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Experiences on the Margins of Citizenship and Migration Policies

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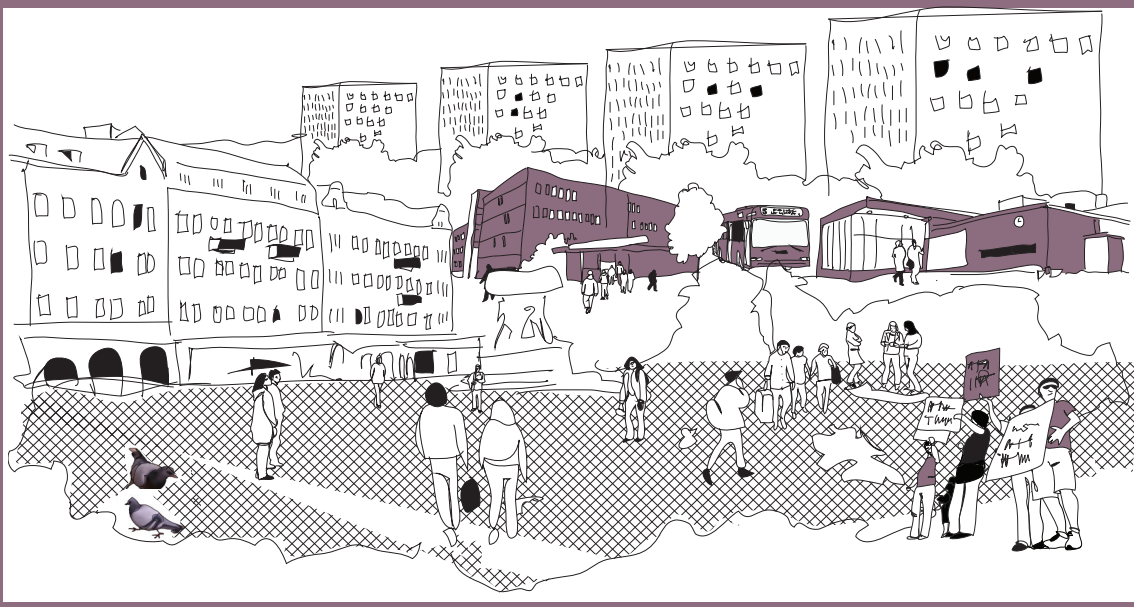

EVERYDAY CLANDESTINITY

Experiences on the Margins of Citizenship and Migration Policies

MAJA SAGER

Lund University

EVERYDAY CLANDESTINITY

EVERYDAY CLANDESTINITY:

Experiences on the Margins of Citizenship and Migration Policies

LUND UNIVERSITY

Maja Sager

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Faculty of Social Sciences
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To Lina and Tove

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Abstract

The overarching purpose of this study is to put the experiences of clandestine asylum seekers (rejected asylum seekers who, avoiding deportation, continue to stay in Sweden) at the centre of a critical re-reading of Swedish migration and gender regimes. Further, the study – in dialogue with feminist and postcolonial perspectives – aims to analyse the gendered experiences of migration and clandestinity in the context of a Nordic welfare model in transition towards a model more closely identified with neoliberal discourses and migration and welfare policies.

The research is based upon a long-term ethnographic study with clandestine asylum seekers and asylum rights activists. The central focus is upon ten in-depth interviews with asylum seekers and nine interviews with activists and 'experts'. Other forms of material (from the media, public events, websites of NGOs, etc.) are used to illustrate the context of the interview material and to analyse aspects of clandestinity in media and public debates.

A series of research questions have guided the process. These circulate around the experiences of clandestine asylum seekers, and how their position can be understood in relation to a gendered migration regime and to notions and practices of citizenship and belonging. The main research question is: How, through public representations, institutional practices and subjective experiences, is clandestinity constructed within the frames of the Swedish welfare state, and in relation to citizenship and migration policies?

The thesis offers a background analysis, a discussion of the theoretical framework and an outline of the methodological considerations. Thereafter follow three analytical chapters focussing on the ethnographic material. These chapters explore the experiences of the informants from the labour market, from the asylum process,

and from an everyday life characterised by a lack of social rights and limited access to welfare entitlements. The final chapter summarises the thesis as well as offers some final reflections on the research questions and aims.

The study illuminates the racialised and gendered processes through which everyday lives in the family, in relation to civil society and to state institutions, shape – and are shaped by – clandestinity and deportability. Further, it illuminates the centrality of the position of clandestine asylum seekers in relation to the construction of citizenship and belonging, and shows how these processes are gendered at the level of symbols, institutions and identities. I also explore how different fields of social policies are interconnected and define the position of clandestinity. Clandestinity is shown to be a location characterised by exclusion and fragmentation on some levels, but also by limited kinds of collectivity and inclusion on other levels.

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Many people have been involved in the making of this dissertation. Firstly, and undoubtedly foremost, it builds upon the contributions made by the asylum seekers and asylum rights activists who shared freely with me their time, their homes, their sorrows, their moments of hope and their analyses and opinions. Without their generous and courageous participation this thesis would not exist. I hope they feel that offering up their experiences for me to write about was worth it. I have not been able to do justice to the number of things that I learned from them in the course of these pages. Thank you all. And my very best wishes go to those of you who still struggle in clandestinity. Thanks also to the friends and relatives who facilitated our conversations with their translation skills.

I have worked with this thesis in three different academic settings – my home department, the Centre for Gender Studies at Lund University in Sweden; the Women's Studies Centre at Lodz University in Poland; and, the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies at Lancaster University in the UK. I owe many thanks to the tutors, colleagues and friends in all these places.

The first phase of my postgraduate studies was funded by the European Commission through a Marie Curie Fellowship for Early Stage Training in Gender and Women's Studies, EU Sixth Framework Programme. This meant that I started the project at the Women's Studies Centre at Lodz University. I am grateful to Professor Elzbieta Oleksy, my tutor whilst I was there, for receiving me so generously and for her valuable input on the first outlines of the project.

My main supervisor Diana Mulinari, Professor at the Centre for Gender Studies at Lund University, has been with me throughout the whole journey. I always left our meetings full of confidence, energy

and inspiration. Our discussions about my project, feminism, the Swedish welfare state, asylum policies and racism, the writing process and about 'being' in academia have been crucial for my completing this project. Without her guidance through the emotional, political and intellectual challenges of the academic world, I doubt I would have been able to get through it. Diana has been a mentor and a friend, and now I am looking forward to also being her colleague and hopefully towards further cooperation in the future.

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———————

Maja Sager
12/1 2011

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

When, in the early 2000s, I was about to become an activist in an asylum rights group in Malmö, Sweden, I expected to find an underground network of people helping rejected asylum seekers to hide from the police in basements, churches and hidden rooms. I imagined myself and some refugee family as mysterious silhouettes switching cars in a dark alley on our way to the next temporary hiding place. What I found was certainly an underground resistance movement; but this was an 'underground' in the sense of being invisible rather than secret, and a 'resistance' in the sense of supporting people on an everyday basis to compensate for the withdrawal of rights to welfare services, rather than a secret army sending coded messages or fleeing into the night.

Of course during the last twenty or so years of increasingly restrictive migration policy in Sweden and Europe, people have been fleeing into the night, and asylum seekers have been hiding from the police in culverts under the hospital with newborn children in their arms. Others have been harassed, persecuted and violently deported and asylum seeking children have been violently detained. It would be exaggerated to claim that these kinds of events are well-known to the Swedish public, but at least such extreme events stand a chance in the logic of the media and so do occasionally make their way to the newspapers and television screens. But with the exception of those peaks of explicit violence and fear, the everyday life of the

group of inhabitants I here call *clandestine asylum seekers*[1] – and to some limited extent also the everyday life of citizens trying to support them – is rather about working long hours for minimal wages, finding ways of fulfilling basic needs for shelter, food and healthcare, the struggle to gain a residence permit, endless waiting, and watching the news in the hope of hearing about policy changes.

The more this part of Swedish society became a part of my everyday life the more words commonly used in the media and in public debate, such as 'undocumented migrants', 'hidden asylum seekers' or 'illegal refugees', became populated by 'real' people, by friends, histories, frustration, fear, hope and sometimes even by a party that was thrown to celebrate someone getting a residence permit.[2] And as these words were repopulated by a reality that seemed absent from the abstraction of the media terms the more the limited visibility of this reality struck me. Despite the connotations these words carry with them, being clandestine does not necessarily mean being literally underground or in hiding: most of the rejected asylum seekers I have been in touch with take part in the informal economy and housing market, or visit the doctor or go to school. They live in Sweden. But clandestine asylum seekers as Swedish *inhabitants*, as, again, *part of the Swedish society* were – and remain – barely visible in public discourse.

The attempts of the asylum rights movement to raise debate on the violent and exclusionary expressions of the state's regulation of migration, to which asylum seekers and activists bear witness, strengthened my impression of invisibility and silence. It seemed to me that, no matter what experiences of violence, racism and indifference people tried to bring to the attention of the public, the generous and humane image of the Swedish welfare state was left untarnished. Sometimes the very image itself seemed to be the argument against any criticism: 'hey, this is Sweden, it can't be that bad!'

---

[1] The concepts clandestine and clandestinity refer to rejected asylum seekers who stay and avoid deportation, the concepts will be discussed below.

[2] In Swedish these words refer to *papperslösa migranter, 'gömda' asylsökande* and *'illegala' flyktingar.*

After a few years of activism I brought my experiences into academia and continued exploring this part of Swedish society from my new location. Within the frames of gender studies and political science I found an absence of both empirical studies and theoretical tools that approached the position of undocumented migrants on the margins of citizenship and nation. It seemed to me that neither mainstream political science nor hegemonic feminist theories on welfare and citizenship allowed for a full understanding of positions beyond borders and formal rights.

Even though the presence of undocumented migrants in Sweden has attracted more attention in the media, academia and in public debate during recent years, it still tends to be a partial visibility. This partial visibility is often characterised by a focus upon the most extreme or explicit expressions of exclusion in individual cases – for example excessively violent deportations or extremely appalling individual stories. Placing the focus upon 'victims' or upon irregular migration as a social problem and as a threat towards the common welfare means that the experiences undocumented inhabitants have of Sweden are still not a part of the general understanding of the Swedish welfare state. Analyses of gender equality, social policy, the labour market or of civil society tend not to include these experiences, and although the existence of the space I call clandestinity is acknowledged, it is still treated as a space on the margin that does not properly form a part of these fields of study or political action.

In this study, I want to reverse this image of Sweden: What happens to the understanding of the Swedish welfare state if clandestinity and experiences of asylum seekers and asylum rights activists are put in the centre? How can social theories in general and feminist theories in particular be developed to also grasp undocumented inhabitants instead of allowing citizenship and formal boundaries of belonging to form an uncontested analytical framework? Instead of asking only 'what can we learn about the situations of asylum seekers?' I want to add the question 'what can we say about the state of things in the Swedish welfare state if we start out from the experiences of asylum seekers in Sweden?'

Concepts – clandestine and clandestinity

The rate at which asylum applications are rejected in Sweden has been increasing steadily since the beginning of the 1990s and by September 2008 it was calculated that around twenty people a day decided to hide away from the authorities to avoid being deported.[3] Authorities and responsible politicians regularly explain this development by claiming that an increasing number of asylum seekers do not have grounds for seeking the protection afforded by asylum. However, many others in the debate assert, on the contrary, that it is not the need for protection among asylum seekers that has decreased but that it is the practise of law and the legal procedures which assess credibility and the need for protection that have become more and more restrictive. This study, following the latter argument, starts out from a critical approach in relation to Swedish and European migration policy. I argue that migration policies *produce* clandestinity through exclusionary laws and practices, and through a political aim to delimit refugee immigration.[4]

However, this production of clandestinity is far more complex than a 'simple' issue concerning decisions about rejection and deportation. There is no simple and direct relation between a rejection of an asylum application on the one hand, and deportation or total exclusion from social rights and welfare entitlements on the other. Rather, the exclusion is implemented and experienced on a

[3] The number of undocumented migrants in general in Sweden is estimated as being somewhere between 20,000 and 50,000, whilst the estimated number of clandestine asylum seekers in particular varies at anywhere between10,000 and 20,000, depending on the 'counting technique' utilised (Social rapport 2010 p. 270). Most estimates presented to the public come from journalists, activists, NGOs and politicians rather than from the results of academic research. Further, except for the 'practical' difficulties involved in 'counting', asking for – and producing – numbers is problematic in relation to questions about *how* and *for what purposes* these numbers are being produced and used (Stenum 2008, Khosravi 2010).

[4] Political scientist Peo Hansen traces a fundamental paradox in European migration policies between attempts to discourage and delimit refugee migration whilst at the same time opening borders to controlled, temporary labour immigration (Hansen 2008).

more multi-levelled basis through the interplay between migration policies and labour market policies, social policies regulating undocumented migrants' welfare entitlements and/or individual and/or collective practices at welfare institutions, in civil society and in movements of social protest. An example of the possible differences in the ways clandestinity/ies are produced in different European nation-states, is seen in the way Spain, in contrast with Sweden, as well as offering free healthcare for all undocumented migrants and schooling for their children, also gives undocumented migrants the right to register with the local authorities and to pay local taxes (Sager 2005). I do not want to argue that Sweden is 'worse' (or 'better') than other EU states as the differences in policies are embedded in national migration history, colonial history, labour market policies and the density of the welfare state, but I do think that these differences in social rights and welfare entitlements illuminate the varying political implications and the complexities of the construction of exclusion and clandestinity.[5]

I use the term 'clandestine asylum seekers' to refer to asylum seekers who stay in Sweden after their asylum applications have been rejected and who consequently 'hide' from the police and the authorities in order to avoid deportation. The concept refers only in part to the Swedish term, *gömda asylsökande*, which literally means 'hidden asylum seekers' and is the most commonly used term in Swedish public debate.[6] However, according to my experience, people in this situation are in most cases not 'hidden' in a literal sense; it is only some people and families who end up actually *hiding* due to strong fear or special circumstances. The way I want to apply the term 'clandestine', in contrast with 'hidden' ('*gömda*'), entails also recognising the agency involved in the chain of acts and decisions that are necessary in order to avoid deportation.

[5] If we look at the example with Spain again, the broader welfare entitlements for undocumented migrants does not simply reflect 'generosity' but must be understood also within the context of the demand for a labour force reserve of undocumented workers in some sectors (Sager 2005).

[6] During the years that I have been working with this study, the concept *papperslösa*, which literally means 'paper-less' but could be roughly translated to undocumented migrants, has become another popular concept.

Clandestine refers to 'being actively underground' rather than 'hiding away'.

Social anthropologist Shahram Khosravi has published several articles (2006, 2009, 2010) based on interviews with irregular migrants. He uses the concepts 'irregularity/irregular migrants' (2006) in a way which is similar to the way in which I use clandestinity/clandestine asylum seekers.[7] In later articles he uses the term undocumented migrants (2009, 2010). Even though most of his interviewees were rejected asylum seekers, he does not want to narrow his conceptualisation to migrants seeking asylum and thus argues for the broader concepts of irregular and undocumented. In a study that deals with non-citizens' potential access to urban citizenship, sociologist Helena Holgersson (forthcoming, 2011) shifts between non-citizen, asylum seeker and deportable, depending on the context and depending on whether the asylum seeker has received a rejection of their application or not.[8]

Khosravi and Holgersson both argue against the misleading connotations and 'discursive luggage' of some of the more publicly well-known concepts such as 'illegal migrants' and 'hidden' asylum seekers (Holgersson, forthcoming 2011). I agree that they may be problematic, but, whilst I also reject the term 'illegal' due to its criminalising and stigmatising connotations, I still think that it is pertinent in this study to apply the concept clandestine as a reference to the term 'hidden'.[9] This is because the term reflects the more symbolic clandestinity of my informants' positions in relation to representations of the Swedish welfare state.[10] Further, while

[7] In Swedish the term is 'irregularitet/irreguljära migranter'.

[8] Holgersson's thesis with the working title *Icke-medborgarskapets geografi* will be published during spring 2011.

[9] Further, the term 'illegal' disregards the fact that most regular routes for asylum seekers into the European Union have been blocked through visa demands and border regulations, such as carrier sanctions, which means that people who need to apply for asylum are automatically criminalised. The application of the term 'illegal' in this context implies complicity with this criminalisation of migrants and refugees.

[10] The concept 'informant' has been criticised for carrying a positivist and objectifying conceptualisation of knowledge and of the participants/interviewees as providers of data to be analysed by the researcher. I want to underline here that

undocumented, irregular or deportable might be the more 'correct' terms, carrying less in the way of misleading connotations, I think that they all lack the specificity of the situation of the people I have interviewed in this study. This is a situation that is defined by having applied for asylum, having been rejected *and* then having taken the active decision to avoid deportation. Whilst one can be regarded as 'undocumented' or 'irregular' through being without the right residence papers, and regarded as deportable as soon as an asylum application has been turned down, clandestinity further describes the agency involved in cutting contact with authorities and continuing the struggle for the right of residence. Thus, when I refer directly to my fieldwork I use my main term, 'clandestine'. But, depending on the context, I do also use the broader and more inclusive concept of 'undocumented migrants', to describe positions characterized by irregular border crossings and/or the lack of a residence permit (positions that can be shared by, for example, visa over-stayers, undocumented workers, victims of trafficking and rejected asylum seekers). I also alter the word clandestine into the noun form 'clandestinity' to describe the social and discursive space in which clandestine asylum seekers are located. This social and discursive space is marked by simultaneous inclusion and exclusion in relation to the Swedish welfare state. Finally, I want to assert that both clandestine and clandestinity are temporary and constructed concepts.

Evidently clandestinity or clandestine asylum seekers are far from being fixed and simple categories, but are rather locations characterised by heterogeneity and diversity with regard to variables such as country of origin, reasons for migration or flight, relations to transnational and/or diasporic communities, social class, gender, sexuality, nationality, etc. In short clandestine asylum seekers as a category share little but their excluded position in relation to asylum

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I regard the interview situation as a process of mutual knowledge production between the researcher and the interview person. Interviewee or participant are often regarded as being concepts that better capture the character of the interview as a process, but I think that 'informant' better describes the interview person as a carrier of knowledge and their own agency in the research.

legislation and citizenship.[11] Also, the way I use clandestinity underlines that clandestine is not a quality attached to people's bodies but rather that the (temporary) position in clandestinity (temporarily) constructs them as clandestine. The plurality in relation to nationality, 'race'/ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, etc. creates diversity in the number of ways in which clandestinity is lived and how it (dis)connects (from) to the welfare state.

This multi-levelled space – and the complex patterns that are cast upon it in public debate and everyday life – serves as a starting point from which to engage in a critical discussion about citizenship, belonging and welfare. In this discussion I want to consider gendered and racialised notions of boundaries and belonging that constitute, and are constituted by, clandestinity. I want to do this by exploring the ways in which clandestinity is constructed socially and discursively, by examining asylum seekers' everyday experiences, by considering their limited access to welfare services and their lack of social and political rights, and through a consideration of the ways in which they are represented in political and media discourses. Also, by taking a closer look at the on-going challenges and negotiations of the boundaries of exclusion and belonging, I want to understand how the gendered and racialised Swedish welfare regime shapes, and is in turn shaped by, individual and collective strategies of resistance.

Operationalisation of the study

This research project is based upon an ethnographic study with clandestine asylum seekers and asylum rights activists which was conducted in Sweden between February 2006 and December 2007. I

[11] It is worth pointing out that the concept of asylum seeker, in contrast to that of refugee, entails a status in which one is seeking recognition as a refugee: 'Asylum seekers are literally pending recognition' (Tyler 2009 p. 189). From this perspective the use of the concept refugee instead of asylum seeker could serve as a statement about the right to recognition. Despite this, I prefer to use the more correct term 'asylum seekers', but distance myself from the connotations of suspicion and distrust that have been added to the concept in the UK context Tyler refers to (2009).

think the ethnographic fieldwork is a pertinent way to approach the situated and partial knowledge generated by people positioned as clandestine and by people who engage as activists in the asylum rights movement. As I have already mentioned, the broader concept of undocumented migrants contain people in many different migration situations, but I have limited this study to the position of people who have had a period of relative inclusion during the asylum seeking process.

My central focus is upon ten in-depth interviews with asylum seekers, and nine interviews with activists and 'experts' that make up a part of this study. Other material that I gathered for the fieldwork, such as material from the media (television news and newspapers), the internet (official websites of institutions, NGOs and government) and public events (seminars and hearings) are also included in the analysis. These materials are used to illustrate the context of the interview material and to analyse aspects of clandestinity in media and public debate. Further, I have critically re-read my own experiences as an activist through the use of personal notes and texts written collectively in activist settings.

I take my inspiration from the feminist tradition of a healthy 'disrespect' towards boundaries in the field of knowledge production. Through my own activist experiences, interviews with asylum seekers, field notes from meetings, hearings and from the street, I will search for links and nodes that are not asked or looked for in analyses that take formal belonging for granted.

Purpose and research questions

> Migrant 'illegality', however, like citizenship itself, is a juridical status. It signifies a social relation to the state; as such, migrant 'illegality' entails the production of a preeminently political identity. If we as publicly engaged intellectuals begin not from the epistemological standpoint of the state and its functionaries but rather from the standpoint of the elementary freedom of movement as something like a basic human entitlement, then rather than presupposing that there is something inherently suspect about the human beings who migrate, the real problem comes into considerably

> sharper focus: that problem, clearly, is the state itself (de Genova 2007 p. 425).

In accordance with de Genova's challenge, in this research project I want to explore the production of clandestinity as an everyday experience and as a possible collective political identity in the Swedish context. In order to do this I will analyse the varied and fragmented experiences of clandestinity by taking the right to both migration and residence as a starting point. I also intend approach the field and ask questions in a way that aims to avoid a naturalisation of national borders and which refuses acceptance of – and complicity with – the systems and laws regulating migration and controlling migrants. The overarching purpose of the study is to put the experiences of clandestine asylum seekers in the centre of a critical re-reading of the migration, gender and welfare regime/s in Sweden. Further, the study – in dialogue with feminist and postcolonial perspectives – aims to provide an analysis of the gendered experiences of migration and clandestinity and an analysis of the changing conditions of the Swedish welfare state and its migration policies.

Whilst there is a long tradition of research exploring the relationship between nation-states and migration regimes (e.g. de Genova 2005; Schierup et al. 2006; Soysal 1994; Zolberg 1999), the gender aspects of these processes have not been fully explored. Although research that analyses the impact on clandestine workers within the Swedish labour market is expanding (Frank 2008; Gavanas 2010), the interactions between different actors, both in civil society and within welfare institutions, which make up their everyday experiences remain, with a few exceptions, poorly researched. Thus, another aim of the study is to explore the ways in which migration policies organise welfare, both practically and symbolically: practically, through the construction – and delimitation – of the choices and availability of positions in the labour market, in sexual practices, in family life, and in civil society; symbolically, through the symbolic violence and racist representations that are normalised through everyday practices.

Feminist theory has developed theoretical and analytical tools for destabilising and de-naturalising notions and concepts that have traditionally been used as uncontested analytical frameworks. The feminist interrogations of citizenship, the nation and the public/private divide are examples of important feminist theoretical interventions. However, despite this destabilising analytical potential, feminist and gender studies have often allowed the formal boundaries of the nation-state to work as a set of taken-for-granted boundaries. Hence, starting with a refusal to take the boundaries of the nation-state as a 'natural' limitation of the enquiry, another purpose of this study, in relation to the field of gender studies and feminism, is to revisit some long-standing feminist questions: 'who are "women"?', and 'who is the subject at the centre of feminism as a political project?'I will specifically explore asylum seekers' experiences of everyday life in clandestinity from an intersectional perspective that includes the intersections of nationality and belonging along with gender, 'race'/ethnicity and sexuality. These intersections will be considered in order to interrogate hegemonic notions which construct the Swedish welfare state as being 'women-friendly' and as offering a 'humane' asylum policy.

My work has been guided by the following research questions:

- What kind of experiences and strategies are articulated in the narratives of people situated as clandestine asylum seekers?
- How, through public representations, institutional practices and subjective experiences, is clandestinity constructed within the frames of the Swedish welfare state, and in relation to citizenship and migration policies?
- How can the position of clandestine asylum seekers within – yet outside – the nation-state be captured theoretically and analytically?
- How are clandestine asylum seekers located in relation to citizenship, welfare institutions and gender and migration regimes?
- Does the position of clandestinity – on the margins of citizenship and migration policies – allow for the

construction or development of a collective political identity?

The outline of the thesis

Following this introductory chapter, in Chapter Two, 'Welfare State in Transition', I provide a sketch of the political backdrop to my case study by tracing some important shifts in Swedish and European migration and integration policies and debates. Firstly, I give some illustrations of a shift in which the subjects of undocumented migrants and migration rights, after having spent many years in the in the dark in media and public debate, began to realise much higher levels of visibility. However, characteristic of this shift towards an increased media visibility is a simultaneous normalisation of the lack of rights accorded to migrants as well as a related normalisation of both the direct and symbolic violence involved in the management of borders.

The next section of the chapter continues with an outline and analysis of the contradictions that characterise the development of both European and Swedish migration policies. These contradictions are seen clearly when one considers the idea of the EU as a peace project on the one hand, whilst on the other it has a highly militarised border regime and an expanding infrastructure for detention. Similar contradictions are found in the tensions between internal and external migration regimes, whilst the paradox of the simultaneous demand for and repulsion of migrants provides a further example. Thereafter, I conclude the chapter with a brief overview of Swedish literature on asylum rights and the rights of undocumented migrants.

In Chapter Three, 'Theoretical Framework', I situate the study theoretically within feminist and postcolonial critiques of mainstream theories on citizenship, nation and migration. The purpose of this chapter is to search for theoretical tools that manage to grasp the subject position of clandestine asylum seekers and undocumented migrants. In the first part of the chapter, I give a brief introduction to the critique of sovereignty in political philosophy

following the work of Giorgio Agamben. Here the position of my informants is theorised as being a figurative location that, through its way of asking questions about the conditions for the political, sheds light on sovereignty and the formation of the modern state. This field does theorise clandestinity, but the analysis tends to neglect historically specific contexts such as the centrality of neoliberalism. Furthermore, the figure at the centre of this kind of analysis tends to become a disembodied theoretical abstraction that does not manage to grasp clandestinity as an embodied and gendered experience.

In the next section of the chapter I turn to mainstream and feminist theories about the nation-state and expanded understandings of citizenship and belonging. Here I find feminist citizenship theories that acknowledge both the importance of looking at internal and external forms of exclusion, and the presence of migrants in transgression of these double and interacting sets of exclusionary boundaries. But although these structures and positions are acknowledged, I still find a gap in the analyses of the interplay between these different forms of exclusions, a gap in which the position of my informants tends to become under-analysed.

In the concluding section of this chapter I turn to feminist takes on social policy and welfare, a field closely related to – and sometimes coincident with – citizenship theory. These approaches suggest the everyday lived experiences and the discourses on need and welfare rights as useful lenses through which the welfare state, belonging and citizenship can be studied. I argue for the study of institutional (and civil society) practices and the intersections of personal lives and social policy as favourable starting points to explore and theorise the under-analysed subject position of my informants in an attempt to approach an conceptualisation of a possible 'clandestine citizenship'.

My methodological choices are inspired by critical feminist epistemology and in Chapter Four, 'Methodology', I situate myself as researcher, feminist and asylum rights activist. I present the feminist epistemological insights that have guided my work and discuss some methodological issues related to the limitations and possibilities provided by my ethnographical material as well as my

own position in relation to the field as researcher and activist. Specifically, I put forward three main points: (1) feminist ethnography between standpoint theory and post-structuralism, (2) feminist ethnography between activism and research, and finally (3) feminist ethnography on the margins of the nation-state. Each of these points represents a general shift in epistemic thought that have been of importance for my work. The first is marked by the debate between standpoint theory and post-structuralist understandings of difference, the second by conceptualisations of what knowledge is and how it can be produced and the third by the relationship between science, the field of the political and representation. At the close of the chapter I discuss the ethnographical fieldwork, my approach to the field, and the kind of data I have collected and used in the analysis. I also present the informants. The methodological discussion of Chapter Four is followed by three empirical chapters in which I analyse the ethnographic data.

Chapter Five, 'Clandestinity at Work', is the first empirical chapter and here I trace the connections between clandestinity and work in Sweden by examining the ways in which positions on the labour market are central to the organisation of the Swedish welfare state and thus central to the content of citizenship. The significance of labour as an organising principle in society is explored from the margins of both labour rights and citizenship, or in other words from within clandestinity. I argue that this seemingly marginal position is central for coming to an understanding of general structures and positions on the labour market. I approach the field through an insight in the way my informants' positions in relation to citizenship and labour are constructed at the very crossroads of migration policy, labour market policy and the interplay between the two policy areas. By centring the discussion of the ethnographic material upon the concepts of precarity, belonging and normality, I show some of the ways that migration policy structures the labour market along racial and gendered lines. Conversely I will also show how access to a permanent residence permit (and the right to asylum) seems, in part, to be negotiated within the frames of labour market interests. The concepts of precarity, belonging and normality also serve to approach

the double character of work as being something simultaneously exploitative and emancipatory, as well as being both exclusionary and inclusionary.

In the next empirical chapter, 'Gendered Deportability', I explore the embodied and gendered production of deportability. To do this I consider the experience of becoming deportable and the ways that the production of deportability in Sweden creates and then reinforces links between the informants' experiences of war (in Bosnia and in Kosovo) and the Swedish welfare state. The notion of Sweden as a relatively women-friendly country is discussed as a provocative contrast to the lack of recognition of the informants' experiences of fear and gendered violence. A similar contrast is found in the consideration of the racial and gendered connotations implicit in the instances of misrecognition and misrepresentation experienced by the informants.

I then go on to explore the ways in which reproduction and motherhood/parenthood are at the core of the way migration policy, family discourse and social policy organise subject positions through deportability and clandestinity. This is explored by considering how, in relation to hetero-normativity and reproduction, certain gender and family formations become privileged – within migration policies, in their access to residence permits and with their access to other 'alternative' forms of inclusion. These findings are based upon the informants' self-representations in relation to family, and upon the effects of the provisional legislation of 2005/2006 that granted residence permits for families with children but which left thousands of single men and women without.[12]

The last empirical chapter, 'Contested Boundaries and Borders', approaches the on-going negotiations and challenges of the meaning and material consequences of clandestinity and deportability. Here, I focus upon the 'practical' negotiation consisting of the everyday

[12] The new Alien Act was implemented on March 31, 2006. During a transitional period from November 2005 to March 2006 all asylum seekers residing in Sweden could apply again within a provisional legislation that allowed a residence permit for families with children who had been in Sweden for around three or more years.

struggles of asylum seekers to negotiate their lack of rights through finding/creating access to welfare services and rights using alternative routes. I approach the negotiation/invention of rights as an ambiguous practice that questions and stretches notions of citizenship and belonging, but which simultaneously continues to be conditioned by asymmetric relations between citizens and non-citizens, and hence runs the risk of engaging asylum seekers in a kind of ritualised negotiation of needs where self-representations of victimisation and helplessness are rewarded.

Chapter Seven also discusses 'available' political subjectivities in relation to the field of migration politics. The main question here concerns the possibilities for clandestine asylum seekers to construct themselves as a collective political identity within the context of Swedish movements for migrants' rights and struggles for social change. Some of the informants have found a certain limited belonging on the level of the community, through their relation to – and engagement with – the local asylum rights movement. I consider whether the engagement in the forms of active citizenship can be seen as one side in an ambiguous 'clandestine citizenship', which, on its flip side is a strictly limited position in relation to rights and space of action.

The concluding chapter, 'On the margins of citizenship and migration policies – a concluding discussion', will summarise the central arguments of the thesis and explore the contributions of my study to feminist and postcolonial understanding of citizenship and belonging.

CHAPTER TWO

The Welfare State in transition

As I described in the introduction, my journey into this project traversed several years of asylum rights activism and undergraduate studies of migration issues before I arrived at the possibility of carrying out this research. While the anger and the frustration have been constants during these years, the perspective and the targets for the anger and frustration have changed. These changes are not limited to the change of names and party affiliations of the ministers of migration that have filed past. Rather, the stage that is migration policy and debate is one populated by actors set – as a result of the complex interplay between the national, the regional and the global – against a constantly shifting backdrop. The complexities created by ongoing wars and crises, international relations and diplomacy, flight and migration patterns, border controls, racism, islamophobia, (mis)representations of migrants, dismantling of welfare states and former links between countries and regions (due for example to colonialism, business or Cold War politics) are in constant motion and change.

Whilst I can hardly try to cover the full complexity of this global context in Swedish and European migration policies, I do, in this chapter, provide a sketch of the political backdrop to my case study by putting forward some important shifts and contradictions in Swedish and European migration and integration policies and debates. Citizenship and national belonging have been, and are still,

at the core of these debates in Sweden. The chapter will begin by introducing some relevant illustrations of the changes that have taken place within these debates regarding migration policies, and by identifying the shifting position of clandestine asylum seekers from forms of invisibility to forms of accepted exclusion. In this first section I use my own journey through the field to put forward a few illustrations of the most decisive continuities and shifts on the political stage of migration in order to understand what it looks like at the moment.

In the remaining two sections of the chapter I will contextualise the study within current research on political and historical developments of European and Swedish migration policy. In doing so I firstly offer a brief outline of the contradictions that characterise the developments in European migration policies. Secondly, I briefly analyse the specificities of the Swedish welfare state with its strong social democratic hegemonies and the shifts in the beginning of the nineties regarding migration policies towards more neoliberal identified frames. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of studies of irregular migration and clandestinity

Silences and absences

In October 2003 a group of asylum rights activists in Malmö arranged a symbolic twenty-four-hour hunger strike in the city centre in order to draw attention to a situation they found intolerable. The group were appalled by the increasing number of rejected asylum seekers too afraid to return to the countries they had left and who had been forced by increasingly restrictive and exclusionary legislation to remain in clandestinity in Sweden under conditions of extreme hardship. The group were in personal contact with around thirty families of rejected asylum seekers and claimed in a debate article that during the ten years they had been organising against inhumane asylum politics they had: ‘witnessed repeated violations of the right to asylum and the human dignity of refugees and asylum seekers. We have seen people being sent back to war, persecution and torture [...]

We have also witnessed these appalling violations increase over time. The situation for refugees has been critical for many years but, against the background of political developments over the last year, we now claim that the situation is acute!' (The Malmö Asylum Rights Group [*Asylgruppen i Malmö*] in *Skånska Dagbladet* 2003).

Two things strike me when I return to this statement today. The first is that in retrospect it now seems completely out of phase that these claims were made at that point in time. This was more than a year before the campaigns for 'refugee amnesty' (*Påskuppropet* and *Nätverket Flyktingamnesti 2005*) and the debate about 'the apathetic children' ('*de apatiska barnen'*) began to move terms such as 'hidden' asylum seekers ('*gömda*' *asylsökande*) and undocumented migrants (*papperslösa*) from the margins to a more central position in the public arena (Tamas 2009).[1] Given the developments in the years that followed it seems in some senses to have been 'too early' for this kind of exclamation. For during those years many more extreme rejections and deportations took place, and many more people than the thirty or so families mentioned in the statement were about to find themselves with no other choice, as the discourses on asylum seekers were stretched and distorted further, than to stay in clandestinity for another few years. As it turned out the field of asylum politics was actually on the threshold of one of the most intense periods of debate and campaigning about migration and asylum rights in years and this is one of the reasons I refer to this event – to reflect upon the shifts that have taken place on the stage of migration policy. Its 'out of phase' character serves to illuminate some of these changes, but at the same time it underlines that the changes I will describe are not about a journey from an ideal past to a failed present. The other thing that strikes me when remembering the hunger strike and reading the statement, is how this loud exclamation was received with such silence. I am similarly struck by the general silence surrounding asylum rights issues at the time.

Let me give another illustrative example of the way clandestinity appeared in the debate that occurred a few months after the hunger

[1] I will say more about these campaigns and about the apathetic children below.

strike. It is about another kind of silence, another kind of absence. In a documentary about the situation for undocumented migrants in Sweden (*Dokument inifrån* 04/02/2004) the reporter questions a civil servant from The National Agency for School Development (*Myndigheten för skolutveckling*[2]) about the (non-)rights of undocumented children to education. The civil servant refuses to see it as a problem of the Swedish authorities and finally concludes by saying: 'but, I mean, this is a group of pupils that actually don't exist' (*Dokument inifrån* 04/02/2004). This statement (being made in a documentary that *does* put media focus on the situation of undocumented migrants) effectively summarises the representations of undocumented migrants as simultaneously present and absent in society. Further, it also illustrates the ways in which these representations seem to have been institutionalised in social policy through a non-recognition of undocumented migrants as a category of inhabitants in the welfare state.

But these silences in the debate – and the institutionalised reflection of the silences in the welfare state regulation of social policy categories – were to be broken (to a certain extent) through the increased mobilisation and political struggle of clandestine asylum seekers, undocumented migrants and citizens engaged in asylum rights issues, as well as through some important shifts in policies and debates surrounding migration. Around the same time as undocumented children were described as 'actually not existing', two important political events related to migration – the campaign/s for 'refugee amnesty' and the debate about the apathetic children – came to mark a significant shift for the public 'face' of migration and asylum policies.

Political mobilisation

Already in early 2002 healthcare professionals, asylum rights activists and some newspapers started to pay attention to the increasing numbers of children in asylum seeking families who had

[2] The Agency for School Development closed at the end of 2008 when it was integrated into The National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*).

developed deep depressions that were expressed through conditions of total apathy. The attention grew during 2003 and by the end of 2004 the concept of 'the apathetic children' was well-known amongst a wider public. The debate that developed around these children centred upon claims made by politicians, religious groups and asylum rights groups, for permanent residence permits for the children and their families. These groups also demanded that changes be made to asylum legislation, practice and process. However, parallel to these sympathetic voices, the debate was also surrounded by various and contradictory explanations as to the cause of the 'apathetic' phenomena. The debate intensified during the following years, and culminated during 2005 when the apathetic children became the focal point in the debate for refugee rights (Tamas 2009).

During spring and summer 2005 – at the same time as the debate about the apathetic children and their families was growing stronger – the asylum rights movement started to mobilise in support of the demand for a general amnesty. A broad range of organisations, individuals (both asylum seekers and citizens), political parties and religious communities campaigned for a general amnesty, under which all asylum seekers that were waiting for the assessment of their asylum applications as well as those living in clandestinity who had applications turned down, would be granted permanent residence permits.[3] The campaign was triggered by several factors, but amongst these there were two that seemed the most significant. Firstly, the perceived high number of clandestine asylum seekers residing in Sweden (in September 2005 the number of 30,000 people living clandestinely was circulating in organisations and asylum rights network) was understood as depending on the high number of asylum seekers that received unacceptable responses to their

[3] Two different networks launched claims for a general amnesty. The Christian Council of Sweden in the campaign *Påskuppropet* (http://www.skr.org/temp_paskupprop05_intro.htm (accessed 12 December 2008)) and a broader network of organisations in the campaign *Flyktingamnesti2005* (www.flyktingamnesti.nu (accessed 3 May 2006)). But as the claims from the two campaigns were very similar, cooperation was high and they were treated as a one by the mass media, I choose to approach it as one campaign with plural voices.

applications. Secondly, the upcoming changes in the Alien Act and in the asylum procedure in April 2006. These institutional changes – especially the closing down of the Aliens Appeals Board – were understood as an 'acknowledgement' from the government that prior to the changes being made the procedure and practice of law had been neither efficient nor just. Being at the threshold of a new system, it was considered a fair moment to 'set to zero' - to create a possibility for the new system to start without thousands of appeals waiting in the pipe-line. Finally, the increasing number of severely depressed refugee children – the apathetic children – was seen as the most visible evidence of the failures of Swedish asylum policy (www.flyktingamnesti.nu (accessed 3 May 2006)).

Confined visibility

Even though the campaigns were about an amnesty for all asylum seekers residing in Sweden – either in clandestinity or waiting for decisions or deportation – the apathetic children continued to be the group given most attention in the debate. In many articles the demands were regarded as a claim for an amnesty for the apathetic children. The broader claim from the campaign never received the same attention in the media. My understanding is that at the same time as the focus on the apathetic children served as the catalyst that led to the discontent which in turn, during 2005, led to the rapid organisation of those demanding an amnesty, it also seems to have become a factor that distorted these demands and in the end silenced the broader range of arguments launched by the campaign. From the moment the apathetic children were brought into the heart of the debate, notions of political rights were pressed out to its margins and replaced by depoliticised notions of 'pity' and medicine.

But the attention given to the apathetic children was ambiguous in another important way. Concurrent with the increasing worry and anger over the situation of the children, the debate was also characterised by suspicion and distrust of the apathetic children, their parents and in some cases also doctors and activists from asylum rights groups. They were suspected of simulation and, in the case of the parents, of forcing, manipulating and even of poisoning the

children to simulate apathy (Tamas 2009). In this way the apathetic children became an arena where the representations of refugees as either victims or criminals were played out. These representations dominated political and media discourses during the campaign, and became the organising principle for the 'solution' of the conflict.[4]

In the middle of September 2005 the demand for amnesty was voted upon in the parliament – five parties from the left to the right voted in favour of the proposition, but the governing Swedish Social Democratic Party and the conservative Moderate Party voted against and, as they had a majority together, the proposal was dismissed.[5] However, two of the smaller parties (the Left Party and the Green Party) which had the role of supporting the social democratic minority government at the time, brought the demand into budget negotiations and ended up with a compromise. From the middle of November 2005 until the end of March 2006 a special process opened up: all asylum seekers in the country waiting for – or hiding from – a deportation, could apply to get their cases re-tried within a provisional legislation.[6] In the middle of March 2006 it was estimated that around fifty percent of the applicants had received, or would receive, a residence permit according to this provisional legislation – mainly families with children. Around ninety percent of the asylum seekers without children got negative responses to their applications within the provisional legislation. Even though the provisional legislation resulted in residence for numerous people, and in that sense can be described as a success, thousands of asylum seekers were still compelled to live in clandestinity in Sweden.

[4] In a journalistic investigation of these accusations and their effects, Geller Tamas (2009) showed that they were groundless. No cases of manipulation or poisoning were proven to have occurred, despite investigations conducted by both doctors and the police.

[5] The Left Party (v), the Green Party (mp), the Centre Party (c), the Liberal Party (fp) and the Christian Democrats (kd). The proposition was known as *Regeringens proposition* 2004/05:170.

[6] The new Alien Act was implemented March 31, 2006. During a transitional period from November 2005 to March 2006 all asylum seekers residing in Sweden could apply again within a provisional legislation that allowed a residence permit for families with children who had been in Sweden for around three or more years.

While the broad engagement from political parties, NGOs, individual activists and churches did not keep up the same levels of work and engagement as during the campaigns, some other and more self-organised groups of undocumented migrants grew in the period right after the provisional legislation. Media attention also dropped after the introduction of the provisional legislation, and so new groups and mobilisations did not get the same access to media, but undocumented migrants and clandestine asylum seekers as a group had arrived at a new position in the public awareness: a position characterised by new paradoxes.

Accepted exclusion

During the years I have been working on this project I have often claimed that my fieldwork explores a part of the Swedish society that has been invisible. Nevertheless, as I discussed earlier, during the same period in Sweden there has been a shift in the amount of attention and space given to undocumented migrants' diverse destinies in the media and public debate. However, I do think that clandestinity remains invisible as a part of hegemonic understandings that see Sweden as a society shaped by an inclusive welfare model. Clandestinity is not included in understandings of what Swedish society *is*.

To illustrate the way clandestinity is simultaneously present and invisible – simultaneously included and excluded - in public debate, I want to turn to a section from an interview with one of my informants.[7] Malin was an activist in an asylum rights group in Stockholm at the time of the interview, and here she reflects on how her perspective has developed during her time in the group:

> Malin: I had read in newspapers about people who lived hidden, and felt incredibly upset and provoked by the fact that this even occurs ... But still, in some way, I thought it was an exception, that it was the result of mistakes or misunderstandings. But I thought this in itself was serious

[7] The fieldwork, informants and methodological choices will be presented and discussed in Chapter Four.

> enough to start to work as an activist with this. […] But once I started with this […] it became so obvious that it is not exceptional! Instead, the exceptions are when people get asylum on political grounds. And also it became obvious that this incongruity is basically solidly built into the system.

Malin describes how she started with an initial approach to the problems as matters of mere knowledge gaps and mistakes within a 'normally' well functioning migration policy. This was an approach that she soon replaced with the opposite understanding of 'the incongruity' that 'is basically solidly built in to the system'.

The way she describes her pre-understanding of the things she read about 'people who live hidden' as being merely mistakes in a well-functioning system, reflects a double set of invisibility in the excluded space of clandestinity. Firstly, it reflects how the starting points in the debate about migration often disregard the fact that clandestinity is actually produced by the very regulation and control of migration. The more extreme expressions of this regulation might be avoided through a more generous practise of law, or by the pursuit of more humane procedures. However, regardless of the shifts that might take place between more or between less openness, the regulations themselves will produce a boundary between those who are included and those who are excluded along which there will always be people who become clandestine. In short, the idea about the production of clandestinity as a result of mistakes, might efface the reality that the (indirect) violence and exclusion experienced in clandestinity *is* 'basically solidly built into' each state that regulates and controls its borders (compare with the discussion about the effects of border controls in Hayter 2000). Secondly, it reflects, or rather, simply describes, how the hegemonic narratives about Sweden seem to work in a kind of auto-generative way: mechanisms that goes against the hegemonic image of humane migration policy, gender equality or respect for human rights tend to be understood as mistakes or 'exceptions from the rule' and also critical voices tend to approach the state with high levels of trust. The political will to encourage a change towards, in this case, a more humane asylum policy, tends to not be questioned as much as the more detailed

mechanisms of decision making or administrative structures at the migration board.

Malin's pre-understanding of the situation of the clandestine asylum seekers that she read about in the newspapers as being a mistake to be fixed, or a misunderstanding to be solved, is in line with the way the living conditions and lack of rights of clandestine asylum seekers and refugees tend to be represented as not being *Sweden*, but rather a part of the global South – or East - accidentally taking place on Swedish territory.

Clandestinity in public – from invisibility and silences to subordinated visibility

Through the struggles and mobilisations during the campaign for amnesty, and during the years after, social policies have developed towards more inclusion of undocumented inhabitants. The way that the expanded visibility of clandestinity in public debate is reflected in the institutions of social welfare and in social policy is clearly illustrated in the regular reports on social welfare (*Social Rapport*) published by The National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*). While their report from 2001 hardly approached immigration (with the exception of some paragraphs on newly arrived immigrants), and the report from 2006 mentions undocumented migrants (*papperslösa*) once under the heading 'Excluded groups' ('*Grupper utanför*'), the report from 2010 has a whole chapter entitled 'Undocumented migrants' (*Papperslösa)* in which the consequences of lacks of welfare rights are critically discussed and analysed (Socialstyrelsen 2001, 2006 and 2010). An important aspect of the higher levels of visibility is the demand, from some groups of clandestine asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, to speak with their own voices in self-organised groups, rather than being represented by groups from the asylum rights movement.[8]

[8] I will develop this theme in Chapter Seven and discuss political subjectivities and the conditions and possibilities built in to the relations citizens/activists/civil society – non-citizens/asylum seekers/clandestinity.

On the level of actual rights, the rights to healthcare have been expanded,[9] and a commission about the possibilities to allow children the right to education presented their report in 2007 in which they recommended an expanded right for children to go to school (Socialstyrelsen 2010 p. 272f).[10]

Given the way clandestinity has become a much debated topic during the last years of the previous decade, it is likely that a statement such as the one made by the asylum rights group during the symbolic hunger strike of 2003 would now not stand alone and in silence in the same way as it did then. But whilst non-access to rights is no longer 'taken for granted', but is instead something open to debate and nowadays something against which people often mobilise, public awareness of the presence of migrants and their lack of rights seems to have transformed into an attitude of acceptance. The lack of rights of undocumented migrants is well-known but it does not create the same public dismay as during the years before and during the campaign. In parallel with the increased political mobilisation of undocumented migrants and clandestine asylum seekers in their own right, the political representations of clandestinity and rights have grown into a more explicit dismissal of migrants' rights to have rights. I think this shift is illustrated well by this statement made by Tobias Billström, migration minister in the right-wing alliance government since 2006:[11]

[9] While the national legislation still only stipulates the right to subsidized care for children under the age of eighteen some county councils have chosen to also grant adult undocumented migrants 'emergency and other immediately necessary care' (Baghir-Zada 2009 p. 47ff). For an analysis of variations in both formal and actual access to care, see Baghir-Zada (2009), and Erika Sigvardsdotter's forthcoming dissertation in cultural geography, Uppsala University. In Chapter Seven I will also briefly approach some variations in actual access to care for my informants.

[10] The commission only discussed children in families who were clandestine after a rejected asylum application, whilst children to other categories of undocumented migrants would not be covered by the expanded right (Socialstyrelsen 2010 p. 272f).

[11] After the elections 2006, the four right-wing parties (the Moderate Party, Centre Party, Liberal Party and Christian Democrats), formed a coalition government. This government was re-elected in the elections September 2010. The extensive

> If someone chooses to go underground after a rejected claim for asylum, we need to think very carefully about what kind of catalogue of rights we are going to have. The question about 'hidden' ['*gömda*'] children's school attendance is under inquiry at the ministry of migration at the present, and the same goes for the question about healthcare. But I think it is important to remember that we can not build up a system that makes it favourable for people to go underground, because then that amount of people will grow and that is something we are not interested in. People who choose to go underground do it voluntarily, by free will and then one has to take the consequences in some respects. I think it is more important to make an effort to get people out of that condition and the repatriation allowance is a possibility for that (Billström in *Rapport* 27/09/2007, quoted in Karlsson 2007 (www.faktum.nu, accessed 17 November 2007)).

Here Billström argues that the lack of social rights is a politically important instrument to prevent people from avoiding deportation. Through delimiting social rights and facilitating 'repatriation' he wants to avoid generating of a clandestine population. This is obviously not a surprising position taken by a minister of migration, but the frankness with which he refers to going 'underground' as a result of 'free will' and that one then 'has to take the consequences' still points towards a shift towards a climate in which the non-recognition of migrants' social rights can be expressed explicitly.

Political scientist Peo Hansen (2009) provides us with another anecdotal illustration of the political will to navigate away from the former hegemonic representations of Sweden as 'the most generous country' in the field of migration. Hansen describes migration minister Billström's approach in the media when, in September 2007, he discusses the provisional law and the arrival of more Iraqi asylum seekers in Sweden than in other EU countries during 2006 and 2007:

> The minister for migration and asylum policy, Tobias Billström, has blamed the large increase in Iraqi asylum

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cooperation between the four parties entailed a joint political programme and was launched under the name 'The Alliance' [*Alliansen*].

> seekers on the former social democratic government and its enactment of a temporary asylum law, in force from November 2005 to March 2006 […] According to Billström, the law – which, thanks to the Right and Social Democrats joining forces, was a watered down version of what the coalition had advocated – 'gave thousands of Iraqi people, who had previously received negative responses to their asylum application, a second chance. Their applications were heard again and many of them received positive responses.' In the minister's view, it is precisely such positive responses that Sweden today pays dearly for. That is, they helped spread the word that Sweden was a sanctuary or, to use Billström's expression, they 'created a signal effect'. When asked in an interview for *Middle East Online* whether this 'signal' is now causing problems, the minister answered that the government is worried, foreseeing problems in the labour market, in schools and with integration. Given the sombre mood of the minister, the interviewer then asked if this should be taken to mean 'that Sweden is slowly turning away from its much lauded, liberal Swedish immigration policy'. The migration minister's answer is interesting and worth quoting at length: 'We do not have immigration laws that are more liberal than any other European country. However, the effect of our laws was, unfortunately, that people who left Iraq and came to Sweden were given a resident's permit sooner or later. [...]' (Hansen 2009 p. 23f).

Another important parallel development during the last decade is the way populist racist politics, with the Swedish Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*) to the fore, have, as in many other EU member states, expanded both the space of action and the space of public articulation for racist ideologies in the mainstream political field.

With this brief journey following events, shifts and statements in the politics of migration, I have tried to illustrate my understanding of the development over the last decade. This understanding encompasses the tensions between movements of protest and the field of the political regarding rights and practices in asylum legislation, and the contradictory interplay between visibility and

invisibility, or between silence and voice. The main argument has been that there has been a shift from clandestinity as a category that is hardly visible in representations of the welfare state, to one of an increased visibility, both of clandestine asylum seekers themselves and of the organisations advocating asylum rights. But whilst asylum seekers and asylum rights activists thought that increased visibility would lead to enhanced rights for asylum seekers this does not seem to have been the case. Instead of arriving on better ground for making claims, the increased visibility of clandestine asylum seekers seems to have been accompanied by an increase in the acceptance and normalisation of symbolic and direct violence directed towards them.

The European context

The scope of migration policy has expanded during the second half of the twentieth century with regards to migration from the global South to the welfare states of the global North. Post-9/11, anti-terror schemes and security policies have increasingly come to frame migration policies within the scope of global securitisation and militarisation (de Genova 2007; Lewis 2004). This is specifically striking in the US context where the post-9/11 legislation has almost exclusively been used to control undocumented Mexican and other Latin-American immigrants (de Genova 2007). In the context of the European Union, both the increased militarisation of border control technologies and the detention and criminalisation of migrants have also been developed within a discursive frame of security and protection from terrorism (Guild 2009; Guild et al. 2009; Huysmans 2006; Tesfahuney and Dahlstedt 2008 p. 44ff). Gail Lewis (2004) mentions this development as one of two important directions in which migration policies have been expanded. In relation to the focus on welfare in this study it is even more pertinent to notice how migration policy has expanded from 'its traditional concern with the admission of people into the country to now include issues of naturalization and integration […] and the control of access to

welfare services' (Lewis 2004 p. 32). Lewis also argues that 'the conjuncture of a culture of suspicion [...] with a concern to erect ever tighter immigration controls and an emphasis on citizenship as a learned practice, gives rise to what we might term an 'immigrationization' of social welfare and citizenship' (2004 p. 29).

Both these directions in the expansion of migration policies – to the fields of securitisation and regulation of welfare access – are connected to the many and varying contradictions that characterise the developments in EU migration policies: the contradictions between the representation of the EU as a peace project and its militarised border regime and expanding infrastructure for detention; the tensions between internal and external migration regimes; the paradoxes of the simultaneous demand for labour migration and repulsion of refugee migration; and the contradiction between policies and agreements related to anti-discriminatory measures on the one hand and policies and discourses based on neo-assimilatory ideas on the other hand (Hansen 2008; Mulinari 2009).

I argue that the simultaneous expansion of the field of migration policies towards both the regulation of welfare access and security schemes is enabled by, and has enabled, these contradictions.

Border contradictions

The establishment of the integrated migration policy in the EU – called by many 'Fortress Europe' – clearly displays the contradictions between inclusion and exclusion built in to the EU project (Stoltz 2000). Within the EU there is a movement towards increased inclusion and integration across borders. The integration entails the opening up of the internal borders of the EU, but is also marked by the simultaneous closing of the external borders for non-EU citizens (Kofman and Sales 1998). In the lives of many EU citizens this development has lead to the erasure of borders and increased mobility, but for other groups the same changes mean a restricted freedom of movement and a reinforcement of the excluding mechanisms at the borders. Although the EU project is often described as a cosmopolitan and post-national project, Hansen (2009), among others, argues that the harmonisation of European

migration policies has instead strengthened nationalist and excluding tendencies (Hansen 2009).

The metaphor Fortress Europe describes an accelerating militarisation seen for example in the surveillance technologies employed along European borders. It further suggests the sets of legislative mechanisms that journalist Sanna Vestin, whose area of expertise encompasses asylum rights, has described as the 'bricks' in the ramparts of Fortress Europe (Vestin 2006 p. 32ff). In attempting to *legally* enter 'Fortress Europe', a first set of legal mechanisms rules out most possibilities for migrants from the global South in general and for asylum seekers in particular. The demand for entry visas, combined with the difficulties of actually getting a visa that are encountered by those who are expected to apply for asylum, is the most pervasive legal mechanism here (Huysmans 2006). A second set of legal practices and regulations aggravates the difficulties when attempting to enter the EU through *irregular* routes. Enforced border controls, sea patrols, carrier sanctions and the processes of externalisation of border controls to states far outside the EU's geographical borders are some of the most important mechanism to mention here (ibid. p. 96).[12] A last set of rules delimits migrants' mobility and space for action and choices once inside the EU (ibid. p. 45ff). The most widely used mechanism for the restriction of movement and autonomy is the increasingly restrictive practise of law in the assessment of asylum applications. Furthermore, mechanisms such as the employment of bio-data registration, the Dublin Regulation, and other regulations allowing a constantly accelerating detention and imprisonment of migrants contribute to this set of regulations of internal borders and boundaries (Dahlstedt

[12] 'Not being able to acquire a visa does not in itself prevent a person from arriving at an international airport or seaport. States therefore have other complementary mechanisms in place, which make a visa a prerequisite for starting a journey. Carrier sanctions are the most important of these, imposing fines on private transport companies that carry persons who do not hold the necessary visas and/or travel documents to enter the territory of the EU' (see http://www.ecre.org/topics/access_to_europe/carrier_sanctions (accessed 10 September 2010)).

and Tesfahuney 2004; Vestin 2006).[13] Paradoxically, the entrance and residence of refugees and asylum seekers are heavily policed and restricted whilst, at the same time, labour migration schemes are developed to meet the urgent demand for labour in an aging European Union (Hansen 2008).

The contradictions between internal and external border regimes, between inclusion and exclusion, do not stop at the physical borders, but also exclude people who are not constructed as a part of an imagined 'European identity' (Stoltz 2000 pp. 134-136). The consequence of the construction of a European 'We' is a simultaneous construction of a non-European 'Other' (Hansen 2004, 2009). Eleonore Kofman and Rosemary Sales describe this process in terms of a conflation of 'citizenship with ethnicity, making invisible the contribution of people of non-European origin to the economic, cultural and social life of Europe' (1998 p. 381).

Welfare and Migration in the Swedish context

> Upon your first arrival in Sweden it's like lying down in a hot bath. You relax and doze off. But when you wake up, the water has got so cold that you can't move (Polite 2007 p. 55, my translation).

In an article on parallels and differences between racism/s in the US and Sweden, Oivvio Polite, a journalist, who specialises in writing against racism, quotes a friend who summarises the experience of moving to Sweden from the US in the sixties. Polite describes the ways racist structures are more invisible and subtle in Sweden, and

[13] 'The 'Dublin Regulation' establishes a hierarchy of criteria for identifying the EU Member State responsible for processing an asylum claim. Usually this will be the state through which the asylum seeker first entered the EU. The Regulation aims to ensure that each claim is examined by one Member State, to deter repeated applications, and to enhance efficiency' (http://www.ecre.org/topics/asylum_in_EU/determining_responsibility (accessed 10 September 2010)).

how they 'hide' behind the first impressions given by the welfare state. The relaxing bathtub in Polite's anecdote represents both the institutionalised forms for the management of social conflict in Sweden and the strong hegemonic discourses about the Swedish nation and welfare state. Historically, the central organising principles of the welfare state have been redistribution and inclusivity, but it has also managed expressions of social discontent and demands through incorporation and institutionalisation of social movements within the state (Schierup and Ålund 1991).

The Swedish welfare model is built on a specific model for collective negotiations of interest conflicts, something seen in various social arenas but mainly in the labour market through collective labour agreements and the obligation to maintain industrial peace (see for example Hirdman 1998; Korpi 1983; Lundqvist 2007; Pringle 2010). Central to this model is the way in which the broader layers of the labour movement, represented by the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), have been closely linked to the Social Democratic Party. This link is maintained through collective party affiliations of union members and strictly regulated and institutionalised forms for the unions' right to negotiate labour rights. This can be understood as having a limiting effect on the ability of labour unions to organise protest outside this frame.

Despite this critique, most postcolonial and feminist scholars acknowledge that the Swedish model has generated strongly inclusive and just policies. In relation to migration, the Swedish welfare state has an extensive tradition of inclusivity. For example, Sweden provides rights to vote in local elections for permanent residents and the right for the children of migrants to study their mother tongue in school. Contrary to the arguments presented in neoliberal discourses, political aims about social inclusion of immigrants and other marginalised groups, despite their shortcomings, are powerful locations from which to begin a movement towards inclusive policies regarding inequality.

If we return to Polite's metaphor, the comfort of the hot bathtub suggests the inclusion and acknowledgment of some rights within the welfare state. The paralyzing cold water on the other hand, indicates

the way a lack of recognition of social conflict, and the denial of institutionalised racism risks blocking the space of action for other, more radical claims and for political collectivities that are not yet included in the political sphere – for example the unemployed, undocumented migrants or sex workers.

Despite the Swedish model's tradition of carrying out inclusive and redistributive aims, there are aspects and paradoxes of inclusion that remain to be revised. One such central revision is the contextualisation of the Swedish model within the historical legacy of colonialism which in different ways has permeated the Swedish relationship with its others. Although located outside the scope of this study, I do however want to illustrate some of these arguments by briefly illustrating the tensions between inclusion and the denial of racism.

In a Swedish Government Official Report (SOU) on racial discrimination in Sweden, jurist Paul Lappalainen (SOU 2005:56) describes how the present anti-discrimination legislation has been developed through a constant struggle against the enactors' denial of any need for such legislation.[14] He and other antiracist and postcolonial writers locate this denial in the broader denial of the ways that Sweden is economically, politically and historically embedded in the global post-/colonial history (see for example Kamali 2009; Mc Eachrane and Faye 2001). The hegemonic narratives on Sweden have excluded historical facts such as Swedish involvement and profiting from slave trade and the Swedish colony Saint-Bartélemy in West India (SOU 2005:56 p. 94f). But, more importantly, there has also been a historical memory loss in relation to Sweden's more indirect interference and embeddedness in colonialism and imperialism through the benefits of the capital accumulation from the colonies that enabled the acceleration of industrialism in the European imperialist sphere (SOU 2005:56 p. 95). Further, although marginal in the colonial practices in comparison to the more aggressively expanding colonising countries, Lappalainen underlines how Sweden came to play a more central

[14] *Utredningen om strukturell diskriminering på grund av etnisk eller religiös tillhörighet*.

role in the ideological production of the racist scientific theories that accompanied the colonialist project. This history of racist knowledge production within Swedish academia is an important historical background to understandings of institutionalised racism.

In 2005 and 2006 two governmental commissions (*Utredningen om strukturell diskriminering på grund av etnisk eller religiös tillhörighet* (2006) and *Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering* (2005)) presented their reports. Both commissions had already been the topic of heated debate between researchers and in the media well before the reports were presented. The researchers involved were accused of having left-wing political agendas and the basic assumptions about the existence of structural discrimination and racism in Sweden were dismissed. In the end, to a large extent, the actual results were ignored and the reports were soon 'put on the shelf'. The reception of the two commission reports is interesting in itself. Both have been marginalised in academia and stigmatised in the media. Most of the critiques focused on the very points of departure in theories on structural discrimination, institutionalised racism and the creation of difference and Other-ness.

But it is not enough to refer to the historical neglect of racism as a structuring principle of the western nation-states to understand the reception of the commissions' structural arguments around racism, integration and social justice – this marginalisation of knowledge also has to be contextualised in the wider neoliberal shift in the Swedish welfare state.

Studies of irregular migration and clandestinity

The tendency to neglect and/or the inability to discern the presence of racist ideas and structures in Sweden today – and the tension between this national self-image and the experiences of migrants and racialised citizens – is a common-place occurrence in schools (SOU 2006:40), work places (SOU 2006:59; SOU 2006: 60), the legal system (SOU 2006:30), the healthcare system (SOU 2006:78) in political debate (SOU 2006:52) and in academia (SOU 2006:40). I think that this tension is explicitly expressed in the field of the regulation of migration and asylum that is at the centre of this study.

In a discourse analysis of Swedish migration policy and debate during the second half of the twentieth century, Christina Johansson (2005) has traced continuities and shifts in the ways that labour migration, refugee migration and integration have been played out at the intersections of nation-state, asylum rights and of ideas about ethnic homogeneity and social cohesion. Although the approach to refugee migration has grown more and more restrictive during the period covered by Johansson's analysis, the same period is characterised by an unwavering self-image of Sweden as 'a progressive forerunner amongst countries and as a leading advocate of a generous refugee policy' (Johansson 2005 p. 14, my translation). She claims that this self-image is cultivated by politicians, mass media and, more rarely, research in social sciences.

Just as the scope of migration policy is shifting, expanding and influencing other policy areas, the research on migration connected to asylum rights and irregular migration/undocumented migration is a broad, interdisciplinary and multileveled arena that connects to various theoretical fields. At the European level there is – as we have seen earlier – a vast production of critical knowledge exploring the ways EU migration policies feed into nationalist national agendas (Hansen 2009). These are: a) looking at how migration policies construct both irregular and regular migrants' positions on the labour and housing markets (Anderson 2009, Anthias and Lazaridis 2000); b) looking at the intersections of gender, identity and citizenship (Brah 1996; Kofman and Sales 1998); and c) looking at the intersections with studies of welfare and social policy (Lewis 2000; Yuval-Davis, Anthias and Kofman 2005).

In studies of migration and irregularity in Sweden, the academic research that has dealt with the field has to a great extent focused on the institutional aspects of the reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Migrants as subjects and carriers of experience have been put in the background for more instrumental approaches to migrants as clients/objects/workers in welfare institutions, integration schemes or on the national labour market. However, there are a number of academic publications that have approached the issues of irregularity, asylum rights and migrants' experiences in

Sweden from more critical approaches (Appelqvist 1999; Baghir-Zada 2009; Dahlstedt and Tesfahuney 2004; Fryklund and Lundberg 2010; Hansen 2004, 2008, 2009; Holgersson forthcoming 2011; Khosravi 2006, 2009, 2010; Norström 2004; Tesfahuney 1998).

But while the visibility of undocumented migrants and rejected asylum seekers in academic publications is only slowly increasing, the last years have been characterised by an acceleration in the flow of publications from popular science and journalism, as well as NGO papers reporting from and analysing migration policies and the increasing restrictiveness in the assessment of asylum applications (Bexelius 2001, 2008; Granestrand 2007; Vestin 2006; Zamacona Aguirre 2008), the situation/s of undocumented migrants and rejected asylum seekers (Abotsi and Stephens (ed) 2008; Mattsson 2008; Blomgren 2008; Lodenius and Wingborg 2008) and the climate in the public debate on migration (Tamas 2009). These politically engaged journalistic and activist approaches have been important in provoking a more intense debate which encourages broader public awareness of the presence and situation of irregular migrants in Sweden and Europe.

Only a few studies have been conducted upon the ways sex and gender affect and are affected by the laws and practices regulating asylum and refugeeship (in Sweden: Folkelius and Noll 1998, in Europe: Crawley 2001). In Sweden, there is a growing interest at the level of feminist and/or asylum rights activist groups, as well as amongst NGOs to approach the gendered aspects of the understandings of persecution and refugeeship played out in the practice of law (Bexelius 2001, 2008) and of the gendered pitfalls of clandestinity (Nordin 2008).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have sketched out some of the shifts and continuities in Swedish migration policy and debates which are central to my field. I have claimed that the last decade has entailed a shift from clandestinity as a barely visible space in the Swedish welfare state –

with clandestine asylum seekers as a group that has been silenced by both benevolent representation and by an ignorant public and political sphere – to a climate in which undocumented migrants and clandestine asylum seekers have at least some more voice and visibility. This increased visibility has been realised both through heightened public attention and knowledge, driven by the campaign for amnesty and the heated debate about the apathetic children, and through the self-organised groups of the asylum seekers themselves which, although still small, made the 'own' voice of undocumented migrants heard in the debate.

This chapter has also provided a sketch of some of the paradoxes in European migration policies and suggested some links between these paradoxes: from paradoxes surrounding inclusion and exclusion on the level of border controls, others found in the discourses about national and European identities, and finally those found in the ways that the span of political concerns about migration have expanded into the fields of admission and control of access to social welfare. Finally, I have discussed the specific context of Swedish migration policy in traditionally inclusive forms of social organisation, but which are now in transition towards becoming policies with a more neoliberal orientation.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Framework

In the previous chapter I presented some illustrations of relevant developments in political debates on asylum policy and migration in Sweden. I have also mapped out some of the pertinent developments in European and Swedish migration policies with a special focus upon the shift in migration policies towards a neoliberal migration regime in the beginning of the nineties. The previous chapter also offered a very brief overview of the field of research on migration that relates to this study. In this chapter I will contextualise the study theoretically, aiming to identify the central categories for the study and to define my analytical lens in a way that allows me to approach the position of clandestine asylum seekers in the nation-state – as well as allowing me to grasp the instability and movement inherent in clandestinity. I will explore the location of the categories of clandestine asylum seekers through a critical dialogue with feminist and postcolonial understandings of citizenship and the nation-state.[1]

In the first section of the chapter I give a brief account of the conception of sovereignty as being power to declare a 'state of exception', something that is understood as being a key moment in the formation of the modern state (Bhuwania 2007; Agamben 2005).

[1] Although my study focuses on clandestine asylum seekers, many aspects of this position are shared by other categories of undocumented migrants (such as visa overstayers, undocumented workers or victims of trafficking). So, whilst sticking to the term clandestine in relation to my informants, in some parts of the theoretical discussion and in the analysis I also use the broader concept 'undocumented migrants' to describe these instances of broader validity for the arguments made.

The philosopher Giorgio Agamben (1995, 2005) plays a central role in the literature of political philosophy which describes the refugee as a central theoretical figuration in the critique of both the modern nation-state and the paradigm of sovereignty. These critiques offer a theoretical frame for theorizing the relationship of clandestinity with sovereignty, the state of exception and with inclusion/exclusion. Nevertheless, this theoretical field has been criticised for not taking historical and geographical contexts into sufficient account, and so, building on the work of Aiwha Ong (2006), I will argue for the necessity of bringing in the neoliberal paradigm as a historical specificity that shapes clandestinity in late modernity. Further, in this theoretical field 'the refugee' tends to become theorised in a disembodied way which, in the analysis, deprives this position of political subjectivity and does not fully manage to grasp the contradictions and pluralities that the accounts from everyday life of my informants entail. In the next section of the chapter, I turn instead to feminist and post-colonial citizenship theory and their critical understandings of the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion inherent in the notions of citizenship and the nation-state in order to develop a more embodied and contextualised conceptualisation of clandestinity.

I start the discussion about citizenship with a broad introduction to the basic debates, approaches and levels of citizenship theory, and then put forward a series of important analytical distinctions within these debates that are relevant for my analysis. I also draw upon analyses of the changing conditions of the nation-state and national citizenship in the context of processes of globalisation (R Hansen 1999; Sassen 1996, 2000). Thereafter, I look more deeply into the feminist and anti-racist takes on citizenship theory and focus upon the subject position that is at the centre of my study: the clandestine asylum seeker.

In the last section of the chapter I approach the position of my informants as a space for the negotiation of both citizenship and boundaries at several levels that go beyond those of the nation-state and formal citizenship. I also briefly introduce the concept of intersectionality and argue for an analysis of institutional (and civil

society) practices grasping the intersections of 'personal lives and social policy' (Lewis 2004). Through a focus upon their lived experiences, I consider these to be favourable starting points from which to begin theorising the subject positions of the informants.

Sovereignty and 'the state of exception'

The fragmented position of clandestine asylum seekers needs to be explored as one that is located *within* the actual borders of the nation-state but *outside* citizenship, political claims-making and the protection of the law. Further, it is a position characterised by being constructed through the law (being inscribed *by* and *within* the law) but represented as being located *outside* the law. In order to grasp this position – and the included exclusion that characterises it – and to understand the shared location of undocumented migrants and racialised citizens in relation to borders and boundaries of national belonging, I will turn to critical approaches to sovereignty and the understanding of 'the state of exception' as being a key moment in modern state formation (Agamben 1995, 2005; Bhuwania 2007; Diken and Bagge Laustsen 2005; Ericsson 2006; Khosravi 2006; Tesfahuney and Dahlstedt 2008).

The work of political philosopher Giorgio Agamben on sovereignty, 'the state of exception' (2005) and 'bare life' (1998) has become a central point of reference in critical analyses of regimes of surveillance and militarisation that mark the post-9/11 'war on terror', as well as contemporary migration control regimes. Building on Arendt's writing on the position of the refugee during and immediately following the Second World War, on Foucault's thinking on biopower and on the work of twentieth century philosophers Carl Schmitt and Walter Benjamin, Agamben has developed a critical understanding of the way sovereignty is inseparable from 'the state of exception' – the possibility that is *built into the law* for sovereignty to exempt itself *from the law* (Agamben 2005). Agamben traces the state of exception through the history of modern state formation and points to certain historical moments in

which the state of exception has been used to reinscribe sovereignty in the face of conflicts or movements threatening its stability.[2] He argues that 'the voluntary creation of a permanent state of emergency (though perhaps not declared in the technical sense) has become one of the essential practices of contemporary states, including so-called democratic ones' (Agamben 2005 p. 2). He continues by claiming that 'from this perspective, the state of exception appears as a threshold of indeterminacy between democracy and absolutism' (p. 2f).

While the sovereign can thus be defined as 'he who decides on the state of exception' (Schmitt 1922, quoted in Agamben 2005 p. 1), the mirror image of the sovereign is that of the one who is excluded from the law – the *homo sacer.* The *homo sacer*, in Agamben's terms, refers to the position outside the *polis,* the excluded position that *needs* to be there as an antipode that defines the inside. The *homo sacer* is simultaneously the condition for and the result of the power of the sovereign to exclude. Decoupled from the political life inside the protection of the nation-state – from being a subject who holds rights – the *homo sacer* enters a condition of 'bare life'. Intertwined with this history of the state of exception, runs the history of 'the camp'. The camp, according to Agamben, is a 'zone of indistinction', a border zone, in so far as it is not merely a place excluded from the 'normal order', but also one in which the withdrawal of civil and political rights and law becomes a temporarily and materialised state of exception *included* in the law – in other words the 'zones of indistinction' are zones of included exclusion (Agamben 1995; Diken and Bagge Lausten 2005). From the camps in Cuba set up by the Spanish colonisers at the end of the nineteenth century, via the Nazi death camps, 'extraordinary rendition', Guantanamo Bay, and the refugee detention centres, the state of exception has manifested itself materially through the indefinite detention of subjects made into non-citizens or even non-humans – made, in other words, into the *homo*

[2] He focuses, for example, on the annulling of certain rights relating to personal liberties in the Weimar Republic as a historically decisive state of exception that means Adolf Hitler's Third Reich 'can be considered as state of exception that lasted twelve years' (Agamben 2005 p. 2).

sacer (Diken and Bagge Lausten 2005 p. 17). Diken and Bagge Lausten argue further that the camp has continuity in the organisation of the state in modernity, and that the camp as an 'ordering machine' is reflected in urban structures such as gated communities, shopping malls and, more explicitly, refugee detention camps.

The figure of the *homo sacer*, the theorisation of sovereignty and the theorisation of the camp have become central references in analyses of racialised exclusion by and from the nation-state in its variety of expressions. These run from racially segregated urban spaces, through the ways in which non-white bodies are more exposed to violence enacted by the state, to the different processes by which migrants are deprived of rights and 'humanity' (Ericsson 2006; Khosravi 2006). Agamben situates the refugee at the centre of the modern state. Referring to Hanna Arendt's post-Second World War work on totalitarianism, he notes that the real condition of the sovereign states rests on a contradiction:

> The paradox here is that precisely the figure that should have incarnated the rights of man par excellence, the refugee, constitutes instead the radical crisis of this concept […] In the nation-state system, the so-called sacred and inalienable rights of man prove to be completely unprotected at the very moment it is no longer possible to characterize them as rights of the citizens of a state (Agamben 1995 p. 116).

Diken (2004) also discusses how the ways in which refugees are treated can serve as the ultimate mirror of the condition of sovereign nation-states. Transnational institutions such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights are supposed to be related to personhood (R Hansen 1999) – to 'bare life' – and not simply citizenship, but in contemporary discourses on refugee policy, a separation between humanitarianism and politics, has made this potential role of the *homo sacer* less visible:

> Breaking the continuity between man and citizen, as *homo sacer*, the refugee brings to light the real condition of sovereignty and the contradictory character of the attempts by committees and organizations dealing with the refugee´s

> ‘human rights’, which insists that their actions are only humanitarian and not political […] This separation between politics and humanitarianism, or between the rights of the citizen and the rights of man, thus signals ‘a secret solidarity’ between humanitarianism and the powers it should fight (Diken 2004 p. 89).

Humanitarianism is sometimes presented as the bridging mechanism between the nation-states’ excluding sovereignty and universal, but ‘state-less’, human rights – in that humanitarianism could also offer something that approaches human rights for the *homo sacer* (Nyers 2006 p. 32). But, it is the withdrawal of the law and the political – the lack of political voice, the transformation into a depoliticised, rights-less and voiceless human being – that is the real threat to the refugee. Peter Nyers argues that the movement and presence of refugees makes visible the contours of the movement and presence of sovereignty: ‘it is not only the refugee’s body that is moving but also the sovereign state – the body politics – that is in constant motion’ (Nyers 2006 p. x). The depoliticisation is not countered but rather reinforced through humanitarian acts, as – through their focus on *bare life* rather than political rights of the refugee – they further efface the links between the refugee’s existence and *politics proper*.

The possibility that one can be granted a permanent residence permit on humanitarian grounds in Sweden, offers individualized and/or depoliticised reasons such as health or a family situation and hence avoids highlighting the political rights (or lack thereof) to asylum for specific groups (e.g. people of a certain nationality, or from a political group from a certain region or country). The disproportionate use of humanitarian reasons as grounds for granting permanent residence can, in the context of Diken’s understanding of Agamben, be described as an institutionalisation of this withdrawal of the political potential inscribed in the position of the refugee.

Bare life as embodied experience?

The conceptual apparatus developed by Agamben provides an important insight into the way that the excluded position of undocumented migrants is a condition built in to modern liberal

democracy rather than a 'mistake' to be fixed through policy changes. It also offers a spatial understanding of the 'state of exception' through the conceptualisation of the camp, bare life and their location in the sovereign nation-state. These insights serve as a starting point – or rather a frame – for my study as a result of their capacity to grasp the figure of the refugee in movement between states and statuses. They also enable me to put this figure at the centre of an understanding of the nation-state, to explain how the violence and exclusion such figures experience is inherent to the imagined inclusive democracies, and finally to trace these mechanisms of sovereignty and the state of exception over time in shifting historical contexts. But this trans-historical potential in Agamben's theorisation of the state of exception, which at one level provides the advantage of tracing patterns, also risks effacing the specificities of historical and geographical contexts. The state of exception is treated as a trans-historical phenomenon and whilst the similarities between the different historical moments are underlined, they are also put forward at the cost of not taking the historical differences and local contexts into account.

In relation to the position of undocumented migrants in the nation-state and the construction of clandestinity in Sweden (and Europe) today, there are several specificities in geographical, historical and subjective contexts that risk remaining concealed through a straight-forward understanding of this position as bare life in a permanent state of exception. Firstly, to develop a conceptualisation of a state of exception that is contextualised in contemporary political developments surrounding welfare and migration in Sweden and Europe I need to take into account some of the continuities and shifts that I discussed in the previous chapter. These are: the relation between a deregulated labour market and selective migration regimes; the shift from a multiculturalist paradigm that embraces (essentialist) notions of difference to a neo-assimilatory paradigm, one that problematises and then ignores difference whilst simultaneously stigmatising citizens and migrants considered cultural 'Others; and finally, the continuous neo-racist and nativist approach to migration and migrants.

In Aihwa Ong's (2006) anthropological work on migration and diasporic communities in the US and in East Asia, she underlines the centrality of neoliberalism in the changes taking place at the beginning of the twenty-first century regarding migration flows, migration controls and the life conditions and legal status of migrants around the world. She starts loosely in the Schmittian conceptualisation of the exception that Agamben builds upon in his use of 'the exception as', with, in Ong's words, 'a fundamental principle of sovereign rule that is predicated on the division between citizens in a juridical order and outsiders stripped of juridical-political protections' (Ong 2006 p. 5). Ong argues that in the present historical moment, when the sovereignty of nation-states is challenged and questioned through notions of post- and transnationality, a historically contextualised understanding of the state of exception needs to include an understanding of the neoliberal paradigm. She puts forward an additional exception with neoliberalism, and argues that the neoliberal exception can work in an inclusive way through its management of different populations and groups of migrants, but in a way which is also exclusionary. Further, Ong criticises the way in which Agamben – through the focus on the way sovereignty organises the division into political beings and bare life through citizenship only – disregards other forms of ethical systems that might provide other conceptualisations of humanity and subjectivity. She argues that the 'fundamental reference of bare life in a state of permanent exception thus ignores the possibility of complex negotiations of claims for those without territorialized citizenship' (2006 p. 23). I understand her critique as a critique of the universalist ambition in Agamben's theorisation of bare life.

A second contemporary aspect of the specific exception of migrants' rights in Europe that tends to remain concealed in an abstracted trans-historical understanding of the state of exception, is how this exception and the subject positions within it, are constructed through racialised and gendered processes. British sociologist Imogen Tyler (2006) builds on Agamben when she problematises the ways humanitarian organisations and anti-

deportation campaigns for individual asylum seekers tend to efface the asylum seekers themselves as political subjects through claiming to represent them. But she also criticises what she describes as 'the theoretical turn to [the figure of the asylum seeker]' (Tyler 2006 p. 198) for the way that its abstract formulation of the problem universalises the refugee or 'the figure of the asylum seeker' (ibid.) and creates a gap when the asylum seeker as a theoretical figuration and asylum seekers as political subjects are collapsed into one. She argues that the voiceless-ness and the effacement of refugees that Agamben criticises through the critique of sovereignty are again reproduced through this disembodied way of theorising the position of the asylum seeker.

> What is of concern here about the logic of this theoretical argument is the way in which the figure of the refugee is harnessed for their (political) signifying force, and then performed as an 'unspeakable truth' (we are all refugees) in ways that abstract and disembody 'the figure of the other' from any embodied referent (actual refugees) (Tyler 2006 p. 197).

Tyler shows effectively how Agamben's take on sovereignty and humanitarianism can offer a fruitful theoretical tool for approaching understandings of the conditions framing the position of asylum seekers and refugees. But at the same time she also argues for the importance of exploring, not only the dehumanising and effacing representations of the figure of the refugee in the media, but also in radical theoretical and activist approaches to this position as a figure. The figuration in itself is a violent act that effaces the complexities of the embodied experiences of refugees:

> We must attend to the violent foreclosure that accompanies 'figuration', not only in humanitarian, political and news media accounts, but also in the purportedly radical theoretical accounts of 'the asylum-seeker' and 'the refugee' (Tyler 2006 p. 199).

I understand this as a call for exploring this figuration as a subject position marked by gendered and racialised processes, and for an understanding of refugees and asylum seekers as being embodied subjects and agents beyond the fixed and effacing frame that the abstract theoretical models of sovereignty seem to suggest.

In this section I have discussed how the theorisation of the refugee – or the undocumented migrant – as a key figure in the drama of sovereignty provides me with an analytical perspective that carries the understanding of the position of clandestine asylum seekers as being central to the sovereign nation-state, whilst also being positioned in 'bare life' outside the political but yet inside the ordering power of the state. However, I have further argued that this concept alone does not provide analytical tools that allow for an understanding of the multiplicity of the experiences from clandestinity, including the specific historical and geographical contexts of globalisation and neoliberalism as well as processes of racialisation and gendering.

In the next section I turn to feminist and postcolonial approaches to citizenship, a field where the traditional approach to static and formal conceptualisations of citizenship is challenged by nuanced, dynamic and multi-levelled understandings of citizenship as practice and as potentially being rooted in collectivities other than the state (such as the local community or the region). I will do this in order to outline the possibilities for capturing a historically and geographically contextualised subject position of clandestine asylum seekers.

Citizenship theory

The field of citizenship theory is woven from a complex web of analytical, normative and empirical debates and/or divisions. One arena of theoretical debate deals with contentions about what citizenship *is* – is it a formal status, a symbolic sense of belonging, a lived experience and/or an everyday practice? Is it a relation between the individual and the state or multiple relations within

community/ies? And what contains the apparently simple notion of formal citizenship? Another issue is concerned with *how to study* citizenship. Which are the relevant sites of research? *Where* does citizenship as practice or as formal status manifest itself? Should we, for instance, look at the national, post-national or transnational levels to produce knowledge about citizenship? Other debates circulate around normative visions of citizenship – what *could* or *should* it be? A global vehicle for ever expanding rights? A national registry of members? Practices of individual and collective engagement in the local community? A final central area of debate is found in the tensions between national, post-national and transnational forms and perspectives. Are post-nationality and transnationality normative goals or empirical facts? Has formal citizenship really lost its importance, or are states still exercising their power to exclude? Does transnationality challenge the importance of national citizenship or is it instead a result of its fading importance?

The position of clandestine asylum seekers is, at first sight, not included by many of these theoretical debates, nor is it included in the concept of citizenship itself (in its more narrow *formal* sense – see discussion below). But this position on (or outside of) the margins of citizenship and the theoretical debates surrounding it, also allows for a fruitful exploration of the concept. As I will show, the position of my informants connects to several of the debates mentioned above. In the following, and in dialogue with feminist and postcolonial approaches to citizenship and the nation-state, I am going to explore these debates in more detail. I will explore the potential of theorising the clandestine position in relation to citizenship and provide a preliminary conceptualisation of a form of '*clandestine citizenship*', asking questions such as: what are the limitations and possibilities of such a concept, and what kind of rights and spaces of action would clandestine citizenship entail?

Gender, 'race'/ethnicity and citizenship

> For some, citizenship continues to define the parameters of rights and responsibilities, guaranteeing a base line of equality of opportunity and respect within the context of

> differential potential and achievement. For others, citizenship as a social relation (as opposed to an ideal) is among the most exclusionary of discourses and practices – this exclusionary effect itself being an outcome of the inequalities of social power linked to divisions of class, ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality and disability (Lewis 2004 p. 10).

My theoretical framework is built upon feminist and postcolonial critiques of mainstream theories of citizenship and the nation-state. Feminist and anti-racist insights into the ways relations between citizens and the state are differentiated along gendered, racialised and class lines have been helpful to me in the process of understanding the instability of supposed 'fixed' categories such as nation and citizenship. While mainstream approaches have too often dealt with the nation-state as a coherent analytical category – having unproblematic boundaries with other nation-states, and having undifferentiated and homogeneous (implicitly male) citizens – feminist and post-colonial critiques have developed nuanced understandings of the ways gender, 'race'/ethnicity and class organise access to 'full', or substantial, citizenship, welfare and power. They have thereby made visible diverse subjectivities beyond the liberal individual notion of the intelligible citizen (e.g. Lewis 2000, 2004; Lister 2003 (1997); Lister et al. 2007; Yuval-Davis 1997; Phillips 1991. In the Nordic context: de los Reyes et al. 2005; Eduards 2002; Ålund 2005).

One of the central contentions of feminist citizenship theory is the challenge and analysis of the public-private dichotomy. This theory considers the ways in which this dichotomy influences research and theories on citizenship as well as the actual organisation of the state, the possible ways of doing citizenship and even possible ways of being a citizen (Lister et al. 2007 p. 10). Feminist theories also problematise the exclusionary character of the male-biased concept of citizenship and, in parallel with that, studies of international relations between nation-states have been problematised for their narrow focus on uniquely male-dominated power structures (Enloe 2000 (1989), 2004; Yuval-Davis 1997 p. 68).

The autumn issue of the journal *Feminist Review* which appeared in 1997 ran with the theme, 'Citizenship: Pushing the Boundaries' (Crowley et al. 1997). In the editorial there was a discussion about citizenship theory in relation to feminist and antiracist theoretical endeavours. In the piece the editors situate the journal issue firmly within the rising popularity of studies of citizenship at the time. They also underline the importance of feminist interventions in the field in order to develop understandings of citizenship in the sense of belonging and for constructing 'alternative models of citizenship which challenge the closure of the state and conceptualize citizenship as mediated and multi-tiered':

> 'Citizenship' highlights the complexity of the relationships between individuals and the 'nation-state'; the construction of collectivities within, between and across states and nations; and categories of belonging and the forces of globalization (Crowley et al. 1997 p. 1).

The fruitful avenues of enquiry opened up by this debate means that an extensive literature has developed on and about a variety of different approaches to citizenship. Some of these approaches are seen in, for example: diasporic citizenship, sexual citizenship, cosmopolitan citizenship, cultural citizenship, intimate citizenship and lived citizenship (see for example Isin 1999; Lewis 2004; Lister 2003; Lister et al. 2007).

While the defence of social rights in relation to neoliberal changes in the European welfare state is one crucial arena for negotiation and struggle over the meaning of citizenship, these 'newer' approaches to citizenship have grown out of struggles for an expansion and renewal of notions of citizenship. These renewals intend to capture 'new' categories of rights related to culture, sexuality and identity (Lister et al. 2007 p. 9), and to grasp reconfigurations of both national and international borders following the end of the Cold War and the on-going expansion of the EU (Lewis 2004 p. 2). Historically, the feminist movements in their plurality through time, place and social space – along with the broader varieties of new (and traditional) social movements –

expanded the meaning and range of citizenship and 'the political' by challenging androcentric models of citizenship.[3] The struggles for the expansion of citizenship make visible hegemonic discourses and practices regulating 'forms of exclusion from or subordinated inclusion in the social relations of citizenship' (Lewis 2004 p. 18). A preliminary formulation of 'clandestine citizenship' – a citizenship that is marked by formal exclusion (although included in the law), but which carries the potential for an informal inclusion – is closely related to these arenas of the negotiation of citizenship. The position of undocumented migrants at the centre for this study needs to be contextualised within the neoliberal dismantling of social rights. Similarly the position needs to be placed in context with the negotiations and struggles for the expansion of the concept of citizenship towards 'new' categories of rights and across changing notions of borders. The main traditions within citizenship theory stem either from the liberal approach to citizenship, as a link between the individual and the state that regulates individual rights, or from civic republicanism which conceptualises citizenship through participation and duties in relation to the community (Lister et al. 2007 p. 7f). T.H. Marshall (1950) challenged the liberal notion of citizenship through his description of the development of citizenship as an 'evolutionary' story (Yuval-Davis 1997 p. 69). In his description citizenship began in the eighteenth century with the introduction of *civil rights* which regulated rights to personal property and freedom from state violation. Thereafter, the *political rights* to suffrage and participation in the democratic process were added during the nineteenth century, and finally, during the twentieth century, the *social right* to economic and social security was also included.

Marshall's classification has been criticized for failing to adequately account for the ways that gender divisions, along with 'race'/ethnic and class divisions, organise access to citizenship asymmetrically (Lister et al. 2007 p. 8). The development of civil, political and social rights for women and racialised groups, and for

[3] This is a challenge mirrored in the challenges of other movements to white supremacy, colonialism and class conservatism.

workers and the landless, does not coincide with the historical outline presented by Marshall. Furthermore, even after these rights have been formally acquired, exclusive practices have *de facto* circumscribed the possibilities of specific groups gaining access to the institutions and practices needed to exercise their rights. Schierup (2005) points out that Marshall only looked at *formal* rights and that he 'presumed a homogeneous nation-state without considering the specific problems and situations that confront women, ethnic minorities or immigrants' (Schierup 2005 p. 243, my translation). Instead, contemporary critics of his work promote a focus on *substantial* rights; different groups' *de facto* possibilities of participation in and symbolic belonging to society (Schierup 2005 p. 244).

But regardless of these problematics Marshall's classification still serves as a starting point for many in the contemporary citizenship debate (Lister et al 2007 p. 9; Lewis 2004 p. 8). Lewis argues for the need to look at 'the *practice* of citizenship through the analytical lens provided by Marshall, we need to think of the civil, political and social elements as bound together in an unstable unity, with social rights occupying the position of the irreducible core of citizenship' (2004 p. 10). Yuval-Davis underlines the way that Marshall's classification enables an approach to citizenship 'as a multi-tier construct, which applies to people's membership in a variety of collectivities – local, ethnic, national and transnational' (1997 p. 5) instead of the liberal understanding of citizenship as a 'simple' connection between the individual citizen and the state.

These multi-tiered, practice-oriented approaches to citizenship are central to the informal aspect of clandestine citizenship. In the *Feminist Review* issue cited above Nira Yuval-Davis outlines some of the central concerns in feminist interventions in citizenship theory, in which she arrives at an argument for the notion of 'transversal politics' (1997 p. 1; pp. 4-27). In the same issue Ruth Lister discusses 'differentiated universalism' as a way of negotiating the tension between the liberal universalist notion of citizenship, one that disguises the white male norm and the acknowledgement of difference that brings the risk of essentialism and of disguising

power relations within 'minority' groups (1997 p. 39ff). In *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*, a study from 1997 (2nd ed. 2003), Lister works with the concept 'active citizenship' to grasp less formal aspects and expressions of citizenship. She quotes Ray Pahl to illustrate the concept, saying that active citizenship is about 'local people working together to improve their own quality of life and to provide conditions for others to enjoy the fruits of a more affluent society' (Pahl 1990 p. 8, quoted in Lister 2003 p. 24). Lister also mentions that this is a kind of citizenship practice, that 'disadvantaged people, often women, do for themselves, for instance through community groups, rather than a paternalistic top-down relationship; one that creates them as subjects rather then objects' (Lister 2003 p. 24). Lister and Yuval-Davis are representative of feminist and antiracist approaches in the sense of breaking up, expanding and nuancing understandings and practices of citizenship. This branch of feminist and postcolonial citizenship theory can be described as the analysis of the ways that formal citizenship translates – or does not translate – into substantial citizenship. But, in my analysis, I will use these insights in 'the other direction', and explore how positions characterised as being excluded from formal citizenship, might still carry the possibilities of instances of active citizenship as routes towards (limited) forms of citizenship through participation.

Feminist and antiracist studies of social policy and welfare have been important in the feminist understanding of citizenship as a process, and the importance of 'agency' as central for an analysis of both social policy and citizenship (Lister 2003 p. 6f). I return to a discussion on citizenship, social policy and migration in the last section of this chapter, but mention it here to show the way feminist and critical takes on citizenship forms an interdisciplinary platform. Lister for example, positions herself as coming from social policy studies, but, her work builds upon political, social and feminist theory, as well as literature on migration and the nation-state (p. 8).

Often critical approaches to citizenship studies share mainstream notions of citizenship, and have difficulties grasping the implications of increasing international migration, and the increasing presence of

subject positions on the move between national citizenships and between nation-states. Even if the notion of substantial rights has contributed to a more pluralistic approach to members of the nation-state, it still tends to remain *within* the frame of the nation-state. While feminist, antiracist and postcolonial research mainly approaches the ways people with membership – formal citizenship or permanent residence – are excluded from actual belonging to the nation as a result of racial and ethnic discrimination, the ways that formal exclusion at the borders interacts with those processes are less explored. I think the discourses and public debate on migration, asylum rights and undocumented migrants can be helpful to illustrate the inherent instability of the concepts citizenship and national belonging, and the interconnectedness between the two 'kinds' of exclusion – the formal exclusion through denial of citizenship and the exclusion based on ideas and practices that organise belonging in relation to welfare and power institutions. Ruth Lister (2003) argues that a consequence of this limitation in theoretical discussions on citizenship is the theoretical and empirical exclusion of people moving – or trying to move – between nation-states.

The differentiation of different levels and kinds of legal status consequently becomes a means of differentiating migrant inhabitants' access to rights, possibilities for making claims, and for welfare entitlements. This on-going regulation of migration, and of welfare entitlements and political rights of migrant inhabitants, helps to illuminate two important analytical points which are important to distinguish from each other. On the one hand one finds a lack of clarity *within* definitions of formal citizenship – from gaining a temporary residence permit to being passport holder – and a further lack of clarity in distinguishing *between* these different levels of formal citizenship. On the other, one finds the mechanisms regulating substantial citizenship such as the structural and symbolic mechanisms that exclude racialised citizens and which prevent permanent residents from gaining full access to rights, welfare and power. A favourable starting point is to approach the paradoxes inherent in the notion of citizenship as related to migration and gender, the double character of citizenship as inclusive and exclusive

(Lister 2003; Lister et al. 2007) and the blurred continuum between inclusion and exclusion that are at work at different levels of analysis and in different approaches to studies of citizenship.

The struggles of irregular and undocumented migrants are often not mentioned in this literature, but I do want to underline these struggles (e.g. the movement of the sans papiers in France, or the sometimes relatively successful struggles for regularisation in Spain) as moments of struggle to expand definitions of citizenship, as well as emphasising their importance for some of the developments in citizenship theory and political understandings of citizenship in European social movements.

Inclusion and exclusion in the nation-state

One of the foundations for my understanding of the nation-state is of the state as a set of symbols that are under constant negotiation. Access to welfare and citizen rights, as well as discourses about belonging, are important elements in what is essentially the on-going construction of the symbols of nation.

In some critical approaches to concepts such as nation and belonging, these concepts and their significance can be ambiguous. While discourses about national belonging and nation-state policies are constitutive of each other I think it is analytically important to differentiate between the nation, the state and the nation-state – between the nation as the imagined community (Benedict Anderson 1993), the state as a concentration of political and administrative power and finally, the nation-state in which the two are understood as coinciding.

To develop a conceptualization that takes the movement of people between nation-states and the instability of legal status into account, it is necessary to broaden the understanding of the concept citizenship from the narrow notion of formal citizenship to a broader

concept of different forms of legal status.[4] But it is also important to make a distinction in relation to the less precise concept of national belonging. While citizenship refers to formal membership – formal belonging – in an internationally recognized nation-state (Lewis 2004 p. 9), *national belonging* is about belonging to the nation as an imagined community (Benedict Anderson 1993). Gail Lewis (2004) discusses belonging in terms of 'the associational and identificatory aspects of being a citizen – that is, to the ways in which we identify and associate *ourselves* and the ways in which *others* identify and feel associated with us' (p. 21). Yuval-Davis et al. take their point of departure from the understanding that the '[p]olitics of belonging encompass and relate both citizenship and identity, adding an emotional dimension which is central to notions of belonging' (2006 p. 1). Both in political discourses and in some theoretical approaches, there is a tendency to equate citizenship with national identity and to thereby freeze notions of identity and culture instead of taking a more critical approach which interrogates their historically embedded and constructed character (Lister 2003 p. 14f). I understand national belonging as *discourse* and *practice*. Belonging is regulated on a symbolic level by discourses upon national identity, inclusion and access to rights. But these discourses also produce actual practices in welfare institutions, among politicians and among decision makers at different levels.

The nation-state can be described as the regulator of several sets of boundaries – the first regulates admittance to national territory, the next regulates admittance to formal membership (citizenship) and the final set regulates the content of this membership on both a practical and a symbolic level. Regardless of your reasons for migration – work, family reunification or protection from persecution – you will have to pass through the same gates, and they are all regulated by the two-fold functions of citizenship – inclusion and exclusion. These gates begin with the gate into the territory, then the gate to a residence permit and from there to different levels of legal status – from being granted a temporary residence permit to gaining formal

[4] Hence in my analysis this is sometimes related to the permanent residence permit as a form of citizenship.

citizenship (Lister p. 44ff). Access to substantial – or full – citizenship can be described as the last gate on the migratory path (Schierup 2005 p. 244) and this gate, to a great extent, is regulated by institutional practices as well as discourses on the nation as an imagined community.

Even though the positions at each of these gates involve different expressions of the absence of social and political rights in everyday life, the description of these locations as a continuum is still relevant. Whilst the undocumented migrant is primarily excluded by the lack of legal status, and the racialised citizen is excluded by structural and institutionalised racism, the two positions share their relation to the nation-state's exclusionary mechanisms (Lister 2003 p. 47). Both positions are also conditioned by *the border* as a discursive, social and physical boundary for access to welfare and belonging.

I will return later to a discussion about how one might analytically link the external and internal forms of inclusion/exclusion, and how such a link could serve to open up an analytical space where the subject position of my informants can be approached. But before that, the next section will present the debates on post-nationality – these debates approach the core of the tensions between nation-states/sovereignty/citizenship and transnationality/human rights.

The nation-state in a globalised era

Along with increased international migration and accelerated processes of globalisation, new theoretical perspectives and analyses of the role of the nation-state in the globalised era have developed in recent years creating a multi-faceted debate.[5] This debate starts out from a position of relative agreement about actual developments

[5] The concept globalisation is by no means uncontested, but rather problematic in many ways. The debates surrounding the concept focuses, among other things, upon the risk of conflating the diverse and complex rationalities behind the various developments/movements that counts as parts of globalisation into one rationality behind one development. Another important critique is the inherent eurocentrism of the concept (Isin 1999 p. 94). I talk about *processes of globalisation*, in plural, to underline the complexity and instability of the concept.

such as increased economic integration and international migration. Nevertheless, the debate soon arrives on grounds characterised by widely differing conclusions about the consequences of these processes, the driving forces behind them and the potential for new forms of communities and resistance (e.g. R Hansen 1999; Jacobson 1996; Sassen 1996, 2000; Soysal 1994). Some of the issues under discussion are whether transnationality is a normative 'goal' or an empirical 'fact', whether formal citizenship has lost its importance, and if states still exercise their power to exclude? The post-national perspective has been fundamental in the project to broaden the mainstream perspectives on globalisation, international relations, migration, citizenship and the nation-states because it also includes transnational regimes, movements, subjects and organisations in its analysis. Furthermore, the status of the nation-states and citizenship in themselves are questioned in the era of globalisation (Lister 2003 p. 43).

In a review of the debate Randall Hansen summarises two opposite positions in terms of 'the declinist thesis' and 'the anti-declinist thesis' (R Hansen 1999 p. 425ff). The roots of the division revolve around the signification of national citizenship and sovereignty of the nation-state which, in the context of the processes of globalisation, migration and the development of different international regimes, can be regarded as declining or not declining. The 'declinists' argue that national citizenship has lost its significance in relation to the rights attached to *personhood* in, for example, the form of international conventions protecting human rights. The 'anti-declinists' on the other hand argue that the nation-state and national citizenship are still significant (ibid).

According to 'the declinist thesis' (R Hansen 1999 p. 425ff) globalisation and the post-war migration to Europe have challenged the nation-state's sovereignty and territorial control, thereby affecting the link between the nation-state and citizenship. Some of the literature focuses upon transnational identities, communities and movements that have emerged as a consequence of the growing number of groups of migrants and citizens with links to many countries and cultures (Fernández et al. 2001; Sassen 2000; Yuval-

Davis 1997). Others focus upon the declining importance of national citizenship and the correspondingly increased significance of transnational human rights (Fernández et al. 2001; Jacobson 1996). Both these fields/perspectives can be described through Hansen's term 'the declinist thesis' but also by the broader concept of 'post-nationalism'.

Jacobson (1996) argues that the importance of national citizenship declines on the basis of the last decades' developments towards an extension of social citizenship rights to non-citizens who reside permanently in Western nation-states: 'As rights have come to be predicated on residency, not citizen status, the distinction between 'citizen' and 'alien' has eroded' (Jacobson 1996 p. 8f). He argues that the only formal difference between citizens and permanent residents is found with political rights.

In Sweden, Fernández et al. (2001) connect to the post-national perspective. They describe three contemporary processes that they see as symptomatic of a changing significance of citizenship: the development of group differentiated rights; of European citizenship; and of the increased importance of human rights (Fernández et al. 2001).

As an example of 'the anti-declinist thesis' Randall Hansen shows how Christian Joppke starts out from a similar empirical context as Jacobson, but, through using a different conception of the causality involved, he ends up in an opposite position in relation to post-nationality (R Hansen 1999 p. 430ff). While the 'declinists' put the permanently resident non-citizens' rights forward as the basis for their argument about the disconnection between individual rights and national belonging and citizenship, Joppke instead shows – in a comparative study in Germany, UK and the US – how these rights are still based on national legislation and policy rather than on transnational commitments and regimes (ibid). Thus, the power over the distribution of rights is still prevalent within the nation-states.

Some literature presents the EU and European citizenship as an example of the development towards a post-national world and the growth of post-national belongings, communities and principles for rights distribution (Fernández et al. 2001; Soysal 1994). But the

critical takes on the EU project's excluding mechanisms, and its parallels to nation-state projects (P Hansen 2009) discussed earlier, are important to bear in mind in relation to this claim. The EU contains within its structure many of the processes of exclusion and inclusion that characterise the nation-state. European citizenship can be understood as an excluding form of post-national citizenship as it does not include all the residents in the union but only those who already hold a citizenship in one of the EU member states (Lister 2003 p. 46f). The EU project seems to have inherited the excluding mechanisms of the nation-state and can be described as 'a union of nation-states' (ibid. p. 53). Against this background, I would argue that the value of the geographically delimited EU project as an example of a post-national development can be questioned. It seems reasonable to understand the process of EU integration as one in which an expanded nation-state is constructed rather than as a project in which borders and identities are transcended.

Another of Joppke's – and other 'anti-declinists' – arguments against the post-national analysis is that rights of non-citizens in permanent residence have been increasingly curtailed during the last decades' development of migration policies in the US and the EU. Thus, regardless of the similarities with the rights of citizens, the rights of permanent residents are different both in their content and in the way they are conditioned by national policy changes (R Hansen 1999; Lister 2003). A final 'anti-declinist' argument is that the formal difference between citizenship rights and permanent residents' rights that remains – political rights – has far-reaching consequences for the migrant groups who are excluded from political life (R Hansen 1999 p. 433f).

I understand the discussions on post-nationality as stating that there is a distinction between descriptive and normative arguments for and against the post- and transnational perspectives. In the 'descriptive debate' – as presented above – some scholars (for example Jacobson) argue for a factual empirical development towards the declined importance of the nation-state as a global actor, and as a guarantor of its own sovereignty and territorial control. Others, for example Joppke and Lister, argue that the role of the

nation-state as regulator of people's movements and lives is as decisive during the contemporary era of globalisation as it ever was (R Hansen 1999; Lister 2003). On the other hand, in the normative debate, the opinions about empirical developments may differ asymmetrically, but transgressive movements of thought, subjects, communities or analytical entities are argued for as a means to counter the exclusionary practices and ideas surrounding the external and internal borders and boundaries of the rich Western nation-states (and the EU). This compares with some visions of cosmopolitan citizenship seen, for example, in the work of Sassen (1996, 2000), or in Lister's arguments that 'a feminist theory and politics of citizenship must embrace an internationalist agenda' (Lister 2033 p. 38).

The people at the centre of my study – those positioned as clandestine asylum seekers – are characterised by being located both inside and outside, simultaneously and ambiguously. They are inhabitants in Sweden, yet not citizens or even residents. They might be citizens in another country, but for various reasons they can not enjoy the rights of that citizenship. They have claimed their human rights to get protection as refugees – but got rejected and thereby ended up in the very gap that is at the core of the debates on post-nationality: between the nation-state and transnational regimes. The tensions in the debate, and the contradictory position of undocumented migrants in global and national political arenas, are effectively summed up by Nyers:

> While global migrations are rendering internal and external borders less distinct and secure, it is clear that state capacities to enable inclusions and enforce exclusions have not diminished, only taken on new forms. This point is often lost in all the hype about the hybrid identities generated through border transgressions (Nyers 2003 p. 1070).

I think it is important to firmly underline the continuous and fundamental importance of national citizenship and the persuading role of the nation-states in relation to migration from the global South/East to the North/West in general, and in relation to the

position of undocumented migrants in particular. But, without losing track of the importance of formal 'membership', I also think it is important to acknowledge some of the visions and practices of alternative and transnational ways of constructing identities, communities and belongings beyond the limitations of the nation-state.

Clandestine asylum seekers – locations in between

A theorisation of the 'within'-differentiation of citizens *inside* the borders requires an analytical bridge to the 'outside'-differentiation, *beyond*, *on* and *across* the borders – and, as a mirror, the theorisation of external exclusion needs to be linked to internal structures of exclusion. The exclusion at the border is not a practice which only takes place on the margins of the nation-state, but is a practice that is central to the organisation of the nation-state. Running parallel to this, the differentiation of citizens/non-citizens is not marginal but is instead at the core of citizenship and of processes of racialised and gendered differentiation of citizens' access to power and resources. In this section I will explore further whether the theoretical discussion I reviewed in the previous section manages to grasp the position of clandestine asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.

While the feminist work on belonging (Yuval-Davis 1997; Yuval-Davis et al. 2006) and citizenship as lived experience (Lister 2003) has been crucial for the critique of liberal notions of citizenship, I would claim that the formal notion of citizenship (though extended to include an understanding of other kinds of resident status) 'returns' as the crucial and decisive aspect of citizenship in relation to undocumented migrants and clandestine asylum seekers. The subject positions put forward in the post-national approaches are in the first place, either positions in local/regional communities or positions in transnational communities and networks. This is in contrast with the situation of undocumented migrants, whose positions are overtly determined by their relation to the nation-state – on the level of the state – to the extent that we can run the risk of romanticising this position through accounts of irregular migrants as 'cosmopolitans' or 'global citizens'. I argue that the concept of citizenship has to be

understood in the context of increased migration controls in general and the political reality of Fortress Europe specifically. To my mind this means that the critique of liberal understandings of citizenship needs to go yet another round with the concept. The first round has involved problematising universalist understandings of the citizen, the community and the nation through an acknowledgment of 'membership in all kinds of polities from local to global in which people participate in a multi-layered way' (Yuval-Davis et al. 2006). The next round involves problematising the ways this focus on multi-layered forms of belonging risks pushing the crucial role of the regulation of formal citizenship into the background. It is crucial to acknowledge that formal citizenship continues to shape the lives of (unprivileged) migrants, discourses on migration, and that it also has an organising role in relation to other policy areas (as I will discuss throughout the empirical analyses) such as labour, housing and welfare policies.

However, Lister et al. (2007) do acknowledge the interplay between external and internal borders and boundaries, and they conceptualise the combination of the two sets of boundaries in terms of 'migration regimes':

> Migration regimes captures the combinations of formal/legal and political/cultural practices that govern the terms of entry to nation-state citizenship for migrants [...] Migration regimes cannot be divorced from experiences of racialisation and multiculturalism (although analytically and politically they too often are). Together they represent the internal and external *intersecting* aspects of nation and nationhood, operating within and at the borders of nation-states (Lister et al. 2007 p. 4).

The external dimension is about the regulation of both entry and legal status while the internal dimension concerns the ways rights and obligations are designed in relation to citizens and permanent residents. Hansen and Hager (2010) refer to the analytical distinction between these two dimensions of migration regimes as 'analytically inseparable' (p. 15) and argue for an integrated approach that treats

the division rather as an instrumental division. Lister et al. (2007) argue that the connection between migration and citizenship is a crucial site for exploring the link between external and internal dimensions:

> Asylum and naturalisation policies express a transnational dimension to the framing of citizenship [...] that creates further tensions between citizenship and human rights [...] One way to set out cross-national differences and explore tensions between pluralist integration and assimilation in Europe is to look at this relationship between migration and citizenship. A crucial distinction here is between the external dimensions of migration and internal dimensions of integration policies (Lister et al. 2007 p. 78).

But in their chapter on migration regimes, the analytical divisions between the two are still very present, and the understanding of the external dimensions of migration seem to be limited only to the practices, traditions and policies related to naturalisation (of permanent residents). In their account some regimes, for example the Swedish model with possibilities for relatively quick naturalisation, and with a preference for granting permanent residence permits over temporary permits, could be described as being an open and inclusive migration regime.[6] But I would argue that although the analysis of the regulations of naturalisation is pertinent in certain contexts for understanding how boundaries of inclusion are negotiated (for example in relation to the development of an integrated European guest worker scheme that is designed to provide the member states with flexible, temporal and cheap workforce without access to welfare and citizenship rights (P Hansen 2008)) the way Lister et al. (2007) focus the analysis on naturalisation risks

[6]During the periods of labour immigration in the sixties and seventies, the political aim of the social democracy and the majority union in Sweden was to avoid segmentation of the labour market through giving permanent residence permits and making the naturalisation period relatively short (though, segmentation of the labour market still characterised and characterises the Swedish labour market, a segmentation that runs along racialised and gendered lines (Mulinari and Neergaard 2004)).

creating a limited idea of the migration regimes at work in European welfare states. In the case of Sweden, for example, the analysis of the inclusive policies on naturalisation leaves un-analysed the very different 'face' of the migration regime that would be discovered by an analysis of the negotiations on boundaries for belonging that are taking place between asylum seekers, clandestine asylum seekers, undocumented migrants and the state. This is a part of the migration regime that would be missed with an analysis of only naturalisation. So, in order to register all the nuances of the migration regime, I would argue for an inclusion of analyses of the processes and practices related to obtaining – or not obtaining – a residence permit on different grounds. I would also argue for an analysis, in cases of rejection, of the ways that access to community, visibility, welfare entitlements and/or political subjectivity are negotiated and practiced.

In Lister's own writing (2003) the external dimensions of exclusion are clearly underscored in order to mark them as being crucial for realising a full understanding of citizenship and migrations regimes. In the parts that specifically refer to the external dimension of exclusion, she focuses on gendered representations of migrant women as dependants, and upon their lack of any representation at all in migration research. As in the co-written book (Lister et al. 2007), a lot of the focus on external exclusion is also put upon the different practices, traditions and policies related to naturalisation. These parameters of external exclusion are obviously crucial for an understanding of migration regimes, of citizenship and for the position of the many migrants within the regulated routes of migration – regulated labour migration, family reunification, quota refugees or asylum seekers who are granted asylum or a permanent residence permit relatively soon after their first arrival, etc. – in relation to residency, citizenship and belonging. But if we use Lister's own description of the different sets of gates regulating inclusion and exclusion, these accounts of external exclusion focus upon the gate between a permanent resident permit and formal citizenship. This pushes the other set of gates – those that regulate admission to the territory and residence permits – into the

background. The argument which describes a post-national development towards the declining importance of national citizenship shares this focus on the gate that sits between a residence permit and formal citizenship. But through analytically locating the external exclusion at the gate between a permanent residence permit and citizenship, there is a risk of: a) disregarding the development of rights of permanent residents towards a level that approaches the rights of formal citizens, and b) leaving the gate between the entrance, clandestinity and the gaining of a residence permit, under-theorised. Something that further risks pushing the experience and rights of subject positions moving, or intending to move through these other sets of gates.

But Lister makes the important argument that 'Fortress Europe […] contributes practices (which are also gendered phenomena) with regard not only to 'outsiders' but to racialised minorities inside its walls also' (p. 47). She also mentions irregular migrants' precarious situation in relation to welfare rights and the labour market. These arguments are important, and to my mind they are the fields within this discussion that still need to be further explored and analysed in order to fully grasp the interplay between forms of exclusion. Although mentioned and briefly discussed in the citizenship literature that focus upon exclusion, I think these aspects of exclusion from citizenship still tend to be presented separately from other discussions on citizenship, and hence the interplay between the levels of exclusion remains to be thought together.

The thinking together of external and internal exclusion would be a necessary first step for an analysis that fully bridges the gap in between positions, or in other words the grey zone between the state-governed rights of citizens and transnationally formulated and managed human rights. The gap created when the nation-states continue to be the actual distributors of these rights – and hence distributes mainly through the political subject they know, citizenship – is described by many, but still seems difficult to bridge analytically in the sense of grasping the actual subject positions at stake – the state-less, the undocumented migrants, the clandestine asylum seekers.

Social policy, welfare practices and lived experience

Above I have explored theories on sovereignty, citizenship and nation and have identified some possible theoretical approaches to the position of my informants. But I have also identified a theoretical and analytical gap that leaves the position of clandestine asylum seekers under-analysed and, in some instances, even under-theorised. While the chapter thus far has explored the need for the expansion of citizenship, this last section turns to an exploration of 'the social' in order to find approaches that manage to grasp the position of clandestine asylum seekers.

In this section I will turn to feminist intersectional takes on social policy and welfare. As postcolonial and cultural studies intellectuals have argued, social policies are also policies about the creation and regulation of specific populations (Fink et al. 2001, Lewis et al. 2000). In *Rethinking Social Policy*, Lewis et al. (2000) argue that social policy is 'both constitutive of and constituted by a series of intersecting and unequal social relations' which affect the construction of (welfare) subjects (Lewis et al. 2000 p. 1). Further, nation formation and national belonging are constituted by the very same parameters: 'social solidarities and identifications of belonging' (Fink et al. 2001 p. 3). Women, because of their specific position as reproducers, are at the core of discourses of ethnic, cultural, and national belonging (see McClintock 1995, Yuval-Davis 1997).

This is a field closely related to – and which sometimes coincides with – citizenship theory in terms of the debates on intersections of gender, welfare and migration regimes. But this field also offers the everyday and lived experiences in the welfare state as well as the discourses on need and welfare rights, as lenses through which the actual doing of the welfare state, belonging and citizenship can be studied. I will argue for the study of institutional (and civil society) practices and the intersections of 'personal lives and social policy' (Lewis 2004) as favourable starting points from which to explore and theorise the under-theorised subject position of my informants.

Feminist contributions

The feminist movement and mainstream gender theories have been criticised for a lack of understanding of the ways different power relations constitute each other. This critique has been present within – and against – feminist movements and feminist academic debates since the so called second wave of feminism during the sixties and seventies (e.g. Combahee River Collective 1978 (1995)), but it grew stronger and gained a more central stage within feminist and gender studies through the theoretical and political interventions of Black feminism during the eighties (e.g. hooks 1981) and the development of queer theory in the early nineties (e.g. Butler 1990). Third-world feminists have also provided crucial theoretical critique of the one-dimensional and Western universalistic gender analysis that has been prevalent throughout the institutionalisation of gender studies in the West (Mohanty 1986 (2003)).

Kimberlé Crenshaw (1995) introduced the term intersectionality to conceptualise the theoretical approaches that try to explain how different structures and processes of gender, 'race'/ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, etc. interact and form new patterns. This allows for an understanding of gender as a structuring principle, always intersecting with other axes of social construction of meaning, such as 'race'/ethnicity, sexuality, class, nation (Wekker and Lutz 2001) and, in my study, importantly, citizenship status. During the last decade the concept of intersectionality has undergone rapid transformations into a variety of possible modes of application. Intersectionality has also been criticised for being a fancy word for old identity politics in which notions of essential categories risk being reproduced. I will argue for a focus on understandings of categories as *processes* rather than fixed – that subject positions are produced through contextualised processes of gendering and racialisation. [7]

[7] I find Joan Scott's, by now classic, definition of gender (1986) a useful starting point for my use and understanding of the concepts gender and intersectionality. Scott stresses the *relational nature* of gender – gender as a relation between men and women, but also as a relation to other power variables (class, 'race'/ethnicity, etc.). The relational construction of gender runs along four interrelated elements

Studies of citizenship and welfare through the lenses of intersectionality and personal lives have developed theories about structural inequalities and have mapped the actual processes in people's encounters with the state through welfare institutions that re/produce these structures and categories.

In the Swedish context of feminism and gender studies, the female subject at the centre of the feminist political and theoretical project/s has most often been a citizen. Even though feminist theories allow for a critical approach to welfare studies, traditionally Swedish feminist welfare studies have had been mostly concerned with women and their conditions as citizens. Also, Swedish feminism has often remained within the framework of the nation-state – on both a theoretical and an empirical level. Specifically, the kind of 'state feminism' outlined in parts of the Swedish feminist movement does not seem to grasp women without citizenship or the rights attached to a permanent residence permit. Despite a political identification with the rights of migrant women, there is a tendency towards the creation of fixed notions of cultural differences which may be traced in some of the scholarship on migration, gender and welfare. It has been argued that there is a risk that ideas about previous homogeneity often existing in some of this scholarship might contribute to discrimination and exclusion of racialised Others through making the presence of migrants in society and on the labour market invisible (see for example de los Reyes et al. 2005; Yang 2010).

A central concept within these debates has been that of the 'women-friendly' welfare state, initially introduced by Helga Hernes (1987). This concept, that aimed to encircle the specific position of women as a group at the labour market and in welfare policies, has

– or levels: cultural (dichotomous) symbols; normative (binary and hierarchic) concepts; structuring elements of societal kinship system, and; structuring elements in subjective (sexual) identity formation (Scott 1986). Scott's gender concept has been criticised in debates contesting the very division between a socially constructed 'gender' and its foundational equivalence in the notion of a biological 'sex' (Butler 1990), but I think that Scott's conceptualisation of gender as a multi-layered and relational term actually allows for a reading that does not explain sex as being a biologically 'true' foundation for cultural gender, but rather a social construction inseparable from the social construction of gender.

been criticised on many accounts. In relation to the discussion here the most relevant critique is of ways in which the concept creates a notion of 'women' as a homogeneous group and hence conceals differences between women in relation to processes of racialisation, class structure, sexuality, etc. However, in the last ten years feminists within the field of welfare and social policy have responded to the criticism developed by antiracist feminists (see for example Mulinari 2009; de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005; Pringle 2010; Wikström 2009; Williams 1995) and have acknowledged the centrality of 'race'/ethnicity in the regulation of gender in the Nordic countries through analyses of the intersections of gender, welfare and migration regimes (see for example Borchorst 2009; Fink and Lundqvist 2009; Sainsbury 2006; Siim and Borchorst 2009).

The scope of Swedish feminist approaches to welfare has expanded through these interventions, but if we narrow down to the position of asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, there is still a need for further theoretical expansion to fully grasp the ethnic-gender regimes at work.

Post-colonial and feminist studies of institutional practices in welfare and social policy have developed the understanding of the ways social policy and welfare institutions and functionaries are not about a 'neutral' distribution of welfare and subsidies, but are also complicit in constructing categories and processes of racialisation and gendering. This is especially evident in the context of critical social policy research in the UK, where the links to 'personal lives' and the ways social policy influence different modes of citizenship have been thoroughly investigated by feminist sociologists (see for example Lewis 2000; Fink et al. 2001). In the words of Gail Lewis: 'It was not just the form, content and distributive criteria of social welfare that were subjected to challenge but the very categories and boundaries through which welfare was conceptualized, produced and distributed' (Lewis 2000 p. 3). Although mostly analysing (racialised) citizens experiences of the welfare state, the same approach to citizenship and welfare as the a sum of lived experiences is useful in this study in order to catch a view of the experiences of people in positions in between. In the case of my informants the view

is rather of the experiences of the *absence* of the welfare state through *non-access* to social rights and welfare entitlements. In the lived experience of social policy and (non-access to) welfare institutions the positions in between exclusion on the border and inclusion through citizenship can be analysed.

Conclusion

In the sections above I have reviewed some of the debates and theoretical interventions that relate to inclusion and exclusion in the nation-state and the ways in which these processes develop in the context of globalisation and increased international migration. The field of citizenship theory is both broad and complex, but I have chosen to put forward a few critical interventions that are of relevance for my work: firstly, the feminist and postcolonial critique of the liberal concept of citizenship and the ongoing work of challenging the private-public divide and of re-defining the practices and relations of belonging included in the concept of citizenship. Secondly, the shift from a focus upon the mechanisms of inclusion to a scrutiny of the mechanisms of exclusion, and how they work at both an external and internal level in relation to the nation-state. Thirdly, in the debate on post-nationality it is claimed that national citizenship is losing its importance in relation to transnational human rights – but setting out from the position of the least privileged migrants, the nation-states' on-going regulation of migration and rights is still a decisive factor. Further, I have explored these theoretical debates, specifically investigating the extent to which they manage to theorise the in between position of the subject positions at the centre of this study. I traced a gap in the thinking together of external and internal forms of exclusion, and in the theorisation of subject positions in the gap between national citizenship and transnational human rights.

I have reviewed two separate but interconnected theoretical fields: on the one hand political and philosophical takes on sovereignty, 'the state of exception' and 'bare life', and on the other

feminist and critical approaches to studies of citizenship, nation and welfare, My review explored conceptualisations of positions at and beyond national borders in relation to the gap between the different layers of rights provided by the sovereign nation-states and universal human rights. The gap between these 'orders' has inherent tensions between citizenship regulated by the nation-state and human rights regulated by transnational regimes, as well as between sovereignty and notions of global or cosmopolitan takes on citizenship.

In the field of political philosophy, the position in this gap is further theorised. However, the subject located here tend to be theorised as a figuration – the *homo sacer* – who becomes a token in the philosophical critique and challenge of sovereignty rather than an embodied subject, contextualised in neoliberal shifts in both migration and welfare regimes. This study draws partly on this literature, but takes its starting point in the experiences of people that populate and embody these positions 'in the gap', and through grounding itself in these experiences it will try to bridge the theoretical gap and approach understandings of differentiation within, at and beyond borders.

In critical approaches to citizenship studies, the movements in between nation-states and to a position outside citizenship are explicitly addressed, and transnational, global and metropolitan approaches to citizenship have tried to bridge the gap. The racist and sexist differentiation within nation-states and among citizens is addressed in this literature as well as the racist and sexist differentiation at the border of the nation-state and of citizenship. Also, the concepts of citizenship and belonging are developed from narrow, formal understandings to multi-tiered concepts where citizenship and belonging can be practiced at different levels and sites. Transversal and global citizenship can be realised, not through existing formal structures, but through practices and political action. However, I have seen how the subject position at the centre of this study – the clandestine asylum seeker – remains under-analysed and rarely visible in this literature.

The asylum seeking informants in my study are in a position defined by the lack of citizenship status. As I have argued above,

some critical approaches to citizenship which want to broaden the concept of citizenship and explore its multi-tiered characteristics and multi-levelled processes of inclusion and exclusion at the level of the state, but also at institutional and community levels, tend to not grasp the position of these informants. I have argued that the relevance of formal citizenship (although, the meaning of formal citizenship itself can be broadened from formal citizenship to other kinds of legal status that permits residence and varying access to rights) seems to return as a decisive element of this position.

But carrying the importance of formal citizenship with us, I think it is also important to turn to multi-tiered understandings of citizenship in order to explore the agency of clandestine asylum seekers and the negotiation of conditions and rights that take place in clandestinity. Without pretending that it would be a satisfactory replacement for formal citizenship and for formal rights, I still think an exploration of citizenship practices in the position of clandestine asylum seekers is necessary to understand the construction – and deconstruction – of national boundaries in the everyday. It is also necessary to explore these practices and negotiations to counter the tendency in both research and public debate to either victimise refugees or to make them invisible. As a tool in the exploration of these practices, I will (mainly in the concluding discussion in Chapter Eight) try to approach an understanding of the limitations and possibilities of a conceptualisation of a 'clandestine citizenship'.

In the last section I have turned to feminist understandings of everyday and lived experiences of the welfare state, institutions and discourses on need and welfare rights as a lens through which the actual doing of the welfare state, belonging and citizenship can be studied. The discussions on social policy and everyday experience help me to locate one of the important sites for studying the ways that the positions of my informants highlight – and are highlighted by – everyday practices of citizenship, belonging and welfare rights.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology

The technologies of knowledge production are rarely about an innocent search for the right path towards notions of 'truth'. Feminist researchers argue, for example, that the production of knowledge is a highly political enterprise in which both the path and the point of arrival are staked out during the journey. Rather than being an 'innocent search', these pathways and points of arrival are dependent upon the researcher's understanding of what knowledge is, and how it can and should be produced. With every step in the research process methodological choices are made, and these choices are closely connected to the epistemological approaches of the researcher, or in other words to the *what*, *who*, *how*, *why* and *where* of knowledge.

My methodological choices are inspired by critical feminist epistemology and aspects derived from postcolonial theory. In this chapter, by way of a dialogue with feminist epistemological insights, I want to offer a reflexive outline of my research process. In the first section I present some epistemological issues that are central to my work and situate myself as a scholar, a feminist and an asylum rights activist. In the next section I outline some of the practical considerations that had to be taken into account when conducting ethnographic fieldwork of this nature. Later in the chapter I present the informants, as well as other ethnographic material. In the final section I reflect on the process of turning ethnographic material such as conversations and interviews into data, and conclude with a further reflection upon the process of analysis.

Epistemology

Feminist interventions in mainstream epistemology have not resulted in *one* feminist epistemology, but rather in a breeding ground for a quickly developing multitude of feminist and gender understandings of the relationship between gender and knowledge (e.g. Collins 1986; Haraway 1991; Harding 1986, 1991; hooks 1990). Within this broad field there are three general shifts in epistemic thought which I consider to be of the most importance for my work: the first is found in the debate between standpoint theory and post-structuralist understandings of difference; the second with the conceptualisation of what knowledge is and how it can be produced, and the third in the relationship between science and the field of the political.

Between standpoint and post-structuralism

In the Nordic context of feminist activism and research, the distinctions most commonly drawn when mapping the field are those drawn between liberal, radical, Marxist and post-structuralist feminism/s. In *The Science Question in Feminism* Sandra Harding (1986) provides a division that focuses more closely upon the epistemological assumptions connected to different approaches within gender theory than it does upon imprecise ideological labels. According to Harding's classification system *feminist empiricism*, *feminist standpoint theory* and *feminist postmodernism* are the three foremost feminist epistemologies. In one sense they describe a historical development within the field of gender studies, but they are all still present as parallel and/or overlapping approaches. *Feminist empiricism*, according to Harding's classification, entails the ongoing work of lifting up, making visible and restoring women's presence in history and society. Whilst feminist empiricism accepts the positivist aim of producing knowledge about a reality beyond ideologies and discourses, this approach critiques the ways in which male bias has produced knowledge gaps and errors in mainstream research. In the *feminist standpoint* approach, the politics of location is put forward and marginal positions in relation to structures of power are considered to be privileged standpoints for 'stronger objectivity'.

Whilst not fully questioning positivist epistemological assumptions, standpoint feminism is a powerful tool for questioning mainstream approaches to the social sciences. *Feminist postmodernism* takes the questioning of traditional epistemology one step further, and suggests that there is no reality to be discovered beyond discourse and language (Harding 1986).[1]

I take my point of departure from a standpoint perspective, and argue that valid forms of knowledge are produced from both marginal positions and within social movements. However, my position *also* entails taking a post-structuralist approach which understands scientific knowledge as being partial and contextual. I locate myself within a tradition of thought that aims to bridge Marxist and post-structuralist positions, underlining the connection between knowledge production and challenges to relations of power (Collins 1986, 1997; Hennessy 1993; hooks 1990).

In their article 'Building Standpoints', Sarah Bracke and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa (2004) try to blur the division between standpoint theory and postmodern thinking. Building on the debate between Sandra Harding and Donna Haraway, which resulted in the establishment of the concept 'situated knowledges' (Haraway 1991), they question the assumption that standpoint theory is inherently 'modern' and 'essentialist', and that standpoint theory is incompatible with postmodern thought and knowledge production (Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa 2004 p. 309). They also prefer to see the ongoing epistemological debate between standpoint, postmodern and post-structuralist theory as a process of challenging dichotomies such as modern/postmodern rather than as a polemic

[1] The terms postmodernism and post-structuralism are sometimes used interchangeably which, at times, can lead to a blurring of the boundaries between the two. My understanding is that postmodernism entails a broad ontological shift which extends upon the modernist paradigm as articulated in the arts, philosophy, and theory. Post-structuralism, on the other hand, refers more specifically to a theoretical school which derives from linguistic theory and which now sits within the broader movement of postmodernism. In this thesis I will generally use the term post-structuralism. However, whilst the terminology is distinct, on the occasion that the concepts discussed overlap I use the terms chosen by the authors to whom I refer.

between strictly separated fields of epistemic thought. With their aim of finding possible relations between the two, Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa reformulate a standpoint as being, not simply a marginalized position but something 'produced in the practice of political struggle and in the articulation of a collective subject emerging in this struggle' (2004 p. 312).

My understanding of standpoint theory is grounded in an awareness of knowledge production as being contextualised and fragmented. From this perspective academic knowledge is not *better* knowledge, but rather knowledge produced within an institutional context and put into a form that allows it to be accepted in contexts where, for example, knowledge generated by everyday practices and experiences would often be seen as incomplete. It is also based on the critique of the notion of the thoroughly independent researcher, who, as someone able to decouple themselves from both the area of research and the informants, can thereby produce objective knowledge – to perform, in other words, what Haraway has called 'the God trick' (1991 p. 193). Another central aspect in my understanding of standpoint theory is the acknowledgement that diversified forms of situated knowledge, which are evolving from marginal practices and experience, have to be placed at the core of feminist theorising.[2] Following cultural anthropologist Narayan (2000) I work from an understanding that the analysis of collective group experiences grounded in a common history (of, for example, underprivilege or racism) does not have to essentialise groups and reinforce fixed categories. On the contrary, the analysis of collective experiences of marginalisation is in my opinion a privileged starting point from which to challenge notions of nation and cultural belonging.

An important source of inspiration for my approach to the fieldwork – and a concrete example of a research project located at

[2] For a further insight into the debates surrounding feminist standpoint theory and its relation to postmodern and post-structuralist feminism, as well as to issues of power and intersectional approaches to structures of hierarchies, see the debate in Signs 1997 about Hekman's article 'Truth and Method' (Collins 1997; Harding 1997; Hartsock 1997; Hekman 1997; Smith 1997).

the crossroads of post-structuralism and standpoint theory, as well as at the crossroads of academia and activism – is the feminist activist collective from Madrid, '*Precarias a la deriva*' ('Precarious women workers adrift' in the following I refer to them as *Las Precarias*). In 2002 they began conducting an activist research project upon women's lives and experiences in the precarious labour market which resulted in the 2004 book *A la deriva por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina* [*On the drift along the circles of women's precariousness*] (my translation).

Taking the perspective that the understanding of labour conditions has to be connected to other aspects of life, and other levels of analysis, the group – consisting of female activists, migrant residents, undocumented migrants, housewives, artists, web designers, sex, care and domestic workers etc. – engaged in a kind of auto-research, 'the drift' (which will be explained below). Through 'the drift' they aimed to track their own individual and collective everyday experiences in workplaces, streets, places, homes and bodies related to the withdrawal of the welfare state, the flexibilisation of the labour market, restrictive migration policies and the global restructuring of care work (regarding these latter global phenomena, see for example Anderson 2000; 2009 and Ong 2006).

The result is a text that describes the working conditions in some of the most precarious sectors of Spanish labour market, and which reflects upon how these conditions relate to other parts of women's lives in the city as well as to global processes and structures. Furthermore, *Las Precarias* offer extensive reflections upon the epistemological questions considered by the activist collective as they proceeded: for example; who can produce knowledge, about whom, about what, and how do they produce it, as well as the vexed question, what counts as knowledge? Their response is not a definite alignment with traditional schools of epistemic thought, but rather an experimental exploration of the possibilities of knowledge production. In this case the possibilities are explored through the collection of a form of knowledge in which the women conducting research upon both themselves and each other are trying to shorten

the distances between embodied experiences, narrations, knowledge accumulation and the writing process itself:

> What inspired us, above all, was the desire to learn through the trajectory, to communicate along the path, to get to know those new situations and realities in the precarious labour market and in a life conditioned to work for survival, each of us narrating to each other. We wanted to make a cartography of the precarious work of women, starting with communication, joint reflexion and registering all of that, in an attempt to materialise knowledge production in as many ways as possible (photography, video, recordings, written narratives) in order to accumulate material that could serve to expand our communication about our experiences (*Las Precarias a la deriva* 2004 p. 25, my translation).[3]

A la deriva por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina is an epistemological intervention directed towards academia and towards feminist, social and worker's union movements. I find the project/process of *Las Precarias* interesting in relation to my research for several reasons. Firstly, we share a theoretical location at the crossroads between post-structuralism and standpoint theory. They try to use the multiple and diverse experiences of precarious women workers as a point of departure for developing new strategies for social change – as a standpoint –, but at the same time they try to destabilise their common, but diverse, standpoint as 'precarious women workers'. This problematises reproductions of fixed categories and groups. Secondly, we also share an institutional location at the crossroads between academia and activism. *Las Precarias* are located outside academia, but have knowledge about, and links to, the inside. They are also involved in a conscious critical dialogue with 'academia's inside' and in opposition to the institutional and structural limits to knowledge production inside academia.

[3] A CD-Rom was also included with *A la deriva por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina* which documented 'the drift'. The original text is available at: http://www.sindominio.net/traficantes/editorial/precariasaladerivapdf.htm (accessed 2 January 2011).

Instead of the researcher(s) 'collecting' women's experiences through traditional interviews or observations *Las Precarias* conduct their study through 'the drift'. The concept of 'the drift' (*la dérive*), is one borrowed from the political art movement the *Situationiste Internationale* (the Situationists) who argue for a situationist approach to counter hegemonic knowledge production. In this approach the researchers/activists wander through the urban landscape attentive of impressions, messages and interactions with people in the streets as a means for 'establishing a psycho-cartography grounded in the coincidences and exchanges of the physic and subjective flows' (*Las Precarias* 2004 p. 26, my translation). In their feminist reformulation of the concept and the method, *Las Precarias* take a step beyond the 'haphazard drift of the [male bourgeois] *flaneur*' (ibid.). Their 'drift' is a 'situated drift' along the everyday spaces of, and links between, themselves as precarious women workers. What is most significant here is that they conduct the study not upon an anonymous group of 'women', but upon themselves and people in their close surroundings.

The drift – in the way it is used by *Las Precarias* – is a research method that aims to cross the barriers of language in becoming a means of articulating emotions, senses and situations related to precariousness which lay beyond the limitations of hegemonic discourses. I understand the methodology of *Las Precarias* as a way of reinscribing embodied materiality into a post-structuralist critique of subjectivity, of bringing 'corporeality' into an activist, feminist research agenda. This is why I want to argue for an understanding of their epistemic position as being at the crossroads of standpoint theory and post-structuralism, for whilst their approach is founded upon the standpoint of precariousness, they build towards a post-structuralist understanding of this location in terms of its embodied and fragmented articulations.

Although my research process (which I will discuss more in detail in the last section of this chapter) has not been conducted through a 'drift' in the specific form applied by *Las Precarias*, I refer to their work as a way of describing my location between post-structuralist and standpoint approaches to knowledge. I refer to their

process as an illustration of the way I intend to include the messy 'psycho-cartography' made up by my experiences as an activist in the asylum rights movement, as well as my many different encounters with, and relations to, the informants and other asylum seekers in clandestinity over the years.

At the crossroads between scientific and other forms of knowledge

Working with Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa's suggestion for a reformulation of the standpoint 'as being produced in the practice of political struggle' (2004 p. 312), I move from the one-dimensional understanding of a standpoint based on a fixed category ('Woman') to a standpoint starting in the temporary location of clandestinity. Although it remains to be explored whether this location can be understood as a possible emergent collective subject, I think it is possible to apply this more fragmented, temporary and pluralistic understanding of a standpoint. Through this shift I also approach another important feminist epistemological intervention: the perspective on social movements as an important site for critical knowledge production. The way that knowledge about domestic violence was first generated in the feminist movement through political and practical struggle, which then served as inspiration for both researchers and politicians, captures the centrality of knowledge production as constitutive of movements of social protest (For the Swedish experience see Eduards 2002 p. 80ff, 2007 p. 279ff).

The important role of social movements in the production of critical knowledge is not only developed within feminist thought. With analyses of the American Civil Rights Movement and the Swedish environmentalist movement in the eighties as examples, Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison (1991) describe social movements as *processes* in which new ideas, knowledge and social identities are formed. They also underline the importance of a historically contextualised analysis of social movements:

> [M]ovements are of interest for theorists of knowledge as providing the breeding ground for innovations in thought as

> well as in the social organization of thought. For us, social movements are bearers of new ideas, and have often been the sources of scientific theories and of whole scientific fields, as well as new political and social identities (Eyerman and Jamison, 1991 p. 3).

Eyerman and Jamison introduce the concept of cognitive praxis to describe social movements as knowledge generating processes: 'The cognitive praxis of social movements is not just social drama; it is, we might say, the social action from where new knowledge originates' (Eyerman and Jamison 1991 p. 48). They identify three dimensions of cognitive praxis: the cosmological, the technological and the organisational dimensions. The cosmological dimension is concerned with conceptions of the world and the context/s from which these conceptions stem; the technological dimension contains specific demands and solutions presented by the movement; and finally, the organisational dimension is about both the ways in which the organisation is structured and the background against which organisational choices are made. These different dimensions are not only research variables but also constitute, according to Eyerman and Jamison, '*cornerstones of a movement identity*' (Eyerman and Jamison 1991 p. 69). To 'read' the cognitive praxis of a movement one can not depart simply from what the actors say, rather, one must also bring in observations, texts, documents, events and other material related to the movement's everyday activities and discussions.

This theoretical framework opens up an understanding of knowledge production which transcends the narrow limits of academia, offering a framework that provides a fruitful point of departure for an analysis of the complex web of relations, social actors and knowledge claims which emerge from my empirical material.

My understanding of the multileveled character of the field has developed in the environment of clandestinity and can be described as a part of the 'cognitive practice' of the asylum rights movement (Eyerman and Jamison 1991). The encounters, discussions and collective analyses with both clandestine asylum seekers and with

'my' asylum rights group have been a crucial source of inspiration and knowledge when outlining the contours of the fieldwork. While the early reactions and comments within academia have been that the field I am trying to grasp is far too broad, I have had to rely on my activist experiences to argue for the necessity of linking different levels of analysis and for grasping the different locations I have wanted to understand.

Though, the analysis of the asylum rights movement *as a social movement* is not contained within the frame of this thesis. Throughout the thesis I refer to the asylum rights movement in the sense of a broad and pluralistic movement of action/s, practice/s and social protest/s that are in critical opposition to the content of, and effects caused by, restrictive migration policies. Rather than analysing this multifaceted movement as a social movement, my central concern is with (gendered) experiences of clandestinity and with the possible articulation of these experiences in the field of the political. These experiences, and the way in which they are articulated, will be captured through an epistemology that stands at the crossroads between different forms of knowledge production.

Between research and activism

> As a woman I have a country; as a woman I cannot divest myself of that country merely by condemning its government or by saying three times 'As a woman my country is the whole world' (Rich 1984 p. 212).

When Adrienne Rich claims that she can not cease 'having a country', she does not say that she can not try to understand any positions beyond her own, but that she has to: '[…] understand how a place on the map is also a place in history within which as a woman, a Jew, a lesbian, a feminist I am created and trying to create' (ibid). Rich here underlines how bodies are marked in ways that denote both the accumulation of historical privilege as well as the accumulation of historical forms of exclusion and stigmatisation. The author describes herself as located in a position of privilege in relation to her citizenship at the same time as she illuminates the

ways in which her position as a woman, a lesbian and a Jew is fractured by gender, sexuality and ethnicity.

Critical epistemologies can intervene in mainstream understandings of knowledge and, by posing difficult questions, can change the approach of the researcher. But nevertheless Rich will still be situated in that 'country'. Needless to say, my position in this research is marked by the privileged position of 'having a country' – a privileged position which, due to the focus of my study (clandestine asylum seekers), must be reflected upon to illuminate the ways in which I 'create and try to create'.

As my position as a Swedish citizen separates me from the position of both asylum seekers and clandestine asylum seekers, the kind of participatory or activist research that suggests that the researcher should be located in the same location as the informants was obviously not a possibility when I came to consider the ways in which I might conduct this fieldwork. However, even though I have now brought my questions about migration, citizenship and welfare into an academic context, I still position myself as an activist in a local asylum rights group in Malmö. Along with the theoretical interventions that are central to my work, my purpose, inspiration and knowledge of the field are all very much rooted in this movement of social protest.

I take my point of departure from an identification and active participation in these locations, which have been reinforced by long involvement with activist groups and networks who aim to challenge closed national borders. This position as outsider/within (Collins 1986) has helped me to acknowledge the epistemological privilege of movements of social protest in producing alternative ways of understanding both worlds and words. My participation in movements of social protest has also provided an arena where the unlearning of privilege is at the core of everyday practice. But, as feminist intellectuals have shown, when critically re-reading the feminist movement, movements of social protest can both challenge relations of power and reproduce them in several ways. A total identification grounded in a subordination of intellectual analysis to

the needs of the 'margins' runs the risk of weakening the contribution made by the analysis.

The shift from the collective endeavour of activism to the solitary task of research means so much more than just a shift between different frameworks of knowledge production. It also means alternative ways of understanding the relationship between knowledge production and social change. As an activist I knew during my encounters with clandestine asylum seekers that some acts and strategies – such as helping in the process of appealing against a rejection, distributing economic support or helping someone to get an appointment with the doctor – could effectively offer solutions to central problems. Although the search for strategies to solve imminent problems in the informants' situations was always present in my relationships with them, my focus as a researcher needed to remain fixed for the most part upon the collection of material relevant to my analysis. Hence, the writing of this thesis posed difficult questions about the social utility of knowledge.

Las Precarias, in their research discussed above, claim not only to share the informants' position, but also to *be* informants themselves as a collective. In my opinion this claim seems like a short cut that allows them to avoid complicated questions which generate doubts surrounding power and privilege, as well as about the intellectual responsibility that social research implies. Although inspiring, I think that the location of the 'good' on the margins is a problematic point of departure. The idealisation of social movements and of marginality often evolves from positions of privilege that tend to romanticise both places and people. Frequently the idea of a horizontally formed sharing of a position involves a risk that the power discrepancy in every research situation is forgotten. No matter how nice and participative the researcher is, she will still be the one who instigates the research and makes contact. It is she who will conduct both the analysis and the work of writing alone, and she is the one who will transform the shared knowledge of the 'group' into a form of knowledge accepted and approved within academia. It is not enough to reformulate the relationship between the researcher

and the researched from the traditional subject/object-positions to the power sensitive and feminist subject/subject-position.

However, one of the strengths of my position at the crossroads between academia and activism was that it facilitated my access to the field and provided me with the solid ground from which I could build a relationship of trust and confidence with the asylum seeking informants. My various experiences from the field have also provided forms of embodied knowledge of many of the issues discussed throughout the fieldwork and the analysis. This position also opens up the possibility of challenging taken-for-granted understandings of problems both among activists and clandestine asylum seekers.

Cynthia Cockburn's participatory action research with women's peace organisations in Palestine, Northern Ireland and Bosnia (1998) is an important feminist source of inspiration for my methodological choices. She is firmly rooted in both academia and in the UK anti-war activist movement. It is her double position of outsider/within both in academia and in the anti-war movement that serves as a foundation for her challenging ethnographical intervention.

The politics of feelings and representation

> [T]his book walks a fine line between making a spectacle of these women's struggles and a wanting to speak quietly, with respect for all that it means to tell the stories of people willing to put their lives on public display in the hope that it will make it better for others (Lather and Smithies 1997 p. xiii).

A feminist shift which views informants not as 'objects of study', but instead as 'subjects/actors in the research process', produces a series of questions about the relationship between researcher and researched as well as about the ways in which the informants are represented. An approach that envisions research as an emancipatory project also demands that one thinks through the ways in which the research and the reception of the research might produce and/or reproduce representations of the informants.

The politics of feelings and representation are present in my reflections upon the fieldwork and the empirical material in two ways: in the challenge to write about groups that are already marginalised and stigmatised and in the ways my research has been received. The request, 'do not write bad things about us' from one of my informants illustrates the challenge of developing ways of writing which do not reinforce hegemonic racist representations of the kind of people that my informants 'are'. The research to which Patti Lather and Chris Smithies (1997) refer to in the quote above is an ethnographic study conducted with HIV-positive women in Philadelphia. They attempt to transfer the complexity and contradictory representations offered by the women in the study through a polyphonic text, allowing the very layout of the pages to represent the diversity of the material with different voices and levels of analysis sharing the pages in parallel texts and text boxes. In Diana Mulinari's (2005) study of Latin American women in the Swedish Diaspora which explores women's experience of political repression and exile, the author allows both silence and laughter to cover the spaces where her informants are unable (or unwilling) to name painful situations and difficult memories. Mulinari also works through the complex ways through which her informants move between notions of 'we' that include her at the same time as she illustrates everyday work that demands the creation and maintenance of a collective 'we' that is fractured with differences (Mulinari 2005). I share the concern of Lather and Smithies and Mulinari with finding a proper method to analyse the material and represent the informants in my study in a way that does justice to the diversity of narratives, opinions, identities and subjectivities found within the group of informants.

Another entry point to feminist knowledge production is exemplified by Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1991). They include reflections on the *reception* of their research experiences and their analysis of these experiences contributes to a broader analysis in which the reception becomes a part of the empirical material. In their case the abusive phone calls they regularly received, due to their involvement in the lesbian rights movement, is at the core of their

work. The calls themselves, and the reactions from both men and women to their analyses of the calls, contributed to their undergoing a strong feminist radicalisation. The strong reactions to their interpretation of their experiences became an important source of material in their analyses of violence.

'How terrible!' or 'Do you want to save the world, or what?' are both quotes from feminist colleagues and represent two common reactions to the presentation of my research within feminist academic contexts such as seminars and conferences. Bearing such comments in mind and taking the risk of generalising, my ethnographic experience from receptions of my work within academia is therefore ambivalent. In the context of postcolonial and IMER studies the reception of my work tends to shift the focus from my feminist analysis of gendered dimensions to either more abstracted theoretical and political approaches to the experiences of clandestine asylum seekers, or towards more de-politicised translations through which the violent practices of the Swedish welfare state are named in neutral terms through abstractions. But in the context of gender studies there is a focus on methodological concerns. These concerns are most often highly pertinent. But sadly, the discussion almost never crosses this first barrier of questions related to the fieldwork and the vulnerability of the informants. Taking into account the ethnic composition of gender studies, questions such as: 'But where do you find them?' 'How do you convince them to take part?' and 'How do you relate to them?' may be an indication of a dissociation between these privileged (white) feminist contexts and marginalised groups. This dissociation is lacking within the field of postcolonial and IMER studies, being more grounded in a multicultural, though male-dominated, community of scholars. These reactions may also be an illustration of problematic hegemonic representations of clandestine asylum seekers as deviants or victims. Such representations are also present in feminist intellectual communities, especially with the notion that migrants, in particular female migrants, are always victims in relation to human trafficking networks (Black 2003).

Given my own emotional and political investment in the field it has been a challenge to try to take a step outside my self-righteous activist attitude that says 'we know everything' and instead to explore clandestinity with a critical feminist and antiracist curiosity (Enloe 2004). I have needed to try to take a step back and look and re-read this knowledge I feel so strongly attached to. I have also had to dare myself to see the blindness, the exclusion and the 'that is not done or thought about' in both the asylum rights movement and among clandestine asylum seekers themselves. In the following section I will present both the empirical material and the practical considerations brought to bear by the field. I finish the chapter with a brief discussion of the process of analysis.

Empirical material

The empirical material grew out of ethnographic fieldwork conducted with clandestine asylum seekers and activists from asylum rights organisations in Sweden between February 2006 and December 2007. My focus centres upon ten in-depth interviews with asylum seekers. There are also nine interviews with activists and 'experts' and other material from the fieldwork included in the analysis.[4] Furthermore, I use material from the media (television news and newspapers), the internet (official websites of institutions, NGOs and government) and public events (seminars and hearings) to illustrate the context of the interview material and to analyse aspects of clandestinity in mass media and public debate. Further, I have critically re-read my own experiences as an activist through the use of personal notes and texts written collectively in activist settings.

[4] Field notes and observations from conversations, phone calls and casual meetings with the informants. I have also been present and taken recordings and field notes at meetings and happenings related to migration and asylum rights, sometimes as a participant, and others as an observer I have also accompanied one of the informants to a meeting with a lawyer, and have visited an underground healthcare clinic.

Some of the informants were people I had already learnt to know during the campaign for a general refugee amnesty (‘Miranda and Ermir’ and ‘Floriana and Ismail’) who had participated in the organisation and preparation of some of the protest actions and events that were part of the campaign. One of the events that the local campaign in Malmö arranged was a drama performance in which the actors were people living clandestinely who let the audience acquaint themselves with their experiences and everyday worries. The planning and rehearsal of this performance became an important space for discussion and meetings, both between people sharing the experience of being clandestine, and between them and the activists. My fieldwork developed partly from this specific space, from interviewing some of the participants to the inclusion of one of the texts produced for the performance in my empirical material. This specific group of informants – the participants in the campaigning activities – were all families with children that were granted a permanent residence permit under the provisional legislation.[5] The interviews took place during the period when they were waiting for decisions to be made with regard to their applications.

The rest of the asylum seeking informants were not granted a permanent residence permit under the provisional legislation and these are the informants that I have been following for the longest periods of time (‘Ardian and Ana’, ‘Fija’ and ‘Adelina’). I made contact with them all through different refugee rights groups and individuals trying to support refugees.

All the asylum seeking informants are from the Balkan region. Most of them are from Kosovo, and one family is from Macedonia. The material from the theatre performance and some memory notes (taken before I began the fieldwork) that I use in one section of the analysis are both based on stories from, and activist encounters with, a woman from Bosnia. I only focus upon an informant’s ethnic

[5] Between November 2005 and March 2006 a special provisional legislation was introduced which aimed to regularise clandestine asylum seekers with children. See Chapter Two for a more thorough presentation of the content of the provisional legislation.

identification when they choose, in the ways in which they represent themselves, to emphasise this sense of belonging. Even though it was not my initial intention to focus upon asylum seekers from the Balkans, a variety of circumstances contributed to this being the end result. Firstly, the selection simply reflects the 'demography' of the rejected asylum seekers who were staying clandestinely in and around Malmö at the time I was starting the fieldwork, and who were in contact with the networks of asylum rights activists and NGOs I turned to in my search for possible informants. Secondly, it reflects the political situation in relation to assessments of asylum grounds and patterns of migration and flight at the time. At any given moment, the groups of people staying clandestinely will be a reflection of on-going conflicts in the world, and the official understanding of the situation in these conflict areas in the receiving countries. At the time when I was conducting my field work, the Balkan region was no longer regarded as a place that produced refugees.[6] However, many asylum seekers arriving from the Balkans still had tales of deeply traumatic experiences produced by ongoing local conflicts, including harassment and acts of violence, as well as traumas produced by the wider conflict. Furthermore, a large number of asylum seekers from the region had spent many years in the asylum process in Sweden and were now in a situation in which they regarded a return as being impossible. Hence, during the period in which I was beginning my fieldwork, many of the clandestine asylum seekers that were in touch with the networks I had access to were from the Balkans.[7] As my main focus is upon experiences in

[6] In both Bosnia and Kosovo various treaties, agreements and the presence of international organisations (In Bosnia NATO from 1995 until 2004 and EUFOR since then. In Kosovo KFOR and UNMIK from 1999) were seen as guarantees for safety for almost all groups of asylum seekers from the region. See: Burg and Shoup (1999 p. 377f), Security Council (http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc10088.doc.htm (2 January, 2011)). Except for a few ethnic groups (for examples Roma people from Kosovo, or Bosnian couples in 'mixed marriages') it was difficult to be granted asylum, other forms of protection, or a residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

[7] It is important to underline that the group of informants, and hence my analysis, does not include other groups of asylum seekers that have been central in both events and political debates surrounding asylum during the years I have been

Sweden I have not developed any deeper reflections on the specificities of these diasporic communities, but, throughout the analysis, some reflections that are specific to the origin of my informants will appear.

For the interviews with activists and other actors in and around the asylum rights movement I turned to people I knew, or knew about, and asked them directly about giving interviews. Most of these were conducted during one occasion, and we often met either in the informant's home or at a restaurant. I conducted four interviews with activists in asylum rights groups ('Jenny', 'Maria', 'Alma' and 'Meram'). I also interviewed two people who are clandestine asylum seekers themselves, but who are also activists in different kinds of migrants' and asylum rights groups ('Adrian' and 'Rosa').[8] Finally, I conducted two interviews with professionals and 'experts' working with, or in close relation with, clandestine asylum seekers: a lawyer specialising in asylum legislation and a refugee representative from an NGO.[9]

The interview settings

To create a safe environment for the informants, I consulted them about the way they preferred us to arrange the meetings. This meant that the settings where I conducted the interviews varied a lot. Everyone wanted us to meet in their place of residence, but, given the confined spaces in which most of the informants are forced to

working with the project. One such group is that of unaccompanied children, whose situation in clandestinity looks rather different to that of the families and adults I have interviewed. Further, I have not interviewed any single men, a group that is often exposed to violence and exploitation and who might also be strongly affected by some of the norms and regulations surrounding family formations that I will discuss throughout the analysis. Finally, I have not talked to people in detention centres.

[8] Although here I make a 'practical' division into asylum seekers and activists, it is important to emphasise that the boundary between the groups is not static. As I will show in the analysis the other asylum seekers might also be considered activists.

[9] The other informants could also be considered 'experts', but my distinction would be that 'experts' are working full-time within the field and take part in the interview as professionals.

live, this meant that on many occasions other family members were present. Sometimes the other family members were involved in the interviews whilst on others they only listened. Except for one occasion when a family's teenage children both engaged in the conversation (the whole family lived together in a one-room apartment), the parents did not want their children to listen and so arranged our meetings in ways that made it possible to conduct the interviews without the children.

As I do not speak any of the first languages spoken by the informants, the interviews had to be conducted in Swedish (on a couple of occasions some parts of the conversations were held in English). Most of the informants have spent at least a few years in Sweden, and some of them felt that they had reached a level of proficiency with the language that meant they could do the interviews in Swedish without an interpreter. Others preferred to use an interpreter. I always offered to arrange a professional interpreter, but left the final decision to them. Everyone except Fija preferred to ask a friend or relative to help us.[10]

Needless to say, the content of the interviews and the situation of the informants demands high levels of anonymity to ensure their emotional and actual safety and security. As the focus of this study is upon experiences in Sweden, rather than stories from the countries of origin, I have not delved too deeply into sensitive details on experiences during or after the war/s. But still, some such details are mentioned and integrated in the analysis. Consequently I have developed several strategies to protect the anonymity of the informants. Firstly, I use pseudonyms and have left out geographical details such as the location of home towns in the countries of origin, as well as the places of residence during their time living in Sweden. Secondly, in some cases I have changed small details (ones I did not consider relevant to the analysis) in the description of the family situation or other personal data that risked revealing someone's identity. Furthermore, during the writing up process I presented the draft to the (asylum seeking) informants so that they had a chance to

[10] I will present the informants below.

reflect upon and check the degree of anonymity and accuracy presented by the information and analyses regarding themselves.

After these strategies of protecting the informants' anonymity had been applied, I decided to explicitly contextualise my research in and around Malmö. Besides the practical difficulties involved making one of Sweden's few big cities anonymous, I decided that it would contribute to the analysis if it was contextualised in the specific context that Malmö presents with its relatively high numbers of newly arrived migrants and asylum seekers. Further, Malmö provides a specific context with the way in which local political debate is centred around issues of migration, restructured labour markets, integration, segregation, racism and exclusion (for a further discussion of Malmö's specificities in relation to migration, labour and as a city in contradictory processes of transformation see Mukhtar-Landgren 2005; P Mulinari 2007 p. 21ff).

In the next section there follows a brief presentation of the informants.

The clandestine asylum seekers

Ardian and Ana are a young Kosovo-Albanian couple from Kosovo. They have been in Sweden since 2003. They left Kosovo because Ana had been sexually assaulted during the war and the emotional trauma and the stigmatization within the community created an unbearable situation that they felt they needed to get away from. Ana and Ardian were referred to internal displacement or to seek protection from local authorities, and when I met them they had been staying clandestinely initially from the summer through to the autumn of 2005, and then, after being rejected under the provisional legislation, from May 2006 up to the time of writing. They live in a one-room apartment in a small town in the south of Sweden. Ardian's sister lives in the same town, and except for her and a few friends, they are only in contact with a woman who works for the local church and another woman who is part of a refugee rights group in Malmö. Ana has had contact with the psychiatric clinics at the hospital in Lund and the local hospital.

During the period I was seeing them, they were waiting for the decision on another appeal to the Migration Court. Before our first meeting they doubted whether they felt strong enough to be interviewed, but when they had submitted their appeal they decided to meet me. The first interviews were mainly conducted with Ardian. He speaks Swedish with deliberation and did not feel the need for an interpreter. Ana was present but she does not speak much Swedish, so we planned that I should meet her separately with an interpreter. However, she chose to discontinue their participation in the study before I had the opportunity to conduct these separate interviews. We met and talked by phone a few times after they had decided they did not want to take part in more interviews, but we did not go back to conduct recordings.

As far as they and the people in their network can understand the situation, they do not seem to have any possibilities within the frames of current legislation, except the hope for a residence permit on the basis of Ana's post-traumatic depression.

Fija is a single woman in her late thirties. She is from Kosovo, and identifies herself as belonging to the minority group Gorani. Fija has been in Sweden since 2004 when she left her home due to increasing harassment of herself and her family. Swedish migration authorities referred her to internal displacement or recommended she seek protection from the local authorities in Kosovo. Her asylum application was rejected in spring 2005. She was also rejected under the provisional legislation, and hence, like Ardian and Ana, has been in hiding both before and after the period of provisional legislation.

She lives in Malmö, sharing an apartment with a friend of someone Fija got to know through the local refugee rights group. Fija's family is scattered all over Europe, but two of her brothers live in Sweden with their families. One of them has had a residence permit for some years, whilst the other got a residence permit according to the provisional law during the period I was seeing Fija. She has contact in Malmö with the woman with whom she shares an apartment as well as with a family she knows from the refugee centre where she stayed when she first came to Sweden. When I first met

her she worked regularly at a restaurant in a small town outside Malmö, but she had no contract, and after some months they stopped calling her in for work.

During the period I was seeing her, she tried to arrange meetings with her lawyer, even though she does not have great hopes about a solution within the framework of present asylum legislation. She also tries to find information that will serve as evidence to prove that should she return home she, as someone who belongs to the minority ethnic group Gorani, cannot be protected from the violence and persecution that made her leave Kosovo in the first place. She hopes that the new government's stance upon labour immigration might offer a possible solution to her situation. We made the recorded interviews with the help of an interpreter. But Fija learned a lot of Swedish during the period I was seeing her, and after a while we could have some meetings without an interpreter.

Adelina fled from her husband in Kosovo with her two children, six and eight years old at the time of the interview. As they had been in Germany before they came to Sweden they were considered as a so-called 'Dublin case', which means that their asylum application is not assessed in Sweden. They have been staying in an apartment in a small municipality outside Malmö. Adelina's uncle lives in the same place, and he and his family has supported them during the periods they have had to hide. They are also in contact with a woman who is working locally on her own to support asylum seekers in the small town.

During the period I was in contact with Adelina, she did not want to see me at first because she felt too depressed and afraid. However, when she and the children had their case suspended [*inhibition*] and were waiting for a new assessment, without having to be clandestine, she agreed to meet me in person. A few weeks after our first interview she and her sons were granted permanent residence permits on the grounds of exceptionally distressing circumstances [*särskilt ömmande omständigheter*]. During the interview her uncle served as an interpreter.

Miranda and Ermir are a couple from Kosovo. They left in 2002 with their two sons who were one and three years old at the time of their arrival in Sweden. Their asylum application was rejected after three and a half years. They decided to leave the refugee centre in the countryside where they had been waiting and came to Malmö to stay clandestinely while trying to pursue an application for a residence permit. I interviewed Miranda and Ermir during the period whilst they were waiting for a decision upon their application under the provisional legislation. At that time they had been hiding from the authorities for around ten months and Miranda was in the last months of her pregnancy with their third child. They had moved a few times, but during the previous months they had been staying in a one-roomed apartment that the local asylum rights group rented for them on an informal basis. Even though they did not have to hide while waiting for the decision, they preferred to stay at this address as it was unknown to the authorities. Miranda and Ermir had a lot of contact with other Kosovo-Albanians and also had friendly contacts with many asylum rights activists. They took part in the drama performance I described earlier as well as in other activities related to the campaign for a general refugee amnesty. Miranda also took part in a combined language class and discussion group for clandestine women organised by the local asylum rights group. A month after our last interview they were granted a permanent residence permit under the provisional legislation.

Both Miranda and Ermir were present during the conversations except for some shorter sessions when I interviewed them separately. They wanted to speak Swedish but Miranda occasionally switched to English to clarify some things she could not express.

Floriana and Ismail came with their children to Sweden from Macedonia in 2003. They had three children; a son and a daughter in their early teens and a son of around seven years old at the time the fieldwork was conducted. They had been hiding for more than a year at the time I interviewed them and they were also waiting for a decision upon their application under the provisional legislation. The whole family shared a small one-roomed apartment in a Malmö

suburb. Consequently there was no option other than to meet the whole family at the same time. A few months earlier, before they moved in to the apartment which was rented and paid by the local asylum rights group, they had been moving between several temporary places.

Some members of the family took part in the drama performance and in other campaigning activities during the year they were hiding. Through these activities they made contact with other clandestine asylum seekers as well as with several activists in the asylum rights group. They were finally granted a permanent residence permit under the provisional legislation. A friend of theirs translated during the interviews.

The activists and 'experts'

Malin is from a small city in the north of Sweden and has been an activist in an asylum rights group in Stockholm for many years. She is around twenty-five years old and has full-time employment that is not connected to her engagement in asylum rights at all. She has been intensely committed to helping a few families and was deeply engaged in the campaign for a general amnesty. She has taken part in public debates, given interviews for the media and has participated in many other campaigning activities.

Maria is from the north of Sweden and is around twenty-seven years old. She had been an activist in an asylum rights group based in Malmö for about five years at the time I interviewed her. She has been closely involved in many different kinds of activities within the group. She has had close contact with around twenty different families during these years. She has also arranged activity groups for the children from families of undocumented migrants. On a practical level she has been involved in counselling, administrating economic support from the group and other organisations who support clandestine asylum seekers (churches, NGOs), finding places for the families to stay, and contacting physicians and nurses who give free care to clandestine asylum seekers.

Filippa works at an NGO in a project that aims to support asylum seekers. They support both asylum seekers who still are 'in the process', and clandestine asylum seekers. Filippa has also been active in the local asylum group.

Alma is from the south of Sweden and is between twenty-five and thirty years old. She has been an activist in the local asylum rights group for about three years at the time of our interview. During this period she has been in contact with around fifteen families and in very close contact with a few families/individuals living in clandestinity. She has also been active in the campaigning activities for a general amnesty. Alma has a background as a feminist and anarchist activist and has been studying both social sciences and humanities. She works as an artist and journalist.

Meram is forty years old, and has worked with asylum rights issues during several different periods of his life. At the time of my interview he was loosely connected to the local asylum rights group even though he mainly acts on his own, supporting clandestine asylum seekers with advice, interpretation, locating accommodation and finding economic support. Many years ago (when he just had arrived in Sweden from Iran) he was very active in an Iranian-Swedish organisation supporting Iranian refugees in Sweden. Then he had a break from political work for some years, but through his work in a restaurant located close to the refugee's Reception Centre and as a result of his language skills Meram got in touch with several asylum seekers at the beginning of their stay in Sweden. Through these contacts he became inspired to re-engage with asylum rights.

Adrian is part of a group of undocumented migrants and clandestine asylum seekers in Stockholm who have been claiming a broader amnesty after the provisional legislation closed and left many thousand clandestine asylum seekers without a residence permit. He came to Sweden from Algeria with his wife and two children approximately four years prior to the time when I conducted the interview.

Rosa is also a member of the group of undocumented migrants and clandestine asylum seekers in Stockholm. She is also affiliated to one of SAC's branches for undocumented workers.[11] She is from Bolivia and had been in Sweden for about a year and a half at the time of the interview. Her asylum application had recently been turned down. She had quite a lot of social contacts both within the Latin-American community of undocumented migrants and asylum seekers as well as within the organisations with which she was affiliated.

'The Experts'. I also conducted interviews with a lawyer who specialised in asylum legislation and a refugee representative from a NGO with many years' experience in the asylum rights movement on both the political level and at the level of direct juridical and practical support.

The politics of analysis

I take my point of departure from an understanding of clandestinity as a multi-levelled space which, although defined legally, is also constructed discursively and socially. Further, this space is characterised by being both included in and simultaneously excluded by society (see Chapter Three for the discussion on how this included exclusion is produced and conditioned by the law and by the multi-tiered character of citizenship). This understanding of the field has served me as a mind-map for the outline of the fieldwork and interviews. The conduct of the semi-structured interviews involved taking two steps. Firstly, I made a map of the field itself, describing the different levels and themes I wanted to bring in to the analysis: the experiences of flight and arrival; ideas and pre-understandings about Swedish society before arrival, during the reception, the asylum process and then after the rejection; the considerations and alternatives taken into account for the decision to

[11] A syndicalist trade union.

go into clandestinity; the everyday experiences of clandestinity; experiences of access and/or non-access to welfare services and rights (mainly schools and child care, healthcare, the labour market, the housing market and the legal system[12]) and access to support networks (family, friends and/or actors in civil society). Secondly, I developed the semi-structured interview scheme in a mode that I thought would help me cover all the parts of this cartography.

To do this I asked about their trajectory to Sweden and about the trajectories that had been taken since their first arrival. Different aspects of everyday life were considered, especially 'problem solutions' (i.e. in cases of health issues, economic problems, etc.) as well as the networks of people around the informants, their ideas about and perspectives upon the future, Swedish migration policy, the welfare state and migrants' rights in general. The interviews with the activist and 'expert' informants, except for some obvious differences, followed more or less the same structure regarding perspectives on migration policies and the welfare state. A similar line was taken regarding everyday practices for 'problem solutions', both their own practices in relation to the clandestine asylum seekers they were in touch with, and their experiences of asylum seekers' own strategies. However, in contrast with the questions posed to the asylum seekers, instead of talking about trajectories both to and inside Sweden, I would ask the activist informants about the 'trajectory' into their engagement in asylum rights issues.

The process of transforming long conversations (and even friendships) into data has been difficult, and highly fractured. I followed a traditional working agenda regarding qualitative methods. All the interviews have been transcribed, except for some parts in which the conversations have deviated too much from the themes of interest for my study.[13] I have then structured the material

[12] To report crimes or to get protection from violence or threats.

[13] The quotes that have been included in the text have further been translated into English. As is always the case with oral speech, and especially with a group of informants who speak 'broken Swedish' to varying degrees, the comprehension might be limited for the reader who just encounters small sections of the interviews. To transfer the content in a way that does it justice, I have edited the quotes slightly. I have tried to keep the colloquial tone and when specific

thematically around the codes and themes I have found to recur in the interviews as well as themes and concepts deriving from the theoretical framework.

The most difficult task as a scholar is that of interpretation. Through different strategies (such as, long quotes, conversations including the researcher's own voice, descriptions of the context of the interaction and even personal reflections) I have made efforts to create an open text which invites further dialogue and different interpretations. The analysis is founded upon the understandings and practices reflected in the informants' narratives and their choices as to where to put emphasis in their answers to open questions. Sometimes the analysis builds upon the quotes in order to analyse structural levels, whilst sometimes they serve to illustrate theoretical positions.

While some issues can easily be identified as central themes across most of the interviews, others were less easy to identify as being central, with strong variations dependent upon the informants' structural and subjective positions – especially regarding family relations, identity and experience. Feminist scholars have been (often rightly) criticised for the tendency to read social processes through the narrow lenses of gender relations as the primary power relation, and this critique – coming from a plurality of angles – is an analytical contribution that is central to my research. However, one of the results of the study – and one that might be seen as unexpected, taking into consideration my theoretical focus on intersectionality and my shared criticism of the primacy of gender in some feminist analyses – is the actual centrality of gender in some aspects of clandestinity which emerges from the empirical material.

Swedish slang, terms or expressions are used, I indicate in footnotes when I think it is relevant to the analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE

Clandestinity at Work

Fija came to Sweden from Kosovo to apply for asylum in 2004. I first met her in May 2006 just over a month after the new Aliens Act had been put into effect at the end of March. Fija was one of the 12–15,000 asylum seekers who did *not* meet the requirements to get a resident permit under the provisional legislation of 2005/2006. She was very disappointed that she had not been included in this regularisation process and had therefore been compelled to return to clandestinity.

Our discussions during the first months of my fieldwork revolved around the hope for another provisional process of regularisation – a real amnesty. Then the right-wing alliance government that came into power in October 2006 suggested a broadening of labour immigration policy that would include the possibility to apply from within the country – to 'shift queues' from asylum seeker to labour migrant (field notes from parliament hearing 15/11/2006).[1] After that the conversations between myself and Fija often considered the possibilities connected to the proposed legislation: what I thought about her chances, if and when the proposal would be implemented, whether Fija would be able to find formalised employment or not, and what other alternatives might possibly be open to her. But she was also sceptical about the proposal on labour migration. One reason was that her experiences in the informal labour market had not given her many reasons for hope:

[1] As opposed to the rules at the time for the field work (2006/2007) according to which one had to apply from one's country of origin before arriving in Sweden.

> Fija: It is difficult with the work. I work 'on the black' in the pizzeria so it is very insecure.[2] And the boss changes workers as often as you change your socks. So, as far as I can tell right now, this work place will not be much help.

Another reason for Fija's scepticism was her assumption that age and/or specific skills risked becoming conditions for acquiring a residence permit:

> Fija: The new legislation on labour permits might be good for me, but not for everyone. My father for example, he is 73 years old, what should he do if he came here and ended up as clandestine?

A couple of months after the main part of my fieldwork had ended, Fija had to quit working at the pizzeria when it suddenly closed, the owner cut all contact and then disappeared without paying the last month's wages. A friend helped Fija to contact SAC, a syndicalist trade union that also organises undocumented workers, but they could not find a way to bring the employer to account either. Fija not only lost the money but also an opportunity to enter into the labour market and the possibility of formal employment that could have led to a residence permit if/when the new legislation on labour immigration came into effect.[3] Later she did find a job at another

[2] When Fija and the interpreter talk about informal work they use the rather common colloquial terminology 'black' and 'white' labour ("*svart*" and "*vitt jobb*") for informal and formal labour (furthermore, Fija uses the same terminology when she talks about staying clandestinely as 'staying blackly' ("*stanna svart*") and staying with residence permit as 'staying whitely' ("*stanna vitt*")). I will not discuss this further, but I find it pertinent to put forward Paula Mulinari's argument about the racialised connotations of this terminology: 'Concepts like "white" and "black" employment are not neutral but on the contrary concepts that capture both ideas and fantasies about the hierarchies in the labour market, at the same time as they produce these hierarchies' (P Mulinari 2007 p. 277, my translation).

[3] The proposal for new legislation (*Nya regler för arbetskraftsinvandring Prop. 2007/08:147*) was based on an agreement between the government and the Green party. The changes were put into law (with some changes from the original proposition) on December 15, 2008 (see http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/9528/a/104328 (2 January, 2011)).

pizzeria, but the possibilities for formalising this employment seemed to be very limited.

This brief summary of Fija's work experiences gives an idea of the ways in which an asylum case can become linked to the asylum seeker's employment situation and to changes in labour market policies. Fija's hopes about possible solutions have been rising and falling over the years in a way that mirrors the shifts in migration and labour market policies as well as those of political regimes.

Fija's experience in the labour market also gives an idea of the possible limitations of an analytical gaze that takes its point of departure in an unreflected assumption about workers as *citizens*. Both citizenship, and the formal boundaries for belonging that the borders and regulation of migration create, need to be understood as unstable categories that are in a constant process of formation. This process shapes the conditions of migrant workers in both expected and unexpected ways (compare Anderson's discussion on the regulation of au pair work (in UK) which produces a very specific employment situation, or rather, produces workers with very specific relations to the employer (2009)).

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the connections between clandestinity and paid work in Sweden based upon the voices of the informants. The significance of labour as an organising principle in society will be explored on the margins of both labour rights and citizenship. Clandestine asylum seekers are located at the intersections of nationality, gender and 'race'/ethnicity, but these structuring principles also intersect with other processes in different policy areas and fields: labour market policy, migration policy and asylum rights. I argue that this seemingly marginal position – clandestinity – is central to an understanding of general structures and positions in the labour market.[4]

[4] While my conceptualisation of clandestinity – and my interview material – focuses upon the position/s of rejected asylum seekers who avoid deportation, one can assume that parts of the analysis will also be valid for broader groups of undocumented migrants (undocumented workers, workers with temporary work permits, visa over-stayers, students or asylum seekers who have temporary residence permits but no work permits, etc). I discussed the overlaps between these categories in the introductory chapter (see also Khosravi 2006).

I use Fija's situation as an entry point to the chapter, because I think it illustrates the way things tend to get blurred at the crossroads of labour market policy, migration policy and asylum rights. I will discuss in what ways the locations of my informants in the asylum process and on the labour market are conditioned by these direct and implicit links between the policy areas and what it means for their everyday (working) life.

The chapter is organised as follows: this introductory section will finish with a brief overview of the informants with whom the analysis in this chapter is mainly concerned. Thereafter I position my analysis in relation to relevant discussions in the fields of migration and labour research. Specifically I try to outline and critically reflect upon some of the complex and multileveled patterns of contradictions and tensions that condition migration policies and clandestinity in Sweden and the EU today. The next part focuses on three themes that I have identified as central in relation to work in my empirical material: 'precarity', 'belonging' and 'normality'. The three themes show how the subject positions in clandestinity are framed by contradictory and blurred links between labour market policy, migration policy and asylum rights. They also serve to illustrate the double character of work as simultaneously exploitative and emancipatory. This chapter builds mainly on data from interviews with Fija and Ardian because, amongst all the informants I spoke with, it was they who addressed these issues the most closely. Along with the voices of these informants I also refer to excerpts from policy documents, as well as to transcripts from hearings and seminars with politicians and activists.

Fija came to Sweden from Kosovo in 2004. Her original asylum application was rejected and, during the spring of 2006, her application under the provisional legislation was also rejected. Fija is one of the few informants in my study who has worked at all, and she is the only one who has worked regularly during much of the time she has been living clandestinely in Sweden.

Ardian and his wife Ana are from Kosovo and arrived in Sweden 2003. When I met them they were staying clandestinely for the second time since May 2006 when they had been rejected under the

provisional legislation. Ardian does not regard working as an alternative due to the risk of discovery and deportation, although for him work seems to have been – and still is – central to his identity and sense of everyday meaningfulness and belonging.

Where migration policy meets labour market policy

Both the discourses and the practical outcomes of Swedish and European migration and border policies are characterised by a complex web of contradictions (Hansen 2008). This complex web of contradictions needs to be analysed to approach an understanding of the contradictory character of clandestinity, and of the ways explicit and implicit links between labour market policy, migration policy and asylum rights are constructed.

The development towards restrictiveness in Swedish refugee policy that accelerated in the early 1990s has been a joint journey guided by both the Social Democratic Party and the Moderate Party. While this journey has been accompanied by hegemonic discourses on immigration as linked to all kinds of social problems (Knocke 2006; SOU 2005:56; Tesfahuney 1998), the political right and the left have disagreed on policies and analyses in the field of labour migration and the labour force. However, policies, analyses and perspectives from 'both sides' have, in different ways, transgressed the boundaries between labour market policy and migration policy.
Many European countries, among them Denmark and Norway, have linked asylum legislation to labour market legislation. An example of this in Danish legislation is that asylum seekers or refugees who do not participate in the labour market integration programmes as prescribed will not be granted permanent resident permits (Emilsson 2008 p. 39f). In Sweden the boundary between the two areas has been more clearly demarked and the right to protection has not been conditioned by demands of labour market participation. But in practice the boundary between the two policy areas is not always that clear. The debate on asylum rights and refugee policy has often been

related to protectionist and 'nativist' ideas (de Genova 2005; Schierup et al. 2006) about the national labour market. Ever since the period of increased immigration to Sweden commenced during the latter half of the twentieth century, migration policy and the debates surrounding migration have in part been shaped within the frames of labour market policies.[5] For instance, the major national organisations representing workers and employers were central actors in drawing up regulations and quotas for, as well as the 1972 cessation of, labour immigration (Schierup et al. 2006 p. 199).

The framing of migration policies within labour market policies created an opening for inclusive policies that aimed to prevent immigration from becoming 'a vehicle for wage and welfare dumping' through inclusive approaches to migrants' civil and social rights (Schierup et al. 2006 p. 218). Further, the restrictions of labour immigration policies from 1972 did not have a direct effect on refugee policies at the time – on the contrary the seventies and eighties saw the most inclusive era of refugee reception. But, conversely, given the shift in the 1990s from a refugee policy based on principles of solidarity to a more restrictive path during the last two decades (Schierup et al. 2006 p. 220), I would argue that the historical link between regulation of migration and the 'needs' of the national labour market as a central reference in the political approach to immigration has shaped and influenced debates on refugee migration. Although the periods of restrictiveness are not entirely synchronous, it seems that the protectionist position of the workers movement and the Social Democratic Party eventually spilled over from labour migration to refugee migration.

However, the political right also link labour market policies, migration policies and asylum rights. The right-wing alliance government that gained power in 2006 has presented some statements and proposals that resemble the way in which Norwegian and Danish legislation relates participation in labour market integration programmes to the right to asylum and other forms of

[5] An example of the ways in which this connection was institutionalised is that the Ministry of Labour had the political and administrative responsibility for asylum seekers and refugees until the early eighties.

political protection. The restrictions of family reunification that will be discussed below are an example of this development.

In an analysis of the development of migration policies and programmes in the European Union, political scientist Peo Hansen (2008) traces the historical and institutional roots of the contradictions that characterise migration and border policies in the European Union. He identifies a series of contradictions starting with the contradiction between the goals of internal and external migration policies. Under this umbrella-contradiction he finds the contradiction between policies and agreements related to anti-discriminatory measures on the one hand and policies and discourses based on neo-assimilatory ideas on the other hand. Finally, Hansen identifies 'the *most fundamental contradiction in the EU's migration policy*' as 'the EU's *double* and increasing *need* for migration and migrants' (2008 p. 203, original emphasis, my translation) as both labour force and population reserve *and* as a political tool to conceal conflicts of interest by the scapegoating of migrants for various social problems (Hansen 2008 p. 203):

> It is in the interplay between these contradictions – the hollowing-out of the institution of asylum and the promises about an asylum policy built on humanitarian grounds, the economic needs of undocumented labour migrants and the politically motivated 'fight' against 'illegal immigration', etc. – that we catch sight of what is actually at stake in the EU migration policy. We become aware that it is not so much about misguided policy, as about contradictions related to powerful political and economic interests (Hansen 2008 p. 195, my translation).

The political shift at stake here among the contradictions is a further turn away from refugee immigration and the opening up for expansion of controlled and provisional labour immigration, through different kinds of guest worker schemes.

The contradictions and links in migration and labour policies are racialised and gendered. For example, studies of the globalised chain of care work (Salazar Parreñas 2004; Lutz 2002) have illuminated the ways in which migratory status is closely tied to the global

(re)structuring of care work, as well as how global gender relations are framed and conditioned by global and national migration regimes (Lutz 2002, 2008; Williams and Gavanas 2008). But feminist scholarship has not been sufficiently linked to either mainstream migration studies or to the more critical approaches, here represented by Peo Hansen. Women as migrants and the gendered aspects of migration are less visible in social theory (Morokvasic et al. 2003; Phizacklea 2003).

Feminist political scientists have contributed to several fields of political studies with criticisms of the way in which capitalist relations are understood solely as involving the relations between male (breadwinner) workers and employers. For example in the feminist critiques of traditional comparative welfare studies (e.g. Sainsbury 1999) it has been shown how the absence of the relations of care and reproduction makes important differences between welfare regimes invisible.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003) is concerned that feminist research on globalisation and the new global labour division tend to reproduce some '"globalized" representations of women' (p. 247) divided sharply into either victimized (among Mohanty's examples are '[t]he teenage girl factory worker, the domestic worker, and the sex worker' (ibid.) and further, 'the migrant/immigrant service worker, the refugee, the victim of war crimes [...]' (ibid.)) or empowered women (Mohanty's examples '[t]he human rights worker [...], the revolutionary militant and the corporate bureaucrat' (p. 248)). These one-dimensional and 'ready-made' representations do not take the complexities and contradictions of women's locations, identities and roles into account. Mohanty asks for a concern with 'whose agency is being colonized and who is privileged in these pedagogies and scholarships' (p. 248). In relation to the discussion here, the figures that appear in the limelight when the migration literature *does* acknowledge the gendered aspects of migration – or when feminist literature acknowledges the migratory aspects of gender formations – tend to be some of these '"globalized' representations of women' that Mohanty renders problematic (Mohanty 2003 p. 247). In this literature there is the refugee victim,

the semi-victimised housekeeper, and the multi-victimised, trafficked woman. And in mainstream studies of migration there is the male breadwinner migrant worker competing with the male breadwinner citizen worker.

Migration policies and migrants' subject positions are thus characterised by contradictions and paradoxes on many levels. Aristide R. Zolberg (1999) sorts out some of the contradictions at stake in terms of two different sets of dynamics in relation to debate and policy making on migration control. He understands the attitudes towards migration as divided in material and cultural dynamics. The material dynamics are framed by the capitalist economy and the interests involved in relation to migration are, on the one hand, the employers' interest to increase immigration to press wages down and, on the other hand, the trade unions' interest to control immigration to counter 'wage dumping' and decreased labour rights. The cultural dynamics are related to identity and Zolberg suggests that the conflict in this dimension is between extreme rightist or conservative groups that consider immigration a threat to an imagined 'national identity' or 'national life style' and those who either do not believe in this kind of culturalist entities or believe that immigration would 'improve' national culture and identity (Zolberg 1999 p. 83ff). Zolberg's outline of the two sets of dynamics carries a certain kind of blindness in relation to gendered dimensions of capitalist relations, labour and migration. These two dynamics for the most part encompass the relations of paid labour, but do not capture relations of either unpaid domestic work or those of other forms of care work.

Swedish sociologist Denis Frank (2008) builds on Zolberg when he argues that the Swedish social democratic trade union movement has traditionally been guided by a negative attitude towards migration as an economic phenomenon but by a positive attitude towards migration's cultural dimensions. Frank's analysis shows that Zolberg's two sets of dynamics seem pertinent for an understanding of what is at stake in the Swedish debates on labour and migration. However, I would argue that the dimensions do not exist as 'purely' separated from each other but rather might have had an effect on

each other. For even though the economic dimension might have been the foundation for a restrictive stance to migration, there seems to be a risk that the restrictiveness itself has *constructed* a cultural dimension. Wuokko Knocke shows how both the openly racist discourses on migration policy that characterised the first half of the twentieth century, and discourses surrounding labour immigration during the sixties and seventies carried ideas about migrants as deviant and as carriers of problematic cultures (Knocke 2006. See also: SOU 2005:56; Molina 1997; Tesfahuney 1998). The discourses surrounding both restrictions on labour migration and on refugee migration often includes notions of 'our' and 'their' cultures. Even the materially based discussion about 'wage dumping' and decomposition of labour rights sometimes includes references to cultural traditions in 'Other' national labour markets.

The way migration policies link to labour market policies – and how Zolberg's cultural and material dimensions tend to coalesce – can be further investigated through an understanding of racialised and gendered patterns of labour market segmentation.[6] The processes creating informal and precarious labour conditions can be related to two aspects of the global restructuring of labour markets in late capitalism: neo-liberal deregulation and segmentation of labour markets, and the racialised and gendered segregation of the work force (D. Mulinari and Neergaard 2004 p. 38ff; Wallerstein 2002). It has been argued that these mechanisms are inherent to the capitalist system (Wallerstein 2002), but in the context of the Swedish (and European) welfare state(s) these processes become ever more

[6] Labour market segmentation means that the labour market is divided into an *internal* and an *external* labour market. The internal labour market is regulated by labour rights and offers relatively safe work conditions – in this market one finds the 'core labour force'. The external labour market works as a reserve labour market with precarious work conditions and demands of high levels of flexibility. Conscious or unconscious racist attitudes can lead to racialised groups being referred to the external labour market. But these attitudes are mainly an effect of the way that institutionalised racist practices among employers, state institutions or the labour unions result in 'the labour force [being] sorted, categorised and finally allocated' (Mulinari and Neergaard 2004 p. 39-41, my translation).

pronounced and bare in relation to the increasing presence of undocumented workers.

Informal and precarious work is not only confined to undocumented workers and should not be understood as a marginal phenomenon, but rather as central to the organisation of the labour market in the global neo-liberal order. The informal economy and the flexibilisation and deregulation of the labour market are expanding in relation to many work sectors and different categories of workers. These processes reinforce and deepen the racialised and gendered segmentation of labour markets (D. Mulinari and Neergaard 2004 p. 38ff).

When my ethnographically grounded material meets the theoretical discussions above two things happen. One, it serves partly to confirm the cartographies of contradictions sketched by Hansen (2008), Frank (2008), Wallerstein (2002), and Mulinari and Neergaard (2004), and two, it refuses – as is a tendency with ethnographic material – to correspond neatly with the pre-given positions on these maps – which opens up a series of further contradictions.

In this section I have discussed the contradictory and double character of work on discursive and institutional levels. In the next section the contradictory and blurred links between labour market policy, migration policy and asylum rights are illustrated through the analysis of the ethnographic material. Here the empirical material shows the way the contradictions at the level of policy and discourse link to contradictory conditions of life as lived in clandestinity. As a parallel to the double functions of citizenship (discussed in Chapter Three with e.g. Lister 2003), work also seems to have its double functions of exclusion and inclusion. The analysis in what follows is organised in relation to three analytical concepts that I have identified as central in the interviews: precarity, normality and belonging. The analytical concepts embrace the tension between work as exploitative and work as emancipatory (Ålund 1991) and between work as a path to inclusion and work as an exclusionary gate-keeper – both in general, but specifically in relation to the Swedish welfare state.

Precarity

The concept of precarity has entered the debate on migration and work because of its analytical capacity to link and highlight different positions in the neoliberal labour market such as irregular and regulated work, irregular and regulated workers and migrant workers and citizens (Anderson 2007; Papadopoulos et al. 2008 p. 222ff; Las Precarias a la Deriva 2004; Tsianos and Papadopoulos 2006; Waite 2008. Also see Ekland 2004, for a lively discussion of the concept in a Swedish context). The concept is further embraced as a reflection of the position of precarious workers as being double-edged – simultaneously a condition of exploitation and 'a possible point of *mobilisation* among those experiencing precarity' (Waites 2008 p. 413, original emphasis). Precarity refers to instability and insecurity (relating to both labour and economics), but allows for an understanding of how positions in the labour market expand and link into subject positions in other policy fields (as seen here with migration and asylum policy for example) as well as experiences of everyday life:

> [T]he exploitation of workforce happens beyond the boundaries of work, it is distributed across the whole time and space of life. Precarity means exploiting the continuum of everyday life, not simply the workforce (Neilson and Rossiter, 2005, cited in Tsianos and Papadopoulos 2006).

Thinking in terms of precarity as a position with the potential for building a collective political subject, it de-centres the labour market and points towards an understanding of the marginal positions in the labour market as *central*. Connecting the general processes of gendered and racialised segmentation of the labour market to clandestine work, the concept of precarity helps us to challenge the hegemonic representations of clandestine work conditions and clandestine and undocumented workers as exceptions and deviations in an otherwise 'healthy' labour market.

Precarious life situations, precarious work

Although from a long-term perspective the struggle for a residence permit is the most crucial activity and goal for rejected asylum seekers, day-to-day survival is often the most acute issue in clandestinity. The lack of income amplifies the precarity inherent in the position of the clandestine asylum seeker, whilst the ability to provide for oneself (and one's children) is a decisive factor in the struggle to gain a residence permit.

> *Maja: How do you maintain yourself economically?*
> Ardian: The church helps us with food, and for the last month we have also been getting a small contribution from the asylum rights group in Malmö.
> *Maja: How much money do you have to manage with each month?*
> Ardian: We just have to survive no matter what we've got ... for the rent we need 2400 SEK (approximately 260 euro). The church buys the food.
> *Maja: They give you food? Not money?*
> Ardian: No, we don't have anything to do with money.
> *Maja: Ok, so it's just the rent and then you get food and then you have no money after that?*
> Ardian: The church pays half the rent. And the food is not really sufficient for the whole month.
> *Maja: So ... the second half?*
> Ardian: the second half ... [laughs]
> *Maja: Do you get that from the Asylum rights group?*
> Ardian: Yes ... and I have to pay around 400 SEK (approx. 45 euro) myself, and I have to pay the electricity bills ...
> *Maja: How do you manage to do that, do you borrow from relatives?*
> Ardian: Yes exactly, I borrow and ... sometimes my sister helps me and ...
> *Maja: Some work too? Do you have temporary jobs?*
> Ardian: No. My sister works and her husband works too. But they have a lot to do for themselves, they have three children and a house that they have to pay for. That is terrible too, it is difficult for them.

> *Maja: And during the first period you were clandestine, at the same time as so many other people from Kosovo were clandestine here in this town, how did you and people in general maintain yourselves? Did many people get support from the church?*
> Ardian: No, in that period we didn't have any contacts with the church. We had a friend who helped us, with food, and we stayed in his apartment. He really wanted to help us, so we managed in some way, we managed, with food and everything.

Ardian mentions here a few of the ways that often become routes for survival and economic maintenance for many clandestine asylum seekers: gifts and loans from religious congregations, activist groups, friends and family. But the dependency and conditionality built in to these routes of maintenance are both explicitly and implicitly addressed in the quote. The money they get is not sufficient and they mostly receive food instead of 'having anything to do with money' (Ardian). I read the reluctance to talk about it as an expression of the ambiguity built in to the act of asking for and the receiving of money out of 'mercy'. Ardian does not seem to know exactly how to put it to show that he is grateful for the support whilst at the same time explaining their economic situation to me.

Although work – even in the informal labour market – creates another kind of independence in relation to interpersonal networks and civil society, the dynamics of dependency and conditionality attain another level in the relationship between employers and clandestine/irregular workers. Workers with citizenship or residence permits also run the risk of being exposed to precarious work conditions in the gendered, racialised and flexibilised labour market, but the undocumented worker's legal status places her at the outer edges of flexibility and precarity (Anderson 2000; de Genova 2005; Khosravi 2006). Fija summarises her conditions as an irregular worker at a pizzeria:

> Fija: There are no contracts or anything like that, no oral agreement either, and […] the owner, or the responsible one, can just, today, decide that now you have to leave. It has been

> very unstable. […] the boss seems to change his mind every time his mood swings, so one doesn't know from one day to another if there will be any work.

Fija describes here how she has to comply with her employers needs and mood swings. The precarity that all workers in the external labour market are exposed to is reinforced by various common aspects of clandestinity that are reflected in my material. First, there is the urgent need to work to gain some sense of security in the insecure, irregular position, or to send money to family members. Second, there is the insecurity produced by the irregular status and the fear of deportation that often prevents the worker from demanding better work conditions or from even getting paid.

This insecurity produced by the irregular status has been conceptualised by anthropologist Nicholas de Genova (2005) as 'deportability' in his study of the ways in which migration law interacts with demands made by the labour market in the US. Deportability is, according to de Genova, not the act of deportation itself but 'the possibility of deportation, the possibility of being removed from the *space* of the U.S. nation-state' (p. 8), and this constantly present risk of being deported organises the subject's possible range of choices, positions and space of action.[7] De Genova describes how deportability constructs positions in the labour market and forces migrants into the position of a flexible and precarious labour force:

> It is deportability, and not deportation as such, that has historically rendered Mexican labor to be a distinctly disposable commodity. 'Illegality' is thus lived through a palpable sense of deportability whereby some are deported in order that most remain (undeported) as workers. In other words, 'illegality' provides an apparatus for producing and sustaining the vulnerability and tractability of Mexican migrants as labor (de Genova 2005 p. 8).

[7] In relation to clandestinity, deportability is *one of* the specific characteristics/consequences for the clandestine asylum seeker, within a broader spectre of characteristics/consequences of clandestinity. De Genova (2005) draws a parallel distinction between 'illegality' and deportability.

Fija's approach to her employer and description of her work conditions are strongly coloured by the risk of deportation. She continues describing the conditions of her employment:

> Fija: Work is when the boss calls ... and if they need you ... so that means it's quite unstable. This woman who is in charge could call me today and say 'we don't need you anymore'.

As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, this eventually *did* happen. The pizzeria closed, her employer stopped calling, did not answer the phone and in the end refused to pay Fija's final month's wages. Beyond her material needs this employment had been doubly important to Fija, for she had also hoped that it might provide her with a possible point of entry in case of changes in labour migration legislation.

The threat of deportation amplifies precarity and distorts and delimits choices in many other areas of clandestine asylum seekers' lives. In Chapter Six I explore these aspects of deportability further and develop an understanding of 'gendered deportability', but here I already want to underline some concrete gendered consequences of deportability in relation to work conditions. Among the activist and 'expert' informants, many talk about the vulnerability built into the relation to the employer. The joint understanding is that men are often exploited through hard work, and that women also risk being sexually abused by employers and other people upon whom they become dependent in clandestinity.

> Karin: There are some [of the clandestine asylum seekers that she has met as an activist] who have taken casual work in order to survive and get on in life, but the work is often done under totally crazy circumstances. There was a guy who told me the other day that he had worked at a restaurant and done all the work in the kitchen on his own, he had been making all the food, washing all the dishes, he arrived at six in the morning and got back home at midnight ... and for this he was paid twenty SEK an hour [just over two euros]. And on top of that he lived in another town, so he had to travel for an hour. The circumstances were terrible. The police came there in the

> end, and they took him away […] he was paid once a week, but that last week when they took him, he didn't get any payment at all.

> Lawyer: I think that single clandestine women often fare badly, they are very vulnerable. And also some categories of single men fare very badly ... but for other reasons. They are often taken advantage of and subjected to working conditions that resemble slave labour. I have an example of a man who, for almost two years, worked seven days a week, ten hours a day, for twenty Swedish crowns an hour [approximately two euros].

What Karin and the lawyer describe sounds as though it might have come from another time and place, and the difficulties of linking these 'extreme' experiences to the understanding of the national labour market as a whole have been reflected in the ways the Swedish trade unions have reacted slowly – or not at all – to the production of precarity in the labour market. The affiliation of irregular workers with trade unions is one way of challenging this insecurity and of posing demands for better work conditions etc. In the Swedish context, the syndicalist union SAC organises undocumented workers and also argues for this position in relation to the major Swedish trade unions.

In an interview study with actors in the in/ formal domestic service sector in Stockholm, feminist anthropologist Anna Gavanas (2010) further deepens the insights of the gendered and racialised forms of exploitation that migrants in general, and undocumented migrants in particular, are exposed to in the (domestic) labour market. The suspicions expressed by the lawyer above are confirmed by Gavana's interview material: many of the women in the study had been exposed to expectations that they would sell sexual services alongside the domestic work, and/or had been assaulted and sexually harassed by their employers (Gavanas 2010 p. 43ff). These exploitative and abusive approaches to undocumented workers were, on the one hand, built upon the ways in which both fantasies and

expectations of domestic work/ers are gendered, racialised and sexualised in specific ways and, on the other hand, implicit and sometimes explicit threats related to the workers' deportable status.

Precarity through fear of deportation

As mentioned above, several of my informants did not work at all. When I first met them Ardian and Ana had recently had their asylum application rejected by the provisional legislation of 2005/2006. They were very afraid of being found and deported by the police and hence did not even consider the possibility of supporting themselves with informal employment. Ardian describes their economic situation in this way:

> *Maja: Hasn't it been possible to find a job here in the small town? Casual work or something?*
> Ardian: It is dangerous, it is dangerous. Because I am searched for, or wanted. It is a problem.

The insecurity and fear are not only connected to the risk of being exposed to police controls whilst at the work place, but also to the risk of random police controls whilst travelling to or from work. There are similar fears should they fall victim to accident or injury. These fears are constantly present in Fija's description of her everyday working life:

> Fija: When I'm working I'm very worried that I will be taken by the police, because I'm a hidden refugee, but also because I work 'on the black'. So every time I'm out in the streets I'm worried and I'm also worried in my work place.

> Fija: I was in the kitchen at work one day, and right outside the window I happened to see a parked police car. One of the other women who worked there said "You are here 'on the black', you better go and hide and I go out to talk to them". I locked myself in the locker room, but nothing happened, the police had just come to talk to the boss.

> Fija: When I was on the way back from work one day a colleague gave me a lift, went over the speed limit and got us stopped by the police ... it went on for about half an hour, they wanted to see his papers and all that […] imagine what would have happened if they had asked for my papers! When I got home ... I couldn't sleep that night […] the man who was driving said to us afterwards "god, my legs are shaking!" He was afraid of losing his driver's license, but I felt that my whole heart was shaking! Yeah, now I can laugh about it, but it was terrible!

The informants' everyday presence in public space and in work places is framed by levels of fear and insecurity that are either reflected in a further impairment of the already precarious work conditions or prevent clandestine asylum seekers from even entering the marginal segment of the informal labour market that is open for undocumented workers.

Work as a strategy against precarity

Work in general, and specifically work in relation to clandestinity, irregularity and/or migration, is most often described in terms of exploitation and oppression (P. Mulinari 2007). However, in her study on processes of racialisation and differentiation in the Swedish service sector Paula Mulinari (2007) notes that a worker's critical position towards her working conditions, or her feelings of being exploited, does not have to exclude all kinds of appreciation of the work. Mulinari discusses the risks of making resistance and agency invisible in accounts on precarity and exploitation:

> [Sassen's] narrative of the sector constructs a problematic representation of a mass (in the two meanings of the word) of racialised women working without political will, pride or social ties to their fellow-workers (P Mulinari 2007 p. 127, my translation).

In relation to my field, I would argue that this two-fold perspective upon work as simultaneously exploitative and emancipatory is highly applicable. In my material, along with the exploitation and precarity created by clandestinity, there is a further significance found in work and the labour market. Work and a (relatively) regular wage can reduce the precarity characterising other aspects of everyday life in clandestinity, such as the insecurity related to economic issues, accommodation and health, which thereby allows for a semblance of 'normal' life and belonging. Through having an income and going to work regularly, the clandestine asylum seeker might pass as a citizen or permanent resident. Also, the regularity of work and the access to a work place can contribute to feelings of security, stability and of being part of a community.

> *Maja: Can you tell me something about your daily routines?*
> Fija: Yes, ok, I wake up and go to work. And whilst everyone else feels like going back home as soon as possible, I feel on the contrary that I want to stay ... the day passes faster if I have something to do, as I don't have anything special to do right now and I don't see my future, I have no clear idea about what will happen. So that is why I prefer being at work, it makes the hours pass by.

Even though Fija has acknowledged the precarious conditions for her employment, she regards her work as one of the most stable parts of her life at the moment. Work can serve as a place for distraction from both the pressure and the emptiness.

Fija lived in another part of Sweden when she was applying for asylum, and came to live clandestinely in Malmö to avoid being deported. As she only has been living in Malmö in clandestinity she has very few social connections there. In this context, the co-workers at the pizzeria become very important. She has been telling me about her very limited contacts with other people in her everyday life:

> *Maja: But don't you see anyone at work?*
> Fija: Yes, the people at the pizzeria, and they all speak the same language.

Maja: Ok, does anyone there know about your situation?
Fija: No one knows I am staying clandestinely, they only know I am applying for asylum, but not that I am clandestine.

Fija's everyday presence at a work place reduces some of the precarity connected to her situation as it allows her to take a temporary step out from clandestinity. At work she enjoys communicating in her first language with the people around her and passes as still being in the asylum seeking process (and thus still in a regular situation and a relatively included position).

Finally, with more direct connection to the search for asylum or a residence permit, as well as helping you to stay alive, work can help you to avoid deportation from Sweden. It can also help to approach some form of, at least partial, inclusion while searching and/or waiting for solutions such as an amnesty, law changes, a partner with Swedish citizenship or – as in Fija's case – a possibility to get a residence permit through a labour immigration system. The work place becomes a threat and a promise simultaneously, and it is in the ambiguous meeting between the two that precarity is created.

However, the links between positions in the labour market and positions in relation to migration status go beyond the subjective experiences of these links. In the next section I will approach the way migrants' positions in the labour market – and the approach to both labour migration and other forms of migration – are affected by more abstract notions of nation, society and belonging.

Work to belong

In February 2008, the minister of migration, Tobias Billström, and the prime minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, organised a press conference to present a policy proposal that would restrict the rights of migrants to family reunification.[8] The ministers suggested that unemployment

[8] At the time of the press conference the proposal was sent for review by a government Commission (http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/10198/a/97534 (2 January, 2011). Since then, a SOU (2008:114) – a Swedish White Paper – was

among newly arrived migrants could be countered through a demand that foreigners with permanent resident permits have employment and 'adequate accommodation' in order to qualify for the right to family reunification.[9] The press conference was held in Landskrona, a small city in the south of Sweden which, following the elections of 2006, realised a degree of infamy when it became the municipality where the racist party, *Sverigedemokraterna*, gained the largest proportion of votes. A journalist commented that it did not seem like a coincidence that a policy proposal that would turn the migration policy further towards the restrictive line was held in Landskrona. Billström and Reinfeldt got upset and denied a secondary motive of trying to gain votes from the extreme right voters, and yet they presented careless associations between migration, unemployment and all sorts of social problems:

> Journalist: Isn't it better for children to be able to be reunited with their parents, even under poor material conditions ... for example a low-standard house or a family with scarce economic resources ... than not being with them at all?
> Migration minister Tobias Billström: The issue is with what kind of choices we want to make. Shall we in ten or fifteen years, when the alienation,[10] the dependence on economic subsidies, the segregation and the youth criminality have done their thing, just lean back and say 'yes, but at least they were allowed to come here!' It is not that simple because there are no simple answers when it comes to migration policy. But this is a choice we have to make. We assume that in this country in the future we will also want to stand up and help as many asylum seekers as possible. But to be able to do that, we also

presented and the new law was implemented in April 2010. The law finally included an exception for reunification with children. The focus above is upon the way the suggestion is presented rather than the content of the actual law after these processes of negotiations.

[9] Even though refugees and some other categories of permanent residents would be exempt from the restrictions, it points towards a further reduction of non-citizens' rights to family life.

[10] Alienation here is a translation of the Swedish word *utanförskap,* it could also be translated as exclusion, or 'outsider-ness'.

> need some regulations for family reunification that do not make it more difficult but will instead help these people (Press Conference 08/02/2008, http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/10198/a/97534 (accessed 2 January, 2011), my transcription and translation).

The way Billström creates an associative link between immigration, unemployment and a series of social problems illustrates a discursive slide through which the subject's legal status and access to human rights become an individual concern related to labour market contributions rather than to personhood or to inviolable human rights.

Representing 'belonging' and 'normality'

Even though Ardian and Ana lack the direct connection to the labour market that Fija has, Ardian gives labour and the role of labour in everyday life great emphasis in his self-representation and in his way of referring to belonging, inclusion and everyday meaningfulness. In this sense Ardian's situation also mirrors the developments and tendencies at the intersections of labour market and migration policy, but it sheds light on aspects other than the tendencies illuminated by Fija's experiences. During our conversations he often emphasises that he has a lot of contacts in the local community and would be able to find work quickly if he was granted a work and residence permit. Talking about studies and work, he refers to the situation of his sister's family who have been living permanently in Sweden since they left Kosovo many years ago:

> Ardian: In my sister's family, everyone started school immediately, and today everyone is working, they have a strong attachment to Swedish society.

Here work becomes not only a place and an institution that might increase levels of participation or senses of belonging, but the very *definition* of belonging. To work *is* to belong. When I ask Ardian about his life before he emigrated his answers focus on his former

working life and, in relation to his previous occupations he underlines that he is *normal* (‘*vanlig*’):

> Ardian: In Kosovo I was very well off. I worked, I had a good salary, I had a job that I loved. But I had to leave my country because of ... the event […] First I worked as a lorry driver and then in an English company as a minesweeper. I worked for three years and then I had to leave my work and I came here.
> *Maja: But before the war you were a truck driver?*
> Ardian: Yes, before the war I worked in different places. I worked in a jewellery shop for a year, then I worked in an internet café and then I worked as a truck driver. And after the war I worked in the English company that did minesweeping. [...] I had a totally different life, I worked all the time, I earned money. I am an ordinary human being who wants to work and who wants to be accepted in this society.

In *Formations of Class and Gender. Becoming Respectable*, feminist sociologist Beverly Skeggs (1997) analyses the way a group of working-class women in UK negotiate identity and self in relation to class formations and *respectability*. The central theme in the analysis is to show ‘how experiences of being positioned and classified (as working class, as heterosexual, as feminine, as caring, as vulgar, as feminist) produce different responses which impact upon subjective construction’ (Skeggs 1997 p. 4). Skeggs’ analysis of the struggles for respectability through disidentification and dissimulation from the working class, an analysis inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu, is, I think, pertinent for understanding similar processes in the self-representations of my informants.

In relation to Billström’s rhetorical links between unemployment, immigration and social problems presented above, I understand Ardian’s way of connecting his work history and his wish and ability to work with notions of belonging and normality, as a challenge to the representations of migrants as deviants in the labour market. Furthermore, the way in which he emphasises his former (working) life can be understood as a way of reclaiming and asserting his *humanity* in the face of the doubly dehumanising processes he and

Ana have been going through – the war that made them into refugees in the first place, and the asylum process that excluded them from recognition as refugees and from both the welfare state and the labour market.

In the run up to the elections in 2006, the coalition between the right-wing parties that eventually won the elections ('The Alliance' [*Alliansen*]), introduced the concept 'exclusion' (*utanförskap*) as another word for unemployment. Through this language shift the structural aspects of unemployment were conjured away and replaced by a strictly individualised, apolitical and racialised understanding of positions outside the labour market. Also, the shift in political vocabulary reinforces the idea about the primacy of work as the definition of (symbolic) national belonging that Ardian implicitly responds to.

Normalising and institutionalising precarity

During the autumn of 2006 a lot of people just like Fija had to face the disappointment of having been excluded from the provisional legislation that had granted thousands of people permanent residence permits. In Stockholm, a network for undocumented asylum seekers (*Nätverket Papperslösa Stockholm*) was founded in 2006, and since then they have organised weekly manifestations outside *Riksdagen* (the Swedish parliament) to claim their right to obtain a residence permit and/or to be granted some basic social rights as undocumented inhabitants. In the late autumn of 2006, they organised a hearing in the parliament, asking the parliamentary parties for solutions to their situation. Several rejected asylum seekers gave testimonies about their fears for deportation and about their frustrating situation in clandestinity. The representative from the Moderate Party responded with this as their possible solution:

> We will also present a proposal about the possibility for an asylum seeker to work or take an internship from the first day of their arrival in Sweden, and that will later on enable a 'shift of queue', that is that one can go from being asylum seeker to be ... to apply for a residence permit as a labour immigrant […] When it comes to the grounds required to get a residence

> permit *as* an asylum seeker they will of course stay constant, so it will still be possible to stay if one meets the asylum requirements. By making it possible for those who can get a job to apply for a residence permit on other grounds, it will make it easier for those who apply for asylum (representative from the Moderate Party, parliament hearing 15/11/2006. Field notes).

This answer takes us back to Fija's objections to the work permit as a form of compensation for not being granted protection through asylum or a permanent residence permit. Many rejected asylum seekers in the audience at the hearing objected in a similar way and questioned the way the politicians presented labour migration as an answer to their worries about the lack of legal security in the asylum seeking procedure (field notes from Parliament hearing 15/11/2006).

Even though this legislation would in some cases lead to a regularisation of the irregular legal status of workers and of the work contracts, some of the features that drive workers into precarity would still be attached to the position of the temporary regular worker. A decisive passage in the legislation proposal states that temporary work permits will be tied to a specific employer during the first two years and thereafter be tied to a specific work sector until a permanent residence permit can be granted after four years of temporary residence (Regeringens prop. 2007/08:147). This part of the legislation carries two sets of implications: first, precariousness and vulnerability in relation to the employer would still run the risk of being conditioned by the worker's fear of deportation; second, the racialised and gendered segmentation of the labour market would risk being reinforced by the way in which migrants would be 'locked into' certain work sectors.

I return to Hansen (2008) to contextualise the temporality (and its flexibilising and precarious consequences) inscribed in the Swedish legislation proposal. The interplay between restrictive asylum legislation and mechanisms of temporality and flexibilisation in labour migration legislation in my examples from Sweden can be understood within the frames of Hansen's reading of the contradictory European migration policies. He poses temporality as a

key feature of the way the member states negotiate the tensions between demand for labour migration and the neo-assimilatory tendencies to either exclude or compulsorily include migrants (2008 p. 103ff). When access to a temporary residence permit (and thereby the access to civil rights) is conditioned by one's position in the labour market the individual is thus reduced to a reified component of the labour force and consequently stripped of all (costly) rights attached to citizenship or permanent residence permit (Hansen 2008).

An example of how inclusion can be conditioned by institutionalised precarity, is the specific forms of residence and work permits designed for au-pair work in Sweden (Platzer 2007) and in the UK (Anderson 2000, 2009). The case of au-pair work permits shows clearly how migration policies surrounding the phenomena construct and shape the au-pair as a flexible and undemanding worker. The vulnerability of an au-pair's working conditions is institutionalised through the conditions inscribed in the specific kind of residence and work permit required for au-pairs (Anderson 2009; Platzer 2007 p. 128ff). The permit is neither a general work permit nor a general permission to work in the domestic services sector, but is instead related to the right to employment by one specific family (p. 124). Moreover, there are no mechanisms in place to control whether the employers comply with their contractual obligations in relation to the au-pair (p. 124ff). Even though au-pair work is a marginal sector, I find this example interesting as an illustration of how migration policies can organise the labour market in a very concrete and gendered way and of the way precarity becomes inscribed into the position of the worker through the interplay between work conditions and the need for a residence permit.

Conclusion

Both clandestine asylum seekers and other migrants without a permanent resident permit are located at the intersections of nationality, gender and 'race'/ethnicity, but these structuring principles also intersect with processes in different policy areas and

fields: migration policy, social policy and the labour market. At an individual level, this means that the experiences from, and understanding of, clandestinity are related to the labour market and not only asylum rights policy.

I have approached the discussion in this chapter through an insight in the way that Fija and Ardian's positions in relation to citizenship and labour are constructed at the very crossroads of migration policy, labour market policy and from the interplay between the two policy areas. Centring the discussion of my ethnographic material upon the concepts precarity, belonging and normality I have showed some ways that migration policy structures the labour market along racialised and gendered lines and, conversely, how access to a permanent residence permit (and the right to asylum) seems to be partly negotiated within the frames of labour market interests. I have also discussed and illustrated the importance of linking discourses on belonging and nation to the analysis of discourses on labour, and of not taking the formal boundaries of belonging as a natural demarcation of the analysis, in order to gain a fuller understanding of processes of racialisation in the labour market.

Some mechanisms in the proposal on labour migration and the regulations of au-pair work have served as specific examples of how the links between the policy areas are institutionalised. The government's proposal on labour migration also points towards the discursive slide that Billström's statement above represents even more explicitly: the subject's legal status and access to human rights as an individual concern related to labour market contributions rather than to personhood or to inviolable human rights.

The concepts of precarity, belonging and normality have also served to illustrate the double character of work as simultaneously exploitative and emancipatory. Whilst a worker's legal status constructs her or his position in the labour market and in relation to employers towards precarity, the precarious aspects of other parts of life can be diminished through work. Similarly, the way in which work serves to define belonging and normality in relation to the welfare state and the nation often has an exclusionary effect on

clandestine asylum seekers. But, in parallel with the two sides of citizenship – as carrying both the potential to exclude and the potential to include – the exclusionary character of work also has its flipside: the potential for inclusion at many different levels.

CHAPTER SIX

Gendered Deportability

In the previous chapter on work and clandestinity I explored the ways policies and subject positions in the labour market affect – and are affected by – policies and subject positions related to migration and the legal status of migrants. In this chapter I will further explore the dynamics shaping the informants' positions in relation to citizenship rights, migration status and welfare entitlements. To do so I will illustrate the ways in which different political fields, notions of gender, and the everyday experiences of my informants link to each other in the gendered experiences of clandestinity. Based upon an analysis of the interview material, I will argue on the one hand that these links – between warfare, migration controls and (non-access to) welfare, as well as links between bodies, feelings and policies – are constructed through the gendered implications of asylum legislation and practices. On the other hand, I will also argue that these links are constructed through the *gendered production of deportability* and everyday lack of access to gendered welfare rights (such as stable employment, reproductive healthcare, public child care and protection from domestic violence). To illustrate these links the chapter opens with a brief recapitulation of Isra's experiences of the war in Bosnia, her flight from the country and her subsequent pursuit of asylum in Sweden. Following this I will introduce a feminist understanding of the concept of deportability and discuss how the gendered conditions found in the practice of asylum law and the withdrawal of 'women-friendly' welfare constitute the gendered

formation of deportability. These conditions at the same time constitute gender formations in clandestinity.

The discussion is built around the ethnographic material and organised through three main themes that I have identified as being central in relation to the gendered production of deportability: the reproductive body and parenthood/motherhood, life spans and notions of normality, and finally, representation and recognition.

Gendered links between warfare and welfare

> What can I say? I don't know. Maybe one has to be wise to say anything. It is difficult to explain how it is to live clandestinely. You don't have any rights. If you get ill … I think about that often. What happens if I get sick, if my son gets sick? Then we won't have any rights. Like that day when my son fell over in the playground and hit his forehead. It was bleeding and bleeding. I didn't know what to do. I called everyone I could think of. It worked out that time, but what will happen next time if one of us gets seriously ill? I don't feel well right now, I have a shooting pain in my chest. I am worried it is something with my heart. Or cancer. Everyone says I am too young to worry about that, but a few weeks ago ... a man in this house, he died. He had a temperature for a few days, and then he died just like that. He was young. Imagine if that were to happen to us too (Broström/Isra).[1]

I met Isra in my role as an activist in an asylum rights group several years before this research project started. Like so many Bosnian Muslims she had gone through some deeply traumatic experiences during the war and, with her parents, had eventually fled Bosnia for

[1] From the monologue '*Man kanske måste vara klok*' by Emma Broström, based on an interview made by me and Broström with Isra. The monologue was part of the performance '*Hör vår historia*!' ['Listen to our story!'] which was arranged in August 2005 by a group of clandestine asylum seekers and the local asylum rights group in Malmö as a part of the campaign for a general amnesty for all asylum seekers in Sweden.

Germany. Whilst there she met Emir, they got married and when their temporary residence permits in Germany ran out they escaped to Holland. But once in Holland they ended up in detention for a couple of weeks and were eventually forced to return to Bosnia. Whilst peace agreements had, by this stage, been signed, they nevertheless found life difficult amongst the Serbian majority in their former home region. They were harassed by Serbian-Bosnian police, and memories of the violence they had experienced during the war were mixed with new instances of violence and insecurity. After attempting to live for two years in Bosnia it became too difficult to bear and they left for Sweden. They arrived during 2000, and I met them for the first time in 2003 when they had recently been informed about the rejection of their appeal to the Aliens Appeals Board (*Utlänningsnämnden*). As a consequence of this rejection they had begun living in clandestinity in order to avoid deportation. During the three years they spent in clandestinity, between their arrival and their finally being granted a residence permit in spring 2006 under the provisional legislation, I was in regular contact with Isra and her family. She was in her mid-twenties when I first met her. Her first child was only four months old.

Isra and Emir showed me a pile of papers they had collected as evidence for the asylum-seeking processes they had undergone, and they expressed some suspicion that the authorities might not have read them. One reason their suspicions had been raised was that the papers showed Emir had been interned in a concentration camp at the beginning of the war, and that he and Isra had suffered from severe traumas both before their flight to Germany and after their return to Bosnia. They could not believe that these documents had been taken into account during either the assessments of their applications for asylum or their appeals against subsequent decisions.

Isra and Emir did not regard returning to Bosnia as an option and refused to even consider that they might be forced to return. They were very afraid and could not see any possibility for a life in which they might recover from the anxiety and stress disorders that had resulted from their experiences in Bosnia. Supported by friends, relatives and the local asylum rights group in Malmö, they managed

to stay clandestinely for about three years. Even though they did receive support from the network around them, Isra spoke of the ever-present anxiety and fear of being found by the police, or of getting ill or of not managing to take care of her daughter. This network of friends, relatives and asylum rights activist trying to support her and her family, and the attitudes, identity constructions and power intrinsic to these relations became part of her everyday experience in Sweden. Furthermore, after deciding to live in hiding from the authorities in Sweden, which meant facing the constant risk of discovery and deportation, Isra became increasingly isolated and had to deal alone with her experiences of persecution in Bosnia. The sense of isolation became intertwined with the feeling that when telling her worst memories to the migration board, an environment she understood as one ruled by distrust and suspicion, she had not been listened to or taken seriously.

This summary of Isra's routes as a refugee through Europe and Sweden – and the feelings these experiences gave rise to – creates a sense of the many contexts and processes that intersect in the construction of clandestinity. The everyday experiences of clandestinity in the Swedish welfare state need to be understood as being constructed at the intersections of subjective experiences, (non-)access to welfare institutions and various geographical, historical and political contexts and processes. In the case of Isra and her family this is reflected in the ways in which they are directly or indirectly affected by: political events and decisions related to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina; the politics of border controls and internal alien controls in the Schengen area; restricted (and gendered) practice of law in Swedish asylum legislation (in the next section I discuss the gendered aspects of asylum legislation and practice of law), and the family's limited access to welfare services and entitlements. As can be seen in the extract from the monologue based upon Isra's description of clandestinity, these different contexts and processes do not only influence the asylum case and the living

conditions of the family, but also Isra's actual embodied experience in clandestinity.[2]

The concept 'women-friendly' has already been thoroughly criticised and further developed in the feminist theoretical debate on welfare states (e.g. Borchorst and Siim 2002; Borchorst 2009, Siim 2009), and in Chapter Three I reflected briefly upon some of the theoretical implications in relation to presumed national homogeneity and hetero-normativity. However, given the way in which representations in hegemonic political discourses on the welfare state in general, as well as in many feminist political and theoretical approaches, continue to present Sweden as being women-friendly (although often presented with 'so-called' as a problematising prefix (Siims 2009 p. 150)) and as being characterised by high levels of gender equality, I think it is important to consider the concept of 'women-friendliness' further.

In relation to Isra's story, and in the following discussion, I take the notion of women-friendliness out of its theoretical framework within comparative welfare studies and use it rather as a provocative symbol. When hegemonic discourses such as these are juxtaposed with the informants' experiences of clandestinity, as well as with the way in which their experiences of war are reinforced by – and linked to – Swedish migration and welfare policies, then the notion of 'woman-friendliness' becomes one that is open to challenge. Some of the mechanisms in the welfare state that have been central feminist issues (in relation to the state), and which are taken into account in the concept 'women-friendly', are the first mechanisms withdrawn from those living in clandestinity: access to the (formal) labour-market, healthcare, parental care, childcare and protection from domestic or other forms of violence. I will explore how the experiences of non- (or limited) access to those rights and entitlements that make up the core of the conceptualisation of

[2] When I talked to Isra towards the end of the research process, she told me that this period in her life still continued to affect her in similar ways. She has had to work a lot to handle anxiety attacks over the years since receiving a permanent residence permit, and she described how the years in clandestinity continue to affect her life, her relationship with her husband and her children.

women-friendly policies interact with the informants' experiences of seeking asylum and of being rejected.

My focus during both the fieldwork and in the analysis has not been upon the details of the asylum processes and the cases of my informants, but rather their experiences and understandings of the process as a part of their experiences and understandings of Swedish migration policies, and, by extension, Swedish society. Still, I think that some aspects and developments within both asylum law and its practice are worthy of further discussion due to the way in which they frame the informants' experiences. In the next section I will outline briefly some of the feminist interventions regarding the gendered dimensions of asylum legislation and the processes of inquiry and assessment. I do not intend to assess the cases of my informants specifically in relation to the notions of gender related persecution that I will discuss here. However, I do think it important to frame the informants' experiences of the routes through the asylum system, the processes of being made into deportable bodies and the significances of being deportable as a gendered body.

The gendered asylum process

The generally restrictive development in Swedish and EU asylum and refugee migration policies comes down hard on everybody seeking asylum or a residence permit – regardless of their gender. But gender – along with nationality, 'race' and sexuality as well as with the political climate in both the country of origin and of destination – is still *one* of the organising principles that build up the contradictory and asymmetrical consequences of these policies Hajdukowski-Ahmed et al. 2008; Moussa 1993). To grasp some of the gendered aspects of the asylum process, the conceptualisation of the concept 'political' in assessments of asylum grounds needs to be investigated. The understandings of what is 'political' tend to be restricted to a putatively universal idea of political activities and political persecution – while activities and forms of persecution that do not fit in to the universalist idea are often understood as being 'private' or 'cultural' – e.g. gender related forms of persecution (Bexelius 2001, 2008, Spijkerboer 2000).

The discussion about the assessment of gender related asylum grounds has developed mainly through the efforts of international feminist NGOs during the last decade to put the issue on the international human rights agenda. UNHCR have recommended that states look over their approach to asylum seeking women in general and to women who fear gender related persecution in particular. These recommendations have led to discussions and commissions in some states, but have often not resulted in any concrete changes (Bexelius 2001, 2008; Zamacona Aguirre 2008).

The concept of gender related persecution refers to gender related *grounds* for persecution as well as to gender related *methods* of persecution. Among the phenomena that can be regarded as expressions of gender related persecution are sexual violence, forced genital mutilation, domestic violence, forced sterilisations, punishments resulting from women's transgressions of social norms, and laws regulating women's behaviour and/or sexuality, etc. (Bexelius 2001, 2008; Crawley 2001; Folkelius and Noll 1998 p. 611; Spijkerboer 2000). The feminist informed discussion about gender related persecution has two slightly different main approaches. One approach is the argument for an expansion of the criteria that count as grounds for granting asylum. This position argues that fear of persecution, based on gender (or sex) should be added to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or the holding of a political opinion as another ground for persecution that gives rights to refugee status. The other approach argues for a gender sensitive expansion of the *interpretation* and *assessment* of the already existing criteria. Many studies have shown that the interpretation and assessment of asylum grounds build on a traditional, male-orientated, understanding of expressions for the grounds for asylum. This is especially common when considering the category of 'political opinion'. The perception and representation of the 'real' refugee is often that of a man with a well-documented position in dissident movements. The ways of doing politics, being political or being exposed to political reactions that are more often embraced by women are consequently not interpreted as 'fear of persecution, based on political opinion' (In Sweden: Bexelius 2001,

2008; Folkelius and Noll 1998; Zamacona Aguirre 2008.[3] In the UK: Crawley 2001. In the Netherlands: Spijkerboer 2000).

Thomas Spijkerboer (2000) has deepened the analysis of the way in which a universalist male norm works in the conceptualisation of political persecution. It is not only the dichotomy private/political that works in the arguments, assessments and decisions on asylum applications, but also a series of other gendered dichotomies. Politics, and consequently the prerequisites for political asylum and refugee status, are defined as the *absence* of other spheres. The first and foremost amongst these is the private sphere, but it is also seen in the economic, physical, and bodily spheres which also need to be absent in order that an experience of persecution can be understood as being political. As an example, Spijkerboer argues that 'real' torture is regarded as a political act built on technological and scientific knowledge and thereby as political persecution, whilst other kinds of violence, especially sexualised violence against women, have a stronger connotation of being physical and bodily. These forms of violence are consequently regarded as being private or as being 'normal' crimes. Also, what can be seen as a culturally racist understanding of violence as 'a part of the Others' culture' creates an attitude which regards gender related violence in particular as being a part of 'normal' practice in the society of origin and hence not admissible as grounds for asylum.

Further, it is important to highlight the similarities between notions of gender and nation that lie behind gendered aspects of war and persecution on the one hand, and the gendered aspects of asylum application assessments on the other. It is some shared ideas of women's symbolic relation to the nation, to the political and hence to war, that creates the links between warfare and welfare. This is realised through the positioning of women outside the sphere of the

[3] The issue of gender related persecution is undertheorised in the Swedish context. Except for Kristina Folkelius and Gregor Noll's article from 1998, the Swedish studies I refer to are taken from reports made by NGOs and advocacy groups. Maria Bexelius' two extensive reports from 2001 and 2008 were published by The Swedish Refugee Advice Centre. Maite Zamacona Aguirre's report from 2008 was funded and published by the Red Cross Sweden.

political and inside the sphere of the private, where they are conceived as belonging to the state/the men of the nation (compare Yuval-Davis 1997).

My focus in this study has not been upon the details of the asylum processes and the cases of my informants, but rather is directed towards their experiences and subjective understandings of the process as a part of their experiences and understandings of the Swedish welfare state. That means that I cannot assess their cases specifically in relation to the notions of gender related persecution presented here. Whilst I have not looked thoroughly into the legal specifics of their cases, it is nevertheless clear that the experiences and subjective understandings of the asylum processes are amongst the central themes in the interviews. And I do find it pertinent to frame these experiences of the routes through the system within the discussion about gender related persecution and gendered patterns in the assessment procedures. This seems especially relevant when considering the production and subjective significance of deportability. In Isra's case the fear and pain inherited from her experiences in Bosnia and from years of flight, as well as the way in which this fear and pain has not been acknowledged by the process of assessment, adds new dimensions to her experience of clandestinity and of being made deportable as a woman.

To deepen the understanding of the ways in which my material points towards a certain reinforcement of war traumas through the ways in which rejections of asylum application are understood and lived, I now want to take another look at the concept of deportability and the need for a gendered and embodied approach to it.[4]

Deportability

I introduced the concept of deportability briefly in the discussion on labour rights in chapter 5. Deportability, as conceptualised by de Genova (2005), is 'the possibility of deportation, the possibility of being removed from the *space* of the U.S. nation-state' (2005 p. 8)

[4] For a further discussion about women and traumas of war and persecution in relation to the refugee experience, see Hollander (2006).

and the ways in which the presence of this 'possibility' – or rather, threat – organises migrants' positions in the labour market. In concrete terms, in the labour market the implicit – and sometimes explicit – threat of deportation produces flexibility and precarity. But, as my analysis has already shown, deportability organises a range of aspects relating to everyday life in clandestinity. Parallel to de Genova's exploration of the ways in which deportability constructs positions in the labour market, I identify a need to further explore how deportability constructs positions in family life, in the streets and in relation to subjective experiences of the body, the self and the future. Broadening both the understanding and the consequences of the threat of deportation in migrants' lives, might serve to approach a more gendered, embodied understanding of deportability and the location of my informants.

In Khosravi's ethnographic study of irregular asylum seekers' situations in Stockholm, he draws on de Genova and develops a wider understanding of deportability through his ethnographic accounts:

> The lack of legal status and valid identification or social security number creates 'everyday irregularity' […] The land lord, the employer, the subway ticket controller, the nurse at the district healthcare centre and everyone else that demand documents proving one's legal status, contribute to the construction of everyday irregularity [...] This everyday irregularity results in a constant feeling of vulnerability and surveillance (Khosravi 2006 p. 295f, my translation).

Khosravi's understanding of irregularity (2006) and the ways fear and risk of deportation – deportability – affect both emotional and daily life parallels the kind of gendered reading of deportability that I want to give. However, in order to do so I want to focus more closely upon the deportable gendered (female) body, and to do so specifically in relation to reproduction and mothering/parenting.

Some central themes in most of my informants' experiences – which are further reinforced by the ways in which discourses and legislation construct possible subject positions – are firstly, the

reproductive body and parenthood/motherhood, secondly, approaches to life spans and notions of normality, and finally, (mis)representation and (lack of) recognition. I identify these themes as being central in the ethnographic material, both in the sense of how the informants' space for agency and autonomy in relation to health, reproduction and parenthood is narrowed and distorted – and in the sense of how health, reproduction and parenthood become central in their narrowed range of possible and 'allowed' self-representations and gender formations.

Isra explicitly described the withdrawal of rights, welfare entitlements and the fear of deportation as a bodily experience. Her experiences of violence and war, and the non-recognition of these experiences through repeated rejections of her appeals for asylum, seem to have translated into deep anxiety. This anxiety has been accompanied by the onset of psychosomatic symptoms and the worry for the health of both herself and that of her children. In the excerpt from the monologue given in the introduction to this chapter, Isra describes stinging sensations in her arms, pains in her heart and anxiety related difficulties with breathing. These experiences seem to be very common amongst clandestine asylum seekers as other informants described similar symptoms. During my visit to the underground health centre I found that anxiety related psychosomatic reactions were common among the patients

The deportable body and reproduction

I now want to return to Ardian and Ana, who we encountered in the previous chapter. Here I want to approach their situation by giving a little bit more detail in order to illustrate the extent to which their story of leaving Kosovo, their flight to Sweden, the rejection of their application for asylum and their finally becoming clandestine, turns upon notions of reproduction and the (female) body.

They came to Sweden from Kosovo in 2003 in order to apply for asylum. Since the UN had been present in Kosovo through UNMIK since 1999, by 2003, regardless of any experience of persecution or

violence related to the war, it was very difficult to get asylum in Sweden). Ana was one of many women who had been sexually assaulted during the war, and subsequently it was difficult for her and Ardian to stay in the town where they lived. They did not explain the difficulties they encountered to me in detail, but they are related to the stigma attached to war rapes, that people knew, and that they were excluded from the community. Furthermore, Ana was in need of both mental and physical healthcare, something that was not available in Kosovo at the time. The couple also remained involuntarily childless due to Ana's injuries from the assault. They decided to leave for Sweden, because, as Ardian puts it 'we hoped that my wife would have the right to stay because she was a victim of war'. But things were not as they expected in Sweden:

> Ardian: I had talked to many people in Kosovo, and they said that Sweden was a democratic country where people are treated as human beings and not like animals. But when we arrived here, it was very different from what I had heard before.
> *Maja: How was it?*
> Ardian: It was ... my wife has not ... she hasn't been treated as a woman who has survived war, who has survived many horrific things. She has been very traumatised, she has been ... raped. And … it was … I thought this would be a country that could help her, but it isn't at all like I thought it would be.

In this quote Ardian, after some hesitation, explicitly names what happened to Ana as 'rape', but most other times during the interviews he talks about women who 'have survived the war' and of how the Swedish authorities are 'cold' towards them. The formalised demands and narrow definitions of violence and persecution in the asylum process clash brutally with Ardian's way of trying to find a language to describe their experiences in the interstices between cultural taboos, traumatic memories and bodily pain. As discussed above the norms surrounding the assessment of asylum grounds tend to privilege certain modes of talking and representing one's experiences. In this context it is obvious that Ardian's way of talking – for instance when he names 'rape' as 'survived the war' – clashes

with the expectations of the authorities who demand that truth be told in certain ways and with a specific vocabulary.

Ana and Ardian were not granted asylum or residence permit. After three months they got the first rejection and a year after their arrival in Sweden their appeal to the Aliens Appeals Board was rejected as well. At the point when the appeal was rejected, Ana was under medical and therapeutic treatment due to her severe trauma. Consequently the decision to turn them back to Kosovo was postponed for another year until August 2005, at which stage they began to live in clandestinity. In November that same year, the provisional legislation (between November 2005 and March 2006) allowed them to apply again. They seemed to meet most of the criteria included in the provisional legislation and their handling officer signalled to them that they could 'relax and wait for joyful news' (Ardian). But instead they got another rejection.

At this point, reproduction painfully and explicitly appears at the centre of the way in which Ana and Ardian are once again made deportable. As the practice of law in the provisional legislation developed, children (with a certain length of stay in Sweden) became the most central of the criteria for gaining a permanent residence permit. Ana and Ardian were rejected as they did not have children. Seeing as the couple were involuntarily childless due to the injuries Ana had received from the sexual assaults she was subjected to during the war, then this means that the direct consequence of the war crimes that made them leave Kosovo in the first place ultimately became the reason for having their application for a residency permit in Sweden rejected. When I first met them, as far as both they and the people in their network could understand the situation at the time, they did not seem to have any further possibilities within the frames of current legislation.[5] Their one hope was of being granted a residence permit on the grounds of exceptionally distressing circumstances based on Ana's mental health problems (*Uppehållstillstånd på grund av särskilt ömmande omständigheter* 5 Kap 1 § UtlL).

[5] The new Aliens Act *Utlänningslag* (2005:716) was implemented March 31, 2006.

My brief delineation of Isra's story in the introduction revealed the way in which the war in Bosnia and the sexualised violence that has marked the Balkan wars as being explicitly gendered, link to the production of deportability in Sweden. Ana's (and Ardian's) story further reinforces this image of how the pain and violence imposed on women in the Balkan wars seem to have continuity, and seem to be reinforced, in the production of deportability in Sweden. My material therefore confirms earlier feminist scholarship that identifies the processes of asylum assessment and the consequences of rejection as being gendered (Bexelius 2001, 2008; Hajdukowski and Ahmed et al. 2008).

The deportable mother

Ana and Ardian's childlessness grew beyond its initial meaning for the couple and came to construct their deportability in a way that connected it specifically to (non-)reproduction. But during our conversations, they also pointed out how much more difficult it had been for clandestine families with children – until these families were granted residence a permit under the provisional legislation.

> *Maja: And the other Kosovo Albanian families you were in touch with. How did they manage?*
> Ardian: Oh, they didn't manage well at all […] Some stayed inside all the time [...] and the people who had children had a lot of problems. They had to buy milk and things like that. It was very difficult, but for the two of us it wasn't that difficult, as we were only two, we had no children, we could manage [...] Some people were working ... informally, and they didn't have too many money problems. But ... for the others who couldn't work and had children it was terrible. It was a huge problem. But they managed, and in the end they were allowed to stay.

While reproduction has a role in the production and understanding of deportability for Ana and Ardian, in the everyday life of clandestinity deportability can also construct a restrictive frame around the conditions and space for parenting/parenthood. I now want to turn to

another of the informants, Adelina and her children, in order to look at the way her motherhood is at the centre of her experience of deportability.

Two years before I met her, Adelina and her two children had left Kosovo for the second time. They had to escape from Adelina's abusive and violent husband who had been harassing her and who had threatened her with death. They had already claimed asylum in Germany, but their application was rejected and consequently they were deported back to Kosovo. The next time they got a chance to flee they ended up in Sweden, but seeing as they had already been to Germany their asylum grounds were never properly assessed with the Swedish authorities referring to the Dublin Convention and wanting them returned to Germany.[6] As they knew a return to Germany would mean immediate deportation, Adelina decided to stay clandestinely with her children supported by some family members who had been living in Sweden for some years.

Although Adelina's application was formally rejected under the rules of the Dublin Convention (and not after an assessment of her actual asylum case) it is pertinent to relate her situation to the discussion above that considers the ways in which gender related persecution tends to be interpreted as existing outside the framework of the practice of asylum law. Her case had been dismissed in Germany, and hence Adelina was caught in the non-recognition of gender related and sexual violence as forms of persecution that are both personal *and* political. In this case, despite the fact that the state (Serbia during the time of the interview, Kosovo since 2008) had not been able to provide her with protection from her abusive ex-husband, the threat towards her had been regarded as a case of 'private' crime.

I originally got in touch with Adelina through Sofia, a woman who was doing voluntary work in the refugee community in the small town where they both lived. She contacted the asylum rights group in Malmö to ask about advice regarding Adelina's case. I indicated my wish to conduct an interview with Adelina through

[6] For an explanation of the content of the Dublin Regulation, see Chapter Two, footnote 13.

Sofia, but at first she did not want to see me because she felt very depressed and worried about the situation her family was in. However, a few months after their application had been rejected they managed to be granted an exemption from the regulations in the Dublin Convention and got a chance for a new assessment of their case. During this process they did not have to be clandestine, the children could start to go to school again and Adelina felt less oppressed by her circumstance. As a result the family felt a bit better and she finally agreed to meet me for an interview. Despite no longer having to remain clandestine while their case was reassessed, they remained at the same secret address as before. They were terribly afraid of being rejected again and had heard that sometimes the police came searching for people even before they had been informed by the Migration Board that their appeal had been rejected.

Adelina's experience of clandestinity was strongly marked by fear and worries. Her worries focused specifically upon her children and how they would be affected by the isolation and fear that they had to face during this period. The field notes from the interview describe how the children's health and well-being was at the centre of her concerns during our encounter:

> In the beginning the children are a bit shy and stay in their bedroom playing. Sofia stays with us for a moment – to hear about my project and to say something about her own voluntary work in the community – but then she leaves us to conduct the interview and goes to the other room to play with the children. During the interview their play accelerates – they start to run around in the apartment and scream louder and louder, first in the other room but after some time also in the living room where we are sitting. They play hide-and-seek, they wrestle and they climb all over us on the sofa.
>
> During the interview, every time we listen to their laughter and raucous screams, Adelina and her cousin smile happily. They repeatedly mention how difficult it has been for the children and how much they enjoy being back in school. I notice that while I experience their play as increasingly violent and beyond control, the other adults are just watching with smiling faces, overwhelmed by the pleasure of seeing the

> children feeling better. Despite all the worry and insecurity they still have to carry until they get a decision from the Migration board, this evening – and in relation to the children's reawakened liveliness – the atmosphere is characterised by relief (field notes).[7]

Whilst former sections showed that deportability has embodied consequences which are further conditioned by notions of reproduction and the reproductive body, here instead it is parenthood that becomes central. Adelina's account of her period in clandestinity puts parenting directly in the centre:

> *Maja: What did you do during the days when you were clandestine?*
> Adelina: Nothing. The whole day was spent taking care of the children, trying to calm them down. What can one do? There is not much to do. Only trying to survive and all that.

> Adelina: I can't describe how difficult it is to live clandestinely. Nights and days, always here inside the apartment […] I have been a bit strong and tried to make it in some way, but it has been most difficult for the children. The youngest boy's face and eyes became completely swollen. They became like ... like wild people.

There are two things to note here. Firstly it is clear that her possibilities for performing motherhood – to protect and take responsibility for her children's wellbeing – had become severely limited by deportability. Secondly, Adelina describes her children as 'wild people'. Without drawing outlandish conclusions from the choice of words, I like to speculate in the underlying reference to clandestinity like a kind of wilderness – a space where civilisation

[7] A few weeks after our interview Adelina and her sons got permanent residence permit on grounds of exceptionally distressing circumstances (*Uppehållstillstånd på grund av särskilt ömmande omständigheter* 5 Kap 1 § UtlL).

has withdrawn.[8] This ties in with the way that (hetero-) normative family life (with children) often tends to be one of the most central aspects (along with work and schooling) in the informant's reasoning about their situation and dreams for the future. 'Normality' seems to become a kind of protection against the withdrawal of 'civilisation' and human dignity that deportability entails. In the case of Adelina and her children this is manifested through an emphasis on motherhood that can be read as a form of protection against the ways in which deportability intervenes in her parenting, and hence, according to Adelina, in her children's behaviour and education.

It is important in this context to highlight the paradox in family policy and racist family discourses that tend to problematise migrant and/or racialised families as carriers of traditional family patterns and gender roles (too caring) on the one hand, and as abusive and/or irresponsible (not caring enough) on the other (Harris and Shaw 2009; Mulinari D 2009). A concrete moment where this paradox was played out explicitly in Swedish society is found in the debate about the apathetic children (see Chapter Two). The groundless accusations about manipulation and simulation of apathy (Tamas 2009) were woven with material from both 'sides' of the paradox: on one side, representations which show migrant families to be traditional and to embrace conservative family values of care and community, and, on the other, the idea of abusive and dysfunctional parents with a mere instrumental approach to their children. These representations tend to construct an image of racialised women who do not take part in such 'traditional' family patterns – unintelligible, victimised or understood as (victimised) sex workers. Adelina's parenting is thus not only limited by the material and emotional obstacles produced by deportability per se, but it is also limited in the sense of the narrow range of intelligible representations of her position. For Adelina, motherhood takes centre stage in her struggle against deportability/'wilderness' and on her quest for normality.

[8] Adelina's reference to her children as wild people, and to clandestinity as wilderness, as a space where civilisation has withdrawn, creates a striking parallel to Agamben and the *homo sacer* inhabiting a zone of indistinction where the law has withdrawn itself to leave nothing but bare life.

Monopolised horizons

When I talk to Fija in February 2008, she is very tired. A few days before our conversation she broke up with the man she had been in a relationship with for more than half a year. The previous time I had met her we had been talking optimistically about the possibility of her applying for a resident permit as his partner. Now that they are no longer together she does not know what to do.

In Fija's case the relationship had developed from hope to disappointment, probably emotionally but also in relation to the hope for a residence permit. Of course, romantic relationships and family life are never practiced or understood outside – or free from – the social, so my argument is not that migration policy and the urgent need for a residence permit 'destroys' a formerly 'pure' relationship or romance. I do, however, want to underline the way that these processes organise family life and relationships in specific ways (For a discussion on how migration policies regulate family formations in the UK context, see Harriss and Shaw (2009)).

In Khosravi's exploration of the significations of non-citizenship through an ethnographic study with rejected asylum seekers in Stockholm he refers to one of his informants (called Anvar in the article). Anvar describes the lack of a residence permit as a 'personal minus' factor, and continues that being irregular is: 'like being ugly. No one wants you. If you don't have any money you don't go shopping. If you don't have residence permit you don't look for a relationship' ('Anvar' in Khosravi 2006 p. 294, my translation). This quote illustrates two aspects of deportability and the way it intervenes in relation to intimate relationships – in the sense of the significance deportability has for the informants as a kind of 'pause' in life and in the sense that it can circumscribe one's actual possibilities for becoming involved in a relationship. I now want to turn to Fija to see how both these aspects of deportability organise her position in relation to reproduction, relationships and ideas of the future.

Life in brackets

> Fija: I don't think there is any point when I put my thoughts aside or forget my situation even for a moment.

As I discuss throughout this thesis, there are a multitude of ways to live, experience and resist within clandestinity. But in addition to the diversity of means and methods, there are some themes that tend to be central for most of my informants. One such theme often appeared in the informants' responses to questions about dreams and plans for the future. Deportability seemed to permeate the informants' feelings and perceptions of their life-course – like a filter through which all dreams and plans for the future are percolated and negotiated.

Deportability, as expressed through my ethnographic material, creates two distinct situations. On the one hand temporality and conditionality are created through the way the present situation might be disrupted at any time – in an emergency situation, for example, that makes contacting the authorities unavoidable, or if one gets caught by the police. On the other hand deportability creates timelessness and suspension. The determination not to return voluntarily, when combined with the lack of options regarding gaining a residence permit, means that the asylum seeker has no control over the development of their situation. These circumstances can be described in terms that indicate the extent to which the horizon of expectations of the clandestine asylum seeker is monopolised by the uncertainties of deportability – life, in other words, is put within brackets. This aspect of clandestinity, with reference to Agamben (2005), could be understood as a concrete instance of the ways in which the clandestine asylum seeker embodies the bare life. The following reflection by Fija on her future plans effectively illustrates how her possibilities of imagining the future are circumscribed:

> Fija: Right now I don't think about what I will do later. After I get a residence permit maybe I will want to get married and have children, but now I don't think about the future.

For both Adelina and for Ana and Ardian notions of (non-)reproduction and/or (non-) parenthood had become central in their route into clandestinity, for their struggles for a residence permit and for the ways in which deportability became embodied and experienced in their specific life situations. In Fija's asylum story and in the expressions deportability takes in her life, notions of motherhood, reproduction and the body are less strikingly present. They are, however, indirectly brought to the fore through the ways in which the changing dynamics of her relationships and her wish to start a family affect – and are affected by – her legal status and her deportable body. Fija was in her late thirties during the period when I conducted the interviews, and, given her wish to create a family and have children, the perceived brackets around her life-course take very specific and concrete expression in her life.

As with Ana and Ardian, Fija was already clandestine before the introduction of the provisional legislation, and hoped to finally get included during the period of expanded criteria for gaining a residence permit. But she was rejected, and again as with Ana and Ardian, mainly understood the rejection as being a consequence of not having children. She often returned to making a comparison of her situation with that of her siblings'. Her five siblings had also been – or still were – asylum seekers in the EU and, except for a sister in Denmark, the siblings who had spouses and children had managed to get residence permits. Fija and a brother, however, both without children had been forced to remain in clandestinity.

The provisional legislation specifically (but also practices of asylum law in general) resulted in normative family regimes indirectly privileging asylum seekers in 'normal' heterosexual families. In the case of Ana, the violent consequences of the privileging of families with children became striking through the way her childlessness was related to the actual war traumas she had fled (see above under subsection 'The deportable body and reproduction'). In the case of Fija, reproduction and gender also become central in another equally paradoxical way: on the one hand Fija as a single 'refugee woman' lacks a certain notion of 'normality' (heterosexual family and children) that would have opened up other

possibilities for gaining a residence permit. On the other hand the deportability puts her life 'within brackets' and circumscribes her understanding of her own chances and possibilities to construct exactly that kind of (privileged) normality.

A central debate in relation to this – one that does not relate directly to Fija's situation, but to the discussion on regulations of family and intimate relationships – is the way that deportability reinforces vulnerability in relation to gendered violence, domestic violence and crime in general. My empirical material shows that the conditions of vulnerability produced by deportability put serious pressure on intimate relations, especially on the relations between men and women. On the one hand some of the women I met risked becoming dependent upon men for a residence permit whilst on the other women continued to bear the responsibility of care work. Undocumented migrants in general have no – or small – possibilities to report crimes committed against them without risking deportation themselves, and many women end up in abusive relationships as a result of the way the relationship becomes the condition for their further residence in Sweden. Compared to the challenges and debates surrounding asylum seekers' non-access to healthcare and education, the non-access to protection from violence is hardly debated or publicly questioned. This silence is reflected in the interviews. One of the informants, a lawyer, says: 'The debate [about the possibilities for undocumented migrants to report crimes committed against them] is absolutely dead. Nothing is happening. No one is talking about this'.

A feminist psychologist, Jenny Nordin (2006, 2008), has conducted a study which shows that many shelters for abused women – not all, but many – do not allow undocumented women to stay as they do not receive municipal or state subsidies for them. Therefore in this case it is not only the welfare institutions but also parts of civil society (ironically, parts which aim to protect women) that withdraw from – and become non-accessible in – the location of the clandestine asylum seeker.

In March 2010 the anti-deportation network 'No One is Illegal' launched the campaign *Ain't I a Woman* which focuses upon the

vulnerability of women in relation to violence that women, and especially undocumented women, can end up in. They claimed, among other things, that the laws regulating domestic violence (*Kvinnofridslagen*) had to be put above the Aliens Act in order to create a full legal protection for all women living in Sweden (http://aintiawomankampanjen.wordpress.com/upprop/ (accessed 4 January 2011)). As none of my informants expressed any direct experiences of violence or threats of violence, I will not continue with this discussion here, but I do want to put it forward as an important and decisive limitation for the autonomy and safety of undocumented women.

Gendered constructions of normality

In the discussion above about the experiences of Ana, Ardian, and Adelina, we have seen how the interplay between gender and migration regimes constructs asylum seekers as deportable through mechanisms that, as well as placing constraints upon access to such positions, privileges both motherhood and 'normal' (hetero) families. We have also seen how deportability creates a state of exception and monopolises horizons by placing an individual's life-course within imagined brackets. Similarly, we have seen the ways in which Fija's wish to create a family is circumscribed by her position in clandestinity, while the lack of a (nuclear) family also constructs her deportable position in clandestinity. But gender regimes also seem to play into the ways in which my informants try to construct a sense of 'normality' in their everyday life. In the previous chapter on work I discussed how access to a work place gave Fija a space that provided her with a daily routine, an income, an opportunity to speak her own language and the chance to pass as a 'regular migrant'. All in all, irrespective of the precarious working conditions, Fija gained a sense of normality in her everyday life. I also discussed how Ardian underlined his identity as a worker and provider for the family before they left for Sweden and connected that discussion to Skeggs' writing on respectability.

Here, respectability becomes central again. Normality (as in heteronormative and gender normative ideas on the family and

reproduction) is not only something that comes 'from above' and which is rewarded through the ways that gender regimes and migration regimes combine in the informants' positions as deportable. It also seems that the informants turned to notions of respectability and normality in order to distance themselves from representations which construct them as being outside the law, as criminals or as 'wild people' – to use Adelina's words. This turn to respectability finds a concrete expression in the accounts of two other couples of informants – Floriana and Ismail, and Miranda and Ermir (all of whom will be introduced at greater length below). Floriana and Ismail underline how they manage to survive 'for the children' and Miranda and Ermir describe how they try to create a normal environment for their children through not telling them the details about their situation. It is also manifested through the way that Miranda and Ermir – just like Ardian – emphasise their willingness to start to work and contribute to society and the community. But this struggle to realise respectability is also apparent in more casual practices. This is seen, for example, in the ways most of my informants relate to me as hosts, inviting me to their homes, and then making a big effort to make me feel more like a guest on a friendly visit than like a researcher conducting an interview. Through the simple rituals of hosting guests and maintaining a 'normal' family life, the informants seem to resist being identified as deportable.

In previous sections I have discussed how asylum seekers' autonomy in relation to health, reproduction and parenthood is narrowed and monopolised. In this last section I have discussed how reproduction, parenthood and intimate relationships/family become central in asylum seekers' narrowed range of possible and intelligible self-representations and gender formations. Now I want to go deeper into the issues of representation and lack of recognition in both the asylum process and in clandestinity.

Misrepresentation and lack of recognition

Isra, Ana, and Adelina had all been exposed to different forms of gendered violence, war and/or persecution. They also shared the experience, throughout the asylum procedure, of feeling unrecognised as victims of these instances of violence and/or persecution. Hence they all shared the fear of being forcibly returned to a place that they perceived as being unsafe. These feelings and fears need to be contextualised in the wider lack of recognition that my informants experienced in Sweden. In this last section of the chapter I will approach some of the tensions between visibility and invisibility, as well as the informants' experiences of a lack of recognition within what is often perceived as being a 'culture of suspicion' (Lewis 2004).

Fear of being un/seen

Floriana and her husband Ismail came with their three children to Sweden from Macedonia in 2003. They had been hiding for more than a year at the time I interviewed them and they were waiting for a decision upon their application under the provisional legislation. The family shared a small one-roomed apartment in a Malmö suburb, but before they moved in to that apartment they had been moving between several temporary places. Floriana and Ismail often expressed fears about being found by the police:

> Floriana: We were so afraid when we went outdoors so we split up into groups. Some of us walked further ahead and some on the other side of the street a bit behind. When we saw a police car the children got so scared they jumped and tried to hide in the bushes. We were totally struck by panic ... And that meant of course that we showed that we were afraid of something […] Once a friend sent me to hospital, and outside a police car was parked. I thought I was going to die of the fear!
> Ismail: One can really say that we have lived *hidden*. The first four months after the rejection I think we had to change the place where we were staying ten times.

In the discussion in the introductory chapter (Chapter One) about the concept of clandestinity, I emphasised that the term is partly misleading because clandestine asylum seekers are often very much present in society. Rather than literally living underground, as one might expect, clandestine asylum seekers are present on the labour market, in the streets, in the housing market and at welfare institutions (healthcare, schools, child care). However, here I will discuss some ways that clandestinity actually also seems to be about *underground* existence, something which is often related to the feelings of fear and (in)security that deportability engenders. Firstly, in some of my informants' lives and in some situations, clandestinity has literally been about *hiding* and/or being *underground.* Floriana and Ismail tell me in the quote above about how they and their three children were literally hiding indoors, and that the few times they went outside they were extremely nervous and ready to hide in bushes to avoid the police in the streets. They were desperately afraid of being caught by the police and deported.

But there is another fear (and anger) that I hear in the voices of my informants. This relates directly to being underground and, as a consequence, totally invisible. Listen to Fija:

> *Maja: What do you think people should know about the situation for clandestine asylum seekers?*
> Fija: The most important thing is to convey a sense that the individual who is hiding, still *exists.* Because it seems like people think that you disappear when you become clandestine. As if you cease to exist.

For Fija, replying to a direct question, it is the feeling of being rendered non-existent which is the most pervasive aspect of the situation clandestine asylum seekers experience. The way Fija expresses the dehumanising and fearful feeling of being rendered non-existent is a description of invisibility that can be related to my former argument that clandestine asylum seekers are, in some senses, more widely acknowledged in the public debate than they were previously. But in another sense, as actual inhabitants of Sweden they still remain invisible. So, while it is important to acknowledge

that the term clandestinity might conceal the presence of rejected asylum seekers in both public life and the labour market, it is also important to acknowledge the fear of both visibility and invisibility that many people who need to hide away from deportation experience in some situations. Clandestinity is not about a simple notion of being underground; it is also about the invisibility seen in the experiences of Floriana, Ismail and Fija, that the lack of recognition creates.

Cultures of suspicion

Another overarching experience from the asylum process, one that is shared by all the asylum seeking informants, is the feeling of not having been listened to or taken seriously. Lewis (2004) introduces the concept of a 'culture of suspicion', something she relates to the ways the scope of migration policies have expanded into the field of regulations that govern access to welfare. She describes (often racist) cultures of suspicion as being highly present in many fields of social policies, but as being explicitly expressed in the field of assessment of asylum status and applications for residence permits (p. 29). Although Lewis is writing from a UK perspective, her ideas seem equally valid when translated to a Swedish context. Recurrent experiences from the asylum process among my informants are, for example: a) the non-translation of important documents, b) the assignment of dilettante interpreters and/or lawyers, c) encountering interpreters or handling officers that seemed to be 'against' the asylum seeker, d) errors and mistakes in the descriptions of the stories included in the documentation for the asylum case (and the rejection), e) hostile or non-attentive handling officers, and f) feelings of having been approached with suspicion and lack of trust.

A series of reports and studies about individual and more general experiences of the procedure of reception and the assessments of asylum claims in Sweden further confirm the informants' similar understandings of the asylum process (Appelqvist 1999; Bexelius 2001, 2008; Dahlstedt and Tesfahuney 2004; Granestrand 2007; Khosravi 2006, 2009, 2010; Norström 2004; Tamas 2009; Tesfahuney 1998; Vestin 2006; Zamacona Aguirre 2008).

Furthermore, several of the informants, as well as the activist informants, talk about the way their knowledge, experiences and analyses of the political situation in the countries of origin differ widely from those of the Migration Board. Many of the informants feel frustrated about the way that the Migration Board tends to base decisions strictly upon official representations of the situation in the country of origin, official representations that are often deeply embedded in international and bilateral relations (for a parallel argument about the application of a 'white list' with countries regarded as safe countries in the UK, see Tyler 2006 p. 189). For example, the UN presence in Kosovo through UNMIK becomes an argument against any claims for the need of protection (the formal presence is 'valued' more highly than the actual experiences of not being able to enjoy the protection from UNMIK). Further, in this situation, granting someone asylum on grounds of persecution also touches upon areas that offer considerable political sensitivity. Here, for example, an admission of persecution would also indicate a statement about the inefficiency of the UNMIK administration.

Fija lives with the feeling that her handling officer at the Migration Board as well as not taking her case seriously, was almost working against her. Ana and Ardian also feel that the Migration board did not take either Ana's experiences or the social and psychological consequences of her experiences of the war seriously. Floriana and Ismail suspect that some bits of their story have not even been regarded. Adelina, who was a so called 'Dublin case' knew that her case had not been assessed, even though she knew for sure that the country she was supposed to apply to would reject her application as a result of that country's law. Here is Floriana and Ismail telling me about their experience from the asylum process:[9]

[9] Floriana and Ismail felt reluctant to use a professional interpreter during the interview. Instead a friend of the family was there to help us with the translation. He had supported them and followed them closely during a period of time, and sometimes he shifts from proper translation into his own voice where he explains things he knows about the family. I put his comments into the quotes as well, and call him interpreter.

Maja: What is your experience of the Migration board?
Ismail: We are not used to this kind of situation ...
Interpreter: Obviously they haven't done anything like this before ... travel to another country or anything like that ... So they had no idea how they would be received, or if they would be sent back immediately ... So they were under huge pressure, they didn't dare to speak to anyone, or express any emotions or anything like that. But they feel like they were well received in the beginning when they first arrived.
Maja: Did you have any expectations? [...]
Ismail: We didn't know anything whatsoever about how this process would go.
Floriana: But I never expected that I would experience this in Sweden, after all the things we have experienced at home.
Maja: Can you tell about the asylum process? How was the procedure?[10]
[...]
Ismail: The interview was very stressful. It [the things they experienced in Macedonia] isn't anything you like to talk to anyone about. It is not easy to talk about it. That we [the adults] had to be interviewed we understand of course, but that the children were interviewed individually ... She [the oldest daughter] had just turned twelve by then. […] It was kind of trick questions. The kind of things one asks to check if someone is lying.
Floriana: The police here and the police there [in Macedonia] are not the same thing. There ... if we saw the police we knew something was going to happen. And the children, especially the children, were extra afraid of the police, if they saw the police they got scared to death. And then here, during the interviews they perceived the migration officers as police officers and they were very afraid. They asked the children questions but the children couldn't answer ... they cried and were afraid.
Maja: Can we return to what you said about the interview ... that they asked trick questions ... How did you feel during the interview? [...] How was their attitude towards you?

[10] Although my analysis does not entail a thorough analysis of the informants' asylum cases, we have talked about the process and their understanding of it throughout the fieldwork.

Floriana: During the interview we were so very stressed that we hardly know what we said ourselves or what questions we were asked. We didn't understand Swedish at the time, we had an interpreter […] but it was some amateur interpreter who, it appeared later, had translated everything incorrectly. There was a lot that had been translated incorrectly, he had interpreted it as if we only had come here for economic reasons ...

Floriana: We became aware of this when we got the first rejection, there it said that the interpreter had said we came here because of economic problems and that we didn't have any other problems ... during the interview they said to me that I had to calm down to be able to understand what the interpreter said, but I did understand everything he translated to me. But what he said to them ... I didn't understand that.

Ismail: I was very nervous and angry that day during the interview, and I didn't understand so much of what was happening or what was going on. But one thing I did understand was that all the time they were throwing all these questions around about whether I had a job, and what sort of work I did ... all the time they tried to suggest that I was poor down there [in Macedonia].

Maja: Do you feel like you have been able to tell your whole story to the authorities here? That the decision they have made is based upon knowledge of your full story?

Floriana: We think we have been allowed to tell most of our story and our situation down there [in Macedonia], but ... given the way we have been treated after all that, we don't think they have gone through our documents at all ... if we told anybody else what we have experienced ... if not for our sake ... we would have got some help because of the children. But here we were so badly treated and ... that proves to me that they haven't read through what we have said at all. It is just laying there in a pile with all the documentation and no one has gone through it.

Maja: Why do you think that?

Floriana: I don't understand how they can be so cold otherwise. I mean, everywhere else we have been, every doctor or psychologist we have met, has received us so well. They have understood our situation and tried to calm us down

> and tried to help us with everything ... But at the Migration Board they didn't care at all about what we have experienced.
> *Maja: Why do you think ... I mean, I do understand that you think that ... but what do you think is the reason that they haven't read the papers and all that?*
> Floriana: I can't get my head around that ... I ask myself all the time 'What are they doing? How can they do that?' But I just can't understand it [...]
> Floriana: I mean we say that the interpreter translated incorrectly, but of course we can't know for sure because we didn't understand what he said in Swedish. So it can just as well be that the interpreter translated correctly but that the Migration officers wrote something totally different.

The quote is lengthy, but I think in its full length this quote manages to encapsulate several aspects of Floriana and Ismail's experience and understanding of their reception at the Migration board and the ways in which it was coloured by suspicion and non-recognition. This is exemplified by their feeling afraid and insecure upon first arriving but then feeling well-received in their initial encounters with authority. However, this positive experience is not granted much longevity and the encounter soon descends into a feeling of incomprehension on their part. As well as subjecting their children to insensitive interrogations the focus of the Swedish authorities switches towards the family's economic situation rather than upon the terrible experiences they had endured in Macedonia. Ultimately they are left with the feeling that something went wrong somewhere along the line – with the translation, with the assessment of the information and their story. More worryingly, they are also left with the feeling that the Migration board might simply have ignored the information they provided.

Counter representations

The responses of Adelina and her cousin to my questions in what follows makes me acutely aware of the ever-present culture of suspicion, a suspicion that most often relates to ideas that asylum

seekers are so-called 'economic migrants'.[11] Adelina and her cousin show this through their way of talking *against* these representations of asylum seekers as 'economic refugees' or 'asylum shoppers' or whatever description is used to imply that asylum seekers are pulled by the welfare systems of various welfare states. During our two-hour conversation they often relate to me as if my questions were coming from suspicion and, with increasing impatience, return several times to explain the nature of flight to me:

> *Maja: But how come, when you decided to leave Kosovo, you decided specifically to come to Sweden?*
> Adelina: When you have to ... when you have the kind of problems with your family as I had, you don't care where you go. You just want to take off and be left in peace somewhere. So there was nothing special that made me go specifically to Sweden, it was all about leaving Kosovo.
> *Maja: But how come you ended up in Sweden? Was it a coincidence? Was this the only place it was possible to go at that moment?*

Adelina and her cousin explain that a man in Sweden had promised to marry her to make it possible for her to leave Kosovo. The details about this are not important here, I only want to show how they often understood my questions as implying motives other than her actual need of protection for Adelina's arrival in Sweden:

> Interpreter: For her the only important thing was to leave.
> […]
> Interpreter: She ended up here [for various reasons], but for her the important thing was to get out of Kosovo.
> [...]
> Adelina: If I had anywhere to return in my home country, I would have returned immediately. I wouldn't have stayed

[11] In this interview the informant also chose to have a relative rather than a professional as an interpreter. He was Adelina's cousin and had been with the family during the difficult times. He had a lot of insights and emotions in relation to the situation himself. Sometimes he expressed his own opinion or put his own words to things rather than translating directly. For those occasions I present him as an 'own voice' in the interview, and not only as a channel for Adelina's words.

> here to hide away as though I was in a prison. And I haven't come here just because I wanted to ... or to be clandestine or anything like that ... I escaped for the children's sake.
> [...]
> Adelina: Listen, when you are down there [in Kosovo] ... you are not interested in going exactly *here.* And you don't care what country your relatives or friends are in either.

Instead of accepting the representations of asylum seekers to which they are implicitly related, and instead of positioning themselves against 'the rest' (or 'other' asylum seekers), they both react strongly to my questions about Adelina's 'choice' of Sweden as destination country and argue with vehemence against negative representations of themselves.

Conclusion

In the same way as the seemingly marginal position of clandestine asylum seekers in the labour market can be read as being central to understanding the mechanisms regulating the labour market as a whole, the marginal position of clandestine asylum seekers in relation to social rights and welfare services can be read as central for an enhanced understanding of the gendered and racialised mechanisms regulating bodies and lived citizenships. In this chapter I have shown how certain family constellations, and especially parenthood, have become (non)privileged in the migration legislation. The ways in which the childless informants have been excluded because of their childlessness has created links between experiences of violence and vulnerability in the countries of origin and the experience of exclusion and non-access to rights in the Swedish welfare state. I am not arguing that it is a 'bad thing' that special considerations are given in relation to children; rather, I am mapping some of the consequences of the current Swedish migration regime. In this case it is a regime that privileges vulnerability and ideas of normality ('normal' families, 'normal' relationships,

‘normal’ reactions, ‘normal’ victimhood) over reasons relating to political stances, or of being the victim of war crimes.

I have also identified interactions of gender regimes and migration regimes regarding family policies showing how ideologies about motherhood enter into the field, saving women as mothers whilst punishing non-mothers – that is to say making women a specific category. But this is contradictory, as at the same time women’s specificity (vulnerability) is marginalised through the ways women’s experiences of war and flight are disregarded. Furthermore, the actual practices of parenting are severely constrained through the fear of deportation. I later contextualised gendered forms of non-recognition in the wider experiences of the informants and have shown how their grounds for asylum have been left without acknowledgement and that often they have been received by a ‘culture of suspicion’. This culture emanates from the expansion of migration regulation into the field of the regulation of access to welfare service.

This analysis has shown that the positions of clandestine asylum seekers are defined by a much broader range of mechanisms than simply their migration status. The rejection of asylum is a first step in the production of deportability, but thereafter a complex web of practices and representations in relation to gendered violence, reproduction and parenting, relations and life spans, recognition and credibility, interact in the production of the actual experience of clandestinity. This is an experience that seems to be strongly gendered and framed by the feeling of being met with suspicion and non-recognition – both as an individual experience from the asylum procedure and in more general representations of asylum seekers.

In relation to the notion of Sweden as being a place characterised by women-friendly policies, I think the analysis in this chapter points towards the necessity of further investigating the feminist conceptualisation of the welfare state. This needs to be conducted in a way that also takes the intersections of migration status, citizenship and non-citizens’ access to welfare services and social rights into account along with other central principles structuring differences in access to power, welfare and recognition.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Contested boundaries and borders

In previous chapters I identified state policies which, by narrowing citizenship rights, produce a subject position of clandestinity marked by a sense of vulnerability which is augmented by the fear of deportation. This position is further marked by a limited range of choices on the labour market, in family life and in other close relationships, as well as in relation to plans and dreams for the future. I have also touched upon some of the ways that organisations, networks and campaigns have claimed further social rights and/or citizenship and the right to a permanent residence permit for undocumented migrants and/or clandestine asylum seekers. But, along with the uncertainty, insecurity and deportability that characterise the everyday experiences of clandestinity, the empirical material traces an on-going resistance and negotiation in regard to access to rights that involves many different practices. Firstly, one encounters the resistance inscribed in the clandestine position itself – that is, the challenge made to sovereignty and to notions of belonging which is inscribed in the very entry and continuous residence of undocumented migrants. Secondly, one sees the ways in which undocumented migrants organise, both formally and informally, by way of political mobilisation and network building. Finally, one can trace the different ways undocumented migrants find access to welfare services (healthcare, education, childcare, etc) through family, friends, NGOs and activist networks.

In this chapter I will further develop the notion of these practices and strategies as being forms of political struggle through which the boundaries for exclusion and belonging are negotiated in the everyday lives of asylum seekers. These boundaries are negotiated by asylum seekers constructing their own possibilities to remain in Sweden under liveable conditions, and by NGOs, activists, families, friends and professionals who support them.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate specific moments of negotiation with and challenge to the boundaries of citizenship, 'the political' and the welfare state. I will do this through the analysis of two central actors that challenge repressive and exclusive state regulated citizenship discourses – the asylum rights movements and the migrants themselves. The asylum rights movement in my analysis will be conceptualised as a highly diversified movement of social protest, with my informants occupying two locations on the map – as actors in the asylum rights movement and as actors in relation to the individual cases of their own families.

The chapter begins by providing an analysis of the everyday experience of my informants, with a special focus upon the flexible boundaries regarding access to housing, schooling, employment and healthcare. In other words I will analyse the 'doing' of clandestinity. The chapter also explores the complex processes through which identities enter the field of the political and locates clandestine asylum seekers in varied positions in relation to each other, professionals within the welfare state and the asylum rights movement. Central to the arguments developed is a focus on the ways resistance and forms of solidarity and care are organised, with a special emphasis on the paradoxes regulating inclusion and belonging.

Negotiations of boundaries

There is no simple and direct relation between a rejected asylum application, a decision to expel an asylum-seeking individual from a state and their complete exclusion from social rights and welfare

entitlements. Rather, the exclusion is implemented and experienced on manifold levels, and is far more complex than a simple issue concerning decisions about rejection and deportation.

In the introductory chapter I discussed the differences between European welfare states when it comes to undocumented migrants' entitlements to welfare rights. These differences, which were exemplified by the case of Spain, showed some of the varying political implications and the complexities of the construction of exclusion and clandestinity. Another arena where these complexities are played out is found in the personal lives of those living in everyday clandestinity. Both the discussion on clandestinity and work (Chapter Five), and the discussion on everyday deportability and gender (Chapter Six), point toward the ways in which the construction of deportability and the different ways clandestinity is understood and lived relate to various policy areas (social policy, migration policy, labour market policies) (Anderson 2009). Other ways in which different experiences and understandings of clandestinity are constructed are found in the experiences in their country of origin of the asylum seekers themselves and the ways in which these experiences are understood by the Swedish authorities, as well as their experiences with migration authorities, welfare institutions and civil society. Furthermore, family constellations, diasporic communities, age, gender, sexuality and reproduction feed in to the construction of the excluded space the asylum seeker is forced to locate. In what follows the focus will be upon the ways in which the boundaries of clandestinity are actively negotiated by my informants as well as by civil society when mobilising for asylum and migration rights. Whilst exclusion, at the level of the state and formal access to its institutions, appears to be absolute, there are family members, parts of the civil society and 'disobedient' civil servants who support clandestine asylum seekers and create possibilities for negotiating the lack of rights and who challenge the effects of deportability upon people's lives.

Research on social policy and the distribution of welfare services has shown that citizens' access to welfare services and benefits tends to be distributed asymmetrically through disciplining and normative

discourses (in the UK: Lewis 2000; in Sweden: Pringle 2010). The lack of formal rights for clandestine asylum seekers' access to welfare services risks further reinforcing this general asymmetry and these normative discourses on access and needs. Similar dynamics to those seen in the previous chapter, where different formations of gender and family tended to be (non-)privileged in the formation of deportability, might affect the ways in which 'alternative' and informal routes to access are created. My material points towards a broad variety of formal and informal methods by which rejected asylum seekers might gain access to welfare services, forms of access that are obviously much more uneven, arbitrary and unreliable than the access provided through political and social rights.

Access to welfare services

During the period of my fieldwork I found that for the children from families living in clandestinity access to schools had to be negotiated for each individual child. Activists knew about a few schools where teachers and principals always tried to provide a place for clandestine children and others where it was impossible, but most often they would have to contact schools and principals each time a clandestine child was in need of a place at a school. In other cases an engaged teacher, school welfare officer or principal from a school the child attended during the asylum process, would try to make it possible for the child to stay or find a place somewhere else. The schools that wanted to include children who found themselves in these circumstances faced a series of administrative and security problems such as how to register the children, their grades and their credits, and how to assure their safety. These problems were exacerbated by a lack of resources, problems that were avoided by the schools that simply accepted the exclusion and did not want to offer a place to clandestine children.[1]

Floriana's and Ismail's children went through long periods when they had no access to school, and they expressed strong feelings

[1] Local activists in Malmö knew about cases when the police had contacted schools in search of clandestine children.

about the extent to which they missed it. The other informants with children – Adelina, Miranda and Ermir – also described access to a place in school as being one of the most central aspects of their children's situation. Miranda and Ermir (a couple from Kosovo who I will introduce in more detail later) managed not to tell their children that they were clandestine and, with the help of activists, found them a place in a school in Malmö where they had moved in order to avoid deportation. Adelina's difficulties when she had to keep her children out of school have already been mentioned in the previous chapter.

(Non-)access to healthcare is another central aspect of my informants' clandestinity and is also central to the work of the activist informants. In Stockholm, Göteborg [Gothenburg] and Malmö, there are 'underground clinics', run by medical NGOs, asylum rights networks and individual healthcare professionals. At these clinics nurses, doctors and other healthcare professionals volunteer to help undocumented migrants using the resources they manage to gather through both fund raising and through the connections they have with regular healthcare institutions.[2] Although often knowing of the clinics in – or close to – the cities where they stayed, those amongst the informants who had been in need of medical care had actually turned to regular public healthcare. Undocumented migrants are entitled to emergency medical care, therefore, in cases of emergency those in clandestinity can turn to public healthcare. In the cases that came up during the interviews where this had happened, the treatment that had most often been sought was that of emergency psychiatric care. However, whilst they are entitled to emergency care, undocumented migrants are supposed to be charged for the care, but amongst the informants who had accessed public healthcare none had experienced this. All the same, some of the activist informants did speak of cases when people had been invoiced after visits to hospitals.

With the exception of a few negative experiences when they had been turned back, most of the informants reported that they had been

[2] See Baghir-Zada's (2009) study of healthcare provision for undocumented migrants in Sweden and the Netherlands.

well received when seeking treatment. However, in a few cases, echoing experiences at the Migration Board, the informants had encountered a suspicious attitude from healthcare staff, and had often been accused of simulating and exaggerating their symptoms (I will discuss the role of medical conditions in the asylum process and in the negotiation of exclusion in the last section of this chapter).

Although schooling and healthcare are areas of welfare that might be asymmetrically accessed or utilised, whilst still remaining a central right of all citizens and permanent residents, both the housing market and the labour market are fields within the welfare state that are non-accessible and/or differentiated for both undocumented migrants *and* groups of citizens and permanent residents. So, while informal routes to schools and healthcare are constructed almost exclusively by/for undocumented migrants, the informal housing and labour markets have a broader 'purpose' and are populated by broader groups of marginalised citizens and workers. Compared to other European welfare states, the informal housing and labour markets might be small in Sweden, but they still exist and they still offer their paradoxical 'possibilities' to clandestine asylum seekers (Schierup, Hansen and Castles 2006 p. 215ff).[3]

The possible sources of income that my informants (both activists and asylum seekers) knew about, or had to rely on, were quite varied. The main source of income among the group of informants was economic support such as gifts or loans from friends and relatives or from activist groups, NGOs, religious congregations or political parties (mainly the Left Party and the Liberal Youth, two parties that have special funds from which individuals and groups can apply for economic support). Alongside different kinds of gifts and loans, informal labour is an important source of income for this group who are excluded from the possibility of gaining formal employment. Among the informants in my study the presence of the informal labour market was not especially marked, but adding up the accounts of the activist informants, reports from trade unions and documentation in the media (Schierup, Hansen and Castles 2006 p.

[3] See the discussion in Chapter Five on the ambiguous role of informal labour in clandestinity as both exploitative and emancipatory.

216) most clandestine asylum seekers (and undocumented migrants in general) are referred to the informal labour market for economic maintenance and survival. As well as these two main sources of income, the informants told me about a couple of other potential revenue streams. One, for example, entailed gathering cans and bottles to return to shops in order to collect the deposit. However, the most inventive method was 'job sharing'. This involved an NGO/activist group (as a group) or a person with citizenship taking on a position but then allowing the asylum seeker to do the actual work and receive the money.

In my group of informants Adelina had mainly been supported by her family, while Ana and Ardian were supported by family, friends, an activist group and the local church. Fija had an income through her work, and, during the periods when she did not have a job, the woman who provided her with accommodation allowed her to stay for free. Ermir and Miranda, as well as Floriana and Ismail, had no family living in Sweden and got most of their income during the period of this study from the local activist group, sometimes from friends as well as by some 'job sharing' and some informal work. Needless to say, such 'incomes' were often below subsistence levels and the lack of money and nourishing food for the children was a constant worry. In order to combat such difficult circumstances, during the periods when the informants stayed with family members or with activists, they shared the food in the house. Both Malin and Filippa had been co-living with people for long periods, and also Alma, Meram and Maria had been sharing house for shorter periods.

Finally, accommodation is another field of urgency for the informants. Some of the informants have been able to stay in the same place during their time in clandestinity, but others, finding only temporary accommodation, have had to constantly move around between apartments and rooms. Floriana, Ismail and their children had stayed in ten different places during the course of only a few months. The ways of finding accommodation, much like the ways of finding the economic means to exist, are either through friends, family members or activists. Activists often find friends with empty rooms, or locate the temporarily empty apartments of others who are

on vacation. The other option is find a place to rent on the informal housing market. However, this often involves paying an over-priced rent and living under insecure conditions. Finally, some activists rented apartments in their own name and either paid the rent themselves or by using the money from activist networks. For the asylum seekers among the informants, the issue of accommodation was of course urgent and a source of constant worry. This was also the problem that seemed to take most time and energy to solve for the activists. Amongst the various problems that they tried to solve, it was this one that most often required the activists to open up their own spaces, and, as a consequence, they often found themselves more affected by the asylum seekers' situation.

Some of the strategies I have recounted here merely offer limited solutions which only reach individual families. But, as I will show later in this chapter, the struggle to gain access on an individual level is often closely related to collective levels of struggle for access. For example, an indication of the way that engagement on the level of 'individual needs' tends to spill over into other forms of politics can be seen in the way representatives for the underground clinics have become important voices in asylum rights debate.

As I discussed earlier, the social rights of undocumented migrants is a topic that has a growing presence in public debate, and consequently some of the rights to healthcare and education have been revised and partly expanded during the years I have been working with this study. This growing attention, coupled with the mobilisation of public opinion and demands for these expansions have developed mainly in civil society and in the groups of professionals working in the actual fields (doctors, nurses, psychologists, teachers, social workers, counsellors, etc). These individual actions seem to open up the discursive space for the challenging of naturalising discourses on who has the rights to welfare.

Routes towards clandestinity as identity

Floriana's and Ismail's experiences of fear and non-recognised rights – both in Macedonia and in Sweden – were discussed in the previous

chapter. However, in relation to the topic of this chapter, their narrative about Sweden becomes relevant again, but on this occasion it is because of the contradictory interplay between exclusion and inclusion, rejection and recognition represented in their account. Here they describe the family's route into clandestinity and the decisions and encounters that became decisive for their trajectory.

> Ismail: After the rejection when we were given a day and time for when we had to leave Sweden, we had to find something out. We tried everything. We looked for help at churches, everywhere ... But the churches denied us, because it was either full already or they didn't work with refugees. And then we got in touch with an asylum rights group in Malmö.
> Floriana: We had absolutely no plans and no expectations that anything would happen that would help us out [in contrast with the period that the interview was conducted, when the provisional legislation had come into legal force a few months earlier and the family was waiting for the result of their application]. No, we decided that we rather would live our whole lives like this, clandestinely, rather than go back. My daughter told me she would rather kill herself than go back.
> Ismail: We had no intention of going back again. […] And thanks to the children's psychiatric unit [*Barn- och Ungdomspsykiatrin (BUP)*] we got in touch with the asylum rights group and came here to Malmö.
> Floriana: When it comes to doctors and psychiatrists etc. that we have visited, we have received a lot of support. They say to us 'try to stay put another little while, don't give up, soon something [some legislative or political change] has to come!' That gave us some hope.
> […]
> Both: When it comes to doctors, the children's psychiatric unit and asylum rights activists and ... everyone else ... we have been so well received and treated. By the people! It is only the migration board that has treated us badly.

In Floriana's and Ismail's description of the route into clandestinity two tensions/contrasts are present that I understand as important conditions for the negotiation and challenge of boundaries. Firstly, it

is worth noting the striking contrast between the strong decisiveness about the necessity to stay in Sweden and a kind of arbitrariness expressed through the lack of plans and expectations. This mix of strong agency and more passive vulnerability is quite characteristic of the ways that my informants represent the space they create for themselves – and/or with the support from family and civil society – in clandestinity. I think it is important to try to think about the negotiation and challenge of boundaries and exclusion with both these contrasting aspects of the informants' narratives in mind, in order to acknowledge asylum seekers as political subjects with agency and power of action. But at the same time it is also important to acknowledge how limited their possibilities of agency are in the excluded spaces of the nation-states. Secondly, in the final section of their account above, the marked contrast between their experience of the state and their experience of civil society (and individual civil servants) reflects another tension – this being between the way that 'the people' and the authorities/the state are sometimes distinguished as different actors and sometimes conflated into one notion of 'Sweden'. This is another tension that I will return to during the course of this chapter.

Central to this chapter is the process through which a shift takes place from a location within the frames of the state, a location that is marked by subordination to the bureaucratic and administrative regulations of state institutions, to a location within the frames of civil society.[4] This location is instead marked by a search for forms of resistance, solidarity and support.

Similar causalities – different routes

Whilst the rhetoric and the political analyses might appear different in differing strands of the asylum rights movement – and in other formally or informally organised groups that mobilise for an expansion of the range of political rights and access to welfare – the

[4] Although it is an excluded location, it is an exclusion *included* in the law and the state, as discussed in the theoretical framework (e.g. Agamben 1995, 1998; Bhuwania 2007).

actual *practices* of these different groups and constellations tend to have many similarities. Maria had been an activist in an asylum rights group in Malmö for almost five years at the time of writing. She has been more focused on getting direct support to rejected asylum seekers, although the group also does things on the level of campaigning and working with public opinion. Her story is representative of the ways small, independent, 'support oriented' groups and organisations describe their work:

> Maria: I have mainly been working with people ... seeing people who contact the activist group to get help in different ways. That can be people who have questions about how to pursue their asylum cases, and then we can either help them to get in touch with lawyers, or if there is something that we can do directly ourselves ... maybe to contact a lawyer they have already taken on but don't fully trust, or contacting the Migration board and acting as a kind of representative ... or ... even only through telling what we think about their possibilities in pursuit of a residence permit. And then it is a lot about contacting other parts of society that they don't have access to, like schools, healthcare ... yes basically all parts of society that we take for granted..
> *Maja: What parts? Except for school and healthcare, what other parts?*
> Maria: Yeah, I mean, they normally have no money, and if one is clandestine – which not all but many of the people who contact us are – one doesn't have a personal identity number or anything and no possibility to work 'on the white'.... some people have 'black' work to manage life and feel less stuck, but it is often under totally crazy working conditions. [she continues by talking about work conditions, which I discuss earlier in Chapter Five]. So, anyway, we can help with some economic support from the asylum rights group. And we can try to help with finding accommodation. But my experience is that it has most often been the asylum seekers' own social networks ... friends and family who have helped out with that part, but then we can at least help with the rent.

Maria's account of her activist work clearly illustrates the order of priority and that the struggle to appeal against the decision of an asylum case or the fight to get permanent residence status through other legal mechanisms is understood as the most fundamental and decisive negotiation of boundaries. Other areas of negotiation, such as social rights, economic support and labour rights are more about 'cover ups' of the consequences brought about by the lack of a residence permit, something finally manifested through the lack of a personal identity number.

Most of the asylum seeking informants in the study see themselves as refugees in need of protection from persecution of different kinds. They all regard the situation they would find themselves in if they returned to their countries of origin as being too dangerous and hazardous to ever consider returning. Most of the activists I have interviewed express ideas about open borders, free migration, etc. These ideas often articulate a disapproval of the very processes through which the state categorises and separates people into 'worthy' and 'non-worthy' asylum seekers and migrants. But, in their support for asylum seekers, the struggle for gaining either a permanent residence permit or refugee status through negotiation with this categorisation still tends to be one of the most central activities.

In concrete terms, this struggle is about: trying to find lawyers to work with the cases; it is about gathering information about political developments and shifts in the countries of origin in general; in particular it is about finding this same material in relation to the political/minority/religious groups from which the asylum seekers come; it is about finding arguments for applying for asylum on grounds of exceptionally distressing circumstances; it is about going over the possibilities of getting a residence permit through family reunification with a partner who is a citizen/permanent resident or through the new labour migration legislation; it can be about trying to bring about a hearing at the Migration Court; about getting media attention for a case; it is about mobilising protests related to individual cases or to groups of asylum seekers sharing the same situation. For the informants this struggle is expressed through the

ongoing practice of networking and information sharing with activists, friends, their own diasporic community and/or other asylum seekers. It is also illustrated by a constant awareness of debates on asylum policies and changes in legislation, as well as by hours spent by the television watching news and political debate shows on the topic.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the feeling of not have been listened to or taken seriously, and the sense that the experiences which made them seek asylum in Sweden in the first place have not been recognised, are overarching experiences of the asylum process that are shared by all the asylum seeking informants. These feelings of having been misunderstood, mistrusted and mistreated are constantly present in their approach to the struggle for a residence permit or asylum. Even though getting a chance to stay, whatever chance that may be, is the most important thing for my informants, they also want to hold on to their right to protection. Further, many of the activist informants express the centrality of this search for the recognition of asylum seekers and migrants as political subjects with political and social rights in their own activist agendas, rather than allowing them to be represented as victims or as some other depoliticised category.[5]

While all clandestine informants share similar experiences of shifting from the framework of state institutions to the framework of civil society in their search for access to welfare entitlements, their experiences are extremely heterogeneous regarding their location within this new regime of clandestinity. Central variations in the empirical material can be traced in relation to existent diasporic communities (or absence of these communities); the status of these

[5] Saying that migrants and asylum seekers should be recognised as *political subjects* should not be confused with a claim that all asylum seekers have *political grounds* for asylum. For some activist informants, as for example with the 'no border' oriented activists, the argument is based upon ideas about free movement and that everyone should have the right to migrate and settle wherever they want. Malin, for example, says that it goes against her idea about rights to put too much focus on political grounds for asylum – because that argument implicitly implies that if such grounds looked different it would then be correct to reject the migrant.

communities regarding the Swedish ethnic regime; the economic, cultural and social capital of particular individuals and groups; and finally – as discussed in more detail in the previous chapter – the civil status of the individual(s) (single, married, with/without children, with/without already settled relatives etc).

Paradoxical inclusion through clandestinity

Paradoxically, at the same time as being defined by exclusion, the position in clandestinity seems to have the potential to serve as a point of entrance to some (limited) kinds of community and belonging. In some of the informants' lives the contact with and support from asylum rights groups and other sectors of civil society have grown into a relative inclusion on the community level.[6] Parallel with the ways that individually orientated support on the level of welfare provision tends to lead to, and inspire, collective mobilisation for expanded welfare rights for undocumented migrants, the same individual support also tends to create enhanced feelings of security and belonging through the actual networks of people (activists, friends, family, professionals from churches, schools and healthcare) involved in the support work.

Below Filippa expresses her understanding of the indirect effects of her engagement to provide accommodation, economic support, etc. for a clandestine asylum seeking family. She explains that the family had been very distressed during a period, but that they then had a period when they felt a bit better, because:

> Filippa: They did not stand alone. That we could offer some kind of network of people around them. That was some kind of safety – although limited. And that they could do a little bit of forward planning, a little, little bit of forward planning. And also that it was summer – we could go to the sea and

[6] Here it is pertinent to again underline that I got in touch with the informants through the activist networks I am a part of myself. This means that I only got in touch with people who already had some kind of contact with civil society and the study is limited to that group within the group of clandestine asylum seekers, and can only deal with the situation of undocumented migrants without these connections to civil society through secondary material and sources.

> swim and people could spend time with them. They could be part of a bigger context of people ... simply. And for them to not have to carry everything by themselves. And for the children to at least *see* other children, and not only stay locked into an apartment somewhere.

While at least some of the concrete needs of care, accommodation and schooling are solved in direct and instrumental ways, Filippa here refers to a less concrete feeling of enhanced security through the sense of having a network of people around – of having some kind of social context with people who express a will to at least try to support them.

Ermir and Miranda, who I mentioned briefly in the previous chapter and earlier in this chapter, are a young couple from Kosovo. They left Kosovo after the war and arrived in Sweden 2002 with their two children who were one and three years-old at the time. Their asylum application was rejected after three and a half years. They then decided to leave the refugee centre where they had been waiting and came to Malmö to stay clandestinely. In Ermir and Miranda's account of their time in Sweden, the importance of inclusion on the level of the local community is very much emphasised. They talk a lot about how they and their children, upon arriving in Sweden, were reallocated from Malmö to a refugee centre in a village in Småland. They had to stay there for the three and half years that the asylum process lasted, until they left for Malmö to avoid deportation. Although they moved to Malmö to become clandestine, they felt that many aspects of life in the city offered a greater level of community.

> Miranda: We are not clandestine! We were more clandestine when we were at the refugee reception centre in the forest, but after we arrived in Malmö, we don't feel clandestine, and my children don't either.

Although Miranda and Ermir also express how they sometimes felt included and welcomed in the village, they mainly give accounts of the feeling of being hidden away in the forest, and of the unfair and even racist practices that they understood as a result of the 'culture of

suspicion' (see Chapter Six and Lewis 2004) which had developed from the close cooperation between the small community's local unit of the Migration Board, the Healthcare Clinic and the Language School (*SFI*). So, although they were not clandestine during the years in the village, they felt very isolated, regulated and controlled by the local unit of the Migration Board. When Miranda and Ermir arrived in Malmö, they had friends from Kosovo who could support them emotionally and practically. Furthermore, they soon got in touch with activist networks which supported them, and eventually they got involved in the campaign for a general refugee amnesty during 2005 and 2006.

Regardless of the political and theoretical implications of this campaign on the level of national politics and asylum rights, it also became a site for the creation of a local network that involved both clandestine asylum seekers and various actors from different parts of civil society – migrant associations, NGOs, activist groups, political parties and religious congregates. Miranda and Ermir, and also Floriana and Ismail and their children, participated in manifestations, flyer distribution, collecting of signatures for the petition for amnesty and in the planning and realisation of a performance that was set up at a local theatre scene and aimed to provide the audience with testimonies from clandestinity. The work with the performance and the campaigning as an everyday practice during these months can be understood as the practice of active citizenship and as inclusion through community building (Calhoun 2007; Lister 2003; Yuval-Davis et al. 2006). The campaign did not only challenge the exclusion on the level of the state and of policy making, but also provided a more local and 'direct' challenge to exclusionary policies through a local and 'direct' inclusion in the community. This (along with the access to friends in the local Kosovo Albanian diaspora) is the context from which Miranda expresses her insistence that she and her family have not been clandestine during their time in Malmö.

Another aspect of relative inclusion on the level of the community – and hence a challenge to the boundaries of exclusion – can be approached through the concept of 'passing' (Lewis 2004). Gail Lewis defines 'passing' in terms of 'a public presentation of self

in a way that denies or disguises the identity or membership of a subordinated (and often despised, feared and hated) social group in an attempt to avoid the stigma, discrimination and ridicule that such individuals and groups often receive'. She continues by saying that, '"passing" becomes a way of negotiating the inequalities of citizenship and social power that result from what we might call the hierarchical ordering of difference' (Lewis 2004 p. 20). While the concept is more often applied in the context of the differentiation of identities such as in respect of gender, 'race'/ethnicity and sexuality, I think it is also relevant in the context of the temporary, juridically defined position of my informants. This is because despite the temporary nature of the position of clandestine asylum seekers, some of the informants, and other clandestine asylum seekers I have met in activist settings, bear witness to the feeling of having their exclusion more or less written all over their skin. This extends to a feeling that everyone can see that they are not allowed to be here, that they are afraid, poor or homeless (compare also Khosravi 2006). In this context, the moments of 'passing' become important moments in a kind of 'momentary resistance' which challenges the boundaries of exclusion. Through passing as an activist or a citizen, as a refugee with a permanent residence permit or as an asylum seeker still waiting 'within' the system, my informants live moments outside clandestinity and inside the boundaries of belonging.

For Fija these moments come when she is at work, as her work colleagues do not know about her status (see Chapter Five). For Floriana, Ismail, Miranda and Ermir who participated in the mobilisation for general refugee amnesty it was the practice of active citizenship that made them pass as citizens, the only subjectivity understood as being possible within these practices. Although one has to be careful to not romanticise such a relative form of citizenship, in the face of the consequences of exclusion from formal citizenship (or a permanent residence permit) that we have explored throughout previous pages, I still think it is important to highlight these openings and interstices in which clandestine asylum seekers can approach citizenship through active participation in political protest and mobilisation.

Who is allowed to be a political subject?

Despite the possibility of understanding asylum seekers' central role in the negotiation of boundaries as a route towards partial inclusion on the level of community and towards instances of 'passing' as activists, that I have discussed in the previous section, there seems to be a gap between the understanding of the activities of citizen activists and non-citizen activist. This also extends to a similar gap between the understanding of citizen activists understood as 'Swedish Swedes' and the struggles to challenge and negotiate the boundaries of exclusion which are practised by racialised citizens. For example, activists organised in activist groups or NGOs (and often represented as 'Swedish Swedes') get much more appreciation and attention than do asylum seekers, immigrant associations, members of diasporic communities, families and relatives to asylum seekers, who probably support clandestine asylum seekers much more than actors in civil society. This gap is present in the ways some of the informants represent the movement with 'idealised' representations of asylum rights activists, representations which are seen in the media, in books as well as in the general discourses within the movement itself.

In G*ömmarna* ('*The Hiders*') (Segerstedt Wiberg 1997) the author takes on the important task of documenting some of the activities practised in civil society to challenge exclusionary asylum policies. The book is an important intervention in the defence of values of solidarity and inclusion that have been systematically challenged in Sweden by neoliberal policies and the emergence and increasing establishment of racist parties. The complex balancing act between inclusive actions and the distancing realised through polarised representations of 'hiders' and 'hidden' is also represented in the book. For example some passages demonstrate a stark polarisation between the active citizen 'hider' ('*gömmare*') and the passive asylum seeking victim:

> Among those who carry out the obligations of democracy to the asylum seekers are the 'refugee hiders' [*flyktinggömmarna*]. They are not undemanding but are

> however tolerant towards the refugees. They understand the asylum seekers' fear of being forced to go back to countries without freedom. Therefore, they want to help the asylum seekers through, amongst other things, learning thoroughly about the reasons for their flight. […] We owe the hiders [*gömmarna*] many thanks for their courage to defend the weakest and most vulnerable today and in particular for speaking for the children, who have become the victims of wars and persecution (Segerstedt Wiberg 1997 p. 8, my translation).

Here, the account attributes a lack of voice and power to the asylum seekers whilst highlighting the humanism of the hiders, but also their responsibility to not be 'undemanding' and to 'thoroughly [learn] about the reasons for the flight'. These kinds of representations, which also recur in the interviews with both activists and asylum seekers, are problematic because of the way in which they polarise the relation between citizens and non-citizens, and through the way they ultimately identify the citizen as a representative for Sweden. They are present in the material both as uncritical reproductions and as (self)critical reflections upon the pervasiveness of these polarised representations of activist 'do-gooders' (often represented as 'Swedish Swedes') and powerless clandestine asylum seekers. Another problematic aspect of these representations is that the protests, the support, and the networks from within diasporic communities or families seem not to be interpreted as conscious acts of solidarity and political protests to the same degree as similar acts made by NGOs and activist groups. The absence of acknowledgement of the support given by family and relatives as forming a part of the asylum rights movement might be interpreted as pointing towards a tendency to interpret racialised groups through essentialist notions of fixed culture, and hence an underlying understanding of such support as a 'culturally' coded obligation.

Another interpretation of the ways in which support from family and relatives is non- or misrepresented in some accounts of the field of asylum policies is that it might point toward a reading made through racist understandings of those acts, in which the acts are read

as expressions of criminality or fraud, instead of acts of solidarity or civil obedience. It is interesting to frame this last reflection on the unbalanced acknowledgement of political agency in an international context by relating it to Peter Nyers' discussion on how hunger strikes, protests at detention camps etc. are disregarded and not mentioned in mainstream media and thereby depoliticised through a compact of silence (Nyers 2003).

Although both activists in the asylum rights group and the asylum seekers themselves experienced the struggle to expand access to welfare services in general, and the campaign for amnesty in particular, as instances of enhanced cooperation and community across citizen/non-citizen boundaries, my interpretation that the asylum seekers were practising active citizenship, is not always shared by the informants themselves. Floriana and Ismail placed a strong emphasis on the activists' efforts, and represent themselves as being rather dependent on some of them:

> Floriana: If it hadn't been for the local asylum rights group I probably wouldn't be here today, so I owe them many thanks. It is thanks to them I am here now, and have had the chance to go and register again [under the provisional legislation].

I would here like to return to my arguments in relation to what Floriana and Ismail had to say in the beginning of this section – that it is important to acknowledge the agency of clandestine asylum seekers as political subjects, but nevertheless to not underestimate the difficulties and obstacles many asylum seekers encounter that delimit their space of action.

However, during the first decade of the twenty-first century, the self-organisation of undocumented migrants has increased, and, among other central issues, they have challenged this helper/helped relation. In particular it is the mobilisations related to work and labour rights which have grown strong, and have become important sites for representations of undocumented migrants as a political collective and for claims of labour rights. These struggles, which originate in the local unions of the SAC in and around Stockholm, where undocumented workers have organised as undocumented

workers rather than asylum seekers or any other category of migrants, reflect earlier developments of unions, workers' and anarchist movements in Europe (especially in Southern Europe).[7] In these instances the self-organisation and the organisation across citizen/non-citizen boundaries have been put forward as a necessary internationalist response to the exclusion of migrants from rights and the segmentation of labour markets related to this exclusion (see discussion in Chapter Five).

However, groups of clandestine asylum seekers with a focus on asylum rights have also challenged the helper/helped division through creating direct dialogues between themselves and politicians. For example the group *Papperslösa Stockholm* continued struggling for an amnesty, after larger branches of the network in the campaign either ran out of energy or were happy (and therefore more or less silent) with the compromise that was the provisional legislation.

The representations of helper/helped are also challenged by some of the informants on the individual level. Miranda, for example, was angry about the ways some people approached her, having the feeling that some of them enjoyed her precarious situation:

> Miranda: I don't like it at all when people talk like that [imitating a pitiful voice] 'oooh! Poor you! And you are having a baby and you need this and that and that!' […] I am not dying! I am normal. I live in a hidden way, but I am normal like you!

As I have shown above clandestine asylum seekers are themselves often at the core of the movements of social protest. Finally, I want to frame this empirical discussion about the effacement of migrants' agency and self-representation with Peter Nyers' theoretical argument which states that:

> Through an impossible activism — 'impossible' because the non-status do not possess the 'authentic' identity (ie

[7] The SAC, or the Swedish Syndicalist Union, a comparative small radical union that was the first to even acknowledge the presence of – and then organise – undocumented workers.

> citizenship) that would allow them to be political, to be an activist — they make visible the violent paradoxes of sovereignty. Consequently, the risks taken by the taking abject foreigner — ie taking the risk to become a speaking agent — is risky for the sovereign account of the political as well. Not surprisingly, representatives of the sovereign order display a striking anxiety whenever the abject foreigner takes on the status of a political activist engaged in acts of self-determination (eg stopping his/her deportation) (Nyers 2003 p. 1080).

The effacement of migrants' political mobilisation might, within these theoretical frames, be understood as an expression of the 'anxiety' produced when this mobilisation put light on the 'violent paradoxes' defining their position/s in relation to the political.

Identifying with the state

One of the questions that guides this study regards the conditions and discursive frames under which clandestinity might evolve as a collective political identity. In the discussion above we could catch sight of a few instances and moments in which such a collectivity might be discerned. But marginalised positions do not automatically generate collective political identities, solidarity within the group and/or new forms for social organising and resistance. The idea presented above, that mobilisations on individual and collective levels lead to alliances and relative inclusion in communities and practices of active citizenship, also need to be problematised. Along with the challenges made to exclusion that I trace in my material, I also see a tendency among the asylum seeking informants to identify (despite repression and exclusion) with the welfare state and its institutions. This identification with 'Sweden' is expressed through a kind of unbroken trust, as, despite the experiences of exclusion, fear and hopelessness, some of my informants talk about Sweden as a better and more democratic country than both their countries of origin and other European countries. An unbroken trust located in the process of des-identification with other refugees is expressed in phrases such as 'If it was up to me I would let everyone stay. But I

understand that they can't give asylum to everyone who applies ... if that happened everyone would come here' (Fija). Paradoxically, the existence of volunteer/activist groups – who are organised to criticise and challenge the Swedish welfare state – and 'disobedient' civil servants (for example doctors and teachers who often break the rules in order to assist clandestine asylum seekers) are understood as an illustration of a more democratic and peaceful society. Due to the contradictory role of the activists, located both as political activists in the public space but also as 'helpers', some of my informants had difficulties in conceptualising the differences between activists and welfare authorities. The discrepancy between the understanding of the pro-migration actors of their work as *against* the official policies, and the understanding of the undocumented migrant inhabitants of this work as being *a part of* the Swedish welfare state will be explored in more detail below.

The paradoxes of successful strategies

The activist informants all talk about support practices at the individual level as being directly linked to demands for rights on more collective levels. Through generating knowledge and awareness of the consequences of exclusion from rights, and of the details in the legislation in welfare rights and institutional rules and practices that become obstacles for asylum seekers' access, the very involvement in individual support becomes the bridge to collectively formulated demands. Maria, who described the work in very practical ways above, continues further on in the interview:

> Maria: We are an organisation that is not tied to the state, so we don't have to care about what the state ... says or thinks. […] And I think it is good that we work with both direct contacts with people *and* with the campaigning and creating of opinion in favour of migration and asylum rights. […] If we only did the direct support to individual asylum seekers, it wouldn't feel like the right thing for me – although that might be what I have focused on mostly so far in the interview –

> because then it only becomes like upholding the system ... If we don't protest clearly and publicly against the unfair system, it is as if we give legitimacy to the system. So I think that it is important to do the two things. […] And the other way around, it is about creating some kind of closeness ... If we were only in the streets shouting, it would become too distanced in some way, like a kind of escapism. Because here there are still people, here and now, who are desperate for someone who can support them in their struggle to be included. And, also, how can we know that our ideas are right if we don't keep in touch with the people we are trying to help? For me it is very important to meet people and it is also very rewarding because they have so much strength, the people I have met through this work – they give me strength.
>
> Both these things [the practical work and the campaigning] give me strength in relation to each other. To meet people who are in this very exposed position, as one is as clandestine, that gives me strength to react or, rather, it almost forces me to react. And the other way around, to feel what I know I am talking about in the campaigning work, I need this contact, to have *seen* how it is […]
>
> I want this situation to be made more visible, and the best would of course be if people had the possibility to talk publicly about the situation themselves, but it isn't all clandestine asylum seekers who have the strength for that, or want to do it or dare to do it ... and then I think I, with my experiences, can serve as some kind of voice or witness.

Needless to say, the same holds true for the asylum seeking informants: the period in clandestinity became a period of enhanced knowledge and reflection on the mechanisms and politics regulating migration, belonging and welfare.

While understandings of citizenship as *formal citizenship* is not enough to formulate and grasp the position of clandestine asylum seekers, a more community oriented notion of belonging and of citizenship practices manage to grasp these activities and these groups and collectives as acts of active citizenship. Through a multi-levelled understanding of citizenship, the actors involved in the negotiation of the boundaries of exclusion can be understood as

performing active citizenship – and this applies to both the citizens and the non-citizens.

In Maria's description of the ways that individually and practically orientated work might link to a more collective struggle, she is constantly negotiating a tension that she sees in the role of the asylum rights activists and their activities. The representations they offer of their work and organisations reflect how they feel trapped between the urge to 'do something' in relation to an unbearable and emergent situation and the risk of victimising people and reinscribing the state and 'the system' through these activities. I will return to this tension between challenging and reinscribing the state below.

The negotiations of successful strategies

As I mentioned earlier, Miranda and Ermir made a lot of friends during their years in Sweden. Ermir's work within the culture sector made it easier for him to connect with people and they had a network of friends, both in the small community in which they spent the first three and a half years, and in Malmö after they left the centre to avoid being deported. Their experiences have similarities to Floriana and Ismail's in that they were also participating in the campaign for amnesty through attending meetings, rallies and flyer distributions. They also took part in the theatre performance and hence participated in the creation of an alternative form of critical – or active – citizenship. Another similarity in their accounts of clandestinity is in the sense of a clash between their perception of the attitudes and approaches of 'the authorities' and those of 'the people'. It was not only in the comparison between activists in the asylum rights movement and the 'authorities' that they encountered these clashes, but also between civil servants at 'ground level' in the community around the refugee centre and the migration authorities. Here they give me an account of their experience in the community regarding being included and excluded simultaneously in relation to different actors:

> *Maja (to Ermir): Did you get a work permit while waiting [during the asylum process]?*

Ermir: No, we applied, but when we got the first rejection, they said that we didn't have the right to work in Sweden.
Miranda (to Ermir): Do you remember when they said to me at the nursery that I could come there and work? Then the migration board didn't want that to happen, they wouldn't let me start working!
Ermir: Yes, but then the teachers arranged it so that you could go there and help them anyway.
Miranda: Yes, they said 'we need you as an interpreter, to help us talk to the immigrant parents'..
Ermir: Yes, but you also helped as a teacher, not only as an interpreter.
Miranda: Yes. Teacher too. But the Migration Board didn't let me work. I told them that it would make me feel so much better if I could help. If I could be there, play with the children and get some work experience for the future.
Ermir: And the principal wanted to have Miranda there, he didn't care what the migration board said ...
Ermir: So in the village they were really happy about us.
Maja: With you specifically or with having the refugee reception centre there?
Ermir: No, I mean our family. I think they felt quite differently about the others, but for us they were happy, kind of 'ooh, we have such good artists'. They were kind of proud ... and Miranda was really social, and the children too, and they all liked us. But it wasn't them who would decide about us. They were all, everyone I know there were sad when we had to leave. So it is some other people who don't live there, who live thousands of kilometres away, who decided about our family's residence permit.

Here the couple first talk about the clash between the need and the wish to employ Miranda at the preschool in the local community and the authorities' rejection of her application for a temporary work permit during the period while she was waiting to hear about her asylum application. Secondly, they talk about how they, as individuals, were very much included and accepted in the local community in which the refugee centre was located. However, they simultaneously acknowledge that the other people at the refugee centre, as a group, were probably received 'quite differently'. I think

this account expresses the ambiguity built in to a situation characterised by multiple modes of belonging. On one level belonging in the community clashes with the more 'powerful' exclusion at the level of the state and the migration authorities. But on a second level, the pleasure of being included as an individual in the village community is given a sense of ambiguity with their also being identified as a part of a collective that is excluded (the asylum seekers at the refugee centre or asylum seekers in general). Multiple modes of belonging seem to lead to a divided feeling of inclusion and exclusion. Even though the negotiation of boundaries – and the creation of other levels of belonging – is often conducted through relations of friendship or solidarity, it is obviously also a negotiation resting on a series of conditions. These processes are framed by power relations inherent to the citizen/non-citizen relations, and racialisation, both on the individual level and on the level of social organising and social solidarity.

The notion of belonging through community has been used above to trace the ways that exclusion, at the level of the state and its institutions, is challenged and negotiated and how citizenship rights and belonging are practised to some extent at the community level. But this optimistic view of belonging through community also needs to be problematised. While the 'right to have rights' (Arendt 1968) is a matter of course for citizens, undocumented migrants have to invent and create access to welfare rights and personal security every day. This everyday 'invention of rights' is done with and through family, friends, co-patriots, individual civil servants and civil society. Already in the presentations of the practices of negotiation of belonging above, I have touched upon some of the dynamics that seem to be played out in the relations entailed in these negotiations – between clandestine asylum seekers as non-citizens on the one hand and actors in civil society and the community on the other hand. In the next section I will further explore the conditions built in to the relations between citizens and non-citizens in the everyday negotiation of rights and the creation of alternative modes of belonging through community.

Isra and me as activist/citizen

The discussion about deportability in the welfare state in the previous chapter opened with a brief summary of parts of Isra's story and experiences. Here I will return to Isra to further develop the discussion about the conditions built in to the everyday negotiations of the boundaries of citizenship and welfare rights, with a renewed focus on the relations between citizen/activist and non-citizen/asylum seeker. I will build on memory notes from my activist encounters with Isra and will consider the conditions for dialogue, listening, and representation as well as both the limitations and the possibilities built in to our encounter.

Drawing on the memory notes, I trace some important dynamics that are at work and which condition the negotiation of the state's exclusionary migration policies: conditionality and expectations of victimhood; defining the political subject and mediation between state and non-citizen. After introducing these dynamics through my subjective memory notes about the relations between citizen/activist and non-citizen/asylum seeker, I will develop each of the themes building on the fieldwork and material from public debate and mass media.

> I met Isra, her husband and their newborn baby for the first time in a small apartment a friend had temporarily loaned them at the time. They had just heard about the latest rejection of their appeal and had found themselves with no other choice than to leave their own apartment in order to avoid being deported. One of Isra's friends, with the support of the Malmö asylum rights group, had managed to get a permanent residence permit after years of clandestinity. This friend had helped them to get in contact with us in the group. I don't remember our first meeting in all its details, in many ways it tends to be mixed up with other similar situations and places in my memory: the sparse interior of the room, the sofa corner and the glass coffee-table with cups of sweet tea or strong coffee. In a corner, the bags half packed with the most important of the family's belongings. The documents, the feeling that the Migration Board have not listened or understood. My voice walking the thin line between

explaining the arguments in the documents and appearing to argue for them myself.

The apartment they stayed in during the first weeks following their rejection was located in a residential project area on the outskirts of Malmö. In high school I had some friends who lived in the same area and I had been there visiting them many times. But that was in high school. Now, me and most of my friends lived in the same 'alternative' area in the centre of Malmö surrounded by students, activists, artists, apartment houses from the turn of the century, and shops and restaurants where you can buy cheap food from Lebanon, China, Greece and many other parts of the world. On the bike ride out to the residential area to meet Isra's family, I remember reflecting upon the fact that since I quit school I only went to the outskirts of the city to visit or have meetings with asylum seekers (or former asylum seekers who now had a residence permit but that I had learned to know as asylum seekers).

Isra and her husband seemed to be politically conscious and their approach to their situation and migration policy was similar to my own analysis, and was expressed using similar language. Isra is maybe a few years younger than me, but sometimes she made me feel like a young girl – maybe because she was married and had a child but more likely because of her experiences of war and flight. I remember having the sense that age disappears as a valid measurement of a life span in the face of war, violence and insecurity. I was impressed and a little bit intimidated by Isra.

After we had met a couple of times to discuss their situation, we arranged a meeting with a lawyer to see if some mistakes that seemed to have been made during the first instances of their asylum application were reparable. Later on we arranged for Isra to see a psychiatrist to get help with her post traumatic stress disorder, but also to get some kind of document that might serve as a ground for being granted a residence permit on humanitarian grounds. But we soon realised that not much could be done in relation to their asylum case and application for a residence permit. While our first meetings were characterised by Isra and her husband's surprise and gratefulness to meet 'Swedish Swedes' who actually did care and wanted to listen and help, they soon got

> a bit frustrated, realising that we could not do much to change the situation. Isra let me know more and more about the psychological and physical problems from which she and her family members were suffering, and she often described the situation as acute and unbearable. I remember that I started to perceive Isra's voice as 'demanding' when she called me to talk about their problems and needs, I sensed that she was thinking that 'you've said you wanted to help us, now do something!'
>
> As time passed we had less and less contact, and the last year (before they got a residence permit through the provisional legislation 2005/2006) we mainly had contact to give them money from our group to help out with the rent and some bills. But as Isra's husband was working to earn the family's living, that contact and support also became more and more sporadic.

In this memory note I touch upon a number of important dynamics in the relation between me as citizen/activist and Isra as non-citizen/clandestine asylum seeker (and thereby to a certain degree dependent upon the support from citizens and residents). Some of these dynamics are discussed above, but here, rather than existing at an abstracted theoretical level, they are manifested at the level of a personal relationship.

Malmö is one of the most segregated cities in Sweden. In the city's small geographical area there are invisible boundaries that mark huge socio-economic differences and the local discourses on these boundaries are highly racialised. The geographical movement from the centre to the margin of the city that I reflect on in the memory note, can thus serve as a symbol for the conditionality that both mine and Isra's different positions build into the relation. What I reflected upon on my way to the residential area in the outskirts was that I (almost) only crossed these invisible boundaries in my role as an asylum rights activist, and that this illustrates a specific set of conditions for these encounters: I am situated in the centre and my movement towards the margin – the geographical margin, but also the economic and social margins in the sense of sharing house, money and time – is optional, temporal and conditional. At the same

time, the possibility for Isra to move slightly from her marginal position towards the centre through her encounter with me (and the relative 'inclusion' I could offer in form of access to healthcare, links to the campaign for refugee amnesty, friendly chats, mediation of money for rent and food, etc) is arbitrary and conditioned by my time, my engagement and the choices I make.

While Isra is located in clandestinity at the absolute margin, I am located within, as a citizen, racialised as 'Swedish', as being middle class, as an academic, etc. The conditionality of my movement towards the margin and towards clandestinity illustrates how the conditionality of individual support and solidarity in civil society risks becoming something that the non-citizen has to *achieve* – often through the performance of needs and victimhood. In the memory note this is manifested in the way my increasing non-action (due to various reasons) forces Isra to share more and more about her family's difficulties. The dynamics of our relationship are also a part of processes of medicalisation and victimisation on other levels which I will discuss in the next section.

Another theme that also draws on the conditionality of the citizen's movement towards clandestinity and the margins is the way in which this conditionality – and this movement from centre to margin – seems to define the political subject in the active citizenship practices that constitute the negotiation of boundaries. Citizens' acts of resistance or protest are channelled through their citizenship and thereby tend to be read as being 'more political', whilst non-citizens' acts are either effaced or understood in terms of strategies for everyday survival.

Depoliticisation and medicalisation

The representations of asylum seekers in public debate and mass media tend to be characterised by a process of depoliticisation that takes place either through medicalising and victimising or through representations in which they figure as criminals. This tendency towards medicalisation and criminalisation does not only happen at the level of media representations; it is also institutionally embedded in migration policies, the asylum process and refugee reception. But

the depoliticised image of the asylum seeker is not one that goes unchallenged as there are also representations of, and channels for, asylum seekers' voices which try to go against the depoliticising tendencies and establish asylum seekers as political subjects in their own right.

The structural and institutional frameworks for the asylum process and debate represent another important level in the process of medicalisation, victimisation and criminalisation. In my interpretation of the outcome of the campaign for amnesty, the forms through which the conflict was 'settled' became a reinforcement of victimising and medicalising tendencies. This was achieved through the inscription of humanitarianism (as a depoliticised contrast to notions of political rights) in the provisional legislation, and through the avoidance of any recognition of political rights or restitution for former irregularities in the assessment of asylum applications.

In her book *Flyktingfällan*, journalist and refugee rights activist Sanna Vestin (2006) links the personal experiences of herself and a friend with the Swedish procedure for asylum seeking to analyses of the structural frames of the migration policy. She describes the institutional processes which, by way of the methods used for validating the experiences of refugees, force people to focus firstly upon details not relevant for their asylum cases, and secondly, upon their humanitarian reasons (rather than their political reasons for protection) such as health, mental problems, and their social situation in the country of origin (p. 60ff). She summarises the situation with a quotation from one of the asylum seekers she interviewed: 'To fight for your rights in Sweden is to fight with the doctor' (Larisa in Vestin 2006 p. 87).

Due to the restrictive routes of assessment of asylum grounds (Vestin 2006), a high number of people who have had the importance of their *political* experiences of violence, harassment, fear, etc., erased in terms of their conceptualisation as political refugees, are facing a situation where the only possible basis for new appeals are arguments based upon humanitarian grounds – for example mental or physical disease. Lawyers and activists trying to support refugees who have received negative decisions (and consider it impossible to

return to court), are also aware that medical reasons are the last possible option for a successful application. This results in a situation where self-representations, as well as the relations between asylum seekers and lawyers, support groups, and doctors become focused upon medical reasons and arguments. In this situation the sense of political rights fades away, all aspects of the cases are distorted and ultimately condensed into a medicalised discourse.

Representatives for the authorities, as well as responsible politicians, consistently respond with silence to the questions and critiques posed by asylum seekers, lawyers and refugee rights activists about the restrictive judgement of grounds for asylum. Questions on individual cases can not be answered because of confidentiality (except directly to the individual asylum seeker, but details of the grounds for decisions are hardly ever divulged, even to the asylum seekers themselves), and questions on more general levels can never be answered as 'every case is an individual case'. Regardless of the supposed juridical accuracy of the arguments for not entering into a dialogue about the grounds for decisions on asylum applications, the result is a silence in respect of their reasons for flight as well as upon the experiences that asylum seekers carry with them.

But the strategies of the asylum rights movement also are a part of the process of medicalisation of asylum rights. Firstly, as I mentioned above, when seeking to gain a residence permit the focus in individual cases must be on the humanitarian and medical grounds. Even if the engagement in the case stems from a conviction that the asylum seekers have a political right to protection – in most cases, claiming humanitarian grounds is the only available option after a negative decision on an appeal. Secondly, in what is generally a marginalised position in relation to the media, the asylum rights movement is compelled to focus on the most tragic cases – the youngest, the most vulnerable, and the most severely ill – in order to gain any kind of a voice or platform in the public debate.

Needless to say, many asylum seekers have serious medical problems. My argument here is not with that, but is instead focussed upon how identities are constructed in ways that, amongst the many

possible identities available in institutional contexts, privilege the victim. Clearly the increasing number of severely depressed children in asylum seeking families *should* be given attention in the media, but my argument is that the phenomena of 'the apathetic children' made other possible discourses about asylum rights and the need for protection invisible.

Active citizenship?

I now want to argue that asylum seekers themselves are performing active citizenship, but that as non-citizens they are excluded from being read as political subjects or as subjects of active citizenship. In the memory note about my encounter with Isra, I described how we both shared the feeling that 'the Migration Board have not listened or understood'. I also spoke about how I often ended up in a role where, when I wanted to help Isra grasp the details of the situation and the board's decision, I worried about seeming to defend their decisions. These were the times when I felt 'my voice walking the thin line between explaining the arguments in the documents and appearing to argue for them myself'. I draw on this as an expression of the balancing act that the practise of active citizenship means: while acting 'against' the policies and practices of the state, these acts might still become inscribed as 'being' expressions of these policies and practices.

What I tried to avoid in my conversations with Isra, is coming across as defending the legislation and practise of law that I tried to analyse with her. I wanted her to know that I was 'on her side' against the decisions she and her family had received. But when I translated the bureaucratic language into a more understandable form of Swedish, and when I explained how the Migration board had reasoned, as well as how they might reason in relation to different measures Isra or their lawyer could take and, above all, when I explained why Isra's experiences of violence and persecution don't fit within the definitions of refugeeship, I heard how it could sound as though I was defending the decision. For Isra the rejection was a catastrophe and it did not make sense in relation to the experiences she carried with her and the strength of her feeling that she cannot

return to Bosnia. What I want to arrive at here is not merely the emotional aspect of my linguistic negotiation between explaining, rejecting, and defending the practices of law, nor of Isra's possible negotiation of how to understand me. Rather, what I want to highlight is that I actually *am* balancing on the boundaries between these possible roles in my practice – irrespective of how much this practice stems from a deeply felt renouncement of the rejection of Isra's application and the exclusionary tendencies of the migration policies.

This ambiguity built into the exercise of active citizenship is reflected by Floriana and Ismail's approach to 'Swedish society' that I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. They emphasise throughout the interview the support they and their three children have received from activist groups, healthcare networks and also functionaries in public psychiatric healthcare. They were in close contact with some very engaged activists during almost two years of clandestinity and received a lot of financial and other kinds of support from them, they were well received at the times they turned to psychiatric emergency care and furthermore, they and their two teenage children also took part in some of the mobilisations protesting for a general refugee amnesty during 2005.[8] Discussing their experience of Sweden, Floriana and Ismail focus upon the support they received from a range of Swedish citizens, as well as upon the way that experience clashes with the exclusionary attitudes and policies they have encountered at the level of the state and its institutional arm, the Migration Board:

> Floriana: Wherever we have been we have been so well received. That is why I can't understand how the Migration Board can be like that, when the people is totally different.

In the description offered by Floriana and Ismail it is rather the support and understanding they have met that describe their ideas about Swedish society, whilst the Migration Board is described as a separate ('evil' or 'cold') actor. The inclusionary practices of

[8] See Chapter Two for a presentation of the campaign for refugee amnesty 2005.

activists, doctors, and psychologists are understood as representing the nation just as well as the exclusionary practices of the Migration Board.

While the arguments for actors in civil society taking action are about challenging the state and its institutions – in differing degrees, from anarchist renouncements of the state to moderate calls for reformed practise of the Alien Act – the everyday practices of these challenges might have more blurred boundaries in relation to the state. This can be seen in the example where we/they help to make the policies of the state understandable, but, referring back to the other practices of negotiating access to welfare rights, we/they also 'help' the state to make the effects of the policies less explicitly violent. Through solidarity and/or humanitarian actions that make the policies understandable (as in the case with myself and Isra), or make clandestinity more 'liveable' and humane (as in the examples in 'Negotiations of rights'), the active citizenship practices of civil society and individual civil servants can be read as providing the state with a more humane face. These acts can of course be read in different ways, and throughout the accounts given by the asylum seekers about their understanding of the actions of asylum rights activists, 'disobedient' civil servants or civil society, they often talk about these acts as contrasting strongly with their perception of migration authorities or the state. Others interpret the acts as something that makes them describe Sweden as 'a good country'. Another possible interpretation is that these experiences of care and solidarity provide a powerful contrast with state bureaucracy and create a friendly environment. On the one hand this allows one to name the injustices experienced and on the other permits a shift from isolated personal experience towards forms of shared, collective practices. Hence, these acts can be read as both working against (in contrast with) and as working with (or in parallel with) the state.

Conclusion

Andrijasevic and Anderson (2009) claim that while migrants' mobility (over physical borders and over boundaries for belonging and rights) is still 'not seen as political, nor are migrants understood as making a political claim' (p. 363), it is important to instead acknowledge 'that the emerging migrant collective subjectivities through political mobilisation have direct bearing on our understanding and conceptualisation of citizenship' (p. 364). In the introduction and in the theoretical framework chapter (Chapter Three) I suggested the possibility that the subject position at the centre for this study – clandestine asylum seekers – together with irregular migrants, undocumented workers and other groups of unprivileged migrants from the global South and East, might be understood as a collective political identity struggling for inclusion in the concept of citizenship – or for an expansion of the notion of citizenship to one which accommodates their position. In this chapter I have looked deeper into the conditions found in clandestinity as experienced by my informants, to try to get sight of the possibilities and limitations of a conceptualisation of clandestine asylum seekers – or undocumented migrants – as a collective political identity. I have also approached a discussion about the conditions and discursive frames through which collective political identities might evolve and how these identities might be negotiated and articulated.

This has been a very difficult chapter to write. It is nearly impossible to grasp the complexities, the ambiguities, and the tensions between intentions and effects in the field of migration and citizenship, but also to distinguish between successful individual strategies and political defeat. Central to my efforts has been an attempt to go beyond binary oppositions – between victims and 'do-gooders', between fruitful individual strategies and expanded collective rights. I have been at pains to identify not only the effects of structural locations but also the varied ways through which different individuals make citizenship. I have tried to inscribe myself through a critical dialogue with my empirical material and in ways of

thinking about these practices that transcend either/or notions of the nation-state and of the relationship between state and civil society.

Central to the chapter is also an exploration of the contradictions found in the struggles and resistance that challenge the exclusionary state policies but at the same time allow for the emergence of new hierarchies regarding the relationship citizens/non-citizens. I have reflected on some of the possible and available political subjectivities related to citizenship, migration and the political in my informants' narratives. I have also discussed strategies and practices of inclusion/cooperation/community and asylum seekers' possible positions as political subjects, both on an individual level in relation to institutions and actors in civil society, and on the collective level of organising, claims making and accessing public debate. I have also addressed issues related to representation and 'voice' in these different settings.

Above I have looked at some key questions that might have a fracturing effect on the intent to mobilise, both for the mobilisation of undocumented migrants as a political collective, as well as for the broader asylum rights movement and activists with citizenship. I have given some examples of issues that might have a fragmenting effect on the Swedish asylum rights movement. Further, I have given some examples that points towards a certain re-articulation of (parts of) the movement through the shifts from a more specific focus on monitoring the Alien's Act and the practise of law (that is, struggling for residence permits *within* the frames of the legislation) towards a broader focus on rights to movement and migration, open/no borders, etc – parallel to the 'no border' and anti-deportation movements in Europe in general. The two perspective/strategies are at times overlapping and at times create contradictions and conflicts. The practices of support and struggle for everyday maintenance and dignified everyday life in clandestinity have been present within both these sets of perspectives/strategies. Whether supporting asylum seekers while waiting for a residence permit or giving them help and support to live without a residence permit, the practices of negotiations of the boundaries for everyday clandestinity look quite similar on each 'side' of these differences of opinion. The different

perspectives in relation to rights, the state, and to the agency of migrants might produce some differences in the representations and approaches to asylum seekers as political subjects – while some practices share the same dynamics.

To conclude this chapter, I want to quote a friend from Afghanistan who, whilst in hiding in order to avoid deportation, received some support from the asylum rights group and some of the people around it. He expressed his appreciation of the support with the following metaphor:

> They try to close the door and you help us to get in through the window!

Thinking further, and putting this alongside metaphors (or direct ambitions in some cases) more commonly found in anti-deportation and no-border networks in Europe such as *tearing down walls* and Fortress Europe, I realised that his metaphor effectively illustrates the paradox of action for asylum and migration rights in relation to sovereignty. Should these movements mobilise to tear down walls or just open the windows as often they can in a still solid building? The contradictions between practices of citizenship and rhetoric about open borders and the political and social struggles for inclusion create a stage where the paradoxes of sovereignty are played out.

CHAPTER EIGHT

On the Margins of Citizenship and Migration Policies – A Concluding Discussion

> [B]ut, I mean, this is a group of pupils that actually don't exist (Dokument inifrån 04/02/2004).

In Chapter Two I talked about some of the unsettling connotations behind this remark made by an employee at The National Agency for School Development (*Myndigheten för skolutveckling*) in a television documentary about undocumented migrants in Sweden (*Dokument inifrån* 04/02/2004). During the course of the documentary the reporter had asked the employee some questions about undocumented children's lack of rights to schooling in Sweden, and the remark, because they 'actually don't exist', was supposed to explain this. I think this statement illustrates the way that clandestine asylum seekers, as well as other groups of undocumented migrants, have been made invisible. I do not mean this in the sense of everyday life, at school, at work places, on the streets and in the neighbourhoods; rather, I mean invisible in mainstream understandings of Swedish society and, at the time this remark was made, to some extent invisible as a social category in the area of social policies (in this case, in relation to policies on children's right

to schooling). But, as an asylum rights activist I had learned to know a few of these children that the civil servant in the television documentary claimed did not exist. I knew their longing for school, for teachers, for books, homework and friends, and this is to mention but a few of the urgent needs of children who are living in clandestinity.

One of these children was a six year old girl from Bosnia. She, her brother and their parents had nothing but traumatic memories left in Bosnia. They had already spent several years in Sweden when their asylum claim finally ended with a rejection. In February 2004, during the same period as the above documentary was aired on television, they were staying clandestinely while trying to find a way to get residence permit. But late one evening the police came to the apartment where the family were staying temporarily. The police smashed the glass door to the living room where the girl was sitting with her parents. She had to witness the couple who lived in the apartment being beaten by several police men, and her own father handcuffed, yelled at and pushed around. Following this event, her mother was put in a detention centre and the girl, her brother and her father had to report to the migration board every day until they were all deported a few weeks later.

During the weeks between the police raid and the deportation myself and some other friends in the asylum rights group spent a lot of time with the girl and her family. We made visits to the detention centre to see the mother, and also took the girl and her brother to the children's psychiatric unit in order to get them some counselling that we hoped might help them with the traumas they had undergone. But, as well as these difficult times, we also spent happier moments in their company, with play, laughter and even a birthday party. We tried everything we could think of to stop the deportation. We went to Stockholm to let the children talk directly to the Alien's Appeal Board about their experiences in Bosnia (the board said no anyway), and we helped them to appeal to the European Court (who eventually *did* decide that the family should not be deported, but it was too late, they had already been irreversibly deported when the decision arrived).

These two events, a remark about undocumented children as a group of pupils who does not exist, and my own relation to a child who was so violently treated by several authorities, were, during the years before I started this project, two of the most important moments among many others that have followed me during the research process. The activist location from which I experienced and interpreted these moments generated understandings that profoundly challenged mainstream representations of the welfare state and the state institutions, and that showed the effects of neoliberal policies and the commitment to the construction of a 'Fortress Europe' in the former (relatively) inclusive welfare state.[1] In this study I wanted to include locations from which these challenges to mainstream images and ideas about the changes that have taken place in Swedish society could be further explored.

The purpose of the study has been to explore notions and practices of citizenship and belonging in a Swedish welfare state in transition from the inclusive Nordic model towards one more closely identified with neoliberal discourses and policies. The position of clandestine asylum seekers on the margins of citizenship and migration policies has provided a fruitful starting point for exploring the complexity of citizenship and belonging at the intersections with gender, 'race'/ethnicity and migration status.

The thesis shows how experiences on the margins of citizenship and migration policies can be understood as constructing an ambiguous form of 'clandestine citizenship'. This is a form that is characterised by exclusion and fragmentation on many levels, but is also characterised by limited kinds of inclusion, collectivity and channels for active citizenship practices. These processes of exclusion and inclusion and their consequences for people's subjective everyday experiences are strongly gendered. However, it is also important to recognise that in many cases and situations the lack of citizenship or a residence permit is a larger and more decisive

[1] As I have underlined earlier, with references to periods of more inclusive welfare and social policies, this model also had its limitations regarding the position of migrants on the labour market and in the representations of culture/s and 'Swedishness''.

organising principle than gender in the intersecting structures that go towards the formation of these subject positions.

Central areas of enquiry

There are five central areas of enquiry that have been tackled by this study. Firstly, I have contributed to the mapping of some of the subjective experiences from – and knowledge about – citizenship, belonging and migration policies in Sweden. This knowledge and these experiences are, as I have shown, generated in the location/s of clandestine asylum seekers. The location of the clandestine asylum seeker is one that is characterised by a juridically and socially included exclusion. Secondly, I asked questions about the Swedish migration regime in a way that aimed to avoid a naturalisation of the nation-state and to refuse acceptance of – and hence refuse complicity with – the institutions, systems and laws that regulate and delimit migrants' mobility and access to social and political rights. That is, I wanted to look at experiences of clandestinity, taking the right to residence as a starting point. Thirdly, I interrogated the often presumed primacy of gender relations, and investigated the ways in which nationality and (non-)citizenship also need to be added as important, and sometimes decisive, intersections in a feminist analysis that refuses to allow the nation-state's boundaries to frame the feminist project. Fourthly, I have critically explored the possibilities and limitations of some feminist and postcolonial theoretical approaches to citizenship, migration and the nation-state. I have investigated the potential of these approaches to analytically capture the position of clandestine asylum seekers in the Swedish and European context. Central to this context in relation to my study are neoliberal processes of the dismantling of welfare states, the deregulation of labour markets and the ongoing construction of Fortress Europe with its contradictory interplay between a) the labour market's needs for migration, and b) neo-racist 'needs' for migrants who they both exclude as 'others' and include as scapegoats. The fifth area of enquiry was related to methodological

concerns. Inspired by an intention to think together standpoint feminist and post-structuralist feminist epistemologies, I explored clandestinity as a standpoint characterized by plurality, temporality and fragmentations. Further, I explored the possibilities offered by my own location at the crossroads of activism and academia.

The construction of clandestinity

My study shows that, on the level of migration policies and the representations of migration and migrants, the position in clandestinity is surrounded by contradictions. Further, this position is characterised by contradictions in the subject positions in relation to work, reproduction and social/family networks, all of which are fields that might provide the clandestine asylum seeker with forms of inclusion and enhanced security, but which at the same time entail vulnerability and a delimited space of action.

In the study I discuss how clandestinity, at the level of public debate and media representations, is constructed through a complex and multi-levelled interaction between visibility and invisibility. I have traced a shift in the ways clandestine asylum seekers are made (in)visible as inhabitants in the welfare state. Whilst the early years of the twenty-first century were characterised by a rather dull awareness of the presence of this growing group of inhabitants in Sweden, the years 2004-2006 were instead characterised by a quickly accelerating media attention due to the debate surrounding 'the apathetic children', the campaigns for a general amnesty on all pending or rejected asylum seekers and an increase in self-organisation among both rejected asylum seekers and undocumented workers (and the diasporic communities of these groups). However, their increased visibility in public view has been framed by a neoliberal shift in European welfare states in general, and hence, while the recognition of the *presence* of clandestine asylum seeker has increased, the recognition of political rights and/or welfare entitlements have gone in the other direction: a normalisation of the lack of rights and the implicit violence built in to this non-access to

social and political rights seems to have developed. This development was presented in Chapter Two as a background analysis to the analysis of the empirical material.

In Chapter Six I also explored some of the tensions between visibility and invisibility as they are played out on the more subjective level. Feelings of being rendered invisible were, for example, expressed through Fija's frustration with what she perceived as being a general unwillingness to even recognise the existence of clandestine asylum seekers. Other informants talked about how it seemed that clandestine asylum seekers were not recognised as being human beings with rights and needs. A specific gendered aspect of this invisibility was traced in the lack of recognition given to experiences of sexualised violence in some of the female informant's lives, a lack that in many cases led to the rejection of their asylum applications. Parallel to this emergent feeling of being invisible, ran the need to stay out of sight of the authorities and the police. Hence, having full visibility in the public, in the streets, on the labour market or in the sphere of social protest, was a situation circumscribed by fear and cautiousness. This circumscribed visibility might be understood as an expression of the conditions created by the contradictory location between inclusion and exclusion that the clandestine asylum seekers inhabit.

In the next section I will return to some of the theoretical points of departure as a starting-point for further developing the ways subject positions and life experiences in clandestinity are framed, circumscribed and lived.

Included exclusion in the law and in practice

The kind of explicitly violent scenes witnessed by the six-year-old girl I spoke about in the introduction to this chapter were uncommon, although not unheard of, amongst my informants.[2] However, the analysis has shown that the experience/s of clandestinity is/are located in a continuum that carries an indirect threat of violence

[2] Further, I have not interviewed children in this study. For a discussion of the composition of the group of informants, see Chapter Four.

(through misrecognition, exploitation, lack of safety, dependence, deportation, etc.). The subject positions and the space of action in this continuum are framed and delimited by the rejection of the asylum application, the lack of citizen rights and welfare entitlements and the risk of detention and deportation. These mechanisms interact in the construction of clandestinity with yet more factors such as gender, 'race'/ethnicity, family formations, social networks and relations to diasporic communities.

In the theoretical chapter I conceptualised clandestinity as a space marked by exclusion, one that is simultaneously included on two levels – through actual everyday presence and participation in society, and through the law. The latter form of included exclusion, the way in which clandestine asylum seekers are defined as being excluded from the law *by* the law itself, has been theorised by Agamben in his critical conceptualisation of sovereignty and the state of exception, a mechanism that he sees as being central to the liberal democratic nation-state. This field, of theorisation of the positions of undocumented migrants in relation to sovereignty, which grows out of Agamben's work, has shown the importance of theorising the migrant as a theoretical figuration that sheds light on its own centrality and, hence, the centrality of control, exclusion and disciplining of migrants in the modern nation-state. But, as I also discussed in relation to the theoretical framework, this abstracted level of theorisation might bring with it yet another form of effacement of the global historical context of neoliberalism (Ong 2006) and of the actual embodied experience of migrants in this included exclusion (Tyler 2006). My study confirms the centrality of the undocumented migrant as a figure who reveals the conflicts surrounding sovereignty and the nation-state. But the ethnographic fieldwork further confirms that such an approach to the undocumented migrant as an abstract theoretical figuration runs the risk of resulting in a limited image of this position.

Through the methodological approaches outlined in Chapter Four, I have, in dialogue and interaction with clandestine asylum seekers, activists and my own former experiences, collected material that has allowed me to explore the plurality and the multi-levelled

character of the understandings of – and relations to – citizenship, civil society and the state. Throughout the analysis I have shifted between close analyses of the material and using these readings of the material as illustrations of my own arguments. Some small sections of the analysis have been based on my own memory notes and encounters as an activist. The methodology served to facilitate the linking of certain levels and modes of knowledge. One such mode is found in the informants' representations of themselves, Swedish society and the ways in which they account for their encounters with state bureaucracy, civil servants and civil society. A second mode is encountered with the informants' own analyses and ideas about their situation and migration policies in general. These forms of knowledge link in turn with political contexts and representations of migrants in the public arena.[3]

The study shows that clandestinity can be partly understood as a form of 'bare life', but that an approach which explores the embodied experiences of this form of bare life immediately presents a more complex picture of a position situated in the neoliberal shift in both migration and welfare policies. It also confirms the centrality of gender in the processes and conditions that shape and limit subject positions in clandestinity. Throughout the analysis I have encountered examples of how the position of the informants can be understood as a form of embodied state of exception. This is shown through the ways in which the informants seem to need to re-gain a sense of humanity and dignity through different strategies. The strategies I have illuminated have been: the adaptation to norms regulating gender and sexuality; references to – and self-identification with – contributions at the labour market; parenthood and/or normative family structures and roles; references to rights to social rights, and finally, challenges of explicit and implicit racist

[3] Further, I have been able to draw some conclusions and knowledge from some *limitations* in my approach and access to the field, such as the informants' difficulties or unwillingness to talk about certain things, the tendency that our research-relation was pulled in the way of becoming a more 'solution-oriented' relation focused on finding solutions to the informants' acute problems, and my own cautiousness that sometimes resulted in un-asked follow-up questions and silences.

representations of asylum seekers as a group. Further, the analysis has provided an insight into the depths to which the included exclusion from the law reaches in the lived experiences of this exclusion. Clandestinity seems to narrow the clandestine subject's range of choices on the labour market, in family life and in social relations in general; it also increases vulnerability in relation to both state and 'individual' violence. Further, clandestinity severely limits the possibilities of planning for the future, or of imagining starting a family or a relationship. These are all themes that point toward a description of bare life as a subjective experience, that the withdrawn sense of humanity entailed in the included exclusion of the clandestine asylum seeker is not only a theoretical lack but one lived as a feeling against the skin. But the analysis has also shown that the understanding of this embodied subjective experience of 'included exclusion' can be further developed through the application of theories from other disciplinary fields.

On the intersections of migration and gender regimes

I have argued that the field of feminist and postcolonial theories on citizenship offered possibilities to approach clandestinity as a space defined by the interplay between internal and external boundaries of exclusion. This is a space defined by the gap created as a result of the way in which human rights – as a presumed universal and transnational set of rights – are, for the most part, still managed and distributed by the nation-states through the only form of membership they know: citizenship. This gap between levels of rights – transnational and the national – makes clandestinity into a kind of grey zone of rights. I have not here considered legal complications or analyses of legal theory in relation to the lack of clarity created by this gap between transnational and national forms of rights, but rather I have aimed at exploring this grey zone as a social space. Such an analysis necessitates the thinking together of internal and external forms of exclusion. Although the theoretical tools for such a thinking-together are present in, for example, Ruth Lister's approach to external and internal borders as migration regimes, I still discerned a gap – in the sense that the empirical and analytical approaches to

these sets of borders and boundaries still treat them as being separated from each other. Further, the focus on external boundaries seems to be often limited to discussions on naturalisation – that is, on the frontier between gaining a permanent residence permit and being awarded formal citizenship. This means that the position of migrants who are located at another boundary, the one between the lack of any kind of permission and residence permit (a form of status that in today's European nation-states is approaching formal citizenship with regard to the level of rights and welfare entitlements, see Chapter Three) remains under-analysed in the conceptualisation of different migration regimes. In this study I have explored the lived experiences of this position in order to contribute an empirical analysis that might approach this under-theorised and/or under-analysed position. My analysis has shown how the position/s of the informants is/are shaped by the interplay between levels of rights and between forms of exclusion/inclusion. They are conditioned and excluded through the mechanisms of external forms of exclusion – such as border controls, the Dublin Regulation, (gendered and exclusionary) forms of assessments of asylum applications, the detention and deportation of migrants and other mechanisms in national as well as in joint EU border politics. The accounts given by the informants of their experiences and understandings from the processes of assessment, and the accessibility of other forms of residence permits (through, for example, labour permit or family unification) circulate around the feeling of being exposed to a culture of suspicion and an asylum politics which aims to exclude them. But, the asylum seekers also enter into – and hence become positioned within – a welfare state marked by internal forms of exclusion such as segregation and discrimination on racialised labour and housing markets, as well as racist representations of migrants. In my analysis I have shown how the informants relate to – and are affected by – polarised representations of asylum seekers as either victims or criminal, but also representations of migrant families and cultures of parenting. Hence, the positions of the informants are shaped by the interplay between these sets of exclusion, stigmatising

representations and cultures of suspicion that these forms of exclusion produce.

Further, the study has shown that a full understanding of migration regimes needs to include the analysis of the positions of asylum seekers in other areas and policy field. The subject positions in clandestinity are shaped by a complex interaction between different policy fields, gendered representations of migrants, subjective experiences of the asylum process, social networks available for the asylum seeker, family formations and other friendships/relationships. In Chapter Five I discussed how migration policies and labour market policies shape each other and how these links between the policy areas shape subject positions both on the labour market and in relation to migration policies. I also discussed the double character that the labour market and notions of work as identity played in the lives of the informants. Clandestine asylum seekers are made into extremely flexible workers through the fear of deportation and the lack of resources and hence end up in positions marked by precarity and delimited agency on an already racialised and segmented labour market. But at the same time, income, everyday routines and a sense of community at the work place simultaneously produced a feeling of enhanced inclusion and safety.

In Chapter Six I focused on the embodied experiences of being made deportable and the significance of different bodies in these processes. I also traced links between policy areas and fields as well as between the Swedish welfare state and the Balkan wars of the late twentieth century. The lack of recognition in the assessment of asylum grounds, one lived through a lack of social rights and welfare entitlements, produced specifically gendered forms of experiencing deportability and clandestinity. The experiences put forward in Chapter Six in many ways confirm earlier research on women as refugees and asylum seekers. If one reads the ways in which Sweden continues to be identified as (relatively) women-friendly (despite some questioning of the term having occurred) with a critical eye, then one can see how the centrality of gender – in the production of deportability through normative notions of reproduction, families, and women's specificities as mothers/non-mothers, and further, the

centrality of gender in the effects of the withdrawal of welfare entitlements and other rights – creates a specific picture of the ways that the women-friendliness and feminist analysis of welfare needs to broaden the scope of its central subjects, beyond the frames of the nation-state and formal citizenship.

Feminist and postcolonial theorisation of citizenship has further provided the analysis with a perspective on citizenship that distances itself from the liberal notion of citizenship as a 'simple' relation between the individual citizen and the state. Instead, although difficult to generalise as one theory, these theoretical takes on citizenship place a focus upon the multi-tiered character of citizenship and the importance of understanding it as a complex web of relations at the intersections of gender, 'race'/ethnicity, class, sexuality and nationality. This form of a more multi-tiered citizenship was discussed in Chapter Seven, and in the next section I will reflect on that chapter in relation to a discussion about a possible 'clandestine citizenship'.

'Clandestine citizenship'.

In discussions about the exclusion of clandestine asylum seekers and undocumented migrants from access to political and social rights, and often in response to my research, many people tend to say that 'in one way this is kind of natural'. According to this view, the boundary between citizens and non-citizens is one of an easily defined and clear-cut line. This kind of statement about the 'natural' quality of the exclusion of non-citizens and asylum seekers from social rights (regardless of the varying opinions as to whether the assessments of asylum applications are too restrictive or not), points, as I have shown throughout these chapters, towards the difficulties involved in even thinking outside the legal framework of the state. They also point towards the importance of de-naturalising the idea of the nation-state and its boundaries in order to catch sight of the instability and the ongoing construction and reproduction of boundaries that define the location of undocumented migrants. Furthermore, this kind of statement, one that describes the exclusion as something 'natural', carries with it the idea that the effect of a

rejected asylum application would be a 'simple' and direct exclusion of the asylum seeker through deportation. But as I have shown in this thesis the exclusion is implemented and experienced on a much more complex and multi-levelled basis.

My empirical material illuminates the specificity of the Swedish migration regime when it comes to the rights granted to undocumented migrants. In the introduction, in order to illustrate the complex, changing character of the boundaries of exclusion framing clandestinity, I mentioned that, when compared to Sweden, Spain's welfare entitlements for undocumented migrants are more generous. In the case of Spain this allows for a less sharply delineated boundary between the welfare entitlements of citizens and non-citizens. But, while the Swedish welfare state has been traditionally organised around a principle of solidarity, this solidarity seems to have quite clear boundaries. Attached to the specific form of solidarity inscribed into the Swedish welfare state project is a sharp division between citizens and non-citizens, but also one between the imagined national community marked by racialised and nativist connotations – and its Others. Both these divisions are at work in the construction of clandestinity. In some instances, there also seems to exist a continuity in the way the state is strictly organised around belonging – a continuity to civil society that in some ways also allows both formal and symbolic belonging to be a boundary for inclusion. But, as we have seen earlier, it is an ambiguous picture where civil society and individual actors in welfare institutions also resist to these strict notions of belonging.

Central to my analysis is a challenge to the exclusion of those living in clandestinity from the rights of citizenship. The study has illuminated the difficulties of being acknowledged as a political subject and the way in which these issues are seen as being outside the legitimate sphere of political claims.

As I mentioned above, feminist and postcolonial approaches to citizenship have been attentive to the limited analysis to which a focus on formal citizenship might lead, as formal citizenship fails to assure access to actual, or substantial, forms of citizenship. Substantial citizenship has been explored through concepts such as

lived and active citizenship. In this study, I have built on these approaches, but, rather than focusing on the actual substantial citizenship of formal citizens, the aspects most central to my study have been the possibilities of looking beyond formal citizenship in order to find possible moments of citizenship acts in the practices of my informants. Whilst the lack of social and political rights attached to formal citizenship continues to shape and delimit central aspects of the informant's lives, I have suggested that their actual participation, mobilisation and critical articulation in relation to the state can be understood as forms of active citizenship. Further, with the intention of approaching an understanding for the potential of clandestinity as a collective political identity, and as a preliminary formulation of the content of 'clandestine citizenship', I have identified moments of 'passing' (as citizen, permanent resident or asylum seeker still within the asylum process) or being included in local, political or work place communities as moments of limited and temporary 'clandestine citizenship'. The actual access to some welfare entitlements, such as schooling for children or healthcare, would also, although circumscribed and limited, form a part of such a 'clandestine citizenship'.

The concept of 'clandestine citizenship' can serve to bring in to view the spaces for access, action and contestation of exclusion, as a means to challenge victimising and polarising representations and positioning of asylum seekers in relation to the state, to civil society and to citizens as professionals, activists or family/friends. But the concept also has obvious limitations, seen especially through the severe restrictions that a lack of formal rights produces in the life situations of the informants. However, seen as a conceptual tool, rather than as a fixed notion of a legal status, I think it can help to clarify some of the contradictions and ambiguities that clandestinity entails.

The ambiguity is played out on two levels: firstly in everyday experience, where power relations between citizens/non-citizens have to be negotiated along with the negotiation with the excluding state; and secondly, in the paradoxes surrounding critical approaches to sovereignty. Although challenging the state's sovereignty through

the search for other practices and modes of inclusion, these forms of struggle might still be seen as preserving and reinforcing the legitimacy of the state through their focus on citizenship, residence permits and state controlled rights. Further, as discussed in Chapter Seven, marginalised positions do not automatically generate either collective political identities or desidentification from the state. For many of the asylum seekers there existed no sharp boundaries between their understanding of the Swedish state, civil society, welfare professionals, etc., but rather a perceived contrast between the Migration Board specifically and 'the rest' of the people and institutions they encountered. This can both be read as an illustration of the pervasiveness of the images of Sweden as a forerunner in human rights and equality, and as an expression of the actual alternative forms of belonging that asylum seekers become a part of through the everyday practices of civil society, 'disobedient' civil servants and family and diasporic communities.

Final reflections

In this study I have tried to further develop a feminist understanding of citizenship and political subjectivities by exploring migration regimes as gendered. I have also reflected upon the specific methodological challenges of studying vulnerable groups. In addition I have also discussed the strength and limits of the shift in my position from activist to scholar.

The study has provided a critical reading of the Swedish welfare state by taking the experiences of those on the margins as being central to an understanding of gender and migration regimes. It has illuminated the centrality of the position of clandestine asylum seekers in relation to the construction of citizenship and belonging, and has shown how these processes are gendered at the level of symbols, institutions and identities. I have also analysed how different fields of social policies are interconnected and define the position of clandestinity. In doing so I considered how these processes of exclusion have been negotiated in ways that can be read

as reinforcing hierarchical power relations and naturalising forms of segregation, but have, at the same time, also challenged and resisted exclusion.

I have explored the ways in which experiences from the asylum process, from work, from the family situation, from a lack of recognition and from relations with diasporic communities and civil society networks, shape the experience of not having a residence permit. But although the foundational role of the residence permit/formal citizenship remains uncontested in the material I have analysed, it also shows how the effects of clandestinity can be negotiated through collective action and everyday challenges to the boundaries of belonging.

This study demonstrates the consequences of allowing the physical and juridical borders of the nation-state to limit the imagination in relation to rights and political demands. It shows the importance of imagining dissolved frontiers and less fixated belongings, as well as showing the value of being in constant movement towards other forms of solidarity despite the risks and contradictions that will inevitably follow.

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