

Women and young girls tell their stories on  
migration and media practices.  
Generational order and identity positions.

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## Introduction

This paper has its focus on women and their lived experiences of migration and is based on an in-depth study with two migrant families living in Sweden as well as in Greece respectively. A narrative perspective is taken in the analysis of four women's – two mothers and their daughters- perception and interpretation of daily life with special focus on their media practices taking departure from a generational perspective. Young women (teenagers) with their mothers are compared concerning issues related to *recognition* and identity work. Furthermore, we will take an intersectional approach and also include the aspect of generation as a subcategory of gender into the analysis. The aim is here to focus on how stages in life and the discursive positions these women take in a story line are related to identity formations in the process of daily life, migration and “getting access” to a new culture and what role media has in this process. What expectations do these women have to fulfil in their positions as migrants, foreigners, mothers, school girls e t c? And how do their positions affect the women's views of themselves, their children and the surrounding society and the homeland. How do the processes of recognition look like in countries such as Sweden and Greece?

Migration is here regarded as a process of cultural change (Gillespie, 1995), which affects life differently depending on for example, gender, ethnicity and stage of life (generation). There are, of course, a variety of factors, e.g. demographic variables as well as personal factors, involved in this process of cultural change. We are strongly aware of the fact that every migrant has his/her own private story of migration (see for example.... Rydin and Sjöberg.....). In the present analysis we will avoid using ethnicity as an essential marker and instead look mainly at two women's lives and what it means to move from one country (homeland) to another in terms of changes in life course, language shift and the role of the media in this process but also look at how these women's daughters relate to the process of migration within the family. In order to avoid to be caught into the discussion of the centrality of ethnicity and rather set focus on cultural change, we have chosen one woman who have migrated to Sweden, but grew up in Syria (married to a man from Iraq) and one woman who grew up in Sweden (Swedish parents) but has migrated to Greece (married to a man from Greece).

## **Everyday life, citizenship and recognition: a gendered and generational perspective**

In this paper everyday life and the private sphere set the point of departure for understanding people's media use (see Silverstone, 1994) and their interaction with the surrounding society. "The world of everyday life is not only taken for granted as reality by ordinary members of society in the subjectively meaningful conduct of their lives. It is rather a world that originates in 'thoughts and actions, and is maintained as real by these'" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 33). Thus, everyday life is the dominant site for making sense of the world and of ourselves. The taken for granted, the intersubjective (shared with others) and the ordered (both spatially and temporally) are features of everyday life, originates in people's language, thoughts, and actions. Everyday behaviour and thoughts create routines and rituals, thereby providing us with what Giddens (1991: 44) would call ontological security. In this paper we turn our attention to what actually happens with this feature of taken for grantedness when moving to another country and its implications on self-perception and one's lived experiences of daily life. Cultural encounters involve the process in which people try to create meaning and deal with various cultures in daily life and where migrants often are forced to go through a 're-socialization' in their attempts to adjust to a new culture (Stier, 2004).

According to contemporary sociological and cultural research on citizenship we should not only focus on public arenas of politics when examining citizenship but also to people's mundane everyday activities like thoughts, talks, activities, which in turn have implications on the macro politics (Dahlgren, 2006). It is about connecting intimate and domestic spaces with the public, the home with society, the local with the national. And here the media and internet in particular, are looked at in detail and their role of acting as mediators for creating and maintaining the agendas of social life and politics of the society at hand. Dahlgren (2000: 321) has emphasized the importance of general knowledge of culture and citizenship for participation such as understanding of different discourses in the public sphere as well as the ability to express ideas and thoughts in a civic culture. Also the term representation as used by Stuart Hall is of relevance. Hall (1997) talks about how the process of meaning-making depends on what system of concepts we have, which in turn makes it possible for us to understand the world. Two persons, whose mental maps differ will in other words perceive the world in different ways and might also run into difficulties in communicating with each other and in turn having the consequence of not gaining recognition of one's thoughts, emotions, behaviour etc.

Following the famous work of Charles Taylor (1994/2003) on the politics of recognition, we claim that identity formation and citizenship are tied to whether a group or person is recognized or not in a society/by others. One can never be a full-fledged citizen unless one has also achieved recognition. Exclusion and discrimination are effects of non-recognition. Taylor stresses that non-recognition can cause harm resulting in a kind of oppression and consequently lead to a false and restricted life situation. Some feminists, claims Taylor, advocate that women in patriarchal societies have been forced to adopt a negative image of themselves. They have internalized a picture of themselves as inferior

persons. So even if some of the objective obstacles for development disappear, they might still be incapable to take advantage of potential opportunities. In line with Sreberny (2005:246) we argue “that a gender lens is crucial to the articulation of a more holistic analysis of global issues that includes the democratization of communication, the communication of democracy, and the emancipation of the world’s women”. Sreberny (from 1998 quoted in 2005) claimed that: “ Women have long recognized and utilized the power of new technologies, including the Internet, e-mail, and fax, together with older media such as print, “snail mail” and the telephone to build networks of solidarity around events and issues, potentially connecting grassroots women’s organizations to centers of decision making and facilitating the participation of ordinary people not only in local and national civic politics but also in global issues as members of transnational social movements.” Due to very rapid development of broadband in residential suburban areas, most people have Internet access, regardless of socio-economic conditions.

Nancy Fraser (2003) has continued in the footsteps of Taylor and the idea of the politics of recognition. She introduced the “identity model”, which has its origin in Hegel’s philosophy and the idea that identity is constructed in dialogue through a process of mutual recognition. According to Hegel, recognition is an ideal mutual relation between two subjects and mutual respect to each other. This relation is constitutive to the subjectivity: one can only be a subject through recognizing another person and also at the same time be recognized by the same person. In brief, the outlined identity model is a prerequisite for being a participant in a society and for civic culture. Sreberny (2005) somewhat later said that “is essentially about mutuality – a dialectic through which one is recognized and knows that the other recognizes one. We hear each other, exist together, coexist”. By a close-up analysis of people who have gained formal rights, such as a legal citizenship, the process of recognition still seems to be vivid.

The women in the present analysis are in different stages of life. The concept of generation is in this context used to better understand families in the process of transition, where parents and children are in different stages of life. We start from the position that the definition of a ‘child’ and ‘adult’ is socially constructed (Alanen 2001). Thus, these concepts have different meanings in different cultures. This may create generational tensions in family life when you are facing a new culture. The concept of generation also has a temporal dimension, which stretches from tradition over to modernity and thus is a matter of cultural change. Children and adults may cope with the process of cultural change differently, which may lead to family disputes and conflicts. We can, for example, expect that the children’s gaze is more directed to the future and that they are more integrated in the society where they grow up as so called second-generation migrants than their parents.

Alanen (2010) talks about generational order. “The core idea in the notion of generational order is that there exists in modern societies a system of social ordering that specifically pertains to children as a social category, and circumscribes for them particular social locations from which they act and thereby participate in ongoing social life. Children are thus involved in the daily ‘construction ‘of their own and other people’s everyday relationships and life trajectories” (p. 161). In other words, children have been placed in certain positions,

i.e. child-parent relation, child-teacher relation e t c. Also when being interviewed by adults, they are positioned in a certain way. They are expected to talk about their position as an expert on children's lives versus an adult point of view. Positioning may take different forms in different settings. Although the generational status of child versus parent or adult has to do with structural mechanisms of a given society, there are also positions that are flexible and depending on circumstances at hand. The generational structure of, for example, a nuclear family also has international relations, where members are given certain positions in relation to each other.

By conceptually privileging the asymmetry between children and adults, childhood and adulthood, space is opened for empirically exploring

1. the *generational structures* that are composed of generational categories (positions) of childhood (or childness) and adulthood (or adulthood: Blatterer, 2007a), and linking them into a reciprocal interdependency, as well as relationships of power:
2. 2 the material, social and cultural processes in which children and adults, as both individual and collective actors, are involved, and in which also their everyday activities are embedded so that *generational (re)structuring* is recurrently effected; and finally
3. the cultural systems of *meanings, symbols and semantics* through which existing generational categories and their interrelationships are produced and rendered culturally meaningful.

### **Positioning theory: The discursive production of reality and identity**

The definitions of identity are numerous, from Erikson's (1968, 1977) concept of identity as a stable psychological entity, rooted in childhood (involving values and biographic experiences) mainly influenced by local actors like family and peers to a late modern definition of identity advocated by, for example, Giddens (1991). As for the latter identity formation is the result of a reflexive process, adjusting to various contexts and situations, and where the function of media as symbolic resources is emphasised. When discussing identity it is also important to look at its many "faces" such as personal, social and cultural. In comparison to personal identity, constituting an individual's unique expressions and traits, the social (diverse internalised social roles) and cultural identity (to understand and use cultural symbols and rituals, and a feeling of belonging to a certain culture) are put in relation to different groups and communities (Johansson & Miegel, 1992). To live in a multiplicity of cultures is said to encourage a development of transcultural identities and translocal communities; it means that a person's identity has to switch (and thereby find a balance) between different cultures and its norms, values, expectations etc (Hall, 1992). Finding answers to the questions "Who am I?", "What do I want?" become especially important during adolescence. The formation of self can be seen as a critical period in a young person's life and is the first step to adulthood. We are

of course building our identity during our whole life but adolescence is a sensitive and a crucial time when young people go through a conscious reflecting process of the self and adapt oneself to a complex environment (Kroger, 1996).

In our attempt to understand the processes of migration and identity formation we draw upon what has come to be called positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1990; Harré and van Langenhove, 1999). Thus, with this theoretical point of departure we want to examine how stages in life and the discursive positions these women, who participated in the projects, take in a story line are related to identity formations in the process of daily life, migration and “getting access” to a new culture and what role media has in this process. With this line of thought the concept of discourse becomes crucial; being defined in the context as “[...] an institutionalized use of language and language like signs. Institutionalization can occur at the disciplinary, the political, the cultural and the small group level” (Davies and Harré, 1999: 34). But also around a specific issue like gender or class. In her work on adolescent girls and their social identity Frazer (1990: 282) states “[...] the girls’ *experience* of gender, race, class, their personal-social identity, can only be expressed and understood through the categories and concepts available to them in discourse”. But some discourses are more dominating and powerful compared to others. Where a dominating discourse is advocated by various dominating institutions and actors in society and different prominent discourses float between various spheres on both the macro and micro level (Fairclough, 1989). With their poststructuralist point of departure Davies and Harré also recognise the ability of a person to make his or her choice in relation to various discursive practices. However, a subject position is, and the optional discursive practices offered in a specific context, drawn upon existing social (e.g. speech-acts) and cultural (including moral) structures and a person’s available repertoire which varies depending on social, symbolic, economical and cultural power. Thus, people have different capacities to position themselves or others. For example, an individual that relies heavily on cultural stereotypes will position him- or herself differently within a specific discursive practice compared to a person who who has a much more individualized way of living and thinking.

Davies and Harré (1999:35) claim that “An individual emerges through the process of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate. Accordingly, who one is, that is, what sort of person one is, is always an open question with a shifting answer depending upon the position made available within one’s own and other’s discursive practices and within those practices the stories through which we make sense of our own and other’s lives”. Thus, we are speaking, acting, thinking and feeling from a specific position within a discursive practice. A practice in which social and psychological realities are produced (Davies and Harré, 1990). Davies and Harré (1990: 46) continue “Once having taken up a particular position as one’s own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story lines and concepts which are med relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned”. Relating to the abovementioned discussion on politics of recognition, it is worth noting that the same line

of thought is seen in the work of Davies and Harré, i.e. that the existence of personas relies on the social cooperation and recognition of others.

Davies and Harré (1999) talk about and examine various forms of positioning. A person's talk may position another in a conversation (interactive, forced positioning) or it might be a matter of so called reflexive positioning where a person is positioning him- or herself within a certain discursive practice. Positioning may be intentional with the aim of achieving certain aims but can as well occur on a more unconscious level of mind. The authors also distinguish between first and second order positioning. Where the latter type of positioning results from a critical reaction to the first positioning taken place in a conversation. That is, the positions we undertake is not static but can change as a talk unfolds. Looking specifically at the aim of this paper, we want to examine the various positions the four interviewed women take in their story line in our attempt to understand their thoughts about migration, daily life, family matters and media practices.

## Migrant women tell their stories: methodology

The analysis presented here is based on the results from two projects – '*Media practices in the new country*' and '*Mediated childhoods in multicultural families in Greece*'<sup>1</sup>. The projects share many similarities in terms of purpose, theoretical framework and methodology. The main difference is that while the former aims to highlight the role and utilization of the media in families (mainly with children in the ages 12-16) with an immigrant background in Sweden, the latter studied the migration process and the role of media for Swedish women (and their children) who had been moving to Greece.

As for '*Media practices in the new country*', in total, 75 persons took part in the project, involving 16 families and three focus groups, in an educational setting, with origins from countries such as Greece, Kurdistan, Iran, Lebanon, Somalia, Syria, Turkey and Vietnam. The participating parents were either studying, looking for a job, on the sick list or had occupations such as busdriver, working at a factory or store, interpreter, and preschool teacher. We met during our fieldwork informants who came to Sweden in the mid 80s to those who arrived a couple of years ago. The empirical work of the Greek study was collected in September 2004 and in total ten families, living in Athens and its surroundings, participated. The study is based on families with children of the ages 12-16, the same age group as in the abovementioned project. In all the families the mother is Swedish, who has lived in Greece for many years (from 10 to 26). Three of the husbands have also lived in Sweden. In nine families the husband was Greek and in one family the father was non-European (but who had lived in Greece for 26 years). One mother lived alone with her children. The parents worked as teacher, secretary, physiotherapist,

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<sup>1</sup> The project '*Media practices in the new country*' was funded by the Swedish Research Council (2004-2006) and '*Mediated childhoods in multicultural families in Greece*' by Halmstad University. The data for the latter project was collected 2004.

painter, psychologist, photographer, housewife, businessman, or owned their own business such as a café, hotel, store.

Each family in the two projects had their own story to tell about the reasons for coming to Sweden or Greece and how their cultural journey was experienced and is experienced today. This trip has been physical, moving from one place to another, but also emotional and cognitive. The journey to Sweden/Greece may be ended but another one has started – one's life in Sweden. To grasp this journey and the migrants' lived experiences in Sweden the two projects have had a media ethnographic approach. This approach has also features of so called life story research that tries to capture the essence of personal narratives as they appear to be politicized, structured, culturized and socialized (Goodley, Lawthom, Clough and Moore 2004).

Drotner (1993) proposes a media-ethnographical approach in order to capture the contextual character of media use in relation to the audiences' everyday lives. The focus is here on a specific group of people rather than a certain medium. By studying peoples' media use in contexts such as home, work or school one can see how media use is an active process rather than a passive one. Besides narrative interviews the two projects entailed field observation and photo-taking (among the children). In our project the families were visited about two times in their homes but in order to get access to the families a network of gatekeepers were developed with whom we had contact for (in the project in Sweden) about two years. A combination of research diary and field notes was written during the field work in Sweden and Greece. Most of the interviews took place at home and they were all recorded and transcribed. By being given the opportunity to see the families at home we got to observe media access, current media use but also the representation of the homeland, one's religion in the home, which became an important complement to the interviews and gave additional contextualized data.

### **The interview context: a narrative approach**

Asking a person questions about, for example, locus of control or authoritarian behaviour is a form of positioning and has to be understood as such: it tells something about how people position themselves when answering a questionnaire administered by a scientist (van Langenhove and Harré, 1999: 29).

Stating that we wanted the informants to tell their stories does not of course mean that these stories are a pure reflection of an objective reality or a fixed mental image, quite the contrary. While being out on the field we as researchers stage a scene which is constructed by certain contexts and by people's different frames of references. That we use language differently in various contexts (here the interview context) is seen in the work of, for example, Bakhtin (1986: 60) on 'speech genre'. This might represent what Billig (1992) calls 'moral methodologies' and impressionability, of how the interviewee constructed a view from 'how things should be – the norm'. And here we find an asymmetrical relation: female interviewer-mother and female interviewer – girl (daughter). In interviews also have other positions related to educational status: female academic- mother without professional platform and female academic – school girl. These relations are important and play a certain role in the

interviews. These relations create certain expectations during the interview. Our informants may take certain subjective positions depending on their expectations and thoughts about the interview situation.

The various interviews varied in character as they were based on open questions in order to create a conversation like character and therefore the result vary a lot. Some were extensive as people liked to talk about their lives, others were scanty. The older generation, the parents, could come up with quite detailed narratives that had little resemblance with an ordinary interview. Samar's story has some parts that are extensive and detailed descriptions of her life as a mother and about her professional career. Adela's story, on the other hand, is not so detailed and has more elements of question-answer type of dialogue. This frame is more representative for younger people in the project as a whole.

### The story of Samar and Adela

Samar had no intentions to move from Syria. She had a well-paid job as an engineer in Damascus, travelled much and had parents and friends in Syria. In 1992 however she visited her two sisters in Sweden, where she also met her husband (with origins in Iraq), who had at that time been living in Sweden for 8 years. Samar comes from a family with 6 sisters and one brother. Besides the ones living in Sweden and Syria, she has a sister in Germany and Dubai. The decision to move to Sweden was not an easy one and she knew from her sisters that it meant to start over from scratch. In the following text, our attention is drawn to the story of Samar but also to her 11 year old daughter Adela's thoughts and talks about Syria/Iraq and Sweden, her media usage etc.

- I knew it would be difficult but I never thought it would be this difficult. It was really tough. [...] Yeah, it was not an easy decision but as it was a difficult situation with politics, he (the husband) couldn't move to Syria, he is not allowed to live there. There were many disturbances between Syria and Iraq 92-93 so it was not that easy, he couldn't move there. [...] So the only option was that I moved here. I live here.

Samar emphasized how difficult it was to come to a new country and that she had to start from the very beginning, despite that she had a good education in her country of origin (Syria). She also formed her own family during her first years in Sweden. She gave birth to a daughter and a son. Now eleven years she and her husband had one more child. In the excerpt below she focuses her narrative on mastering the new language.

- When I came, I knew how much I can do and what I should do. The first step for me was to learn Swedish but I became pregnant about two weeks after, after we got married so it was a little bit difficult for me, felt ill and we had it very tough the first four months. But still I started the school in order to learn Swedish, SFI, at that time it was allowed to smoke indoors, they had a smoking room, and that was the worst thing I could do, to smell smoke, I could barely be there.

*But how did it feel to learn Swedish as it is completely different compared to...*

- I have actually studied Swedish at home. I never attended any school, I studied at home by myself. I borrowed books from the library, sat and worked. But I spoke English with everyone the first five years.

Exclusion from the society makes it more difficult to learn the language, especially articulating and talking the new language. She emphasised the lack of Swedish friends as one explanation for this:

- But still my problem today is to pronounce things correctly, I understand everything, I have read much but I am not satisfied with the pronouncement. But I think you understand what I am saying. Plus I have not got any Swedish friend. You know, it is very difficult to get a Swedish friend.

During her first years in Sweden, she rather preferred to speak English than Swedish:

- Much English outside the home and I built my family during these five years. I had my daughter and then my son. So I, I thought that during these five years I concentrate on...

The process of language acquisition coincided with family formation and Samar made a choice to strengthen the ties inwards to her private sphere, rather than the public sphere of the Swedish society. But Swedes, she said, are not particularly open to migrants. She claimed that the Swedes ("you") set the boundaries for what is accepted, here addressing the interviewer, and thus clearly aware about the dichotomy of "we" and "them".

- I feel that, you draw the line from the beginning. When one meets an immigrant with dark hair, directly one keeps a distance. You do not understand, what's this, you are scared. But in the beginning one doesn't understand this, one thinks 'they don't like me', one is being put off and I had many friends in my country so one feels 'no, me too, I don't want to', I think the first initiative should come from you, you are at home.

*Yes...*

- You don't have any difficulties.

*No.*

- But we are coming here, we have it very difficult. We want to understand things, how you live, how things are. Here it is very difficult and a great difference between your culture and our, so this combination one must understand first then one can dare to make a step.

While her mother complained about the difficulty of getting to know Swedes Adela mentioned that her best friend was from Albania but that she also had friends whose parents were Swedish. For Adela the situation was to struggling to learn Arabic through her parents but also at school. She therefore preferred using media in Swedish (Swedish language and subtitles) and directed the gaze to the global commercial youth culture. As the family visited Syria once per year her Arabic had improved but was also easily forgotten eventually:

*Hur är det här att läsa arabiska då?*

- Det är lite svårare för att jag har inte tillbringat så, jag har tillbringat, även om jag tillbringar väldigt mycket tid på arabiska så man glömmet det fort. Till exempel när jag åker ner till Syrien som vi brukar göra på sommaren då pratar jag bara arabiska hela tiden sen när jag kommer till Sverige så glömmet jag allt jag har lärt mig där nere så börjar vi prata svenska om igen.

After the first years of struggling with language, Samar had aspirations to start working. By means of her own network of friends with migrant background she successfully found a job in a school as teacher for children with special needs:

- Yes, and it felt really nice. I succeeded to start working with children who had special needs. It went really well for me and I thought 'Ohh, I can continue to work'. [...] and I thought it was great fun to work with children, and children with special needs. Really enjoyed working with them.

The teaching experience led to an interest in working with children and she decided to apply for a university education in social work, an education of four years of study. But she was only admitted at a university far away from her home town, which made it difficult to accept this position, as she could not stay away from her small children all day long. *"But as my children were small I thought 'No, I don't have the heart to travel to Lund'. When they call me here in Helsingborg I can go straight to the nursery but from Lund it's very difficult"*.

Therefore instead of taking a college degree, she stayed to work in the school where she had been a supply teacher, now as a home language teacher:

- But I continued my work and in some way I managed with it. And then I stayed at the same school. It was Gustav Adolfsskolan. And there I collaborated very well with the teachers and got a permanent job there, they wanted me. [...]

In the next passage Samar told the interviewer her view of inclusive processes into the Swedish society and how she was accepted and supported. She expressed a relief that she finally felt a kind of recognition after years of struggling with getting "access" and finding her place in the new country:

- No, I have a colleague, they are very sweet and we have worked together for several years. They came to see me several times and my manager, she really liked me, she thought that I struggled much in this country. That I deserved something better. She has visited me several times. She supported me really much when we going to continue our studies. I needed, I hade to have the right qualifications to become a teacher, I didn't, I needed this subject, what's the name...

Still, in order to become a qualified (certified) teacher, she had to have a degree in pedagogy (education). At this point, Samar got support from the university, and a supporting female teacher, so that she could continue her studies at distance through an Internet platform. She expressed strong gratitude and stressed the importance of having a supportive environment. However, during this period she spent much time at home and she got more isolated again with the effect that her Swedish deteriorated. Her contacts with Swedish society became limited to occasionally visits to the health service or parent groups or that she sometimes spoke Swedish with her children, who were fluent in this language. However, the media apparently also played a role in the process of getting access to the Swedish society. Samar lined up a number of daily papers, local and national. And she also pointed to the importance of advertisements.

An important tool in this knowledge process of getting access to the Swedish society is to use both Swedish-English and English-Arabic dictionary:

- No, most of the time it was in English and then I could ask my sisters about a word. But I have used the dictionary much when I studied. When there was a difficult word and I couldn't find it in the Arabic-Swedish dictionary but first had to look in the Swedish-English and then English-Arabic and then I found the word and if you have a compound word, they are really difficult 'what is it they want', 'which word is it'.

When the interview was conducted, Samar was on maternity leave again, and therefore once again she felt somewhat isolated from the society. She stressed that the media, especially television and Internet, became more important in this situation, for example for watching the news and reading Swedish local and national newspapers. But her media practices were tightly intertwined with her private family life as parent and mother of an infant.

- So when he is asleep I have some little time. Sitting by the computer and starting searching. I also look at Swedish books, need to fresh up the memory...

*By watching TV, one can at least hear Swedish...*

- It's not so much. Most of the time it is movies that are translated to Swedish, therefore I am much better in reading.

*Then to listen...*

- To talk.

*You are more used to the text...*

- Yes, I am much more used to the text. I know English and they talk English and I read but do I read right or wrong I don't know but know I know what wheel means but how one is pronouncing it I don't know when just reading it.

Transnational television (satellite television) was mentioned as a comfort zone when Samar was homesick:

- Yes, it sometimes feels that one is longing home so it cools down the emotions if one watches.

*But you said that one longs home. Are you then watching any special programs? Or is it, there is also music channels...*

- Yes, there are music channels but it depends. Sometimes during the day I'm tired and have no energy to work and it is not nice weather outside 'what should I do' so then I switch on the TV and watch something that is shown that moment. But we have one month where we have a little special with programs, it is Ramadan when we fast then we like to watch TV as we all eat together the same time, we are watching the same program and it can be series and stuff like that, and it feels that we are home during this period. Want to have this feeling 'I am home' during Ramadan.

[...]

- It is much movies, doesn't have to be religious. It is more about the feeling that we celebrate all together, that one is not alone. One sits here just the four of us. I have Christmas curtains for my children and things like that but it is a special time for us too.

Preferred transnational channels were *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* but also Arabic newspapers on the Internet, which were used for being informed about news and events in Syria through a site called *Alamin* ([www.alamin.com](http://www.alamin.com)). However, for her daughter Adela these channels or sites were of little interest as she had problem to understand Arabic not spoken in the same dialect as her mother's.

By the site *Alamin*, one can also be informed about central issues of everyday life such as issues related pregnancy.

- Yeah, then you go there and one can link to the others. When I was pregnant I read much about the pregnancy, how children develops every day, every month and all this. There are sites everywhere, American, English, French, one looks and each channels has a link to others.

However, when Samar was pregnant with her last baby, she also could understand, which she highly appreciated, Swedish information about these matters:

- [...] but it was rather fun this time when I was pregnant with Hadi as I could read Swedish much better so I used it. It was a delight to know everything, my belly, how he lives. Before that, they talked but I didn't understand. I didn't understand but now I do, it was really great to know these things.

Samar stood out as a competent Internet user. She developed her ideas about the various Internet services: MSN that was used for chatting with friends and relatives in other places of the world such as the US as well as with family in the home country. She and her friends tried to find time slots when they all were able to meet due to different time zones. She also used the Internet for other purposes such as paying bills, sending e-cards e t c. Her husband, as a refugee from Iraq, also visited chat rooms on the Internet, particularly for political discussions and voting in Arabic.

- Either you can call or one sent MSN or e-mail.

*Can you give an example of any question where he has logged in and chatted?*

- Most of the time I am not with him but I can see when he 'if the computer is on then I would like to send what I think', what they think, when they should vote in the homeland so then the question becomes what it should be, they want here in Malmö to have a place, so the Iraqis should go there but they were not allowed so they went to...

Transnational media were primarily used for bonding, i.e. to preserve mother tongue and cultural heritage such as norms, traditions, values, religious beliefs. Learning the mother tongue by means of, for example, television often had the wider implication of conveyance of cultural heritage to the children but Samar stressed that it is impossible to force her children to, for example, watch Arabic programmes. She and her husband had however found that the children enjoyed much more to listen and dance to Arabic music. Something that also Adela mentioned:

Vad vi har upplevt, att om vi säger till våra barn "du ska göra det och det, det och det" så blir "ja, ja, ja, ja" och sen gör dom ingenting. Vi gör det att vi sitter tillsammans och tittar tillsammans och dom blir intresserade. Vi lyssnar på musik tillsammans och försöker vi hitta rytmen till musiken och sjunger tillsammans och dom går med den hela tiden istället bara prata "ni måste göra det", annars ingenting blir gjort (Interview with Samar).

The telephone, on the other hand, was preferred by Samar for talking to her mother. Also Adela preferred the telephone for private conversations with relatives and friends..

After a break in the interview with Samar as the youngest child was crying, it continued by a talk on maintaining bonds with the home country. The first question picked up a thread that was discussed earlier in the interview concerning disruption and dissociation.

*- But do you feel that the children are split in any way?*

- No, I think that we are more split compared to the children. As it is more a focus on here, I think. Because when we go to the homeland it doesn't feel exactly as the homeland and here isn't home either so it is...

*So you mean that when you travel to, for example, Syria, you don't feel that it is your homeland?*

- No, many changes are taken place when one is not there so it doesn't feel the same sometimes. As they have changed, time is also passing by there, they change things when we are not there.

Here Samar expressed a sense of split identity of lack of belonging to the new country or the old homeland. She maintains that the adults are more split than the children, who have been raised and lived in Sweden. But this kind of split identity is sometimes expressed even by children as well, as in Moignan's (2009) study of young people of Iranian decent living in Sweden. Adela, on the other hand, resisted such a position. When people around her have asked her where she comes from, they immediately position her in the category of 'the other', a position she rejects: "jag bara "Irak eller Syrien", jag vet inte vad jag ska svara liksom". This kind of statement stresses the relational nature of identity (Madianou, 2005). In the interview with Adela we can also see how she positions herself within the broader Arabic community rather than stating that she has roots in Syria and Iraq. "*Ja, det är många i skolan som har bra respekt för oss. Det är många som är araber i vår skola som, vi har stor respekt*". Due to instability in Iraq Adela had never visited the country or seen her relatives. Her father's tellings about Iraq and his family there became important to her. "*Pappa brukar ringa dom och så brukar prata och sen får han berätta och så. Han berättar ju, jag har bett pappa flera gånger att berätta hur det är och så*". When asked whether she could think of moving to Syria in the future she replied that she might but that she wanted more to travel and see different parts of the world.

The final part of the interview with Samar and Adela discussed issues related to religion, tradition, norms and values and how one stays in touch with the former home country on the local level. On question of the importance of religion, Samar claimed that religion is important, although she was not considering herself as extremely religious. And Adela, neither read the Koran regularly or prayed on a daily basis. Samar explained it like this;

- Yes, as we believe in God, we are Muslims and we try to raise our children as much as we can. This you can do, this you can't do. There are things that one absolutely cannot do, there are things which one can discuss. To eat pig meat is not allowed and that is something my children has learnt from early years so I don't think this is a problem. To take a shower with all the other girls when one is naked is not allowed when you are a Muslim so she has learnt that 'I can take a shower with underwear'. My son has also done this. It both applies to boys and girls, not just my girl. And when I go out to take a shower I am wearing my towel. (Interview with Samar)

Still, we can see that norms and values, related to religion, seem to be important, as Samar in the excerpt above has quite an extensive description of the importance of some central values related to food and behavioural codes.

The family also participated in the local Arabic community to some extent. Samar's husband with origin in Iraq was very active there, in the "Iraq house", before Saddam Hussein was overthrown. But after that, his interest in this community decreased.

- We had the Iraqi house here and they were really active before regime. The regime of Saddam had fallen but now they are not so active but before it was mainly daddy and Sarah (the oldest daughter) who joined an activity. But Syria, from Syria there are not many, we are too few, but there are some from Palestine, Lebanon, all together.

*It's more of an Arabic community...*

- Yes, and it is not many families that we meet, we are too few at the Syrian association of culture but we meet. They (the children) also have their friends.

*But it's more that one is having an Arabic community rather than a Syrian one?*

- Yes, it becomes more of an Arabic community.

The story of Adela is illustrating young women's aspirations and thoughts about their future. The story of Samar is more complex, because it also includes her struggle for building her own family in the new country. By making this choice of comparison, we will demonstrate that one should avoid generalizations about the category "gender". Women's lives can be quite shifting depending on their personal circumstances, which often are neglected in research about migration issues. There is a tendency to believe that a certain category such as "migrant women" is homogeneous (Hellgren, 2008:92). But in reality it is not.

## The story of Lena and Anna

The next story consists of excerpts from interviews with Lena, who decided to move to Greece in 1987, and with her 14 year-old daughter Anna. Lena has her roots in Sweden and worked as a teacher at a nursery. Her life took another path during a visit in Greece when she came to see a friend and met her husband Kostas. Besides their daughter Lena they also have a 12 year-old son and live in the suburb of Athens. Lena told us about the first years of her relation with Kostas:

- Ja, jag var på besök här. Jag bodde här hos Kostas. På så sätt och jag var definitivt inte intresserad, det vara ju bara till att krångla till sitt liv [...].

*Var det sen att du åkte hem och sen höll ni kontakten...*

- Det här var 82 sen höll vi på så fram och tillbaka i fem år för vi gifte oss 87. För eftersom Kostas började då pluggade och arbetade samtidigt. Han pluggade på kvällarna och så jobbade han på dagarna och sen hade han fortfarande militärtjänsten kvar så utav den anledningen så dröjde det ganska länge. [...]

*Kändes det som naturligt, vi har ju pratat om det innan också, vad det att han sa "nu får du komma, antingen kommer du eller så", det var aldrig så att ni skulle bo i Sverige?*

- Det var aldrig någon diskussion om det. För vi visste om att det var mycket större chanser för oss att få ett bra liv här.

For Lena and Kostas it was without any doubt that they should have a life and family in Greece as the chances for Kostas to succeed with his job in Sweden would be less. But for Lena the decision to move to Greece and get married had the consequence of her leaving a job identity as a teacher and stepping into the role as a mother and housewife. Having her attention drawn to the private sphere; being a wife and raising children, Lena has not put much effort in learning Greek and still today she speaks English with her husband and Swedish with the children. She stated that as the children get older she will automatically be forced to speak Greek as she then has to deal with teachers etc. Her husband on the other hand does not understand why she does not speak more Greek:

- Det funkar inte och det har väl varit en av dom jobbigaste bitarna språket egentligen för det blev ju mycket diskussion om detta, för han kan inte förstå att jag inte pratar grekiska och så vidare, "titta alla andra som har varit här så länge" och så vidare alltså jag säger att språket komer med barnen.

*Men du pratar grekiska?*

- Javisst pratar jag grekiska men det kommer med barnen. Efter hand som barnen växer upp så är man tvungen att lära sig får nya kontakter och skolan och allting sådant. Det är jag som har suttit med läxböckerna från början här ju. Det är en annan sak. Desto fortare egentligen man skaffar barn här nere desto fortare kommer man in i samhället och språk och allting.

Thus, having children made Lena more part of society and she also mentioned how she at first was regarded as a stranger among Greeks but when she had her first child, the Greek mothers especially gave her recognition. As the whole family is a member of a sailing club, Lena has got much of her Greek acquaintance from there.

Lena talked about how she switches between being Swedish and Greek depending on whether she is in Sweden or Greece and describing herself as “something between”:

- Perhaps one can say that one is something between now. [...]. ‘Cause this suits me quite well I think but then one becomes, you value many Swedish things so if one discusses with Greeks then one is always saying “that’s how it is in Sweden” and so on and so on. But then when one comes to Sweden one can get very annoyed about how Swedes are and then one says “that’s how we do it in Greece”. So then one becomes very Greek in some ways, wants to defend Greece like that even though we can sit here and say a lot of bad things about Greece, about how stupid they are and how the society works and so on but if it’s a Swede who opens their mouth and says the same thing as I have just been saying then I defend Greece.

According to Lena her relation to Sweden had become weaker the moment her parents died and she had not been visiting Sweden for three and a half years but in the same sentence she also talked about longing and later in the interview the importance of following Swedish traditions is stressed, which make her feel more Swedish:

- Det jag längtar efter komma upp till Sverige det är alltså jag vill åka upp och träffa allihopa, äta lite middag, sitta och dricka kaffe liksom så och så vill jag shoppa lite granna, det är vad jag...gå ut och handla liksom.

[...]

- Jag plockar fram midsommarstången och sätter på bordet ungefär och sill och potatis då och jordgubbar men julen är svensk. Helt svensk för det är liksom den viktigaste svenska traditionen på något vis och sedan så håller vi oss till grekisk påsk för den är viktigaste där liksom men sen så håller jag ju på allt det här som vi äter ju våra fastlagsbullar, semlorna, 25 mars är ju våffeldagen va och sen så är semlorna då under fastan.

When discussing the relation to Sweden and Greece Lena also brought up how differently her daughter and son dealt with the fact that she was from Sweden. While the son had no interest in Sweden the daughter showed a great interest. (A gender issue: The daughter has her mother as image, the son the father) The mother also stated that she thought that her son would prefer that she was Greek. Things would then be much easier as he did not have to correct her Greek and they would not be different from other families.

*As I understood it Anna is more interested in Sweden than Giorgos?*

- Yes, definitely. There’s a big difference. Giorgos doesn’t want to have anything to do with Sweden. Giorgos doesn’t want to go to the Swedish school, he doesn’t want to do anything ‘cause he is Greek and he isn’t going to move to Sweden and live there, so there is no reason. [...]. I think that he, he has never said anything but as I understand it, it’s a little bit like if I were Greek then it would be so much nicer for him. ‘Cause then he wouldn’t have to explain so much perhaps.

*To explain to you or to others?*

- No, explain to others that he has a mother perhaps who is not Greek like all the others and that we differ a little bit from ordinary Greek families. We are not the ordinary Greek family, guess that he wants to be quite ordinary if you put it like that.

(Connotations of gender through their names: Anna and Giorgos. Greece is a patriarchal society) Like her mother, Anna states how their way of living differ from Greek peers and that they also come to know more things as they are growing up with two cultures. This feeling of difference can be related to the dichotomy between a non-ethnic 'us' and ethnic 'others', which is central in the fields of ethnicity and nationalism (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996).

*Men det du säger att ni har ett annat liv, hur visar det sig?*

- Hur ska jag säga det, av sakerna vi gör varje dag. Att många barn här i Grekland dom har aldrig rest med flygplan och så, allt sånt där och vi är mer av utlands, vi vet mer saker. Med det sättet många saker i skolan vi barnen är mer bättre kan man säga, vi vet mer saker i det.

*Är det några fler saker som du säger att ni lever ett annat liv än det här att ni vet mer saker, ni har varit ute och rest?*

- Vet inte annat, kan inte tänka annat. Men det roliga är att i år när vi, vad heter det, i en mening kan man ju säga, vi kan prata två språk tillsammans.

In the interview with Anna, the difference between her and Giorgos was also discussed: She enjoyed taking Swedish lessons and would like to live in Sweden in contrast to her brother, who perceived himself as Greek:

- I've always almost hated, you can say, Greece and I've always wanted to live in Sweden, I'm also more Swedish you can say in how I live, what I do and all that, what I think, all those things, everyone thinks that I'm more Swedish and I also think that.

*In what do they then say, that you are more Swedish?*

- Don't know exactly, I know that I really want to go to Sweden, I enjoy talking Swedish, and I love the Swedish school. Giorgos doesn't like anything of that; he doesn't want to have anything to do with Sweden.

[...]

*But what you're saying about friends, is it that your mother is Swedish and your father is from Greece, is it important to meet other friends who also have a Swedish mother?*

- Yes, there one is almost, have such things to say, but if you live, if you only have a friend who is Greek then he will say "how do you live", "how do you manage everything" and things like that. It is another way of living.

Thus, the feeling of being different in Greek school made the attendance of the Swedish school and joining various activities at the Scandinavian church important; also for the mothers. The Scandinavian church was not merely a religious place but also (and most importantly) a meeting point for social activities both for the Swedish women and their children. It is a place where the mothers went with their children on special holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Midsummer Eve. Lena also meets other Swedish mothers when her children attend the Swedish school in Athens. The mothers then take the opportunity to meet at a coffee place, Lena says:

- Ja, om man hör hört dittan och dattan och allting sådant och så diskuterar man Sverige och hur det var när man var där förra gången och så vidare och så jämför man och så vidare och det blir ju mycket liksom dom

vet inte hur bra dom har det i Sverige och ändå så hör man den där ständiga klagolåten när man kommer dit upp.

Compared to the other mothers who participated in the study Lena lived in the suburb of Athens and did not often run into other Swedes. Besides the Scandinavian church and the school, watching Swedish satellite television became of great importance to Lena, where she could get the latest social and political news from Sweden.

*But you still feel that it is important to keep up with what is going on, that is, what's going on in Sweden by watching God morgon Sverige (Good morning Sweden), for instance?*

- Yes, and they're showing, of course I find it amusing and fun, because there are, that is to say, they are discussing a lot of different topics that are entertaining and that sort of keep you up-to-date.

*What do you find especially amusing to keep up-to-date with?*

- Everything. General things, I might not be as interested in sports and things like that when they're discussing that. But other topics, mostly things that are currently happening in the society, sort of, yeah, maybe some fashion stuff, I am not talking about clothes here, of course, they could be discussing clothes, but also a lot about design and that's what I find amusing. And yeah... a lot of things, they discuss a lot of different things that are, that are just happening and are of immediate interest. Like these killings and quite a lot of things like that, and yes, even if I don't do it quite as often, but of course I still sit here and watch it and listen to it, but maybe to more general things then.

Research has shown that *transnational satellite television* has a central role for people living in diaspora (Aksoy & Robins, 2003; Carø Christiansen, 2004). It has become a means to have a synchronised contact with everyday life and events in one's homeland and thereby offering new ways of managing separation and distance. The Swedish channel *SVT Europa*<sup>2</sup> can be said to exemplify a diasporic medium. The Swedish satellite television may also get an additional value to Lena as she did not visit Sweden on a regular basis anymore as her parents had died.

Lena did though have much contact with her sister and some best friends in Sweden; mainly through the phone. Lena had been longing for the channel for quite some time for her own interest in Sweden but also so that her children could watch Swedish programmes. But nor Anna or Giorgos had shown any interest in watching Swedish television and as for Anna she preferred to watch dubbed Spanish/Mexican soaps and *The Charmed*. This is a disappointment to Lena who prefers much more Swedish programmes for children:

*För det är ju fler som har nämnt det, dom jämför svenska och grekiska program, och det kan ibland då vara barnprogram, tycker du att där är någon skillnad?*

- Ohh, grekiska barnprogram är nästan bara tecknade serier ju. Jag tycker det är mycket våld och det är, jag tycker inte om dom, och dom här fruktansvärda rösterna, det skär i mig, det gör ont i mig, ahh när man hör att dom sätter på detta på lördag och söndag så säger jag ohhhaj aj.

*Du tycker att det är mer våldsamma program?*

- Ja, det är det. Definitivt, definitivt, och jag tycker liksom inte, i Sverige har man mycket mer program för barn med människor i.

*Här är det mer tecknat?*

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<sup>2</sup> The public service satellite channel SVT Europa (Europe) broadcasts live Swedish produced programmes (news, children's programmes, debate programmes, documentaries etc.). Swedish teletext is also accessible.

- Ja, det är det jag tycker det är viktigaste liksom så att det ska vara mer jordnära, det är så mycket fantasier, jaah det där våldet och allting sånt här i tecknade serier. Tycker inte om det.

Besides *SVT Europa* Lena read both local (from her hometown) and national newspapers on the internet and read Swedish books. When Lena watches any of the Greek television channels is mainly a film, documentary and some news.

While Anna talks much about her great interest in Sweden, of how she feels more Swedish compared to her brother this is hardly reflected in her media use. She might read a book in Swedish even if it is much more difficult compared to a book in Greek but still her media use is seldom Swedish. When asked whether she tries to keep updated on what is happening in Sweden Anna immediately replies: “*No, I don't live there, it's nothing that I care about*”. However, she has great interest in knowing about her mother's life in Sweden “*How she lived, her friends, when she had an accident with the bicycle*”. When Anna was younger their mother had put effort in reading Swedish books to them as a way to learn the language. She had also swapped videotapes with classical Swedish movies like *Ronja Rövardotter* by Astrid Lindgren with other mothers.

Today, when being a teenager Anna had gained a great interest in *Harry Potter*. Besides having read all the books she was a member of a special *Harry Potter* forum, where she was chatting with other fans in Greece about, for instance, favourite characters in the books. The members also tipped each other about various sites about *Harry Potter*. Due to her interest in *Harry Potter* she had also started to write her own stories which she published on this forum and she got feedback from other members. Internet is also much used for e-mail, especially to her best friend who has moved to England. The participating children had taken photos of their favourite things, places etc and one of the photos that Anna had taken was of a metal box. She says “*Ja. Min favoritland är England så där inne plockar jag saker för England och såna där saker*”. Her best friend had made her interested in England and Anna would like to visit the country one day. She was also determined to attend upper secondary school education (3 years) in Sweden, which she later did.

## Positioning talk: the importance of generation as an intersectional category

The aim of this paper has been to focus on how stages in life and the discursive positions two mothers and their daughters take in a story line are related to identity formations in the process of daily life, migration and “getting access” to a new culture and what role media has in this process. In other words, what type of positions could be seen in their talks and within what specific discursive practice did they position themselves or were positioned by others.

We have in the two projects focused on families with migrant background and positioned our informants into a discourse about citizenship, in the sense that we have initiated a discussion that to some extent circulates around the issue of how to get access to Swedish society and how to learn the Swedish language (however not only, other issues were discussed as well). In other words, an agenda is set by us, the researchers. But we also have to say that this agenda was perceived as natural among the informants and was often brought up by them selves. Thus, the informants’ stories were, for example, partly constructed by how an informant positions him- or herself in relation to the interviewer/researcher with a Swedish background and the interview context. There were, for example, occasions when the discourse ‘we and them’ were evident in the talks and where the interviewer were labelled as ‘you Swedes’. That happened, for example, in the story of Samar. It is without doubt that that just by starting an interview with the question “Tell me how you ended up in Sweden/Greece” the mothers were immediately being positioned as the other and can be said to exemplify a first order positioning (Davies and Harré, 1999).

Immigration often leads to a career shift where the migrant has to step down from the professional ladder (Berger, 2004). Compared to Lena, Samar puts strong focus in her storyline on how she tried to get into the society where they live and emphasized her aspirations of a professional career, which is in line of the larger discourse of being a financially independent woman and her own identity as a hard working and highly educated women in Syria. Within this discursive practice, it is natural that Samar was occupied with her struggle to find a professional platform in Sweden but also an occupation about what she has lost by moving to Sweden. She had given up a career and a life in prosperity and had now made an attempt to start another life where she struggled and negotiated between the positions of being a working woman and mother with three children. The feeling of being trapped in the role of being a mother and trying to become a professional as well is a situation that is common to women of today, in general. Taking the position as a working woman had also implications on her media use; trying to learn the language by using Swedish media, studying various internet based courses. But she also positioned herself as a fighter, not willing to give up her aspirations of finding a new identity as a teacher. She took courses on the university level and she had acquired a job that she was satisfied with. Recognition was not obvious to her and she had to work for that.

Lena positioned herself in her talk as a housewife and did not bother very much about the fact that she was not working and her gaze was mainly directed towards the private

sphere and the children compared to Samar who continuously in her story tried to find a balance with her job aspirations and the expectations that follow when becoming a wife and mother. Gaining recognition from others was much more crucial in Samar's talk and she mentions how especially one colleague at her work became her mentor and inspired her of not giving up job aspirations. Lena's husband, on the other hand, had a well paid job and could financially support the family. Lena also positioned herself in a different social and cultural context, i.e. the Greek patriarchal society, in which being a housewife is more common compared to, for example, in Sweden. It goes without saying if it was a deliberate or forced position i.e. expectations from the Greek society and family that a good mother stays home with her children at least the first years.

One main feature of the mothers' experience of migration is the loss of language. "[...] the way of framing ideas, thinking about a belief system, mastering a means of making meaning, communication and self-expression, spelling and pronunciation of words, and knowledge of idioms and colloquialisms." (Berger, 2004: 6). Learning a new language becomes a prerequisite for knowing a culture, of knowing speech-acts within specific discursive practices. Relating to the work of Harré and Davies (1990, 1999) a person must have an available repertoire in order to be able to navigation between various discourses and thereby position oneself within these or merely by positioned by others. But depending on the position taken by the mothers i.e. as a working woman or housewife, the issue of learning a new language was handled and talked about differently. In Samar's talk struggling with language and of "getting in" the Swedish society were of main concern, especially due to her attempt to work as a teacher. For both Samar and Lena knowing English had helped them but while Samar mainly spoke Swedish and Arabic, Lena still spoke English with her husband. Lena was also by both her husband and son positioned as "the other" in terms of difficulties in the Greek language. While Lena was of the opinion that her Greek language skills develop as her children grow older; where she is then "forced" to deal with things outside the home, Samar mentions the difficulties and frustration of not being part of Swedish society while being on maternity leave. Becoming more isolated due to lack of friends and of not being able to meet colleagues at the job. In this context, using Swedish media becomes important to Samar: of not forgetting the language and being updated on things. While Lena talks about how having children made it more easier for her to be recognized, Samar experienced the opposite feeling. This in turn might be the result of how they positioned themselves in their talk – as a working woman or housewife.

As for the issue of language the situation was almost reverse for the children. They had to struggle with maintaining and mastering the parents' mother languages. Although Adela expressed some worries about her Arabic (had e.g. problems to understand what was said on national Arabic TV), it did not appear as a serious obstacle and her Swedish was fluent. While Anna preferred Greek she had no problem of speaking or reading Swedish. In their mothers' talk we can also see how they positioned themselves as "something between". A positioning they had not made intentionally but was rather forced to take as they spent much time away from the homeland (which is not the same country they once left) and they would never feel 100% at home in the new country. Taking the position as being "the other" had also implications on their media use – transnational television

played a central role for the mothers and of feeling connected to the homeland. For Lena, her viewing of Swedish satellite channel was also related to her position of being a housewife and living in the suburb; resulting in that she did not have much contacts with other Swedish women in Athens. Both mothers also used internet for keeping updated on things in the homeland and of using it for one's personal network with friends and family abroad. As for media practices, the daughters discussed it mainly from the position of belonging to a global youth audience (using international popular culture) but while Anna focused on the local or Greek context, Adela combined local and transnational internet practices when she talked and chatted to friends and relatives in Arabic.

The daughters were in a different stage of life and focused on friends and youth culture but we can see in their talks how they are positioned by themselves but also by others as being "something different" in terms of bilingual skills, way of living etc but still they were involved in a process of integration, mainly through participation in school and various leisure activities. In another analysis (2010), we have stressed that young people search for other young people on a local level, who shared her double bonding or hybrid identities. One crucial "tool" for this bonding was to communicate in one's mother tongue language, which in this case can particularly be seen in Anna's positioning herself as a Swede. Language and ethnic origin become a guarantee for security and a feeling of solidarity, and thereby constituting a platform for young people's negotiations of their identity. While Anna positions herself as Swede, something she is proud of, Adela becomes rather confused and uncomfortable with when people around her want to position her as Syrian or Iraqi.

The cases discussed in this paper touch upon several aspects that are vital in the debate on citizenship and participation. In an increasingly transnational world, with growing mobility and global media, some researchers have criticized the distinction of 'here and there': "Fixed binary orientations and identities, which refer to categories like 'here' and 'there' are far too one-dimensional", has been claimed by Moser and Hermann (2008:76). But our findings clearly show that it would be a mistake to totally dismiss the 'here-there' dichotomy. The two chosen cases also show how each family has their own story to tell and that an ambivalence relation is seen to 'here and there' and various positions are taken within these. While Sweden may be perceived as one's home; being geared towards participation in Swedish society as far as one's rational selves were concerned. Emotionally, however, these women may have their hearts in their parents' homeland, especially in terms of bonds of friendship and kinship. Parallels can here be drawn to the concept of 'fragmented citizenship' (Wiener, 1997); acknowledging the potential distinction between the notion of belonging and the more legal aspect of nationality. Several issues raised by the women are of relevance in the so called 'cultural turn' of civic agency and of understanding what has come to be called cultural citizenship (Dahlgren, 2003). A civic culture in which a minimal sense of belonging to the same social and political entities is seen, which we would say entail a person's recognition by others. Furthermore, to be able to communicate and to gain knowledge and understand current affairs in society is fundamental for any democracy and Dahlgren talks about the necessity of a linguistic and cultural proximity.

Migrant youngsters are aware of their different position (as seen in Adela's and Anna's talk) in society, which is why they strive towards a change and 'getting away'. This is

manifested, for example, in their high ambitions for the future or in their thoughts about moving to another country to accomplish their life goals; which might indicate a transnational citizen life in future. Similar results have also been observed in previous research with migrant children in this age group, which is in a transitional period from childhood to adulthood (cf. Passani and Rydin, 2004). Samar and Lena, on the other hand, took for granted that the new country was the final place to stay. Motherhood, they were raising their children, had changed their direction of professional career completely, from an engineer towards the role as a teacher in primary school, and from a preschool teacher to housewife.

A human being is situated in a discursive formation of expectations, which means that they take certain subject positions in various social and cultural settings and in stages of life. It was apparent that the role as citizen is probably seen differently depending on an individual's special migrant situation and the various positions taken in daily life. To be first generation versus second generation makes a big difference and your stage in life, such as being a teenager versus being a mother also makes a difference. In other words, behind the category of "migrant women", we can find quite dramatic variations in how life appears. In this paper we have used positioning as a theoretical framework and as a means to move beyond the risk of essentialism and instead looking at unique perspectives that is these women's individual life stories in terms of migration and daily life and their media practices.

## Notes

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