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IMAGINING MIGRANTS
Racializing Categorizations and Formations of "Beginners"

ABSTRACT

Betül Uzun: Imagining Migrants: Racializing Categorizations and Formations of
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This study investigates racializing categorizations in relation to the field of migration. The main purpose of this study is to scrutinize the prevailing representational forms of migrant Others. In an attempt to reveal the underlying assumptions in ordering social differentiation, racialization is employed as one of the analytical concepts in this study. By taking a social constructionist point of view, I examine the creation of racial categories as a political project which is rooted in colonialism and persists in exclusionary practices.

Locating this study within discussions of new racism, culturalist explanations in the construction of difference are examined in order to reveal how racialization is maintained through inferiorization of culture and naturalization of difference.

The connection between racialization and migration reveals itself in the immigration policies. The discursive functioning of "immigrant integration" and "social cohesion" are linked to the way states identify a set of core values to characterize their uniqueness and the modes of belonging vis-à-vis to be integrated outsiders.

The empirical part examines racial formations within the field of immigrant integration and asylum reception in Finland. Racial formations of assumed-to-be Muslim asylum-seekers are discussed in relation to the nation-state paradigm and the Orientalist archive of knowledge. The empirical investigation pays attention to the particular socio-historical context in Finland, which is manifested at the intersections of Finnish exceptionalism, welfare state tradition and achievements of gender equality. The research data generated for this study include 11 interviews and the video set introduced by the Finnish Immigration Service, namely *Beginner's guide to Finland Part 1* and *Part 2.*

Keywords: coloniality, migration, new racism, racialization, Orientalism

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin Originality Check service.

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> Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imagining (Said, 1994, p. 7)

1   Introduction

When I visited the Tampere office of Finnish Immigration Service for the first time in 2018, a banner on the office wall caught my attention: "In Finland, women talk for themselves." At the beginning, I could not make sense of it, I was standing there, waiting for my appointment to manage my residence permit, as a woman handling her own matter by herself. I was confused because I could not figure out if that statement was targeted at me. If not me, then whom? I do think women everywhere in the world handle their own matters, not only in Finland. I began to think what the message was. Why did they think this is unique for women in Finland? It was the very first moment leading me to a realization that there are certain imageries governing our position in society. In Finland, I was one of non-European migrant women, which means that I too became a target of the statement due to my assumed lack of agency, and thus in need of being reminded, by the official authorities no less, that I have a voice of my own.

A closer look into the statement motivated me to study this topic in order to reveal the underlying assumptions constructing social categories. It was clear that the statement was informed by the stereotypical image of a non-European migrant woman as uneducated and constrained to the domestic sphere, therefore, lacking the intellectual and social ability to interact with authorities. As it was explained on the Immigration Service's website, that banner was part of a larger campaign *the 100 Acts for Gender Equality*, "to encourage women and girls to independently take care of their own permit matters with the authorities" since "the man of the family often handles the matters of the entire family, female family members included." The campaign at the same time is claimed to "highlight the fact that in Finland, women and men are equal. Women are allowed and even expected to talk for themselves" (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017).

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[1] In reference to *Beginner's guide to Finland*

To be allowed, in other words, to be given permission to talk as articulated by the campaign made me think about different conceptualizations of gender equality. In my understanding, there is a hierarchical positioning between subjects who are being-allowed and who are granting allowance, thus, what this hierarchy implies cannot be considered as equality in any terms. Nevertheless, this study does not only concentrate on limitations of "women-friendly" policies and practices as being promoted by the state, such as the campaign *the 100 Acts for Gender Equality*. States' efforts to undermine gender-based hierarchies through a range of policies and practices have been discussed within the framework of "state feminism" (Keskinen, Tuori, Irni and Mulinari, 2009). Moreover, the limited scope of state-feminism in relation to recognizing diversity, as well as the heteronormative perspective it promotes have been criticized (Keskinen et al., 2009). In this study, I am interested in the epistemic sources informing categories of gender, race and ethnicity, and the hierarchical social positions which are constructed on the basis of these categories. Therefore, the subsequent question I need to ask is *where these assumptions come from*. Assumptions lying at the very core of the distinction made between women in Finland and non-European migrant women. In search for answers I ought to keep in mind the teachings of feminist theories as well as intersectionality in order to reveal multilayered identities and social positions based on ethnicity, racialization, social class, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability and so on. In other words, gender is one of the analytical categories along with others in critical examination of the intersecting hierarchies. It is especially important in a context where state feminism could conceal other forms of inequalities (Keskinen, 2013).

My starting point is that the official gender equality discourse operates through two connected ways: consolidation of the certain image of that nation (against the imagined Others) on the one hand, and institutional practices othering group of individuals on the other hand. Since my case addresses categorical formations in Finland, the Others I refer are those who are defined as non-Western "third-country nationals"[2]. It might be necessary to elaborate more in depth here what I attempt to underline by non-Western and Western. Following Walia (2013) the term West is used in this study not only to refer to the geographic site of the global North, but also to refer to the Western political, economic, and social formations, as well as the ideologies categorizing and ranking human bodies.

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[2] In the EU context, the concept is employed to address who is not a citizen of the European Union

In the literature, it has been discussed that the notion of gender equality plays an essential role "for the creation of self-images as modern, progressive and advanced nations through a juxtaposition to migrant 'others' projected to the past and stagnation" (Keskinen, 2013, p. 226). What this binary, gendered narrative of the Others reveals in its most basic sense is that the West being imagined as gender equal sets the standard to categorize the non-Western migrant Others. "Muslim women are often constructed as the prototype of migrant women, perceived as miserable victims par excellence, handicapped by their culture of origin" (Lutz, 1997, p. 96). Hierarchies within these "cultural groups" are ideological constructions operating along the lines of gender, social class, racialization, ethnicity and religion.

Considering human mobilities, it has been argued that migrants navigate across and negotiate multilayered intersecting identities (Phillips, 2007), therefore, in order to scrutinize the prevailing representational forms with regard to non-Western bodies, this study sees culture as emergent and changing rather than fixed, and challenges interpretations of culture as an absolute and unchangeable category. Moreover, decolonial and feminist critique of coloniality of power is helpful in revealing the hegemonic Eurocentric system of knowledge promoting hierarchical racial structures by which migrants are constructed as cultural, ethnic and religious Others. In addition, those theoretical lenses can enable us to see "the ways in which the continued racializing refrain that immigrants have the wrong culture and lack 'gender equality' is a repetition of patterns that rendered women in the (former) colonies eternal victims, as well as the notion that nationhood gets inscribed on/through discourses regarding women's bodies" (Korteweg, 2017, p. 435). In this sense, applying the "coloniality of power" perspective to human mobilities sensitizes us to see that "migrants arrive in a space of power relations that is already informed and constituted by coloniality" (Grosfoguel, Oso, and Christou, 2015, p. 641).

This study interrogates the links between racialization and migration. Racialization is employed as one of the analytical concepts in this study to underline the social processes shaping people's conceptions of race, and the meanings they attach to it. By taking a social constructionist point of view, I examine creation of racial categories as a political project which is rooted in colonialism (Korteweg, 2017; Väyrynen, 2019) and persists in exclusionary practices grounded in culturally based explanations of human difference, thus, assumed incompatibility of diverse groups of people (Balibar, 1991; Lentin 2005). Culturalist formulations that are based on modernist and absolutist

views of culture "conceptualize culture as being composed of absolute, fixed, observable, and immutable attributes" (Pon, 2009, p. 62). Reading culturalist formulations pertaining to colonial discourse, the concept of "fixity" emerges as the central indication of cultural, historical and racial difference in the ideological construction of otherness (Bhabha, 2004). Therefore, culturalist formulations while emphasizing distinction and sustaining the idea that people can be categorized into different cultural groups, tend to perpetuate essentialism and treats cultural groups as internally homogeneous and fixed. Lentin explains that "culture" has become alternative to "race" to describe human differences, consequently, culturalist responses to racism has become prominent in the 1980s and 1990s, yet, "depoliticize anti-racist discourses and obscure the link between 'race' and 'state'" (2005, p. 383). Accordingly, the connection between racialization and migration reveals itself in the immigration policies as well as integration discourse that replaces the politics of race and racialization with the question of community and its cohesion through the problematized (in)adaptability of the migrant Others into host societies. As Korteweg puts, "the notion of immigrant integration produces gendered and racialized non-belonging" (2017, p. 428). Erel, Murji, and Nahaboo (2016) suggest that racialization generates various categories of migrants that are differentially positioned and stratified. Therefore, by addressing Europe's migration remiges as articulating and being articulated by racialization and coloniality (Erel et al., 2016), this study concerns racialization of a particular group of migrants as asylum seekers from predominantly Muslim majority countries.

I employ "migrant" and "migration" as umbrella terms in order to refer to human mobility in general. In doing so, my primary aim is to keep the main focus on the processes of racialization which constructs the particular figure of migrant, as well as the categories and lines defining "otherness". I use the terms "asylum-seeker" and "refugee" when the different legal and political meanings of the terms need to be evoked. My intention is to avoid contributing to the dichotomy present in the popular understandings of the distinction between asylum seekers and migrants as worthy of humanization and unworthy invaders/economic opportunists for the latter. Moreover, in the literature there has been a growing understanding that traditional distinctions of "forced" and "voluntary" or "political" and "economic" migrations are no longer valid to capture overlapping and complex dynamics at play in shaping contemporary nature of human mobilities (Castles, 2007; Walia, 2013; Westra, Juss, and Scovazzi, 2015).

Castles (2007) explains, on the one hand, asylum-migration nexus can be found in the discourses of northern policy makers, the media and thus public opinion, to refer to allegedly false asylum claims by migrants who are indeed economic opportunity seekers. Thus, as a discourse, asylum-migration nexus legitimates border control and deportations, and functions as a mechanism of knowledge-power in Foucault's sense, serving certain economic, political and ideological objectives, through legal definitions of the categories of migration and assigning people to these categories (Castles, 2007). On the other hand, asylum-migration nexus is a concept articulated in critical political economy of migration, in order to highlight the blurring of the distinction between economic and forced migration and underline "many south-north migrants have mixed motivations to seek both protection and better livelihood, therefore, they don't fit the Eurocentric categories of refugee regime" (Castles, 2007, p. 39). Similarly, Westra et al., (2015) discuss that the Geneva Convention and its Protocol is inadequate to address the volume and the variety of causes of flight. As Dahlvik (2018, p. 9) has noted: "A critical gap can be observed between the importance of asylum as a means of protection for refugees when it was established more than six decades ago and the role of the concept today as an instrument allowing entry to a territory for a selected few, thereby functioning as a tool for collective exclusion."

In this study, the term "migration" is employed to replace "immigration", unless referring to an immigration policy. Following De Genova (2002), this strategy enables to question and problematize the unilinear understanding imposed by the categories generated from the standpoint of the migrant-receiving nation-state.

In the present study, I use two videos introduced by the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri), namely *Beginner's guide to Finland Part 1*[3] and *Part 2*[4], as the illustrative examples of the prevailing representational forms concerning the figure of Muslim (im)migrant from Arabic and/or Dari speaking countries[5]. In its YouTube channel Migri describes the videos as "offering information about Finnish culture, customs, legislation, rules, and rights in Finland." I chose these videos due to their main narrative regarding (in)adaptability of the migrant other. The main research questions are as follows:

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[3] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lbea86mZpLA
[4] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbPJmLDelH0
[5] The videos can be found in the Dari, Arabic and English languages.

RQ-1: How is Finnish society represented by the Finnish Immigration Authorities in the informational material vis-à-vis non-Finnish societies?

> SQ1: How is the Finnish way of life represented in the visual text? What are the unique characteristics attributed to Finnishness in relation to newcomers' perceived lack?
>
> SQ2: What kind of figure of asylum-seeker is produced through these texts? How is the Other figured to be different from the normative position? On what grounds is the presence of asylum-seekers is problematized?

RQ-2: How do migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees interpret the informational material presented to them by the Finnish Migration Authorities?

> SQ3: How do participants interpret the visual text? Do they evoke dominant or opposed interpretations?
>
> SQ4: How do participants relate the themes and discourses found in the data to their everyday life experiences?

I aim to approach the first research question by analyzing the main narratives and modes of representations in the above-mentioned video set. I scrutinize the prevailing representational forms perpetuating racialized constructions which are present in the analyzed video material. The main argument is built upon the assumption that immigration control, thus, immigration bureaucracies and Migri as the corresponding institutional site, cannot be considered as independent of nation-building and state reproduction practices through "territorial articulation of governance and belonging" (Squire, 2009, p. 5).

> The Finnish Immigration Service is a decision-making organization in matters related to immigration, asylum, refugee status and citizenship and maintains the reception system. The agency implements the Finnish immigration policy and promotes controlled immigration, good administration and human and basic rights[6]

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[6] "From immigration to citizenship – building a strong and secure Finland" https://migri.fi/en/about-the-finnish-immigration-service

The mechanisms of immigration control and their role in continuous processes of nation-building is manifested in immigration policies and integration practices which reflect the perceptions of national interests and national identities (Dahlvik, 2018). At the same time, their role in shaping and legitimizing systems of categorization and "bureaucratic labelling" (Zetter, 1991) cannot be ignored. Therefore, my understanding is that the video set by Migri can be seen as the manifestation of an ideological categorization and legitimization of particular description of asylum seekers, say, as the "beginner".

The second research question will be dealt with by the in-depth interviews with individuals who fits the description of the target audience for the video set. The video set has been introduced in Arabic, Dari and English languages, 2016. Correspondingly, for the period from 2015 to 2019, the largest group of individuals applying for asylum have been respectively citizens of Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria (Finnish Immigration Service, 2019). This study attempts to understand how interviewees make sense of the representations and how they negotiate these representations in everyday life in society, since racialized practices are continually constructed in everyday life, in addition to the macro structures informing racial categories.

The remainder of the thesis is organized in the following fashion. In the next chapter I will present the theoretical framework guiding the study. In what follows, the background chapter will contextualize the situation in Finland. In chapter four, I will detail the methodology. In chapter five, I will present the findings in reflection on the theoretical framework.

2   Theoretical Framework

There can be found a number of sociological approaches to conceptualize the nuances and complexities of boundary-making, belonging and othering. This section of the study concentrates on theoretical discussions concerning the formation of imagined collectivities with the focus on exclusionary practices. In their exploration, I draw on poststructuralism, feminist and critical race theories. Throughout the section, the relevant arguments from the literature are put together in order to build an overview of the imaginative geographies and the hegemonic locus of colonial mode of thinking as the epistemic sources of racial categorizations manifested in contemporary culturalist formulations. In what follows, how the culturalist formulations is rationalized by and translated into immigration policies and integration practices is discussed. This section is heavily built upon the theories of racialization in order to make sense of the interrelated and overlapping social and political processes in historical continuum that labels certain group of individuals as migrants and making them into racialized Others. The rationale behind my theoretical choice is to scrutinize formations of national/ethnic/cultural/racial belongings as the result of social processes, instead of considering them pre-given entities as starting point for my study. Therefore, a critical examination of boundary-making can cast light upon how "difference" is socially organized and (re)produced.

2.1   Boundaries of Belonging in Their Formation

Following Anthias and Yuval-Davis (2005), I believe a relevant starting point for a critical exploration of racial categories would be "the social ontology of collectivity and belongingness". As they note (ibid., p. 2):

> Historically, ethnic, national or racial categories have been formed in various ways, through conquests, colonization and immigration, and of course the modern variants of these categories under the sway of capitalism and imperialism as well as their most prominent political form, that of the liberal democratic state.

"Imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983/2006) are created and reproduced through rituals and "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm, 1983/2012) that construct a sense of commonality and mythical unity which is perceived to be the core of ethnic and national collectivities. Imagined communities are ideologically reproduced through shared cultural resources and boundary formation relational to other groups: "ethnic positioning provides individuals with a mode of interpreting the world,

based on shared cultural resources and a shared collective positioning vis-à-vis other groups, often within a structure of dominance and contestation" (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 2005, p. 4). Group belonging does not always require "the existence of the conscious ethnic identity," it could be "constructed outside the group, by the material conditions it faces, and by its social representation by other groups, or by the state" (ibid., p. 6).

As David Theo Goldberg (2002, p. 6) explores in his book *The Racial State*, modern states' role in racial definition, management and exclusion actualizes itself through "reproduction of national identity, the national population, labor and security in and through the articulation of race, gender and class". In this co-articulation of race and modern state, race is constitutive to the emergence, development and transformations of the latter, "modern states are racial in their modernity, and modern in their racial quality, their raciality" (ibid., p. 7). Modern states in their national articulation established themselves as being culturally and racially homogenous, and this homogeneity - "heterogeneity in denial"- is maintained throughout modernity and "reproduced through repression, occlusion and erasure, restriction and denial, delimitation and domination" (ibid., p. 33). Moreover, racializing colonial project is predicated on "the extension of the rule of self-promoted rationality", by which "modern states expand their scope of authority, legitimacy, power, wealth and control not only over their citizens -in the name of freedom, autonomy, self-determination and self-direction- but also over those racially considered incapable or not yet capable of self-rule. The colonial project is necessarily racially configured, accordingly an extension of modern state definition" (ibid., pp. 50-51). Consequently, a structure of knowledge had been developed by European nations to ensure ruling over colonial territories that created the notion of West (Bonilla-Silva, 2000).

2.2   Imaginative Geographies and the Orientalized Other

Edward Said's "imaginative geographies" (1978) could provide us with a relevant epistemological frame to address the formation of the particular Other, namely the Orient. Orientalism as a way of seeing and imagining postulates "a perception of a historically constructed, culturally dangerous, threatening, and violent Islam in Western consciousness" (Alghasi, 2019, p. 180).

Said (1978/2003) draws attention to mechanisms of power, knowledge and geography in constructing a certain view of the world, namely through the Orientalist discourse, by which the Orient (the East) has been imagined and produced politically, ideologically, scholarly, militarily

and scientifically *in* the West, *by* the West. As Said puts, Orientalism "is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and the Occident" by which the Orient emerges as a European invention, a point of reference to define the West as "its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (2003, p.2). According to Said (2003, p. 55), this imaginative geography through "dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" has intensified the collective notion of "us" Europeans as against all "those" non-Europeans.

Moreover, as Said has noted (2003, p. 72):

> … figures of speech associated with the Orient—its strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth. … They are all declarative and self-evident; the tense they employ is the timeless eternal; they convey an impression of repetition and strength; they are always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which is sometimes specified, sometimes not.

Reading this passage from Said's Orientalism through Bhabha's (2004) analysis of discursive strategies might reveal a deeper understanding of colonial discourse and ideological constructions of otherness. According to Bhabha (2004), paradoxical mode of representation and colonial stereotype heavily rely on ambivalence. Function of ambivalence as one of the most significant discursive strategy "ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures" (Bhabha, 2004, p. 95).

Additionally, Said explains (2003, p. 72):

> … anyone employing orientalism, which is the habit for dealing with questions, objects, qualities and regions deemed Oriental, will designate, name, point to, fix, what he is talking or thinking about with a word or phrase, which then is considered either to have acquired, or more simply to be, reality.

Power is exercised in these practices of naming, defining and establishment of essentialized knowledge through denial of autonomy of those who are named. As Bhabha (2004, p. 101) puts, "colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible."

The dichotomous depictions of Occident and Orient, characterizes the former with assumed masculine traits such as civilized, human, progressive, rational and superior, whereas attributes the femininity and the notions of uncivilized, sub-human, backward, irrational, and inferior to the latter, therefore, establishes and legitimizes the European colonization and control over the Orient (Boatcă, 2013).

Moreover, decolonial theories emphasize that emergence of Western representations of cultural difference corresponds the era of 15th and 16th centuries that Western European colonial expansion in the Americas took place (Boatcă, 2015; Mignolo, 2012). The consequent emergence of Occidentalism had been the precondition of Orientalism, as "a discourse *from* and *about* the West that sets the stage for discourses about the West's Other(s)" (Boatcă, 2015, p. 82). Similarly, Mignolo explains (2012, p. 13):

> If racism is the matrix that permeates every domain of the imaginary of the modern/colonial world system, "Occidentalism" is the overarching metaphor around which colonial differences have been articulated and rearticulated through the changing hands in the history of capitalism … and the changing ideologies motivated by imperial conflicts.

Following Mignolo (2007) "colonial matrix of power" is the key in understanding of contemporary formations of racism embedded in legacies of colonialism. As Maldonado-Torres (2007, p. 243) indicates "coloniality survives colonialism", on the one hand "colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation which makes such nation an empire", on the other hand coloniality "refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration." Then, the coloniality of power sustains on the basis of Eurocentric system of knowledge and knowledge production, through control of formation of subjectivity, culture and epistemology in silencing or demoting other epistemologies to a primitive, pre-modern past, traditional, or a Muslim evil, at the same time reconstructing a universal Western particularism (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2007).

As a central component of Orientalism and coloniality in general, the role of ideology in constitution of Other, on the one hand, is to (re)articulate Occidentalism, on the other hand, to deny Other's human agency and resistance (Young, 2000). What I attempt to discuss in this study

is the perpetuity and persistence of colonial logic in contemporary modes of knowledge-production and dissemination of this logic through discursive apparatus as common sense knowledge in our everyday lives via scholarly texts, media texts, political speech, integration practices and so on. As Edward Said (2003) noted, Orientalism can be read initially as an intellectual endeavor to know, then to define Other, as if there were a coherent unified group of Other. Today, what we think we know about cultural and racial Others as a "common sense" is the normalized discourse of Orientalism which ignores localities and homogenize group of individuals through the very same logic informing our mode of thinking. For this reason, it appears crucial to look at constitution and reconstruction of Others, since the categories of "migrant", "migrant women" or "Muslim migrant" do not exist outside history. When I refer to "Muslim migrants" it is in a manner to evoke how they are imagined and stereotyped in Western public discourse and accordingly face exclusion, not because I presume a coherent group identity. These categories do not exist prior to their entry into social relations, application of these categories as homogenous and taken-for-granted ignores sociohistorical constructions and denies pluralities of different groups of individuals, and "ultimately robs them of their historical and political agency" (Mohanty, 2000, p. 316).

In short, I intend to discuss Orientalism and colonialism as discursive strategies entrenched in knowledge-power nexus, and to argue that the contemporary culturalist formulations and narratives regarding Others can be read as the extension of colonial reasoning. In the next section I will take a closer look at state as "racializing machine" (Garner, 2007, p. 72) via immigration control and mechanisms of exclusion.

2.3   Racialization and Migration, Boundary Maintenance

Harsha Walia in *Undoing Border Imperialism* (2013) conceptualizes "border imperialism" to depict the processes by which the precarities of displacement and migration, at the same time political, economic, cultural, and social dominance of the West are structurally created and perpetuated via neoliberal practices. Border imperialism, thus, interrogates the politics of borders as part of global systems of power and subjugation, with their roots in othering and colonization, and suggests that discursive and embodied borders not just spatially segregate us, but hierarchically position us.

Racialization, in terms of reproduction and maintenance of privileges and discriminations, can give hints how and why we are stratified in regard to our attempts for cross-border movements in certain contexts. While migration can be considered as a universal phenomenon, the ways it is perceived and constructed varies depending on historical and geographic contexts. Although, mobility has been a permanent feature of human history (Dahinden, 2016), the emergence of system of passport and related controls on cross-border-movements emphasizes "an essential aspect of the 'state-ness' of states", resulted from the gradual consolidation of state apparatuses, and states' acquisition of monopoly over the legitimate means of movement, consequently, enabled "the exclusion, surveillance, and containment of 'undesirable elements', whether these are of an ethnic, national, racial, economic, religious, ideological, or medical character" (Torpey, 2018, pp. 7-8).

The term race has been a controversial one to employ in a research, given that race as a biological phenomenon is a discredited pseudo-scientific idea that was conceived during the Enlightenment. Therefore, it requires some clarification why "race" has social significance, and racial categories remain critical analytical concepts in examination of power relations embedded in societal structures. Following critical race theories, race as an analytical category is vital especially during contemporary times which are declared as "post-racial" because what race means is determined by social relations, race and racial categories as products of social thought, "not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient" (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, p. 7). According to Garner (2007, p. 62), "racialization is based on the idea that the object of study should not be 'race' itself, but rather, the processes by which 'race' become salient." In this study, I employ racialization with a purpose to underline the social processes. Moreover, focusing on social processes can enable one to be attentive to social forces signifying racial meanings as well as the fluidity and contextuality of racial categorizations (Clair & Denis, 2015). Race and racial categories are subject to multiple determinations and cannot be treated as an independent variable, therefore, emphasizing the processes constructing racial meaning is important, since "racialization is an exercise of power in its own right" (Garner, 2007, p. 62).

This part of the study explores how racialization and migration are mutually constitutive. Racialization functions to create divisions between groups of individuals and denotes them as

being different in essential, natural and immutable terms, consequently, structures, normalizes and legitimizes exclusionary practices. In this process, class and gender are co-constitutive in structuring racial exclusion. Processes of securitization, criminalization and racialization come into force all together by which some migrant bodies are marked as undesirable, illegal, needed to be restricted, prohibited or deported. This reflects the very logic of immigration law and policies, by their very nature, and classificatory methods they employ to separate the desirable from the undesirable, the unproblematic from the problematic bodies. According to De Genova, "regime of migrant 'legality' and 'illegality' is predicated on the hegemony of immigration law and it is reified as already established, immutable and unquestionable, it functions to differentiate, categorize and rank between those who to be excluded and those to be included, thus, institutionalizes unequal politics of citizenship that is informed by "essentialist politics of difference" and "politics of nativism" (2013, pp. 1191-1192).

Racialization in this sense operates as "dialectical process of signification" (Miles and Brown, 2003, p. 101), in which "imagination of the Other is simultaneously imagination of Self" through production of set of contrasting "attributes that carry duality of evaluations, negative and positive" (ibid., 86). Yet, to understand racialization process, power relations is the key. Other is marked as different/deviant by and from the "unmarked" position. The figure of migrant as the racialized Other in Europe "comes to embody, albeit implicitly, a set of values that differ from those that signify whiteness", thus, expresses a set of anxieties including disorder and dissolution of boundaries (Baldwin, 2013, p. 1477). "Migrant is imagined to be a figure capable of destabilizing a set of values or, indeed, a presumed stable social order, upon which white power and privilege are sustained" (ibid., 1477). As De Genova (2013, p. 1192) notes:

> the specificities of European colonial nationalisms were always encompassed and subsumed within a larger racial project of global white power and prestige. Contemporary post-colonial reformulations of these nationalisms as anti-immigrant formations may seem rather more parochial, but are no less predicated on this legacy of racialized inequalities.

The processes of securitization and criminalization by constructing some migrants as posing threat, also legitimize and normalize further restrictive controls over asylum and immigration for protection of "national interests" (Lentin 2005; Squire, 2009). Following Faist's definition of securitization, it implies "a perception of an existent threat to the ability of a nationally bound

society to maintain and reproduce itself" (2006, p. 104). Then, the paranoia of "clash of civilizations"[7] became an easy one to evoke by securitization of migration discourse, by depicting cultural difference necessarily conflictual in a way eventually leading to social breakdown (Ibrahim, 2005).

Racialization, thus, is an adequate analytical tool to grasp the social processes by which migrants are constructed and stratified. Among many racialized Others, this study empirically concerns with the contemporary basis of racism and racialization of "newcomers", precisely, in the current political climate of the so-called migration "crisis"[8] in 2015, displacement following the recent conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. What this discourse of crisis reveals is how borders are also discursively reproduced as migrants challenge both their position as outsiders and the legitimacy of European exclusionary migration policies (Erel et al., 2016; Holzberg et al., 2018). Within the context of crisis discourse, the logic of (un)deservingness is reworked to distinguish racialized Others as some being worthy of humanization, some not. According to Holzberg et al. (2018), the figure of (un)deserving refugee is constructed on the basis of three main themes including economic productivity; state security; and gender relations and sexual violence, by which "people are framed as, respectively, the costly/useful; the destabilizing/assimilable; and the misogynist/victimized refugee" (p. 547). It is within this context that European anxieties regarding the place of racialized Others in public sphere, with the emphasis put on cultural and religious otherness, is incited, and that Europe's cultural and physical borders have been challenged in ways that any individual members of the EU cannot be considered to exist in isolation (Erel et al. 2016). I understand the current discourses of migration crisis, securitization and criminalization of asylum seekers as recent manifestations of racism, at the same time, legitimize racist stereotypes predicated on cultural difference. These discourses did not emerge in a vacuum, rather need to be considered in wider socio-historical context.

Moreover, it is crucial for a researcher to follow "Complex Migrations – Differential Racialization" nexus to be attentive to the multiple and co-existing stratifications come into play through racialization (Erel et al., 2016). This makes visible "the ways immigrants and settled communities emerge as uniquely racialized subjects through distinct, yet overlapping, hierarchies

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[7] Samuel P. Huntington's infamous book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996)

[8] Read EU crisis

of legal status, gender, culture, class and social space, facilitating politically discontinuous subject" (ibid., p. 1348).

It is also important to point out that it has not been always the case that migrants are deemed to be a problem which ought to be prevented, deterred and contained. On the contrary, for the post-WW II period, foreign labor was seen as a needed resource for the reconstruction of Western Europe and immigration until 1980s remained necessary for capitalist expansion (Fassin, 2011; Ibrahim, 2005). By saying this I do not claim that early migrants were safe from being racialized and xenophobic violence, neither depiction of migrants as cultural threat or as criminals is a new phenomenon, rather, the emphasis needed to put here is that within post-Cold War context "dangerous" mobilities came to be defined as the primary security threats to national territory, this includes refugees, organized crime, drugs-smuggling, terrorism and people trafficking as the "new" enemy in immediate aftermath of Cold War (Walters, 2004; Ibrahim, 2005). "Clash of civilizations" rhetoric has been later proliferated further following the terrorist attacks against the United States on 9/11. Following 9/11 and the continuing "war on terror" has given racism new legitimacy, along with criminalization of asylum seekers and other uninvited migrants, Arabs and/or Muslims in particular (Lentin, 2008). Drawing on Ibrahim (2005), we ought to take into consideration how cultural difference is reified as natural and essentialized categories in which migrant bodies can be inscribed, by which racist implications can be easily masked, yet affects those who are defined and stratified by them, concerning life choices, opportunities and resources. This helps to unravel how migration has become a security issue that some believe can lead to social breakdown.

To sum up, my approach to migration aims to unravel why this historical phenomenon has come to be understood as a social problem to be tackled. For this purpose, in my analysis I took the very logic of nation-state formation as the starting point. It is through the nation-state's monopoly of exercising power in terms of defining its territory as well as the classification systems in regard to who can be given access or be naturalized that migration turns out to be a phenomenon to be controlled and restricted. Thus, migrants find themselves in a position either to be excluded or integrated. As a result, migration often is seen as posing a threat to social cohesion and social body which is already defined by territorial belonging. Migration is a challenge to nation-state borders. In this sense, integration has also become a problematic. A "foreigner" always remains a foreigner.

For example, a person who has lived his whole life in the same country can still be considered a "second or third generation migrant" who is thought to belong to somewhere else. Regardless of their citizenship status, they are still not perceived as one of "us." In a context that national borders are legitimate, states enjoy freedom to enact arbitrary power to limit the freedom of human mobilities. Consequently, some bodies are racialized, criminalized, detained, deported or excluded. In the West exclusionary migration policies as well as the anxieties that migration evokes must be read in relation to colonial histories, the past and present of European legacy. All in all, it is the "border imperialism" causing situations for displacement and maintaining them (Walia, 2013). The following sections problematize and unravel the first, the discursive shift in racist ideologies as signifying incompatible cultural difference on the basis of normative constructions of culture and essentialized traits that are attributed to cultural/racial Others; the second, how this discursive shift informs "integration" practices.

2.4   New Racism and the Culturalist Formulations

> All knowledge, of whatever kind, proceeded to the ordering of its material by the establishment of differences and defined those differences by the establishment of an order; this was true for mathematics, true also for taxonomies (Foucault, 2005, p. 377)

New racism was conceptualized during 1980s. Balibar (1991) refers to it as racism of the era of "decolonization," of the migratory movements from old colonies. New racism reveals a discursive shift in racist articulations, following the discrediting of scientific racism in the aftermath of the 2nd World War. In the post-war context, racisms of modernity that was based upon genetic determinism and biological explanations of superior and inferior races has given a way to culturalist conceptualizations. Presumed superiority and inferiority is communicated and sustained through reference to culture, without explicitly referring to race, skin-color or phenotypic differences (Jiwani, 2011). As any sociological concept, new racism is a debated one. The newness of new racism/neo-racism has been questioned. These discussions nonetheless boil down to a persistent existence of racism; race is still relevant and central to how society is conceptualized. By referring to new racism in this study, I do not claim that new racism is opposed to and can fully be separated from, say, "traditional" racism. I do not ignore the historical continuity, rather my aim is to show how they overlap. I can say that my intention of referring to new racism is a tactical one to reveal a relative discursive shift by which racism is widely condemned yet persists. How

has it been possible to overtly claim to be non-racist and yet subtly remain racist? Despite all the convergences with traditional racism, why there has been a need to conceptualize new racism? Following Goldberg (2006, p. 337) one could argue that:

> Race refuses to remain silent because it isn't just a word. It is a set of conditions, shifting over time. Never just one thing, it is a way (or really ways) of thinking, a way(s) of living, a disposition.

According to Balibar (1991, p. 21), neo-racism centers upon the immigration, functions within a framework of racism without races: "It is a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, a racism which, at first sight, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions." Yet, framing race in cultural terms is not a new phenomenon. As Balibar (1991, p. 23) notes "racism without race is not revolutionary", racism has already been a culturalist racism by which bodily stigmata has always played a role as signs of deeper morality, intelligence, spiritual inheritance rather than mere biological heredity. Similarly, Lentin and Titley (2011, p. 69) argue that racism has always been theorized in connection with cultural and behavioral characteristics to differentiate human groups, "the historical attachment of these characteristics to real or imagined physical traits enables the belief that race is concerned with phenotypical difference alone, held to be the signifier of genetic variation par excellence."

Goldberg, (2000) reminds us that racial knowledge is informed by established scientific fields of modernity, particularly anthropology, natural history, and biology, its universality, authority and legitimacy come from its scientific character. So, racial knowledge has always had social anthropological elements in relation to the perceived behavioral and cultural characteristics of groups, one example can be given from early anthropological theories of criminology and Lombroso's theory of "born criminal"[9]. Nonetheless, cultural conception of race, or the culture as the marker of deviance, has become the most prevalently vocalized one since 1980s. By adopting modernist and absolutist views of culture while not utilizing a racial language, new racism can be argued to allow for racism to get expressed in a "sanitized" way.

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[9] Cesare Lombroso and his book *Criminal Man*, 1876. His theory is based on "criminal atavism" and suggests that criminals can be distinguished from non-criminals by multiple physical anomalies

Cultural racism has emerged from replacing "race" with other signifiers such as "culture" or "ethnicity" as a more politically neutral term (Lentin, 2005). "This is a language of racism that has learned to disavow the terms of 'race' in order to relegitimize racist practice" (Bhattacharyya, 2008, p. 97). Racialized hierarchies, thus, are maintained through postulating the existence of reified and incompatible cultures which are assumed to produce harm if they co-exist. Culturalist racism is based on the idea of cultural hierarchy that some cultures are more advanced and greater morally, universal and progressive. Erasing racial language by replacing with culture and unquestioned pre-given cultural difference yet maintains the very basis of racial codification through assigning fixed qualities to social groups and naturalizing them. Consequently, this as being the most prevalent way of making sense of non-Western cultures, in a colonially complicit way, keeps normalizing social differentiation through designating cultures as bounded and distinct entities that are organized around essential defining values, as well as assuming that people are determined by and products of their culture, as if culture is a solid entity (Phillips, 2007).

How, then, can we understand this discursive shift by which culture and ethnicity are brought to replace race, a shift to "there is only one race, human race" discourse which echoes so reasonable that we forget race was a socio-political construction to begin with, more than it was a mere pseudo-biological concept? Drawing on Lentin (2005; 2008), the official refutation of race takes on after the horrors of 2nd WW and the Holocaust in order to ensure that race and racism no longer have a social place. "A lexicon for difference, drawing on ideas of ethnicity, origins and heritage, was proposed by anthropologists and institutionalized by structures such as UNESCO" (Lentin & Titley, 2011, p. 70). As Lentin (2005, pp. 381-382) explains "UNESCO tradition of anti-racism" has been embraced widely by the Western scholars, as a positive celebration of difference, consequently, translated into multicultural policies:

> As a policy, multiculturalism would have us see our societies as 'race-free' and culturally rich. However, (…) it has become impossible to see clearly the artificiality of the divide between 'race' and 'culture' within official discourses that valorizes culture while -albeit strenuously- demonizing 'race'. The emphasis placed on the difference between these two means of categorizing human difference often serves to mask the persistence of racism in what is widely believed to be a post-racial age.

On the one hand, racial categorizations were substituted by cultural distinctions to explain human difference. On the other hand, the ranking of humanity as the very core logic of racism has regained legitimacy by culturalist explanations. As Phillips (2007, p. 31) notes:

> At least part of the impetus for multiculturalism was the need to challenge dismissive and disparaging stereotypes of people from minority cultural groups, to contest the hierarchy of "us" and "them." But insofar as it starts from the unquestioned "fact" of cultural difference, multiculturalism tends to call up its own stereotypes, categorizing people in ways that simplify differences, emphasize typical features, and suggest defining characteristics of each cultural group. This intentionally promotes a view of individuals from minority and non-Western cultural groups as guided by different norms and values, and inadvertently fuels a perception of them as driven by illiberal and undemocratic ones.

Such developments brought about stripping race off its roots in politics and modernity, thus, as being banished from reason, racism has come to be understood as pre-modern and being associated with either pathological extreme racists or the ignorant individuals with lack of education and maturity (Lentin, 2008). Today what we are left with is that cultural prejudice and discrimination that is normalized due to the belief that they are not racial in origin. "Clash of civilizations" rhetoric is now a commonsense for the very ordinary individual. This new racism promotes itself "to be democratic and respectable, and hence first off denies that it is racism" (van Dijk 2000, p. 34). As Lentin and Titley (2011, p. 49) note "race has been semantically conquered, but it remains deeply ingrained in the political imaginaries, structures and practices of the West."

In what follows, I attempt to discuss the functioning of culturalist explanations within anti-migration rhetoric by drawing on the literature of new racism and make my point of how culturalist approaches once suggested to oppose racism can turn out to reinforce racialization of Others. Culturalist discourses have become the most prominent one in deeming otherness as being culturally "incapable" of fitting into "virtuous" European culture. It is argued that such culturalist discourse "has enabled the re-emergence of an absolutist idea of European culture, absolutist because it locates agency, belonging and virtue to this culture, while juxtaposing an undesirable other" (Rajaram, 2016, p. 7). This culturalist conception of racism as many call new racism is built upon three main pillars: "the notion of cultural rather than biological difference"; "the abstract and decontextualized use of the discourse of liberalism and individualism to rationalize racial

inequality"; and "a celebration of nationalism that at times acquires an ethnonational character" (Bonilla-Silva, 2000, p. 188).

Drawing on Bonilla-Silva (2000, p. 189), the central characteristics of the new racism can be listed as follows. Firstly, unlike the traditional conceptualizations of racism, new racism is articulated on the basis of both presupposition of cultural differences and perception of culture as immutable basis of identity and belonging. Thus, new racism suggests the framework within which anti-migration rhetoric, without resorting to racialist language, can be justified by being intertwined with discourses about social cohesion, preservation of culture and values. One recent example can be found in the debates sparked after Ursula von der Leyen, as the incoming European Commission president, had given the title "Protecting Our European Way of Life" to the European commission vice-president in charge of migration earlier in September this year[10], later, the title has been modified to "Promoting the European Way of Life"[11]. Secondly, new racism by invoking the notions such as equality, fairness and freedom as the Enlightenment-ideological constructions provides argumentative flexibility on racial matters in a manner to maintain white-western privileged status and to "raise liberal arguments to support and/or pursue illiberal ends" (ibid., p. 190). I think the most illustrative example would be the political debates on banning headscarves and veils in several EU countries, in order to ensure "the liberation of women" through regulating their bodies. Moreover, as Jiwani (2011, p. 18) puts, "new racism utilizes culture, religion, academic performance, civic engagement and a host of other 'nonracist' or liberal criteria by which to advance the notion of inferiority and to naturalize this inferiority by reference to cultural membership." Lastly, Bonilla-Silva (2000) argues that new racism embraces a discourse of nationalism which may involve ethnonational character based on cultural particularity.

New racism employs culture as the all-encompassing explanation of human behavior. This culturalist view, thus, fails to recognize complex negotiations of identity and that culture is not bounded nor static, rather cultural meanings are constantly negotiated and contested internally (Phillips, 2007). At the same time, culturalist explanations obscure power relations and depoliticize the politics of race. Depicting racialized Others as being solely determined by their "backward", "traditional" and "misogynistic" culture and so-called traditions -reworking of Orientalism- denies

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[10] https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/12/world/europe/eu-ursula-von-der-leyen-migration.html
[11] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_6278

their autonomy while implying a contrast with "autonomous" and "rational" depictions of a stereotypical white/western Self. Such depictions rely on totalizing categories such as "non-Western culture", "Western culture", and "Muslim women". The embodiment of difference is promoted through set of absolute attributions to culture.

In sum, new racism corresponds an era that race as a concept has been replaced with the terms of culture and ethnicity in construction of difference. In other words, "culture" has come to be deployed as a marker of deviance. The racialization of Others is maintained through inferiorization of their culture as well as naturalization of difference. Essentialized representations of cultural difference have come to be perceived as common-sense. Therefore, a priori existence of difference ought to be deconstructed in order to understand how power is exercised in the establishment of difference, namely, by the practices of naming and evaluating. Then the question must be the one that: who comes to be different and from what? What is considered to be the norm by which some are imagined deviant? Recalling Said, this is a creation of an image of Other, one-sided construction by denying Other's self-determination. This process of naming and evaluating, classifying and ordering is the core of the Enlightenment methodologies and modernity (Goldberg, 2000).

Once the image of Other is created, cultural "difference" is reified, racial stereotypes are assigned accordingly. Cultural difference implies a divergence from a normative position, the position of the "racially unmarked" that is taken to be a natural fact (Pickering, 2004). As Pickering (2004, p.93) notes "cultural racism clearly builds on the non-whiteness of those against whom it is directed and does so from an invisibly centered whiteness in order to demand exclusion, exonerate marginality or equate inclusion with cultural assimilation."

2.5   The Racialized (Im)migrant Other and the "Problem of Integration"

Attention needs to be paid to how the discursive functioning of "immigrant integration" and "social cohesion" are connected to the way states identify a set of core values to characterize their unique nation and the modes of belonging vis-à-vis the racialized migrant as to be integrated outsiders. Immigrant integration discourse maintains boundary formation between us and them, it is heavily built upon the securitization discourse and the perception of cultural incompatibility.

Integration was initially constructed as a concept meant to capture two-way process of social exchange between newcomers and receiving societies. By the 1990s, it has come to be conceptualized as "the adoption and performance of liberal norms and values" (Korteweg, 2017, p. 431) as being predicated on "the perceived cultural deficits of immigrants themselves and their presumed inability to connect with receiving-society members and receiving-society institutions in social exchange" (ibid., 434) in a manner that reinforces racial stereotypes and cultural differentiation on the basis of liberal/illiberal, modern/ traditional, Western/ non-Western binary configurations (Phillips, 2007). The concept of social integration and its application to the field of immigration is embedded in nation-state paradigm based on reproduction of "territorially delimited, historically rooted, and culturally homogenous society" (Araújo, 2010, p. 190).

According to Lentin (2008), as a solution to the perceived failure of multiculturalism in Europe, in order to guarantee cohesion, integration has come to be underlined in relation to prescribed national values and "unilaterally defined national story" (p. 490). This unidirectional inward process of "integration" -assimilation- is centered on national values, superiority of "western morals" and Europeanness as the norm, thus, implies a moral hegemony (ibid.).

Korteweg (2017) argues that integration discourses (re)produce migrants as particular racialized and gendered subjects onto whom generalized social problems are projected. Integration discourses, as being determined by cultural racism, "repressive liberalism" and the subjectification of neoliberal rationality, communicate a set of concerns over migration, citizenship and the labor market in the processes of evaluation and selection of migrant bodies for their utility, compatibility and autonomy (Joppke, 2007, p. 1; Lentin & Titley, 2011). Similarly, Kurki (2019) argues that integration training as being predicated on marketisation and neoliberal governance aims to produce "desirable immigrant subject" who is manageable, reliable, dependable, yet held responsible if they "fail" to become acceptable members of society, renders them usable, employable and disposable (p. 58).

The field of integration can be considered as manifestations of "state-ness of states" (Torpey, 2018) in a governmental manner to demonstrate the ability to control and manage, tame and discipline (Lentin & Titley, 2011) by promoting unidirectional supervised integration in highly paternalistic ways. According to Korteweg (2017, p. 433), processes of categorization and boundary-making

embedded in integration field shape the modes of exclusion and inform institutional habits, personal interactions and structural relations:

> The intersectional construction of immigrants' subjectivity can activate differences of gender, race, ethnicity, religion and class, among others, to inform the framing of integration as a particular social problem and attendant policy approaches, which come to structure social, political and economic relations.

Racialized and gendered processes of differentiation reveal itself most prevalently in the integration discourses by which in the notion of "gender equality" is utilized to problematize migrant presence and (in)ability to adapt "European lifestyle". At the intersection with religion, the instrumentalization of gender and sexual politics explicitly targets Muslims migrants, renders them incompatible and threat to European liberal values. One can add "homonationalism" into this discussion (Puar, 2007). Puar investigates how and why a nation's promotion of itself as "gay-friendly" has become a desirable goal, and how the inclusion of queer subjects can be linked to politics of exclusion. Discourses of gender and LGBTI equality and sexual diversity are instrumentalized in an attempt to further racialize Muslim migrants as homophobic, in addition to being misogynistic, which in turn gives the grounding to justify racist, xenophobic and Islamophobic violence[12]. By such discourses non-white/Muslim men as a category is reconstructed as the perpetrators of sexual violence, consequently being labelled as a threat to sexual freedom and rights of the majority population. Lentin and Titley (2011, p. 216) argue that "the centrality of sexual democracy to integration politics is established by states in conjunction with dominant feminists and gay rights activists who actively collaborate in foreclosing the possibility of full citizenship for 'illiberal' minorities."

Integration discourse in a way functions more like an illusion when majority population is already imagined as sexually free and gender equality is declared as something already achieved, it renders the racial Others as the problematic subjects, obscures the social problems and projects them onto migrants and minorities (Lentin and Titley, 2011; Korteweg, 2017). Therefore, the "threat of

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[12] I have to note here homonationalism is a deeper phenomenon, anti-migration can be one of the fields homonationalism informs politics of exclusion. Moreover, homonationalism and its utility in global geopolitics corresponds to pinkwashing and justifications of colonial endeavors, Western imperial projects, and military interventionist politics, precisely the US military operations and Israeli occupation of Palestine (Puar, 2007).

immigrant" discourse is legitimized and rationalized by rendering migrants as a deviant social group who are disruptive to social order, sexual violence offenders and criminals, accordingly their behavior must be controlled, disciplined and limited by the regulatory tools of integration field. Moreover, Walters (2004) suggests that discourses of crime control can be understood in terms of two poles that are "criminology of the self" and "criminology of the other": The first stance understands criminal act as a "rational act perpetrated by utility-maximizing subjects; a response to opportunities for crime" whereas the second stance implies "a demonization of the criminal" and that they are monstrous evils (p. 247). Walter (2004, p. 247) notes: "a tautology is set up so that their acts both explain and are explained by their location outside the norms, structures and codes of civil society."

In addition to portrayals of violent brown/black/Muslim men as perpetrators of sexual violence and oppressors, Muslim women is routinely kept being imagined as passive, powerless, oppressed victims. Their oppression is attached to essentialized perception of Islam. The veil, as the primary signifier of the Muslim woman stereotype, becomes stigmata, the marker of their deviance, oppression, sometimes fundamentalism. While the individual trajectories, particularities and diversities are being erased, there emerges a homogeneous imaginary of the oppression of Muslim women as a group. It is important to underline the intersectionality here, the oppression of Muslim women must be addressed within a framework that takes into account the interconnection between sexism and anti-Muslim racism which leads to different experiences of racism than Muslim men, different experiences of sexism than non-Muslim women (Ramírez, 2015).

To sum up, integration is a manifestation of the continuous process of us and them categorization, to-be-integrated outsiders are framed as deficient in the liberal values and/or potentially disruptive of social cohesion in the receiving societies. The way in which the problem of migration and integration is conceptualized reflects an extension of colonial reasoning intertwined with the paradigm of nation-state construction. Instead of erasing the boundaries between outsider and insider, integration discourse/practices maintain these very boundaries (Korteweg, 2017). Similarly, Kurki (2019) argues that despite the integration policies and practices are officially introduced to promote multiculturalism and tolerance and to achieve equality, in practice, they create racial and gendered segregation. In the next section I attempt to situate the discussion in the Finnish context, to understand how migration and integration is conceptualized, how it is linked

to history of nation building, perceptions of cultural homogeneity and social cohesion. Following Keskinen and Andreassen (2017), discussions on migration and racialization "need to be adjusted to and elaborated in a context characterized by welfare state ideologies and institutions, notions of allegedly homogeneous nations and claims of exemplary achievements in gender and socio-economic equality, as well as neoliberal policies" (p. 64).

3   Background

3.1   Historical and Social Context

This section of the study aims to investigate the historical and social context in the Nordic region with the focus on Finland, to address and understand the portrayal of migrants and racialized minorities as the Others that are claimed to pose security threats and disrupt social cohesion. Keskinen, Skaptadóttir and Toivanen (2019) argue that historical and present-day narratives of national identities in the Nordic region have been predicated on the myths of cultural and racial homogeneity. Perception of cultural and racial homogeneity, in denial of heterogeneity, is an outcome of nation-building processes by assimilatory and repressive state actions, including the appropriation of land, forced settlement, restrictions on movements and so on, directed at the indigenous Sámi and Inuit people and ethnic minorities the Roma and the Tatars (Keskinen et al. 2019). Perceptions of national, cultural, racial homogeneity prior to 1970s migrations have been determinant of how migration has come to be conceptualized as a problem, a potential threat to homogenous national body (Tuori, 2009; Keskinen et al., 2019). Understanding of heterogeneity through increasing migration, heterogeneity as something brought from outside, has been perceived as disruptive to social cohesion, therefore, should be tackled by the integration/assimilation of the migrant Others. Such framing of homogeneity and heterogeneity is discussed to impose a normative, conformist idea that homogeneity as the desirable condition based on functionalist views on social cohesion and essentializing notions of shared ethnic/cultural/racial backgrounds (Keskinen et al., 2019), accordingly, can be argued how this normative understanding informs governance of differences.

Moreover, the "Nordic welfare model", based on egalitarian principles and universal social benefits, has been one of the central defining characteristics for the countries in the region (Keskinen, 2016). The establishment of the welfare model was intertwined with constructing national identities on the basis of egalitarianism and universalism (ibid.). Keskinen et al. (2019) argue that the development of welfare systems in the Nordic region was tightly linked to nation-state paradigm and notions of homogeneity. Welfare systems were designed to eradicate regional economic and class differences through equalization (ibid.) Hervik, (2019) notes that the traditional conceptualizations of social egalitarianism have been built on a notion that "equality as sameness" (p. 10). The neoliberal policies from the 1980s onwards, and the economic crisis of

2008 which has put strains on welfare systems shaped the political and economic environment that migration particularly from non-Western countries has become conceptualized as an economic threat, a burden on welfare system and causing economic problems, consequently, "the boundaries of deservingness and entitlement for welfare benefits are racialized and interconnected with the idea of whiteness" (Keskinen et al., 2019, p. 10). In her discussion of how welfare state arguments in Finnish immigration policies and politics are closely intertwined with cultural conceptualizations of national belonging and the perceptions of asylum and non-Western migration as a burden for the welfare state, Keskinen (2016) argues that the rhetoric of costly welfare state and language of economy have dominated the way immigration and integration is debated, while depicting migrants from non-Western societies as economic opportunity seekers choosing Finland due to the generous Finnish welfare provisions and the wealth of the country. Accordingly, immigration and integration discourse follows a distinction that immigration is either a potential asset for the economy which presupposes a successful integration with high employment rates, or a possible burden for the welfare state due to unemployment and exploitation of welfare benefits, thus, rendering migrants either costly or useful (ibid.). Moreover, when it comes to asylum seekers, their de facto residing in the country and thus perceived non-belonging has paved the way for the welfare nationalist rhetoric asserting exclusionary demands for differential treatment for those who are not given national membership (ibid.). In addition to welfare nationalism, Keskinen argues that welfare chauvinist rhetoric combines cultural otherness and (lack of) economic utility in order to exclude racial groups particularly migrants from Middle Eastern and African countries who are imagined to be culturally and economically deviant "undesired others" (2016, p. 15).

Hervik, in tracing historically the constructions of Nordic identity, notes that it has always been perceived as "being at the top of the evolutionary hierarchy, first as a 'race' and later through 'culture', 'welfare state', 'equality', 'gender equality', 'tolerance', 'generosity', and 'happiness'" (2019, p. 17). Nordic exceptionalism, in this sense can be considered as one of the main pillars of constructing ideal national and Nordic identities predicated on positive self-image as "global good citizens", "rational", "peace-loving", "conflict-resolution orientated", hence allowing for a particular form of nation branding (Loftsdóttir and Jensen, 2012, p. 2). Notion of exceptionalism is also deployed in reference to the Nordic countries' perceived outsider position in relation to European colonialism and its neo-colonial consequences (ibid.). Moreover, the notion of

exceptionalism when applied to national identities underlines the uniqueness and the superiority of the nation. As Puar (2007, p. 3) notes: "Exceptionalism paradoxically signals distinction from (to be unlike, dissimilar) as well as excellence (imminence, superiority), suggesting a departure from yet mastery of linear teleologies of progress," Such understandings of exceptionalism manifest itself in representations of Finland as a country that is pioneer of social justice, human rights, democracy, developmental aid and peacekeeping (Alemanji & Mafi, 2016). Similarly, as Tuori (2007) argues "advanced gender equality" is often perceived as being inherently Finnish. As Rastas calls "Finnish exceptionalism" as a discourse while "differentiating Finland and Finnish people from other nations" asserts "the moral superiority" (2012, p. 89). When the discourse of exceptionalism is applied to underline an exceptional history without colonial involvements and thus without racism, can be used as a strategy for ignoring the politics of race and for denying racial discriminations (Rastas, 2012). In this sense "Finnish exceptionalism" can be argued as providing a basis for new/neo-racism that is postulated on perceptions of a "race-free society", in other words, facilitating a framework of "racism without race" (Balibar, 1991).

3.2   Contextualizing Colonial Complicity in Finland

Perceived outsider position of Finland in relation to colonial histories in overseas and in the Arctic has been discussed by a number of researchers and various forms of colonial involvement has been addressed. Firstly, Finland's position in relation to colonialism towards the Sámi people has been discussed within the framework of settler colonialism (Väyrynen, 2019) or/and as an internal colonization within the nation (Tuori, 2009). Secondly, several researchers have discussed that Finland and other Nordic countries have taken role in and benefited from colonial enterprises and the production of Europe as the global center, as well as they have formed commercial and trade relations with the colonies outside Europe and they have participated in missionary work (Palmberg, 2009; Tuori, 2009; Loftsdóttir and Jensen, 2012; Keskinen, 2019). Thirdly, Nordic countries' involvement in colonial project has been discussed in relation to reproduction of hegemonic knowledge systems and colonial perceptions of the world, thus, being culturally, politically and intellectually part of the colonial order. In this sense, Vuorela (2009) refers to concept of "colonial complicity" in order to address "participation in and acceptance of colonialism as a discourse and a form of universal truth" (p. 20). Vuorela (2009) highlights the ways in which colonial discourse and imaginaries are normalized and reproduced even though

Finland was not in the Western European colonial center and did not take part in colonialization outside Europe. She argues that hegemonic discourses are not limited to a particular colonial past in history, rather "our minds were 'colonized' into an acceptance of colonial projects" (Vuorela, 2009, p. 21). Similarly, Palmberg (2009) argues that assuming a deterministic causal relationship between having colonies and colonial mind would be misleading, therefore, one should take into consideration generalized identification with colonial ideologies and civilizing project.

Colonial complicity, in this sense, addresses the ways in which colonial practices, Eurocentric modernity and perceptions of the world are translated into national self-images and manifested in racialized and gendered power relations. The Nordic countries are considered to identify with the Western world and embrace colonial ideologies with the Enlightenment value systems (Keskinen et al., 2009). Moreover, Keskinen argues that considering the position of Finland "in relation to the East-West divide and racial categorizations, clear demarcations towards the racialized 'others' have been an important way to demonstrate belonging to the West" (2018, p. 158). Similarly, Rastas discusses that "Finns were subject to racialist stereotyping by Swedes and assigned a lower status in racial hierarchies", however, in order to contest being inferiorized and to generate "counter arguments of 'Finns as White Europeans'" they engage in pseudo-scientific studies producing racializing knowledge using similar racial categorizations (2012, p. 90). In examining racial taxonomies of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Keskinen (2019) notes that the Sámi, Finns, Tatars, and the Roma were the groups placed on the lower levels of the racial hierarchy in the Nordic region. Consequently, during the period following national independence and modern nation-state formation, the new Finnish nation-state engaged in racial categorizations and racial knowledge production in order to construct hierarchical distinctions between the Finns and the Others as the Sámi and the Roma to underline its belonging to the West (Keskinen, 2019). In this sense, regardless of having an active engagement in overseas colonial conquests or not, a combination of colonial and racial thinking with modern nation-state building reflects and continues to define the patterns of othering and non-belonging. Recalling Goldberg (2002), production of racializing knowledge is deeply embedded in social structures in the formation of "racial state." Moreover, as epistemic sources of racial categorizations, coloniality shapes understandings of superiority and inferiority circulated through variety of "civilizing projects". Recalling Maldonado-Torres' distinction of colonialism and coloniality, coloniality addresses the long-standing patterns of power that established by colonialism, yet it defines "culture, labor,

intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration" (2007, p. 243). Power structures which are on a global and national level still defined by racial and gendered colonial ideologies as well as discourses. It is this context that migrants arrive in, not a neutral space but a space that is already informed by coloniality and still embodies racial power relations, colonial imaginary and knowledge (Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou, 2015). These power structures still relevant to position the Other and epistemically constructing the Other in reference to Oriental/colonial archive or library of information in Said's sense.

Given that gender and sexuality is central to racial formations as well as to "civilizing mission", we need to look at gender equality discourse more closely and precisely how gender and sexuality are linked to various forms of domination and exclusion. Moreover, how gender equality discourse is conceptualized around women's bodies and their bodies become sites for moral and sexual order. The notions of exceptional achievement of gender equality (Honkasalo, 2014; Keskinen 2018) and the central role of this discourse to constitution of self-images and national identities in Finland and other Nordic countries (Tuori, 2007; Keskinen et al., 2009) has been widely discussed by a number of studies. Gender equality is considered as "inherent to the nation" (Tuori, 2007) and it is a national project included in the Finnish welfare state that is consolidated by state feminist tradition (Ylä-Anttila & Luhtakallio, 2017). The role the notion of "gender equality" plays is acknowledged in relation to establishment of "Finland's uniqueness vis-à-vis 'other countries'" in terms of international comparisons (Honkasalo, 2014, p. 288). In this sense, gender equality has become a discursive practice to establish racial/cultural/ethnic boundaries of belonging and otherness which consequently serves to marginalize and exclude/regulate Others. Considering the field of integration which has increasingly come to be defined as "conformity to social norms and cultural values" of the majority population, supposed (lack of) gender equality operates as a marker of cultural difference between "liberal" majority and "illiberal" minorities who are depicted to be "patriarchal, traditional, and undemocratic, commonly referring to non-western and/or Muslim" (Honkatukia and Keskinen, 2017, p. 2). When this discourse is institutionalized in immigration and integration politics turns out to be sites for carrying out Western "civilizing missions" as the Other is imagined without capacity for "progress" and stuck in pre-modern patriarchy located in racialized bodies (Keskinen, 2009; Larsen, 2009). In such imaginaries, the ''immigrant woman'' constructed as a contrasting image of civilized liberal Western subjectivities. At the same time,

Islam is imagined to be incompatible and a threat to core values of a Western nation. Hierarchical culturalist constructions are reified over women's bodies. Moreover, gendered culturalist formations depict presumably Muslim migrants as a sexual threat to white women which strengthens racial boundaries, as well as assumes a control over women's sexuality by framing white women as potential victims of sexual violence (Keskinen, 2018). In short, when gender equality discourse is mobilized to reify cultural hierarchies and to marginalize Others, it does so through criminalization of racialized men, and homogenization of oppressed racialized women.

3.3   Short Overview of Immigration and Integration in Finland

Concerning the multiculturalism debates in Finland, the reference is mainly made to changing context after 1980s, when immigration exceeds emigration. Prior to 1980s, Finland is discussed in terms of an emigration country with labor migrations to Sweden and North America (Saukkonen, 2013; Keskinen 2018). This emphasis on increasing migration is partly due to the perceived homogeneity of the social fabric prior to migration movements so that the topic of multiculturalism and diversity is largely discussed through newcomers into Finnish society (Tuori, 2007; Saukkonen, 2013). Additionally, another aspect highlighted in relation to migration is that compared to most European and other Nordic countries, Finland has received lesser amount of migration (ibid.). 1980s also coincides with the development of immigration and refugee policy and the first Aliens Act in 1984, in a response to first post-World War II refugees in mid 1970s from Chile and Vietnam (Kurki, 2019) At the beginning of 1990s, the refugees from Somalia, Iraq, Iran and former Yugoslavia arrived in Finland, according to Keskinen, the economic recession of the era has elevated the views of refugees as a burden to the welfare state, which is maintained since then (Keskinen 2018).

In addition, the first integration policy adopted "Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers" in 1999, which was drawn on examples from the Netherlands and other Nordic countries (Kurki, 2019). Integration has been defined "as a two-dimensional process involving 'the personal development of immigrants, aimed at participation in work life and the functioning of society while preserving their language and culture'" combining efforts for "individual integration plan for immigrants, financial support for participants in integration activities and the local integration programme" (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 277). According to Kurki (2019), at the beginning of 2000s, immigration has come to be shaped by labor market needs,

growing migration has included people seeking work and education in addition to family and humanitarian reasons. What marks 2000s also, Kurki argues the racialized distinctions between desirable and undesirable migrants has become visible, certain groups welcomed more than others: "labour-based immigrants, especially people with recognized formal education and professional experience from Western countries, had more value and quality than people with refugee and asylum seeker status from the Global South and East" (p. 12). Moreover, Islamophobia and "war on terror" discourses have been disseminated in Finland public debates in tandem with the stricter regulation and control of immigration to sustain national security and to fight against international crime, terrorism and religious extremism (ibid.). The new Integration Act of has been adopted in 2011 to "promote the integration of immigrants, equality and freedom of choice with measures that support the achievement of key knowledge and skills needed in society" (ibid., p. 14). Saukkonen (2013) argues that despite the language of "two-way integration" in documents, "policy practice concentrates almost exclusively on the personal development that the immigrant makes in finding their place in the Finnish social, economic, political and cultural systems, and in the labor market in particular" which allows for a criterion to be established in terms of employment and hence independence of social security services, Finnish language skills and social interaction with majority population in order to evaluate migrants' success, consequently to term desirable state of being a migrant.

Tighter control and more restrictions on immigration and asylum policies since 2011 especially towards migrants fleeing conflict and war in the Middle East and Africa have been sustained alongside an increase in right-wing anti-immigration rhetoric (Keskinen, 2016). Anti-migration discourse reproduced labels to justify restrictions such as 'bogus asylum seekers' and 'welfare refugees' abusing the system (ibid.). Moreover, Kurki (2019) explains that the word "immigrant" has come to be understood in stigmatizing terms in reference to inferiority. Similarly, Alemanji and Mafi (2016) show that the term "immigrant" is today employed as a new racial category, to describe non-white/non-European individuals in Finland.

In short, I intend to discuss racial formations and categorizations in regard to migration. Situating formation processes in historical and socio-political contexts can allow for understandings of boundary maintenance, hence, marginalization and exclusion of certain groups of individuals. Eurocentric view on migration, that is informed by colonial/Orientalist archive, reveals itself in

the narrow depictions of the notion of "(im)migrant" which is rendered as a stigmatizing label determined by culturalist imagery. "Colonial complicity" as Vuorela (2009) terms to conceptualize practices informed by colonial mind, or "coloniality" as a broader conceptualization, defines the patterns of exclusion and inclusion, superiority and inferiority by ensuring naturalization and normalization of such power relations. Coloniality of power operates through control over authority -nation-state- labor, sexuality, and subjectivity -Eurocentrism- (Quijano, 2007). In this sense, migrants arrive a space which is already hierarchically ordered. The racial/cultural hierarchy of the European/non-European binary reconfigures racial Others when they arrive in territorially defined space as migrants, renders them a sexual threat, economic burden, culturally paralyzed. It is this context that I will analyze the visual texts and the interview data in the following sections.

4   Data and Methods

4.1   Data

In the present study, I use two videos introduced by the Finnish Immigration Service, namely *Beginner's guide to Finland Part 1* and *Part 2*, due to their discursive power in constructing the migrant Other. In its YouTube channel, as well as on its website, the Finnish Immigration Service describes the videos as "offering information about Finnish culture, customs, legislation, rules, and rights in Finland." The videos can be found in the Dari, Arabic and English languages. The empirical research data is obtained over these videos. I start with analysis of the videos in order to gain an overview of the ideological constructions of the asylum seekers who have been defined as '*the beginners'* in the video set. I design my approach by taking into consideration that "a visual image is constructive of reality rather than simply being descriptive of it" since visual images offer particular ways of seeing social issues embedded in a wider cultural context (Marvasti, 2004, p. 64). Moreover, Rose (2001) draws attention to the idea that "what is important about images is not simply the image itself, but how it is seen by particular spectators who look in particular way" (p. 12). Semiotic analysis of the visual text reveals what is evident on the surface of an image and its deeper meaning (Marvasti, 2004). Therefore, my motivation was to utilize the videos to facilitate intertextuality in my interviews by which the participants could draw from their prior knowledge and understanding of the context that the text has emerged. In this sense, their everyday life experiences as being immigrants in Finland could be evoked to make sense of the particular themes in the video set. Since the participants interpretation of the visual text cannot be expected to happen in vacuum. As well as composition of texts cannot be thought in isolation from history and ideology.

For the second empirical level in this study, the data was collected through face-to-face interviews with 11 individuals who have applied for asylum in Finland. Semi-structured in-depth interviews are applied in order to capture the participants' everyday life experiences, their understandings and interpretations. The data consisted of 1 focus-group and 6 in-depth interviews with 11 participants in total. The first focus-group discussion is conducted with 3 participants. Before the focus-group discussion, I asked participants to watch the videos. I had an unstructured approach during the session. The discussion lasted for an hour, participants talked to each other and they led the conversation, without my involvement. It was a flexible brainstorming session in that sense. The

first focus-group discussion, therefore, was used as a pilot study which allowed me to grasp the main set of themes and employ these themes to form the questions, thus, I organized the next interviews accordingly in the semi-structured format. I believe this provided me with an opportunity to overcome possible research bias in preparation of the interview themes and questions. The following 6 in-depth interviews were conducted in Tampere, Turku and Helsinki, lasted from 1 hour and 25 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes.

4.1.1 Population and sample selection

By the time the empirical data was collected, during spring 2019, the participants had been living in Finland from 4 months to 5 years, in different stages of their asylum application. Only 4 participant's asylum applications were approved and granted positive decision.

The participants were selected through snowball sampling. The criteria for choosing the participants was in line with the videos' target audience who are asylum seekers from Arabic or Dari speaking countries. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, individuals from Iraq and Syria who applied for asylum in Finland are perceived as analytically relevant. Their age varied from 18 to 47, and 4 of them identified as female, and 7 as male. 9 of the participants have already had their higher education before they moved to Finland. All the interviews were conducted in English due to my lack of Finnish and Arabic language skills.

The interviews were held in a relatively informal format. Instead of following a formal question and answer format, we had face-to-face conversations with the participants following the guiding themes/questions. As Burgess (1984) puts "a conversations with a purpose" gave the participants the opportunity to develop and reflect upon their thoughts.

4.1.2 Relevance of the videos

Even though none of the participants had seen the exact same videos before this study, they were familiar with the main narratives, the figure of the Muslim immigrant and the lines of exclusion/problematization of their existence. Their responds to these visual texts and how they relate the main set of narratives to their experiences and thus the wider socio-cultural context was the focus for my analysis. What the interviews made clear was that their individual experiences, and pre-existing knowledges from different contexts were apparent in their interpretation of and reflection on the visual texts (Alghasi, 2019). Accordingly, construction of these visual texts

corresponds a particular context and ideologies racializing immigrants. My approach to the video set is drawn on Foucauldian understanding which highlights "the role of power in the production of textuality and of textuality in the production of power" (Alfaro, 1996, p. 282). A set of connections, through which a text can be related to other texts, positions a work within existing networks of power, thus, create and discipline the text's ability to signify, in other words, intertextuality emphasizes the production of ideology (ibid.).

4.1.3 Reflection on the interviews

The interview data is appropriate to grasp and interpret the participants' interpretations of social processes. To make sense of social meanings requires an understanding of depth, complexity and contextuality in participant's accounts and their experiences (Mason, 2002). These understandings can be generated through interviews. Yet, a possible limitation can be result of that "the interview method is heavily dependent on people's capacities to verbalize, interact, conceptualize and remember" (Mason, 2002, p. 64). In addition to this, another limitation that my data pose could be due to use of English in the interviews. Given that English is neither mine as the interviewer, nor the interviewees' native language, this situation may pose limits on the vocabulary that is available to one to formulate their thoughts. As a strategy to overcome these limitations, I was attentive to non-verbal expressions, feelings and reactions that can be communicated by body language and demeanors of the participants during the interviews. These were later included in my notes on the interview setting and my impressions of the interviewees.

4.2 Methods

In the analysis part, first the videos are deconstructed, the discursive representations and constructions of Other/Self is analyzed by applying semiotics and critical discourse analysis. The second part of the analysis interrogates the participants' interpretations of the visual texts. The interview data reveals modes of othering/racializing practices that they experience in everyday life and interactions with institutions.

4.2.1 Semiotics and critical discourse analysis

How can we make sense of the links between the ways in which Finland as a nation is imagined and the ways in which the figure of asylum-seekers is conceptualized in the video set? Racialization is "dialectical process of signification" (Miles and Brown, 2003, p. 101) in which

representations of Other reveals how Self is imagined. Therefore, in order to make sense of the dialectical signification, I employ semiotics analysis to decode the visual texts in exploration of how signs create meaning of an image and the ways in which social difference is produced. Semiotics enable exploration of the connections between signs and broader structures of meaning (Rose, 2001). Visual imagery contains a culturally meaningful visual stimulus which could be called as a "signifier" and what it stands for and symbolizes could be called the "signified" (Marvasti, 2004, p. 74). In the process of meaning-making, an image denotes a meaning on the surface and connotes a deeper symbol (ibid.). What the video set tells us can only be understood by situating it in the socio-political context because the structures of meaning in the texts are related to wider social setting, they are not isolated neither independent. It is a representational practice of signifying otherness, a discursive formation. Since it is a representation of difference it is inevitably linked to relations of power.

I understand visual semiotics as giving us an analytical toolbox, by its application we can make sense of implicit meanings in explicit images. Yet, the visual texts at hand is a one-sided representation of asylum-seekers as the Other that is the object of the discourse, from the perspective of state institutions that is the subject of the discourse, therefore, the power relations within the text requires to be exposed. In this sense, discourse analysis can address questions of power and knowledge to understand social construction of racial difference. As van Dijk (2000) explains social practices, in our case production of social difference, have a cognitive dimension such as beliefs, norms and ideologies people have that inform discriminatory practices and stereotypes regarding the Other. van Dijk (2000) notes that these beliefs and norms are widely products of discourse, therefore, "discourse as a social practice of racism is at the same time the main source for peoples' racist beliefs" (p. 36). Moreover, to be attentive to power relations at play, I focus precisely on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). According to van Dijk (2001, p. 353), CDA more than merely describing discourse structures, "it tries to explain them in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structure." Therefore, CDA can enable us to make sense of the participant's interpretations and the ways in which they challenge to dominant modes of representations. In this sense, I am attentive to six tenets of CDA summarized by Fairclough and Wodak (1997) as listed in van Dijk (2001): "CDA addresses social problems; power relations are discursive; discourse constitutes society and culture; discourse does ideological

work; discourse is historical; discourse is a form of social action" (p. 353). Analysis of the video set is guided by the following questions:

> SQ1: How is the Finnish way of life represented in the visual text? What are the unique characteristics attributed to Finnishness in relation to newcomers' perceived lack?

> SQ2: What kind of figure of asylum-seeker is produced through these texts? How is the Other figured to be different from the normative position? On what grounds is the presence of asylum-seekers is problematized?

4.2.2   Interpretivist approach

I employ interpretivist approach drawing on inductive analysis of the qualitative data at hand. Interpretive approaches "see people, and their interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings, as the primary data sources" (Mason, 2002, p. 56), thus, concentrates on participant's perceptions as "insider view", rather than imposing an "outsider view" (ibid., p. 56).

As Mason (2002) explains, within the interpretivist approach researchers' role is to understand everyday interpretations and to attach social science interpretations in order to move towards an explanation. Therefore, the steps I employ in analyzing the interview data as follows: the first step involves "initial coding" in other words, generating general themes before moving more in-depth codes; the second step as "focused coding" requires application of sociological concepts to have theoretically sensitive categorization of the data (Marvasti, 2004, p. 86). "Focused codes allow the researcher to reduce the possible universe of meanings, moving from a large number of initial codes to a smaller, more manageable set" (ibid., p. 86).

Interpretivist approach in this sense enable exploration of individual and collective understandings. Given that the qualitative data is obtained over the video set, it is the main aim of this study to understand first the participant's interpretation of the visual material, second, by invoking intertextuality of discourses which reflects a broader universe of meanings, to understand the everyday reality of social world constituting migrant subjectivities. Everyday reality consists of the social actors' meanings and interpretations regarding their own actions as well as other people's actions and social situations (Mason, 2002). Analysis of the interview data is guided by the following question:

SQ3: How do participants interpret the visual text? Do they evoke dominant or opposed interpretations?

SQ4: How do participants relate the themes and discourses found in the data to their everyday life experiences?

4.3   Research Ethics

Prior to the interviews, participants had been informed about the subject of this study. The research interviews were recorded upon their permission, via informed consent form. Their anonymity and confidentiality are ensured. By considering research ethics with marginalized populations, I intentionally avoid questions may potentially trigger any traumatic reaction related to their forced migration experience. The digital data is transcribed to ensure the participant's anonymity. In order to safeguard participants' anonymity all names used are pseudonyms.

5   Findings

This section introduces firstly the findings from the video set which address the representations of Finnish way of life and the figure of asylum-seeker. Secondly, it examines how participants relate these representations to their everyday life encounters.

5.1   Modes of Representation in the Video Set

My starting point in analyzing the visual texts is built on the assumption that the topics addressed in the video set which aim offering "information about Finnish culture, customs, legislation, rules, and rights", have been deliberately selected. Hence, the selection of issues portrayed in these videos can be considered as a reflection of the authorities' ideas on what topics are deemed to be important that need to be conveyed to newcomers. In other words, the selected topics may reflect what issues asylum-seekers are imagined to lack knowledge of. Moreover, I consider the video set as part of the larger field of immigrant integration in a sense that the purpose of the video set is to educate newcomers and to guide their behavior in Finland. As the title of the video set frames, *Beginner's Guide to Finland*, the positioning of "beginner", or say newcomers, as oppositional to the settled national body can be seen as the basis of the material at hand. Since the video set aims to give information about customs, legislation and rules, it can be seen as a materialized manifestation of the asylum-seekers' alleged deficiency in liberal norms and democratic values.

Additionally, I see a need to scrutinize further the choice of the term "beginner". What the term "beginner" signifies in this context can be understood as two interrelated hierarchical subjectivity positioning. Firstly, one can be a "beginner" in a liberal and democratic society due to their geographic and cultural origin. Such formation highlights the ambivalent positioning of liberal versus illiberal and modern versus traditional. Secondly, recalling "colonial matrix of power" Mignolo (2007) and epistemic hierarchy, the formation of "beginner" can be seen as a denial of asylum-seekers' subjectivity, their past experiences, and ultimately their epistemologies. By imposing Eurocentrism, construction of asylum-seekers as beginners infantilize and invalidate their knowledge and perspective of world, while subjecting them to ethnocentric paternalist gaze through regulating what Others should be informed of (Keskinen et al., 2009). In other words, coloniality of power operates at the epistemic level to reinforce a distinction between colonizing and colonized epistemic views (Grosfoguel et al, 2015).

In deconstructing the video set, I keep the focus on three steps: firstly, examination of visual description; secondly, interpretation of discursive elements; thirdly, connection between the material at hand and macro-mechanisms within wider socio-political context (Wang, 2014). I follow the chains of association, in terms of how different issues are drawn together and how the shift occurs from one topic another. In this sense, as the material at hand are videos narrating the story, a closer holistic look is required. In addition, it is important to look at how the fictional characters are introduced, constructed and reproduced in the different topics illustrated by the videos.

When I arrived to Finland, many things seemed strange at first. But as I began to understand Finnish culture and mentality, I realized that everything was fine after all.

Figure 1

Figure 1 is the starting point of the video set. I explore the portrayal of the characters, their demeanor, clothes and facial expressions, as well as the text which accompanies the setting. "When I arrived to Finland, many things seemed strange at first. But as I began to understand Finnish culture and mentality, I realized everything was fine after all." First, the visual image with accompanied text underlines a state of confusion, not so in reference to the uncertainties of asylum process, but rather the strangeness of the new social environment, hence setting the binary configuration from the starting point. Second, this scene is also important in terms of introducing the characters. The characters' facial expressions also reflect the confusion and sadness. We can see the iconic representation of Muslim migrant woman with a headscarf. Racializing gaze suggests a specific mode of observing the body (Gilroy, 2000) and the headscarf here is the distinguishing marker on the surface. I read it as an attempt to make the body visible and draw

recognizable distinctions between assumed-to-be Muslim migrant women and Finnish women. The headscarf in this context is a visual coding which stands in for a wider narrative.

The national self-image in the video set is characterized around a set of core values which are grounded in liberal notions of democratic institutions, rule of law, freedom, individual autonomy, and particularly gender equality: "In Finland equality is considered very important. I learned quickly, that all men and women equal, and that they have the same legal rights and importance" (Beginner's Guide to Finland, Part 1). Finland is represented as a peaceful country of order. After portraying Finland as the country of law and order, the narrative switches to "dos and don'ts" in Finland, simultaneously emphasizing the disciplinary consequences if one acts deviant, in a disciplining manner. Moreover, towards the end of the first video and largely in the second video the cultural characteristics attributed to Finnish people are described in reference to being obedient to rules, quietness, importance of personal space and privacy, respect for nature, and being punctual and hardworking. The below excerpt is from the *Beginner's Guide to Finland Part 2*:

> I have learned that Finland is a big country with fairly few residents. Maybe this is why people are quiet and like to spend time by themselves, and when they do get together, they play by the same rules. Once you learn to understand all this, you might just find out that Finland is one of the best places to live.

The structuring of the narrative seems to try ensuring that if the newcomers play by the rules, they may earn their place in Finnish society. By focusing on the racializing tropes in terms of stereotypical constructions of difference and deviance, I have spotted two main themes which are: the discourse of violence; and the discourse of social disruption. These themes are intertwined and overlap in many aspects, nevertheless they can be regarded as clusters of racializing tropes underlying deviance in several different ways.

5.1.1 The discourse of violence

Discourses on violence are the most prominent ones in the video set regarding depictions of migrant men and migrant families. Firstly, I look at the sexual violence discourse which portrays the Finnish women as the potential victims. Secondly, I focus on discourse of domestic violence which problematizes migrant families.

5.1.1.1 *Sexual violence and rapist others*

The discourse of sexual violence is a salient theme in the video set depicting dangerous masculinities in relation to migrant Others. This discourse can be seen as a largely shared racializing trope, as Keskinen (2013, p. 228) notes: "frequent references to honor-killings, female genital cuttings and rapes by non-white migrants are listed to argue for the destructive effects of the demographic changes, and Finland/West is described as gender equal against the patriarchal others." The discourse of sexual violence can be found in anti-migration rhetoric, it is salient in securitization of migration (Saresma, 2019). It is the discursive manifestation of how women's bodies become a social site in construction of moral order, as well as national reproduction of belonging and non-belonging (Keskinen, 2013). The figure 2 depicts the Finnish women as a potential victim, the accompanied text implies that the potential perpetrators' roots in other cultures where women are not regarded as free as Finnish women.

In Finland everyone has the right to dress how they want and go out without being harassed or assaulted.

Figure 2

Rape is a serious offence that will be punished. The victim can report the rape to the police, and the offender will be sentenced based on the victim's testimony and doctor's examination.

Figure 3

Moreover, the figure 3 can be read as signifying the "state feminism" where the "women-friendly policies" and women's movement is founded as the main component of the welfare state project in Finland (Keskinen et al., 2009).
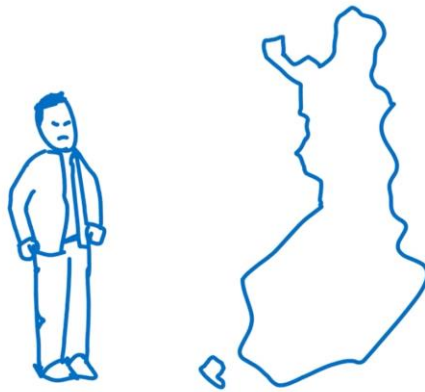
You can be sentenced to years in jail from committing rape, which complicates the asylum process.
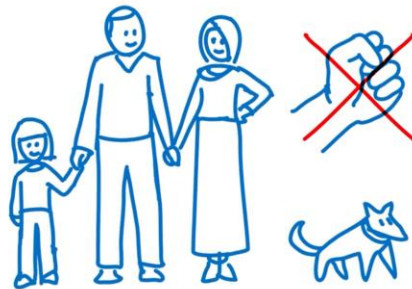
Figure 4

Following the framework of "dos and don'ts," a flow towards figure 4, the aim is to discipline the potential perpetrators by showing the consequences of the violent act through highlighting "deportability" (De Genova, 2002), as well as non-belonging since a right to stay in a national

territory depends on obeying legal regulations. The depictions of migrant man as the potential perpetrator of sexual violence narrow the understanding of violence as committed by newcomers who are outsiders from other cultures. Hence, such discourse is inevitably followed by rationalization of stricter deportation rules so that Other's violence can be prevented. Additionally, the discourse of sexual violence operates to construct Others as the enemy of Finnish women by inciting fear and anxiety, at the same time, the female body is designated as the trope of national security (Saresma, 2019).

5.1.1.2 *Domestic violence and migrant families*

After introducing the notion of gender equality, the narrative switches to the concept of domestic violence. As it has been discussed earlier (Keskinen et al., 2009; Keskinen 2013) gender equality is conceptualized as a marker of difference.

> … breaking the law leads to serious penalties. For example, it is strictly forbidden to cause physical and emotional harm to another living being. It is forbidden to discipline or hit men, women, children and animals. Domestic violence is also forbidden and will be penalized. (Beginner's Guide to Finland Part 1)

It is forbidden to discipline or hit men, women, children and animals.

Figure 5

I understand this discourse as problematizing migrant families and assumed violence within those families, most probably on the basis of patriarchal gender roles. Considering the central role of family institution to reproduction of national body, this discourse can be linked to broader discussion on migrant families as threat to national reproduction. In this view, national

reproduction refers to "the stabilization of a specific arrangement of living" and "reproduction of life, culture and value" (Tuori, 2009, p. 155).

And sometimes a bit aggressive too. If this happens, you should just continue walking and ignore them.

Figure 6

It might be worth noting here, nowhere in the video set there is a representation of migrant women actively defending themselves against harassment or gender-based violence, rather equality is pictured as a given and something migrants can enjoy. Defending one's rights and freedoms are discussed in the videos in reference to Finnish women where their agency is evoked when they report the rape to police. Regarding figure 6, if a migrant woman encounters a harassment in public sphere, she is advised to ignore and not contact the authorities. In this case the threat of violence is something to be shrugged off. She is not only shown as a submissive figure, but she is actually advised to be submissive in front of threatening Finnish men. So, there are two clearly conflicting presentations of the significance of violence towards women and of the appropriate way to react to it.

5.1.2   The discourse of social disruption

Culturalist formations of migrant Others and securitization of migration discourse is heavily built on perceptions of incompatible differences and hence a threat to social cohesion (Ibrahim, 2005). This is another widely prominent racializing trope and goes alongside perceived order and cohesion as being already established in the receiving society. Figures 7 and 8 illustrate cultural differentiation signifying binary poles in terms of chaos versus order.

Waiting in line also felt strange. I was used to people going in and taking care of their business at the same time. That does not work here.

Figure 7
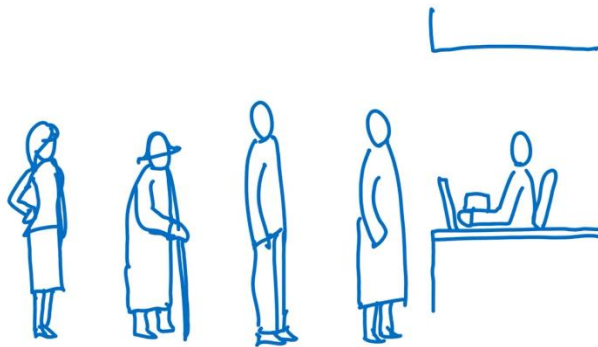
Whether it is the supermarket, the bank, the pharmacy, the doctors, the cash machine; you need to queue. The Finnish seem to love it.

Figure 8

Essentialized notions of difference on the basis of geographical and cultural origin renders a homogenized group of migrants that threatens existing ways of life. We can notice how an assumption of cultural clashes is evoked by assumed deficiency of migrants in understanding the norms of civilized life. Moreover, there is a boundary maintenance in terms of characterizing the inside of the borders on having order, an implicit stand aiming at managing chaotic elements from outside the borders and discipline a presumable disorder through queueing.

In sum, the manner in which the Finnish way of life is represented derives from the assumption of the existence of a culturally homogeneous distinctive group. The discursive construction of oppositional absolute differences renders the Other as traditional and irrational in relation to the autonomous and rational Finnish subject.

5.2 Discursive Formations in Encounters

The analysis of the interview data is guided by an aim to understand of how discursive formations operate in our everyday lives. In other word, this section concentrates on how the participants relate the content of the videos to their everyday lives and experiences. I categorized findings around three themes which are heavily emphasized in the data set: Finnish exceptionalism, integration problematic, and markers of deviance. These categories reflect both the dominant racializing discourses in representation of migrant Others and practices affecting their everyday life encounters.

5.2.1 Finnish exceptionalism: "we do not do this in Finland"

The way I address the notion of exceptionalism in this study is drawn on Rastas' (2012) conceptualization. According to her, "Finnish exceptionalism" as a discourse differentiates Finland and Finnish people from other nations by implying their "moral superiority" (2012, p. 89). Finnish exceptionalism can be applied to make sense of number of encounters between migrants and social workers, teachers and other figures within the field of integration and job training. This discourse shapes the practices of teaching migrants how to do things in the Finnish way. One participant noted that:

> *I think most of the Finnish think they are better than immigrants in everything ... I know the education here is one of the best ones in the world, but it does not mean everything they do is the best way, how they are doing ... They do not believe that someone can do better than them. And it does not happen just with me, it is with everyone. Like, I have one friend she gets many work practices in many companies, she said she has the same problem. She said it is a similar job here as in Syria, but every time they say, 'we do not do this in Finland', I do not know why they have this: 'we don't do this in Finland'... So, I think this is the problem to have any job in any place.* (Leila)

Exceptionalism, in this sense, by underlying being the best, belittles Other's potential, and turns into an obstacle to the acknowledgement of the migrants' skills and experiences. Additionally, it

functions to deny their knowledge and renders them imperfect, not qualified enough. The excerpt below is from the same interview with Leila. After having watched the videos, I asked Leila how she feels about the videos:

> *Like how to park cars, it is the same in every country, or the nature [keeping nature clean] in every country it is the same. Why you have to teach people like this? And also I heard from a lot of people, immigrants, what they do not like in our courses is [that] when the teacher teaches about Finland, she talks to you like you do not do anything in this life, you did not have a life before. It is not the best way how you need to teach. If I want to teach you my language, it does not mean you are stupid, or you do not do anything. You just do not know my language, and I also do not know your language.*

She addresses both the videos and the integration training by challenging to paternal attitudes and lack of recognition of their experiences and knowledge. This coincides with the discursive formation of "beginner" as depicted in the video set. The idea of exceptionalism asserts epistemic and moral hierarchy that in turn ignores the intellect of the Other, their histories, and epistemologies.

Moreover, exceptionalism discourse can be regarded as the basis for how the Finnish way of life, norms and rules are represented as unique characteristics in the video set. This becomes clear in the excerpt below, where Mostafa, another participant, respond to following sentence from the video text: "Police do not accept bribes or act violently" (Part 1):

> *It is a normal thing. It is supposed to be [the case] in all countries. That is true we have problems, we have war in our country [Iraq], but we know that already. And even that, police know what haram and halal, we know that.*

In my opinion, this excerpt shows how Mostafa, on the one hand, challenges the distinctiveness predicated on democracy and rule of law in the functioning of social institutions in Finland. On the other hand, his response to their assumed deficiency in understanding of democratic norms highlights the existence of alternative epistemologies (haram and halal), thus, challenges to moral superiority. Additionally, the implicit message in the video text, that emphasizes a distinction and excellence by signaling hierarchical differentiation and Other's imperfection in those terms, were clear to all participants. Most of them refused the idea of distinctive excellence by highlighting "it is the same everywhere" and objected their perceived imperfection by "we already know that." Debunking distinction was necessarily followed by a comparison, since being distinct requires an

object of contrast. This object of contrast in participant's articulation was mainly the country of origin, but also in some cases other countries they had been to. It might be worth noting, when the participants gave examples from other countries, it was in line with binary configurations of Orient and Occident.

The videos introduce the culture to you. Like, 'you haven't seen any people before and here the people, how people are. We have rules, we have police'. It is like the same in every country, they have rules. Even in this Middle East we also have this stuff, but we have also corruption. But we know that it is not the right thing, so we came here. But they don't accept that we have the same thing there. (Tariq)

Almost all of the participants were critical about the video set, they found it unnecessary and offensive, picturing migrants as if they are barbarians lacking intellect. These points they raised address the functioning of the Orientalist discourse as one-sided imagining of essentialized, exaggerated and distorted differences from the perspective Occident:

What I can say they don't know about the background of our country. They really don't know anything about us. They think we only make problems and mistakes and we really are barbarians. But this video, if a Finnish person made this video, this would be ok, he does not know about us. But the problem [is] these videos are from the government. And the government should know everything, and they know everything already. This [is what] makes it more upsetting because it is from the government. (Mostafa)

The negotiated reading of the videos emphasizes the feeling of security and safety that the participants have in Finland. This remark was made by all participants. They emphasized the trust they have regarding social institutions and public officials, due to existence of order and rule of law. Such readings were followed by participants' own reflections on their past experiences from conflict zones and their travels to Finland. For example, Leila made the following comment regarding the figure in the beginning of the video set which depicts a migrant family next to map of Finland:

They look very sad. I do not know why they are sad, because actually when you come to Finland, you feel life now is really easy, everything will be very good and now you are safe.

It is important to highlight that she challenges the sad and passive victim figure of asylum-seekers while underlining the agency of bringing themselves to safety.

5.2.2 Impossible integration

This section highlights how the stereotypes, anti-migration rhetoric and practices of integration are interwoven and reproduce racialized migrant subjectivities. In the previous sections, the discourse of integration has been discussed in relation to one-sided unidirectional understanding by which policies are shaped to concentrate on giving instructions to newcomers about institutional and liberal norms in a top-down manner. Integration policies are shaped by labor-market needs, and success in integration as being measured by Finnish language skills, social interaction with mainstream society, employment and independence of social security services (Saukkonen, 2013). In this regard, during the interviews, integration-related topics appeared to be one of the most salient themes that were addressed by the participants. Many aspects of their social life were linked to the field of integration and asylum reception in terms of both discourses shaping their position and policy practices. Participants mainly stressed issues arising from one-sided understanding of integration, this goes hand in hand with their perception on lack of recognition of their subjectivities. Participants usually linked the top-down instructive language in the videos to their encounters with the authorities working in the integration field. Many participants indicated that while they are held obligated to learn the language and the culture, their educational and professional backgrounds were ignored. They consider that the top-down instructive manner designed to teach them the "dos and don'ts" too limited that conceals their efforts to be integrated subjects, at the same time, does not provide tools they might be in need of:

> *The most important thing, no one ever told us what our right is to stay here. They always talk about what we have to do to integrate with the people. And then they keep insisting on integrating. At the same time, we try to integrate, we went to schools, and these schools did not accept anyone in 2015, unless you had the social security number.* (Tariq)

As Tariq indicated in the below excerpt not having a social security number in some instances further restricts their possibilities and increases their exclusion in-real life situations:

> *They just put them [immigrants] in one box. And they chose who they want, and then he has the right to work, to education and have right to everything ... I got a post, when I got to post office to get the post, they did not give it to me. Because I don't have social security number. I brought a Finnish guy to get my post to me.*

Lack of social security number can be interpreted as lack of recognition as an outcome of bureaucratic categorizations. In Tariq's view who gets to be acknowledged of their rights are determined by bureaucratic system which works as "cherry picking of refugees" (Yuval-Davis, Anthias and Kofman, 2005). Another participant, Hamza noted how lacking a social security number further restricts their access to employment:

> *I went to some company in Helsinki, you can find a lot of jobs in cleaning, and I went there, made the interview and passed everything, but I went to apply, they asked me my ID, I showed them the ID from the camp. They asked, 'what is that paper?' Maybe you saw it, the ID of the reception center, is just a paper from the camp. I told them I am just an immigrant I don't have any paper here, they said 'Sorry you cannot have the job, if you like after you get your residence permit', I laughed and I told them okay, after two years maybe we can meet.*

Even though asylum-seekers have a right to work according to current legislation, this is far from being the reality for many of the participants. This might also be relevant to note here, some participants have been waiting for a positive decision on their asylum claims for more than three years. As Hamza indicated, the longtime waiting is accompanied with unemployment. According to Griffiths (2014, p. 1996) "being made to wait" is strongly related to power relations: "the imposition of waiting, always with a glimmer of hope for eventual change, is part of the technique of control that sustains the marginality."

Moreover, we can address lack of recognition in broader terms than social security number. Following Lamont, Beljean and Clair (2014), social inequality operates at the level of legitimacy, thus, if we regard recognition as being given validation, legitimacy and value, lack of recognition prevents full membership. In relation to non-recognition of their educational and professional backgrounds, several participants indicated that immigrants are manly encouraged to apply for blue-collar jobs, at the same time, some of them noted they were discouraged to pursue higher education at university level. Similarly, in her study Kurki (2019) explores the ways in which immigrants are guided to certain professions through market-oriented integration practices in education that are informed by gendered and racialized stereotypes. Integration practices appeared to be limited in providing the participants with tools to overcome structural discrimination, rather reinforce them by demanding perfect language skills in Finnish and sustaining job market segregation.

Imperfect language skills in Finnish as well as unemployment were articulated by the participants in relation to dominant discourses shaping anti-migration rhetoric. Almost all participants noted that being unemployment elevates the strain they feel because being unemployed as a migrant further racializes them as exploiting the welfare system. Being dependent on the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) and not paying taxes emerges as a stigmatizing label. When I asked Leila her feelings about being part of the society, she said:

> *Actually, when you are working it helps so much to feel like this, because you don't take salary from Kela. Many Finnish people tell us like 'you are immigrants, why you are here, why you are not working, why you are taking salary from Kela?' ... So, it helps so much when you are working, so you show the other people that 'I don't take anything from anyone'... even the Syrian people living here for a long time, maybe 20 years, when we meet them do you know what the first thing they say?! 'They pay your salary form my taxes what I pay every month' so it is normal to hear it from Finnish people.*

Having a job seems to be the crucial condition to get validated. We can see the impact of "welfare chauvinism" in the participants' evaluation of their belonging or non-belonging. Keskinen (2016) terms welfare chauvinism to describe how anti-migration rhetoric combines cultural otherness and lack of economic utility to excludes migrants from Middle Eastern and African countries. Moreover, ability to pay taxes can be used as a strategy for one to consolidate their belonging, thus, this may show us the stratification between settled communities and newcomers. Several participants also noted that "not paying taxes" is frequently articulated by others to discriminate against them. In addition to the bodily stigmata (Balibar, 1991), skin-color, dark hair or veil, "not paying taxes" or the assumption that one does not pay taxes because they are migrants, can function as an additional marker of deviance. In the below excerpt Ammar were talking about visibility of having dark hair and beard as racial markers, one of the examples he gave:

> *I was in a bar, there were some couple of guys, they came and told me 'Hey! You have to buy me a beer'. Why? 'Because you live in my country, so this is part of the tax, you will pay me in beer.'*

5.2.3   Under gaze: markers of deviance and anti-Muslim racism

This section concentrates on how difference and deviance is socially constructed in reference to Islam and how dominant attributes to Islam are informed by popular discourses as well as Orientalism (Said, 2003). The stigmata of otherness (Balibar, 1991) can take various forms

depending on the context, it may involve skin-color, name, language, religious practices and so on. During the interviews the participants referred to all of them in their stories of how they are racialized and perceived by other people. The most recurrent bodily markers include having dark hair and veil. Given that not all Muslim women prefer to wear a veil, the ones who do wear it become visually identifiable as Muslims and appear to be more vulnerable to verbal threats and harassment in public sphere. In two interviews, the participants told me how they experienced hostile encounters due to wearing veil:

> *When this Turku incident happened, many people were saying many bad words while I was walking in the street, in Finnish or in English, because they think I do not understand Finnish. So, they shout in English to make sure that I will be sad or angry about them.* (Leila)

Another participant, Afra, also mentioned how one of her friends who wears a veil was targeted by another young girl in the bus stop and accused of being a fundamentalist who "kills others who have different religion." The Islamophobic image of veiled women was attributed to fundamentalist threats in these cases. Especially regarding the first encounter which happened after the knife attack in Turku in 2017, these examples show how racialized individuals are homogenized and essentialized into a unified group, in a way, she was held responsible of the violent acts of others. Moreover, Leila mentioned that sometimes she thinks about taking her veil off which would make everything easier for her. She would be less visible, also due to the fact that she is not a brown woman, she could not be easily profiled. Their stories indicate how the veil is constructed as a marker of deviance which highlights strangeness and framed as a source of unease, and Islam is imagined to be essentially a political fundamental religion. Nonetheless, Leila later adds:

> *But then I think, even I have a scarf, because I would like to show I am from a different culture, from a different country, from a different religion. Why not? They have to understand me, and I have to show [them] the good things. But that makes me more stressed because every time if I do anything, I get scared that they will think 'all the Muslim people are like this' so it makes my life more difficult.*

A headscarf, beyond being a stigma, stands for many things. It is what makes her visible and recognizable. In a way, it is a medium for communicating her individual motivations and collective

identification. What makes it a stigma is the public perception. At the same time, due to being generalized, she expresses her concern of being seen as a "representative" of Muslim people.

Bodily markers of deviance are not the only ways in which social difference and exclusion are carried out. Differentiation can be carried out by questions and gazes, friendly or unsympathetic (Rastas, 2005). The questions that participants most commonly received about Islam, are the ones concerning the position of women, the veil and the alcohol consumption. Orientalist formations of these question are found overwhelming by most of the participants. In order to resist being generalized, the tactic they mostly employ is to reframe the questions by underlining that they can only talk about their ideas, their experiences, what they see in their cities or countries of origin. In addition to receiving the aforementioned questions, the participants articulated some instances where they feel under gaze. Though being under gaze is not a momentary situation, it is a general act of seeing others within the dynamics of socio-political power relations and perceiving others by one's own values. Nonetheless, the act of seeing and being seen can be employed both figuratively and literally. Likewise, while Ammar was talking about what has been changed in his life during his time in Finland, he explained:

> *I started to be vegetarian, to make my life easy. Because I cannot eat pigs, and they offer it all the time. So, to make my life easy and ignore the part [in which] they will start 'Oh you are Muslim! So, you don't eat this, blah blah blah…' and 'so you drink beer, but you don't eat pig', okay. So, I decided to be a vegetarian to cut this drama.*

Yet, some acts of gaze are more overt, more disciplinary. Rana articulated that her husband decided never to have lunch at work in order to avoid being questioned why he does not eat, specifically during Ramadan and to avoid being told that it is not safe to fast while working.

Criminalization of migrants through labeling them as rapists is the most commonly recurrent stigmatization of young migrant men in all the interviews. The sexual violence discourse can be found in the video set, as well as in the participants' encounters within the field of integration and asylum reception. The following excerpt is Arif's comment regarding how criminality and the consequent use of the term rapist is constructed through reception practices, the video text was not the first time he encountered the sexual violence discourse:

> *For me, it is kind of videos that can be presented to people in rehab. Like for the people who are in custody, committed crimes. And tell them that 'you are coming to this, and you have to know that*

is not right'. Like last month, we got an announcement: 'everyone living in the reception center,
you have to come, it is an important meeting, if you are not coming, we will cut the money you get.'
I did not go there, because I already knew that there would be bullshit. Who went there, they went
out angry. They told them not to rape anyone in the street. Even more offensive than this video.
Like this video is kind of telling it is wrong to rape, but that one was telling we know that you are
a rapist, don't rape. Don't steal, and don't do this, don't do that. Like directly talking to criminals.

Several participants noted that they receive similar remarks in their daily encounters made by random people in the street who shouts racist slurs or from settled migrants, who came to Finland a decade earlier, telling them to stay away from Finnish women. Some of the encounters were in form of verbal harassment, some others not overtly aggressive yet derogatory. Participants' reactions to those vary depending on the tone of racializing rhetoric. They usually saw no point to react racial slurs, but sometimes if they perceive the person as being open to dialogue, they use the chance to challenge the stereotypical reductionist view, by emphasizing their individuality. Several times they told me they find those racist slurs funny.

6   Conclusion

This study aimed to examine racializing categorization in relation to migration and asylum. Drawing on a social constructionist perspective, this study viewed racialization as a social process that organizes and reifies modes of social differentiation through representations and racializing meaning production. In the empirical part, I examined racial formations within the field of immigrant integration and asylum reception in Finland. Racial formations of assumed-to-be Muslim asylum-seekers are informed by the nation-state paradigm and the Oriental archive of knowledge (Said, 2003). Social differentiation is maintained through racial boundary maintenance centered on who belongs to "us", and who is the Other. The empirical analysis paid attention to the particular socio-historical context in Finland, which is manifested at the intersections of Finnish exceptionalism, welfare state tradition and achievements of gender equality.

Concerning the first empirical level, analysis of the video set was guided by the following questions:

> SQ1- How is the Finnish way of life represented in the visual text? What are the unique characteristics attributed to Finnishness in relation to newcomers' perceived lack?

SQ2- What kind of figure of asylum-seeker is produced through these texts? How is the Other figured to be different from the normative position? On what grounds is the presence of asylum-seekers problematized?

The Finnish way of life is represented around a set of core values characterized by liberal norms, freedom and gender equality. The state of law and order are heavily emphasized concepts. The notion of social cohesion is signified by highlighting the social order as being derived from the implementation of and being obedient to the rules. Liberal rationality is emphasized in relation to hardworking and autonomous subjects enjoying the freedom of choice.

Questions of social cohesion are brought to the surface through problematization of (in)adaptability of the migrant Others into Finnish society based on their perceived cultural deficiency in understanding the liberal norms and democratic values hence, their alleged inability to live in a democratic society. These assumptions are largely invoked in the video material in reference to potential criminality of the migrant Other. In this sense, such binary configurations postulate criminal and illiberal modes of being in the representation of asylum-seekers. Cultural incompatibility is framed within this normative understanding of liberal governmentality.

The ways in which potential criminality of the migrant Others is conceptualized in the video material reveal set of anxieties. The most salient depiction of a migrant man portrays him as a potential perpetrator of sexual violence, a violent subject. The discourse of sexual violence operates to construct Others as a threat to the national body by inciting fear and anxiety. In addition to sexual violence, the discourse of domestic violence problematizes migrant families. Therefore, the presence of asylum seekers is largely problematized in relation to social disruption and diminishing social cohesion.

The second empirical level was conducted through in-depth interviews. The data was collected through face-to-face interviews with 11 individuals from Iraq and Syria who have applied for asylum in Finland. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were applied in order to capture the participants' interpretation of the visual material and to understand how participants relate the themes to their everyday life. Analysis of the interview data was guided by the following questions:

SQ3: How do participants interpret the visual text? Do they evoke dominant or opposed interpretations?

SQ4: How do participants relate the themes and discourses found in the data to their everyday life experiences?

I spotted three themes which are heavily emphasized in the data set as Finnish exceptionalism, integration problematic, and markers of deviance. These categories reflect both the dominant discourses in the representation of migrant Others and the practices affecting their everyday life encounters. The findings from the interview reflect the consequences of representations in daily life encounters partly.

Finnish exceptionalism, as one of the themes was found in the participant's critical reflection on the visual material, as well as in their narration of everyday experiences within the field of immigrant integration and asylum reception. The idea of exceptionalism signals a distinction and excellence (Puar, 2007), it asserts epistemic and moral hierarchy (Rastas, 2012). The participant's reflection on the video material took form as an opposed interpretation of the underlined uniqueness in terms of the rules organizing social life and professionalization. Additionally, exceptionalism was interpreted largely as an obstacle to the acknowledgement of the migrants' skills and experiences.

The second theme, impossible integration, illustrates participant's reflections on stereotypes, anti-migration rhetoric and practices of integration. Participants linked the top-down instructive language in the video set to their encounters within the integration field. Their critical interpretation of the top-down instructive manner, which is designed to teach them the "dos and don'ts" is shaped around the perceived lack of recognition of their subjectivities, and the problematized notion of a one-sided integration.

The third theme, markers of deviance, indicates the participants' perceptions of stigmata of otherness (Balibar, 1991) and being under gaze. In connection with the video set, criminalization of migrants through labeling them as rapists arose as the most commonly recurrent stigmatization of young migrant men in all the interviews.

What is common in these three themes is a sense of paternalistic approach, either through giving instructions "dos and don'ts" or constructing migrant criminality. What is left unanswered by this study is how to challenge racializing categorizations. This study kept the focus on uncovering

social processes in the racialization of migrants. In this sense, the study at hand can be complemented in the future by literature on solidarity, in seeking a third way rather than being confined to the binary oppositions that are "us" and "them".

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