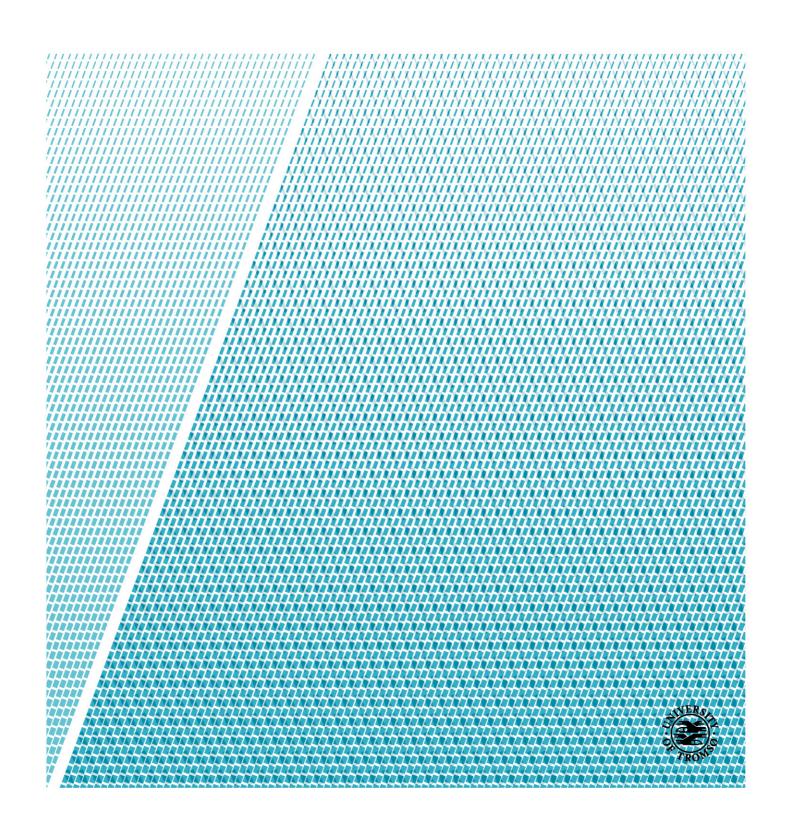UiT

THE ARCTIC
UNIVERSITY
OF NORWAY

Centre for Peace Studies

The Typology of Foreignness

A Case Study of Othering & Belonging amongst Refugees in Northern Norway

Søren Mosgaard Andreasen

Master's thesis in Peace & Conflict Transformation May 2018

Table of Contents

Takk

Abstract

In this thesis I examine the relationship between social boundaries and processes of othering and belonging amongst refugees in a Northern Norwegian community. First, I analyse how five individuals who identifies and are identified by others as Norwegians understand and ascribe meaning to the refugee category, as well as the challenges and possibilities they see for Norwegian society in relation to settlement processes. Second, I explore how four individuals with a refugee status experience the process of establishing belonging in the community of Alta. In doing so, I develop the theoretical lens of 'micro-humiliation' to unpack how subtle, yet repeated everyday experiences of exclusion and inferiority influence belonging amongst my informants. I find that organizing concepts such as 'integration', 'culture' and 'second generation immigrant' permeate everyday talk on, and definitions of refugees amongst the Norwegian majority. In this context, I argue that dynamics of micro-humiliation may arise as a consequence to widespread and largely self-evident cultural assumptions about belonging and non-belonging along the Norwegian/refugee divide which come together as a particular type of othering: 'A typology of foreignness'.

To discuss how the typology of foreignness may transcend into experiences of micro-humiliation amongst societal newcomers, I develop the concept of 'total identification'. I argue that the use of labelling concepts such as 'immigrant' may translate into a problematic form of identity-based reductionism, overshadow individual constellations of personhood and routinely invite subject positions towards refugees with a taken-for-granted ontological quality of ethnic/cultural non-belonging. I then go on to examine social boundaries as they are experienced from the position of individuals with a refugee status. I discuss how certain markers of foreignness, such as religion, skin colour, language, gender and ideas of 'cultural difference' may be intersectionally linked and appear to be cumulative and mutually reinforcing. To describe this individual multidimensionality of micro-humiliation, and how the typology of foreignness may impact people in varying ways according to the broader situatedness of their identity, I develop the concept of 'negative symbolic capital'. I argue that what is often understood as dynamics of ethnic/residential segregation may be thought of as a feedback loop of foreignness. Thus, to emphasise one's minority status may be an emergency plan for establishing belonging; a way for some individuals to create a sense of social attachment, self-worth and dignity in a society where Norwegian ethnicity has become a highly salient marker for 'genuine' belonging within the nation.

1   Towards a Crusade? An Introduction

"Maybe they [immigrants] *have Norwegian written in their documents, but they are not
Norwegians in their hearts!"*
- Siv-Jensen, Norwegian Minister of Finance & leader of the Progress Party
(Siv-Jensen quoted in Dagbladet by Stalsberg 2018, my translation)

"I fear a new crusade will be necessary" [against a supposed immigration-related expansion
of Islam].
- Per-Willy Amundsen, Norwegian Minister of Justice (2016-18)[1]
(Amundsen quoted in Opheim & Haga 2011, my translation).

In present day Norway, two paradoxical, yet profoundly intertwined social processes are
unfolding. On the one hand, dynamics of globalizing capitalism, transnational flows of
migration and the recent arrival (2015) of hitherto unseen numbers of asylum seekers demand
greater openness of the Norwegian nation-state (Gullestad 2006:44). On the other hand, a
number of scholars have identified what Sindre Bangstad (2015:55) coins as protectionist and
"neo-nationalistic central to far-right discourses" about refugees, and document how cultural
anxieties and the fear of 'terrorists' in popular attitudes systematically engender what David
Goldberg defines as *"raceless racism"* (2006:332) against so called 'non-western immigrants'
in Norway (Bangstad 2015:52; Gullestad 2006:26; Olwig & Pæregaard 2011:15; Rugkåsa
2010:135). In this context it is evident that shared understandings of refugees are developed
through processes of racialization in newspapers, political debates and social medias, whereby
individuals with an 'immigrant appearance' and 'non-European culture' are attributed innate
characteristics equivalent to those of 'race' which act as markers of inferior belonging to the
imagined 'family' of the Norwegian nation (Bangstad 2015:52-53; Gullestad 2006:27-29;
2002:41).

The renewed popular emphasis on ideas about culture and decent, along with an increase
in the political manufacturing and reification of hegemonic horror-capital[2], sampled in the

---

[1] At the time of the statement, Aamundsen served as political fraction-leader for the Progress Party.
[2] I use this concept to describe stigmatizing representations created by powerful actors which may delimit social
mobility for some groups in a stratified society.

opening quotes, are critical because they point toward how the presence of deep-seated social boundaries between an 'us' who are seen to fit 'naturally' within the imagined community of Norway are challenging the possible belonging of a refugee 'other'. Images of family, kinship, home and local community thus tend to be used to accentuate 'roots' and different gradations of national attachment, hereby validating the 'naturalness' of a 'pure' national community which can supposedly exist only by the maintenance of certain social boundaries of belonging (Gullestad 2002:3-16; Fekete 2008:76-79). This tendency is mapped by Douglas Holmes who introduces the concept of 'integralist ideologies' (2000:3). Holmes thus argues that integralism (in its most benign form) represents ideologies that enable people to maintain an ethnic identity and a sense of imagined community within the context of an increasingly technically and socially complex society (ibid.). Holmes perspective indicates that at the heart of the matter lies productions of social identities, mindscapes of (problematic) differences and thus an organization of social boundaries between Norwegians and societal newcomers. As Richard Jenkins reminds us: "*To define the criteria for any set of objects is, at the same time also to create a boundary, everything beyond that does not belong*" (2008:102).

In line with these insights, the core aim of this thesis is to examine what social boundaries mean for the way refugees understand their sense of self and how they develop attachment to local communities and Norwegian society at large. In doing so, I seek to expand the present body of research on belonging and othering amongst societal newcomers by introducing a theoretical emphasis on relational dynamics of what I term 'micro-humiliation' as a specific tool for examining how events of "*everyday racism[3]*" (Essed 1991:25) influence settlement processes. I suggest that by applying the analytical lens of micro-humiliation, and a sensibility towards how a few overt, and numerous subtle, experiences of inferiority, deficiency and lowliness influence agency amongst refugees and their descendants, we may be better equipped to understand social conflicts related to processes of immigration which are too often framed as supposedly unavoidable by unclear explanations of 'cultural differences'. Anchored in poststructuralist approaches to social identity and strands from critical race theory, I address the following research question: *How may social boundaries produce experiences of humiliation amongst refugees in Norway, and what are the significance of such dynamics for processes of belonging?*

---

[3] I follow Essed & Rice (1991) in their use of this concept as a way to frame how racism is routinely reproduced and reinforced in everyday practices.

Belonging is often treated in research as a phenomenon relating to specific places and territories and asking what geographical mobility does to people's sense of self. In this thesis, however, I suggest a focus on how (non)belonging amongst refugees is connected to processes of social identity and the types of relationships individuals have access to. In line with Ulrika Wernesjö (2014:11) and Marianne Rugkåsa (2012:23), I suggest that there is a need to analyse how the majority/minority divide is experienced and interpreted on both sides to unpack underlying operations of social power. Thus, I use empirical material from fieldwork conducted during the summer of 2017 at Sisa Cultural Center in Alta to analyse two topics. First, how five self-defined Norwegian individuals understand and ascribe meaning to the category of 'refugees' and the challenges and possibilities they see for Norwegian society in relation to settlement processes. Second, I explore how individuals with a refugee status from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan experience their everyday life and processes of establishing belonging in Alta, as well as Norwegian society at large.

In this context, I draw on Linda Hartling's writings on "*hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths*" (2015:3) and discuss empirically how widespread and largely self-evident cultural assumptions about belonging and non-belonging inherent in the majority/refugee divide may give rise to dynamics of micro-humiliation. In doing so, I argue that a number of taken-for-granted images and organizing concepts that I have found to permeate everyday talk about, and definitions of, refugees amongst the Norwegian majority[4] may reflect a particular type of othering, which I call 'a typology of foreignness[5]'. In examining this dynamic, emphasis is placed on what I understand to be an ecology of socially constructed markers of (ethnic, hierarchical) difference, such as 'integration', 'second-generation immigrant' and 'culture' that may serve to maintain and enforce social stratification. I find that these concepts are consistently mobilized by Norwegian majority informants in the process of establishing the meaning of 'refugees'. I argue, that the 'nature', or character of refugees as *others* is hereby constructed as a taken-for-granted social fact. My material indicates that this construction has gained a hegemonic status, in so far as it is very difficult to talk, think and represent 'refugees' without activating these tendencies of meaning (Lukes 2005:92; Gullestad 2002:17).

---

[4] So, who are the Norwegian majority? This is an ambiguous concept, however, for the purpose of this thesis I use it to refer to individuals who never experience to be challenged by other people in their claim to a Norwegian identity and belonging within the Norwegian nation. The majority population thus denotes people of white skin color with two or more generations of ancestry in Norway.

[5] Due to the limitations on space in this thesis, I seek to avoid double-definitions of key concepts. Instead, I define and explain key concepts as they are put to analytical use.

To capture how the typology of foreignness may influence processes of belonging amongst refugees, I develop the concept of 'total identification'. The core idea is to examine how certain ascriptions of identity, for an example the 'refugee' or 'immigrant' label, may serve to overshadow individual constellations of personhood and routinely engender taken-for-granted ontological positions of ethnic/cultural non-belonging. I propose that the concept of total identifications may be used as an analytical tool to assess what Hartling terms "*the social-cultural-political messages that breed separation, oppression, and social stratification, rather than authentic, empathic engagement*" (2015:3).

I further suggest that the necessary question to address in this context is what kind of subjectivity, strategic resistance and agency that the ascription of 'refugee' as an identity marker may invite. I enter this discussion by exploring how certain signs of foreignness, such as religion, skin colour, language, gender and ideas on 'cultural difference' may be intersectionally linked and appear to be mutually influencing. To further examine this, the multidimensionality of micro-humiliation, and how the typology of foreignness may impact people in varying ways according to the broader situatedness of their identity, I develop the concept of 'negative symbolic capital'. I argue that what is often termed 'practices of segregation' may be thought of as a feedback loop of foreignness and a consequence of individual (and shared) constellations of attributes that are connected to mechanisms of exclusion. In this sense, to emphasise one's minority status may be a backup strategy for establishing social attachment, self-worth and dignity in a society where Norwegian ethnicity has become a highly salient marker for 'genuine' belonging within the nation.

Mapping patterns of power may seem like a reasonably obvious and straightforward requirement of this inquiry. However, as Linda Hartling argues, it is difficult to unpack power dimensions when people have "*internalized knowledge, beliefs, values, and practices that divert attention away from these operations*" (2015:1). Based on this, I present in Chapter 2 a critical conceptualization of the concept of integration, examining how the operationalization of 'integration' as a political project sets the stage for a shared understanding and naturalization of 'refugees' as a specific type of (security/economic) *problem.* In doing so, I discuss how discourses of disqualification tied to the concept of integration may serve to reify and perpetuate, rather than suspend, problematic social divides between the Norwegian majority and societal newcomers.

1.1 In the Belly of the Monster

In writing this thesis I consistently encounter the dilemma that I have to rely on categories and concepts that I seek to problematize. This is particularly true for politicised concepts such as 'immigrant', 'refugee', as well as terms with an inbuilt power dimension, such as 'majority/minority'. Barzoo Eliassi gives us a tool to think about this in dissecting the term 'immigrant', which he sees as neither a neutral or innocent labelling but as:

> "(…) *a highly politicized concept that enables social control of 'others', who are subordinated through naming, and through the drawing of lines between 'us' and 'them' and between 'natural/real/organic' members and 'other members'"* (2010:79).

It should thus be noted immediately that these concepts, which derive their meaning from their relational quality (such as immigrant/Norwegian), are not as such neutral tools for depicting social reality. To introduce briefly the terminology of Pierre Bourdieu, these vessels hold 'symbolic power', a tacit and often unacknowledged level of domination and confirmation of people's position in hierarchies (Bourdieu 1989:16). Gullestad adds to the discussion, by pointing out that the social sciences, in tackling concerns of 'race', 'ethnicity' and 'gender', attribute these categories with a problematic taken for granted naturalness (2002:42). With the Terminology of Alfred Whitehead this thesis is thus not free from committing the "*the fallacy of misplaced concreteness*" (2010:7). This means, that like kindred studies on forced migration, integration and ethnicity, this thesis not only reflect actual conditions; it may indeed contribute to naturalize and realize the legitimacy of particular societal orders (Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:25). Precisely this condition is what Donna Haraway warns us about in writing that researches are always situated and speaking from "*the belly of the monster*" (1999:123).

As a direct consequence of these reflections, one of the objectives of this thesis is to challenge the notion of 'integration', to expose it as cultural and ideological, ingrained in, and ingrainer of, hierarchal structures which may paradoxically create barriers for processes of belonging amongst refugees. I agree with Niklas Luhmann, who suggests shifting analytical attention away from 'integration' to specific processes of social inclusion and exclusion (1997:620). One intention with this strategy is to pierce through the belly of the monster and contribute to reflexive consciousness and a dismantling of the by now self-evident discursive dichotomy in which 'refugees and immigrants' come to figure as a 'non-western', racialized

contrast to 'Norwegians' (Gullestad 2006:237). In this context, I also sacrifice a bit of linguistic transparency by at times substituting the terms 'immigrant/refugee' with the singular term 'societal newcomer', which I perceive as more neutral. However, as refugee is a legal category, I am forced to rely on this term to retain precision in my argument. I thus use the term refugee (and individuals with a refugee status/background) in relation to all individuals who have had their asylum application approved by Norwegian migration authorities[6].

With this in mind, I argue that the concept of *belonging* is central for examining tensions associated with processes of forced migration and settlement in Norway. In this context, I follow Wernesjö, who suggests exploring dimensions of belonging in everyday life (2014:12). For the purpose of this thesis, I define belonging as the intersecting process of inclusion as a member, or part, of local spaces, places and communities and the development of social capital (understood here simply as positive and enduring social relationships). Experiences of exclusion, prejudice and marginalization may be comprehended as tensions within this process. The concept of belonging, to some extent replacing the notion of integration, may thus provoke rethinking social relationality and how processes of marginalization, exclusion and micro-humiliation influence agency and settlement strategies amongst societal newcomers in Norway. Questions of belonging are in this way used to unpack my refugee informants' experiences of being positioned as 'alien others' in relation to Norwegians in everyday interaction and how they subjectively perceive and act on these positions. It is in this context important to stress that the different types of humiliation that refugees might experience may be defined with other concepts, such as racism, exclusion, discrimination, and stigma. The encompassing concept of 'humiliation' is none the less suited to the aim of this thesis mainly because all these different experiences, as Katrine Fangen argues, have in common the "*psychological feeling of being put down, of not being acknowledged as equally competent or of equal worth*" (2006:70). This is rather precisely the definition of humiliation (Lindner 2006:xiv), so all of these social occurrences can be thought of as dimensions within this phenomena.

To deliver a basic argument for the importance of creating a conceptual counter narrative to an otherwise prevailing, scholarly attentiveness towards processes of 'integration', I now turn to exploring the potential paradoxical pathology within the concept and political project of 'integration' in Norwa

---

[6] I refer to individuals who are waiting to have their asylum applications evaluated as 'asylum seekers'. The distinction between refugees/asylum seekers is relevant, in so far as the basic juridical premises for processes of belonging and settlement differs. However, this thesis' discussion on social boundaries and micro-humiliation may indeed be extended to include asylum seekers.

2 A Critical Conceptualization of Integration

"A critique does not consist in saying that things aren't good the way they are. It consists in seeing on just what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established and unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based... To do criticism is to make harder those acts which are now too easy"

(Foucault 2000:456).

In this chapter, I critically engage with the contemporary operationalization of 'integration' as concept and political project in Norway. This is done under the premise that to explore micro-level settlement processes amongst refugees, we must firstly identify and unpack the broader societal context these dynamics are nested in. My analysis thus focusses on the hierarchical logic within the political project of integration and how it serves to rigidify specific categories of belonging and the social boundaries they entail.

As several scholars point out, the relational context between refugees and the Norwegian majority is first and foremost one of power (Gullestad 2002:20; Olwig 2012:6-8; Rytter 2007:64). However, how and where this power is exhibited, normalized and exercised is not necessarily clear. I argue, that we may begin approaching these questions by examining how the ideology of integration paradoxically infer subtle, yet potent and intersectional mechanisms of exclusion, polarization, stigma and inferiority by way of creating modes of social organization: How refugee's relationships with the majority become structured in terms of lacking qualifications and, at times, as being the dangerous 'others'.

Presenting a perspective on how shared understandings of 'refugees' may become impregnated with ideas of innate foreignness and inadequacy, this chapter acts as a central stepping stone towards the main theoretical framework presented in chapter 3, as well as a reflexive backdrop throughout this thesis.

2.1 The Paradox of Integration

Since the 1980s the idea of 'integration' has emerged in Norwegian political and academic rhetoric as the central conceptual frame through which processes of immigration and settlement have come to be understood (Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:9). In this context, the Norwegian welfare state, understood as a constellation of institutional mechanisms, political ideas and

solution models for the administration of resources, constitutes an omnipresent context for the production of integrational ideology (Rugkåsa 2010:13). As a number of recent anthropological studies from across Scandinavia show, integration programs and policies are increasingly operationalized within a frame of protective nationalism, and the term 'integration' has become politicized, normative and imbued with a critical potential for reinforcing the social boundaries between the national majority 'us' and the refugee 'them' (Gullestad 2002:36, Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:23, Rugkåsa 2010:10-15). Scholars point out that the prevailing idea of integration has become increasingly entangled in a logic in which the national is constructed as positive and universal, and cultural differences are framed as treatable deficiencies (2010:245). Tian Sørhaug thus refers to the Norwegian model as therapeutic assimilation, and argues that:

> "*What someone else is – if it different from Us - appears as to be something which they do not have or are. Thus, they can be exposed to a broad arsenal of compensating initiatives* [...] *which make them similar to us*" (1998:131) (my translation).

In Norwegian political rhetoric and public debate, the concept of integration has thus in recent years come to mean "*the cumbersome and slow process*" (Jöhncke 2011:33) of incorporating immigrants and their descendants – particularly individuals from so called 'non-Western countries' into society at large.

On a macro level the Norwegian state project of integrating refugees has most recently been defined as a quest for 'qualification'. According to government agencies[7] the purpose of integration is thus ideally to expose newly arrived refugees as quickly as possible to Norwegian language and social skills required for all "*who live in Norway to use his/her's resources and contribute to the community*" (Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet 2017:1). Contemporary state efforts to integrate refugees thus include practical assistance with housing, economic support, societal guidance and an (up to 3 years) introductory program aimed above all to 'enhance' and shorten the path to productivity in the labour market (Olwig 2012:6; Rugkåsa 2010:98). In this sense, (economic) integration is framed as a process of transferring the everyday knowledge and skills needed to act independently in Norwegian society. On a deeper level, however, the underlying conception may often be that, in comparison to the majority, refugees are an economic burden because they suffer from a lack of basic knowledge

---

[7] Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet (2017), Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet (2016).

and competency (Gullestad 2002:43). In this context, the legislative logic of integration in Norway may be regarded as part of an encompassing effort to render societal newcomers *similar* to the majority, because 'similarity' is regarded as a fundamental precondition for avoiding marginalizing treatment (ibid.; Larsen 2011:333-36).

Gullestad expands this argument in asserting that a powerful logic of equality as *sameness* runs as a cultural undercurrent in Norwegian society, influencing dominant perceptions of how the national community ideally should be ordered as an 'integrated' whole (2002:71-79). However, strong evidence suggests a tension in this project as this is not how Norwegian society actually performs; it performs as if some individuals belongs, and may claim belonging, more than others (ibid.; Rugkåsa 2010:253; Fangen 2006:78).

Likewise, as a consequence of the normalization of integration as a national project of 'qualification' and 'activation', above all in relation to the labour market, an ideal image of citizens is contrasted with refugees as 'imperfect others'. As Olwig points out, political visions of integration serve to enforce shared conceptions of the ideal national community as somewhat uniform and seamless:

> ''[A] *substantial reason for an imagined similarity-community based on an idea of cultural homogeneity has gained so vast an impact today, is, that it has been coupled to a political project of integration.*'' (Olwig 2008:235) (my translation).

Unpacking this line of thought, Steffen Jöhncke and Gullestad note that the political and practical norms across Scandinavia correspond to an idea of integration primarily as a *problem-solving* design to sustain the structure of the welfare system, rather than initiatives considering the actual and individual requirements of the people in question (Jöhncke 2007:50; Gullestad 2002:19). Integration is thus a social strategy designed *by* and *for* the state. Although based on practical interventions, it nonetheless implies a moral imperative, that is, inbuilt assumptions of the 'good society' or the 'good citizen' and thus the morally correct or proper way to address a certain problem (Danneskiold-Samsoe 2011:193). This points towards a central ideological component in the contemporary Norwegian project of integration: The trope that the 'un-integrated' societal newcomer constitutes a liability to the stability, or 'security', of the welfare state and its institutions (Olwig & Pæregaard 2012:3; Jöhncke 2007:44-47; Gullestad 2002:36). Integrational measures have thus gradually taken on characteristics of societal 'defence mechanisms' intended to manage and transform refugees who, if unaddressed, are seen to constitute a latent, societal threat to the cohesiveness and stability of the society.

Thus, it has been well documented, that as a result of continuous representations in media, public debate and government documents during the recent 'refugee crisis' in 2015-16, the refugee category became increasingly conceptually varnished in unilateral terms of 'threat', 'burden' or 'challenge' to the social cohesion of the state (Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet 2017:2, Rettberg & Gaijala 2016:179, Jöhncke 2004:385, Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:10-11).

A potent example for reflexion on this matter is the government commissioned report titled "*Integration and Trust: Long-term Consequences of High Immigration*" (NOU 2017:2), published in February 2017. In the NOU report, the continued existence of the Norwegian welfare state is systematically articulated as at risk if future integration of non-European immigrants fails, as the Norwegian societal model is:

"(…) *dependant on high employment rates and a relatively equal income distribution to maintain today's generous welfare institutions. These requirements are especially challenged when the composition of the population changes in terms of qualifications*" (Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet 2017:13).

Considering this perspective, it is critical to take into account how state projects and policies of integration do not simply present 'neutral' arrangements which allow Norwegian society to cope with immigration, but also set the stage for a shared understanding and naturalization of this phenomenon as a specific type of (security/economic) *problem.* The heart of the matter is the more or less veiled dynamics of micro-power associated with dominant definitions and the dichotomies of us/them, superior/inferior and the social production of the perceived 'foreignness' of refugees they may engender.

This dynamic may be captured by use of Steffen Jöhnckes concept 'solution model'. Jöhncke understands this as distinct clusters of thought and practice (often institutionalized and made into policy) that are designed for the management of irregularities within society, but which also shape how phenomena comes to be understood (2004:385). Jöhnckes idea of 'solution models' is useful for conceptualizing how the systematic framing of refugees as 'challenging' and strategies of 'qualification' are summoned in state programs and policies is also an activation of a specific model that reifies perceptions of the people it targets in a way that is perceived as 'natural'. This turns our attention towards how various integration measures should not be regarded simply as forms of well-meaning 'support'; they also engender powerful vessels of symbolic violence as classifications which inscribe certain expectations and meanings onto the people they target (ibid., Bourdieu & Wacquant 1996:151).

This perspective points to a central paradox. Thus, systematic activation of 'integration' in political rhetoric and national socio-economic strategies may perpetuate a cultural construction of refugees as 'problematic others' in relation to the national community and thereby entrench people in a formidable construction of foreignness (Gullestad 2002:15-19). With this insight in mind, it is relevant to consider how refugees and non-European immigrants are framed in terms of inferiority and risk in a number of Norwegian policy papers (Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet 2017:13; Thorud 2017:54). For an example, in the NOU 2017:2 report, refugees are profoundly consistent defined in terms of:

> "*dependant on public transfer* (p.4)*, marginalized* (…) *less qualified* (p.4)*, increased burden on the welfare state in the long term* (p.5)*, social challenge* (p.6)*, low income families* (p.7)*, low labour market participation* (p.9)*, demanding* (p.11)*, additional challenge* (p.12)*, low productivity* (p.13) *costly and demanding* (…) *heavily subsidized* (p.18)*, resource demanding* (…) *users* (…) *bad investments*"
> (Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet 2017:4-19).

As an authoritative policy document to inform future legislation articulated by elite scholars and part of the larger societal debate on immigration, the NOU 2017:2 provides central insights into the developing societal context in which small-scale processes of settlement and belonging unfold amongst societal newcomers in Alta. The perspective outlined here is furthermore illustrative as a reflexive backdrop throughout this thesis, as it indicates the need to critically examine how the concept of 'integration' structures the potential meaning of 'refugees' as a shared, cultural category. A critical perspective on how dominant ideas of 'integration' contribute to a particular construction of refugees as a 'societal challenge' or 'clients' may deepen our understanding of not only how the divide between the 'refugee other' and the Norwegian majority are socially manufactured and maintained, but also make our reflections sensitive toward how 'integration' as a vehicle for thought, categorization and practice may paradoxically legitimize, reproduce and, indeed, enlarge the problematic nature of the very conflicts and tensions it is meant to mitigate. In the following, I develop this argument a step further by examining how a discourse of disqualification appears to be closely connected to the concept of integration. This is done to set the stage for the subsequent theoretical inquiry into the concepts of social identity, subject positions, and how their combination may be used to understand the links between social boundaries, experiences of micro-humiliation and tensions within processes of belonging amongst refugees.

2.2 The Discourse of Disqualification

In the Norwegian Introductory Act[8] as well as a significant number of recently published Norwegian state documents 'integration' and 'integration capacity' are terms systematically connected to the importance of speedy qualification of newly arrived refugees, ideally implemented through various competence increasing programs in their respective municipalities (Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet 2017:1-5). In this context, government policies are guided towards a "*heavy*" focus on: "*activation, qualification and adaptation: participation requirements relating to different welfare benefits, i.e. basic education, training and qualification adapted to the immigrants' starting points*" (ibid.:1.). Through continuous and pervasive framings of this kind, a particular way of talking about and understanding integration and, implicitly, its target group, is manufactured in which the term 'qualification' acts as a central bearer of meaning (ibid., Jørgensen and Phillips 2001:15). To conceptualize how such patterns of representation may, for an example, influence subject positions developed towards refugees by members of the majority, it is useful to briefly connect Michel Foucault's understanding of discourse with Berthold Moldens perspective on hegemony (2016).

Understanding a discourse as "*a group of statements that belong to a single system of formation*" (1972:117), Foucault argues that any statement accepted as 'legitimate' or 'reasonable' is articulated and rendered acceptable in relation to clusters of pre-established meaning. In this sense, a 'discourse' involves a spectrum of intersecting statements and established ideas through which a phenomenon comes to be understood at a given time. In this sense, discourses shape our perceptions of social entities, such as groups or categories, and influence what may meaningfully be said about them (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:12-16). In this context, the systematic use of terms such as 'qualification' and 'activation' in state policies and integration strategies may be understood as a discourse, a powerful social 'compass' for perception and speech, reflecting the unspoken understanding that 'integration' is a central process through which refugees have to (be) transform(ed) from "*costly and demanding*" (Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet 2017:18) to a functional part of society. The status ascribed to 'non-European' societal newcomers, and thus the position they will keep,

---

[8] The Introductory Act defines it a right and duty for individuals with asylum or residence permit according to Norwegian asylum law § 38 to participate in a 600 hours schooling program in Norwegian language, cultural norms and values.

should their integration fail, seem to be that of an unproductive, social irregularity in the established order of the intact, uninjured welfare society. This is defined by their preliminary character as an "*unqualified (…) pressure on public finances*" (ibid.:2-5, Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:10-11)[9].

Importantly, the discourse of qualification may offer particular categories and ways of understanding individuals in a manner that make such definitions appear naturally given (Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:12-15.). The attitudes, values and positions that are adopted as a certain form of subjectivity may thus occur as a consensual, invisible process under which the most 'obvious, logical or normal' way to perceive the surrounding world is structured externally to the individual (Jørgensen & Philips 1999:10-13). In this context, Foucaults perspective is important as a conceptual linchpin to understand how social phenomena such as the relation between majority and minority identities, and the mechanisms of social distancing and closure that unfold between them, are continuously shaped by, and relate to political practices on a macro-societal level. Along this line, it is thus highly important to be aware of how the encompassing political project of 'integration' acts as a social and cultural construction site where 'refugees' as a collective category of people are forged with very direct consequences for the social in- and exclusion of the targeted individuals. In this context, the discourse of (dis)qualification constructs and naturalizes a binary, hierarchical relationship in which refugees are represented as less competent, or inferior, citizens, in contrast to the ethnic[10] Norwegian population. In this sense, the political project of 'integration' can be considered a hegemonic configuration of the 'reality' of refugees and the phenomenon of immigration. Using Molden's terminology, 'hegemony' is the capability of a dominant group to impress their interpretations of reality, how things are to be understood as the 'normal' way to perceive aspects of the world (Molden 2016:126). The hallmark of hegemony is thus "*the successful creation of this powerful common sense of reality that includes most people in a social group*" (ibid.). This is a relevant insight to understand how the idea of 'integration' and 'qualification' as a form of hegemony envisioned in the state project of integration serve to establish, or enforce, a particular perceptual structure; that of the incompetent, burdensome refugee who figures as a quasi-natural universality, making it difficult for other forms of reasoning to gain

---

[9] To review a few examples among many, the NOU-report states that: "(…) *requirements are put under particular strain when the composition of the population changes, in terms of the qualifications of the individuals*" (Barne-Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet 2017:6), closely followed by: "*Many adult refugees have qualifications that are significantly below the average of the majority population*" (ibid.).

[10] By 'ethnic Norwegian' I refer to the idea that (white) individuals with several generations of ancestry in Norway are perceived as more legitimate members of the nations that societal newcomers. Who the 'ethnic' Norwegians are, is, however, highly ambiguous and problematic to define in practice (Gullestad 2002:20-22).

entrance (ibid.:126-27).

In this chapter I have identified two trajectories within the operationalization of integration as a political project which functions as a specific case of situatedness for refugee identities in Norway. I argued that state efforts of integration may paradoxically normalize discriminating and marginalizing practices by positioning refugees as problematic and costly 'others' in relation to the majority. Thereafter, I discussed how a social divide between 'qualified' ethnic Norwegians and 'unqualified' societal newcomers is produced in a discourse of disqualification. This theorization of integration opens up for an understanding of how discursive power works by generating patterns of social organization; a distinct ordering of relations between Norwegian majority and refugees. Hence, this chapter provides a preliminary stepping stone to an analysis in which macro processes of identity formation are rendered visible and influential for the micro-empirical contexts and individual experiences examined in this thesis. The perspective outlined here furthermore touches upon the core insight that ethnic identity, race, or gender are neither constant nor penetrating factors for all social relationships: They become meaningful only in so far as discourses, everyday practices, and institutions construct their dividing force (Gullestad 2006:30). In the upcoming chapter I merge these reflections with a theoretical understanding of social identity and subject positions to explore how experiences of excluding social boundaries, inferiority and out-sider status amongst refugees may be used as an analytical gateway for understanding tensions within processes of belonging.

3   Theoretical Mainframe

> *"If the search for peace is to succeed, then we must*
> *understand that humiliated hearts and minds are the*
> *deadliest weapons of mass destruction"*
>
> (Lindner 2006:xvii).

This chapter will elaborate the main theoretical framework required to assess how social boundaries may transcend into experiences of micro-humiliation amongst refugees, and how these dynamics may help us understand tensions within processes of establishing societal belonging. At the core of the inquiry lies an analytical object based on individual experiences of outsider status amongst refugees in a Northern Norwegian community. Taken together with my research question, the need becomes apparent to develop a theoretical framework that is able to explain how individual *experience* may gradually translate into different forms of *subjectivity*, attitudes and perception of self becomes apparent. To explore these aspects of social reality, I firstly have to introduce the concept of social identity and understand how it operates. One of my starting points is that the theorization of individual identity should be established within a theoretical schema that allows for a selective attention towards how the micro level premises for individual interaction and experience relate to large scale social structures, such as hegemonic discourses and ideological subtexts.

The immediate objective of this strategy is to create a conceptual model that is able to discern how societies, by drawing and redrawing particular categorical boundaries, may naturalize particular interpretive frames, stabilize certain identities as essentially 'non-belonging', and thereby generate deep layers of collective mentality, shared attitudes, norms and behaviour towards the refugee 'other'. How does constraints and parameters generated on the level of state policies and media discourses on 'refugees' and 'integration' come together as a lived context for ascription of meaning and interpretations of the refugee identity? What does it mean to be a refugee in contemporary Norway, and what kind of opportunities and restrictions does this position entail?

The analysis in this thesis thus requires a three-step assemblage of theoretical pillars. I firstly examine the phenomena of social identity (Jenkins 2008, 2014) and its interdependency on dialectic processes of internal and external definitions. I then build on Jenkin's perspective by introducing the idea of 'total identifications' and present their liminal qualities as a way to

discuss how social distance and sentiments of non-belonging may be reflected and produced in the way refugees are defined by members of the majority.

As a second step, I develop the perspective of social identity by drawing on the concept of subject positions (Davies & Harré 1990). I argue that to frame how experiences of social inferiority affects individual processes of belonging, analytical attention should be paid to the discursive contexts that develop forms and expressions of subjectivity. As a third and final step, I introduce a merging between critical race theory, as it is operationalized in research on Scandinavian nationalism (Gullestad 2002; 2006; Stolcke 1995) and Evelin Linder's (2006) theory of humiliation. From the vantage point of this construction, I suggest that to understand when and how social boundaries may transcend into experiences of inferiority, inadequacy and defectiveness amongst refugees, we must establish the types of subjectivity motivated by continuous, disappointing interactions and small (conscious or unconscious) acts of everyday exclusion, acting like water dripping on a rock; wearing away at it slowly. Thus, the key argument in this chapter is that the exposure to excluding social boundaries may embody the same emotional logic and socially destructive capacity as acts of humiliation. We are here reminded of the condition that the mind-sets, attitudes and beliefs we develop in relation to the collectivities we engage in and are surrounded by, are shaped profoundly by the measures of dignity and self-respect these relationships offer us. As a modest contribution to understanding the phenomena of peace, it is into this social 'hall of mirrors' we now venture.

3.1 Theorizing Social Identity

In this section, I present Jenkins' understanding of social identity (2014; 2008) and seek to add to this perspective by introducing the concept of 'total identifications'. As a first step towards an analytical design, this theoretical constellation is useful for the case at hand for establishing how identities are situated within specific social contexts and conditioned by them. Within this conceptual agenda, where individual identity is seen to be distributed in, and created by, relationships with other people, the tendency for refugees to be allocated within various 'outsider' positions in relation to the Norwegian majority may be understood as influenced by shared interpretive frames of familiarity and foreignness (Jenkins 2008:13-21). Such frames often surface in processes of categorization, in turn linked to a deep-seated human capacity for perceiving, navigating and responding to the world by locating, marking and negotiating social *boundaries* (Jenkins 2014:119-130).

Thus, a key insight established across the social sciences is the idea that identity, individual as well as collective, is produced and reproduced during interaction located in specific situational settings[11] (ibid.:70; Jenkins 2008:65). This implicates a fluid understanding of identity as occurrence, process and experience that 'happens' between people. In this perspective, personal perceptions of self-worth and distinctiveness are understood as a complex social mode and an accumulated outcome of interactions, rather than a fixed structure or static 'role'[12]. According to Jenkins, social identity may be defined as:

> "*the way in which individuals and collectives are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectives* (…) *our understanding of who we are and who other people are, and, reciprocally, other people's understanding of themselves and of others*" (Jenkins 2014:19).

Hence, social identity is a *relational* phenomenon and as such a flexible social resource which may be used to position oneself in relation to the perceived expectations of others (ibid.:15-16, Rhea 2016:35, Eriksen 2010:5-6). Along this line, Jenkins argues that it may be useful to substitute the concept of social identity with that of an ongoing and open-ended process of 'identification', which he defines as: "*the systematic establishment and signification between individuals, between collectivities, and between individuals and collectivities, of relationships of difference and similarity*" (Jenkins 2014.:18). A central dynamic associated with identification is thus 'dichotomization' which implies a discernment of contrast (or foreignness); "*a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance*" (Barth 1969:15). Neither majority or minority identities, which we may also refer to as processes of identification, are thus unilateral, but are situated within a two-way social process; an interface between inside and outside, 'ego' and 'other'. To conceptualize the dialectic character of identity, Jenkins relies on the dual terms of 'internal' and 'external definition' (Jenkins 2014:51). According to Jenkins, internal definition describes how individuals define, conceive and assert themselves, whereas external definition describes how individuals interpret and assign meaning to others (ibid.). It is in this field of tension, between internal and external definition, that identity, whether individual or

---

[11] The idea of 'singular' contexts may be deceiving, however, in so far as most social situations and settings represent a complex overlapping of multiple different contextual streams.
[12] As has been implied, for an example, in the early works of Erving Goffman (1971).

collective, gains its sense of experiential gravity (Barth 1969:14; Jenkins 2014:50; Valtonen 2008:141).

An imperative point here is that even though numerous processes of identification take place continuously in a moment to moment flux, only a few definitions are rendered salient, dominant and long-lasting. Jenkins suggests that the capacity to influence or even constitute individual experience thus depends on whether or not the individuals internalize the label(s) concerned (2014:43). This, in turn, is a matter of whose definitions *counts,* are reiterated, and have the legitimacy and authority to appear as natural and logical.

This insight is important firstly because it connects to the reflections of Chapter 2 and establishes how the concept of 'integration' may act as a particularly potent external definition of refugees due to the substantial hub of legislative, economic and other forms of *power, and* disciplinary measures represented by the state system. Thus, it may be the definition that the state ascribes to refugees that is perceived as most legitimate, rather than the identity or definition they ascribe to themselves.

Secondly, it frames how some categories tend to systematically cultivate collective awareness and entrench as reified consciousness particular readings of identities. As Roy McDermott notes, it seems that some categories *lie ready* to capture identities which deviate from a rather thin line of normalcy (1993:271-72). Categories, their constellation and use may, in other words, be thought of in terms of their boundary marking quality and capacity to reflect and produce a perceived social distance between the Norwegian majority and societal newcomers.

A central point surfaces here regarding the different powers and potentials of identity categories which is not clearly articulated in Jenkins' writings. Categories are not *just* categories; some terms, such as 'refugee' or 'immigrant', have a greater potency to permeate and in a sense incarcerate people in discursive frames of non-belonging by concentrating signals of (problematic) social distance which are particularly difficult to break down or transcend (even through vigorous personal efforts of boundary crossing[13]). To expand and build on Jenkins' perspective, I will here draw on Erving Goffman's (1968) idea of 'total institutions', understood as closed social systems organized and separated from society at large in which people of some similarity reside, and introduce the parallel concept of 'total identification'. The core idea is in this context to capture how some ascriptions of identity, for an example the 'refugee' label, may overshadow and to varying degrees, depending on contexts, reduce, or

---

[13] A relevant example here is the term 'second generation immigrant', signalling ethnic foreignness and social distance towards a person despite him/her being born in Norway.

socially sterilise, other aspects of identity and personhood. Total identifications may here be defined as sediments of knowledge and beliefs which tacitly guide and predisposes attitudes, representations and behaviour of inclusion and exclusion, which come to influence, and in a sense isolate, the *totality* of how an individual's behaviour and statuses come to be perceived or explained. Here, an empirical extract from the Sisa data set exemplifies how the concept of 'refugee' works, and is experienced as a particular salient total identification by a Syrian male with four years of residency in Norway:

> **Researcher:** "(…) *and how is this experienced? (...) what does it mean to be a refugee in your perspective*?
> **Informant Hawthorn:** "*You must understand* (…) *still today, it is really all I am. You go somewhere in Alta, and no one knows you, knows that you are Hawthorn* (…) *you are seen and put in place as only that* (…) *a poor immigrant*"

The glimpse of Hawthorns life world presented here points towards the condition that 'integration' implies the crossing and transformation of certain boundaries; a process in which people can indeed become trapped *at* the boundary in a perpetuated social state of neither-nor. Hence, it becomes apparent, that the total identification of 'refugee' and its socially quarantining potential may be understood in terms of a liminal quality. Liminality, derived from the Latin noun *limen*, meaning threshold, thus turns attention towards both a marker, or boundary, of difference and a connective zone that potentially admits crossing and contact. Dissimilar to a barrier, the limen suggests awareness, or movement against, a state or ontological status beyond an immediate available form (Pötzsch 2011:86). Liminality furthermore denotes a state of exclusion; a temporary period of transition when one is betwixt and between significant status's (such as childhood and adolescence) and only subsequently is transformed into a complete member of society (Turner 1996:509).

As a conceptual frame, the liminal quality of the total identification 'refugee' may be taken together with the discourse of disqualification as a resource for understanding tensions within processes of belonging, precisely because it accentuates how systematic external definitions of individuals as 'refugee' or 'immigrant' in some stage of 'integrating' may represent an enslavement in a powerful, encompassing 'betwixt and between' identification which may only allow for a partial, fractured transition into 'Norwegianness'. More specifically, we may examine how ideas of familiarity and foreignness, normalized and activated in everyday interaction between the Norwegian majority and societal newcomers,

may invoke and perpetuate a subjectivity of non-belonging, and in the process inscribe a subtle stigma of inferiority, deficiency and a potentially unceasing mark of 'work in progress' onto the people targeted.

In the following section, I will add to this theoretical sub-lens by presenting the concept of subject positions as it is understood by Davies and Harré (1990). The argument is offered that to understand how experiences of social inferiority affect individual processes of belonging amongst refugees, analytical attention should be paid towards the discursive contexts that develop forms and expressions of subjectivity. This theoretical stance works, in line with Jenkins' insights, under the premise that subjectivity is an unstable and processual phenomenon rather than a fixed disposition. I thus align myself with Lyotard, as he argues that the organisation of subjectivity occurs in concrete discursive events of everyday life where aspects of subjectivity are addressed, and the meaning of self and other is accumulated, assigned and assembled (1984:15).

3.2 Subject Positions

In this thesis I draw on Davies & Harrés (1990) concept of subject positions on the one hand to analyse how refugee identities may be externally defined by members of the Norwegian majority, and on the other to explore how such identities are subjectively experienced and ascribed meaning internally amongst the individuals they concern. This implies an understanding of identity and subjectivity as interlinked, social processes of 'becoming' (subjectivation) which "*come to be produced by socially and culturally available discourses*" (Davies & Harré 1990:44-46). Language use may in this context be thought of as a 'place' where struggles over who belongs and who doesn't unfold and are manifested (Foucault 1978:17; Jørgensen & Phillips 1999:24-25). In line with this reflection, Davies & Harré suggest that the use of particular ways of talking about and understanding aspects of the world (discourses) in a social situation entails the fixation of particular ways to perceive oneself and others (1990:46-48). Connecting with the insights of Jenkins, social interaction involves a process in which individuals are identified, and as such *positioned*, in relation to structures of pre-established meanings, categories or 'narratives'. The main point is that processes of identification and positioning entails the creation of a "*structure of rights*" (ibid.), or, in other words, particular status spaces for people to occupy and ascribe to each other. This entails that each subject position not only offers a sense of who I/you are, but also possibilities for and limitations on agency (ibid.; Burr 1995:145). This means two things. First, it means that

depending on how people are identified, certain possibilities and restrictions for *who* they may be and *what* kind of status's they may enter are created. Secondly, the way we speak, and the way other people address, or 'hail', us, may at length accumulate and transcend into an individual quality of self and a capacity for subjectivity.

The concept of subject positions is highly useful in this context to dissect how social boundaries between members of the majority and refugees are manifested and may be located, negotiated, patrolled, manipulated and in various ways blurred by language use. Likewise, the concept of subject positions allows me to discuss how social boundaries form part of the culturally available meanings through which individuals produce themselves and others as subjects, how ideas and ascription of foreignness may transcend into aspects of individual perceptions of self and how this process may have consequences for the way refugees become anchored within Norwegian society. In this context, subject positions may be defined as:

"both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire [...] *the particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned"* (Davies & Harré 1990:46).

Understood this way, individuals locate each other as subjects during interaction by assigning, accepting, negotiating or refusing positions and the specific configurations of significance, possibility and restriction they allow for. When connected to the concept of social boundaries, this perspective generates a number of important questions for understanding tensions within the process of establishing belonging amongst refugees: What parts of society are actually open for refugees to enter on par with Norwegians, and which offer resistance? What experiences of inclusion/exclusion are generated along the way and how do they feed back into settlement processes?

The relevance of these questions may be contextualized by considering recent case studies that examine these dynamics. In one such case study, the Norwegian Anthropologist Rugkåsa shows how minority women in work training programs in Oslo transfer mainly to low status jobs, which, in combination with other forms of intersectional exclusion such as gender, religion and a lack of language skills, tends to render them *more* isolated and stigmatized within their marginal occupation than they would be if they were unemployed (2010:251). Likewise, exploring the integration of Tamil refugees in Northern Norway, Anne Sigfrid Grønseth

documents how a small Tamil community indeed became 'integrated' into the local fish-plant work force, but encounter severe structural barriers that prevent becoming socially and culturally accepted outside the context of work in the local municipality (2011:321-22). As a reaction to the dynamics of exclusion, members of the Tamil community subsequently give up their claim to belonging and migrated into social isolation and more acquiescent Tamil sub-communities in Oslo (ibid.:320).

In this sense, subject positions carry within them different power relations as they constrain and shape an individual's options for agency. Subject positions reflect social hierarchies (at times racism), and (re)produce relations of power between individuals, as they are:

> "*based on the principle that not everyone involved in a social episode has equal access to rights and duties to perform particular kinds of meaningful actions at that moment and with those people* (…) *a cluster of short-term disputable rights, obligations and duties is called a 'position'*"(Harré 2012:193).

Keeping in mind that social phenomena such as groups and identities, as well as our understanding of them, are continuously created and contested through boundary making and un-making, particular attention in this thesis is thus tuned towards how this process occurs when societal newcomers are allocated positions that draw upon tropes of social proximity or distance. As Moghaddam and Harré point out, subject positions allow us to discuss: "*how people use words (and discourse of all types) to locate themselves and others* (…) *it is with words that we ascribe rights and claim them for ourselves and place duties on others*" (2010:2). In this perspective, the ascription and disclosure of subject positions is a complex merging between structure and process, of *having* and *creating* knowledge and awareness of others[14]. In line with this reflection, Davies & Harré argue that; "*any narrative we unfold in interaction with other people thus draws on a knowledge of social structures and the recognizable roles, which people are assigned within these structures*" (1990:42). This phenomenon may be unpacked when related to writings on hegemony, in particular Philip Wexler's understanding of the concept as *the power to establish the 'common sense' or 'doxa' of a society, the fund of self-evident descriptions of social reality that normally go without saying*" (1990:100). In this sense discursive power works and is productive by creating the obligations, rights, expectations,

---

[14] Resonates, amongst others, with the writings of Bourdieu (1977,1996)

attitudes and actions which come to be perceived as self-evident resources to construct ourselves as members of specific social groups, as well as the meanings of our experience.

Fraser's perspective also links to an understanding of how the development of subject positions is to be seen in relation to, and as produced within, particular ways of talking about and understanding aspects of the world which have come to dominate by way of their seeming naturalness and normalcy (which I understand to be discourses) (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999:9-13). This perspective bridges to the previous section's discussion on how dynamics of dichotomization and perceived foreignness are locked within and perpetuated by particular concepts, such as 'integration' and 'culture' which in turn creates structures of opportunity and constraint for refugees and their descendants in Norwegian society (Olwig 2012:7-11). Thus, as subject positions are created by patterns of pre-established meanings, the usage of 'heavy' concepts such as integration is of central importance for understanding why certain positions seem 'more obvious' to develop towards refugees, and to shed light on why processes of inclusion and exclusion associated with immigration unfold as they do on different levels of Norwegian society. In other words, to understand why tensions arise within processes of belonging, we need to understand *what* parts of society we offer people to 'integrate' into, a society that might indeed look very different from a position outside the (white) Norwegian majority.

3.3 Unpacking the Black Box of Identification: Categories, Power & Intersectionality

So far, I have introduced to this thesis a merging between the concepts of social identity and subject positions. Firstly, I argued for a processual understanding of identity (identification) as the touch point between internal and external definitions. Secondly, I expanded the argument by introducing the idea that identification implicates the creation of a structure of rights and status spaces which has an important bearing on the possibilities for and limitations on agency. It follows that the external ascription of subject positions may at length accumulate and transcend into an individual quality of self and capacity for subjectivity.

However, the theoretical perspective outlined so far is characterized by three blind spots. Firstly, Jenkins suggests that the internalization of certain attitudes, beliefs and status positions by individuals and groups is in the main contingent on the *power* of the actor(s) who make the external definition. However, as Jørgensen & Phillips argue, the relation between individual subjectivity and the dominant definitions and categories that exist in society at a given time are not in a simple, one-to-one relation (1999:24-26). All ideological content and meaning, even

the most dominant and naturalized, are thus in a sense *multivocal,* and may be subjected to various degrees of negotiation, resistance and, perhaps most importantly, interpretations (ibid.). Following this, it cannot be assumed that an external definition, or the development of a subject position, is automatically 'absorbed' or internalized amongst those it concerns. As Stuart Hall argues, people do not necessarily recognize a text/message in the way it was *meant* to be understood (1980:128-35). Any act of communication and its meaning can thus be interpreted in varying ways, and this is of course also the case with an external definition: As a type of communicative event it doesn't necessarily generate subjectivity, but there is a certain *potential* for such acts to do so, as well as a certain quality of meaning which may be identified within this potential.

Secondly, it is important to consider Jenkins' argument; "*external definitions may only occur in active social relationships*" (2008:55). Is this necessarily so? Evidence suggest that dominant categories and identity typecasts, by way of cultural and social embedment in collective consciousness, have a certain 'agency', or hidden discursive quality, of their own; a predefined meaning potential which as a type of stabilized, descriptive resource lies dormant beyond immediate social interaction (Davies & Harré 1990:26-28). Likewise, external definitions may over time (like hegemonic discourses), become implanted in objects, symbols and institutions, and as such excerpt influence outside the reach of 'active social relationships'. In this way, the external definitions which lay quiescent, latent and unacknowledged in linguistic habits, physical surroundings and bureaucratic rituals may, perhaps, in relation to their subtleness, become some of the most powerful external definitions by way of misperception. This perspective relates to the profound navigational capacity inherent in dichotomies of social division, such as 'Norwegian/immigrant', the way they may highjack and steer the meaning potential of the individuals in question and reinforce a perceived naturalness in comprehending some people qua relations of (problematic) difference, detachment, and disunion. Gullestads reflections expand the inquiry, as she writes:

> "*the non-thematised frames of interpretation* [the terms immigrant and Norwegian] (…) *are not externally attached stickers, but a substantial part of every discussion. In the moment one speaks of the relationship between 'immigrants' and 'Norwegians' one has used a frame of interpretation that pre-formulates a difference that then has to be bridged*" (2002:93) (my translation).

Gullestad's perspective is echoed by a substantial number of related studies, showing how political and social practices in Scandinavia constitute what we may term a 'systemic differentiation' of refugees from the national majority by continuous identification as 'social clients', 'unqualified' and 'in need of integration' (ibid.:24; Gullestad 2006:20-25; Olwig & Pæregaard 2011:15; Jensen 2011:112-13). These studies show, that as a society we navigate interpret and act upon the social world with an outset in categories and in this way, they are granted concrete consequences. The power of categories, and the hidden tyranny of their subjects, is thus located in their ability to shape ontological models for thought, or, shared frames of interpretation which infer social boundaries: What *is* a refugee? What *is* the line between 'us' and 'them', and where is it drawn? Depending on the answer to these questions, different actions and policies may be legitimized and rendered meaningful. Categorizations are operations of *power* in the sense that they motivate particular social divides and downplay others.

Not only do they reflect social divides; they contribute to their manufacture and reproduction. Evidence thus show, that societal categorizations of refugees have great influence on the communities and self-perceptions that these people develop in Scandinavia - or fail to develop/settle in - as they become part of society (ibid.:28; Rytter 2007:64; Gullestad 2002:37-47; Rugkåsa 2010:244-251). When societal newcomers develop distinct communities, they are thus often referred to as a contrast and disconnection from the majority of Norwegian society. It is seldom discussed, however, how these phenomena may have become constructed and entrenched as *outside-* or *parallel-* communities through the very power of categorization inherent in the projects of 'integration' and 'qualification' that indeed serve to encapsulate them as lucid bubbles of problematic dissonance within mainstream society (Olwig & Pæregaard 2007:18). This insight informs one of the core ideas in this thesis and effectively voices a crucial, but too often clandestine aspect - 'the black box' - of social identity: *Foreignness does not exist a priori*. Social gaps and perceived distance between refugees and the Norwegian majority do not necessarily reflect vast cultural or social difference. Foreignness, 'enemies' and 'others' are in the main to be regarded as complex, often dialectic, outcomes of social processes.

The third blind spot to be addressed is that even though the combined theorization of Jenkins and Davies & Harré acknowledges that identities are multi-dimensional and must be understood in relation to structures of power, little attention is devoted towards their potential *intersectional* quality. In this context, the concept of intersectionality will be introduced as it is presented and understood by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989). Crenshaw's argument is, that in order

to properly understand how social identities influence the way individuals are included or excluded from social spheres, it is not sufficient to extend general inquiries into, for an example, 'refugee identity'. Instead, it is necessary to examine how individual experience intersects with other dimensions of identity, and how these dimensions may build on to one another as mutually reinforcing premises for domination, discrimination and exclusion (1989:140). This perspective is central, firstly, because it highlights the problematic reductionism embedded within analytical terms such as majority/minority. They risk reducing our understanding of social reality and blur the fact that different categorical distinctions, such as gender, ethnicity, class and religion interact and facilitate complex processes of in- and exclusion of specific individuals in specific contexts which may have little to do with majority/minority issues at such. The concept of intersectionality thus implies, that different forms of discrimination and marginalization may be interlinked in intersectional systems of structural oppression which indeed may create very different premises for individuals within both the majority/minority social nexus's. Secondly, Crenshaw's perspective is central, precisely because dynamics of micro-humiliation amongst refugees are inherently complex, intersectional experiences. Peoples positionalities, for an example the gender one is understood by, thus translate into vastly different mechanisms of othering/recognition, experiences of in- and exclusion, and ideas of victim/perpetrator/enemy roles. This means, that the examination of how micro-humiliation influence processes of belonging, is inherently an intersectional inquiry. Audre Lorde coins this insight adequately in writing that "*There is no such thing as a single–issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives*" (2007:138). In examining the ascription of meaning to, and experiences of, identities, emphasis is thus to be placed on how people's life trajectories engender individual, intersectional dynamics of othering and belonging. This perspective will be unpacked further in the following sections, as I go on to discuss how the racialization of the term 'culture' is linked to the construction of certain markers of foreignness, such as religion, skin colour and language as hierarchical social boundary markers between Norwegian/refugee identities.

3.4 Hidden Dimensions of Identity: Social Boundaries & Cultural Racism

As a third and final pillar in a theoretical framework, I will merge strands from critical race theory as it is defined and operationalized in research on Scandinavian nationalism (Gullestad 2002:21; 2006:27; Rytter 2007:75; Stolcke 1995:2) with Evelin Lindners theory on humiliation.

As a conceptual platform to discuss this connection, I rely on the concept of social boundaries as it is used in studies of ethnicity (Eriksen 2010:34; Verdery 2000:60). This is done under the premise, that settlement processes and dynamics of belonging in a, for refugees, new society inherently entail the transformation and/or successful crossing of a number of social boundaries. The boundary metaphor furthermore allows us to discuss how concrete ideas of affiliation, membership, and foreignness are produced, negotiated and how these dynamics translate into concrete practices of exclusion and experiences of what I term micro-humiliation amongst the 'refugee' other. In the present context, the concept of social boundaries draws attention to the existence and reproduction of social barriers (e.g. racism) on various levels in society and their very real and practical consequences for access to status-giving arenas such as the labour market (Gullestad 2002:21-36). Likewise, it serves to problematize and surface hidden and harmful mechanisms of exclusion, the "*invisible barriers against actual social incorporation (…) the everyday unsensational discrimination*" (ibid.:21). As a preliminary definition, a social boundary may thus be understood as a perceived social distance between individuals that is maintained and marked, often symbolically, by way of language. The argument is widely supported, that social boundaries come into existence and may be identified as a social phenomenon when actors distinguish between individuals by use of identity labels and treat members of such categories differently (Wimmer 2013:3; Verdery 2000:35). As Anthony Cohen argues, consciousness of us/them dichotomies clearly implies a social boundary over which differences are picked out and accentuated (2000:64). Such boundaries, Verdery claims, are social structures - a particular way of organizing relations - that are continuously made and remade (2000:34-36). As a social phenomenon, social boundaries refer to, and develop from, underlying patterns of cultural logic and the hegemonic[15] application of power and is thus intimately connected to ideas of (ethnic and racialized) social *order* (Gullestad 2006:25).

The perspective on intersectionality, presented in the previous section, is integral here for understanding how different hierarchies of social life and boundaries of belonging interrelate in terms of how and towards whom relations of problematic difference are produced. Thus, social boundaries, and the disadvantages that follows, are not merely unfolding along the divide between Norwegian/refugee identities. This is, for an example, illustrated by Barbara Perry, who shows how Muslim women of colour are "*feared and reviled on the same basis as*

---

[15] I use the term 'hegemony' here primarily to frame the uneven power relations inherent in Norwegian majority/refugee minority relations and the inherent struggle to control the use of key signs and supposed neutral values (Gullestad 2006:25; Comaroff & Comaroff 1991:19-27).

all Muslims (...) yet in addition, they are often constructed as racialized, exotic Others who do not fit the Western ideal of womanhood" (2014:79). The point is here, that social boundaries in Norwegian society may not perform in the same way towards all societal newcomers. Muslim women/men of colour, for an example, are vulnerable to various gendered boundaries and other forms structural disempowerment in terms of their class, ethnic, racial and religious position (ibid.).

The perspective on the intersectionality of social boundaries resonates with discussions centred in critical race theory, in particular the concept of cultural racism as it is presented by Gullestad (2006) and Verena Stolcke (1995). Anchored in anthropological examinations of Norwegian social structures (such as neighbourhoods), Gullestad demonstrates how racially, and at times gendered, coded modes of dominance are almost ubiquitously present as deeply ingrained and continuously changing 'conventional wisdom' (doxa) (2002:24). Stolcke develops this perspective by describing a 'new' form of racism, defined as a type of cultural fundamentalism, which is based on the tendency for cultures to be positioned and imagined hierarchically. Rather than equating racism with an emphasis on phenotypes, such racism to a large extend replaces the concept of 'race' with 'culture' in conventional political rhetoric and public discourse (Stolcke 1995:3-7; Gullestad 2006:26). This notion is echoed by a tendency for the Norwegian majority population to be perceived as a kind of ethnic essence in which Norwegian culture becomes reified as a somewhat static, individual instalment (Gullestad 2002:16; 2006:27). Abu-Lughod & Lutz develop this articulation of culture in a useful way:

> "*For many (…) the term (culture) seems to connote a certain coherence, uniformity and timelessness in the meaning systems of a given group, and to operate rather like the earlier concept of 'race' in identifying fundamentally different, essentialized, and homogenous social units (as when we speak about 'a culture'). Because of these associations, (…) [it] falsely fixes the boundaries between groups in an absolute and artificial way*" (1990:9).

To contextualize this perspective, it is relevant to briefly consider a number of anthropological case studies that document a strong tendency for refugees in the Nordic nation states to be perceived as 'aliens' inside the Scandinavian 'family' (Rytter 2007:70; Gullestad 2002:78; Wernesjö 2014:47). With the terminology of Mary Douglas, refugees are portrayed and understood in political, media and public debates as a problematic type of *matter out of order* in the perceived ethnically and culturally homogenous nations (1995:41). The language and

symbols of the Norwegian nation thus often have tacit and conventional racial connotations that render them exclusionary and synonymous with whiteness (Gullestad 2006:26).

In an attempt to better understand the underlying cultural 'logic' or doxa from which such dynamics grow, we may briefly connect to David Schneiders works on western kinship ideologies (1968). According to Schneider, western perceptions of kinship are based on the idea that "*blood is thicker than water*" and introduces the distinction between 'authentic' and 'inauthentic' kinship as "*order of nature*" and "*order of law*" (ibid.:27-49). With a thought-provoking parallel to Benedict Andersons later analysis of the nation as an "*imagined community*" (1983) 'authentic' kinship, or kinship by order of nature[16], is thus characterized by 'permanent' bonds stabilized by "*enduring, diffuse solidarity*", similar to that of some national communities (Schneider 1968:51). The main point here is to emphasize how the phenomena of racialized social boundaries, their making and unmaking vis-à-vis refugees, may relate to a distinct tradition of western ontological thinking; a powerful, cultural construction and shared idea of a (white) Norwegian national community as a *family* in which refugees, and their descendants, come to be positioned as members who does not belong by 'order of nature'. The perceived social distance, that may serve to exclude or marginalize refugees, can in other words be thought of as a type of imagined *kinship boundaries*. Gullestad expands this perspective by critically examining what she terms the "*myth of Norwegian homogeneity* (2002:67). According to Gullestad, the Norwegian national community is characterized by a powerful, imagined sense of homogeneity and of homogeneity as the *normal* (ibid.). This condition motivates consciousness of a remarkably sharp boundary between the Norwegian 'us' and refugee 'others', who (depending on intersectional factors) come to figure as a disturbance, or, again expanding the conceptual scope with the terminology of Douglas; *impurity, pollution, and danger* in relation to the imagined homogenous, 'clean', structure of the nation (Douglas 1995:41-42). In the following section, I will connect the insights presented here on social boundaries with Linder's theory on humiliation. The main argument to be established is how social boundaries may function as intersectional *vehicles* for micro-humiliation, which I understand in terms of continuous, everyday experiences of being treated as an inferior.

---

[16] Which is, Schneider claims, inherently influenced by western ideologies of biology and genetics (1968:27-40).

3.5 The Basic Particles of Social Disintegration: Humiliation & Shame

A central point of entrance into the present discussion on micro-humiliation is the condition that refugees, at arrival, are located at the bottom rung of a novel social hierarchy. They often find that their competence is not recognized, and their personalities reduced to simply 'a refugee' (Fangen 2006:70). This diminishment is at the core of the concept of humiliation. Composed from the Latin *humus* (earth), *humilis* (low), and *humiliare* (to make low), humiliation refers to the idea of pinning down, putting down or holding to the ground. Indeed, one of the central characteristics of humiliation is that the injured party is forced 'downwards' towards a state of lowliness or submission. Humiliation is by Lindner defined as: "*the enforced lowering of any person or group by a process of subjugation that damages their dignity. 'To be humiliated' is to be placed, in a situation that is against one's interest in a demeaning and damaging way*" (2006:xiv). Lindner's definition thus frames humiliation as a relational phenomenon that unfolds as an interpersonal experience, or quality, in human relationships. Connecting to Jenkins' perspective on social identity presented earlier, humiliation is a process of identification which lowers the status of the subject in question and draws into doubt one's worth (Lindner et al.: 2013:56-59). Linda Hartling further shows, how theory on humiliation connects constructively to the concept of social boundaries by emphasizing how experiences of humiliation may activate alienation (residential segregation, isolation, societal disconnection and polarization), or acts of aggressive resistance (e.g., joining extremist groups or gangs) (1999:259-72; 2007:467). In a compatible argument, Aaron Lazare points out how episodes of humiliation involve a complex experience of ones being as under attack, belittled, considered deficient or reduced in size (p. 1665). Likewise, Julian Walker and Victoria Knauer add that "*humiliation is a more common trigger for violence than other self-conscious emotions*" (2011:737). An important point here is that the various episodes of micro-humiliation that refugees may experience, often in the shape of seemingly small, day-to-day episodes of contempt, discrimination, and ridicule, are profoundly intersectional processes. A potent illustration of this dynamic is the presence of on the one hand Norwegian discourses of (often young) male refugees as dangerous, criminal, and non-integrated, and on the other representations of (often Muslim) women as oppressed, silenced and subjugated their male relatives/culture (Perry 2014:80-81; Ekman 2015:1995; Miles & Brown 2003:52). Such frames of interpretation may thus engender (highly different) micro-humiliations by reducing individuals to a negative or exotic stereotype, rather than unique individuals (Fangen 2006:83).

For an example, it is well documented how Somali refugees in Norway find it extremely difficult and humiliating to handle the everyday 'otherness' attributed their perceived ethnic identity (Fangen 2006:81; Alitolppa-Niitamo 2004:88).

These perspectives point toward the importance of understanding how individual experiences of inferiority, rejection, shame and exclusion may come together as an explanatory model for processes of societal polarization, residential segregation and other tensions within processes of belonging. For this purpose, I will focus on social boundaries as intersectional *vehicles* for humiliation in its most subtle and ingrained forms, what Lindner terms "*the repeated, everyday experience of being treated as an inferior*" (2006:30), and what I hence shall refer to as 'micro-humiliation'.

There are, however, a number of problematic aspects associated with this perspective. It is thus not entirely clear under what circumstances humiliation actually produces dynamics of withdrawal, aggression or stigma, and when such experiences may simply be ignored. Relatedly, one might ask where the line is drawn between acts of humiliation and that of 'well-meaning' correction. There is, it seems, a risk to 'see humiliation everywhere' and apply the concept of humiliation too readily to too many social interactions. In an attempt to move beyond these fault-lines and build upon the insights of Lindner, it is useful to review James Gilligan theorization of violence (2000). Gilligan asserts; "*the most effective and powerful stimulus off violence in the human species is the experience of shame*" (2000:223). Gilligan thus moves the analytical emphasis from humiliation as such on to the more particular experiences of *inferiority* and *shame*. Thus, to suffer the loss of recognition from others, by being rejected, insulted, or ridiculed, is to be shamed and rendered inferior (ibid.:48). Importantly, Gilligan suggests that depending on life-contexts, individuals have different *vulnerabilities* toward such dynamics. The notion of vulnerability is significant to note, as it resonates with the inquiry into intersectionality and the idea of people occupying differently positionalities in relation to premises for recognition and social value (see for an example Crenshaw's discussions of how race/gender comes together in inequality structures for women of color (1991:1242)).

Considering the uncertain situation of most refugees, located as they are in an unfamiliar country, lacking language and cultural knowledge, it seems reasonable to assume that these factors may come together into a particular state of shared susceptibility and vulnerability towards experiencing inferiority and shame (which none the less generates individual outcomes) in a way that may indeed explain why seemingly 'trivial' episodes may accumulate into dynamics of social disintegration and other tensions in the process of establishing belonging.

This chapter has presented the theoretical lens that I will use to explore the connection between social boundaries and experiences of humiliation amongst my refugee informants in Alta. A three-step interlinkage of perspectives has been presented in which theory on social identity, subject positions and humiliation were merged. The main argument was two-fold. Firstly, I argued for a model capable of linking basic premises for individual experience and minority/majority interaction patterns to large scale social structures and ideological subtexts (in this context with particular attention to the concept of integration unpacked in Chapter 2). Secondly, I argued that accumulative experiences of everyday exposure to excluding social boundaries may be understood better by unpacking them in the analytical context of micro-humiliation. In the following chapter, I present how the empirical material for this thesis was constructed and how fieldwork was conducted at Sisa cultural centre in Alta. Subsequently, I unpack the epistemology of social constructivism and attempt to map the positionalities attached to my own identity in the field, as well as the limitations within the research design deployed in this thesis.

4   Methodology

> *"We shall not cease from exploration*
> *And the end of all our exploring*
> *Will be to arrive where we started*
> *And know the place for the first time"*
>
> (Eliot 1943:59).

In this thesis, I explore how social boundaries between the Norwegian majority and refugees may transcend into experiences of lowliness, inferiority and micro-humiliation, and how such dynamics may influence processes of belonging. In doing so, I present a qualitative case study of Sisa cultural centre, a social hot-spot and 'multicultural' meeting place located in Alta, Northern Norway. This chapter provides an analysis of the research methods applied in studying these dynamics and the theoretical underpinnings implicated in a qualitative, social constructivist approach. I align my inquiry with the insights of Norman Denzin & Yvonne Lincoln, who understand the qualitative investigation to be "*an interactive process shaped by one's personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity and those of the people in the setting*" (2011:5). This perspective highlights the need to explicitly reflect on how the meta-methodological bedrock of social constructivism, as well as the specific strategies for empirical data collection chosen in this thesis, come together as distinct premises for knowledge production. In this chapter I thus present how I conducted fieldwork at Sisa and examine how my own identity has served to socially situate my presence in the field. With reference to my research question, I discuss which data I have devoted selective analytical attention and how this procedure was undertaken. Finally, I unpack the epistemological underpinnings associated with a case study approach informed by a social constructivist stance.

4.1   Why study Processes of Belonging at Sisa Cultural Centre?

Social dynamics of belonging amongst refugees, as well as processes of social in- and exclusion may be studied in a variety of empirical contexts. In this section I discuss why the Sisa culture centre is of particular interest for this inquiry.

Sisa cultural centre (Sisa means 'in' in Sami as in 'welcome *in* to our place', or 'how I feel *inside*') is physically located in a three-story building in Bossekop, a suburb of Alta. It

was established in Alta 18. October 2007, and is a non-profit organization run by a small professional staff (3.5 positions including daily leadership) by means of public funds. In particular, Alta County contracts various social services out to Sisa, such as work training programs and initiatives to improve mental health. However, Sisa also functions as an informal meeting place for locals (Altaværinger), which as a result creates a heterogeneous and interchanging social arena for everyday interaction, in which refugees, individuals with physical/mental disabilities, mental illness, as well as artists, families and sometimes travellers meet, interact and spend longer or shorter amounts of time. Sisa frames itself as 'a place where people meet, cultures and people melt together', and the centre indeed performs as a dynamic arena for social encounters and activities. At the time of my fieldwork in the summer of 2017, Sisa's focus was particularly, but not exclusively, aimed towards issues of 'integration', work training and entrepreneurship[17] amongst refugees. A substantial part of the Sisa building was thus in use for different micro-businesses, such as a barber-shop, IT-repair shop, massage therapy, lunch catering, tailor shop, and a handicrafts store.

As a space and place for qualitative research, Sisa represents a physically, as well as temporally (during opening hours) bounded social field which 'condenses' interaction and social processes in a useful way. Sisa thus represents a stimulating setting for studying how 'refugee identities' are recognized and understood in various contexts by members of the majority. Likewise, as a rather distinctive multitude of social positions meet, discuss, cooperate and in other ways interact, Sisa provides a social space where identities are acted upon and ascribed with content and meaning from highly dissimilar angles. Though Sisa was visited by a highly heterogeneous and fluid group of individuals, a core group of 8 informants, as well as 5 individuals associated with the regular staff[18], would be engaged in various activities or meetings at the centre on a daily basis. During the 1.5 months of fieldwork this enabled me to establish a reflexive relation with a positive degree of familiarity with this group and to repeat, triangulate and reframe particular interview questions as time went on.

Importantly, Sisa may in a certain sense be perceived as a rather atypical institution in Alta, with highly informal, egalitarian and open norms for interaction. The centre strives towards an 'unlocked doors' policy, even in staff offices, and available spaces are often loaned to people in need of a temporary place to stay. Likewise, Finnmark County (the largest, but least populated county in Norway), has a more complex history of migration, as well as a legacy of harsh assimilation policies towards the indigenous Sami population, than the rest of the

---

[17] For an example by offering micro-loans and guidance towards establishing a small-scale business.
[18] Consisting of daily leadership and environmental workers.

country, and is by some considered to have a more 'multicultural' history than in 'the south' (Jensen 2007:7). These conditions are critical to reflect upon as they, on different levels, contribute in shaping the encompassing context of inclusion and exclusion of refugees which might not unfold in the same way in other locations.

4.2 Practical Implementation of the Research Project

In spring 2017, I presented a research proposal to the daily manager at Sisa per email and requested permission to do fieldwork at Sisa during June/July 2017, which was accepted without further questions. The people present at Sisa during my fieldwork (beside staff) were not informed or granted influence on the decision to allow my fieldwork, and the research project was thus not known or cleared in advance with my informants[19]. This condition may be regarded as an ethical dilemma. However, people were free to come and go at the centre and had opportunity to withdraw from the setting at any time.

I conducted fieldwork on a daily basis in June, and on a more scattered basis during July, as the centre closed down most activities during summer. During September and October, I again returned to the centre on eight different occasions. I participated in children's workshops, the creation of art exhibitions, birthday celebrations, helped to arrange activity days for asylum seekers, and contributed modestly in the construction of a wooden theatre stage. During this time, I became particularly connected to 9 informants with a mixed background; some where ethnic Norwegians, some had refugee status's. Some enjoyed being at the centre because of the atmosphere, and some had established a small business at Sisa and thus had their workdays there.

In June 2017 I conducted 4 interviews with refugees from Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq whom I met, or came into contact with, via Sisa. Likewise, I conducted 2 interviews with staff members, and 5 interviews with Alta locals visiting the centre on a regular basis. The (semi-structured) interviews varied in length from 55 minutes to nearly 2 hours. Most of the interviews were conducted at Sisa, however, as I discovered that it was at times difficult for my informants to talk about sensitive issues at the centre, 3 interviews were conducted in private homes and in a nearby park. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian and English, recorded and more or less immediately transcribed. In one interview I used a non-professional translator to

---

[19] I openly discussed my knowledge interests with my informants. However, I found myself often downplaying the emphasis and particular interest in the refugee identity as not to single out or make my informants uncomfortable. Rather, I emphasized that my interest was in processes of inclusion/exclusion at Sisa and in Norwegian society.

translate from Arabic to English. Even though language gaps at times created barriers for complex questions and nuanced answers, my presence at Sisa and day to day encounters with my informants enabled me to continuously clarify points of uncertainty and reframe difficult questions.

An important limitation in my inquiry surfaced at this point, insofar as my findings will be influenced by the time period in which my project took place. Fieldwork conducted at another time of the year would have engaged different informants, different activities and contexts for interaction, and thus, perhaps, a different variety of data. The summer period is relatively quiet at Sisa, and a fieldwork during winter would likely have exposed me to a higher intensity of interaction and activity. On the other hand, the relative quietness of the summer period may have allowed for more in-depth conversations and the establishment of a more trustful relation with a smaller group of informants.

Another significant condition to consider is how the relative proximity of the so called 'refugee crisis', and its associated heavy, and often negative media coverage of immigration issues may have acted as a particularly salient backdrop for how members of the majority framed their understanding of refugees in my interviews. This condition reminds us how the production of knowledge in complex ways is nested in, and contingent on, space, place and interchangeable discourses, thus signalling the importance of explicit methodological reflection (Hastrup 2004:24).

4.3 A Case Study Approach

As a social space with certain premises and norms for contact, Sisa figures as a distinct arena for interaction and distinct institutional practices. At the same time, Sisa may also be perceived as a discrete manifestation of Norwegian society, its values of social support and development associated with the welfare state structure, as well as the opportunities for funding offered by the state under this philosophy (which indeed sustain Sisa from year to year). With this reflection in mind, my research at Sisa is to be unpacked as a case study approach. According to Gerring, a case study may thus be understood as *the intensive study of a single case to for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units*" (2004:342). To study a particular case, or segment of society, may thus grant a selective, but nuanced insight into relatively complex social situations (Stake 2000:435; Hakim 1987:61-69). The underlying assumption is here, that by studying local social boundary dynamics as they are performed and understood

within a niche (Sisa) of the entirety of Norwegian society, and apply my theoretical lens to this material, I may investigate wider premises for belonging amongst refugees within this entirety.

In this way, studying social dynamics at Sisa enables me to discern processes and trace underlying social mechanisms that have significance beyond this immediate context. By contextualizing and triangulating my findings with related case studies and scholarly works, I am further able to assess the extent to which these occurrences may be characterized as generalizable phenomena.

To establish a definition of what a 'case' actually is, it is useful firstly to note, that this notion is rather disputed, and definitions vary within the social sciences (Schwandt & Emily 2017:341). For immediate reflexion, a case may be understood as an "*instance, incident, or unit of something* (…) *an organization or event* (ibid.). John Gerring approaches the subject similarly but argues that cases should be delimited to specific spaces and a specific time (2004:342). Charles Ragin introduces a useful distinction here, as he argues that cases may be understood as empirical entities and theoretical constructs (1992:2017-19). As empirical entities, cases have a certain ontological quality as structures that may be discovered and as such exist independently from the consciousness of researcher. As theoretical constructs, however, cases are in a sense produced by the researcher through prior theoretical orientation, and thus the particular 'lens' imposed on the empirical material. The case presented in this study, as an intersection of these qualities, is understood to be "*things that are both real and constructed, that are fuzzy realities with complex properties*" (Scwandt & Gates 2017:342). Within this perspective, we may understand the empirical material presented in this thesis as simultaneously a production of the activities and processes within the 'Sisa-system' itself, and a creation of the theoretical strategy of description chosen to unpack these dynamics. This means, that the 'case' is framed by a description with distinctive analytical tools, however, I am also constrained as to where and how this frame may meaningfully be drawn (Cilliers 2001:142). The case upon which this study is designed is thus neither merely a product of description, nor a 'purely natural' thing. What this means, and what the implications of this epistemological stance are for knowledge production in this thesis, will be discussed in the following section.

4.4 The Epistemology of Social Constructivism

What are the epistemological consequences associated with rejecting the idea of a stable, unchangeable reality which may be *a priori* portrayed and objectively represented through

science? What are the limitations and pitfalls associated with the idea that scientific methods are in themselves discourses and interpretive practices which constitutes representation, description and understanding which influence phenomena as they appear to human perception? Initially we may note that, as seen through the lens of constructivism, social phenomena which are considered 'natural' and 'common sense' are challenged and re-established as specific products of social processes associated with human recognition. Social constructivism thus stimulates a critical stance towards phenomena which may appear stable and 'given', such as kinship, national belonging, or what it means to be a refugee, and questions their 'naturalness', the sense that they could not be different (Wenneberg 2000:10, Denzin & Lincoln 2011:2). As Søren Wenneberg writes, "*social constructivism does not take the immediate for granted and frames apparent social phenomena in terms of underlying dynamics*" (2010:13). This perspective is central, as it underlines why a social constructivist stance is useful in this thesis. With reference to my research question, emphasizing how social boundary dynamics may engender underlying premises for the way refugees establish belonging, it is not only assumed that identities matter profoundly for individual life trajectories, but also that they do not do so in a vacuum; identities are constructed in terms of subjective experience and meaning through actions, words and various social norms and are thus contingent on interpretations, categories and power, all of which are socially constructed. The idea is here established that identity categories such as 'Norwegian' and 'refugee', as well as the perceived degree of 'familiarity/foreignness' that may stand between them, have an ontological quality as products, or *deposits* from social structures which may be observed in speech and interaction. Social in- and exclusion, as well as the 'integration' of refugees into Norwegian society are regarded as events constitutive of (and in turn also constituted by) the phenomena of identity.

This insight points towards the application of a specific concept of knowledge in which relations play an important part in our understanding of social events (Hastrup 2010b:410). The 'relational' concept of knowledge thus denotes how meaning in itself is a phenomenon that occurs as a result of and is shaped by human relationships. As Thomas Kuhn pointed out with the idea of gradually changing 'paradigms', knowledge, is inherently unstable, subjected to negotiation, and may be understood as a phenomenon situated profoundly in language and the use of particular concepts with conventionally established meanings (2007:97). It is here important to point out, that when social constructivism is applied to knowledge in this way, an epistemological position is created (Wenneberg 2000:18). This particular positon within a theory of knowledge suggests that my own *relation* to the object of inquiry is incorporated into

its existence as it is represented in this thesis (ibid.). In this way the representation and analysis of an object becomes an embedded quality of the object itself. This perspective has central implications for our understanding of social phenomena and how the knowledge we establish about them is to be understood[20]. My particular knowledge interest thus not only discloses, but also *intervenes* in the social conditions I study. It follows here, that analytical interpretations always occur from specific positions towards or relative to a phenomenon, and these positions are integrated into the knowledge we construct. The scientific conditions and strategies deployed in establishing knowledge are in a sense installed into the object of inquiry, influencing both the knowledge created around it and the object itself (Hastrup 2004:418-19).

Notably, there are different positions within social constructivism that entails different ontological positions that need to be distinguished. In this context, I will limit the discussion to Wenneberg's distinction between social constructivism as *epistemology* and *ontological position* (2000:23). In applying social constructivism as epistemology, or the theory of *how we know*, I may thus argue that data and the production of scientific perspectives are situational interpretations that as such are influenced by social dynamics (such as the language used to convey an analysis), and thus comes with positionalities. Likewise, this position suggests that this study should be understood to be of a configurational nature and as a distinct empirical construct. This position entails, that a phenomenon cannot as such be observed or described entirely 'in itself' as independent from the researcher, and statements and actions are not to be perceived as a direct reflection of an 'objective' structure, but as an interpretation *of* life, seen from *within* life. Social constructivism as ontological positon, on the other hand presents a far more radical stance, which suggests that what we understand as 'physical reality' - chairs, windows, cars - are socially constructed and thus have an existential quality of being products of collective/shared thought-processes. This distinction highlights the importance of asking exactly *what* it is, that can be understood as socially constructed.

This thesis limits itself to the social constructivist position defined by Wenneberg as an *epistemology*. This position thus links directly to the theoretical framework applied, in which social identity is seen to be contingent on internal and external definition, as well as the capacity of subject positions in structuring premises for individual agency and perception of self. The social constructivist stance underpinning this thesis' theoretical approach furthermore raises important questions regarding how data collection was undertaken and influenced by embedded

---

[20] The scope of this thesis does not allow for an extensive inquiry into this issue, and it has been discussed usefully by, amongst others (see for an example Hastrup 2004; Wenneberg 2010; Denzin & Lincoln 2011). I will thus focus merely on the aspects which are of greatest relevance for understanding my thesis.

positionalities, biases and knowledge interests. In the following section, I will attempt to map the positionalities that have influenced my presence in the field, the information disclosed to me, and the analytical strategy I have deployed to transform it into knowledge.

4.5 Underlying Premises & Inbuilt Positionalities in Semi-structured Interviews

The analysis in this thesis relies primarily on data gathered through 9 semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted with a questionnaire[21] of 12-17 questions and may generally be understood as accounts given to the researcher regarding a predefined object of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:5-8). The questionnaire for the interviews was designed with the writings of Cecilie Rubow in mind, who argues that it is central to direct attention towards 'concrete events' with questions primarily of the order "*what happened and how did it happen?*" (2010:236). In this way, consciousness may to some extent continuously be guided towards the phenomenon of interest for the investigation (ibid.) This perspective connects to Hastrup's argument that the way an interview situation is facilitated, informants chosen, and questions produced constitutes a highly important way in which the researcher from the beginning constructs the object of inquiry and the very social field to which the study in itself is connected (2010:15).

Central to the methodological choice of applying interviews in this research project is the access to areas of reality that are otherwise not available for direct observation, such as understandings of identities and subjective experiences of social in- and exclusion. In relation to my research question and the conceptual approach of social identity and subject position theory, both of which imply a focus on wider processes of social boundary making/maintenance, interviews allow me, firstly, to probe relevant aspects of individual life-worlds, and, secondly, direct my inquiry towards past events not included by immediate and present interaction.

At times, particularly in the beginning of my fieldwork, it was difficult to address issues of belonging and inclusion and exclusion amongst some of my refugee informants; rather they emphasized positive experiences at Sisa and expressions of gratitude. I here share Wernersjös point of view, as she points out that the interview situation is an arena in which informants make strategic presentations of self (2014:22). This tells us something important about how the

---

[21] See appendix for a model of the questionaires used.

interview cannot as such be regarded as a 'neutral' practice; rather, it constitutes a communicative process which significantly depends on how the social encounter unfolds and the context in which it plays out (Hastrup 2010b:403). This points towards the well-established condition that the production of qualitative knowledge requires the researcher to choose and *interpret* data in order to establish an understanding of its meaning (ibid.). As a consequence, the ensuing production of knowledge cannot avoid being mediated by the researcher as a subject (ibid.). This means, that the acquisition of 'raw' data for this thesis in subtle ways is connected to the kind of relationship I established with my informants (Baarts 2010:41-43). As a number of authors point out, the interview thus has an inherent relational dimension marked by asymmetric power, usually in favour of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:74, Guest et al.:2013:334). In this context, Francine Lorimer argues, that the interview may be regarded as a 'subject producing activity', insofar as the practice of exchanging information in an interview requires the individual to present and position herself as someone (2010:57-58). Here, the interview can be regarded as a form of interaction that necessitates an activation of certain identities, roles and positions within a stratum of social fields, and every session will thus contain a particular gravity and combination of positions and data (ibid., Rubow 2010:240). Cecilie Rubow informs this perspective further, by arguing, that interviews can be regarded as a specific type of relationship, from which reflexive spaces arises (2010:239). Michel Foucault's theoretical orientation resonates with this argument when he writes that the subject emerges as a navigational response to 'everyday' power relations in which "*certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires come to be constituted as individuals*" (Foucault 1980:98).

This conceptualization serves to frame the importance of taking into consideration how my relative positions as a young, white, male academic with Scandinavian ethnicity engenders specific constellations of power in relation to my informants with consequences for the data I was exposed to and the empirical material I constructed (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:5-8, Brinkman & Tanggaard 2015:278-82). In general, I was perceived as something in between staff and a native, Norwegian student. Some informants for an example considered me as a type of 'resource' and made inquiries regarding language, job opportunities and Norwegian law. Most importantly, perhaps, was that even though some of my informants initially positioned themselves by avoiding disclosure of experiences of inclusion and exclusion, this seemed to change radically when they found that I myself am not Norwegian myself, but a Scandinavian immigrant. This shared (however still vastly different) experience of being an immigrant became a great resource (a type of insider position) for establishing common ground and opened

up discussions on sensitive issues. As Unni Wiken points out, the qualitative researcher must: "*dip into the wellsprings of ourselves for something to use as a bridge to others*" (Wikan 1992:471). Likewise, this dynamic is captured by Margaret Boushel (2000:76) who uses the concept 'experiential affinity' as the "*partial overlap of experience and perspective that may link researcher and researched*". Such 'experiential affinity' may thus soften barriers between researcher and informant despite dissimilar positions in the field of research (ibid.).

This condition is important to reflect upon, as it indicates how processes of identification in the field had significant implications for how my informants acted and presented themselves towards me. The interviews conducted at Sisa, as inherently social encounters, thus contained a process of 'social mapping' to which a landscape of perceived expectations, appropriate behaviour, opinions and values associated with different statuses and roles was connected which influenced how meanings are ascribed to events and how opinions are expressed. This dynamic surfaced empirically on several occasions in the Sisa dataset, for an example in an interview with informant Chestnut[22]:

> **Informant Chestnut**: "*Well, I remember that you're an university student, what is it that you study*?"
> **Interviewer:** "*Conflict studies.*"
> **Informant Chestnut:** "*Exactly, so I feel I can say this ... more or less directly, I know you'll get what I think … It's like a type of kinship, you see, an open type of family, you see, and it has something to do with … the threshold is … I know I can count on many of the people like my real family*".

In this case, informant Chestnut identifies me as a researcher according to the category 'university student' and seemingly reacts to this role by signalling a degree of confidentiality and of perceived mutual comprehension. In principle, it cannot be known how Chestnut would have responded if this piece of information had not been disclosed to him. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the moment of identification predisposed Chestnut's response in a certain way.

---

[22] I have given all my informants pseudonyms for to protect their identities. The names of my informants are chosen by themselves as I asked them to pick the name of a tree or a flower (sometimes I gave examples). I use botanically inspired names, as I find they resonate with a matrix of ideas central to this thesis such as roots, process, development and belonging.

In the following section, I build upon this previous discussion on the interview as a context dependant, social situation and unpack how I have sought to address this condition by way of methodological triangulation.

4.6 The Process of Triangulation: Use of Participant Observation & Focus Groups

In the previous section it was shown how the interview is to be regarded as a particular social situation. The empirical material from interviews (the recorded and transcribed dialogue between researcher and informant), can thus be regarded as a 'plaster cast of lived life' which is nonetheless contingent on complex contextual factors (Rubow 2010:241). Thus, important questions are raised regarding how the research design can be refined by combining complementary data-gathering techniques and contextualizing one's findings with related studies. In this context, Denzin & Lincoln remark, that the totality of qualitative research can be understood as a set of interpretive practices that makes the world visible through representations of how people bring meaning to situations and phenomena (2011:3). Here, the use of interviews constitutes a part of a process of 'bricoulage' or 'quilt making', in so far as it contributes to the production of a pieced-together set of representations of perspectives, impressions and situations to a complete analytical portrait of an object of inquiry. This understanding captures the epistemological premise that the 'objective reality' of a social phenomenon cannot as such be captured, however, we may shed light on its qualities more fully and spur reflection, when different methodological angles are combined to capture breadth, complexity and in-depth interpretations (ibid.).

In this context, the concept of methodological triangulation is relevant to consider. Louis Cohen & Lawrence Manion thus defines the process of triangulation as an "*attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint.*" (1986:256). This definition is expanded upon by Tom O'donoghue & Keith Punch as a "*method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data*" (2003:78). In this thesis, I rely on a triangulation of methods by combining 9 semi-structured interviews with 1.5 month of participant observation and 2 focus group discussions. Likewise, I contextualize my findings with anthropological and sociological studies of settlement processes amongst refugees in Scandinavia (in particular Rugkåsa 2010; Gullestad 2002; Wernersjö 2014; Olwig & Pæregaard 2011).

In this thesis, I follow Hastrup's understanding of participant observation as the attempt by the researcher to take part in the lived reality of the studied object and through an immersion in its experience to gain entrance into the lived reality of a particular place, group or situation (2010:7.). As Hastrup writes, it requires a selective type of "*coexistence in a comprehensible section of the world*" (ibid.). Participant observation at Sisa was conducted mainly during the day in the time span from 10 am. - 18. pm. and included partaking in a number of different activities, such as paint and art projects, discussions, carpentry and outdoors activity days. Importantly, I consider the time frame (1.5 months) available for this fieldwork to be a significant limitation in the application of participant observation as it is too short to gain a nuanced understanding of Sisa as a social field. Thus, I use participant observation in this thesis primarily to establish a presence within the field; a method for engaging with my informants and developing the particular type of trust that is demanded from inquiries into sensitive issues. In particular, participant observation is relevant in relation to my research question and its emphasis on social boundaries, insofar as it may contribute to uncovering aspects of rules and norms surfaced during majority/refugee interaction which operate on subconscious or automatic levels (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:75-76).

The focus group discussions involved two groups with respectively four and three individuals. I firstly conducted a group discussion with four, majority Norwegian informants[23] in the context of a children's activity day, and, secondly, a session with three informants with a refugee background[24]. These discussions were structured in the way that I used a questionnaire with 10 questions that the participants took turns to address or discussed in plenum. The use of focus groups is a useful strategy for triangulation in this thesis, as they "*decentre the authority of the researcher*" which is otherwise very present in individual, semi-structured interviews. In this way, focus groups may bring forth layers of experience which would otherwise have been concealed (ibid.:550). Likewise, focus groups are relevant, in so far as they allow informants to challenge or build upon each other's perceptions and opinions.

4.7 The art of picking grains: Analysing Talk & Action

In the previous sections, I have presented the methods of data collection used to establish empirical material for this thesis and sought to map some of the embedded positionalities which

---

[23] Two (white) women and two men from the local Alta community.
[24] Two male individuals from Syria and one male from Afghanistan with 2-8 years of residency in Norway. I use the term refugee background as a cover term to refer broadly to individuals who settled in Norway via applying for asylum.

it inherently represents. In this section, I present how and why specific parts of this empirical material were chosen and subjected to analysis.

For the purpose of this thesis, qualitative analysis may be understood as the "*thinking that writing enables*" (St. Pierre 2011:620), and the "*process of separating aggregated texts (oral, visual or written) into smaller segments of meaning for close consideration, reflection and interpretation*" (Ellingson 2011:595). The analysis presented in this thesis thus entails discerning patterns of meaning as they appeared during the fieldwork experience, as well as during the process of analysis itself. In this context, Elisabeth St. Pierre raises an astute question regarding the intersection between data, theory and analysis when she points out that theory; "*determines whether those words even count as data because words (or anything else) become data only when theory acknowledges them as data*" (2011:621). In particular, I have chosen interview-material that in different ways touches upon social inclusion and exclusion, as well as reflections on how such experiences connect to processes of belonging and becoming part of Norwegian society. Likewise, I have looked for the ways my informants signal social distance and proximity by way of language choices, and thus how social boundaries are marked and in various ways patrolled or made permeable.

Keeping in mind that my analysis is informed by a constructivist understanding of language (as it is associated with the concept of subject positions), the analytical approach towards language use in this thesis is thus governed by the idea that it both reflects and constitutes aspects of social reality. Within this approach, meaning can be captured by tracing processes of categorization and identification as they unfold in conversation and interaction. In analysing transcribed interviews, this strategy was concretely undertaken through a two-step concentration of data. Firstly, I used the model referred to by Brinkman & Tanggaard as "*meaning condensation*" (2015:48) in which interview material is concentrated, categorized and subjected to primary interpretation as exemplified here:

1) Transcription of interview	2) Concentration of meaning	3) Categorization & primary interpretation
Researcher: "*How do you perceive the process of becoming part of Norwegian society?*"	Emotional pain (sadness), uncertainty in relation to status.	Emotional pain. Experience of outsider position.

| Hawthorn: *"It's a lot of stress* (…) *Am I a part of this? I don't know, I don't always feel that way*. | Claims of Belonging. Experience of exclusion? (Why? When? What concrete experiences?) | |

(Analysis of interview using model of meaning condensation (Brinkman & Tanggaard 2015:48))

Secondly, I mapped reappearing themes and sequences from the concentrated interview data to produce 'clusters of experience' and 'categorical links' (Peräkyla & Ruusuvuoria 2011:530). Tracing clusters of experience involved locating patterns and outliers in the primary interpretations in the interviews, establishing a thematic template, such as:

- Outsider position
- Emotional pain
- Family bonds
- Perceived Inferiority (in relation to position within society)
- Gratitude (towards Sisa)
- Exclusion (labour market)
- Integration
- To be 'Norwegian'
  (…)

Establishing categorical links required attention towards how some categories have a tendency to trigger a particular 'family' of categories and stimulate reappearing chains of equivalence which appears as a 'naturally coherent', interpretive frame to present. A particularly salient example is the profoundly reappearing activation of an us/them dichotomy in relation to the concept of integration amongst majority informants, exemplified here by informant Larch: "*they* [refugees/ethnic minorities] *need to become integrated (…) they must know who we are and how we do things in Norway*".

Particular attention was in this context devoted to what Anssi Peräkyla & Johanna Ruusuvuoria define as 'relational pairs', which they understand to be "*two categories where incumbents of the categories have standardized rights and obligations in relation to one another*" (2011:530). Examples of categorical links located in the interviews are:

- Integration/refugee/them/us/Norway/work/language/problem/their responsibility/stigma/ foreigner

- Emotional pain/Norwegian/difficult/rejection/shame/inferiority/
- Sisa/family/dignity/help/to be seen/meeting place/

These methods of pattern-making come together in my analysis as a way to locate nexuses of categorization, identification and the subject positions that interviewees develop for themselves and others, how refugees were described and understood by members of the Norwegian majority, as well as how these positions were experienced and ascribed meaning from 'within'.

As the following analysis will show, I invest particular attention towards how categorical links and relational pairs connected to the concept of 'integration' may reflect a particular mode of othering, a 'typology of foreignness', in terms of configuring the relation between a Norwegian 'we' and a refugee 'other' as an implicit, us/them dichotomy.

5 A Typology of Foreignness

"A helmet worn by no one has taken power."

(Tranströmer 1997:165)

In this chapter I begin my analysis by exploring empirically how members of the Norwegian majority define and ascribe meaning to the category of 'refugees' and the challenges and possibilities they see for Norwegian society in relation to settlement processes. This is done, firstly, under the assumption, that by asking members of the majority, who in various ways visit, participate and volunteer at Sisa about their expectations and experiences towards settlement, participation and interaction with refugees, it is possible to reveal conceptions and understandings which produce subject positions. Secondly, this is done according to the premise that, to unpack how social boundaries may transcend into experience complexes, it is necessary to examine both the meaning structures people are perceived against, are part of, and relate to (Gullestad 2002:129).

A common trope used by my Norwegian informants is the idea of Sisa as an inclusive social space that encourages meetings between people of different ethnicity and social backgrounds; a place where acts of 'integration' unfold. In this context, Sisa is framed as an incubator for integrative processes strictly for the refugees regularly present there, (not, for an example, majority individuals with mental disabilities who could also be described in terms of being somewhat 'unintegrated' in society), as well as a space and place where one can always find people willing to provide assistance with various problems. An interesting discrepancy emerges between how Sisa's staff understand the purpose of Sisa and how the orbiting group of majority volunteers and regular visitors understand it. Thus, whereas members of the staff explicitly avoid using the term 'integration' and rather reflect on their work as 'seeing people' and 'developing healthy social spaces for individual persons', majority visitors and volunteers consistently explain Sisa's functions in terms of its 'integrating effect' by majority visitors and volunteers. In particular, they emphasise Norwegian language skills, work and societal training as key outcomes of Sisa's societal purposefulness.

Mobilized with unexpected regularity, this divided frame of interpretation warrants closer examination. To do so, I focus on extracts from the first focus group interview, conducted with parents representing the Norwegian majority in the context of a children's activity day at Sisa. Situated in the café area, the social context is constituted by an ongoing theatre play

created by a group of 7-8 year-old boys and girls. The informants, Tritoni, Geranium and Daisy are not as such associated with each other and have accidently met at Sisa because of the activities available for their children.

> **Informant Tritoni:** "*Many immigrants come here to meet people and do activities (…) they get integrated.*"
>
> **Informant Geranium:** "*Yes, but not only the 'new foreigners', also second and third generation immigrants are here together. Some have cooking nights and meet in different immigrant associations (…) but there are really good refugees here at Sisa.*
>
> **Researcher:** *"Ok. Wait, let's go back a minute* **[pause]** *'The good refugees', eh, who are they?"*
>
> **Informant Tritoni:** *"Well, maybe that's not a good way to put it* **[pause]** *but, you know people who actually try (…) to become Norwegian (…) learn the language (…) here they can get help to establish a business (…) work and take part.*
>
> (…)
>
> **Informant Daisy:** *"I think Sisa is a great place, really a great place, they work so hard (…) there are so many activities and things that happen here especially for children, yes, they are really good in making things for the children (…) for immigrants I'm sure it's also a good place to meet people (…) an integration hot spot, you can steal that quote from me"* **[laughter].**

The extracts presented here are interesting, as they offer a fragmented, yet lucid peek into the mechanics of indirect identification in which (the idea of) refugees are positioned. In particular, the distinction made in the initial section between 'good' and (tacitly) 'bad' refugees is striking. In this context it is a latent dimension in the argument, that the 'good refugees' figure as an exception, rather than the rule, whereby the greater part of the people within this category are implicitly constructed negatively in relation to the Norwegian majority. Who are actually the bad refugees? And can one be positioned somewhere in between as neither 'good' nor 'evil'? It seems, that a total identification inherent in the 'refugee' label here serves as a powerful frame of reference that, on the one hand performs a form of identity-based reductionism, and on the other represents a dichotomizing story line in which the distance between a Norwegian 'us' and ethnic 'other' is predetermined and rendered immediately meaningful in narrations of the Norwegian/refugee relation. This is occurring on two levels. Firstly, the notion of 'second'

and 'third' generation immigrant implies the development of a subject position in which societal newcomers are delegated a taken-for-granted ontological status as ethnic-outsiders. This position is indeed interesting, as it allows for a particular type of continuity of social order. Thus, an extensive temporal continuity that exceeds the sphere of 'here and now' interaction, creating guidelines for social organization (in principle over generations), is situationally constructed and maintained (Törrönen 2001:325-326). As Gullestad notes, 'second generation immigrant' is a particularly salient distance-term which exemplifies the importance of the story lines of proximity and distance in which people are inscribed and located (2002:42). Feelings of good-will, scepticism or fear towards another person are thus significantly influenced by how people are constructed as a part of a categorical order of groups, and the signals of closeness and distance embedded in this process (ibid.).

Secondly, total identification is exercised through a semantic connection between children and immigrants. Hence, the second extract points toward a chain of equivalence in which the categories refugee/children relate to one another, or, that they share a similar, liminal status as 'yet-to-be' in relation to social and cultural adulthood. A similar connection surfaces on a second occasion, which brings nuances to this interpretation. The context here is an activity day for refugees and asylum seekers. A heterogeneous group of majority Norwegians and adult refugees are present and engaged in the production of paper-dragons for subsequent leisure activities. The atmosphere is light and joyful. In interviewing Redwood (a majority, male adult often present at Sisa) and asking how he perceives the event, its purpose and how to create a constructive arena for meetings between people, he explains that:

Informant Redwood: "*This is what I like about all the voluntary integration activities, it's usually fun, it has to be fun (…) you have to get people together somehow and relax (…) and to make a good come-together, eh, integration-thing? It's just like planning stuff for the kids, so, think about what would be fun and easy to do with the kids, then you have ingredients for a multicultural meeting*".

I suggest that the comparison between societal newcomers and children is important to accentuate, because it exemplifies how social structures and positions of non-belonging may unintentionally be delegated, and boundaries of belonging patrolled and maintained, even in well-meaning contexts aimed at facilitating social inclusion. Equating the enculturation of refugees with the socialization of children may thus open a particular interpretive frame of subordination; to be not yet fully mature, experienced and disciplined.

We may examine the implicit assumptions salient here a bit closer by inspecting another fragment from the initial focus group:

Researcher: "(…) *earlier you said, 'integration hot spot', can you elaborate, eh, tell me, what did you mean by that*?

Informant Daisy: "(…) *it means, I guess it means, this is a place where integration happens, where people can meet each other* (…) *it's also that people have somewhere to go, you know that there's places that works like this* (…) *and you actually know where a lot of these guys are, that they are somewhere safe and* (…) *not hanging around in the streets*."

One the one hand, this extract expresses appreciation of Sisa's many activities and functions that serve to include and support a heterogeneous variety of people. On the other hand, the function of Sisa as an 'integration hot spot' is perceived positively in terms of a safe containment zone to isolate the potential pathology of people/virus from 'the streets'; you know where these guys are and what they are doing. This perspective resonates significantly with a dominant framing of (male) refugees as a type of anarchic people (latent perpetrators, rather than victims); potentially violent and dangerous individuals who are only expected to disrupt the established order, particularly when left in an unmanaged, uninstitutionalized state (Ekman 2015:1987-90). Likewise, an inscription of unpredictability and irresponsibility, closely associated with the cultural category of children, lies dormant within this reading.

These glimpses of identification indicate how social boundaries between refugees and the Norwegian majority may be activated through external definitions based on terms touching upon different types of relative deficiency. Dynamics of total identifications can thus be said to unfold, firstly, through the development of a temporally far-reaching subject position (second and third generation) in which refugees and their descendants are delegated a naturalized ontological status as ethnic 'others'. Secondly, it is manifested through the ascription of a liminal status and the positioning of refugees as a type of 'children'. It is evident here, how the production of total identifications, as a particular form of Foucauldian micro-power, at its base may reflect an ongoing making of identity type-casts and a hierarchical order of their belonging. The total identifications hence emerge around a conceptual fulcrum created by the terms 'foreigners', 'second generation immigrant', 'good/bad refugees' and 'integration'. As will become apparent throughout this analysis, this grammar has a distinct nodal quality and is, in slightly different ways, consistently mobilized in chains of equivalence to ascribe meaning to

the 'refugee' category, as well as the role of Sisa as a purposeful space and place in the Alta community. Echoing Davies & Harrés line of thought, such projections of speech can thus be taken as arenas where negotiations over who belongs and who do not unfold. This particular type of social boundary making, occurring when differences between people are accentuated, emphasised and problematized, may be thought of as a process of 'othering'. Ruth Lister provides a constructive clarification here, as she writes that othering is:

> "*a process of differentiation and demarcation, by which the line is drawn between 'us' and 'them' - between the more and the less powerful -and through which social distance is established and maintained*" (2004:101).

In this context the particular, discursive dynamics of othering unpacked in this section may represent the contours of a broader phenomenon, extending outside the immediate realm of micro-interaction. This type of othering can be defined as a *typology of foreignness*. By this, I refer to discursive frames of interpretation which continuously delineate and separate individuals and groups from an ethnic and national majority order. The typology of foreignness is thus not simply the attachment of labels. In a sense, it is *performative*, a chain of resonant grammar with a doxic quality in the Bourdieusian sense of the word as it defines "*the universe of possible discourses*" (Bourdieu 1977:170), that is, shared mindscapes of what appears immediately thinkable and sayable in relation to societal newcomers. The typology of foreignness may thus exercise a curious form of discursive 'agency' in so far as it renders the development of certain subject positions towards refugees more meaningful than others. In the material presented in this thesis, the typology of foreignness represents an ecology of naturalized (ethnic/cultural) hierarchical terms, mobilized in the process of stabilizing the meaning of 'refugees' as a social fact. It codifies the knowledge which seems appropriate to activate in discussions on this category of people.

I suggest, that this perspective is imperative for understanding how experiences of personal insignificance amongst refugees lies dormant in majority/refugee interaction, insofar as the typology of foreignness, as an inherently shared frame of interpretation[25], routinely ascribes to refugees a mark of inferiority and dependency; a stigma which may indeed become gradually installed into the social tissue of identity and how they come to perceive themselves in contrast to 'Norwegians'.

---

[25] It should here be noted, that individuals are, of course, differently positioned in relation to, and performers of, the typology of foreignness.

Indeed, an interesting reversed parallel arises in relation to this perspective in Gullestad's studies of Norwegian neighborhoods and local communities. Here, she documents how the underlying ideals of equality as 'sameness', touched upon previously, often informs majority-majority interaction in terms of 'strategies of similarity' (Gullestad 2002:82). Gullestad argues, that the strategies of similarity deployed [26] are constituted by (often unconscious) efforts to downplay separating differences which bring forward and emphasize what people have in common. It thus appears that a most critical aspect of external definitions (and in particular total identifications) lies not only in their ability to bend individual understandings of self; not only in their ability to configure collective patterns of perceived social distance; but in their capacity to mediate (softening or hardening) epistemological barriers[27] that effectively may preclude access to the individuality, subjectivity and agency of the 'refugee other' (Pötzsch 2011:86).

However, at this point, it is important to note, however, that refugee identities can, and are, of course positioned differently. Not all interpretations support the connections made here, and not everyone would understand descendants of societal newcomers in terms of second generation immigrants. What this material does suggests, however, is that a dominant tendency of meaning exists which may motivate the majority's external definition of refugees in a certain way, and this meaning potential must be observed, interpreted and critically represented. As several case studies from across Scandinavia show, this argument is not unwarranted despite the limited empirical context of Sisa examined here. For example, Fangen documents how (Somali male) refugees are exiled from the labour and housing market in Oslo, producing social quakes of humiliation and alienation amongst these excluded individuals (2006:79). Likewise, in an example from Denmark, Hanne Mogensen shows how HIV positive African women in Denmark after decades of citizenship, are still perceived as "*strangers in Denmark* [with problems] *presented in ethnic terms*" (2011:222-27). For similar examples, see also Jensen:2011; Andersen & Tobiassen 2002; Hervik:2003. Thus, not every interaction or dialogue will exactly reflect the hegemonic social structures from which it takes shape. It can nonetheless be argued that the typology of foreignness identified in this context may tend to invite subject positions towards refugees that profoundly activates relations of problematic difference. To delineate the contours of this inherently discursive process, I proceed in the following section to examine further the content of meaning deployed in external definitions of

---

[26] Gullestad, for example, uses the example of social bonds amongst neighbors and colleagues (2002).
[27] Here, I use the term epistemological barriers in the literal sense as meaning structures that systemically limit reduction (e.g. transformation) of the foreignness/otherness vested in the refugee category.

refugees amongst members of the Norwegian majority. I condense my findings in what I term a position of cultural subordination and discuss the intersectional dimensions of this reading as it empirically relates to issues of masculinity, agency and self-worth.

5.1 The Intersectionality of Cultural Subordination

In this section, I venture deeper into the structures of meaning deployed by majority volunteers and visitors at Sisa in their identification of refugees. I focus my discussion on how the concept of culture is used amongst my informants to enter into a larger conversation regarding how the Norwegian majority/refugee relationship is understood. Amongst my Norwegian informants, the term 'culture' is deployed rather systematically in articulating a boundary that is to be crossed or transformed for refugees to become 'integrated'. In particular, the idea of culture is used in connection to cultural difference, skills and background. In the case of skills, 'culture' is attached to a processual logic of becoming, learning and potential transformation. However, notions of cultural differences and background, however, are often articulated as rather fixed and immovable aspects of a person's character. The idea of 'Norwegian culture' is used as a type of self-explaining narrative keys amongst my Norwegian informants when discussing challenges related to refugees and the idea of integration. For example, in resonance with the discussion on racialization in chapter 3, my informants would frequently and in a similar way address perceived challenges associated with settlement processes as a problem, challenge or issue of 'culture' and/or 'integration'. In this context, an implicit, and at times explicit argument is that societal newcomers in Norway should ideally subordinate (assimilate), or adapt, to Norwegian customs and 'ways of doing things'[28].This dimension is particularly salient in an interview conducted with informant Larch, a 38-year-old Norwegian woman connected to Sisa by way of various voluntary work. At length, the interview comes to focus on Larch's role as a volunteer and how this work contributes to what she terms 'silent (stilferdig) cultural integration'. In discussing her work experience with refugees, she points out that:

> **Informant Larch**: "(…) *even though we are culturally different, have different cultures, I don't see why we can't try and make the best of it* (…) *to also try and understand other cultural backgrounds besides our own*".

---

[28] Amongst some of my informants, it also appears that Norwegian culture is perceived as somewhat superior compared to that of most refugees.

I consider the interview with Larch thought-provoking in terms of its contradictory qualities. On the one hand, Larch's statement presents an initiative to bridge and negate the Norwegian and refugee identities, on the other the perception of 'cultural difference' expresses the latent idea of a fundamental, bottom-line dissimilarity which is as such a static social gap. In a paradoxical way, both passages and barriers are under simultaneous construction here. To unravel the dynamics of identification at play, it is useful to consider Inger Sjørslevs notion of 'heavy culture'. Sjørslev understands heavy culture to be "*cultural models that heavily influence thinking and values in largely unrecognized ways*" (2011:79). In this context, the notion of cultural difference, as it is used by Larch, can be conceptualized as a type of a 'heavy positioning'. In particular, the perception of cultural difference seems to point to a specific way of thinking 'real' and 'unreal' Norwegianness as a type of innate *content*. As Sjørslev points out, there exists a distinct tradition of western ontological thinking that deeply influences present ways of distinguishing between 'authentic' and 'inauthentic' phenomena and identities that is based on a splitting of inner and outer forms. The predominant doctrine thus locates the genuine, the real, the true, the authentic in an (inner immovable) substance rather than in an (outer changeable) form (ibid.:88). The point is that, in order to understand the 'culturally heavy' ways in which concepts of culture and difference are operationalised to generate subject positions and dynamics of othering towards refugees, it is necessary to look at the specific ontological thinking buried deep within the collective unconsciousness of Norwegian (Western) cultural models. In this sense, 'genuine' belonging to Norway and Norwegianness is perceived as something relating to people's inner being as expressed through the idea of 'culture'. This dynamic also surfaced in a thought-provoking manner during a similar discussion with informant Redwood, who uses the concept of the 'Norwegian folk soul' (folkesjela) to frame *what* it is societal newcomers need to 'integrate' into:

> **Informant Redwood**: "*I believe one of the big challenges with refugees are integration, it's not easy.*"
> **Reseracher:** "*And what is in your opinion the most important thing to integrate people into*"?
> **Informant Redwood**: "*Well* **[pause]** *at first I guess they need to learn the language and feel like they are welcome* (…) *it takes time to time to understand the Norwegian folk soul* **[folkesjela]** *which is a bit odd* **[laughter]** *you know, skiing and going on trips* **[tur; i.e. leisure trips into nature]** (…)".

In this context, I find it highly significant that Redwood uses the term 'understand' rather than, for an example learn, gain or become part of the so called 'folk soul'. This signals that refugees may indeed come closer to 'Norwegianess' by way of understanding/learning; but they are not as such allowed to enter, perform or claim this identity. The writings of Michael Azar (2001) on the situation of ethnic minorities in Sweden may help to expand the discussion on this matter further. Azar questions how it is possible to become a 'real' Swede after formally attaining Swedish citizenship. This question is vital, Azar notes, because people, including immigrants, are not allocated positions of belonging within the Swedish imagined community according to how they act, but according to what, deep down, they *are* (Azar 2001:62). According to Azar, the idea of 'real' Swedishness may thus be understood as a type of meta-racism, or meta-culturalism[29]. In a similar vein, Anthropologist Peter Hervik argues that often made connections between ideas of 'difficult integration' and culturally different backgrounds exist as a collective myth that camouflages the fact that skin colour, decent lines and religion is often dominant and 'culturally heavy' bottom-line factors driving the majority's identification of refugees as innate foreigners in Scandinavia (2004:150-55). The reification of culture as an inner, innate quality may indeed be a very by-product of this dynamic, as well a more political correct explanation model when publicly discussing issues of migration, integration and nationalism.

As a social boundary marker, the idea of culture and the way it is used in discourse is highly important to highlight in this inquiry. The idea of cultural difference may thus become a potent vehicle for experiences of non-belonging and inferiority amongst societal newcomers (and their descendants) by way of trapping them in a never-ending process of societal fitting in and the Sisyphus-like identity work of inscribing oneself into a non-obtainable Norwegian 'cultural essence'. As Lindner argues, the construction of cultural differences may be understood as "*reactions to perceived hostilities from others. It is very possible that they are nothing more than devices used when relations go sour, allowing one side to justify its actions and decisions*" (2006:30). Here, it is of particular interest to discuss how aspects of gender, ethnicity and religion intersects with the discursive contexts in which ideas of cultural differences are mobilized and made salient. In particular, my material shows a tendency for ideas of Islam and Middle Eastern gender roles to stimulate the use of the term 'Norwegian culture'. The following interview extract with Informant Larch informs the discussion:

---

[29] Thus, the 'final point of integration' is relative; it can be altered and adjusted and the boundary between the majority populations and societal newcomers are indeed often changed at the moment when one tries to cross it (Sjørslev 2011:85).

Informant Larch: "*In my opinion, what I do as a volunteer various places matters in the sense of, eh, slow integration (…) into Norwegian culture (…) Norwegian language and the Norwegian culture (…)*

Reseracher: "*And do you think Norwegian culture can be learned?*"

Informant Larch: "*Well, of course, some can. But again, some of it you have under your skin in a way that is difficult to learn (…) it has something to do with where and how you grew up (…) sometimes* **[you need to have patience]** *because it seems people do not always* <u>want</u> *to learn or realize what is expected from them. And then what do you do? For an example. I was working at X for a couple of years, and a lot of the job had to do with work training. There was a group of Muslim Somali women who would disappear for 5-10 minutes during every class to pray (…) you would come to work and open the broom-closet and you would find a butt in the air (…) one of these women praying (…) it was extremely hard to convince them that they cannot behave like this at a Norwegian work place or school (…) I think this is the most difficult, also with the customs of dressing in niqab or hijab (…) personally, I think we should try to understand, but they should as well try to subordinate* **[underordne seg]** *to the* **[Norwegian]** *culture.*"

Before taking a closer look at this fragment, I want to take the discussion a little further and involve a statement from informant Redwood, who touch upon a similar discursive matrix of religion, gender norms and the idea of culture:

Redwood: "*It's weird right, Alta has quite a large community of people from Thailand and Nepal, but you don't ever hear of these people (…) they're invisible, ghosts (…) fit right in. It's different with the Muslims (…) it's like they are in a way louder (…)* **[Muslim men]** *see women differently (…)*"

Particularly striking within these two extracts are the way ideas of Muslim (men and women) and the Niqab and hijab clothing pieces, are used by my informants as examples of 'cultural differences' that are considered particularly challenging. In both extracts, elements of religion and gendered behaviour are perceived as frustrating, and the thought is presented that these practices should 'subordinate' to Norwegian 'folk soul' and culture. This may be interpreted as an inclination towards culturalist racialization,

constituted by way of deploying dominant sets of "*symbolic resources and interpretive frames that circulates* [society]" (Gullestad 2006:24). To expand this perspective, it can be argued that racialization, understood as a categorization of people on the basis of what appears to be innate and 'under the skin', can be considered an active application of hegemonic power by way of drawing on, and perpetuating, available descriptive capital and prevailing frames of identification. Again, we may draw on the idea of total identification and its reductionist potential precisely to understand how such tendencies of meaning, by profoundly crippling the identities of certain categories of people, may lock them in humiliating and inferiorizing positions as 'cultural', or, 'Muslim others' whose alternative qualities of personhood are sterilized and rendered inaccessible behind epistemological barriers.

The imperative question here is what kind of subjectivity, resistance and agency the delegation of such interiorized positions engenders. As a number of anthropological case studies show, while some social strategies of boundary marking a national 'we' produce feelings of safety, predictability and security for a great number of people, they are also potently contributing to the experience of insecurity, self-doubt and non-belonging amongst those who are positioned as 'them/other' (Gullestad 2002:64). As will become increasingly clear in the following chapter, I suggest that processes of societal polarization, residential segregation and strains of cultural fundamentalism amongst societal newcomers may be understood in light of, but of course not reduced entirely to the result of, precisely such dynamics. The empirical material presented here cannot be used as leverage for broader conclusions on dominant attitudes and social boundaries in Norwegian society. What the material may indicate, however, is the contours of a 'plausibility structure', to borrow a term from Peter Berger (1990), that specific dimensions of identity, such as ideas on gender and religious symbols, reified in dominant discourses as 'problematically different', may create an intersectional and mutually reinforcing resource that encourages/invites the positioning of certain individuals as culturally deficient in relation to the (white, Christian) Norwegian majority. This means, that analytical attention should be devoted not only to the use and underlying meanings of the term 'cultural difference' (which has indeed been done by several scholars Olwig & Pæregaard 2007; Gullestad 2002; Eriksen 2010) but also to the particular contexts and markers of identity that *trigger* the use of this meaning complex. For example, the extracts presented here, suggest that Middle Eastern, Muslim societal newcomers are considered more 'culturally different' than newcomers with an Asian ethnicity. Why is this so? What

are the processes of monsterization which motivate(d) such views? These perspectives indicate that foreignness is not just foreignness; it is a hierarchical phenomenon socially manufactured and attached to people in degrees that fluctuates over time and may thus be actively transformed. Pursuing these reflections beyond the tip of the iceberg is out of the scope of this thesis. It must suffice to, firstly, contextualize and give a clue to the elaboration of this perspective by drawing on a related study. Gullestad, amongst others, discusses how the markers of foreignness that come to be particularly salient, dominant vehicles for exclusion (for an example contemporary ideas/representations of Islam) are often perceived, or portrayed, as 'threatening' some of the core symbols for what 'we' stand for in 'our' modern societal model – for an example gender equality and sexual emancipation (2002:30). Likewise, she shows how (male Muslim) immigrants are consistently framed in Norwegian mass medias as "*potentially dangerous offenders (…) Norwegians generally do not trust Muslims*" (2006:277). Secondly, it is evident that certain markers of 'cultural difference' are inextricably linked to each other and may accumulate as a problematic type of 'negative symbolic capital'. This indicates that experiences of marginalization and the micro-humiliation of non-belonging amongst refugees are multidimensional, and that the typology of foreignness may impact people in varying degrees according to the broader situatedness of their identity.

In the next chapter, I will define and draw further on the idea and intersectional concept of 'negative symbolic capital' to enter a larger conversation with the everyday micro-humiliation of perceived foreignness experienced amongst my informants with a refugee background. Thus, at this point there is a line switch in my analysis. I move from examining the majority's identification and positioning of societal newcomers to exploring the experiences and life worlds of the people to whom these meanings actually concern.

In this chapter, I analysed the Norwegian majority's identification of refugees by examining the external definitions deployed by helpers and visitors at Sisa cultural centre. My material showed how a particular tendency of meaning was used amongst my informants. I argued that the semantic constellation of terms such as integration, culture, and second-generation immigrant may come together and underline processes in which social boundaries between 'Norwegian' and 'refugee' identities are delimited and patrolled. I furthermore discussed how the systematic reappearance of this ecology of concepts may reflect a particular process of othering that I defined as a typology of

foreignness; discursive frames of interpretation reified in collective patters of thought which serves, consciously or unconsciously, to delineate and separate refugees from the ethnic and national majority order. The core of this argument was that experiences of humiliation may emerge from social boundaries when these boundaries are manifested as relations of problematic difference which condense the complexity of identity to the semantics of insufficiency. To establish how such dynamics may be of significance for processes of establishing societal belonging amongst refugees, I framed this phenomenon as total identifications. This dynamic was constituted, firstly, through the development of a temporally far-reaching subject position in which refugees and their descendants were granted an ontological status as innate ethnic-outsiders in relation to ethnic Norwegians. Secondly, total identification was manifested through the comparison of refugees as a type of 'children' with a liminal status. I finally condensed these perspectives into the argument that the significance of such dynamics for processes of establishing societal belonging amongst refugees is that it may create a type of epistemological barriers for refugees to be recognized, understood and thus, in as certain sense, become recognized as equally human and belonging within the Norwegian nation.

By subsequently focusing on the way ideas of 'culture' and 'cultural difference' was used by my Norwegian informants, I extended this perspective by showing how perceptions of gender and religion, reified in dominant discourses as 'problematically different', may emerge as intersectional and mutually reinforcing markers of foreignness. The argument was presented that certain signs of 'cultural difference' are intimately linked to one another and may as such accumulate and intersect at particular identities as 'negative symbolic capital'. In the following chapter, I go on to define the concept of negative symbolic capital and put it to further analytical use. In doing so, I move to the other side of the social equation and present findings from interviews and a focus group discussion with four individuals with a refugee backgrounds.

6 The Feedback loop of Foreignness: Responses to the Accumulation of Negative Symbolic Capital

In this chapter, I examine material from four interviews and one focus group discussion conducted with informants with refugee backgrounds. Emphasis is placed on the internal definitions of my informants, their experiences with excluding social boundaries, and how they perceive their identities in relation to the Norwegian majority. This is done, firstly, to investigate how identifications, understood as the intersection between internal and external definitions, influence the process of establishing belonging within a local community (Alta/Sisa). Secondly, this is done to show how social boundaries may be better understood by mapping individual configurations of negative symbolic capital. In doing so, I argue that subtle identifications of non-belonging may at length produce a 'feedback loop of foreignness'. Thus, individuals may choose a strategy of societal withdrawal in response to repeated identifications based on relations of problematic difference. This, in turn, may stimulate the development of subject positions as 'unintegrated' or 'culturally inappropriate others'. In this context, the concept of negative symbolic capital, inspired as a twist to Bourdieu's original notion of symbolic capital (1984:251), can be defined as qualities that serve to limit an individual on the basis of identity, prestige or recognition, and may translate into barriers to social inclusion[30].

I anchor the following discussion in an examination of the way expressions of gratitude are used by my informants. Notions of thankfulness and debt are thus a reoccurring element in the interviews conducted with societal newcomers which, at length, comes together in what I term a narrative of gratitude. Hickory, for an example, repeatedly expressed a strong sense of appreciation towards Norwegian society: "*I am, of course, very thankful, that I live in Norway, (…) it is a difficult debt to repay (…) I am being helped with money because I am sick*.". Another example surfaces in an interview with Chestnut, a 32-year-old man with 3 years of residency who was granted asylum from Iraq: "*I am thankful (…) Norway has taken me in*". The narrative of gratitude, trivial as it may seem, is interesting to consider as it directs attention towards a subtle power dynamic and moral logic of reciprocity within the (Western) typecast of a guest/host relation. The writings of Helmuth Berking may help to shed light on this perspective as he theorizes a sociology of giving (1999). Berking argues that gratitude in relation to the exchange of gifts may translate into asymmetric power relations in favour of the giver, who is rendered morally superior (ibid.:47). In this perspective, the granting of asylum,

---

[30] A convict, for example, may have negative symbolic capital in the context of applying for a job.

though a formal consequence of law, may become constructed as a type of gift-giving that influences the way refugees are positioned in minority/majority interaction, as well as what kind of (thankful or respectfully submissive) attitudes that are expected from them in return. Recognizing these accounts in terms of the framework in which they are cast, that is, as cultural configurations of hierarchical relationships, thus provides us with a significant context through which to understand how some experiences of lowliness, inferiority and unsuccessful status claims may be generated, and, indeed, become perceived as entirely natural, in the refugee/majority relation. As Gullestad notes, terms such as 'immigrants', 'occupants' and 'guests' reveal problematic aspects of 'home' and 'family' as metaphors for the nation precisely because this construction naturalizes the majority/minority relation as one of unequal belonging and power (2002:116).

This means that we may shed light on tensions in the processes of establishing belonging amongst refugees by exploring underlying interpretive frames in cultural constructions of hospitality and what it means to be a guest. This is one of the themes developed in the focus group discussion. Hickory, for one, explains that being met by external definitions, or hints, of non-belonging decentres his sense of societal attachment: "*When I feel out of place, I don't feel like trying fitting in* (…) *this is why I like visiting Sisa, this is a place where you do not feel out of place, but at home*". Informant Chestnut picks up the thread, and at length states that: "*I am not at home, I am a tourist in this place* [Alta/Norway]". Likewise, Hawthorn mentions that he at times feels "(…) *like a guest who has forgotten to take off his shoes in someone else's home*".

The empirical material constructed for this thesis can merely hint at the contours of the dynamics at play here. However, evidence from other studies suggest that some dimensions of the relationship between the Norwegian (Scandinavian) majority members and refugees may indeed be culturally organized/coded as a relationship between a guest and a host (Wernesjö 2014:51, Gullestad 2006:181). In this sense, a doxa of hospitality, that is: "*an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident*" (Bourdieu 1984:471) may profoundly influence how refugees are recognized and positioned in relation to the Norwegian majority. In this context, Jacques Derrida offers a constructive model to understand hospitality (2000). As Derrida explains, to host (in a Western context) is an exercise of power. Hence, hospitality is to be understood as a type of tension in which one part is required to be mastering and controlling the house, or nation, into which someone enters (ibid.:151-55). All hospitality is in this sense conditional and is about keeping guests, as well as the situation of 'hosting' under control. According to Derrida, a premise for even the most well-meaning hospitality is thus that it (on

different levels) generates 'inappropriate others', 'foreigners' and 'refugees' (ibid.:135). With remarkable resonance towards previous chapter, we may here reactivate the idea of liminality to understand the potential pathological dimensions within a 'guest position'. Thus, hospitality generates a zone of liminality, and to be a guest, or tourist, is inherently a liminal experience. It is, with the terminology of Taylor: "*A model of liminality, crossing thresholds and borders, entering a place for a limited stay, being vulnerable to, but not a part of, societal structures and being subject to no long-term commitment. A tourist can feel almost childlike*" (1998:59). The imperative point in this context is that subject positions towards refugees, generated from deep-seated guest/host codes, may be understood as an omnipresent form of negative symbolic capital. Positioned as a type of societal 'guest' (temporary and grateful to the host), one may be profoundly obstructed from establishing belonging. Perhaps more important, a prolonged, extended and untransformed, guest status (i.e. second-generation immigrant), and the consistent experience of marginality it implies, may become a potent depriver of the safety and dignity associated with an identity firmly grounded, and accepted as belonging to, a valued collectivity.

To unpack this perspective, it is constructive to venture further into an interview with Hickory. In discussing his attachment to Norwegian society, Hickory thus explains that he is not troubled by his refugee status as such. Rather, it is the feeling that Norwegians 'look at him' (because of his dark skin), and that his inability to work and right to welfare benefits due to a PTSD diagnosis is at times questioned, as he is not perceived as a qualified citizen. Likewise, he does not speak Norwegian very well and jokes about his physical appearance (Hickory is tall and bulky), and how his stature tends to "*freak people out*". Hickory's PTSD diagnosis, lack of Norwegian language skills and physicality indicate, firstly, how identities are, indeed, layered or intersectional. Secondly, it shows how multiple factors may come together, accumulate and intersect as negative symbolic capital, that, in his experience, engenders obstacles to the process of societal embedment. Hickory states:

> "*I think I cannot become Norwegian the way you mean it, but this is only natural. Just like you cannot become a Pashtun. But does this matter? (…) I know some people, they do not like to be seen as immigrants and try very hard, but still, you know, people do not see Norwegians when they look at them (…) Me? I have decided that it is not worth it (…) I am Hickory, an Afghan. I will rather take pride in who I am as that. I do not see why this should be a problem.*"

Hickory's account is important to highlight in this inquiry, as it indicates a serious withdrawal from attempts to claim belonging in terms of ethnic boundary crossing/blurring and tactics of sameness. As a reaction to subtle, but persistent resistance towards his struggle for a position within the boundaries of 'Norwegianess', he responds with strategies of segregating and reinforcing his Afghan personhood in relation and contrast to an identity as 'Norwegian'. I suggest that this perspective carries within it a profoundly important point for understanding tensions within processes of belonging, and what Norwegian anthropologist Unni Wikan terms practices of segregation amongst immigrant groups (1995:146-47). Thus, taking Hickory's statement into account, 'practices of segregation' may also be thought of in terms of a feedback loop of foreignness and a consequence of individual (and shared) constellations of negative symbolic capital. In this sense, to emphasise one's minority status may be a backup strategy for establishing belonging, self-worth and dignity in a society where ethnicity has become a highly salient marker for 'authentic' belonging to the pack of the nation (Gullestad 2002:48). Kenneth Burke once suggested that to understand literature, we must learn to interpret language as symbolic action (1966:14). I am suggesting, on par with James Gilligan (2000:61), that in order to understand the influence of social boundaries on processes of belonging amongst refugees, we must reverse that procedure and interpret identity strategies as *actions/agency* and as *symbolic language* with a 'symbolic logic' of its own.

The material analysed in this section thus indicate, firstly, that social boundaries towards refugees, their varying saliency and consequence, may be mapped in greater detail by examining the situatedness of individual identities. Social boundaries may thus create highly differentiated experiences of micro-humiliation in consequence to individual compositions of negative symbolic capital. In this way, processes of establishing societal belonging may, in future research, be understood in terms of how such boundary producing capital are created/transformed, by whom and in which contexts. The material presented here modestly suggest that there are at least two ways of doing so. Firstly, people may seek to diminish, or blur, negative symbolic capital by way of education and transformation. Secondly, people may convert negative capital into a positive form by seeking to change the very *context* in which these qualities are defined/valued negatively. In the following and final section, I focus my analysis on the latter and discuss how social and cultural withdrawal amongst societal newcomers might be understood as attempts to mitigate negative symbolic capital and the experiences of micro-humiliation it may engender.

6.1 Mapping Mindscapes of Micro-Humiliation

During participant observation at Sisa, it became apparent that the social arena at the centre was regularly articulated in familial terms, such as 'family' and 'home' amongst societal newcomers. Likewise, notions of kinship, such as 'everyday kin', 'brother' and 'sister' were terms often used to describe the social bonds developed at Sisa. Symbolic interactions such as hugging, joking, and the sharing of food buoyed this interpretation. By probing the notion of family and community during the focus group interview with societal new comers, it became apparent, however, that rather than being a 'home' as such (a site of dwelling, fixity and security), Sisa was important as a link within broader processes of *home-making*. Informant Chestnut, for an example, explains that "*I could call these people* (staff) *at any time of the day, if I needed to, that really means something*", and Hickory notes that: "*there are no opening hours, you are always welcome* (…) *I relax here, people know and respect me for who I am*".

In this context, (non)belonging, respect and recognition were consistently connected to the metaphor of being *seen* by others. Sisa was understood as a place where one's person is "*seen behind a smile*" (Hickory), "*seen for who you are*" (Hawthorn), "*accepted*" (Oak). These descriptions were often developed to establish a contrast semantic when discussing various public (integration) services (the introductory program), work training institutions (Bufar) and welfare industries (NAV). Some of my informants thus described experiences of being 'invisible' or 'looked down upon' in social contexts outside of Sisa. The case of Hawthorn elucidates this perspective. Hawthorn, a 48-year-old Syrian refugee, has thus recently completed the 3-year integration program (introduksjonsprogrammet), and spends considerable amounts of time applying for jobs and attending an obligatory work training plan (WTP). Hawthorn, adept in the Norwegian language and with a higher university education from Damascus, is frustrated about the process of attending WTP and the unexpected difficulties of achieving reasonable employment (in Syria, he occupied a position as production manager with responsibility for more than 50 workers). In particular, Hawthorn recounts his difficulties in having his internal definitions of self validated within the context of the WTP: "(…) *they* **[work training staff]** *do not see me, they see an immigrant (...) I understand the system. But I am like half the man I used to be (...) I feel like I am losing face* **[taper ansikt]**". Hawthorns tale illustrates the point, firstly, that refugees in Norway often experience an increase in economic standards, but also a decrease in social position and hierarchy (Fangen 2006:75). In Norway, they are positioned as people who receive, and who should ideally (according to informal norms of hospitality) show submissive gratitude. Secondly, it points towards how some forms of

'integration', for an example classroom education of refugees, might unintentionally trigger a sense of failure in the sense of people being made to feel small or incompetent (ibid.:73-76).

I subsequently asked Hawthorn how he navigates this feeling of misplacedness. He answered that he has become used to having a "*second face*" and that he feels that he cannot change "*who he is*". Clarifying the meaning of having a 'second face', Hawthorn explains that this is the face that he feels is reflected back at him from some members of the Norwegian majority. In this context, he airs a suspicion of being discriminated against when applying for jobs because of his immigrant status, and that he often feels severely ashamed and worried by the way refugees and asylum seekers are portrayed in national, as well as local medias. Echoing the feedback loop of foreignness, Hawthorn describes, with some reluctance, how he has started to play soccer with a group of other Syrians and visits the local Mosque more often, because he feels relaxed in company with people where he does not "*feel like a foreigner*". Likewise, he does not like to walk on the streets without being accompanied by others, often Syrians, because he feels alone, and that Norwegians seem hostile in their attitudes toward him. This experience is also expressed by informant Oak, a 29-year-old male from Syria, who worries about his wife, who uses a hijab: "*I think it is difficult for X (…) here we are safe but (…) she does not like to go out* [alone] *because she does not like the way people look at her (…) she had some bad episodes* [discrimination in the public sphere of Alta]".

In this context, the notions of 'being seen', 'loosing face' and having a 'second face' are particularly interesting to examine closer as distinct residues from the experience 'within' a subject position. The main point is, reviving the insights of Jenkins and Davies & Harré, that the processes of identification and positioning experienced for example by Hawthorn during work training, as well as when entering the public sphere of the Alta community, reflect a structure of rights, or, particular status spaces, which repeatedly translates into a dissonant feeling of not being properly recognized or to belong. As a still picture of lived experience, Hawthorns account shows how ostensibly trivial occurrences are translating into an experience of his person as somehow trespassed, reduced in size or even subtly attacked (Lazare 1987:1665).

To conceptualize the workings of this process, it is useful to briefly link the discussion to Louis Althusser's notion of 'interpellation'. Althusser thus argues that ideology, understood as the comprehensive constellations of normative beliefs and ideas which are normalized amongst individuals and in society at large, "*hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects*" in an ongoing, unconscious process which shapes attitudes and perceptions of self and other (1972:174-75). As a conceptual prolonging of subject positioning theory,

interpellation thus describes a process in which certain identities may be ascribed to people in a way so they are accepted as more or less naturally given (ibid.:175-78). The important connection lies here in understanding how ostensibly trivial occurrences in Hawthorn's daily dealings with members from the Norwegian Majority are translating into an experience of lowliness and micro-humiliation. In this sense, the available meanings, condensed in the idea of having a 'second face' constitute a repertoire for his perception of self and others. This may indeed intersect with his experience of belonging in an important way, as he has started at times to actively to withdraw into an ethnic network of Syrians. Likewise, Oak gives a glimpse of this mechanism of withdrawal, as he accounts that his wife feels insecure when she perceives that people look upon her (as an 'other') and prefers to spend time with other Muslim women in Alta whit whom she does not risk to feel/be discriminated against for wearing hijab: "*they go shopping and drink coffee together on Tuesdays and Saturdays, this means much to her*". Iris Young relates helpfully to unpack the significance of this dynamic in stating that:

> "*sometimes a group comes to exist only because one group excludes and labels a category of persons, and those labeled come to understand themselves as group members only slowly, on the basis of their shared oppression*" (2006:59)

The point here is to underline how experiences of micro-humiliation may profoundly impair the motivations of societal newcomers who seek to establish belonging within Norwegian society to a point where a responsive agency starts to develop in terms of segregation/withdrawal from mainstream societal spheres. As Fangen documents in her study on Somali refugees in Oslo:

> "*Resignation and anger become for many possible reactions to long periods where they have done everything to attain success, in the educational system and/or the labour market, without finding any open doors*" (2006:80).

This perspective may offer resistance to intuitive understanding, because we are accustomed to believing that for humiliation to occur there must be – somewhere – a 'bad' person, a humiliator, who humiliates others (Lindner 2006:65). However, as Stokes emphasises with the concept of 'systemic humiliation', situations of micro-humiliation may also occur when only one party labels them as degrading: "*although none was intended the insult is received, the slight*

acknowledged, the put-down is felt, the rejection absorbed and the body/mind mobilizes its destructive and devious response in cavernous interiors" (2004:1).

The analytical trajectories presented here raises a number of important questions beyond the bounds of this thesis. Thus, it seems important for future research to investigate whether dynamics of micro-humiliation may cultivate cultures of resentment and societal withdrawal amongst refugees in Norway. If so, unpacking the operations of power and the internalized knowledge, beliefs, values, and practices that divert attention away from these operations must be a key priority for future inquiries into processes of othering and belonging amongst refugees. Likewise, it indeed appears that a root cause for this conflict is that processes of establishing a sense of belonging and security amongst 'Norwegians' unfold at the cost of some societal newcomers, their descendants, and affect how 'they' may claim belonging. Such conflicting processes of belonging also warrants future scholarly attention. By mapping the outline of a typology of foreignness, as well as exploring the analytical possibilities within the concept of negative symbolic capital, this thesis has sought to take an opening step towards this task.

7   Conclusion

When and how do social boundaries between the Norwegian majority and societal newcomers constitute a societal problem? What does it mean to be 'Norwegian in your heart[31]', and what does it reveal about our society when such metaphors are deployed to construct a majority/immigrant divide? Finally, what do the findings in this thesis mean for a wider picture of the connections between experiences of micro-humiliation and dynamics of belonging amongst refugees? The analysis in this thesis emphasises that social boundaries ought to be challenged when they translate into a naturalized narrative system that subtly advances the 'qualifications' and claim to 'genuine' belonging within the (family) nation of the majority group and excludes societal newcomers. I entered this argument by critically examining the concept and political project of 'integration' in Norway. I argued, that state projects and policies of integration do not simply present 'neutral' arrangements which allow Norwegian society to cope with immigration, but also set the stage for a shared understanding and naturalization of this phenomenon as a specific type of (security) *problem.* By fusing Foucault's understanding of discourse with Molden's concept of hegemony, I then showed how contemporary state approaches towards 'integration' construct refugees discursively in terms of lacking qualifications, thereby naturalizing a hierarchical relationship in which refugees figures as lesser competent, or inferior, citizens.

By drawing on poststructuralist perspectives on identity and belonging I aligned this thesis with the idea, that if we understand "*how we construct social reality, we can construct more consciously to sustain norms that promote the ends we profess to desire*" (Slocum-Bradley 2010:81). In keeping with this perspective, I have sought to establish a conversation on some of the "*self-apparent truths*" (Hartling 2015:3) that, woven into the majority's lifeworld, contribute to maintaining and enforcing social stratification along the majority/refugee divide. In so doing, I developed the concept 'a typology of foreignness' to address what I understand as a mechanism of discursively manifested othering; an ecology of racializing and hierarchically configured terms, such as 'integration', 'second-generation immigrant' and 'culture', mobilized systematically, both amongst my informants and in political/public discourse, in the process of constructing the meaning of 'refugees'. I have further attempted to contribute to the theoretical debate on othering and belonging by unpacking how the typology of foreignness and its boundary marking capacity may transcend into experiences of micro-

---

[31] I refer here to the introductory quote from the Norwegian Minister of Finance, Siv-Jensen, presented on page 1.

humiliation amongst societal newcomers. This was approached by introducing the concept of 'total identifications'. Relying on this concept, I discussed how a problematic form of identity-based reductionism and a dichotomizing storyline in which the distinction between a Norwegian 'us' and ethnic 'other' is rendered immediately meaningful in narrations of the Norwegian/refugee relation. I consider this perspective to be of central importance because such tendencies of meaning may normalize the development of subject positions towards refugees signifying a taken-for-granted ontological status as essentially foreign 'others' whose human qualities of personhood are blurred and rendered profoundly inaccessible. In resonance with a number of studies from across Scandinavia, I argue that such dynamics may indeed disrupt attempts to establish a sense of 'genuine' societal belonging amongst refugees in Norway.

I went on to examine social boundaries as they were experienced from the position of individuals with a refugee background. I discussed how certain markers of foreignness, such as religion, skin colour, language, gender and ideas on 'cultural difference' may be intersectionally linked and appear to be cumulative and mutually reinforcing. To describe this multidimensionality of individual experience of micro-humiliation, I developed the concept of 'negative symbolic capital'. I suggested that what is often understood as 'practices of segregation' could also be thought of in terms of a 'feedback loop of foreignness' and as a consequence of individual (and shared) constellations of negative symbolic capital. In this sense, to emphasise one's minority status may be seen as an emergency plan for establishing belonging; a way for some individuals to create a sense of social attachment, self-worth and dignity in a society where Norwegian ethnicity has become a highly salient marker for 'authentic' belonging and social value within the nation.

My immediate ambition has not been to suggest new and better procedures for dealing with global flows of forced migrants. Rather, I draw inspiration from Haraway and think of this thesis as a "*mapping exercise*" (1999:295) of some of the social mechanisms that contribute to the manufacture of relations of problematic difference in the Norwegian majority/refugee divide. As a device of thought, this thesis was thus intended to problematize the profoundly precarious, yet by now self-evident discursive dichotomy between Norwegians and refugees, in which latter and their descendants are at times allowed to claim only a fragile sense of belonging within the Norwegian nation.

8 References

Alitolppa-Niitamo, A. (2004). Somali youth in the context of schooling in metropolitan Helsinki: a framework for assessing variability in educational performance. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 30*(1), 81-106. doi:10.1080/1369183032000170187

Althusser, L. (1972). Lenin and Philosophy, and other essays. *Monthly Review Press*.

Andersen, G. &Tobiassen, M. (2002). Forhold mellem religioner og mellem etnisk og religiøs tolerance. In C. A. Larsen (Ed.), *Danskernes forhold til religion - en afrapportering* (pp. 80-100). Aalborg: Uniprint Aalborg University.

Azar, M. (2001). Den äkta svenskheten och begärets dunkla objekt. In T. Johansson (Ed.), *Identitetens omvandlinger: black metal, magdans och hemlöshet*. Göteborg: Didalos.

Baarts, C. (2010). Håndværket: Opbygning af viden. In: *Ind I Verden: En grundbog i Antropologisk metode*. Denmark: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Bangstad, S. (2015). The Racism that Dares Not Speak its Name: Rethinking Neo-nationalism and Neo-racism. In *Intersections, 1*, 49-65. doi:10.17356/ieejsp.v1i1.26

Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: the social organization of culture difference*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Barth, F. (2000). Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity. In: *The Anthropology of Ethnicity*. Haag: Martinus Nijhoff.

Berger, P. (1990). *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. New York: Doubleday.

Berking, H. (1999). *Sociology of Giving*. London: Sage.

Boulding, E. (2000). *Cultures of peace: the hidden side of history*. Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice* (Vol. 16). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Bourdieu, P. (1989). Social Space and Symbolic Power. *Sociological Theory, 7*(1), 14-25.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1996). *Refleksiv sociologi: mål og midler*. København: Hans Reitzel.

Bousel, M. (2000). What kind of people are we? 'Race', Anti-Racism and Social Welfare Research. *British Journal of Social Work,*

Brinkmann, S., & Tanggaard, L. (2015). *Kvalitative metoder: en grundbog* (2. udg. ed.). København: Hans Reitzel.

Burke, K. (1966). *Language as Symbolic Action* Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Burr, V. (1995). *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*. London: Routledge.

Cilliers, P. (2001). Boundaries, Hierarchies and Networks in Complex Systems. *International Journal of Innovation Management, 5*(2), 135-147.

Cohen, A. (2000). Boundaries of Consciousness, Consciousness of Boundaries Critical Questions for Anthropology. In H. Vermeulen & Cora G. (Ed.) *The Anthropology of Ethnicity*. Martinus Nijhof. Hague.

Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1986). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Croom Helm.

Comaroff, J. & Comaroff, J. (1992). *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Press, 1989*(1), 139-167.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241-1299.

Danneskiold-Samsoe, S. (2011). Suffering for Benefits? Integration and Social Exchange between Iraqi Refugees and Danish Welfare Institutions. In Olwig, K. Pæregaard, K. (Eds.), *The Quest for Integration*. Cambridge Cambridge Scholars

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). *Positionering: The Discursive Production of Selves*. Mindspace. Copenhagen.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed. ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Derrida, J. (2000). *Of hospitality*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.

Douglas, M. (1995). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.

Dumbrava, C. (2015). Super-foreigners and Sub-citizens: Mapping Ethno-National Hierarchies of Foreignness and Citizenship in Europe. *Ethnopolitics, 14*(3), 1-15. doi:10.1080/17449057.2014.994883

Jensen, E., B. (2007). Nord-Norge, en flerkulturell landsdel. *Tidsskrift for psykisk helsearbeid*(01), 15-24.

Ejrnæs, M. (2002). *Etniske Minoriteters tilpasning til Livet i Danmark -Forholdet mellem Etniske minoriteter og majoritetssamfundet*. Paper presented at the AMID working paper series 18/2002.

Ekman, M. (2015). Online Islamophobia and the Politics of Fear: Manufacturing the Green Scare. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 38*(11), 1986-2002.

Eliassi, B. (2010). *A stranger in my homeland: The politics of belonging among young people with Kurdish backgrounds in Sweden*. Mid Sweden University Press.

Ellingson, L. (2011). Analysis and Representation Across the Continuum *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London, New York, New Delhi: Sage.

Eliot, T. S. (1943). *Four Quartets*. San Diego: Harcourt.

Eriksen, T. H. (2010). *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: London: Pluto Press.

Essed, P. (1991). *Understanding everyday racism: an interdisciplinary theory*. Sage. Newsbury Park, London, New Delhi.

Fangen, K. (2006). Humiliation Experienced by Somali Refugees in Norway. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 19*(1), 69-93. doi:10.1093/jrs/fej001

Moghaddam, M. & Harré, R. (2010). Words, conflicts and political processes. In Harré, R. & M. Moghaddam (Eds.), *Words of conflict, words of war: how the language we use in political processes sparks fighting*. Santa Barbara: CA: Praeger.

Fekete, L. (2008). *Integration, Islamophobia and civil rights in Europe*. London: Upstream Ltd.

Foucault, M. (2000). So is it Important to Think? In J. Faubaion (Ed.), *Michel Foucault. Power*. New York: The New Press.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge*. U.K.: Harvester.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality: Vol. 1: An introduction* (Vol. Vol. 1). New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. Pantheon Books, New York

Gammeltoft, T. (2010). Forholdet til den anden *Ind i Verden: En Grundbog i Antropologisk Metode*. Denmark: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Gerring, J. (2004). What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for? *APSR, 98*(2), 341-354. doi:10.1017/S0003055404001182

Gilligan, J. (2000). *Violence: reflections on our deadliest epidemic* (Vol. 18). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Goffman, E. (1968). *Asylums: essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Goffman, E. (1971). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Goldberg, T., D. (2006). Racial Europeanization. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 29*(2), 331-364. doi:10.1080/01419870500465611

Grønseth, A. S. (2011). Tamil Refugees in Pain: Challenging Solidarity in the Norwegian Welfare State. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 37*(2), 315-332. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2010.521331

Guest, G. M., Mitchell. (2013). *Collecting Qualitative Data: A Field Manual for applied Research*. London: Sage.

Gullestad, M. (2002). *Det norske sett med nye øyne: kritisk analyse av norsk innvandringsdebatt*. Oslo: Universitetsforl.

Gullestad, M. (2006). *Plausible prejudice: everyday experiences and social images of nation, culture and race*. Oslo: Universitetsforl.

Hakim, C. (1987). *Research design: strategies and choices in the design of social research*. London, UK.: Allen & Unwin.

Hall, S. (1980). Culture, Media, Language. *Encoding/Decoding*. London: Hutchinson.

Haraway, D. (1999). The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others. *Politica y Sociedad*(30), 121-163.

Harré, R. (2012). *Positioning Theory: Moral Dimensions of Social-Cultural Psychology*: Oxford University Press.

Hartling, L. (1999). Humiliation: Assessing the impact of derision, degradation, and debasement. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 19*(5), 259-278.

Hartling, L. (2007). Humiliation: Real pain, a pathway to violence. *Brazilian Journal of Sociology of Emotions, 6*(17), 466-479.

Hartling, L. (2015). Humiliation and Assistance: Telling the Truth About Power, Telling a New Story 1 (Preliminary Draft) (Article).

Hartling, L., & Luchetta, T. (1999). Humiliation: Assessing the Impact of Derision, Degradation, and Debasement. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 19*(4), 259-278. doi:10.1023/A:1022622422521

Hartling, L. M., & Lindner, E. G. (2016). Healing humiliation: from reaction to creative action. (Report). *Journal of Counseling and Development, 94*(4), 383. doi:10.1002/jcad.12096

Hastrup, K. (2004). Antropologiens vendinger *Viden om Verden: En Grundbog i Antropologisk Analyse*. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Hastrup, K. (2010b). Metoden. Opmærksomhedens retning. In *Ind i Verden: En grundbog i antropologisk metode*. Litauen: Hans Reitzels forlag.

Hastrup, K. (2010). Den antropologiske videnskap. In: *Ind i Verden: En grundbog i antropologisk metode*. Litauen: Hans Reitzels forlag.

Hervik, P. (2003). Det danske fjendebillede. In M. Sheik (Ed.), *Islam I Bevegelse*. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag.

Hervik, P. (2004). Anthropological perspectives on the new racism in Europe. *Ethnos, 69*(2), 149-155. doi:10.1080/0014184042000212830

Holmes, D. R. (2000). *Integral Europe: fast-capitalism, multiculturalism, neofascism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hylland Eriksen, T. (2007). Complexity in social and cultural integration: Some analytical dimensions. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30*(6), 1055-1069. doi:10.1080/01419870701599481.

Young, Iris. 2006 [1990]. Five faces of oppression. In: *Geographic Thought A praxis perspective*. Eds. George Henderson and Marvin Waterstone. Routledge. London & New York

Jenkins, R. (2008). *Rethinking ethnicity* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Jenkins, R. (2014). *Social identity* (4th ed. ed.). London: Routledge.

Jensen, T. G. (2011). To be Danish and Muslim: Internalizing the Stranger? In Olwig, F. K. & Pæregaard, K. (Eds.), *The Question of Integratiion: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*. New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Education.

Jöhncke, S. (2004). Løsningsmodeller: Sociale teknologier som antropologisk arbejdsfelt. In Olwig, F. K. (Ed.), *Viden om verden : En grundbog i antropologisk analyse*. København: Hans Reitzel.

Jöhncke, S. (2007). Velfærdsstaten som integrationsprosjekt. In: *Integration: Antropologiske perspektiver*. p. 37-62. Museum Tusculanum. København.

Jöhncke, S. (2011). Integrating Denmark: The welfare State as a National(ist) Accomplishment. In F. O. P. Karen, K. (Ed.), *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars.

Jørgensen, W., M. & Phillips, L. (1999). *Diskursanalyse som teori og metode*. Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforl. Samfundslitteratur.

Knauer, V. & Walker, J. (2011). Humiliation, self-esteem and violence. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology, 22*(5), 724-741. doi:10.1080/14789949.2011.617542

Kuhn, T. (2007). *Vitenskapelige revolusjoners struktur*. Oslo: Bokklubben.

Larsen, B. R. (2011). Becoming Part of Welfare Scandinavia: Integration through the Spatial Dispersal of Newly Arrived Refugees in Denmark. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 37*(2), 333-350. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2011.521337.

Lazare, A. (1987). Shame and Humiliation in the Medical Encounter. *Arc Int Med - V, 147*(sept.1987), 1653-1661.

Lindner, E., Spalthoff, U., Britton, M., Hartling, L., & Hartling, L. (2013). Humiliation: a nuclear bomb of emotions? *Psicologia Politica*(46), 55-76.

Lindner, E. G. (2006). *Making enemies: humiliation and international conflict*. Westport, Conn: Praeger Security International.

Lister, R. (2004). *Poverty*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lorde, A. (2007). Learning from the 60s. In A. Lorde (Ed.), *Sister Outsider: Essays & speeches by Audre Lorde*. Berkley: Crossing Press.

Lorimer, F. (2010). Forståelse, et socialt forhold. In: Hastrup, K. (ed). *Viden om Verden: En grundbog i antropologisk analyse*. Denmark: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Luhmann, N. (1997). *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft: Bd. 2* (Vol. Bd. 2). Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Lukes, S. (2005). *Power: a radical view* (2nd ed. ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lunde, H. & Heiberg, T., (2000). *Rikets tilstand 1999*. Oslo: Antirasistisk senter.

Lyotard, J.-F. (1984). *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

McDermott, R. (1993). The acquisition of a child by a learning disability. In S. J. Chaiklin, (Ed.), *Understanding Practice. Perspectives on Activity and Context.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Miles, R. & Brown, M. (2003). *Racism*. London: Routledge.

Mogensen, H. (2011). Caught in the Grid of Difference and Gratitude: HIV Positive Africans Facing the Challenges of Danish Sociality. In Olwig, K. & Pæregaard, K. (Eds.), *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare state*. New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Molden, B. (2016). Resistant pasts versus mnemonic hegemony: On the power relations of collective memory. *Memory Studies, 9*(2), 125-142. doi:10.1177/1750698015596014

O'Donoghue, T., & Keith, P. (2003). *Qualitative Educational Research in Action: Doing and Reflecting* Routledge.

Olwig, K., F. (2012). 'Integration': Migrants and Refugees between Scandinavian Welfare societies and Family Relations. In Olwig, K. & Larsen, B. R. (Eds.), *Migration, Family and the Welfare State: Integrating Migrants and Refugees in Scandinavia*. New York: Taylor & Francis Books.

Olwig, K., F. (2008). Integration mellem forestillede og glemte fællesskaber: Tilfældet Danmark. *Norsk Antropologisk tidsskrift* (04), 233-242.

Olwig, K., F. & Pæregaard, K. (2011). *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*. Cambridge:Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Olwig, K., F. & Pærregaard, K. (2007). *Integration: antropologiske perspektiver* (Vol. bd. I). København: Museum Tusculanum.

Peräkylä, A. & Ruussuvuori, J. (2011). Analyzing Talk & Text in: Lincoln, Y, & Denzin, N. K. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London, New York, New Delhi: Sage.

Perry, B. (2014). Gendered Islamophobia: hate crime against Muslim women. *Social Identities, 20*(1), 74-89.

Pötzsch, H., (2011). *Between constitutive absence and subversive presence: self and other in the contemporary war film*. University of Tromsø, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education, Department of Culture and Literature, Tromsø.

Rubow, C. (2010). Samtalen: Interviewet som deltagerobservation. In Hastrup, K. (ed.). *Ind i Verden: En grundbog i antropologisk metode*. Denmark: Hans Reitzels.

Ragin, C. (1992). *What is a Case? Exploring the foundations of social inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rettberg, J. W., & Gajjala, R. (2016). Terrorists or cowards: negative portrayals of male Syrian refugees in social media.

Rhea, R. W., & UiT Norges arktiske universitet Fakultet for humaniora, s. o. l. (2016). *Ex-combatant reintegration in the great lakes region : processes & mechanisms, trajectories & paradoxes*. UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education, Center for Peace Studies, Tromsø.

Rubow, C. (2010). Interviewet som deltagerobservation. In Hastrup, K. (ed.). *Ind i Verden: En Grundbog i Antropologisk analyse*. Litauen: Hans Reitzel.

Rugkåsa, M. (2012). *Likhetens dilemma: om sivilisering og integrasjon i den velferdsambisiøse norske stat*. Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk.

Rugkåsa, M. (2010). *Transformasjon og integrasjon: kvalifisering av minoritetsetniske kvinner til arbeid og deltakelse i den norske velferdsstaten*. (no. 242), Sosialantropologisk institutt, Det samfunnsvitenskapelige fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo.

Rytter, M. (2007). 'Familien Danmark' og 'de fremmede': Slægtskabsbilleder i dansk integrationspolitik. In K. F. Olwig & Pæregaard, K. (Eds.), *Integration: Antropologiske perspektiver*. København: Museum Tusculanum.

Schneider, D. M. (1968). *American kinship: a cultural account*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentice-Hall.

Schwandt, T. & Gates., E. (2017). Case Study Methodology. In Denzin, K & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research 5*. London, UK.: Sage.

Sjörslev, I. (2011). The Paradox of Integration: Excluding while Claiming to Integrate. In P. K. Olwig K F (Ed.), *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*. New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Slocum-Bradley, N. (2010). The Positioning Diamond: A Trans-Disciplinary Framework for Discourse Analysis. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 40*(1), 79-107. doi:10.1111/j.1468-5914.2009.00418.x

Sørhaug, T. (1998). Når forskjellene er forskjellige: et notat om den gode universalisme og en fotnote til debatten mellom Borchgrevink og Grønhaug. *Norsk Antropologisk tidsskrift, 2-3*, 130-144.

St. Pierre, E. (2011). Post Qualitative Research: The Critique and the coming After. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (eds.). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi: Sage.

Stake, R. E. (2000). Case Studies. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (eds.)., *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

Stokes, P. A. (2004). *We are all Humiliated*. Paper presented at the Workshop on Humiliation and Violent Conflict, Columbia University, New York, 18–19 November. http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/StokesNovNYConference.pdf.

Stokes-DuPass, N., & Fruja, R. (2016). *Citizenship, Belonging, and Nation-States in the Twenty-First Century*. Palgrave Macmillan US.

Stolcke, V. (1995). Talking culture: new boundaries, new rhetoric's of exclusion in Europe. *Current Anthropology, 36*(1), 1-24.

Taylor, M., & Wills, D. (1998). Functions of liminality in literature: A study of Georges Bataille's "Le Bleu du ciel", Julien Green's "L'Autre", and Assia Djebar's "L'Amour, la fantasia": ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Törrönen, J. (2001). The Concept of Subject Position in Empirical Social Research. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 31*(3), 313-329.

Transströmer, T. (1997). *New Collected Poems*. London: Bloodaxe Books.

Turner, V. W. (1996). Betwixt and Between: the liminal period in rites de passage (pp. 509-523). Oslo: Ad notam Gyldendal, cop. 1996.

Utlendingsdirektoratet. (2000). *Art og omfang av rasisme og diskriminering i Norge 1999-2000*. Oslo: Utlendingsdirektoratet.

Valtonen, K. (2008). Social work and migration: immigrant and refugee settlement and integration. Contemporary Social Work Studies. Farnham, England, Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Verdery, K. (2000). Ethnicity, nationalism, and state-making Ethnic groups and boundaries: past and future. In H. G. Vermeulen, Cora (Ed.), *The Anthropology of ethnicity*. Haag: Martinus Nijhoff International.

Wenneberg, S. (2000). *Socialkonstruktivisme. Problemer, Positioner, Perspektiver.* Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur.

Wernesjö, U. (2014). Conditional Belonging: Listening to Unaccompanied Young Refugees' Voices. Uppsala: Uppsala University Press.

Wexler, P. (1990). *Critical Theory Now*. Hong Kong: Graphicraft Typesetters.

Whitehead, A. (Ed.) (2010). *Process & Reality*. New York: The Free Press.

Wikan, U. (1995). *Mot en ny norsk underklasse: innvandrere, kultur og integrasjon*. Oslo: Gyldendal.

Wikan, U. (2002). *Generous betrayal: politics of culture in the new Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wimmer, A. (2013). Ethnic boundary making: institutions, power, networks. Oxford studies in culture and politics. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Internet references

Barne- Likestillings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet. (2017). "*NOU 2017:2 Report. Integration and trust: Long term consequences of high immigration*". Departementenes sikkerhets- og serviceorganisasjon Informasjonsforvaltning. Oslo. Accessed 09.10.2017. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/nou-2017-2/id2536701/sec1

Justis- og beredskapsepartementet. (2016). Meld. St. 30 (2015-16). Fra mottak til arbeidsliv – en effektiv integreringspolitikk. Published by Regjeriongen.no. Acssessed 19.02.2018. Available at: http://www.rehjeringen.no/contentassets/6676aece374348ee805e9 fc5f60b6158/no/pdfs/stm201520160030000dddpdfs.pdf

Opheim, Steffen & Haga, Anders. (2011). "*Reagerer på korstog-ønske*". Published in Bergensavisen 05. april 2011, kl. 12:23. Accessed 21.02.2018. Available at: https://www.ba.no/politikk/reagerer-pa-korstog-onske/s/1-41-5555437

Stalsberg, Tom. (2018). "*Iskremen Siv til 17. Mai-ungene*". Published in Dagbladet 1. MAI 2018 KL. 6.00. Accessed 01.05.2018. Available at: https://www.dagbladet.no/kultur/iskremen-siv-til-17-mai-ungene/69760439

Thorud, E. (2017). Immigration and Integration 2016–2017: Report for Norway. Norweggian ministries. Accessed 05.03.2018. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/005e1d69ad5141958451b8770552dab9/immigration-and-integration-20162017.pdf

Appendix

Interview Guide 1. (Used in interviews with Norwegian majority members

Introduction: Name, purpose of interview, confidentiality. May the interview be recorded?

The role of Sisa

1) Can you describe why you come/use/volunteer at Sisa?

2) How do you perceive the role and function of Sisa cultural centre in the Alta community? What is the most important function of Sisa for the community?

3) Is Sisa well-known in Alta, and how does people here (volunteers, staff) perceive their work?

4) What, if any, are the challenges the centre helps to resolve for people who settle in Alta?

5) In your opinion, what role does Sisa play for people who come to Alta via an asylum process? (Focus on: Examples/episodes/concrete events)

6) Are there conflicts at Sisa? If so, can you describe them?

7) Do you think that Sisa can help people to establish a sense of belonging to the community? If so, how?

8) What are your relations to the people present here at Sisa?

9) What does it take to become a part of Sisa and the Alta community? To become a Norwegian

Settlement processes

1) What do you think the possibilities/challenges are for people who settle in Norway (Alta) as refugees?

2) What do you think the possibilities/challenges are for people in the local communities where refugees settle?

3) What are the first things that come to your mind when you hear the term 'refugee'?

4) Are there differences between 'Norwegians' and 'refugees'? If so, what are these?

5) What do you think are important factors in a positive settlement process for refugees coming to Alta?

6) Is there something you would like to change in the way the Norwegian system deals with refugees? What is positive/negative?

7) In your opinion, what do you think is an important question for me to ask you to understand the relationship between 'Norwegians' and 'refugees' in Alta?

Interview Guide 2. (Used in interviews with individuals with a refugee status.)

Introduction: Name, purpose of interview, confidentiality. May the interview be recorded?

Sisa

1) What do you think about living in Alta? About coming at Sisa?

2) What are your relations to the people present here at Sisa?

3) Have you made friends/network in Alta?

4) Can you describe how it has been for you to move to Alta/Norway? What are the possibilities and challenges in this process?

5) How do you become part of Sisa? Of Alta? Do you feel like you are a part of these communities?

6) What are the most important events/activities here at Sisa for you?

7) Can you mention some positive experiences about coming to Norway as a refugee? Can you mention some negative things about living here?

Belonging/settlement processes

8) What is home to you? Is Alta home, or is it the country you came from?

9) Can you mention three things that has been easy about adapting to Norwegian society? Can you mention three things that has been difficult?

10) How do you understand the concept of belonging? What makes you feel like you belong somewhere?

1) What do you think about your future?

2) What do you think is important for me to ask you to understand your position, and how it is like to come as a refugee to Norway/Alta?

3) Do you feel 'Norwegian'? What does it take to become 'Norwegian'?

4) What role does Norwegian language, job and education play in your life? What are the possibilities/challenges for you in the future?

Interview guide 3. Used in Focus group with Norwegian majority members.

1) How do you perceive the role and function of Sisa cultural centre in the Alta community? What is the most important function of Sisa for the community?

2) Discuss: What role does the Sisa centre play for people who settle/are new in Alta?

3) What does it take to become a part of Sisa and the Alta community? To become a Norwegian?

4) How do you understand the concept of belonging? What makes you feel like you belong somewhere?

5) What is home? Is it something you can make? What does it take?

6) Are there differences between 'Norwegians' and 'refugees'? If so, what are these?

7) What do you think are important factors in a positive settlement process for refugees coming to Alta?

8) In your opinion, what do you think is an important question for me to ask/ for us to discuss for me you to understand the relationship between 'Norwegians' and 'refugees' in Alta?

9) What do you think the possibilities/challenges are for people who settle in Norway (Alta) as refugees?

10) What are the first things that come to your mind when you hear the term 'refugee'?

Interview guide 4. Used in Focus group with individuals with a refugee status.

1) How is it to live in Alta? How is it to spend time at Sisa?

2) What does it take to 'belong' or feel at home somewhere?

3) Discussion round: Do you feel at home in Alta? - what is it that creates this experience?

4) Are there any differences between how Norwegians who were born in Norway, and people who move here from another country belongs to the country? If so, what are these?

5) What does it take to become a part of Sisa and the Alta community? To become a Norwegian?

6) What do you think are important factors in a positive settlement process for refugees coming to Alta

7) What do you think the possibilities/challenges are for people who settle in Norway (Alta) as refugees?

8) Do you feel 'Norwegian'? What does it take to become 'Norwegian'?

9) What role does Norwegian language, job and education play for becoming part of society?

10) What do you think is important for me to ask/ us to discuss for me to understand your position, and how it is like to come as a refugee to Norway/Alta?