the principal of similarity. Mudimbe argues how representation of Otherness is based from the principal of similarity/difference (1988, p.133, 136). By referring to a universal similarity among all people (humanity), the informants aim to transcend the discourse of the racist and colonial stereotypes of the Global Right. However, in the last quote, the discourse of ‘migrant as humans’ is also constructed from the principal of similarity to “us Swedes”. Similarity is emphasised based on nationhood. Therefore, the representation of ‘migrant as humans’ builds from a position of us/them where a discourse of nationhood is re-imagined. Mohanty argues that the processes of Othering, and therefore also the processes of constructing us/them, builds “on the basis of a particular group as the norm” (2003, p.22). In this quote, ‘Swedish-ness’ is the referent point, or the norm group, from where ‘similarity’ to the discourse of ‘migrants as humans’ is constructed. This discourse also visualise how the representation of ‘migrants as humans’ is constructed from certain principles of inclusion/exclusion in the ‘community of value’, from certain boundaries of us/them (Mudimbe, 1988, p.133, 136). The inclusion in the Swedish nation ‘community of value’ is based on the principal of similarity of nationhood.

### **8.3 National belonging through nationalistic elements**

In focus of this section is how national belonging is articulated in the exhibition of *Portraits of Migration*. I will base this analysis on the material of the photos and the text of the captions. To search for element in the visual content in the photos (namely to analyse what Rose calls the ‘site of the image itself’), I will pay attention to representation of props and settings (Rose, 2016 p.115-116). Westwood argues, that the imagined nation has to constantly

be reproduced through different discourses (2000, p.41). Yuval-Davis highlights how these discourses concern the (imagined) boundaries of the nation and the people who are imagined living within and beyond the borders (1997, p.15). These can, for example, be interwoven together through a specific ideological construction of *spaces* (Westood, 2000, p.8). In relation to this, what spaces or settings are ‘migrants’ represented through in *Portraits of Migration*? The portraits are photographed in both inside and outside environments. The settings take place in front of the *theatre Dramaten (Östermalm Stockholm)*, *a red cottage*, *at a playground*, *a public swimming pool*, *classroom*, *football ground*, *a party in neon lights*, *in front of a restaurant*, *and at traditional Swedish celebrations*, *a living room*, *a concert hall*, *and a setting of pillows and quilts*. Settings mentioned in the captions as well are the *Central Station in Stockholm* and *the Royal Palace* (SI, 2017, f). The portraits also include elements of nature, visualising green forests, snow and a blue sky. The representations of ‘migrants’ in traditional Swedish public spaces contribute to a construction of migrants as *included* in the Swedish community, as ‘within the imagined borders’. The ‘migrant’ as an individual subject, is represented in settings which symbolise the imagined nation of Sweden, and through these settings/spaces, the subject and the nation are (to some extent) interconnected through each other discursively (Westwood, 2000, p.32, 46). One informant reflects on the represented settings during the interview. The introducing question is if they (SI) had a goal concerning what emotions the exhibition would bring among the audience. In the quote I am saying a follow-up question.

Student: I am thinking about that you mentioned that they [the photos] would be personal.

Informant: Yes, it is definitely like that. To come close to the migrants, (...) Just when you make portraits, that happens. One does not show pictures of many people standing in a line for the Migration Agency.

S: No.

I: You do not show helicopter photos from Lesbos.

S: No.

I: Instead, just to get close to the individuals, so that the people who will go to this exhibition, yeah, will feel more with it.

(Worked professional with the exhibition)<sup>7</sup>

The quote puts focus on what settings the exhibition does not show, which is ‘*Migration Agency*’ and ‘*helicopter photos from Lesbos*’. The representation of ‘migrants’ in different

---

<sup>7</sup> Interview 1, translated from Swedish

public spaces of Sweden, rather than from refugee camps, contributes to ‘avoiding’ the representation of ‘migrants as victims’. The exclusion of representing visual signs as “*the Migration Agency*” in the exhibition does also contribute to less focus on the role of the Swedish state in questions of migration. Instead, these visual settings put more focus on the individuals and the variation of the Swedish environment. Moreover, Yuval-Davis argues that discursive practises of representations are also constructed from specific notions of class (and gender and ethnicity) (1997, p.249). The settings in the visual content of the photos can be analysed in relation to the class perspective. These signs are organised around a cluster of *cultural* elements, and include elements as “*interior decoration of art (paintings)*”, “*a loom*”, “*a grand piano*” (in the concert hall) and the entrance to “*Dramaten*” (SI, 2017, f). Together, these cultural elements are close interwoven with a discourse around middle class status. Besides the cultural symbols of middle class in the images, what more ‘cultural’ elements are represented in the text of the captions? Cultural elements are here categorised as different attributes, for example clothes, food, activities, or religious traditions or nationalistic holidays. “Migrants” are attached to following cultural signs in the text (captions): “*red boots*”, “*dungarees*”, “*hoody*”, “*dotes t-shirt*”, “*West African patterns*”, “*runners*”, “*jumpers*”, “*rags*”, “*woolly hat*”, “*trainers with heels*”, “*(head) scarf*”, “*crazy hair colour*”, “*hide-and-seek*”, “*IKEA bag*”, “*paper bag*”, “*Ramadan*”, “*football*”, “*weaving*”, “*dancing*”, “*piano*”, “*singing*”, “*ballet*”, “*theatre*”, “*music*”, “*instruments*”, “*milk*”, “*Syrian food (kebba)*”, “*chocolate bars*”. Sweden is attached following cultural signs: “*Cinnamon buns*”, “*hot dogs*”, “*Christmas spirit*”, “*eeny, meeny, miny, moe*”, “*water polo cup*”, “*national day*”, “*fika*”, “*World cup for minorities*”, “*Christmas eve*” (SI, 2017, f). ‘Migrants’, and therefore indirect the nation of ‘Sweden’ are represented through a variety of cultural elements. A lot of the signs, for example, the ones regarding sport activities or music, are in this context not tied up to a specific nationality or ethnicity. This representation can be compared to the research of Johansson in the Swedish museum sector. Based on what she names, *the ethnic frame*, ‘migrants’ have in the Swedish museum scene been represented through for example different aspects of folklore. From a postcolonial critic, this focus has represented migrants, foremost, from aspects of difference, based on a Western hegemony/eurocentrism (Johansson, 2017, p.94, Mudimbe 1988, p.131). The exhibition represent ‘migrants’ through a variation of cultural elements, and for example elements which are not coded in a specific nationalistic way, could therefore be a way to ‘go beyond’ racist and colonial stereotypes. The combination of different religious signs, as ‘Ramadan’ and ‘Christmas’, also contribute to

represent 'Sweden' as a diverse or multicultural nation (Johansson, 2017, p.87). I will later on the essay develop the discussion about representation of religion.

The material of the caption includes some different Swedish nationalistic cultural symbols, as for example '*national day*', '*fika*' or '*IKEA*'. A few cultural nationalistic elements occur in the portraits, such as the Swedish flag and a ball in the flag's colour. As previously mentioned, national stories, as a discursive practise to connect the individual subjects with the imagined nation, are centralised around different culturally and symbolically artefacts of the nation (Westwood, 2000, p.32, 46). Around this nationalistic artefacts and cultural symbols, 'migrants' position of belonging in the 'imagined nation' is articulated. There are few symbols or signs from other nations represented in the exhibition. The representation of migrants through more 'general' cultural elements, as for example football, could be a 'strategy' to transcend the stereotyping. To sum up, national belonging of the 'migrants' in the exhibition is emphasised based on nationalistic, cultural symbols, which is also (to some extent) interwoven with a representation of middle class status.

#### **8.4 Confident women and caring men: articulation of gender**

In this section the representations in *Portraits of Migration* will be analysed in relation to a gender perspective. The material in focus is the photos and the text of the captions. The entry point for this analyse, is the visual representation of bodies and activities. I will also highlight the representation of femininity and masculinity. The bodies represented in the exhibition are of different ages, as elderly, middle age, youths and children. There are individuals I code as both men and women represented, based on the names and attributes of femininity and masculinity. There are bodies of different ethnicity represented, that is, an inclusion of both black and white bodies in the photos. The represented migrants have escaped from different countries, such as "Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Syria, Bangladesh, Chad and Gambia" (SI, 2017, f). However, all the portrayed do not share what country they have escaped from, but based on the material of the interviews, it is possible to assume that more nationalities are represented<sup>8</sup>. Visually then, 'migrants' is represented through a variation of bodies, based on gender, age, race/ethnicity and geographical origin. According to Dyer, the mechanism of stereotyping starts with that "we get hold of a few, simple characteristics", and then essentialises this difference to a person (Hall, 2013, p.247). By representing 'migrants'

---

<sup>8</sup> Due to anonymity I will not reveal what countries.



through a variation of bodies is then a starting point for how *Portraits of Migration* visualises that ‘migrants’ are not a homogenous group.

To begin with, all the portraits are photographed straight up, and most of the photos are photographed from the same angle. This contributes to a ‘sameness’ of the photos, and avoids stereotyping of men and women through different the angles of the portraits. The majority of women are standing, and many of them have their arms hanging along the side of the body. Most of the men sit down, or are doing activities with their bodies. The activities represented visual in the images by women is piano playing, and men are doing sport, craftwork or taking care of children. Therefore, men are visually represented through a greater variation of activities in the portraits. The representations of men through signs as sport, symbolises activity and agency, while the activity attached to women, for example piano playing, is more settled activity than football. This is a traditional representation of femininity/masculinity, where men usually get assigned to be the actor. The pose of standing, with arms along the side, is also a passive representation of the body language, which is a stereotypical representation of femininity (Loftsdóttir, 2015, 250, 251). However, in the text of the captions, several of the women are represented through different activities, for example work, which is a theme I will come back to later on. There are different facial expressions represented in the portraits. For example, neutrality, smiling, laughing, serious, thinking, focused and tired. The expression of smiling and laughing are coded as feminine, and therefore tend to be represented by women. Men are in a greater extent portrayed with an expression of seriousness (Statens medieråd, 2018). In the exhibition though, these gender roles, have to some extent, switched. Majority of the women express neutrality. There are more variations of facial expression among the men, for example through smiling or laughing. The majority of the women are also looking into the camera. None of the men are looking into the camera, instead their eyes are fixed ‘beyond’ the camera, or they are looking at children, or have their eyes fixed at the activity they are doing. When most of the women are looking into the camera, this signifies confidence, in terms of ‘not turning away their gaze’ which is a value man traditional get to represent (Loftsdóttir, 2015, Statens medieråd 2018). The representation of women expressing neutrality, and looking into the camera, also contributes construct women as subjects in the exhibition, and not objects. Therefore, the exhibition is framed through the *agency* of the migrants. For example, through the visual representation of subjectivity in the images, but also based on the material of the captions, where the text is written through the ‘voice of the migrants’, that is ‘migrant’ is the first speaker. Besides the

visual representation of women signifying ‘confidence’, which is a traditional representation of men/masculinity, some men are also represented through elements of femininity, for example, through the values of ‘caring’, by kissing a child or holding a baby. In the material of the captions, men are also represented through the values of “*feminism, love, fear, family, and birth of a child*”, which is signs traditional associated with femininity (Loftsdóttir, 2015, Statens medieråd 2018). This is also an example of how the exhibition have partly ‘switched’ the gender roles.

To conclude, the representation of gender in the exhibition differs from the stereotypical representation of women and men in nation branding, in which previous research (Loftsdóttir) has highlighted how women are attached to signs as bodies, motherhood and passive objects, and men are represented as agents and protectors. Both women and men are represented through subjectivity in the exhibition. Based on the visual material, ‘migrants’ are represented as a diverse group. However, in relation to the theories of Wasshede, the visual content of the portraits do not challenge the binary of the boundaries of gender norms (2010, p.218). Instead, (some) women are represented through values which are coded as typical masculine, and (some) men are represented through values which are coded as typical feminine. Many of the photos are though, still placed in the frame of traditional representation of masculinity/femininity, where there for example is more variation among men, and men are more active with their bodies. Even if the (visual) representations of gender in the exhibition *Portraits of Migration* do not ‘upends’ stereotypes, as Jezierska and Towns described other material of the Swedish nation branding, the exhibition is still in line with their research, and these attempts to ‘switch’ (some) representations of masculinity/femininity contribute to the overall representation and discourse of Sweden as prominent in ‘gender equality’ (2017, p.57).

### **8.5 Discourses of modernisation and gender equality**

In this section, I will develop how the exhibition is framed through the value of ‘gender equality’. This theme is part of a broader discourse of ‘modernisation/civilisation’ (Towns, 2002, p.165). I will analyse how ‘migrants’ are represented through the position of feminist, religious/secularised and LGBTQ. Previous research has highlighted how gender equality is an important pillar in the nation branding strategy of Sweden (Jezierska and Towns, 2017, 57), and I will here develop how this discourse is articulated in relation to citizenship/ Other

non-citizen. I will discuss the representation of the position ‘feminist’, and following quote is from the material of the captions:

“Based on my looks, people assume things. I have a lot of things that people don’t realise about me. I’m a feminist who loves heavy metal. I don’t believe in borders or nationality, or in God. I believe in actions and integrity.”  
(Marwan, SI, 2017, f).

In the quote, the self-definition of the position ‘feminist’ is expressed together with a position of distancing oneself of religion. Why then, is the representation of ‘migrant’ as ‘feminist’ combined with a representation of secularism/non-religious? Bracke argues, that the representation of religion (foremost Islam) has become a marker for ‘uncivilised’, and representation of ‘secularism’ has become a marker for ‘civilised/modern’. Bracke argues, the ‘religious (Muslim) Other’ can be included in the ‘community of value’ if one is being saved by the ‘modern’ values of Western hegemony (2012, p.249). As Towns argued, ‘gender equality’ has become an important mark for the Western modernisation discourse (2002, p.165). The construction of the position ‘feminist’ is therefore an articulation for belonging in the ‘community of value’ (in the ‘gender equal Sweden’), but this discourse of ‘modernity’ comes with specific boundaries: the inclusion builds on an exclusion from the ‘Other religion’. The representation is constructed from a dichotomy of the ‘religious uncivilised Other’, and the ‘secularised civilised citizen’. To be included in the ‘community of value’, which is in this case is the ‘modern nation of Sweden’, the representation of ‘feminist’ needs to be constructed from a secularised position.

Overall, ‘religion’ is a discursive theme that is excluded in the representations in the exhibition. Besides the previous quote, there is one more portrait that puts focus on religion. This portrait is represented through religious and nationalistic signs, in terms of a black, young woman wearing a headscarf, in front of two Swedish flags. This woman is portrayed as most of the women in the exhibition: by looking directly into the camera, from a close distance.

But Ramadan began for me today. I will fast for thirty days. It makes me feel at peace. On the subway ride here a guy told me to take off my scarf. He asked me: ‘Why does a cute girl like you wear that?’ I said: ‘I wear this because I choose to.’  
(Yasmin, SI, 2017, f).

“*Ramadan*”, “*fast*”, “*peace*”, “*scarf*” are central signs in the representation’s construction of this portray. The headscarf, together with the signs of ‘Ramadan’ and ‘fast’, are signs for Islam. Based on the presented theory of Bracke, in contexts of Western hegemony Islam symbolise the ‘religious Other’ (2012, p.249). In this portrait the ‘migrant’ is only represented through her religious position. Her representation is based on her difference to the ‘Western, modern citizen’. Values that symbolise the modern state, such as gender equality, political values or skilled work, which are prominent themes in the other portraits, are excluded in this representation. According to Bracke, the religious Muslim can be included in the ‘community of value’ first, when she is ‘saved’ by the Western hegemony from the ‘non-tolerated’ Islam (ibid). The quote highlights how the processes of inclusion/exclusion in the ‘imagined nation’, are centralised around boundaries of values for secularism/religion, or rather, a position of non-Muslim. Moreover, the representation of the ‘religious woman’ is also interwoven with cultural and symbolically artefacts of Swedish the nation, such as the Swedish flag, ‘*national day*’, ‘*fika*’ and ‘*the Royal Palace*’. These nationalistic signs, on the other hand, contribute to represent the ‘migrant’ from the principal of similarity (as symbols for ‘Swedish’ or ‘Sweden’), and are a representation of belonging to the nation of Sweden. In the portrait, the woman defends herself from an unknown racist man on the subway. This is a sign for *agency*, where she ‘saves’ herself/stand up for herself. Therefore, a passive, objectifying representation is transcended. In relation to this, the discourse of the ‘rescue narrative of Muslim women’ (based on the theory of Bracke) is avoided (2012, p.249). To conclude, in contrast to the ‘secularised migrant’, as previously discussed, who can speak about other values (feminism) and therefore be included in the ‘community of value’, the ‘religious Other’ is only partly, symbolically included in the ‘imagined nation’ through the representation of the nationalistic, cultural signs. Regarding values, she is limited to the representation of the religion/ Islam, and excluded from the representation of the values of the ‘modern nation’.

In the last part of this section, I want to highlight how the discursive theme of LGBTQ is part of the overall discourse on ‘modernisation’ and in relation to ‘gender equality’. Bracke argues, questions of LGBTQ have become central in the discursive constructions of ‘civilisation’, where acceptance of homosexuality has become a marker for ‘modernisation’ (2012, p.249). In the exhibition, one photo represents a gay couple of two men. Based on that photo, the representation of LGBTQ was brought up in some interviews. These answers were given in relation to questions of what the exhibition tells about Sweden.

I was targeting a lot of people. Like LGBT-people for example. I was saying, “Have a look. This is what kind of NGOs for LGBT refugees exists in Sweden, and what they are doing. Do you think it is good? Is it inspiring for you?”. So, this spread a lot of information (...)

(Employee, Swedish foreign mission)<sup>9</sup>

(...) those specific issues that are not okay in the part of the world where I come from, but are okay in that part of the world where you are coming from. For example, there were a couple of LGBT-photos. Yes, so those are things that are very important to think of. Freedom of expression is really, really important. And that is something Sweden is known for of course.

(Employee, Swedish foreign mission)<sup>10</sup>

And for sensitivity, I came a cross, was the gay couples (...) Not all the venues in X [names a nation] would host that exhibition. They would like to censor us. They would say “take the gay couple out”. And of course, in some countries, in some exhibitions (...) maybe would say “yes, okay, take that gay couple out (...) But at the embassy we said: “No, we are not going to censor anything, and we want to show everything”.

(Employee, Swedish foreign mission)<sup>11</sup>

It was exhibited in Egypt, and I remember many [people] thought... (...) What is the correct word... that it was bothersome that it was two gay men in it. Instead of listening to them, I put that picture in the entrance (laughing) (...) Like in Sweden... people maybe want to think Sweden is the best, and at the same time love LGBTQ, because it is *cute* and so. But at the same time, refuse to admit that it exist wrongs that Sweden do. For example, that there is undocumented, which I think is a major issue. But in other countries, it is viewed differently (...)

(Worked professional with the exhibition)<sup>12</sup>

First of all, the informants reproduce the discourse of ‘Sweden’ as a nation of acceptance of LGBTQ, or ‘inclusive’ towards the LGBTQ community. In the first quote, Sweden is constructed as a potential *role model*, where the employee wonder if the visitors (in a context abroad) are inspired by the work of LGBTQ questions and refugees in Sweden. This is in line with the previous research of Towns, how Sweden have been seen as a role model abroad, and Sweden has seen itself as a nation with ‘more obligation’ to other nations, in terms of gender equality (Towns, 2002, p.162). Based on the material of the interviews and the material of the captions, the discourse of the ‘gay inclusive Sweden’ is constructed in relation to what it is

---

<sup>9</sup> Interview 8, original

<sup>10</sup> Interview 9, original

<sup>11</sup> Interview 8, original

<sup>12</sup> Interview 3, translated from Swedish

not. The signs attached to 'LGBTQ in 'other countries' are "taken by the police", "not accepted by law or society", "killed", "danger", "not okay", "sensitive", "censor", "bothersome". 'LGBTQ and Sweden' is attached to signs as "okay", "freedom of expression", "not censoring" "NGO", "refugees", "spread information about", "the best", "love", "cute", "a new beginning". What becomes visible is that there are different discourses in relation to the construction of LGBTQ, and these discourses are constructed in relation to each other. That is, 'Sweden' can be constructed as a 'gay inclusive' community, or more broadly, a 'gender equal nation' in relation to the 'dangerous Other'. This dichotomy then, contributes to the overall discursive theme of 'civilisation and modernisation'. Based on the interview material, there is a tension between these different discourses, which becomes prominent in the last quote. The informant's decision to change the spot of the photo is a way to take part in a discursive struggle on a micro-level (regarding inclusive/exclusive gay rights). The representation of LGBTQ people in *Portraits of Migration*, contribute the representation of Sweden as an (gay) 'inclusive' community, which contribute to the overall representation of 'Sweden as a nation of gender equality', and therefore 'a good nation' where 'gays can be saved'. This representation is for example based on a construction of the 'dangerous other' (Bracke, 2012, p.249). The representation of feminism, secularisation and LGBTQ people in the Swedish nation branding is part of discursive struggles of gender equality, neoliberal values and modernisation.

### 8.6 The working, deserving migrant

Representations of inclusion/exclusion in the 'imagined nation' of Sweden are constructed in relation to the discursive theme of *work*. In focus of this section is also how this is constructed in relation to deserving/undeserving. To be included in the 'community of value' as a non-citizen, Hughes argues one can be partly included if the individual perform values of a 'good citizen' (2015, p.36). In a society where neoliberal hegemony dominates, the individual is responsible for one's own welfare (Bhyan et al., 2015, p.51). The 'good citizen' is therefore a 'responsible citizen', who can for example include herself in the society through (skilled) work. The discursive theme of work is represented in the material of the captions, which is in focus of this section. In the text, migrants are represented through the work they have, had or dream about having:

"I didn't want to leave my clothing factory. I had 25 employees, and I felt a great responsibility to them."

(Azad, SI, 2017, f)

“I was a famous conductor in my home country. I was a teacher of ballet, theatre and music. (...) It’s not easy to learn a new language. But I got a job as a music teacher here. Music is the language I can speak all over the world.”

(Leyla, SI, 2017, f)

The portrayed are represented through employments and titles as “*a conductor*”, *teacher of ballet, theatre, music*”, “*music teacher*”, *factory owner*”, “*actor*”, “*water polo champion*”, “*lawyer*”, “*restaurant owners*”, “*weaver*”, “*founder of an organisation*”, “*work with human rights, for refugees, gender equality*”. In this chain of equivalence appears a representation of *skilled work*, while the representations of unskilled employments are excluded, or made invisible, in the exhibition. Majority of these titles are also signs for middle class status. Brace argues that the dichotomy of skilled/unskilled work has become an important mark for processes of inclusion/exclusion in neoliberal ‘communities of values’ (2015, p.18). The skilled worker is imagined as someone who contributes economically to the nation, while the unskilled worker is imagined as a burden. The representation of ‘migrants’ through skilled work in the exhibition, contributes to a construction of ‘Sweden’ as a neoliberal ‘successful’ community with ‘good working citizen/migrants’. The representation of work in the exhibition, therefore, highlights a hierarchy, based on neoliberal ideas of economical contribution. The discourse of the ‘working migrant’ is also interwoven with another discourse, which is ‘the deserving migrant’. Even if ‘work’ is a central discursive theme in the exhibition, the ‘deserving migrant’ is distanced from labour migration. Following are quotes from people who worked professional with the exhibition, when they describe the people who are portrayed:

They are all.... It is people who are refugees. You escape from something for reasons of asylum. So it is not people who are labour migrants. Primarily.

(Worked professionally with the exhibition)<sup>13</sup>

Me and a lot of people in the world, they dream to escape. Sometime they have a reason. Very legitimate reasons, they have been at war, but sometimes people just want to go (...) Also, lately, a lot of people want to escape. They are not running from a war. Why they want to escape? There are a lot of economics reasons. We know, it is not a secret. A lot of people migrate for economic reasons. Or artistic reasons.

(Employee Swedish foreign mission)<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Interview 1, translated from Swedish

<sup>14</sup> Interview 8, original

In these quotes, ‘refugee’ is constructed from what it is not, that is ‘*labour migration*’ or ‘*people who migrate for economic reasons*’. In the second quote, war is constructed as a legitimate reason for migration, while economic reasons are not. The construction of, in this case a ‘refugee’, is therefore constructed by distancing it from the position of ‘economic migration’. Why do the informants separate economic migration from their representation of migrants who escape because of war? Based on the theories of Brace, the migrant Other who escape due to economic reasons, is constructed as ‘undeserving’ (Brace, 2015, p.23-24). I would argue this is a paradox: migrants who flee because of economic reasons are represented as undeserving, but to be fully included in the imagined nation, one have to prove a ‘good work ethic’. ‘Migrants’ are “expected to prove their deservingness to become members of the ‘community of value’” (Hughes, 2015, p.35, 39). Instead, following signs are attached to why the migrants had to escape, based on the material of the captions: “*War*”, “*Grenade*”, “*bomb*”, “*dictatorship*”, “*political reasons*”, “*danger*”, “*societies where you can’t trust the police*”, “*societies that kill you for being gay*” and “*fell in love but was promised to someone else*” (SI, 2017, f). Through the representation of ‘deservingness’ in the exhibition, the nation can “show ‘benevolence’ to the ‘migrants’ by allowing them into the economy and culture of the nation, thus allowing the nation to become multicultural” (Bhuyan, et al. 2015, p.51).

Based on the ‘adult worker’ model, presented by Anderson, the representation of employment symbolises that the individuals have taken responsible for herself, to secure her economic situation (2015, p.48-49). The second quote is an example of how the ‘migrants’ are represented as ‘responsible subject’ in the exhibition. Through the ‘universal language of music’ this individual challenge the difficulties of language barriers and include herself in the ‘community of value’ through (skilled) work. Other examples of how the portrayed individuals are represented in the exhibition to include themselves in the community, are for example through the study of the Swedish language, which is a recurring theme. Following are another example of how the ‘migrant’ includes herself in the community.

“We founded Refugees Welcome Stockholm and made sure refugees who came to Stockholm met with volunteers who could help them. I was there from five in the morning until two at night almost every day.”

(Tina, SI, 2017, f).

In this quote, the ‘migrant’ includes herself in the community by founding an organisation that works for integration. The ‘migrant’ is also represented through a ‘hard working



mentality', where she has worked from five in the morning to two o'clock at night. Besides being 'responsible', the representation of the 'good working migrant' is constructed from an ideal of 'good work ethic'. This is also inline with the argumentation of Brace: that migrants conducting skilled work are 'strong' and the migrants conducting unskilled work are equal to 'weakness' (2015, p.18). 'Strong', which is an occurring theme throughout the material of the captions, is attached to signs, such as, '*independent*' and '*don't ask for help*' (SI, 2017, f)<sup>15</sup>. This is inline with the 'adult worker model', namely that the individual in a neoliberal society are responsible for one's own economic burden (etc). An informant who had been portrayed brings up the representation of the 'good migrant' in one interview. The quote is a response to a question where I wonder what thoughts the informant had in relation to the exhibition's formulation: "give a new perspective to migration" (SI, 2017, g).

I know, in media and everything, all they show is the negative side of immigrants. Which I can understand because not every immigrant is a good person (...) And for me to be part of the project was a way of me showing people that there [are] good of us also. That wants to get in, like studying here and achieve our dreams. It's not just like selling drugs and shooting and everything (...) I always get mad at immigrants or refugees that come to Sweden and not see the opportunities that [they] are given (...) And they don't follow the rules of Sweden. They have the same mentality as they had in their country, which is really bad. But also, what I understand, they can't change it over a night. Once when they come to Sweden, they don't have to follow all the rules. But they have to keep it in the back of their head that this is not your country. And they have to follow the rules that are given here.

(Interview, portrayed)<sup>16</sup>

'Migrant' is attached to signs as "*good*", "*us*", "*get in*", "*studying*", "*achieve dreams*", "*follow rules*", as well as to "*negative side*", "*selling drugs*", "*shooting*", "*don't follow the rules*", "*bad mentality*". 'Sweden' is attached to signs as "*opportunities*", "*rules*", "*not your country*" in the quote. The construction of 'the good side' of migration/migrants, which the informant identifies with, is based on values of 'the responsible subject' and the adult worker model. The informants understanding of the representation of 'good migrants' is contrasted with what it is not, "the negative side of migration", which is what the informant takes a distance from. The informant's representation of 'the negative side of migration' is constructed from a discourse of

---

<sup>15</sup> For example: "I don't want to ask anyone for help. I want to be strong, independent. I want to carry the heavy bag that is my life on my own" (Samira, SI, 2017, f)

<sup>16</sup> Interview 6, original

criminality, a representation based on the racist stereotyping as previously discussed. Anderson et al. argues, “many non-citizens and their supporters are keen to distance themselves from failed citizens” (2015, p.3). The quote from the informant highlights how the discourse of the ‘good working migrant’ produces subjects on many levels: from a personal level to an international level in the material of nation branding. The informant’s quote also highlights that people represent the discourse of ‘the good migrant’ from different positions and for different purposes. Here, the informant’s representation of the ‘good migrant’ is based on a construction to be included in the ‘community of value’: “there are good of us, that wants to get in”. When SI produces the representation of ‘the good migrant’ in their communication, this is from a power position to define who can be included in the community of value. To summarise, ‘migrant’ is constructed from neoliberal values of work, where ‘migrant’ is attached to signs of skilled work, responsibility (the adult worker model), and strong individual with a cultural capital of the middle class. The representation of migrants through unskilled employment (‘failed citizen/migrant’) would put more focus on the responsibility of the state. Through the ‘adult working model’, focus is directed at the individuals ‘success’ regarding their situation of skilled/unskilled work.

### 8.7 The representation of Sweden

To begin with, based on this essay’s total material, there are very different representations of Sweden and Swedes represented. There is an ambivalent image of Sweden in the exhibition: a nation of ‘success’ with good migrants/citizen, as well as a nation who failed, from a right-based approach, to full-fill its juridical obligations. On the one hand, following signs are used to represent ‘Sweden’ in the material of the captions: “*beautiful*”, “*solidary*”, “*good country*”, “*safe country*”, “*home*”, and ‘Swedes’ (or people in Sweden) are attached to signs as “*open minded*”, “*solidary*”, “*complains about the loom*” (SI, 2017, f). The last sign is expressed as ‘typical Swedish’, in a humoristic way. On the other hand, ‘Sweden’ is also attached to following signs in the captions: “*closing borders*”, “*state of emergency*”, “*misunderstanding with the police*”, “*stricter refugee rules*”, “*strictest in Europe*”, “*denies family to be reunited*”, and ‘Swedes’ are attached to signs as “*critical and angry [of Syrians]*”, “*wants me to adapt*”, “*don’t understand*”, “*tells me to take my scarf off*”, “*tries to change who I am*” (SI, 2017,f). The themes of this criticism do not challenge the ‘representation’ of the ‘good, responsible, migrant’. That is, the criticisms do not concern questions of employment or housing. The neoliberal discourse of the ‘good migrant’ can be presented

parallel with the criticism of, for example, racist Swedes and denial of family reunion. I interpret this, as the construction of the ‘good, working, responsible migrant’ as a truth claim, and the lack of criticism regarding this discourse, strengthening its hegemonic position. Central in the representation of ‘Sweden’ in the exhibition is also the ‘Migration Agency’ or ‘resident permit’. The exhibition includes representations of migrants with different legal status: individuals who received resident permit, who have been waiting for years for a decision, and people who have been denied the resident permit. There are both positive and more critical representations of ‘Sweden’. ‘Sweden’ is constructed through opposites, as ‘good and safe’ VS ‘state of emergency’. These different interpretations highlight that the image of Sweden is a floating signifier, and a space for antagonistic, ideological struggles. However, the criticisms presented in the exhibition, strengthen the ‘migrants’ position of agency, and their participation in the exhibition is also a way to problematize the image of Sweden abroad, mainly from a right-based approach.

At last, I would like to highlight how the exhibition have been interpreted in different ways by the informants, which contribute to the ambivalent representation of ‘Sweden’ as a nation of ‘success’ or ‘failure’ in relation to questions of migration. Following quote, said by an informant at a Swedish foreign mission, highlights an interpretation of ‘Sweden’ as a difficult place to migrate to.

X people [names a nationality], and many other people in the world, they see Sweden as a perfect place to migrate. But with the exhibition, they find out that, “Yes, there are a lot of perfect things, yes there a lot of good NGOs”, but also, it is not only better chances. Also, life is hard for them. They have to prove that they are genuine refugees, and sometimes their cases are not accepted (...) It is also good to give a clear, and correct, and accurate portrait of the places people dreams of.

(Employee, Swedish Foreign Mission)<sup>17</sup>

The informant, who has exhibited the photos, argues that the exhibition shows both what is “*perfect*” with Sweden, but also “*how life is hard for them* [the migrants]”. Another informant, have interpreted the exhibition in a different way:

And really, all these photographies, which are not just photographies but there is a story about each portrait, is a kind of “success-story”. The stories reflect how people have managed to found their place in Sweden. And there is also a [figure with] numbers, that shows how migration helps Sweden

---

<sup>17</sup> Interview 8, original

to develops, [how] it helps the Swedish economy. And how people with a different mentality also enrich the society with their culture and experience and knowledge.  
(Employee, Swedish Foreign Mission)<sup>18</sup>

The informant has interpreted the representations of ‘migration’ in the exhibition as a ‘success-story’. Signs attached to migration in the quote are: “*success-story*”, “*develops Sweden*”, “*helps economy*”, “*their culture, experience, knowledge enrich society*”. And from other interviews, following signs are attached to Sweden and migration as well: “*shapes Sweden*”, “*a rescue for many villages*”, “*positive*”, “*[integration] works very well in Sweden*”. Migration in this last quote is constructed from values of economic and cultural contributions, and from an idea of ‘development’. In relation to the theory of Bracke, neoliberalism can not only be interpreted as a political project, but works as a cultural project as well, which produce specific subjects (2016, p.851). As for example the discourse of how ‘migrants’ are represented as economically favourable subjects. In relation to culture, the quote also builds from the principal of difference. That is, these individuals are imagined embodying an Other culture based, only, of their position as ‘migrant’, which will enrich the society. To conclude, these different chains of equivalence highlights how ‘Sweden’ is a floating signifier, in relation to several discourses. These representations of Sweden differ from the discourse of the ethno-nationalist movement of the Global Right, where Sweden is imagined as a nation in chaos and with widespread problems because of migration. In the exhibition, there is one representation/interpretation of Sweden as a nation of ‘successful integration’, for example in relation to the representation of skilled work. The image of Sweden is also represented in the exhibition through a more critical engagement, for example through description such as “Sweden is among the strictest in Europe when it comes to denying families the right to be reunited” (SI, 2017, f). Overall, the critical engagement in the image of Sweden in the exhibition is produced from a right-based approach, where the role of the state is argued to be the cause to the ‘problem with migration’, for example by highlighting signs as the Migration Agency, the police or interpreting European laws.

## 9. Conclusion

The aim with this essay was to study how ‘migrants’ and the Swedish ‘nation’ were constructed in the exhibition *Portraits of Migration*, produced by the Swedish Institute, as an example of practises of nation branding. The focus was how these representations were

---

<sup>18</sup> Interview 2, translated from Swedish

constructed in order to transcend the stereotypes of Western racism, and from what values these representations were constructed. This research question has been framed through theories of stereotyping in relation to ethnicity/race and gender. The question has also been analysed in relation to theories of national belonging, based on different values of modernisation, such as gender equality and secularism, and values of neoliberalism.

To begin with, in this essay, I have highlighted how the representations of ‘migrations’ are constructed from a discourse of *humanity*. This discourse is constructed as an antithesis to how the informants have understood the representation of migration in the ‘debate’ of the Global Right. The discourse of ‘migrants as humans’ is a way to transcend the dehumanised and colonial stereotypes reproduced by the ‘Global Right’. These two different discourses, the representation of ‘migrants’ as dehumanised VS humanised, are in a relation of dependency to each other. If ‘migrants’ would not been dehumanised in the first place, the discourse of ‘migrants as humans’ would not (need to) be produced. The discourse of ‘humanity’ was built from, on the one hand ‘universal values’ as for example love and family, and on the other hand, it was constructed from a principal of similarity. The discourse of ‘similarity’ was based on nationhood and from a Eurocentric norm, constructed from an us/them discourse. When contrasting the discourses of the Global Right and the more liberal discourse of SI, ‘migrant’ is a floating signifier in the discursive struggle in relation to the image of Sweden abroad. It is a discursive struggle about who is included in the community, based upon specific colonial ideas of race/ethnicity.

A focus of this essay is *stereotypes*. To begin with, the individuals in the exhibition are represented through agency. This takes place through several ways. For example, the migrants were represented as the first speaker in the text’s material (captions). But also, through the visual representations, regarding angle, composition and body language, where the individuals are represented as active subjects rather than passive objects. Agency and subjectivity are therefore important pillars in the processes to transcend stereotyping of both racist and sexist character. I have highlighted how gendered stereotypes are reproduced as well challenged. Men are represented through a broader variation of body language and facial expression. This contributes to construct men as more complex and diverse. I have also highlighted how the exhibition have ‘switched’ (some) of the gender roles, where women express values which are typical coded as masculine, and men are represented through values typical coded as feminine. These representations are important for the overall image of

Sweden abroad as a nation prominent in gender equality. The symbols of ‘fathers who kiss their children’, or ‘confident women’ are therefore representations which are part of a broader discourse on gender equality, modernisation and liberalism. However, I would argue that the gender representations are constructed from a binary representation of femininity and masculinity, which partly challenge a stereotypical representation of men/women, but these representations do not challenge the binary power structure of gender.

In focus of this essay, have been the representations of inclusion and exclusion in the ‘imagined nation’ of Sweden. This is for example discussed in relation to the representation of different cultural and nationalistic artefacts. To begin with, the ‘migrants’ are also represented through different cultural elements that are not tied up to a specific ethnicity or nationality in this context, such as football. Through this construction, the representation of ‘migrants’ as the ethnical essentialised ‘frozen’ Other (which previous research in studies of representation have highlighted) are avoided. The cultural elements in the exhibition, and especially the nationalistic artefacts, have also contributed to construct the ‘migrants’ through national belonging to Sweden. These nationalistic signs are for example visible in terms of settings and environment, the representation of the Swedish flag or Swedish companies. These representations construct the subjects in the exhibition as symbolically included in the nation of Sweden. I have also highlighted how the representations of signs, such as “Christmas” and “Ramadan”, or “West African pattern” and “Syrian food” contribute to construct Sweden as a diverse and multicultural nation, and as an *inclusive* community.

The construction of the nation in the exhibition *Portraits of Migration* is not centralised around a representation of borders, but through a representation of specific values. This essay has highlighted how the representations of ‘migrants’ have been framed through values and discourses of modernisation and neoliberalism. I have analysed these discourses in relation to the processes of inclusion/exclusion in the ‘community of value’, and ‘good and failed’ citizen/migrants. The modernisation discourse is represented through values of feminism, secularism and LGBTQ. The representation of values of gender equality is, as previously mentioned, important pillars in the communication of the Swedish nation branding. The modernisation discourse has also come to work as an inclusion mechanism for the ‘community of value’. I have highlighted how the representation of the position ‘feminist’ is a construction in relation to national belonging in the ‘gender equal nation of Sweden’. However, the construction of the ‘feminist migrant’ comes with specific boundaries. The

feminist position is represented in relation to secularism, and the representation of a Muslim religious person, is limited to be represented through only the religious values. This representation is based on the discourse of the 'modern civilised West', which is constructed as a dichotomy to the 'uncivilised religious Other'. It is unthinkable that a white ('Western') person would need to represent the position of feminism in relation one's religious (secularised) standpoint. Therefore, this discourse highlights how different power structures of colonial ideas of race/ethnicity, 'civilisation/modernisation' and 'religion' are interwoven into each other. This discourse, contributes to specific boundaries for a mechanism of inclusion/exclusion to the 'community of value'. Based on the theories of Bracke, the 'uncivilised (religious) Other' have to be 'saved' by the 'modern Western hegemony' before she can be included in the 'community of value'. Therefore, to not only transcend stereotypes but also to challenge racist stereotypes and colonial power structures, the representation of the black woman in hijab would be represented to through other values than just her religion, such as gender equality.

The discourse of 'Western modernisation' is represented in relation to LGBTQ questions. Through the representation of the gay couple in the exhibition, Sweden is represented as a gay inclusive community. As highlighted in previous research, LGBTQ have become an important mark for the modernisation discourse: a 'modern nation' is a 'gay friendly nation' (Bracke, 2012). I have highlighted how Sweden as 'gay inclusive community' was constructed in relation to the dangerous Other. Based on my material, LGBTQ questions were also a marker for an antagonistic field for different worldviews, which caused discursive struggles on micro-levels because of the representation of a gay couple.

Besides gender equality and modernisation, I have also highlighted in this essay how values of neoliberal ideas contribute to the representation of migration. This is foremost, based on the discursive theme of work. Throughout the representation of skilled work (and indirect, middle class positions as well), the migrants are constructed as included in the 'community of value'. The representation of migrants in the exhibition from positions as 'conductor' or 'factory owner' is therefore in line with the theories of the 'good citizen': in a neoliberal society the 'good citizen/migrant' is a working individual. This discourse is also reproduced through the exclusion of the representation of unskilled workers. 'The good working migrant' is also constructed in relation to responsibility, which I have highlighted, are reproduced in several ways in the material. This discourse is also co-produced in relation to a discourse of

‘deserving and undeserving migrants’. Based on my material, the subjects who escaped from war and danger (the deserving) is constructed as a dichotomy to the individuals who migrated due to economic reasons (undeserving). I have pointed out how the discourse of the ‘good working migrant’ is reproduced from different power relations. When SI reproduces this discourse of ‘good and failed citizen/migrant’ in their material, they have the power to impact the definition of ‘who belongs to the nation’. I have also showed, how the discourse of ‘good and failed citizen/migrant’ is reproduced on an individual level. The discourse of the ‘good and failed’ migrants, affected how one of the informants understood herself/himself. The representations of migration in international level are not isolated from the representations on an individual level: they are co-constructed and affect each other. To sum up, the discourse of the ‘working, responsible migrant’ as a ‘good migrant’ is a constructed as a truth throughout the exhibition. As previous mentioned, when the focus is directed as the ‘success’ of the ‘migrants’ (for example through the representation of skilled work) less focus is directed at the role and responsibility of the state, in terms of work, housing and living condition.

Last, I have highlighted how the image of ‘Sweden’ abroad is a floating signifier between different worldviews and ideologies, such as ethno-nationalism, neoliberalism, and also to some extent, a right-based approach. The image of Sweden is then open for different interpretations. There is a discursive battle between the discourses of representing Sweden as a ‘deterrent’ example or as a ‘role model’. This ambivalent representation is produced in the material of the portraits: Sweden is represented as a nation with people who have an ‘open attitude’ VS a nation who have ‘closed borders’. Overall, the image of Sweden as multicultural/diverse nation, characterised through ‘modern values’, such as gender equality or LGBTQ friendly, are taken for truths in the exhibition. Through the method of discourse analysis, I have highlighted how the representation of migration in the exhibition Portraits of Migration, are embedded in a bigger narrative about Sweden, and framed through discursive struggles of who belongs to the nation.



## 10. References

### Laws

SFS 2015:152. Förordning med instruktion för Svenska Institutet. Stockholm: Utrikesdepartementet

### Literature

Ahrne, G, Erikson-Zetterquist, U. (2015). Intervjuer. In Ahrne, G & Svensson, P (red.), *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder* (p.34-53). Stockholm: Författarna och Liber AB

Anderson B, Hughes, V. (2015). *Citizenship and its others*. London: Palgrave Macmillian

Anderson B. (2015). Immigration and the Worker Citizen. In Anderson, B & Hughes, V (red.) (2015). *Citizenship and its others*. London: Palgrave Macmillian

Bhuyan, R, Jeyapal, D, Ku, J, Sakamoto, I, Chou, E (2015). Branding 'Canadian Experience' in Immigration Policy: Nation Building in a Neoliberal Era. *Journal of International Migration & Integration*; 18 (1), 47-62

Brace, L (2015). Reflection on the good citizen. In Anderson, B & Hughes, V (red.) (2015). *Citizenship and its others*. London: Palgrave Macmillian

Bracke, Sarah. (2012). From 'saving women' to 'saving gays': Rescue narratives and their dis/continuities. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 19 (2), 237-252.

Bracke, S. (2016). Is the subaltern resilient? Notes on agency and neoliberal subjects. *Cultural Studies*. 30 (5) 839-855

Della Porta, D, Keating, M. (2010). How many approaches in the social science? An epistemological introduction. In Della Porta, D & Keating, M (red), *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences* (p.19-39). Cambridge: University Press

- Grimen, H, Gilje, N. (2009). *Samhällsvetenskapernas förutsättningar*. Riga: Diadalos.
- Hall, S, Evan S, Nixon S (red). (2013). *Representation*. London: Sage Publication Ltd
- Haraway, D (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist studies* 14 (3), 575-599.
- Hesse-Biber, S. (2014). Feminist approaches to In-Depth Interviewing. In Hesse-Biber, S (red), *Feminist research practice* (p.182-232). Boston: SAGE publications, Inc.
- hooks, b. (2015). *Black looks- race and representation*. New York: Routledge
- Hughes, V. (2015). Can family migrants be good citizens? In Anderson, B & Hughes, V (red.) (2015). *Citizenship and its others*. London: Palgrave Macmillian
- Jeziarska, K & Towns, A. (2018). Taming feminism? The place of gender equality in the ‘Progressive Sweden’ brand. *Place Brand Public Dipl.* 14, 55–63
- Johansson, C. (2017). Including issues of migration and ethnic diversity in museum exhibitions: A reflection on different approaches used in Sweden. *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture*. 8 (1), 85-101
- Kratochwil, F (2010). Constructivism: what it is (not) and how it matters. In Della Porta, D & Keating, M (red), *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences* (p.80-98). Cambridge: University Press
- Kvale, S. (1997). *Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun*. Lund: Studentlitteratur
- Loftsdóttir, K. (2015). The exotic north: Gender, Nation Branding and Post-colonialism in Iceland. *NORA—Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 23, (4), 246–260.
- Martinsson, L., Griffin, G., & Nygren, K. (2016). Introduction: challenging the myth of gender equality in Sweden. In *Challenging the myth of gender equality in Sweden*. Policy Press. Retrieved 2019-05-27, from <https://www-universitypressscholarship->

com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/view/10.1332/policypress/9781447325963.001.0001/upso-9781447325963-chapter-10.

Mohanty, C.T. (2003). *Feminism without borders*. United States of America: Duke University Press

Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988). Diskurs om makt och kunskap om de Andra. Marginalitet och koloniseringens struktur. In Eriksson, C & Eriksson Baaz, M & Thörn, H (red.) (2011). *Globaliseringens kulturer. Den postkoloniala paradoxen, rasismen och det mångkulturella samhället*. Nora: Bokförlaget Nya Doxa

Paternotte, D., & Kuhar, R. (2018). Disentangling and Locating the “Global Right”: Anti-Gender Campaigns in Europe. *Politics & Governance* , 6 (3), 6–19.

Rose, G. (2016). *Visual methodologies, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. London: Sage Publications Ltd

Sharma, N. (2015). Racism. In Anderson, B & Hughes, V (red.) (2015). *Citizenship and its others*. London: Palgrave Macmillian

Sverisson, A. (2015). Visuell metodik. In G, Ahrne & P, Svensson (red.), *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder* (p.191-205). Stockholm: Författarna och Liber AB

Towns, A. (2002). Paradoxes of (In)Equality: Something is Rotten in the Gender Equal State of Sweden. In *Cooperation & Conflict*. 37 (2), 157-179

Turner, G. (1996). *British Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge

Wasshede, C. (2010). *Passionerad politik*. Malmö: Bokbox Förlag

Westwood, S, Phizacklea, A. (2000). *Trans-nationalism and the politics of belonging*. New York: Routledge

Winther Jörgensen, M & Philips, L. (2018) {2000}. *Diskursanalys som teori och metod*. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB

Yuval-Davis, N (1997). *Gender & Nation*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd

### **Web sites**

Alexandermahmoud. (2018, 25 October). Portraits of migration is now shown in Serbia in the group exhibition >>Oppositional Looks<<. Honoured and glad! It has been shown in a total 12 countries now and for me it's a reminder of how much has happened since I portrayed life's the last three years- and how little that has happened, since this girl is still living without papers in Sweden. (Instagram status). Retrieved 2019-01-14 from <https://www.instagram.com/p/BpXYcTilrPZ/>

BBC. (2017). *Sweden to Trump: what happened last night?* Retrieved 2019-05-29 from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39020962>

Helsingborgs Dagblad. (2018). *Prisad fotograf tagen av uppmärksamheten*. Retrieved 2019-05-29 from <https://www.hd.se/2018-12-01/prisad-fotograf-tagen-av-uppmarksamheten>

Regeringskansliet. (2018). *Handbok Sveriges feministiska utrikespolitik*. Retrieved 2019-05-29 from <https://www.regeringen.se/rapporter/2018/08/handbok-sveriges-feministiska-utrikespolitik/>

Sharing Sweden. (2017). *Portraits of Migration at the Museum of Occupations in Tallin*. Retrieved 2019-01-14 from <https://sharingsweden.se/portraits-migration-museum-occupations-tallinn/>

Statens medieråd. (2018). *Kvinnor och män i media*. Retrieved 2019-05-29 from <https://statensmedierad.se/larommedier/kallkritikvemvadvarfor/kvinnorochmanimedier.425.html>

a) Swedish Institute. (2019). *Bilden av Sverige utomlands 2018*. Retrieved 2019-05-29 from [https://si.se/app/uploads/2019/02/si\\_rapport\\_sverigebild\\_web\\_low.pdf](https://si.se/app/uploads/2019/02/si_rapport_sverigebild_web_low.pdf)

- b) Swedish Institute. (n.d). *Communicating Sweden*. Retrieved 2019-05-29 from <https://si.se/en/how-we-work/communicate-sweden/>
- c) Swedish Institute. (2017). *Manual for the production and presentation of the exhibition*. Retrieved 2019-01-10 from <https://sharingsweden.se/app/uploads/2017/06/portraits-manual-eng-2.pdf>
- d) Swedish Institute. (n.d). *Organisation*. Retrieved 2019-01-09 from <https://si.se/om-si/organisation/>
- e) Swedish Institute. (n.d). *Our mission*. Retrieved 2019-01-09 from <https://si.se/en/about-si/our-mission/>
- f) Swedish Institute. (2017). *Portraits of Migration*. Retrieved 2019-05-29 from <https://sweden.se/collection/portraits-of-migration/article/suzana-grenade-fell-just-lay/>
- g) Swedish Institute. (2017). *Portraits of Migration- Sweden beyond the headlines*. Retrieved 2019-01-11 from [https://sharingsweden.se/app/uploads/2017/02/portraits-of-migration\\_alla\\_bild-och-text.pdf](https://sharingsweden.se/app/uploads/2017/02/portraits-of-migration_alla_bild-och-text.pdf)
- h) Swedish Institute. (n.d). *Vår historia*. Retrieved 2019-01-09 from <https://si.se/var-historia/>

## 11. Appendix

### 10.1 Interviews

1. Professional, exhibition, conducted 02-07-2019
2. Employee, Swedish Foreign Mission, conducted 02-13- 2019
3. Professional, exhibition, conducted 02-14-2019
4. Professional exhibition, conducted 02-15-2019
5. Employee, Swedish Foreign Mission, conducted 02-15-2019
6. Portrayed, conducted 02-08-2019
7. Portrayed, conducted 02-15-2019
8. Employee, Swedish Foreign Mission, conducted 02-28-2019
9. Employee, Swedish Foreign Mission, conducted 03-04-2019
10. Portrayed, conducted 03-15-2019

### 10.2 Interview guide

#### Den anställda

- Berätta om din tjänst, arbetsplats, *Vilken roll i projektet "Portraits of migration"?*

#### Projektet överlag

- Berätta/introducera kort om projektet!
  - *När började det? Används materialet fortfarande idag?*
  - *Hur många länder har den visats idag i?*
- Berätta om temat i utställningen. Varför valde ni att göra en fotoutställning kring migration, och specifikt asylsökande?
- Vad är syftet med projektet/mål med projektet? Ville ni sätta ljus på något särskilt?
  - *Vem/vilka tog beslut om syftet? SI, ambassader, fotografen, de porträtterade?*
- Vad är bakgrunden till projektet? I beskrivningen står det att utställningen att internationell media har målat upp en bild av kris och kaos gällande Sverige och

migration. Vill du kommentera den rapporteringen? Och varför ville ni agera på det?

- Vad ville ni att utställningen skulle säga/visa om Sverige? alt. Vilken bild av Sverige ville ni få fram genom utställningen? Och vad ville ni att den skulle visa kring att vara migrant i Sverige?
- Vem är målgruppen?
- Utställningen består av tre olika delar. Varför ville ni komplettera porträtten med statistik kring migration samt informationsskyltar om civilsamhället i Sverige som arbetar med integration?

### **Porträtten**

- Valet av fotograf?
- Hur valdes de som porträtterades ut? Hur kom ni i kontakt med de porträtterade?
- Hade ni någon diskussion kring 'representation'?  
*- Fanns det en diskussion kring att ni ville porträttera exempelvis olika orsaker till flykt eller porträttera asylsökande från olika länder?*
- Fanns det porträtt som sorterades bort?  
*- Om ja, varför? Vem sållade ut (SI eller fotograf)?*
- Fanns det en diskussion i övrigt hur personerna skulle porträtteras? Ex. vilka miljöer, kroppsspråk, fotografiskt?
- Hur gick intervjuerna till? Vem utförde dem? Vilka typer av frågor ställde ni?
- Hade ni någon idé eller mål med vilka tankar och känslor bilderna ska väcka hos betraktarna?

### **Sverigefrämjande kommunikation**

- Utställningen har använts på olika sätt av olika ambassader. Kan du ge något exempel?
- Stötte du/ni på några utmaningar eller svårigheter i arbetet med utställningen?

### **Respons**

- Vilken respons har ni fått från ambassader när ni gått ut med att det här materialet finns tillgängligt?
- Vilken respons har ni fått av besökare som sett utställningen?  
*- Är det något som gripit åskådare mer? Varit förvånande? etc.*

### **Avslut**

- Vill du tillägga, kommentera eller utveckla något innan vi avslutar?
- Hur arbetet kommer gå vidare: återkomma med transkribering, inlämning av uppsats juni eller aug
- Ok att återkomma med följdfrågor?