

The boys from Eika: Emotional survival in a hostile world

by

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Summary

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Eika, which is situated along the lower parts of *Akerselva River*, is the main arena for hashish trade in Oslo. The absolute majority of the drug dealers at Eika are youths who have an ethnic minority background. This thesis employs a qualitative approach in order to examine the following research questions: why did the youths start selling drugs at Eika and secondly, why is it so difficult for them to stop dealing drugs. The study's agenda is also to provide a psychological understanding of a group that has largely been ignored by academia. This is done by applying attachment theory and theories on exile and immigration. The analysis is based on interviews with five key informants and conversations with a great number of secondary informants.

This study found that meaningful friendships are not established at Eika and that most dealers would prefer to quit their illegal activities if they saw other viable alternatives. It was found that the informants' experiences in exile were partially responsible for positioning them outside of Norwegian society and into a marginalized milieu. Most informants feel neglected by and rejected from the Norwegian society. For some the rejection by the Norwegian society is made stronger by difficulties identifying with the culture of origin, consequently they feel they do not belong anywhere. Eika is a venue where they neither need nor acquire knowledge of Norwegian society and culture. Therefore it is difficult for them to quit selling drugs at Eika. Furthermore, the absolute majority of the informants have experienced prolonged separation and/or abandonment from caregivers during childhood. It is proposed that the separation from parents has affected how they think of themselves and of the availability of important others. It is therefore difficult for the informants to trust that anyone will help them should they need it. Exposure to danger in childhood has also made them more adapted to a life as a drug dealer than to other venues of Norwegian society. However, the Eika phenomenon is complex and cannot be explained by exile and attachment perspectives alone.

Foreword:

We owe a debt of gratitude to a number of individuals who have made this thesis possible. Firstly, this study would not have materialized without our informants and we are grateful for the time they chose to spend with us. Furthermore, we wish to thank our primary supervisor Sverre Varvin and secondary supervisor Mona-Iren Hauge for insightful advice and guidance. Without the generous help of Moses Kuvoame and Rita Rødset at Uteseksjonen we would not have been able to get access to the closed world of Eika, and without the kind help of IMdi and Anette Berg Larsen we would have even more difficulties conducting the interviews. We wish to thank Peder Nørbech and Henrik Daae Zachrisson for their inspiring critique and advice, and Cecilie Wille Søvik and Anine Riege for their assistance in preparing the final version of this text.

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Eika in the spring: This picture depicts a portion of Eika where it is very common to see several groups of individuals hanging around the benches and offering hashish to by-passers. The picture was taken early in the morning before most dealers and customers flock to Eika.

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Introduction:

While walking along the lower parts of *Akerselva* River in downtown Oslo, you will almost inevitably encounter groups of young men with immigrant background offering you hashish. In recent years the number of young men selling drugs in this area, which often is referred to as *Eika*, has increased steadily. Number of crimes committed in this area has also been on the rise, consequently generating a great deal of attention from both the police and the media. Police have raided the area on several occasions, and patrol the river frequently without attaining the desired effect. There have also been several interventions from the social services of Oslo, to remedy the problems associated with *Eika*. However, to this day these interventions have been as futile as the raids by the police, and the drug dealers are as numerous as ever.

Malik¹ is one of these drug dealers. His life as a drug dealer along Akerselva is less than glamorous. Today is a Friday, and from years of experience Malik knows that Friday is normally a good day for those who are involved in the hashish trade at Eika. Many Grünerløkka dwellers and people from other places in Oslo wish to start their weekend in the company of a joint or two. However, on this particular day the wind is blowing, there is rain in the air and it is icy-cold. In addition to being wet and cold, Malik's prospect of high earning has disappeared with the weather. Nonetheless, Malik needs money in order to pay the rent and he needs money for food. Malik despises the money he is earning at Eika as much as he loathes the place itself and all that it represents. For over a year he has been thinking of quitting hustling² at Eika, but something is holding him back. One thing he hates about Eika is the presence of some of the other drug dealers. Once he was involved in a fist fight against three of them. He can no longer recall why the fight occurred, but he remembers that both he and the three men needed medical treatment afterwards. Being the man he is, Malik is not too worried about such events. His experiences with separation from and abandonment by his parents and background as a child-soldier make him less affected by threats or violence. During Malik's childhood, danger and potential life threatening situations was the norm. The absence of perceived danger is therefore more psychologically threatening to him than real danger, since the latter is what Malik is accustomed to. When Malik is at Akerselva he spends

¹ This is a fictive name and has no resemblance to the informant's real name.

² This verb is street lingo for making quick money through illegal activities.

much time and energy on avoiding the police who frequently patrol the lower parts of the river. Malik has been arrested on numerous occasions, most times due to possession of small quantities of hashish. He cannot decide what he thinks is worse, the nights spent in holding-cells, or the fines he receives every time they arrest him. While standing by the river Malik often notices how passers-by look at him. Some, he can see, are clearly afraid of him. Others look at him in a derogative manner. He does not like it.

Malik's life as a dealer along Akerselva is clearly difficult, potentially dangerous and detrimental to his personal development. More than anything, Malik and most other dealers at Eika want to move on and quit selling drugs. Despite this, it is apparent that they have great difficulties leaving Eika and getting involved in legitimate activities. Our interest in Eika and the drug dealers was driven both by the abovementioned issues and the fact that the Eika phenomenon has only been studied from a sociological perspective. Although important since they provide a description of Eika, in our opinion the sociological studies are not sufficient to give an understanding of Eika and its drug dealing youth. Thus, one of the aims of this study was to provide a psychological understanding of this subject. Furthermore, the goal of this thesis is to shed some light upon why Malik and other youths at Eika have "chosen" their profession, how they experience their situation and why it is so difficult for them to move on. Thus, our research questions are:

- 1. Why did the youths start to sell drugs at Eika?*
- 2. Why is it difficult for them to quit selling drugs?*

In order to address these two questions we decided to interview some of the youths at Eika. In this thesis we will attempt to examine how the youths' ethnic minority background and relational history can contribute to the understanding of their activities at Eika. We will analyse this from the perspective of attachment theory and theories on immigration and exile. The focus on these theories is partially given by our presumptions about the importance of these two factors in explaining the drug dealers' adherence to Eika, and partially by the findings of the study.

This thesis consists of six sections. The first section gives an overview of Eika and the individuals who sell drugs there. In the second section, which is further divided into two subsections, the relevant theories will be presented. In the first subsection important theories

on exile and adaptation to a new culture will be introduced. The second subsection consists of a brief introduction to the aspects of attachment theory that are relevant for this thesis. The section following the theoretical background will deal with the methodology of the thesis. Then we will move to the sections on analysis and discussion. The section on analysis consists of three subsections; the first one, *Eika*, is about the informants' sentiments and experiences as drug dealers, the second, *exile*, discusses the informants' experiences as immigrants in Norway and finally; *Attachment* will examine the effects of childhood experiences of separation from, and abandonment by caregivers on our informants. In the final section the findings and their implications will be summarized and discussed. However, before moving on we will provide a brief overview of two of the studies on Eika and its drug dealers and some other studies on similar groups.

The field of juvenile drug dealing has despite its severity been largely ignored. This is especially true when comparing the field to the field of drug abuse among youths (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994). We were able to find very little psychological research, and not to mention qualitative research, on drug dealers. Centers and Weist (1989) underline that there has been little research on the psychosocial correlates and aetiology of drug dealing. This has also been the case in Norway. Although the Eika phenomenon has attracted a great deal of interest in the media, remarkable little research has been conducted on the subject. The exceptions are the sociological study that Sandberg and Pedersen (2006) recently conducted, and the thorough work of the sociologist and social worker Moses Kuvoame (2005). Kuvoame has extensive experience with the dealers at Eika and is undoubtedly among the people who have most insight into the needs and difficulties of the dealers. According to his study from 2005, Eika does not merely function as a source of income for the drug dealers, but also as a source of identity, a sense of belonging and status. He proposes that Eika provides the youths with friendship and moral, material, social and emotional support. Furthermore, he reports that some dealers are suffering from war-related traumas, while others are suffering from inadequate housing conditions. The lack of positive adult role-models, the distrust of public institutions, especially the police, and difficulties finding work are among the other issues reported by Kuvoame. He emphasizes that a number of the youths at Eika are highly resourceful and that most would like to do something positive with their lives. Kuvoame concludes that these youths often find it difficult to realize their potential and that this is due to the complex and difficult nature of their problems and needs.

Central to Sandberg and Pedersen's (2006) work is the term *street-capital*³. Street-capital denotes the knowledge, competencies, attributes and objects that have value in a particular street culture. They propose that in order to be a successful dealer along Akerselva, it is vital to be in possession of a sufficient amount of street-capital. At Eika the street-capital includes; competence on quality of drugs, how to sell drugs to a customer and the ability to spot an undercover police officer and how to handle the police in general. Violence, robberies and fistfights are frequent phenomena at Eika, and the authors argue that the violence can be understood as a mean of acquiring street-capital. The street-capital acquired, however, is incompatible with the culture that dominates most segments of the labour market and the educational institutions. Hence, the street related competence the dealers acquire as a result of spending time, and selling drugs at Eika impedes their introduction, or return to the ordinary labour market. In addition they propose that the more street-capital a person is in possession of, the greater his difficulties will be with regards to living a “normal life” with a normal job.

Studies conducted on adolescent drug communities similar to Eika, has revealed that among inner city youths in the USA, involvement in drug dealing is associated with juvenile arrest, involvement in violence, substance abuse, behavioural and emotional problems and academic failure (Centers & Weist, 1998). These findings correspond with the findings of Stanton and Galbraith (1994) who reported that the violence related to drug dealing affects non-selling individuals as much as it affects the drug dealers themselves. In terms of aetiology, Centers and Weist (1998) found that the inner city youths perceived the informal drug trade as the most lucrative income opportunity available to them. This was especially true for the dealers that belonged to an ethnic minority group. Other important factors reported as explanation for young people's involvement in drug dealing is; poor communication with parents, single-parent status, and chaotic and dysfunctional family environments. Black and Ricardo (1994) signify the role of family members in protecting youths from starting a drug dealing career, this is especially true in the case of disadvantaged families.

Next, we will give a more thorough description of Eika and the informants.

³ *Gatekapital* in Norwegian.

Background:

Eika and its “inhabitants”:

In 2003 it was reported that the crime figures at Eika had increased dramatically and numerous news articles the following years contributed to Eika’s reputation as a breeding ground for young criminals and a potential recruiting center for organized crime (Aftenposten, 2004; 2006; Dagbladet, 2003; Klassekampen, 2006). According to police statistics published in 2006 (Aftenposten, 2006) there had been 84 robberies of individual at Eika in the first ten months of that year. This was in addition to the 727 arrest made because of various drug related violations in the same period⁴. High crime figures combined with the media coverage made the police and the politicians sound the alarm bells (Aftenposten, 2003; Dagsavisen, 2005). The police even advised people not to pass through Eika at night (Aftenposten, 2006).

Eika draws its name from a gathering point for drug addicts, that was adjacent to a big beech tree mistaken to be an Oak or an Eik as it is called in Norwegian. Geographically Eika is situated at the eastern parts of down town Oslo. This part of the city has a high portion of immigrants and descendents of immigrants. According to Kuvoame (2005) Eika stretches alongside the eastern bank of Akerselva, from *Grønland subway station* to the site where the river is crossed by a street called *Storgata*. This distance constitutes no more than 750 meters of the approximately 8 000 meter river. However, as we experienced during our fieldwork, there is no consensus among the dwellers of Eika on whether Eika ends at Storgata or whether it stretches another 1000 meters all the way to a bridge called *Nybrua*. Furthermore, the site is not always called Eika among the drug sellers and their customers. Some of the key informants referred to the site as *kontoret*, the office, and others called it simply *elva*, the river. However, for the sake of celerity and the fact that the term “Eika” is used both by the media, the drug dealers themselves and social workers, and is understood as separate from other drug milieus in the city, we will in most instances use the term “Eika”. In some instances however, we will use terms such as “the river”, “the office” and “Akerselva” in order to reflect the jargon used by the informants when we are referring to Eika.

⁴ To put these figures in perspective, one can point out that the crime figures for the entire Oslo metropolitan area illustrate that there had been 783 robberies in the entire 2006 (The Norwegian Police, 2007). This figure includes all robberies; ranging from bank robberies to robbery of individuals. There had also been 6410 drug violations in the entire 2006 in the entire City of Oslo (The Norwegian Police, 2007).

Eika is not far from Oslo's main train station and is close to other hubs of transportation. As mentioned it is the east bank of the river that is referred to as "Eika", the west bank of the river is mostly occupied by residential and commercial buildings. The eastern bank is a picturesque green area with numerous trees, a paved path and several benches. The river is home to fish and numerous water birds. It is these serene surroundings that lend themselves as "the office" to several groups of people, who more or less provide for themselves through drug trade. It is tempting to construct a dichotomy based on the differences of the east and west bank of the river and thus illustrate the eastern bank as a haven for criminals and the west bank as a successful residential and commercial area. Although there still exists a psychological, social and economical divide between the eastern and western parts of Oslo, the dichotomy will not hold water in this instance. The reason is the fact that there is an extensive trade of illegal substances on the west bank of the river as well. Today many of the dealers, who earlier confined their activities to Eika, have extended their "office" to the surrounding areas on both sides of the river. Secondly, the east bank and Eika are part of a popular track that stretches along the entire river. Despite the overt drug trade it is a commonplace to see people at all stages of life when hiking through Eika.

Historically Eika has been the home of young sniffers⁵. According to one researcher, these youths started hanging around the big "oak" tree in the early 1980s (Fodstad, 1996). They were later replaced by older heroin addicts, who were at Eika until a few years ago. It is quite possible, as Kuvoame (2005) points out, that many of these older heroin addicts became a part of the now dissolved "Plata", a large gathering point of heroin dependent individuals and groups. According to Kuvoame (1996) another collection of people started to hang out at Eika around 2001. The main difference between these newcomers and the previous "inhabitants" of Eika was their ethnic background. The newcomers were mainly, but not exclusively, young boys with immigrant background⁶ from Africa who sold hashish and, in some cases, prescription drugs (Kuvoame, 2005). Most of the youths with immigrant background from Africa are born in Somalia⁷. This was the reality in 2001, when *Uteseksjonen*, the municipal

⁵ Persons who in order to enter a state of intoxication or even hallucination breathe in fumes of solvents, paint or glue through their nose.

⁶ According to Statistics Norway, SSB, an immigrant is a person "with two foreign-born parents: first-generation immigrants who have moved to Norway and people who were born in Norway of two parents who were born abroad. In this thesis we will make use of SSB's definition.

⁷ As stated by several of the key informants, this group started selling hashish at Eika already in 1998/1999.

center for social work among street addicts, first started patrolling the area, and is, as we observed, also the reality today.

It should be mentioned that it is extremely rare to observe female drug sellers at Eika. During our many hours at Eika we only once did observe a female who hanged out at Eika. She was not a regular at the site and happened to be an acquaintance of one of the key informants. Sandberg and Pedersen (2006) did also observe only one girl during their study. She had ethnic Norwegian background and was an exception from the rule; young female seller who operated out of Eika.

It is not simple to give an exact estimate of the number of young immigrant drug sellers at Eika. In 2006 Kuvoame stated, in a news article (Aftenposten, 2006a), that there were between “50 to 60” youths with the abovementioned background, who sold drugs at Eika. The police in Oslo put the same number at 79 in another news article the same year (VG, 2006). In a later sociological study, the estimates on the number of drug dealers at Eika were based on these two figures (Sandberg & Pedersen, 2006). The main reason for the difficulty of providing an exact figure on the number drug dealers with, and without, immigrant background at Eika is the mobility of the individuals hanging out there. Another reason is that it sometimes can be complicated to establish who is a regular seller at Eika and who is on quick “tour” to earn some quick money. Finally, the fact that young immigrant sellers are not the only group present at Eika also makes it difficult to establish an exact figure. However, one thing that is certain with Eika is the fact that there has been an increase in the number of drug dealers (Kuvoame, 2005). According to Uteseksjonen, in the summer of 2006 they had registered almost 100 new young dwellers at Eika and the surrounding areas (Klassekampen, 2006).

As mentioned above, there are several groups⁸ operating at Eika. However as we discovered during our field trips and through the available literature on Eika, there are many dissimilar accounts on the groups at Eika. Kuvoame (2005) reported that the largest groups at Eika are young boys with immigrant background and older male drug addicts with ethnic Norwegian background. Sandberg and Pedersen (2006) depict three different group of sellers at Eika; “The refugee”, “The fallen gangster” and “The hip hopper”. The prototype fallen gangster, is

⁸ By ”groups” at Eika we do not mean gangs, but rather several distinct categories of people who may or may not operate together as gangs. It is quite common to see youths selling drugs by themselves at Eika.

according to Sandberg and Pedersen, a leader figure in his mid twenties with a criminal past and with an immigrant background. The hip hoppers are in their early twenties; use most of their earnings from Eika to buy fancy clothes and other symbols of status. They are considered to be cool and are interested in quick cash and hip hop music. Their path to Eika is different from the first group in several ways, they have come to Eika not only to earn money, but also because of they seek thrill and companionship. The refugees are those who have few other means of income other than selling drugs at Eika.

According to several of our key informants, and based on our own observations, it is possible to distinguish between three or four different groups of drug sellers at Eika. The first group consists of young immigrants, mainly from Somalia, who sell drugs on a regular basis in order to provide for themselves. They are males mainly between the ages of 16 and 25. All of our key and most of our secondary informants belong to this group. Another group is the older asylum seekers, who for various reasons have left their camps without obtaining a residence permit, and thus live on the fringe of society. The third group is, to quote an informant, “...youths who are only there [Eika] to earn money for fun in the weekends”. These are the youths who are at Eika only occasionally to earn some quick money. In other words, people who are not regulars to Eika. However, the line between the first and the third group may be arbitrary. Some of the youths we talked to, alternated between periods where they sold drug several days of the week, and periods where they only visited Eika for “quick” cash. A fourth group of drug sellers at Eika are the older drug addicts, mostly of Norwegian descent, who sell hashish in order to fund their Heroin addiction. Some of the informants talked of a fifth group of sellers; Eastern Europeans who were on a quick trip to Norway in order to earn “a lot of money” before going back. We did not observe or talk to anyone who belonged to this group.

Although these descriptions may seem conflicting at first glimpse, they actually come together to give a more or less comprehensive picture of Eika and its “inhabitants”. They give us an idea of the plethora of individuals and groups who move in and out of a street community, and thus illustrate the mobility and the shifting face of Eika. In a sense Eika is a mirror that reflects the groups of individuals who at any given time are pushed to the periphery of society.

The informants:

In addition to the five key informants we talked to many other individuals at Eika during our fieldwork. Most of the people we talked to and interviewed were of African decent and had been living in Norway for less than ten years. Our five key informants were refugees⁹ and had fled to Norway, either alone or with parents, between the ages eight and fifteen. It is safe to estimate that during the period we spent at Eika 80 % of the dwellers there were of African decent, and 80 % of these had their roots in Somalia. Most of the people we contacted used drugs, primarily hashish, in addition to selling. The majority of the people we came in contact with at Eika had a story to tell and were quite willing to share them with us when their initial suspicion had disappeared.

All of our key informants were male and young – between 18 and 21 years old – because of the fact that Eika was more or less a male and youth “habitat”. From the start we decided to interview people older than eighteen years old because of the restrictions placed by the various research ethics committees on research regarding people under the age of eighteen. The upper limit on age was given by the demographics of Eika; almost everyone in the group we were interested in were younger than 30. Besides the age criteria, to be interviewed the key informants had to be current dealers, sell at Eika on a regular basis and have an immigrant background.

In the end we managed to interview five youths who filled the abovementioned criteria. What the informants had in common was the fact that they had an immigrant background, were young males, sold drugs at Eika and most had yet to finish high school. Besides those variables, they had their unique problems, experiences, and life stories. A *brief* look into the lives of the five informants can be found in the appendix. The names of the informants are of course fictive and bear no resemblance to the informant’s actual names.

⁹ According to the Norwegian legal system, refugees are persons who either have been granted asylum or are quota refugees.

Theoretical Background:

In the following section, we will give an overview of the theoretical framework of this thesis. Our informants' experiences, understanding and narratives will later be described, analyzed, explained and understood within the theoretical framework of theories of attachment, acculturation, and identity.

Theories on immigration and exile:

In this section we will focus on the nature of immigration and exile, while the focus of the next sections will be the processes and adaptations that emerge when people who have been enculturated¹⁰ in one culture migrate and reside in another society, before ending the section with theories on identity change due to immigration. It should be mentioned that we will mainly focus on circumstances and factors that arise after immigration has taken place. Secondly, the various theories we focus on in this section are complex and because of the scope of this study we will solely focus on the elements of the theories that have relevance to this thesis.

Immigration and Exile:

Since our informants live permanently in a country other than the one they were born in and thus have migrated in their lifetime, it is pertinent to give a brief insight to the phenomena of exile and immigration and their psychological implications. Immigration refers to the process of moving from one country or region to another in order to resettle. Usually one makes a distinction between voluntary and involuntary immigrants (Torgersen, 2005; Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002; Varvin, 2003). The former includes labour immigrants; the latter category consists of refugees and asylum seekers. Although others have defined immigrants in the terms of voluntary and involuntary, in this thesis we will use the term immigrant to refer to involuntary immigrants like refugees and asylum seekers. The involuntary group, to which all of our informants belong, is generally believed to face the greatest difficulties (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989; Berry et al., 2002). There may be several reasons for this; firstly, those who have fled because of either war or prosecution have usually

¹⁰ Enculturation is the process that bonds the developing individual to their inherited culture.

had less time to get used to the prospect of leaving everything behind, than for instance labour immigrants who leave for a better life and have time to plan their departure. According to Akhtar (1995), a sudden departure might set hurdles for post-migrative adaptation by preventing “*anticipatory mourning*”. Secondly, involuntary immigrants are more likely to have faced harmful events and perils prior to and during flight, than other immigrants, and thus have less mental capacity to adapt to the new environment. There might also be another reason to this finding. According to Grinberg and Grinberg (1989, p. 158) immigrants sometimes, in order to face their many problems in exile, may use a defence that involves a denial of the present and an “*illusion of being able to return*”. It is plausible that the desire of returning home is stronger in involuntary immigrants and that it can interfere with process of adapting to the new culture. The perils of immigration often do not end until the immigrant has been granted the right to stay in the host country, a process that may take many months, even years. The term exile is inevitably linked to the fate of the involuntary immigrant and is understood in this sense throughout this thesis. Grinberg and Grinberg (1989, p. 2) draw attention to the “*unique nature of exile*” that separates it from other forms of emigrational states; namely the fact that the departure is imposed and return unattainable. In line with their point, this study will use the term exile when we refer to immigrants’ presence in the adopted country. It is however apparent that some of the conditions experienced by the exiled are also characteristic for other groups of immigrants.

Several psychoanalytic authors have in their exploration of the psychology of the exiled sought the Greek roots of the term exile (Varvin, 2003; Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). In ancient Greece exile was one of the forms of punishment that was most feared, since it meant that the exiled was sentenced to a life as an outsider and a stranger. In exile the pull factors, those that attract the immigrant to the new country, are weaker than the push factors, which are the factors that pressure one to leave (Berry et al., 2002). Given both the ancient roots and displeasing nature of it, it is no surprise that the world of literature is abundant with depictions of exile and its unsatisfactory nature¹¹. In an essay called “*The mind of winter: Reflection on life in exile*”, Edward Said writes: “*Exile is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home*”.

¹¹ The theme of exile in literature is thoroughly studied in “Exile in literature” by María-Inés Lagos-Pop and in “Literature and Exile” by David G Bevan.

According to Foster (2001) a number of emotional and physical tasks face the immigrant. Immigration in all its forms involves loss and separation, loss of home, people, places, status and sometimes a loss of one's sense of identity. People who leave their home and settle in a new country have their links severed to not only familiar objects, but in a way to everything that bear meaning. For some theorists the loss of home, which is an inevitable part of immigration, is *“not only about a concrete object or condition, but encapsulates the totality of all dimensions of home.”* (Papadopoulos, 2002, p. 15) This totality involves every experience the individual has prior to immigration and constitutes, according to Papadopoulos, a part of one's identity. Papadopoulos (2002) emphasizes that it is essential to deal with this loss before the individual indulges in cultural and social “recreation” in the new homeland. The immigrant not only loses network, and sometimes his or her family, but also a physical environment. Immigration has been associated with anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, psychiatric disorder and substance abuse (Foster, 2001). For Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) immigration can have the qualities of trauma, since it involves a number of adjustment stressors and traumatic events that can combine and produce anxiety and depression. Furthermore, it is generally accepted that the possible risks associated with immigration are elevated when the individual travels and resettles alone without the supportive structures of a family (Foster, 2001).

Since all of our informants immigrated during late childhood and early adolescence, it is pertinent to explore the relationship between age and immigration. Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) state that it is plausible that children might experience immigration as less traumatic process than adults do. This because they have fewer losses due to displacement since they know fewer people, and are more open to new impressions and environments. They continue by pointing to the fact that children are not involved in the decision to immigrate. In this sense the child is always exiled regardless of whether the parents' immigration is voluntary or not (Akhtar, 1995; Varvin, 2004; Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). In short, immigration in childhood and adolescence is associated with higher risk of problems with adaptation and mental health (Fazel & Stein, 2003). Rapid cultural change, as is the case in immigration, may be associated with adolescence antisocial behaviour (see Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006). Immigration, although a major disturbance in the individual's life, can also be perceived as a “rebirth” and an opportunity for personal growth (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989; Varvin, 2003; Akhtar, 1995). In theory, exile can also provide individuals with opportunities that were not available to them in the native country.

People who leave for a new country are often faced with a mountain of new challenges. They are suddenly in situation where, as Varvin (2003, p. 175) puts it;

“The sensory veil of the culture is pulled away, and one finds oneself in surroundings that smell differently, where the food is strange, the music alien, the language often completely incomprehensible, the customs and the moral standards are different (...) and you do not receive the expected reactions to your behaviour (...) ordinarily situations must be dealt with as if they were new”.

What Varvin describes above, is of course the nature of all immigration and is felt by every immigrant, but the situation is even more complicated for the exiled. As mentioned above, the exiled have not travelled towards something, but rather fled from something, and this makes it harder for them than other immigrants to find their place in the new society (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). Akhtar (1995) points to the fact that the exiled cannot visit their homeland as easily as other immigrants can and are therefore barred from the “*emotional refuelling*” that a visit represents. Furthermore, at least in the beginning, the exiled is an alien in an alien world. This state can also affect how the immigrant views himself or herself. According to Varvin (2003), the feeling of being alien in a new environment may also make the person alien to himself or herself. This can be caused by the challenges exile represents to one's identity due to the realization that one has to give up parts of oneself in order to adapt to the new environment (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). In exile the literate becomes illiterate, the doctor becomes taxi-driver, parents cease to function as role models and the independent becomes dependent on others.

Acculturation and adaptation:

After offering a general description and insight into the nature of immigration and exile, we will now shift focus to the specific processes and end states that are believed to occur when individuals or groups who are enculturated to one culture come in lasting contact with another culture. Our theoretical focus will be on two perspectives; the cross-cultural perspective with its focus on acculturation, and the psychoanalytic perspective with its focus on intrapsychic reactions to culture change and immigration. One should also bear in mind that we focus on

the part of the psychoanalytic perspective that focuses on “culture change” due to immigration and exile and not on the part that focuses on second generation immigrants and minorities in general.

Before proceeding, it is of paramount importance to clarify some points regarding this section. Firstly, it should be pointed out that these two perspectives should be viewed as supplementary. Secondly, processes and states that will be referred to are not to be conceived as final and all-encompassing. In other words a person who is alienated or marginalized in the new society is not necessarily alienated in every domain of her or his life, and acculturation or adaptation status today does not imply that the person will be forever in that category. Thirdly, whether the immigrant will adapt psychologically to his new environment is not only determined by his pre-immigration experiences, but also to the social, political and cultural environment of the host country.

Acculturation theory

As mentioned above, acculturation theory is a part of cross-cultural psychology. But the term acculturation has originally its roots in anthropology and sociology (Rudmin, 2003). As a psychological concept acculturation has come to mean; *a process in which cultural change results from contact between at least two autonomous and independent cultural groups* (see Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006, p. 1). Berry and colleagues (2002) have distinguished between individual’s acculturation, most commonly known as psychological acculturation, and acculturation in groups. There are two reasons for this distinction, the first is that the phenomenon of acculturation is different at the two levels; at the group level changes occur in the group’s social structure and collective culture, while on the individual level changes affects the individual’s attitudes and identity. In this section the focus will mainly be on the individual level.

It has long been established that individuals and groups seek different acculturation strategies when they come in first-hand contact with a new culture. Four distinct acculturation strategies have been identified by researchers (Berry et al., 2002). Underneath these four strategies one finds two dimensions; one is the preference to having contact with, and acquiring aspects of the majority or new culture, while the second is the preference for maintaining ones own inherited culture. Every group and individual can be plotted along the continuum of each dimension, thus eliciting four strategies; integration, assimilation, separation and

marginalization (Berry et al., 2002). Briefly speaking, the term integration is applied if individuals and groups both are able to and choose to uphold their original culture and simultaneously engage with the new culture. If the original culture is preserved and the new culture is rejected the scenario is called separation. Marginalization is defined when the group or the individual has no wish or possibility to preserve the inherited culture and simultaneously rejects contact with the new or dominant culture. Finally, the strategy of rejecting ones cultural identity and seeking to acquire the new culture's ways are called assimilation. It is acknowledged that integration is the best strategy to choose since it has been associated with both positive adaptation and good health (Berry et al, 2002). Although a closer look at the categories is out of the scope of this paper, it should once again be stressed that acculturation strategies are freely chosen only in an ideal world; the political, social and cultural characteristics of both the dominant and non-dominant group sets constrains for both the individual and the group.

At the individual level acculturation involves potential change to a person's behaviour, identity and attitudes. Simplified this means that contact with another culture raises the question of how much intentional and accidental cultural shedding and learning the individual should engage in (Berry et al., 2002). Thus, the above mentioned categories can be employed here as well. For the individual, challenges due to acculturative process can lead to either successful adaptation or to acculturative stress like anxiety, uncertainty, depression even psychopathology (Berry et al, 2002). Acculturation studies on individuals have revealed the importance of involvement in culture of origin for positive adaptation (Phinney et al., 1997; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006). Furthermore, studies have indicated that the earlier the individual is integrated, the higher education he or she has, and the lesser the cultural distance between the cultures in contact the more positive adaptation can be expected (see Berry et al., 2002). Racism and discrimination, however, have constantly been associated with negative adaptation (Berry, 1998).

Psychoanalytic perspectives on adaptation to exile

Within the psychoanalytic tradition intrapsychic factors are focused on in the exploration of exile and adaptation to a new society. More precisely, there are several foci; firstly, the focus is on the losses and mourning inherent to immigration and exile. Secondly, psychoanalytic theories focus on the "culture shock", or in the words of Berry and colleagues (2001)

“acculturation stresses”, that is an inevitable part of exile and immigration. Finally, the focus is on the potential structural changes that take place in the immigrant’s identity. Within the psychoanalytic tradition the link between these three components are more visible and prominent. As mentioned earlier, the mourning process must be dealt with if one is to achieve a positive adaptation to the new culture, and this adaptation involves, at least a temporary, derailment of ones identity (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). When the losses involved in immigration are integrated and represented in a meaningful way, the tasks of adapting to and incorporating elements of the new culture can begin.

Considering that the immigrant has to incorporate new communication codes that at first are alien and incomprehensible, there is great potential for perceiving the new environment as chaotic and unpredictable and oneself invaded by a hostile world (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). This shock can induce an anxiety in the individual that can lead to regression. Given that the well-known markers for meaning and behaviour are missing, the exiled becomes more dependent on the inner world (ibid.). The individual becomes less able to use adaptive resources and tends to split the reality into either all good or all bad categories (Varvin, 2003; Akhtar, 1995; Grinberg & Grinberg). He either perceives the former culture and home as bad and the new country and culture as good, or the opposite reaction is observed. This splitting is also predominant in the self-representations of the exiled. According to Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) this dissociation is prevalent in the early faces of exile and is present because the individual struggles to keep the anxiety and confusion caused by the contact with the new culture at a distance.

Given that the environment that receives the exiled is welcoming and friendly; the immigrant may after a while overcome the cultural shock. The task of overcoming the cultural shock is facilitated by integrating the positive and negative aspects of both cultures. If this process is not accomplished and more adaptive defences are not put up, the result can, according to Akhtar (1995), be either “*ethnocentric withdrawal*” or “*counterphobic assimilation*”. Varvin (2003) describes the former as a state marked by strong idealization of ones original culture, while the latter is marked by superficial and exaggerated assimilation. He continues by stating that the ideal state of integration is marked by the ability to move between the two cultures without causing to much intrapsychic conflict. However, before a trouble-free crossing back and forth between the cultures can be a reality, a psychostructural change, in the form of a hybrid identity, must emerge. The psychoanalytic perspectives on the emergence of a hybrid

identity will be treated in the following section on identity and potential identity change associated with immigration and exile.

Identity

The recognition that immigration and the subsequent minority status offer challenges to the individual's identity, makes it appropriate to give a brief overview of this phenomenon. According to Varvin (2003) one's identity consists of mental representations of both our selves and of others. These representations are products of the interaction an individual has had with others, but is not a blue print of these interactions. According to Erikson one's identity enables personal continuity in the midst of change of time and space (see Mann, 2006). Thus, the formation of an identity gives the individual an intrapsychic experience of remaining the same despite environmental and temporal change. There are two stages in life that are vital for consolidation and changes of identity. The first is the separation – individuation stage which takes place in early childhood (ibid.). During this stage the child establishes an identity as an independent individual separate from the mother. The second stage is labelled “*second individuation*” and takes place during puberty (Blos, 1967 in Akhtar, 1995). The second individuation is about establishing one's own space in the social context and independency from the parents. Akhtar (1995) has introduced the term “*third individuation*” to describe the processes that prevail when the immigrant's self-concepts are challenged in the new society. In his opinion the potential changes that occur in the immigrant's identity in exile, on a phenomenological level resemble the earlier individuation periods. Varvin (2003) argues that the challenges that immigration poses to one's identity are an extreme version of the universal identity dilemma; namely the never ending internal and external challenges to our core belief on who we are.

Akhtar (1995) describes four psychological processes that are involved in the emergence of an immigrant's adaptive hybrid identity. He describes these processes as a psychological travel and dubs the first “*from love or hate to ambivalence*”. This process involves the above mentioned splitting between good and bad. A new adaptive identity is dependent on the immigrant's ability to integrate elements of the old and the new culture into the identity. The second process is called “*from near or far to optimal distance*”. Here the task is to attain a state where one has an optimal distance to the self-representations embedded in the native culture and the self-representations emerging from contact with a new culture. The third travel

is called “*from yesterday or tomorrow to today*” and involves living in the present and step by step deidealizing lost objects from the immigrant’s past. The last process Akhtar calls “*from yours or mine to ours*” and is about experiencing “weness” in regard to the new culture. Thus, it involves ending the split the immigrant makes between the old culture as “mine” and the new culture as “yours”. For Akhtar these four processes constitute a positive adaptation of the self to the new environment and the emergence of a hybrid identity. It should be emphasized that the adaptive hybrid identity described by Akhtar is not an inevitable course in the process of identity change in the immigrant. Akhtar’s hybrid identity concept can be understood as analogous to integration strategy described above, and thus are one of several routes identity change can take after immigration. Akhtar’s concepts are relevant to our study, since they capture aspects of identity change that are experienced by our informants.

Next we will present aspects of attachment theory with a focus on the effects of prolonged separation and abandonment during childhood.

Attachment theory: Focus on separation and abandonment

Attachment theory is a theory that encompasses both normal psychological development and the development of psychopathology. According to Thompson (2000), attachment theory is currently the dominant approach to understanding early socio-emotional and personality development and hence, psychological disorders. Given the amount of available literature and the scope of this paper, only a brief outline of the theory will be presented here. Four out of five informants have experienced prolonged separation from, and abandonment by caregivers during their childhood. Therefore this presentation will focus on attachment theory’s contribution to the understanding of how separation and abandonment in childhood or adolescence affect later functioning.

Basic concepts:

Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby (e.g. 1969; 1980), postulates a universal human need to form close affectional bonds. At its core is the warm affectional relationship that develops between the caregiver and child, which is a precondition of normal development probably in all humans. The activation of attachment behaviours depends on the infant’s evaluation of a range of environmental signals, which results in feelings of security or

insecurity. Developing strategies to cope with danger and the experience of security are the goals of the attachment system, which is thus first and foremost a regulator of emotional experiences (Crittenden, 1999). In this sense it lies at the core of many forms of mental disorders (Fonagy, 2004). Although the attachment behaviour is most evident during the first year of life, Bowlby (1980) contended that attachment needs persist throughout life. Within the first year of life the infant's behaviour is purposeful and apparently based on specific expectations. His past experiences with the caregiver has been aggregated into the representational systems that Bowlby (1973) termed "*internal working models*". Because attachment relationships are internalized or represented, these early experiences and subsequent expectations apply also in adulthood and thus influence later behavioural and emotional adaptation, even in new situations and with different people (Ross, 2004). Bowlby proposed that internal working models of the self and others provide prototypes for all later relationships. These models are relatively stable across time and are change-resistant since they function partly outside awareness (Crittenden, 1990).

Individual differences:

Bowlby's colleague, Mary Ainsworth (e.g. 1978), developed the strange situation procedure for observing infants' internal working models in action. Infants, briefly separated from their caregiver in a situation unfamiliar to them, show one of four patterns: *secure attachment*, *insecure ambivalent*, *insecure anxious/avoidant* and *disorganized*. Based on Bowlby's theory and Ainsworth's findings it is assumed that individuals who are anxiously attached to caregivers, grow up with doubts about the extent to which attachment figures can comfort them in times of stress. Such individuals may develop a generalized belief in a "non-supportive world" (Florian, Mikulincer & Bucholtz, 1995). Furthermore, anxiously attached infants must be constantly concerned about the whereabouts of their caregivers, because the caregivers cannot be relied upon to be accessible in times of need. This fear of separation may continue through childhood and adolescence and may therefore have lasting effects (Bowlby, 1973).

In his book *Attachment* (1969), Bowlby introduced the concept of *developmental pathways*. The pathway metaphor denotes that early attachment insecurity not necessarily is destiny. In contrast to metaphors like trajectory, the pathway metaphor contains a notion of change of developmental direction and intersections where relational experiences can be modified

(Crittenden, 2002). However, the hypothesis is that patterns of anxious attachment represent initiations of pathways that, if continued, will increase the probability of pathological development and psychopathology in adulthood. Hence, insecure attachment is regarded as a risk factor in predicting later pathology (Weinfield, Sroufe, Egeland & Carlson, 1999). In the normal population the ratio between the secure- and insecure attachment is 70/30, however, within clinical populations we find the opposite pattern. In clinical populations about 70 % are placed within one of the insecure categories hence linking insecure attachment patterns to the development of psychopathology (Greenberg, 1999). Although solid evidence is linking insecure attachment status to psychopathology it is important to note that there are many who are categorized as insecurely attached that never develop serious psychological disorders. However, it seems evident that the combination of insecure attachment in childhood and experiences of separation, abandonment significantly increases the likelihood of detrimental psychological development.

In contrast to Ainsworth's and Bowlby's focus on security, Crittenden (1999) suggests that attachment theory in essence is a theory about protection from danger. The presence and ability to cope with danger has been central in the evolutionary history of human beings. Crittenden proposes that the perception of danger elicits mental and behavioural organization. In other words, survival has depended upon the organization of successful strategies for protection of both the individual and her offspring. According to Crittenden (1999), caregivers not only respond to their children's distress, they also have to prepare their offspring to be safe in their environment. It is suggested that secure strategies such as open and direct communication of feelings and intentions might be adaptive in some environments, however, the same behaviour might be directly endangering in other circumstances. Specifically, children who experience danger develop strategies that reduce the sorts of danger that they have experienced. The latter assumption is of great relevance in this context since several informants have experienced environments in which life threatening situations had to be dealt with on a day to day basis (Crittenden, 1999).

Separation and abandonment:

The following section will focus on short and long term effects of separation from and abandonment by caregivers. Prior to the Second World War it was believed that the warm affectionate feelings the infant displays towards his mother is due to the association he makes

between the mother and food. This misconception held true both within contemporary developmental psychological theories and within public institutions, such as hospitals or other health clinics. Several studies conducted at the end of the war profoundly altered psychological theory on the nature of the early relationship between mother and child and the child treatment in the hospitals. Especially important were the contributions of John Bowlby. Bowlby had learned from Rene Spitz' studies that infants separated from their mothers in a hospital setting over a long period of time would often withdraw into a depressive state and were unnaturally susceptible to infectious diseases (de Zulueta, 2006). He attributed the infants' pathology to absence of the mother and the deprivation of her love and affection.

With this in mind he studied how infants react when they are separated from their mothers (de Zulueta, 2006). He described how acutely distressed the infant becomes when being left by the mother. Initially the infant attempts to get the mother back by crying and screaming. Bowlby (1969) referred to this stage as the protest phase. In instances of prolonged separation this stage might last for a few hours to a week or more. During this phase, efforts by alternative adults to comfort and sooth the child are typically met with little success. The phase of despair, which succeeded protest, is marked by behaviour that suggests increased hopelessness about the mother's return. Although a child may continue to cry intermittently, active physical movements diminish and the child will withdraw or disengage from people in the environment (de Zulueta, 2006). The time when the child turns his attention back to the environment marks the final phase, detachment. The child no longer rejects alternate caregivers, but if the mother is returning the child will display either indifference to their mother's presence, showing blank, expressionless faces or turning and walking away from their mother (de Zulueta, 2006).

Renn (2002) points out that the effect of loss of a parental figure or prolonged separation depends to a large extent on the availability of potential substitute attachment figures and on how these respond to the child's attachment related needs. In most instances the process of mourning due to loss or separation takes place within the context of the family's characteristic attachment behaviour. The family members may either facilitate the expression of grief by responding sympathetically to the child's distress or adopt a more inhibitive attitude which causes the child to avoid typical and normal feelings of fear of abandonment, yearning and anger. Bowlby (1979) argues that if the child is met with sympathetic and supportive attitude from the other family members, this can facilitate a healthy mourning process in children as

young as two years old. According to Renn (2002), a healthy mourning process due to the loss of a loved one consists of normal behavioural responses of anxiety and protest, despair and disorganization, and detachment and reorganization. The loss is gradually accepted and the child ability to form new attachment bonds is restored.

However, if the child's despair is met by either punishment, indifference or not seen at all, the outcome of a mourning process may have a more severe outcome. The child's unexpressed ambivalent feelings of yearning for, and anger with the attachment figure become split off into segregated and dissociated systems of the personality, and the loss may be disavowed. If a trusted substitute attachment figure is unavailable, the child has little alternative but to move to a defensive mode of emotional detachment, and thus internalizing a mental mode of attachment that is dismissing or avoidant of affective states associated with separation and loss. In such instances the child's attachment behavioural system remains deactivated because attachment-related information is being defensively and selectively excluded from consciousness (Renn, 2002; Bowlby, 1980). This particular strategy for coping with the loss of an attachment figure is defined by Bowlby as detachment (Renn, 2002). The primary mental processes of detached individuals are a splitting of positive and negative features of self, others, and relationships and dismissing negative affect from mental processing and behaviour. According to Crittenden (2002) this includes distancing the self from negative affect and dismissing negative conclusions about attachment figures and attributing negative features of relationships to the self (ibid.).

Long term effects:

A pivotal assumption of attachment theory is that adverse childhood experiences such as abandonment or prolonged separation from caregivers has serious ramifications for later functioning. In his pioneering work *Forty-four Juvenile Thieves* (1947) Bowlby found that 40 % of the young thieves had experienced prolonged separation from their caregivers. Moreover, Bowlby found that among a subgroup of youths, which he labelled *affectionless characters*, a solid 85 % had experienced prolonged separation from their caregivers. The juveniles labelled as affectionless characters were distinguished from the other groups by their lack of affection or warmth of feeling for anyone. These juveniles did not respond to either punishment or kindness. Another trait that characterized the affectionless characters was superficial friendships and the frequency in which they changed acquaintances. Although

some of the affectionless characters were members of gangs or spent much time in the company of peers, these relationships were shallow and marked by the absence of affectional ties. Bowlby predicted that several of the youths described as affectionless characters would end up as hardened criminals later in life (Bowlby, 1947).

In his discussion of aetiology Bowlby (1947) suggested that the origins of a delinquent character are to be found in either prolonged separation from parents or in the conscious and unconscious negative attitudes the parents have towards their child. His study contained evidence for both factors. Moreover, he stressed the importance of emotional traumas in the first decade of life and argued that death and illness in the family has paramount effect on the development of the child's psychological wellbeing (Bowlby, 1947).

More recent studies (Boswell, 1996 and Fonagy, Target, Steele, Leigh, Levinson & Kennedy, 1997, in Renn, 2002) show that up to 90 % of young offenders have experienced maltreatment, loss and separation in their childhood. Moreover, separation from caregivers in childhood is associated with several different forms of psychopathology in adulthood, such as depression and anxiety disorders. The link between prolonged separation, abandonment and loss in childhood is especially evident in the histories of individuals with antisocial personality disorder (Dozier, Stovall & Albus, 1999). Here it must be noted that having unfavourable attachment experiences in childhood will not inevitable lead to a person developing a form of psychopathology. Furthermore, attachment experiences are only one of several factors leading to adult psychopathology. However, the evidence presented above more than suggests that prolonged separation from caregivers and abandonment is a prominent risk factor in the development of adult psychopathology. Bowlby believed that when children experience prolonged separation they internalize a model of themselves as unlovable or rejected. These children do not expect that caregivers will be available when needed, and thus they develop alternative, insecure strategies for coping with their distress (Dozier et al, 1999).

Bowlby (1973) proposed that an individual's mode of perceiving and dealing with emotionally significant persons and situations may be influenced by experiences he had with his parents during childhood and adolescence. In other words, a person who has had ordinarily available and affectionate parents has always known from whom he can seek support, comfort and safety. These experiences of availability of caregivers are integrated into

the internal working models. Consequently, when the person in adulthood is confronted with severe difficulties he will consciously and unconsciously believe that there are others that will come to his aid if needed. In contrast, persons who during childhood and/or adolescence have experienced prolonged separation from caregivers, or that their whereabouts and availability has been constantly uncertain, will have no confidence that a caretaking figure will ever be truly available and dependable. According to Bowlby (1973), such persons will perceive the world as comfortless and unpredictable and that their response will be either doing battle with the world or withdraw from it. In summary, attachment theory postulates that prolonged separation from caregivers during childhood will have detrimental effects on the child's development, given that no appropriate substitute attachment figure is available.

Method:

This section will focus on the following topics; the rationale for employing a qualitative approach, issues regarding recruitment of informants, obtainment of approvals for the conduction of the study, the interview and its administration and transcription. There will also be an examination of the methodological consequences of our presumptions on the findings of the study, before moving on to ethical considerations.

Choice of method

This study employs a qualitative methodology since this approach is regarded as suitable in the study of how human beings think and relate to their lives and experiences (see Thagaard, 2003). Qualitative methods are well suited in the examination of fields that have not been the subject of much research. Eika is an example of such a field. Consequently, the study of Eika requires extra openness and flexibility on behalf of both researchers and their methodology. When working with marginalized groups it is important to develop a relationship to potential informants in order to get “access” to their world and their experiences. Furthermore, the discovery that, both domestically and internationally, there has been conducted exceptionally few qualitative studies on drug dealers, made us aware of the deficit on qualitative knowledge on this subject. Subsequently we decide to adopt an open minded approach and focus on “inhabitants” of Eika and their understanding of Eika and their activities there. Given our research questions we decided that semi-structured interviewing was the method of data collection that was most appropriate. The reason for this decision was that a semi-structured interview would give us the desired structure to go into matters we a priori believed were important and at the same time leave room for unexpected details. This method of data collection would give us the opportunity to ask about issues we believed were important and at the same time give the informants the opportunity to share with us aspects of their experiences we had not considered.

Procedure:

In order to establish contact with potential informants we sought the assistance and advice of individuals and public institutions with experience on and contact with the drug dealers. We were fortunate enough to get access to the irreplaceable knowledge, experience and assistance

of Uteseksjonen. With their assistance we were able to get access to the closed world of Eika. Moses Kuvoame and Rita Rødset brought us along on several of the patrols Uteseksjonen conducted each day at Eika. During these patrols we came in contact with several of our informants. Secondly, these patrols with Uteseksjonen helped us to get a look at Eika beyond the sensational news headlines and to develop confidence needed in order to conduct our own patrols. Prior to recruitment of the informants the study was approved by National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway and by The Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). These bodies approved the theme of the study, the interview guide and study's information sheet (see appendix).

Through our already established contact with some of the “dwellers” at Eika, we were able to expand our network of acquaintances and potential informants. Besides recruiting informants, the purpose of our fieldwork at Eika was to observe the interactions between the many individuals along the river. However, we discovered that there were a number of obstacles we had to overcome in order to conduct the interviews. Often it was difficult to continue the conversation when the drug dealers realized that we were not potential costumers. Several refused to talk to us since they believed we could be undercover police. We discovered that as soon as people had established that we were not undercover police, they were more interested in talking to us. In spite of this, it was still a challenge to recruit key informants. The fact that we presented ourselves as psychology students from the University of Oslo made some of the potentials informants very sceptical. Many were afraid that we would “*mess up*” their heads to quote one. Others thought an interview between one and two hours was too long, while others again were downright suspicious when the topics of the interview were revealed.

Since many of the potential informants were at work when we approached them, few of them were interested in leaving their “office” for long. To conduct an interview at the University of Oslo, which is a few kilometres outside downtown, was out of the question for the majority. Most potential informants insisted on conducting the interview in nearby coffee shops, an offer we could not accept because of privacy concerns. Thus, in order to conduct the interviews we had to find a location in the vicinity of Eika. This was however an almost impossibility since everybody, from churches to commercial businesses, demanded large amounts of money to let us use their facilities. Finally, by accident we discovered that Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) were just a stone's throw away from Eika and they agreed to let use a meeting room for free.

Finally, after managing to find individuals who were interested in participating in the study, a new challenge arose; to make an appointment on where and when to meet. After they had stated their interest in participating in our study it was almost impossible to get hold of them for the actual interview. In some instances we had to schedule and reschedule a meeting ten times before it materialized in an interview. While other times we never managed to conduct an interview. There were several reasons for these difficulties. The informants' job at Eika did not require a strict planning of the day. There was room for impulsivity and flexibility. "Tomorrow" and "five o'clock" did not, unfortunately for us, necessarily mean those things. Secondly, there were times people intended to meet us as planned, but they were either arrested or some pressing business matter has to be dealt with first. All of these challenges provided us with valuable information on Eika and the people making a living there. In the end we managed to conduct five interviews. In addition to these interviews we had a great number of conversations with secondary informants.

The interview:

Before conducting the interviews the informants were briefed about the study both orally and in writing. The issue of confidentiality, informed consent and the right to discontinue anytime during the interview was conveyed to the informants. Once we were certain the informants understood the purpose of the study and interview, the information sheet was signed by the informants. In some instances the informants were allowed to have up to a week to consider whether they wished to participate in the study. As mentioned above, most of the studies were conducted at IMDi's premises, while two interviews were conducted at the University of Oslo. Initially we were advised to compensate each informant with 200 Norwegian Kroner (NOK), but for those who agreed to travel all the way to the university we paid up to 400 NOK. None of the informants declined to be compensated. The rationale for paying the informants was that by letting themselves be interviewed the informants had to leave their job and potentially lose money. Thus, we compensated them for the potential loss of income.

The interview (see appendix) was a semi structured, consisted of 78 questions and was conducted in either English or Norwegian. These questions were made up of core topics like attachment, identity, relationship to Norway and Norwegians and family background. The goal was not to ask every 78 questions, but rather to cover every core topic. Like in any semi

structured interview not all of our questions were phrased ahead of time and we had the flexibility to probe for further details.

The interviews lasted between one and two and a half hours and were carried out in November and December 2006. All of the interviews were recorded by a digital recorder, a procedure that was approved by the informants beforehand. The interviews were carried out without any intermissions and disturbances, and by one interviewer. There were no particular incidences during the interviews and every informant, with one exception, answered to all of our questions. It should be mentioned that extra care was employed when questions and topics of a sensitive and difficult nature was covered. This was done by repeating that they could decline to answer any question. At the end of every interview the informants were asked about their experiences and thoughts on the interview situation. Several of the informants revealed an appreciation for the fact that they could tell their stories, and none of the informants reported that the interview had been a negative event.

Methodological considerations:

There are some methodological considerations regarding the present study. One issue is whether our presentation of the informants and our interpretations are justified and appropriate. The fact that most of our informants were not fluent in Norwegian or English, and the ever present risk that the informants answer what they feel is the right answer, rather than what they feel and think, represents a challenge to the validity of our findings. Secondly, the kind of data we acquired was to a degree influenced by our prior interests and the questions we asked. Hence, the question is whether our presumptions and theoretical preconceptions have provided us with data that only served to confirm those same preconceptions. The question is whether our interviews were open enough to leave room for surprises and unexpected twists. The answer to these questions is yet another question; is it at all possible to approach a novel phenomenon without leaning on previous knowledge? We had our hypotheses regarding Eika and these were involved in shaping our interview questions. However, as mentioned we had a semi structured interview that opened up for novel and surprising data and whenever a new phenomenon were introduced by the informants we pursued them.

There is also the question of the generalizability of the study. This becomes pressing when one considers the fact that the informants were easily distinguishable from others who were more suspicious and distrustful of outsiders and who declined to be interviewed. In other words; it is no coincidence which people agreed to participate in the study in the end. It is quite plausible that our informants represent a group that is less distrustful than other people at Eika. The issue of generalizability is legitimate and would challenge our findings if our goal was to reach a conclusion that is valid for all of the "inhabitants" of Eika. We are not under the illusion that our findings are valid for all of Eika. On the other hand we will argue in accordance with Willig and Kippax and colleagues (see Willig, 2001, p. 17), that even though we do not know how many at Eika and similar milieus share the particular experiences we have identified, we know that these experiences are available within a social context and thus are potentially subject to generalization. In other words; the general processes and dynamics that we describe in our analysis can perhaps have generalizability beyond Eika. Finally, the fact that one of the authors has an ethnic minority background may provide this thesis with a more in-depth understanding of some of the fundamental issues in this thesis.

Ethical considerations:

The nature of qualitative research, including this study, makes it hard to foresee ethical pitfalls before the study is in progress. In the instance of this study, we could not be completely sure whether some of our questions, our behaviour or other aspects of our study could offend or even harm our informants. Could for instance questions regarding the informants' childhood uncover traumas that would lead to a dramatic deterioration of their psychic health? Were there critical factors, unseen by us when we conceptualized the study that could endanger the wellbeing of our informants? It is particularly pivotal to pay heed to the abovementioned considerations when one is dealing with marginalized groups like drug dealers.

There are other potential dangers as well when conducting qualitative inquires on marginalized and stigmatized groups. By carrying out research on a group like drug dealers there is a risk of further alienating and stigmatizing an already vulnerable group. Could our findings and descriptions give further nourishment to the already established negative image of Eika and the people there? This concern is especially valid since several people and

organizations were initially sceptical to assist us since they feared that a study could further marginalize and draw more negative attention to Eika.

There are certainly also issues of confidentiality when a study like this one is carried out among a small group. One faces always the possibility, despite honest attempts on anonymization, that the informants can be identified through what they have said. In this case there is an even more severe dimension to this; since our informants belong to a criminal underworld the result of identification could potentially lead to imprisonment. Thus, we chose to omit details that potentially could lead to identification.

There is also a risk that a study like ours, which focuses on individual stories, can trivialize and reduce the macro perspectives which also are needed to address an issue like Eika. The risk might be that our focus on the individual's past relationships and experiences will downplay the role of macro explanations like structural racism and poverty.

Another issue is how obligated we as researchers are for making this study available for our informants. It is unfortunately more than likely that most of our informants will never read this report and our conclusions. In our opinion this issue could be best addressed by offering our informants the opportunity to hear about our conclusions face to face after the study was completed.

Transcription:

We listened to each interview several times immediately after they were conducted. This was done both in order to get acquainted with and to grasp the emotional content of the material. Then we transcribed the interviews without further delay. The point of this was to ensure that as much as possible of the nonverbal data, like gestures, body language, reactions to certain questions and facial expressions was remembered and noted by the researchers. Another strategy to save nonverbal data, that inevitably would be lost during transcribing, was to write down our observations of every informant right before, during and immediately after the interviews. For instance whether there was an observable change in the behaviour of the informants before, during and after the interviews. Whether there were any changes in face expression or body language when certain theme was brought up. In retrospective it is safe to claim that the registration of nonverbal data demonstrated their value. They were valuable

both as additional cues for our memory when it was difficult to decipher what the informants said, but also as clues to what the informants felt about sensitive issues that did not elicit any answers. An important issue regarding transcription was how verbatim it should be. In order to lose as little information as possible we chose to be as verbatim as possible in addition to including the way the words were spoken.¹² We included features like pauses, laughter and intonation in our transcription. However we were aware of the fact that no matter how verbatim, our transcription involves a conversion of what is said into something else (Willig, 2001).

The data analysis:

After the transcription was completed, we read the interviews many times in order to get acquainted with the data. During the first read-throughs we did not attempt to categorize the data we had in front of us, but rather we discussed the themes and sequences of speech that had caught our attention. These discussions had two functions. Firstly, our knowledge of the interviews was widened and secondly, since there were two of us, the discussions made each of us aware of elements the other had not discovered. It should be mentioned that our written impressions from our many patrols at Eika were at times used to broaden, supplement and specify the information we obtain from the interviews. During the read-through we started to focus on themes that were identified in each transcript. Then themes that were common to all informants were identified. This process was done first separately by each of us, then together. After several rounds we arrived at 13 separate themes¹³ that were concerned with the informants' experiences of their lives. It should be mentioned that our interests and presumptions did not only influence the questions we asked, in addition they led our analytic process in a certain direction. However, this point is accurate to a certain degree, as we mentioned earlier; by using a semi structured interview we opened up for other unexpected topics as well.

In the next phase of the analysis the task was to abstract these 13 topics and identify a smaller number of overarching themes. In the end we arrived at three themes; *Eika*, *Exile* and

¹² Through out of this thesis the statements of our informants will be presented as verbatim as possible. This means also that when our informants stated something in broken Norwegian/English, we have reproduced it in broken English.

¹³ The topics were: *Thoughts on life and future, friendship, losses and trauma, relationship to parents and siblings, police and arrests, relationship to Norwegians, racism, Eika, Getting a job, identity, role models, homeland vs Norway and drug use.*

attachment. To us these topics seemed fitting since they depicted the informants' explanations and understanding around both their activities at Eika and what had led and kept them there. Although at first glance these three topics may seem very different from each other, we will argue that jointly they can shed a light on our research questions and our goal of capturing the dealers' perspective on life. Since these topics focus on different periods of the informants' lives it is our opinion that they are complementary in giving some clues to their lives, why they stay at Eika and why they started selling drugs in the first place. Furthermore, we believe that the abovementioned factors are mutually reinforcing in that the detrimental effects of a life in exile are more strongly felt if the individual has experienced separation and/or abandonment in childhood.

Before continuing it should be emphasized that we arrived at these themes well aware of two issues; firstly that even though the data was fragmented in different topics we had to have an overall perspective when we studied parts of the interviews. In other words; a sequence's meaning could change when we separated it from its context. Secondly we knew that these topics are tentative, not final and that the narratives in themselves contain no defined categories.

Analysis:

The analysis section is divided into three subsections. Each of the subsections will deal with one of the three factors that we believe can shed light on the research questions and the goal of capturing the dealers' experiences at Eika.

Eika:

Prior to conducting the study we had some hypotheses on what the youth at Eika thought about being a part of a criminal milieu. For instance, we believed that at least some of the youths would describe Eika as a venue for socializing and bonding with peers. However, our presumptions were not confirmed by the informants' narratives. In this section we will focus on the informants' descriptions on what they think about dealing drugs at Eika. The section will start by giving a brief overview of the informants' narratives on the different pathways that led them to Eika.

Hustling, that's nothing for me!

It became evident during the course of the interviews, there was no single path that led to Eika and the activities associated with it. Some, like Vahid, stated that he had been attracted to the site and eventually started his dealing career as a consequence of his own hashish use. Others, like Ali and Rahim, reported that difficulty getting a job was one of the reasons for why they are selling drugs. Abdi however, believed that neither his drug use nor economic urgency had forced him to start dealing at Eika. According to him, his career started because he thought it was "cool" to hang around Eika and make quick money. However, despite articulating dissimilar reasons for ending up at Eika, our key informants agreed on one essential matter; they did not consider Eika as, to put it mildly, an ideal place, nor did they think their occupation at Eika was something to aspire to.

As mentioned, prior to our fieldwork, we assumed that at least some of the dealers would portrait life at Eika as something glamorous or as something that provided them with status unavailable to them elsewhere in Norwegian society. Secondly, we were of the impression that Eika was not just a place to conduct drug business and earn some quick money, but that Eika also was a stage for companionship. We could among other things observe that many of the dealers wore expensive and fashionable clothes, items we regarded as status symbols.

Furthermore, since we observed that the dealers seldom operated alone we deduced that at least for some of our informants Eika was an arena for camaraderie. This point is also made by Sandberg & Pedersen (2006) and by the staff of Uteseksjonen. It was therefore striking that all the dealers we spoke to, both our key informants and the secondary informants, considered selling drugs as a defeat and that Eika was not a good place to spend time at. During our fieldtrips the informants' aversion towards Eika and the activities they conducted there, was sometimes expressed quite openly. Some reported harsh conditions, like the cold weather, as a source of discomfort. However, the informants' distaste for Eika was not only due to the harsh conditions of an outside job, but due to more compelling reasons as well. For instance, Rahim who had been working at Eika for three years articulated his sentiments regarding Eika in this way:

But hustling, that's nothing for me, I don't like it, I only go take some shit (hashish) there. Or when I miss some money, because the welfare office, don't give me nothing, that's why I'm in the streets hustling. But nobody likes to be there you know. I do something wrong... because I'm in the position of bad you know, and when I'm in that place I have to be bad ...

Here Rahim conveys his discomfort with his activities at Eika and his attempts to spend as little time there as possible. To him Eika is a site that forces him to act contrary to his beliefs of what constitutes a right action. It is not difficult to imagine what the perception that your livelihood is something wrong and "bad" can do with how you perceive yourself. Secondly, Rahim positions himself together with everybody else at Eika by stating that he is not the only one who detests working there. For Rahim these attitudes towards Eika, his main source of income, have some interesting consequences. He, like others we talked to at Eika, has classified the earnings from Eika as "bad money" and in contrast to "bad" money you have "good money":

But...that money is nothing for me. I don't care about it. Even if I found, one thousand of that money, I finish the money in one night I'm sure of that, because I don't like that money you know...because if I like it I'll be there for ever. To me, to me, like five thousand, I get from drugs, its better I get...one thousand I get real good money you know. I feel happy for that money. And

most Somalis hustling there, they don't care about that money. Because they hate that life...they burn the money one day.

At this point Rahim once more shares with us his aversion against Eika. One reading of this statement is that he feels no joy by earning money at Eika and that had he had other alternatives to Eika, he would have preferred them. His later statement “*if all other doors are closed I'll be at Eika*” serves to reinforce the latter point. Thus, we understand Rahim's attitudes towards Eika as contrary to what we initially had assumed.

For Malik the most imperative reason for disliking Eika is his belief that all the pushers, including himself, are vehicle for others' greed and ambitions. He believes that the dealers are being used by other criminals who operate behind the scenes and that it is the latter ones who make all the profit. Secondly, he believes that most of the pushers in his situation are stuck in a self-defeating cycle that confines them to Eika. In his opinion most of the immigrants who operate at Eika are victims of unfortunate and desperate circumstances and pure neglect from the authorities. If people had been provided with the proper help, he believes nobody would have chosen Eika. Thus, for Malik life at Eika is neither desired nor something you choose unless you are desperate. The thing that upsets him the most is what he perceives as ignorance and short-sightedness among the drug sellers:

...the worst thing actually is that the people (at Eika) don't think for themselves (...) they just think at Eika you have money and they become happy for a thousand kroner, but what comes next, that they don't think about. (If) you come to Eika, work and buy beer and drugs for that money then you are stuck (...) that's not the way to live.

Malik's account on the dealers' lack of foresight gives an illustration of the desperate situation many of the drug dealers face at Eika. One can understand this desperation as lacking the opportunities to get out of Eika. In his statement Malik position himself as someone who is different from the majority of the dealers. In line with this interpretation, he is someone who is able to see beyond the quick money of Eika and think of the future. Consequently, as one might expect, Malik is on the search to end his drug selling days and find a new path in life. He plans to “retire” before the coming summer.

Vahid agrees with Rahim and Malik when he shares his sentiments about his workplace. Although he has a less forthright way of expressing his displeasure of being a part of a criminal and chased milieu, it is more than evident that he has no liking for Eika and his job:

The river is nice by itself, without the sellers, but they (the drug sellers) have ruined the place. That's not good (...) I'm telling you, I want to quit working and avoid the police.

It is important to notice that when Vahid refers to the drug sellers, he uses the personal pronoun “they” and therefore does not identify himself as a seller. Although this may be an unintended mistake due to his incomplete skills in Norwegian, it is more than plausible that the discomfort of identifying oneself as a drug seller is too great. The latter point is even more probable when considering that Vahid was the only informant who initially pretended to have nothing to do with Eika and refused that he was selling drugs. It is evident that for some of our informants the tension between what one considers as morally correct and what one does for a living is a major source for discomfort.

In contrast to the statements of the other key informants, it may seem that Abdi has a more nuanced view on Eika. At first glance it appears that he endorses Eika and life there and thus is in support of what Pedersen (2006) and Kuvoame (2005) discovered; namely that Eika serves as an arena where they feel a sense of belonging and companionship. Among others, he describes the site as a “*very pleasant place with a lot of humour*”. He finishes his description of Eika by stating “*Today people seldom stab each other*”. However most people would agree that a venue where people not so often attack one another does not constitute a definition for “*very pleasant*”. This point, along with another statement later on when he is asked about his future plans throw new light on his partial endorsement of Eika:

...I really want to quit the office quit the whole shit. When a friend of mine stabbed a guy (at Eika) then I realized it wasn't something for me. What he did was like, he dragged the guy down and, then he took out a knife and started stabbing him in his back. What was strange was that the other people there didn't care, because they were high! I felt sorry for him.

Here Abdi describes his discomfort when one of his friends stabbed another drug dealer. Subsequently it is appropriate to raise the question whether Abdi really thinks that Eika is the ground for camaraderie and friendship when all he really wants is to quit Eika and, as he later emphasizes, to get a job elsewhere. The point Abdi makes about the other peoples' reaction to a "colleague" who gets stabbed, seems to give us more than an indication that Abdi really does not think Eika is a "very pleasant" place. What is more than clear for the other four informants is the fact that they do not consider Eika as a suitable place for anything else than getting in trouble and earning "bad" money. For Rahim for instance, Eika does certainly not serve as a "*place where they (the young drug sellers of Eika) can get social, moral, emotional and cultural support from like-minded*" like Kuvoame puts it (2006, p. 11). For the others there are few opportunities for friendship and a sense of belonging at Eika as well. Vahid for instance describes his workplace as a lonesome place and that he only talks to one other person at Eika. Given that he spends more than three hours five times a week at Eika, it is not hard to envision what a lonely place Eika can be. We will come back to the theme of friendship and Eika in the section on attachment.

Since our informants are involved in careers that are based on crime and that brings them at odds with society, it is no surprise that another reason for their dissatisfaction with working at Eika is the negative attention society and in particular the police and media gives to them. All informants are aware of the focus the media and the police have directed at Eika. Malik and Ali feel that this matter and the fact that they have to avoid the police make life at Eika even more unbearable. Those who have been caught by the police for selling drugs, this applies to four of the informants, describe the arrests as humiliating and the behaviour of the police as racist and sometimes unnecessary brutal. This perception can be exemplified by Abdi's story on his arrest at Eika. When asked to elaborate on an arrest he states:

They just put handcuffs on me and I couldn't understand...and I was like a bit drunk so I didn't know what was happening. So I asked one of them what they were doing...I hadn't done anything right? Then suddenly one of them after he had cuffed me...one of the old policemen and then he kicked me up and it was winter and stuff...he kicked me high in the air and I went up a bit and then I fell down and I had cuffs on me and got pain in my back and problems in my back. screamed and shouted because I was in pain...and then he said: "stay on the ground monkey"

What Abdi describes here is that he sometimes perceives the actions of the police at Eika as random and indiscriminate. At this particular time he had not committed a crime and attempted to convey this to the police officer. The response of the police officer was to reply with a racist remark and throw him brutally to the ground. Hence, for the informants the police at Eika can represent a source of uncertainty, fear and random treatment. As stated by some of the informants, the stressful attention from the police is supplemented by how they feel ordinary people view them and their activities at Eika. Several of the informants report that they feel a stigmatized by the way Norwegians look on them. According to Ali, most Norwegians do not know why they are at Eika and think that they are just criminals who are up to no good. In his opinion these people are ill informed about why people really come to work at Eika. An additional factor that contributes to the harsh conditions at Eika is the unsafety and the violence of the site. Several of the people we talked to mentioned dangerous encounters with fellow drug sellers and outsiders. Many of the conflicts are about costumers, or more precise; who gets which customer. Some of these conflicts are solved by means of violence.

The informants' sentiments towards Eika can be summarized Eika as 1) Eika is not a source of safety, belongingness and support and 2) if they had a real option most, if not all, of our informants would leave Eika and do something else. A third point seems to be that for most of the youths it is desperation that has led them to at Eika. Thus, for most Eika and the activities there has not been chosen out of interest nor liking. Eika is chosen as a last option for the majority of our informants and they have ended up there out of necessity.

As one might expect, the conditions at Eika has made all of our informants think about leaving Eika for good and ending their pusher careers. Every person we talked to at Eika voiced a wish to quit Eika because of the issues illustrated above. Rahim even expressed that he preferred jail to Eika. One might wonder whether these plans are genuine or reflect the informants desire to present themselves in a favourable light. Given the emotional, physical and psychological challenges Eika represents, and that the activities at Eika is a source of stigma, police attention, violence and a sense of guilt one might wonder why our informants stay at Eika. Abdi for instance discovered that Eika was not "something for" him after a friend stabbed another seller. Why did he stay another five years, when he, more than the other informants, had the opportunity of getting another job?

Malik is another illustrating example; he has been at Eika for four years. Today he has a small part time job in a youth club as a dance instructor, but he still does not give up Eika. This is even stranger when one considers that he is the one who despises Eika the most and what he perceives as exploitation of migrant youths. Why does he stay at Eika when he sees no good there? Is it still simply a matter of economics? For Vahid, for instance, the question why he still is at Eika is a difficult question to answer:

I'm thinking "Why can I not do it? Why can I not go to that (get an education), why can I not move on?"

Vahid's statement at this point gives us an insight to his puzzlement with his inability to move away from Eika and start a new life. In other words; he does not understand why he despite his hardships at Eika still is unable to quit as a drug dealer. This puzzlement is also shared by Abdi. When asked about if he has any existing plans to quit Eika he says:

I could get a job or an education if I wanted, but like, there is something that prevents me, in a way I don't want to(...) I had a job before...but I quit because of to much stress you know. I don't like convenient store jobs.

What Abdi states here is that he believes he has the opportunity to leave Eika, and in fact has had another job than Eika; however he did not want to keep that job. What is interesting here is that Abdi has always believed that he can quit the life as a drug dealer, but despite this he for some unknown reasons, continue to deal drugs at Eika. Thus, both Vahid and Abdi have no meaningful answers to why they continue to stay at Eika despite identifying their activities there as maladaptive. The question remains; what factors, other than job discrimination, can shed light on why our informants started at Eika and the paradox of why they stay there despite having other opportunities. What is this something that keeps them at Eika? Is it at all possible to give an answer to these questions? We will propose that other perspectives than the sociological is needed in order to fully examine the questions above. Given our informants' background as immigrants and their separation from their parents, we will attempt to illuminate their current situation at Eika by applying psychological theories on attachment and exile.

Exile:

Discourses that address living in exile are known to the informants since they experience it themselves as a member of a minority group. The term exile is not used by the informants themselves, but is a label given by us. Themes like immigration, mixed identity, racism, being a foreigner in a foreign country, the majority's perception of the minority, and manoeuvring between two cultures are all parts of their everyday life. In the following section their understanding and experiences as individuals in exile, and how this understanding can shed light on why they are selling drugs at Eika will be discussed. All informants who partook in the study talked of difficulties in adjusting to life in Norway.

I didn't want to come here!

Even though it is believed that those who have immigrated alone are at greater risk of diverse problems (Foster, 2001), the social and psychological challenges of immigration are felt by all of our informants. As it is always the case when exiled, our informants and their families left their native lands reluctantly because of war and prosecution. For two of our informants, Ali and Vahid, the realization of involuntary displacement is still a vivid and potent part of life, and thus consequential for their everyday experiences in exile. Ali described his displacement in this manner:

I didn't want to come here, mother had to force me and tell me: "It is you who are the biggest, and you can help us! You can be something"

Here Ali points to one of the characteristics of exile; its involuntariness. As is the case with other immigrants, Ali did not want to leave and the push factors were greater than the pull factors. When the latter is the case it is believed that the immigrants have most trouble adapting to the new environment (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989; Berry et al., 2002). Greater push factors were also the case for Vahid. For him leaving Iraq was a matter of survival for him and his parents. He said:

Hadn't there been a war, I promise you hadn't seen me in this country! I don't trade Iraq for any country!

At first glance it may seem that these two statements only deal with the involuntary displacement and losses inherent to exile. One interpretation of Vahid's statement is that for him the country of Exile represents nothing but a refuge from physical harm. There is nothing else to get from exile; his heart is in Iraq and Norway is not home. He has not travelled towards something, for him the opportunities are in Iraq and consequently he does not involve himself in the Norwegian society. Ali has also fled, but his mission is not solely to seek refuge. He has another mission as well, he has to "*become something*" and the opportunities lie, at least potentially, in Norway. Thus, even though exile implies involuntary displacement for both, the condition has different significance to them.

The losses experienced due to immigration are felt by all informants, but their impact are felt and expressed on different levels. For Ali and Abdi the losses involve separation from those near and dear, for others the separation from the nonhuman environment of the native land is more immediate. But no matter the nature of the losses, they involve mourning and what Akhtar (1995) dubbed "*if only and someday fantasies*". These fantasies although rooted in the losses of the past, idealize the future and, according to Akhtar, prevent a full commitment to the present. This phenomenon is evident in several of the informants. For Vahid the fantasies are concerned around becoming a famous writer and returning to Iraq, "*the land of art*". Here it is pertinent to mention that Vahid has great difficulties reading and writing in Norwegian. For Ali the future holds the long awaited reunion with his mother. When asked about his plans for reuniting with his mother he answers:

*Sometimes I gamble...want to become a millionaire to have her (the mother)...
bring her here...*

What Ali points to here is that in order to see his mother again something extraordinary, like winning the lottery, must happen. Both Ali and Vahid's wishes for the future can be characterized as fantasies since they are not grounded in their actual situation today. According to Akhtar (1995) these fantasies herald a position where the immigrant's psyche is fractured between what has been lost and the desire to recapture the lost. This rapture and the subsequent lack of commitment to the present can possibly illuminate Vahid and the other informants' puzzlement with their difficulty to leave Eika. Keeping in mind Vahid and Abdi's earlier remarks on the matter of not being able to leave Eika, one can also argue that their presence in exile produces another split as well. To them exile and the subsequent rapture of

ties to the native home and family creates a split between here and now and another location. In other words; they live in one context and at the same time give emotional references to another location. This point is manifested throughout the informants' narrative. For Ali this is evident in his references to his mother and siblings back home and his periodic economic assistance to them. For Vahid, on the other hand, this split is presented in another manner. When describing his present life he explains:

People say I look weary...yes, I look weary...you know what happens in Iraq these day...I hear in the news that forty or more people get killed...that's nothing to see...you get upset.

What people in Iraq experience is something that upsets Vahid to the point that he gets comments from others. Although physically in Norway his thoughts and emotional involvement is in Iraq. Thus, in line with among others Grinberg and Grinberg (1989), we can argue that for Vahid and Ali the lost objects are not integrated and represented in a meaningful way. Consequently one can argue that both Ali and Vahid are still in mourning over the losses they went through, and that their past interferes with living fully in the present. Papadopoulos (2002) has labelled this state as *nostalgic disorientation*.

The nostalgic disorientation is preceded by another form of disorientation; namely the disorientation connected to the shock of entering the realms of a new culture. Vahid, Rahim and Ali refer to this shock and recall their confusion. Rahim gives this description of his first impressions of Norway:

What! What kind of...this place...you are going to die here...how do the people live! The three first months were in hell! Yes, and snow, oh my god. Snow is not good!

Rahim's vivid description illustrates perfectly the thoughts and reactions of many immigrants upon arrival in the new land; "the sensory veil" is pulled away and one finds oneself in an alien world. Grinberg and Grinberg (1989), Varvin (2003) and Akhtar (1995) state that this phenomenon is relatively common in the beginning of exile and that it can give the immigrant the impression that anything might happen to them in this unknown and unpredictable land. Although Rahim's reference to death should not be taken too literally, it illuminates the point

made above; anything can happen. This period's helplessness is after, a period of varying length, relieved by a period of mourning and sorrow for the loss of the native country (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). For Rahim, this initial period seems to have lasted for three months. However, given his current situation at Eika we can argue that Rahim has not reconciled with his losses. In our opinion Eika is not the site for somebody who has reconciled with his losses and adapted to his new reality. In other words, we believe that Eika represents a venue where those who have not found their place in society come to. According to Volkan (1993) the degree to which the immigrant is capable to psychologically accept his or her losses will decide the extent of adaptation to the new environment.

The loss of a dream:

Some of our informants had a clear motivation for why they agreed to participate in the study. This is especially true for Ali. He had his own agenda coming in to the interview and this agenda would almost certainly have dominated the interview even if the person who conducted the interview had considered these thoughts as irrelevant. His experiences as a lone fourteen year old immigrant in Norway were a major part of the narrative. He described his involuntary departure from his family and home as something very terrifying:

From the day I travelled with the plane from Africa and until I came to the asylum camp I was very scared, I didn't at all know what was happening

What Ali describes here is the common reaction of most immigrants when they leave the familiar for the unknown. But it is reasonable to argue that in Ali's case the fright of leaving the home is even more extreme. This of course is due to the fact that he was young and unaccompanied when he migrated. Thus, he lacked the "protecting covering" that immigrating with your family gives you (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). According to Grinberg and Grinberg (ibid.) this protection enables the child to be more capable than adults in adapting to the new environment. Since Ali lacked the support structure of a family, being young gave him no head start, but rather left him even more vulnerable than other immigrants.

Unfortunately Ali's harsh and disorienting situation as a lone immigrant seems to have been deteriorated by his first experiences in exile. Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) stress the importance of presence of a trustworthy person to defuse the immigrant's anxieties upon

arrival. This point is in line with the research on resiliency which emphasizes that to overcome adversity sometimes it is enough to have a bond to just one individual (Brooks & Goldstein, 2002). Thus, in the case of Ali, a single adult who saw his needs and established a bond to him may have made the difference between Eika and living a more ordinary life. Additionally, Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) compare the immigrant's fear of the unknown with a child who is left by his or her mother and desperately searches for the mother or a substitute. In the case of Ali this comparison is not the case merely metaphorically, but also true on a more literal level. As we will see later, he was separated from his mother when he immigrated. According to Grinberg and Grinberg (ibid) the newly arrived immigrant is extremely sensitive to rejection by the new surroundings. For Ali his new surrounding at the asylum camp felt anything but welcoming. He describes the life at the camp as an exercise in endless waiting and uncertainty about the future. According to him the staff, which were constantly replaced by new people, were inexperienced and uncaring:

You waited and didn't know what would happen to you, when you are small you need love and other stuff (...) we just sat around and thought, thought and thought, and became disappointed... we met new staff all the time, they just worked, wrote on some paper and made money and left.

Here Ali tells about his needs at the time and how he felt that these need were not met by the environment because nobody were around to care. By pointing to the fact that he had to relate to new persons all the time, tells us that it was impossible to establish and develop a meaningful relationship to any adults. Thus, his search for an emotional safe haven was rejected. When thinking back to the early days in Norway he feels that he was treated as an adult, and not as a child deprived of the love and care of family and friends. Ali states several times in the interview that he was all alone during that time. The feeling of emotional isolation and lack of emotional support during the time in the asylum camps are topics that Ali returns to on several occasions during the interview. These initial disappointments concerning the absence of help had not only implications for Ali's emotional wellbeing, but also for his future plans. As mentioned earlier Ali had a mission upon arrival in Norway; he was to get an education and use that to help his family. His dream for the future was to work as an engineer and send money to his family. Although he sometimes sends money to his family he says that his dream has not evolved into reality. He sees the reason for not having fulfilled his dream in the inadequate academic help he received in Norway. Given his special

needs, he does not remember having received any assistance at school, and he felt nobody cared to check what he learnt or the fact that he was not learning. Allegedly, the only thing the staff cared about was that he woke up and went to his classes. Today he does not believe he has the opportunity to get a proper education and seek his dream. When asked about his dream, he answers:

I still have the dream, but I have given up

In this statement we can sense that exile has not been the envisioned rebirth, but rather a misfortune that has led to resignation. Here the resignation has led to a state where the dream no longer is deemed as a realistic opportunity, but rather a fantasy to linger to. This loss of a dream has its psychological consequences in relation to those left behind. Upon departure Ali's mother had told his son to stay out of trouble and avoid drugs. He remembers those words, and when questioned about how his mother would react if she found out about his activities at Eika he tells us:

If she found out...oh then I don't know...then something bad...she would feel bad...she would lose her belief in me...I wouldn't tell her about it...it is a secret (laughs)...that's why she sent me here...to keep me out of trouble...

What Ali touches on here is both the grief of failing to live up to his mother's expectations, and the impossibility of sharing his disappointments and hardships with the only person he feels attached to. Consequently he has to live with the tension of being in, what Varvin (2003) dubs, "a pseudo-existence". According to Varvin this is a condition many immigrants have to live in; they have to pretend to those back home that everything is fine when in fact they have great difficulties in exile.

Today Ali perceives himself as a man who does not have the opportunity to significantly influence his own future. Furthermore he sees a clear connection between his earlier experiences as an under aged lone immigrant in Norway, and the fact that he has been making a living by selling drugs for the last three years:

That was not a good treatment...they treated me as if I was a grownup and you are not a grownup when you are fourteen. Very bad treatment of a fourteen year old who didn't have friends or family...these things...lead one to crime...

Ali perceives the treatment he got as a lone asylum seeker as poor and relates these experiences to the fact that he is working at Eika today. There are two interesting points in his account, firstly: he is the only one of the informants who explicitly states that his experiences in exile are at least partly to blame for his condition. Secondly, he does not seem to think that immigration per se is the reason for his troubles. He argues that it is “*these things*”, namely his early experiences in the camp that has brought him to Eika. From that it is reasonable to read that had he had better help his dream might have been fulfilled after all. Later on he says:

I have things in my brain, but the problem is that I can't write or read properly...that depresses me. If you are going to get an education...you must have somebody who guides you...a person who knows more than you

Here we get an explicit account on what was implicit above, namely that his dream would have lived on had he been guided and helped. He has the ability, but he did not get the proper support to realize these abilities. During our conversation with Ali we got an impression of him as a talented, sympathetic and not least a resilient young man. We could not help but to wonder what could have become of him had he received the correct support.

Where do I belong?

The question of who you are and where you belong is both a question of identity and of where you feel at home. Although these questions are parts of every individual's existence, one may argue that they become more salient in the event of immigration (Varvin, 2003). The answers the immigrant gives to these questions may also give a hint to the acculturation and identity strategies the immigrant has chosen and been able to peruse. The immigrant's adaptation to the new environment is influenced by many factors; however the level of adaptation is always an interaction of the individual's preferences and abilities, and the manner in which the new environment welcomes the new arrived. Secondly, for immigrants the question of where one belongs is complicated by the fact that one has two cultures to relate to and negotiate between.

Several studies have revealed that behaviours and attitudes towards immigrants may have implications for how immigrants psychologically adapt and participate in the host society (see Oppedal, Røysamb & Heyerdahl, 2005). The latter point is relevant when we consider the informants' degree of participation in the Norwegian society and their presence at Eika. Throughout the interviews we got the impression that the informants felt that they were not accepted by the majority culture and that this resulted in tensions in their self-representations and relationship to the Norwegian society. Nearly all of the informants reported that they had little or no contact with Norwegians and that to them Norwegian culture was something alien. Sometimes this lack of contact was explained by stressing the difference between the host and native culture, other times by the perceived rejection from Norwegian society. Regardless of the explanation, what was evident was that the informants had very few venues where they could interact with Norwegians. In fact, for most Eika was the only venue where they had contact with Norwegians.

Vahid was perhaps the one who had least contact with Norwegians and felt most alienated from Norwegian society. He was also the informant that most overtly identified with his culture of origin. As we saw earlier, he had a clear opinion about Iraq as his homeland. Later on he elaborated on this when he was asked whether he identified him as an Iraqi or Norwegian:

Iraqi...that's where I come from...there is no point in feeling Norwegian when many Norwegian say "you are not Norwegian" ...I don't feel Norwegian!

Here it becomes quite evident that Vahid does not identify himself as Norwegian, despite living in Norway since he was eight. Taking this statement alongside his report that he has no contact with Norwegians and his presence at Eika it is reasonable to assume that Vahid is not well-integrated into the Norwegian society. Thus, by employing acculturation theory we can claim that he has a separated status with regard to Norwegian society (Berry, 2002). What is more interesting than his acculturation and identity strategy is how these strategies came to be. It is evident from his statement that this strategy is "chosen" as a consequence of a perceived rejection from the dominant society. One reading of this statement is that identifying oneself as Norwegian is difficult when others do not perceive you as a Norwegian. Consequently Vahid has to identify himself as an Iraqi. This issue has been discussed by among others Stone (1962). According to him identities are established when identity

announcements are in line with identity placements. In other words, Vahid's identity as Norwegian is hindered since others do not recognize him as a Norwegian. Furthermore, Vahid's perception that he is not accepted by the majority society has been cemented through many incidents with Norwegians. One of the incidents Vahid told us about accrued while he was taking the bus:

An old man I was standing next to told me "you (foreigners) are dirtying up this country" (...) when I go places many Norwegians there stare at me in a bad way, and then I think "what is the point of being here if everybody looks at me in that way?"

In this statement Vahid makes it clear that feeling rejected by Norwegians is a very familiar part of his experiences as an immigrant. He states clearly that he feels unaccepted by Norwegians and he questions his reasons for being here. It is this perception that "everybody" looks at him as something unwelcome that has cemented his acculturation status and the consequent isolation from Norwegian society. It is believed that immigrants who experience hostility from the majority culture seem to be less involved in that culture (Kibria, 2002 in Umana-Taylor, 2006). This point has a resonance in the cases' of our informants. All of them report some incidents of rejection and hostility from the majority culture. Therefore, we will argue that the fact that the informants dwell at Eika may at least be an indication that they are not involved in the Norwegian culture and society. Given this point, we can argue that Vahid and the other informants' lack of involvement with and opportunities to enter Norwegian society position them in an unfortunate situation where they acquire no competence on Norwegian culture and society. This since, that competence is acquired by interacting with Norwegians and others who are well-integrated in Norway. When we consider what was reported by Kibria (2002 in Umana-Taylor, 2006) and our informants' lack of involvement in Norwegian society, it is reasonable to pose this question: "why contribute to a society that rejects you?"

Although Vahid seemed to be least integrated in society, the situation was not particularly better for the other informants. Most of them identified themselves as Somalis and identified Norwegian culture as something they could not understand. Consequently, as was the case with Vahid, they reported that they had little contact with Norwegians. Abdi however,

reported that he had contact with Norwegians, but soon it became apparent that he did not consider these as ordinary Norwegians:

I have Norwegian friends that have in a way become foreigners. It is like...they are not Norwegian if you know what I mean? They are not ordinary Norwegians; they know foreign words and stuff...

There are several reasonable and compatible readings of Abdi's perception of his Norwegian friends. One is that Abdi believes that the Norwegians who become his friends are not ordinary Norwegians. Had they been as the others they would not have befriended him or he would not have gotten along with them. Thus, his perception may be that those in the Norwegian society who accept him are themselves different. We interpret Abdi's statement also as a positioning of himself as a foreigner. It is not he who has changed, but it is rather the friends who have become foreigners. This reading becomes more plausible when one considers other statements by Abdi regarding Norwegians. When he is asked what he thinks Norwegians think of him he says:

I don't know what Norwegian think of me when they see me... (pause) I am not the type who seeks Norwegians and ask them bout stuff and things...

This statement establishes two things, firstly what was argued above; his Norwegian friends are not perceived as Norwegians and secondly that Abdi has little contact and seeks little contact with Norwegians. Thus, he consider himself as a foreigner in the realm of a strange and unfriendly culture. This latter point is made explicit later when he speaks about where he would like to get an education if he got that opportunity. He exclaims that Norway would not be his choice and continues:

I have seen the Norwegian way...I want to see other ways...but I don't like the Norwegian culture right? It is like; I have been living here for 10 years now and still I haven't understood what the Norwegian culture is about, and how people think and stuff.

What Abdi does here is to once more position himself outside of the dominant culture on the grounds that he does not understand it despite his many years in the country. Abdi does not

give an explicit explanation of why he does not understand Norway and Norwegians. However, when we consider his entire narrative one hypothesis asserts itself; namely that he feels rejected by society and that this rejection makes him avoid contact with Norwegians. Consequently that avoidance and lack of contact keeps the Norwegian society as something strange in Abdi's mind. During the interview Abdi talks about several incidents when he felt he was treated badly because of his ethnic background. One such incident was the time when the policeman called him a monkey. This is his answer to the question of what he thinks these incidents do to him:

Then I start to distrust Norwegians. I have friends that have very little respect for Norwegian. They hate Norwegians...I hate nobody, but I understand why they hate them...because of these incidents!

What is evident from this statement is that his encounters with racism and rejection have an effect on Abdi and his perception of the majority. He distrusts them and this leads to the point that he withdraws from contact with Norwegians. Almost all of our informants spoke of incidents where they perceived that they were victims of racism and discrimination. These incidents happened at almost every domain of their lives; when applying for a job, when working, when in contact with the authorities and police, when attempting to rent a house and when meeting strangers. As stated above, the feeling of rejection and hostility from the majority culture can lead to social isolation from, and non-involvement in the majority society. These episodes of racism and discrimination all have psychological impacts. Racism and discrimination has been proposed as a risk to immigrants' and ethnic minorities' mental well-being (see Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006; Nyborg & Curry, 2003; Carter, 2007). Specifically, the exposure to racism has been associated with subjective distress, avoidance, feelings of hopelessness and emotional problems and trauma (Nyborg & Curry, 2003; Carter, 2007).

Malik is the only informant that denies having experienced any racism or discrimination, and alongside Ali he is the only informant who reports that he feels more Norwegian than Somali. Malik told us that he felt at home in Norway and that he had managed to adapt to the Norwegian society. With regards to Norwegians, he reported that he had many Norwegian friends. This is very interesting when we remember his background as a child soldier. At face value it seems that the informant who has had the most difficult background seems to be the

one who has adapted best to Norwegian society. Given the fact that he is working at Eika, one might argue that his adaptation has not been as uncomplicated as he claims. As we stated earlier, presence at Eika does not fit the profile of a well-adapted and integrated immigrant. Thus, we can interpret that it is possible to catch glimpses of a feeling of rejection from society in Malik's experiences after all. Although he does not explicitly state that he has been exposed to racism, it is still possible to read that he has had his share of these experiences:

I haven't experience any racism, but I have heard about it. But what is racism really? I don't think about it!

Here Rahim denies that he has encountered racism and he claims that he only has heard about the phenomenon. Later he continues to give his view on racism. According to him if you think about racism you will see it everywhere, therefore it is best not to think about it. Later on he tells us that at one of the schools he attended people used the term "*foreigner*" in a derogatory manner, but this ended when he started to attend that school. Given this statement, one might wonder whether this indicates that he has not experienced racism or whether he has utilized a different coping mechanism when exposed to racism. According to some theorists there are several coping mechanism an individual can use when subject to racism; avoidance, acceptance or denial (see Carter, 2007). Thus, we might argue that in the case of Malik, denial seems to be utilized. However it is also possible to take Malik's statement of feeling integrated at face value. It may of course be possible to be integrated and feel accepted in Norway and still seek out Eika and similar milieus because of other reasons. However, the fact that Malik has not managed to leave Eika despite his wish to do so, tip the scale in favour of the position which argues that Malik is rejected and marginalized. Secondly, we have great difficulties comprehending why a person who says he feels integrated in society hang out at a place like Eika and with people that most Norwegians perceive as a marginalized and alien.

It is sensible to assume that the feelings of rejection from mainstream society will lead to more emphasis on, and identification with ones own culture and ethnic background. In other words one might assume that in absence of opportunities of integration the immigrant will pursue separation as an acculturation strategy and rely solely on his or her ethnic background. Some theorists have argued for the beneficial effects of culture-of-origin involvement and linked it with solid ethnic identity (Phinney, Cantu & Kurtz, 1997). Several studies have

suggested a link between a strong ethnic identity and psychological wellbeing, resilience towards racism and self-esteem (see Umana-Taylor, 2006). In the case of the informants the protecting or comforting role of a solid ethnic identity appears to be absent. This seems to be due to the fact that most of our informants do not have a culture-of-origin involvement and appear to be as alien in that culture as they are in the Norwegian. This of course would constitute a marginalized position when considering acculturation theory. This point can be illustrated by considering Abdi's story. When he visited Somalia a while ago his experiences there made him realize that things have changed since he left Somalia. When asked about this trip he answers:

I didn't feel completely accepted there because I couldn't always understand what they were saying. I didn't feel accepted because you are from another culture right? And in Norway I'm not Norwegian right...so where do I belong? Then I stand in the middle...so I'm by my self then right? (...) Sometimes I don't know...I don't know who I am...I feel between things.

What Abdi shares with us in the statement above, is his sense of belonging to nowhere and therefore not knowing who he is. He belongs neither to Norway nor Somalia, and this position gives him a feeling of being alone. Hence, he is in a position where he is rejected not only by the majority culture, but also by his native culture. One can also argue that Vahid is in a similar position as Abdi with regards to falling between two cultures. Throughout Vahid's narrative the topic of homeland is always in the background and ready to function as an idealized object that is compared with the discomfiting present. When asked directly about whether he would return to Iraq if peace prevailed in that country, Vahid says:

Yes, I could do that, but first I must work and make some money... then I must get a house or a place to live there...

In this statement Vahid demonstrates his willingness to return to Iraq if the civil war ended and he had a home there. Two elements in this statement grab ones attention, one is the level of commitment that is evident in what he says and the second is the position the native home now has in comparison to our earlier interpretation of Iraq as the land of opportunities. It reasonable to argue that the fact that he uses the verb "could" instead of "would" indicates that he is not so committed to returning to Iraq as we thought earlier. Here "could" indicates

that return is a possible and not inevitable choice when peace has returned to Iraq. Thus, this puts the earlier statement that he would not be in Norway if there had not been a war in Iraq in a different light. Secondly, this has also consequences for our interpretation which stated that Vahid perceives Iraq as the land of opportunities and as home. If the work and the money is to be found in Norway and a return to Iraq is a possible, but not an inevitable choice, perhaps Vahid does not consider Iraq the land of opportunities and as home. Thus one might now argue that home is nowhere to be found, and this would of course position Vahid in a more marginalized condition and leave him profoundly “homeless”. It is reasonable to state that Abdi and Vahid’s feeling of belonging neither to Norway nor their native land would give them a diffused sense of who they are. In fact, this latter point is expressed by Abdi himself when he states: *I don’t know who I am*. The crisis of identity or in other words; not knowing who one is has been linked with mental problems in immigrant youth and difficulties with committing to goals (see Oppedal et al., 2005). The latter point may thus contribute when we attempt to explain why our informants are at Eika and why they find it difficult to leave.

Although several of our informants identify themselves as Somalis or Iraqis we did not observe what one might call a strong ethnic identity among the informants. For instance Ali told us that he did not know any thing about Somali culture and that he left Somalia by the time he would have learnt about Somali culture. Others like Abdi identified Somali culture as something unfamiliar. Thus for the informants the culture of origin did not seem be the source of psychological and social security. What were more evident, through out the interviews were the culture conflicts these informants experienced when negotiating between two cultures they did not master. This was Ali’s description when asked what he thinks about being exposed to two cultures:

When you see the other culture you are placed in the middle of them, and then you become crushed...yes...you get crushed...you don’t understand...you become confused you see.

The interesting thing about Ali’s description is that it depicts the two cultures, and ultimately himself, at conflict. Therefore for him being in contact with his native and the Norwegian culture is not the source of personal growth, but rather the opposite. This position reminds us of the marginalized state where neither culture is a refuge for the individual.

In summary, we propose that feelings of rejection have led many of our informants to avoid the venues of Norwegian society. This has had its impacts on the acculturation strategy and the consequent cultural competency they have acquired with regards to Norwegian society. We also argue that Eika is a venue the informants seek partly because of the perceived rejection from mainstream society. Subsequently this feeling of rejection is deteriorated by some of the informants' perception of not belonging to, and understanding their native culture, thus positioning them in a marginalized state. Furthermore, Eika is a venue where one does not need culture competency and know-how on Norwegian society and culture. Hence, Eika as a workplace does not involve the cultural requirements of other venues in the Norwegian society. These requirements are fluency in Norwegian, familiarity with the values and attitudes of the majority culture and basic knowledge on how Norwegian society functions. Staying at Eika leads not only to potential arrest and harm, but also involves a vicious circle. At Eika, as is stated by Sandberg and Pedersen (2006), the informants acquire street competence and not competence on how to integrate and adapt to mainstream society. An outcome of this is that it is very hard to leave Eika. These arguments illuminate why our informants have great difficulties leaving Eika. They do not feel accepted by the Norwegian society and lack the competence to enter it.

Exile-specific experiences by themselves cannot explain the informants' adherence to Eika. Perceived discrimination and rejection has not sufficient explanatory power to answer our research questions. Most exiled who experience discrimination do not end up selling drugs at Eika. We will propose that in order to get a better understanding of the informants' current situation at Eika, other elements such as relational history has to be taken into account. Experiences of separation from caregivers are factors that can further contribute to shed light on their present drug dealing.

Attachment:

Attachment related issues were a recurrent theme in all interviews. We found that four out of five informants had experienced prolonged separation from caregivers and abandonment during childhood. The relational history of the fifth informant is uncertain since he did not want to talk about his childhood or the present relationship to parents.

The loss of a childhood:

In the following extract we highlight the stories of Malik and Abdi which represent examples of separation, abandonment and severe maltreatment. When asked where he lived during his childhood Malik starts to talk about when he and his one year older brother were sold by their father to a militia in Sudan:

When I was four, five years old, then I was in the military. In Sudan. I was sent there to get my training, from, say, from four years old until I was nine I was there. After the war and stuff, so I lost my mom and stuff, so my father took me to this place, a place, because he wanted money you know, so it is possible to send children to the military.

Thus, Malik was separated from all caregivers at a very young age, and was only reunited with his mother seven years later. Why he was separated from his mother in the first place remains uncertain since Malik was reluctant to talk about this issue. Malik's story is a story of prolonged separation and abandonment. Not long after being sold to the guerrillas his brother died. Malik does not remember how his brother died; he just remembers bringing food and cigarettes to his sleeping brother who never seemed to wake up. Studies have shown that in the absence of parents and appropriate substitute attachment figures, siblings tend to function as each others caregivers (Cassidy, 1999). With the death of his brother, Malik lost the only remaining person he could turn to for support and consolation. Malik was therefore surrounded by persons, soldiers who were engaged in warfare, whom he did not know. If he wanted or needed help he was certain that he would not receive it. When asked about what he thinks of his childhood today and whom he turned to for consolation when he was young Malik replies:

My childhood, really it was hell. Then I didn't have any parents, I had no one, that I knew well, that were family, I was with people that I didn't know then, I had to do the things they told me. So everything made me sad, I didn't like it. Had no thoughts or something, wanting to cry and say mommy, mother didn't come you know, if you ask for help, you don't get what you want. I had (at that time) no thoughts about consolation and stuff. Then it is like, the thought, you

are young, you have to be grown up, right, (that was) the best way. Be strong and be the best, if you are strong, then you survive, right.

When thinking back to his life with the guerrillas he is able to see how alone and lonely he was. He could not cry and hope for consolation from his mother, because she was not there and could not come. Malik was not only separated from his parents, he also lost important parts of his childhood. In order to survive he had to repress the wish for consolation and other emotions related to vulnerability. In the absence of caregivers Malik was forced to cope with dangerous situations knowing that his mother and father would not be there to help him. During the interview Malik explains that expressing attachment related emotions could be directly health threatening. Expressing emotions such as sadness or anger could lead to him getting hit by the soldiers. He therefore quickly learned to hide such emotions, or even better, not feel them at all. Thus, emotions related to attachment needs were either not expressed or split off from conscious awareness. When asked about negative memories from his childhood, Malik replies:

Worst, worst was when I was four years old, you know, don't get any sleep, and carrying stuff, that was not good. Not getting sleep, that was worst in the start and I had to carry the rifle. I fell backwards, and almost, when I was walking forwards I was walking backwards, but after awhile I learned to carry it. And then really, it was very strict there and stuff. It was like, they burned people with cigarettes and stuff. I was four years old, here, I've still got scars, it never goes away this one. Burned here (shows the interviewer his burn marks) and stuff, black here, this one.

Even though one may question the accuracy of how old Malik was when these things happened, it is evident that abuse and torture were parts of his childhood. The torture left him with permanent physical scars and it is reasonable to assume that these experiences also left him with psychological scars that may be equally permanent. During the interview Malik did not display any emotions even though he was talking about extremely difficult experiences. His responses to the interviewer's questions were brief and factual, with the absence of emotions. As a result the interviewer was surprisingly unmoved by the dramatic content of his story. Sadness and the true nature of his tragedy only revealed itself to us while reading through the interview. We presume that Malik in order to protect himself has split off

emotions related to vulnerability and comfort. This process was probably both adaptable and necessary while living with the guerrillas, however, this way of coping with difficult emotions is a deterrent to later development and interpersonal functioning (Crittenden, 2002). This experience corresponds with our reactions while interviewing some of the other informants. According to Crittenden (2002), the brief and impersonal way of telling life stories function to maintain superficial contact with others without being subjected to the risks associated with intimacy. Intimacy in Malik's developmental history is associated with separation and betrayal. Therefore the inhibition of negative affect and the related withdrawal from close relationships can be understood as means of preventing disappointment. This topic will be discussed further at a later stage.

Malik's experiences of abandonment and torture have clearly shaped how he perceives others and how he perceives life in general. When asked what he thinks about his life at present, Malik replies that this life really is hell, and this he means in the literal sense. He believes that the current life might be a test, since it is filled with death and pain. He does not specify what is being tested or the possible reward or punishments that might follow from the test.

During the interview Malik describes how he is presently discovering emotions that were not there earlier. He attributes his discovery to a reduction of hashish smoking, thinking that the cannabis somehow had a flattening effect on his emotional life. We do not question that the smoking of cannabis can have consequences for the experiencing of emotions. However, it seems probable that the separation from his mother and the subsequent maltreatment he suffered whilst living with the guerrillas also have had a great impact on how he processes emotions, and especially those who pertain to attachment needs. In order to survive his childhood Malik was forced to develop strategies that would keep him as safe from harm as possible. Other children, in other circumstances, regulate feelings of safety and unsafety by signalling distress. Malik, as we have seen, learned that signalling distress could be outright dangerous. Feelings of vulnerability may therefore have been split off from awareness.

While transcribing and analysing the interview with Malik we asked ourselves how a person who has experienced this kind of betrayal ever can believe that man is good, or ever be able to trust another person on a deeper level. One gets the impression that by choosing a life as a drug dealer at Eika, with all its risks, hardships and potential dangers, Malik has found a life that somewhat resembles his childhood. Malik is well-adapted to a life in danger through the

strategies he developed when he was young. Following this line of reasoning, we propose that the environment at Eika is less threatening to Malik than other and safer environments. At Eika, as in his childhood, he is expecting the unexpected. He does not need to trust others since he can trust himself. Most other venues of society are profoundly safer than Eika, but perhaps not so for Malik. In these “safe” environments he does not know what to expect and he also might have to depend on others in order to reach his goals. However, Malik’s childhood has taught him that trusting others is associated with betrayal and abandonment. From this perspective it seems reasonable to argue that Eika for the time being is a natural choice for Malik.

Another informant, Abdi, was also separated from his parents at the age of four. His father only managed to obtain Norwegian passports for himself, Abdi’s mother and four of their children. The remaining two children, including Abdi, were sent to an aunt in the USA. In Abdi’s recollection of the event he remembers being very sad and confused. His mother was taken away from him and nothing would ever be the same. The moment of separation remains to this day a vivid and traumatic memory for Abdi:

Eh, I remember it was very, it was very strange kind of, because I was very upset and stuff, because I remember it in the airport...so then they said that we had to travel alone, me and my other sibling to the United States kind of, so I felt like, that this would, that this was the last day of my life, kind of. Because it is a bit strange when a four year old, kind of... is taken from his mother, kind of.

Thus, Abdi remembers that this was not only the last day of his life as he knew it, but also the end of life *it self*. He was parted from his caregivers and without them he felt that his life would end. The moment of separation from his parents was clearly very traumatic for Abdi. He also recollects that in kindergarten he felt different from the other children. Sometimes the parents of the other children came to visit their children, while his parents remained absent. He was often sad and explains that he felt like he was in a different world. Furthermore, he felt like he did not have a mother and a father. Abdi remembers that he often was sad during his childhood, and most of the time it was due to the absence of his parents:

Because what I remember kind of, the other children, they had their parents, right. But I didn't have any parents...because I started in this, in the United States, I started attending this kindergarten preschool thing. Because I remember, kind of, that the parents of the other children used to visit sometimes. Both the father and the mother, or something like that. And I had none of them. ...I thought, kind of, in a way I thought that, I wasn't inside myself, I thought that my mother wasn't in this world at all, kind of.

Abdi quite clearly felt that he was all alone in the world, and he was reminded of this when the parents of the other children in the kindergarten came to visit their children. He also mentions that he felt as if he was not *inside of himself*. Perhaps were the feelings of loneliness and abandonment so near and overwhelming that in order to cope with them he sought refuge in a place outside of himself. In other words, the emotions were split off from consciousness. Although Abdi remembers being sad during his childhood he has no recollection of seeking or receiving consolation. He kept to himself most of the time and did not talk to others about the things that troubled him. When asked who he turned to for comfort he replies:

No one, kind of. I stuck to myself and stuff. I didn't use to talk much either you know, with anybody at all. I really was one of those...I was a difficult child, kind of.

In retrospect Abdi describes himself as a troubled child. He did not talk to anyone about his problems, and it seems likely that his aunt did not, or could not see his needs. Studies indicate that the effects of loss of parents can be reduced by the presence of substitute caregivers, given that these respond to the child's distress in an emphatic and supportive manner (Renn, 2002). Although Abdi lived with family members in the United States, he cannot remember that they were able to meet his needs in an emphatic manner. Bowlby (1980) proposed that children who experience prolonged separation from or abandonment by caregivers may develop a feeling of themselves as unloved, and conversely a feeling of the important other as rejecting and unlovable. Such children may find it difficult to trust others, or believe that someone would help them should they need it. Not asking for help, and instead becoming self-reliant can therefore be the safest option if further disappointment is to be avoided.

During the interview Abdi repeatedly describes himself as an autodidact. He says that when he was a child growing up there was no one to tell him what to do, or gave him advice on how to live his life. Furthermore, thinking back, Abdi cannot recall ever being asked whether he needed help or support. This, in Abdi's mind has made him into what he refers to as a self-made man. Everything he knows, he has learnt by himself he says. Even to this day, Abdi cannot think of a person that he would look to for guidance, advice or inspiration. One reading of this is that Abdi did not believe that anyone would be available to support him or give him advice should he need it. Since attachment related beliefs tend to persist into adulthood an individual with experiences comparable to those of Abdi will perhaps come to believe that the world is a non-supportive place, and that in order to survive it is best to trust no one except your self. This promotes a self-sufficient or self-reliant interpersonal mode of functioning characterized by a maintaining a distance from others and the fundamental belief that others will not help in times of need (Florian, Mikulincer & Bucholtz, 1995).

When asked directly if he missed having someone looking out for him, or give him advice when he was growing up he initially denies having this need. However, later in the interview he states that it would have been a good thing if someone had helped him with ideas and plans about his life when he was a child. As we have seen, Abdi felt that the separation from his mother and father when he was four years old left him very much alone in the world. Abdi believes that the separation from his parents is partly responsible for why his life has turned out as it has. He believes that his life would have been better and that he had finished an education and gotten a regular job. Although Abdi does not explicitly say that his childhood experiences of separation and abandonment are the reasons for why he is making a living by selling drugs, it seems plausible that it has been a contributing factor. Here it is important to note that there is no straight line between childhood separation and later maladaptive functioning (see e.g. Sroufe & Rutter, 1984). Therefore it not possible to suggest a cause - effect relationship between Abdi's separation from parents and the fact that he is selling drugs now. Nonetheless, it seems likely that the separation and the absence of substitute caregivers has shaped Abdi and left him with the belief that help and assistance is unattainable. This factor, combined with perceived and real rejection from society, are probably central in the explanation of why Abdi currently is selling drugs at Eika and why quitting selling drugs is so difficult for him.

Friendships:

In the following section we will examine the friendship relations of our informants. This will include both friendships established along Akerselva and friendships outside of the drug dealing community. One of the hypothesis' prior to conducting the interviews was that Eika was a source of friendship, identity, the feeling of belonging or finding some one in the same situation as yourself. The rationale for this is that many of the dealers share several characteristics. All of our informants and the absolute majority of the dealers at Eika have an ethnic minority background. The fact is that the majority of the dealers come from the same country, Somalia. Most of the dealers and all of our informants are approximately the same age. Many share the wish of finding a way out of the present situation, namely making an income by means of selling drugs. We believe that it is important to examine the role of friendships since several authors argue that perceived social support is related to childhood attachment experiences. In addition, attachment behaviour in adolescence and early adulthood is directed more towards friends and romantic partners than to parents (Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1990; Florian et al., 1995).

The myth of friendship:

Several of our informants report that Akerselva is a place where one can meet interesting people and, sporadically, have a good time. However, the river is very seldom a source of supportive and meaningful friendship. This is contrary to the findings of Kuvoame (2005). In this section we will focus on friendship-related themes and experiences. According to Ali the conversations that take place at Eika are dominated by topics such as money, the prices of drugs and how to avoid the enemy, namely the police. Ali describes the friendships at Akerselva as superficial:

When they are together...not that kind of friends that think about each other, he thinks about his stuff and I think about my stuff and when we part, then it's, (the friendship) over and when we see each other again we are friends again. That's the way it is there (Eika). It...it is not friends that call each other all the time.

Malik more or less confirms that the friendships established at Eika mostly are superficial and that these friendships do not provide a source of emotional or physical support.

I don't think you'll find, you won't find good friends on the river, no. To be honest... it is a kind of street meeting ... we become friends on the streets... we only stay on the streets, nothing more.

Thus, both Ali and Malik describe the relationships established at Eika as superficial. According to Ali the friendships established there is only about money and partying. Hence, the friendships that are established at Eika have clear limitations. Ali does not talk about personally important topics with the other dealers. Furthermore, most of these friendships are geographically limited in that as soon as he leaves Eika the friendship is virtually non-existing. Approximately two years ago, Ali explains, he used to spend time with some other dealers from Eika. This group was a group that used drugs on a regular basis, and they would drink three or more times a week. In this period Ali describes himself as totally crazy and that all he did was drink and create havoc. After some time Ali realized that he did not like this lifestyle and started avoiding this group:

And when you are friend with...those who use (drugs)...sometimes if you are together with them you become like them, so therefore I avoid them.

The friends Ali found at Eika were using drugs and Ali says that he did not like this lifestyle and what he was becoming. This period corresponds with a period that he earlier in the interview describes as very troublesome. Prior to his debut as a dealer Ali actually had some Norwegian friends. He describes these friends as "normal people" who either have normal jobs or are studying: "*people who work, and stuff*". Ali believes that these friendships ended as a direct result of his choice of starting a career at Eika. When he started working at the river he perceived a change in his friends' opinion of him, in one way "*they don't understand*" he says, "*and they look at you in a strange way and bring you down*". Because of this he did not want to continue the friendships. At present Ali spends most of his time in his own company and we get the impression that he has given up on friendship.

In general Ali has a very pessimistic view of friendship in Norway. For Ali "real friendship" is something that does not exist in the modern world, at least not in Norway. In Norway, he says, people think mainly about themselves and Ali believes that people here do not need other people. In contrast, Ali explains that in Somalia in the "old days" the friendships were

genuine. People grew up together and spent more time engaging in social activities. However, when asked about potential friendships within the Somali community in Norway Ali is pessimistic:

Yes...it is difficult to get a good Somali friend...because the friend you find, that which we have in Somalia, don't know if you have heard of that thing, groups, clans. We have many different clans, even if you are from the same clan as me then it is...then lots of other stuff divide us. Because he has his clan, I've got my clan, there is much talk about grownup and stuff like that...so...but those who has their family here are fine.

Hence, Ali believes that true friendship within the Somali community is difficult to obtain since Somalis in Norway are divided by their affiliation to potential rival clans. A relevant question here is how realistic the appraisals Abdi makes concerning the impossibility of friendships, either with Somalis or Norwegians are. It is reasonable to argue that friendships do exist in Norway. However, he has lost hope in both friendship and that people will come to his aid if needed. It seems reasonable to assume that his perception of the futility of friendship, to some extent is based on earlier relational experiences. Today Ali does not see the possibility of change and it seems that he has learned that he is not able to change his life no matter what he does. Abdi remains to this day socially and emotionally isolated. The fact that his mother sent him alone to an alien country when he was fourteen years old is a form of abandonment. His experiences as an under aged asylum seeker in Norway did not prepare him for a life in Norway. He did not receive the emotional or academic support he needed while living in the asylum camps. Furthermore, at the point of leaving the asylum camps he lacked the know-how needed to navigate the Norwegian welfare system. All his job applications were turned down and getting an education is not an alternative for Ali. Thus, Eika is the only remaining option for Ali.

The end of this section will focus on a particular aspect of friendship that concerns how our informants deal with problems that are too difficult to handle alone. A recurrent pattern throughout the interviews was our informants' inability to seek support in presence of dangerous situations. One of the corner stones of attachment theory is that when individuals find themselves in insurmountable trouble they seek help from others they perceive as

stronger and/or wiser (Bowlby, 1969). While talking about friendship, Malik suddenly shifts topic and starts talking about an episode at Eika where he was attacked by three other dealers. The fight was brutal, and Malik describes in a thorough manner the injuries the other men suffered as a result of the fight. The fact that he broke his nose during the fight receives less attention. We believe that what Malik wanted to convey to us was that he is capable of taking care of himself. He does not need help. Somehow, he does not see the usefulness of friends, or more likely, does not trust that they will actually help him, should he need it. Based on his childhood history, Malik has experienced that important persons are not only unavailable in times of distress and danger, but also that they are not to be trusted. If Malik was to allow himself to believe that friends will come to his aid when asked, he would risk experiencing disappointment again. This risk, it seems, he is currently not willing to take.

Lieberman, Doyle and Markiewicz (1999) found that positive friendship qualities such as closeness, help and security were associated with secure parental attachment. Such findings are consistent with attachment theory based on the assumption that childhood experiences with caregivers model later relational functioning (Black, Jaeger, McCartney & Crittenden, 2000). It was also found that lower conflict in friendship relationships was related to more secure parental attachment. This finding seems to suggest that adolescents with more secure attachments to their parents learn more effective conflict resolution skills, and may be better at controlling their negative affect and expressing positive affect. Adolescents who have experienced separation during childhood are more likely to distrust that peers will help them should they need it (Lieberman, et al., 1999). This point is exemplified by how Rahim answers when asked about who he would turn to when in trouble:

I trust my self, I don't go with nobody. I don't go with nobody. Sometimes a fight comes to me, I know what I'm gonna do. I don't go to someone, saying helping me, something like that.

Thus, Rahim does not seek help even in situations that are potentially harmful. One reading of this is that Rahim either perceives that no one would help him if he should ask for it or that he doubts that he would be able to make use of the help offered. During the interview Rahim mentions several conflicts that he has been involved in recently. Among these conflicts is a fight where he ended up stabbing another dealer. A common feature in all these stories is the absence of friends or other supportive figures. The loneliness of his situations is underlined by

the way he answers when asked to elaborate on a period in his life when he experienced psychological difficulties: *“I am a doctor to my self, I didn’t need help”*. Hence, when Rahim is experiencing difficulties he does not turn to others for support or help; rather he solves his own problems. Another reading in continuation of this point is that Rahim by this statement positions himself as the expert of himself. This would of course complicate the task for anyone who would like to help him out of Eika.

The self-reliant way of functioning observed in Rahim is also evident in the other informants, although in a somewhat varying degree. Furthermore, they seem to be organized around the idea of depending on no one, and having no one depend on them. The self-sufficient mode of functioning of our informants can possibly contribute in the explanation of why attempts of helping the youths often do not succeed. Our informants have experienced that attachment figures were unavailable in times of need. They are therefore more likely to dismiss help efforts of others, and instead rely on themselves. Although most of our informants lack the belief in true emotionally important friendships, several of them report having many pleasant, but superficial relationships. This fits with the dismissing and self-reliant manner of relating to important others and to emotions (Crittenden, 2002).

However, this strategy, or mode of relational and emotional functioning, has some important advantages. Individuals using this strategy are very well adapted to function alone for long periods of time. Often they are quite gifted in terms of initiating new relationships (Crittenden, 2002). The ability to initiate new relationships is probably an important ability in the ever shifting social world of Eika. Knowing who is who and who is dangerous is vital for both physical and psychological well-being along the river. Furthermore, the ability to initiate new relationships is also important in the drug trade itself. All of our informants report having regular customers, and both Abdi and Ali admit that they are willing to travel significant distances in order to meet up with the regular customers indicating that these customers represent important sources of income. Hence, the ability to establish these business related and superficial relationships is an important asset in the drug trade. The paradox is that by choosing to deal drugs at Eika our informants have found a life that they master, but at the same time despises. The inability of our informants to trust others is making it difficult for others to help them. This is one of several factors in the explanation of why it is so difficult for our informants to quit selling drugs at Eika.

In summary, it seems evident that histories of separation and abandonment in childhood have influenced how the informants think of themselves and of important others. All the informants report that they do not seek help, even when faced with potentially dangerous situations. Instead they chose to trust themselves and solve their problems alone. Either they do not believe that anyone would help should they ask for it, or it is difficult for them to make use of the help offered to them. This is probably one of the reasons why efforts to help the dealers at Eika often fail. It seems likely that their childhood experiences of separation and abandonment from caregivers has taught them that important others are not to be trusted. In order to avoid getting disappointed again they have developed a self-sufficient mode of functioning. Furthermore, as a consequence of exposure to danger during childhood some of the informants are probably better adapted to dealing drugs at Eika than to other, safer arenas of Norwegian society. The rejection the informants experienced in childhood may also influence the fact that they feel rejected by Norwegian society. We assume that individuals who have experienced rejection comparable to those of our informants will scan their surroundings for potential signs of rejection, since this is what they have learned to expect from life. We assume that finding potential signs of rejection from Norwegian society is probably not too difficult for young males with ethnic minority background.

Discussion:

The purpose of this study was to address two research questions; why did the youths start selling drugs at Eika and secondly, why do they continue to do so? The study's agenda was also to provide a psychological understanding of the conditions of a group of people who have largely been examined through a sociological and epidemiological perspective. Prior to conducting this study we had several assumptions regarding Eika and the drug dealers. We believed that Eika provided the drug dealers with not only money, but also status, friendship and a sense of identity and belonging unattainable elsewhere in the Norwegian society. These assumptions have partially been supported by sociological studies that have been conducted on Eika, but were not supported by our data.

As demonstrated by this study, many paths had led our informants to Eika. Some had come in contact with the milieu due their drug use, others offered job discrimination and neglect from society as the explanation for their activities there. All of our informants, inclusive every drug dealer we conversed with at Eika, described a dislike for the place and uttered a wish to leave it. To them, Eika was not a source of status, friendship or identity. Rather, the opposite seemed to be the case; they described Eika as an unsafe site and the money they earned there as "bad" and the source of a guilty conscience. Given the informants' sentiments of Eika, their wish to leave it behind, and the fact that there are other legitimate jobs available, necessitated other explanations other than job discrimination in order to understand the paradox of their continued activities there. Even though one cannot dismiss job discrimination as a factor in trying to explain why our informants are still at Eika, we wondered whether that was the whole picture. Theories on exile and attachment were applied in order to shed light on these issues.

The informants' experiences in exile were partially responsible for pushing them outside of main stream society and into a marginalized milieu. The immigration to Norway had been far from a "rebirth" for the informants. Many felt neglected by and alienated from the Norwegian society. Furthermore, in the interviews most of the informants expressed that they experienced a rejection by Norwegian society and felt themselves subjected to racism and discrimination. For some the rejection by the Norwegian society was made more potent by difficulties identifying with the culture of origin, consequently leading to a diffused sense of

self and a marginalized position where they felt they do not belong anywhere. We argue that the informants neither have the cultural competence to enter Norwegian society nor the desire to participate in a society that rejects them. Given the informants' position in Norwegian society, we propose, that Eika is a venue where they neither need nor acquire knowledge of Norwegian society and culture. Thus, indicating why they have a hard time leaving Eika behind. Although this line of argument is reasonable, experiences in exile alone cannot give a sufficient account of why the informants ended up in, and continue their adherence to Eika. We found that other factors besides than job discrimination and rejection from Norwegian society might contribute to the understanding of this. The informants' childhood history of prolonged separation from caregivers is such a factor. We propose that the negative effects of exile are felt more strongly by those who have experiences of separation from caregivers while growing up.

Attachment theory contributes to the understanding of our informants' lives and destinies by providing a developmental and relational perspective. Four out of five informants reported having experienced prolonged separation and abandonment during childhood and adolescence. In addition, one informant was severely maltreated while growing up. The informants' history of separation and abandonment were varied, just as the possible effects of the separation may vary from one informant to the next. However, our informants shared some important relational characteristics. They all lacked the belief that others would come to their aid if they should need it. The histories of separation and abandonment may have influenced their willingness to trust others, instead they rely on themselves. Childhood separation from caregivers is associated with a feeling of the important other as rejecting and unloving, and conversely the self as unloved. Not asking for help, and instead becoming self-reliant can therefore be the safest option if further disappointment is to be avoided. Already as children our informants had grown accustomed to solving their own difficulties. At Eika they do not have to trust anyone but themselves in order to get by. Hence, making Eika a viable alternative.

Furthermore, some of our informants are probably well-adapted to the life as a drug dealer. During childhood and adolescence they had to cope with danger and unpredictability without the assistance of caregivers. It seems reasonable that they developed emotional and relational strategies that were adaptable and efficient in these original circumstances. The unpredictable world of Eika with potential dangers such as incarceration, stabbings and fistfights can

therefore be understood as a replica of their childhood environments. They are accustomed to coping with danger, and to them unpredictability is predicted. Hence, the strategies of coping with danger and relating to others that they developed during childhood are still in effect today. However, this way of relating to emotions and other people is less adaptable elsewhere in society. It can be argued that within Norwegian society secure strategies such as open and direct communication of feelings and intentions together with interpersonal negotiation of these are more adaptable strategies. For our informants however, the prospect of having to trust others is possibly very threatening given their prior experiences. Therefore life dealing drugs at Eika perhaps is less threatening for our informants than other and more secure and predictable venues of society. Finally, we propose that stresses experienced due to separation from caregivers and perceived rejection from society together have a cumulative effect on the functioning and wellbeing of the informants.

We suggest that the factors this study focuses on are central in the understanding of why our informants have chosen an occupation as drug dealers and why they continue to sell drugs. However, we do not claim that the above-mentioned factors are sufficient in explaining their activities at Eika. The Eika phenomenon is complex and cannot be explained by exile and attachment perspectives alone, since the aetiology of delinquency and pathology are multifaceted. Furthermore, we do not claim that our findings are valid for the entire Eika milieu. This is due to the low number of informants in this study and the fact that the dealers have different background and life stories. However, it is reasonable to assume that the dealers who agreed to participate in the study are no less well-functioning than those who declined to participate. This assumption is based on the fact that our informants trusted us with their personal narratives. Finally, not every youth with an immigrant background and a childhood history of separation and abandonment starts selling drugs at Eika or similar milieus. Thus, other factors than the ones we have focused on may also be at play.

What distinguishes this study from earlier studies on Eika is its psychological perspective. More precisely, it focuses on two quite different, but complementary factors in trying to explain why the youths at Eika are there and what keeps them there. Unlike the other studies on Eika, this study focuses on intrapsychic and developmental factors. In that sense, the findings of this study will have some implications for how the problem of Eika is handled. Firstly, it would be a mistake to view Eika as just a social and criminal problem, because such a perspective would reduce the complexity of the problems facing the youths there. The

second implication is related to the first, and is concerned with the type of interventions that should be implemented in the future to help these youths. The complexity of the informants' needs requires that future interventions should not merely focus on providing the youths with employment and competence on Norwegian society, language and culture. Rather, future interventions should in addition map out and address the youths' unique needs and developmental background.

In conclusion, we propose that our informants' wish to leave Eika is hindered by perceived rejection by Norwegian society and the lack of competence to enter it. Furthermore, the relational history of the informants makes them better adapted to life at Eika than other venues of Norwegian society. Finally, prolonged childhood separation and abandonment may have influenced their willingness or ability to trust other persons, thus making it difficult to help them.

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Appendix A:

The informants:

Vahid:

Vahid was born eighteen years ago in Iraq, into a large Shia family. Vahid and his entire family had to flee from Iraq to Saudi Arabia as a result of the first Gulf War. The family lived in a refugee camp in Saudi Arabia for seven years. Vahid describes this period as very challenging time for him and his family. Discrimination from the Saudi authorities and the hardships of the camp was an every day challenge.

Then, ten years ago the entire family immigrated to Norway. Given that his family came to Norway as quota refugees, under the protection of The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), his family resettled in Norway immediately without the need to seek asylum.

Vahid, who has attained Norwegian citizenship, lives alone in Oslo. He his parents are unemployed and chronically ill with multiple medical problems. Vahid attended elementary school¹⁴ in Saudi Arabia and in Norway. He expresses no immediate desire to return to school. Vahid is working part time sorting mail in addition to selling hashish at Eika. He started dealing and smoking hashish at the age of sixteen and been doing it ever since. Today Vahid calls himself a Muslim and wants to quit selling drugs at Eika. In stead he wants to either pursuit a career in photo or TV-commercials.

Malik:

Malik, originally from Somalia, is a 21 year old “veteran” of Eika; he has been selling hashish ever since he was seventeen. He started smoking the drug even earlier. As a result of his drug use and drug dealing Malik has had several encounters with the police. He has been arrested and fined numerous times.

¹⁴ In Norway elementary school consists of 10 years and is mandatory. The first seven years are called “Barneskolen” the last three years are called “Ungdomsskolen”. Ungdomsskolen is also sometimes referred to as secondary school. After elementary school, one may proceed with three years of high school, in Norway Called “Videregående skole”.

Malik came to Norway ten years ago. But before moving to Oslo, he had spent several years under the protection of the Child Care Services outside of Oslo. Prior to his migration to Norway, he had been living about two years in Finland, where he had arrived by himself through The UN. In the mean time his mother, unaware of her son's whereabouts, had resettled in Norway.

The separation between Malik and his family originated from the time, according to Malik, his father sold him to an unnamed rebel group¹⁵ in Sudan. Malik dates this to the time he was four years old. According to Malik his father sold his two sons because he needed money. In the rebel group's detention Malik went through unimaginable hardships and a treatment close to torture. After about four years Malik managed to flee from the rebel group's camp, but not before witnessing his brother's violent death and numerous other traumatic incidents.

After his escape from the camp, Malik spent about a year on the streets in a big city in East-Africa. Finally he was picked up by an UN agency and sent to Finland. Malik, now a ten year old boy, stayed in Finland for over two years. His reunification with his mother happened when an organization, possibly The Red Cross, discovered the possible link between Malik and his mother. He was flown to Norway where he was reunited with his mother. Today Malik lives together with four acquaintances. Besides selling hashish at Eika, he also occasionally washes dishes in a restaurant. Having completed elementary and high school, he plans to proceed with his studies and take courses at a university college¹⁶.

Abdi:

When Muhammad Siad Barre, the president of Somalia, was ousted from power in a coup in 1991, the country was plunged into a brutal civil war. After the coup, the streets of Mogadishu were turned into battlefields and Abdi's father decided that the family of seven should flee Somalia. Since he was not able to obtain enough forged Norwegian passports, only four of the family members could leave for Norway. For the other three, including Abdi, the father managed to get hold of forged American passports. Thus, the four year old Abdi was

¹⁵ It's plausible that the unnamed group is Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a Ugandan rebel movement which operated from bases in Sudan. LRA is well-known for their notorious kidnapping of children to use them as child soldiers.

¹⁶ In Norway institutions of higher education consists mainly of university colleges, called "Høyskole" and universities. The latter ones concentrate on theoretical subjects and supplies bachelor, masters and doctor degrees, in addition to a number of professional studies including psychology, dentistry, medicine, pharmacy and law. The of university colleges supply a wide range of bachelor and engineering degrees, and professional degrees as social worker, teacher, nurse and economist.

separated from both his parents and flew to his aunt in the United States. Finally in 1996 Abdi was reunited with his parents in Norway. At the time of reunification Abdi was eleven years old and had not seen his parents for almost six years.

Today Abdi, calls himself a “modern Muslim”. According to him his parents are having a hard time adapting to Norway and Norwegian way of living. This is true particularly for his father. After finishing high school Abdi moved out of his parents apartment and moved in with a couple of friends. Abdi reports no immediate plans for proceeding with higher education.

Today Abdi earns his living solely through selling hashish, an activity he has sustained since 1998/1999. Besides selling the drug, he has also been using it almost every day in the last six years. According to him he was one of the first who started selling hashish at Eika, and the reason he started in the first place was because he needed a way to fund his hashish habit. Being one of the veterans of Eika at the age of 21, he sees no way out of Eika as long as he lives in Oslo.

Abdi describes Oslo and Eika as “very dangerous” and “violent”. He tells about several incidents of stabbing and beatings at Eika, but according to him a these incidents are much less common now¹⁷. Because of numerous arrests, Abdi does not spend as much time at Eika as he used to. Now days must of his customers call him and make appointments for the delivery.

Ali:

Ali was born 21 years ago in Somalia. When he was fourteen years old the civil war in Somalia had left Ali’s mother worried about his safety in the country. She asked Ali to leave the country and to “become something” in a foreign land in order to save his family form the poverty. The then fourteen year old boy had to travel from Somalia to Norway with a “man” who his mother had paid to be Ali’s traveling companion.

After seeking asylum in Norway, Ali was sent to a small municipality in Norway plagued by racism. After a while in that camp with no family around him, Ali was transferred to another

¹⁷ According to a police report from 2003 the crime at Eika and the surrounding areas increased significantly the first three months of 2003, see the background section.

camp in the north of the country. Ali describes his time at the camps as very lonely and harsh. On the one hand he was totally alone in a strange and foreign country. On the other hand he felt that the environment at the camps were unsuitably strict, over controlled and that there was little genuine contact with adults.

Before getting his residence permit in Norway, Ali moved to Oslo. After getting a temporary work permit, Ali started working in a youth club. Since he forgot to renew his working permit he had to stop working. He did not receive welfare and was not allowed to work. He had to move out of his flat and live in a rundown hospit¹⁸. It was during this period, which lasted for several months, Ali was introduced to Eika.

Today Ali has finished both elementary school and high school in Norway, but his career at Eika has continued to this day, despite many attempts at getting a legitimate job. Despite selling drugs for several years at Eika, he has only been arrested once. Today Ali spends up to ten hours a day dealing hashish at Eika. Some of the money he earns at Eika he sends to his family in Africa. According to him, many of the people who deal drugs at Eika were introduced to the site in the same way he was. Unlike many at Eika, Ali does not use any drugs himself and describes himself as a Muslim.

Rahim:

Rahim was born in Mogadishu twenty-one years ago and moved to Oslo six years ago when the civil society in Somalia broke down as a result of conflict between various rivaling clans. At present Rahim lives alone while his two brothers and five sisters live with their parents. Rahim finished elementary school in Somalia and describes himself as an enthusiastic student. However he has not continued his studies here with the exception of the introductory course in Norwegian.

Rahim has been working at Eika for four years. Originally dealing drugs was not his ideal occupation. He attempted to find other jobs, but his applications were turned down. Although being a dealer himself Rahim describes Eika as a 'bad' place and that the business that goes on there is bad. This has ramifications for how he views himself since those who stay at bad places become bad themselves. Rahim has no ambition of becoming what he labels *big* in the

¹⁸ Publicly funded hostels that give shelter to the homeless.

drug business although, according to himself, he could have been one of the top dealers at Eika if he wanted to.

Rahim is a highly sociable person. He greets you with a big, warm smile and is easy to initiate a conversation with him. In contrast to other dealers he talks to everybody along the river and has a great number of acquaintances. However, he describes himself as a lone wolf, spending much of his time by himself. He also report having no close friends. The only thing Rahim knows about the future is that he does not want to continue selling drugs at Eika.

Appendix B:

Interview guide:

Tema	S.	Eventuelle tema	S.
Person/familie/boforhold	3	Flukt/avreise	8
Familie- og boforhold		Familieforhold og status i hjemland	9
Status, yrke og utdannelse	3	Grunn(er) til flukt/avreise	9
Interpersonlig/tilknytning	4	Traumer/tap rundt flukt/avreise	9
Barndom og oppvekst	4	Selve flukten/reisen	10
Forholdet til far	4	Første møte med Norge	10
Rollemodeller	5		
Nettverk	5		
Eika-miljøet	5		
Identitet og Kultur	6		
Identitet og tilhørighet	6		
Tanker om egen kultur i diaspora			
Helse	6		
Helse og psykiske problemer			
Norge	6		
Språk og språkproblemer	6		
Tanker om Norge	7		
Kontakt med Nordmenn	7		
Traumer/tap I Norge	7		
Rasisme	7		
Offentlighet	8		
Politiet	8		
Kontakt/vansker med det offentlige	8		
Annet	8		
Tanker/ønsker om fremtiden	8		
Tanker om livet ditt	8		

Innledende spørsmål:

- a) Kan du begynne med å fortelle meg hvordan dagen din i går var?
- b) Kan du begynne med å fortelle meg hvor du har vært og hvem du møtte i løpet av dagen?
- c) Før vi begynner, kunne du fortelle meg om **din familie**? For eksempel, hvor du ble født, hvem familien din består av, hvor du har bodd, hva foreldrene dine jobber med, og om dere flyttet ofte fra – slike ting. Jeg vil gjerne vite litt om familien din før vi begynner

Barndom og oppvekst:

- a) Hvor bodde du da du var yngre?
- b) Hvis du tenker tilbake til din barndom, hva tenker du på som positivt, og hva tenker du på som negativt om barndommen? Har du noen eksempler på begge?
- c) Hva slags forhold hadde du til dine foreldre da du var liten?
- d) Hva er ditt første minne fra barndommen/det første du husker?
- e) Da du var liten, hvilken ting ville gjøre deg lei deg og/eller sint?
- f) Hva gjorde du hvis du ble lei deg og/eller sint?
- g) Kan du fortelle om den første gangen du kan huske at du var atskilt/borte fra foreldrene dine?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du?
- h) Kan du huske skremmende straff fra dine foreldre?
- i) Hvis du trengte **trøst**, hva gjorde du?
- j) Opplevde du å miste noen som sto deg nær da du var liten?
 - i. Kan du fortelle meg noe om **omstendighetene** og hvor gammel du var?
- k) Fortell meg om en gang **en venn virkelig skuffet eller såret deg** på en måte du ikke forventet.
 - i. Hvordan **håndterte** du det?
 - ii. Ville du gjøre det **samme nå eller noe annet**?

Forhold til far:

- a) Jeg vil gjerne at du beskriver for meg forholdet til faren din fra så lang tilbake som du kan huske.
- b) Nå vil jeg gjerne at du skal velge tre ord som beskriver forholdet ditt til faren din da var liten. Bruk den tiden du trenger. Spør etter eksempler på setningene (ordene).
- c) Jeg vil gjerne at du beskriver forholdet du har til din far i dag. Bruk den tiden du trenger.
- d) Du sa at ditt forhold til din far var _____. Kan du fortelle meg om et **spesielt minne** eller en hendelse fra din barndom da deres forhold var
- e) Er det noe ved måten din far er som kan gjøre deg trist?
- f) Er det noe ved måten din far er som kan gjøre deg glad?
- g) Er det noe ved måten din far er som kan gjøre deg sint?
- h) Hvem har mest kunnskap om Norge og det norske systemet, deg eller din far?
- i) Hvem mestrer livet i Norge best, deg eller din far?
- j) Hvordan reagerte faren din da du kom i problemer som liten?
- k) Hvordan reagerer faren din hvis du kommer i problemer i dag?

Rollemodeller:

- a) Jeg vil gjerne at du forteller meg om du hadde et forbilde (en person) da du var liten.
- b) Har du noen som du ser opp til, og som fungerer som et forbilde for deg i livet ditt nå?
Hvem er denne personen?
 - i. Hvis ja; jeg vil gjerne at du beskriver hva ved denne personen som du ser opp til.
 - ii. Hvordan du tror denne personen har bidratt til å forme deg som den personen du er i dag?
- c) Hvilken person har gitt deg råd i din oppvekst? Hvem har du hørt mest på (har hatt størst innflytelse på ditt liv)?
- d) Hvem vil du si at du i dag ser mest opp til og vil være som?
 - hvorfor ser du mest opp til ham/henne/dem?
- e) Hvordan er ditt forhold til dine foreldre nå?

Nettverk

- a) Føler du at du har nok familie og venner rundt som kan hjelpe deg i situasjoner som er vanskelige å løse på egenhånd?
- b) Har du noen kontakt med landsmenn?
- c) Hvor opplever du at du er mest hjemme?

Livet i Eika-miljøet:

- a) Hvor lenge siden er det du begynte å selge cannabis/hasj?
- b) Når kom du inn i dette?
- c) Hvor gammel var du?
- d) Kjente du noen fra dette miljøet fra før?
- e) Hvordan vil du beskrive forholdet mellom de ulike personene som holder til ved eika, er det mye konflikt, samhold etc. hva dreier konflikten seg om?
- f) Hvis du kommer i problemer, hvem er det du søker hjelp hos?
- g) Hva er det mest positive med Eika miljøet?
- h) Hvem er dine beste venner og hva gjør disse til daglig?
- i) I din oppfatning; hvordan er en bra venn?

Identitet og tilhørighet

- a) Vil du si at du føler deg mest norsk eller somalisk, eller begge deler?
 - i. Opplever du at det av og til er vanskelig å både være norsk og somalisk?
 - ii. Kan du komme med noen eksempler?
- b) Føler du av og til at det å være oppvokst i en somalisk kultur og samtidig forholde seg til den norske kulturen skaper noen konflikter i ditt forhold til andre?

Tanker om egen kultur i diaspora

- a) Nå som du har bodd i Norge en stund, hva tenker du livet i Somalia.....kunne du tenke deg å flytte tilbake til Somalia? Hvis noe, hva må forandres i Somalia for at du skulle ville flytte tilbake dit?

Helse

- a) Da du bodde i hjemlandet hadde du noen alvorlige helseproblemer?
- b) Hvis du tenker tilbake på barndommen din kan du huske om du var mye syk?
- c) Hvordan er og var dine foreldres og dine søskens helse?
- d) Hvordan er helsen til dine kolleger i miljøet?
- e) Hender det at du i perioder er veldig sliten og ikke orker noe som helst?
- f) Vil du si at du har nok gleder i ditt liv?

Språk og språkproblemer

- a) Har du noen problemer med å uttrykke deg og forstå norsk?
 - i. (hvis ja) hvor store problemer tror du det skaper i kontakten med nordmenn?

Tanker om Norge (positiv/negative)

- b) Hva tenker du om Norge som land?
- c) Hva tenker du om livet ditt her i Norge (trivsel, fortid, framtid)?
- d) Gir det å bo i Norge muligheter som du ikke ville ha hatt hvis du hadde bodd i hjemlandet?
- e) Hva er det verste som har skjedd deg siden du flyttet til Norge?
 - i. Hvordan tror du dette påvirker deg i dag?

Kontakt med nordmenn?

- a) Har du norske venner? Har du kontakt med nordmenn? Ønsker du kontakt med nordmenn?
 - i. Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
- b) Hvordan/hva tror du nordmenn tenker om deg når du møter dem?

Rasisme

- a) Har opplevd at noen nordmenn har behandlet deg dårlig eller lite respektfullt på grunn av din utenlandske bakgrunn?
- b) Kan du fortelle om en slik situasjon?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du?
 - ii. Hva tenker du om slike episoder i dag?

- iii. Tror du slike episoder påvirker ditt forhold til nordmenn og Norge?
- c) Har du opplevd at det har vært vanskelig å få seg arbeid på grunn av din utenlandske bakgrunn?
- i. (Hvis ja) hva tenker du om dette?
- d) Har du opplevd at du har hatt vanskeligheter med å få et sted å bo på grunn av din utenlandske bakgrunn?
- e) Har du, eller har du hatt, norske venner? Hvis nei, kunne du tenke deg å ha en norsk venn?
- f) Hvordan/hva tror du nordmenn tenker om deg når du møter dem?

Politiet

- a) Har du hatt kontakt med politiet? i. Hva skjedde?
- b) Hvilke tanker gjør du deg rundt det som skjedde?¹⁹
- c) Har du møtt noen politimenn som har vært hyggelig mot deg?
- d) Hvis du kommer i alvorlige problemer som du ikke kan løse selv, tror du da at politiet kan/vil hjelpe deg?

Kontakt og vansker med det offentlige

- a) Føler du at "det offentlige" (sos.kontor, trygdekontor, leger, skole, udi, etc) behandler deg bra, dvs at de ser problemene dine, forsøker å hjelpe, behandler deg med respekt? Hvis nei, hvorfor er det slik?
- b) Hvordan opplevde du dette møtet (ble du og dine problemer tatt på alvor)?

Tanker om livet

- a) Hva tenker du om ditt liv slik som det er i dag?
- b) Hva er det du er fornøyd med, hva er du misfornøyd med?
- c) Ditt liv slik du lever det i dag, hva får det deg til å føle?

Tanker om fremtiden

Dette spørsmålet er en direkte oppfølger til spørsmålet over og formuleringen blir formet av det. Essens:

- a) tror du livet ditt kommer til å forandre seg? Hvorfor, hvorfor ikke?
- b) hvilke forandringer ønsker du?

¹⁹ Vi må få tak i deres tanker og følelser om politiet, om de tror politiet er primært ute etter å ødelegge for dem, eller om synet på politiet er mer nyansert

- c) Hva må til i livet ditt for at du skal komme deg videre fra dette miljøet og denne jobben?

Familieforhold og status i hjemland

- a) Da du bodde i hjemlandet hva arbeidet du med/gjorde du?
- b) Er det noen i din familie eller slekt som er igjen i hjemlandet?
 - i. Har du noe kontakt med dem?
- c) Hva tenker du om det å være så langt unna slekt og familie?
- d) Hvordan påvirker det livet ditt her at du er så langt unna nær familie?

Grunn(er) til flukt/avreise:

- a) Hvis du tenker tilbake til din avreise/flukt fra -----, hva vil du si var den viktigste grunnen til at du flyktet/reiste?
- b) Var det noen andre grunner til at du riste/flyktet?
- c) Hva tenker du om det som fikk dere til å reise?
- d) Hvis du fortsatt hadde bodd i -----, og hadde visst alt du vet i dag, ville du ha fortsatt ha flyktet/reist av de(n) samme grunn(er)?

Traumer/tap rundt flukt/avreise:

- a) Opplevde du noe rett før flukten/reisen som du fortsatt sliter med?
- b) Kan du fortelle meg hva det er du fortsatt sliter med?
- c) Opplevde du å bli ydmyket rett før flukten/reisen?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du?
 - ii. Hender det at du fortsatt tenker på den episoden?
- d) Opplevde du å bli fysisk/psykisk mishandlet rett før flukten/reisen?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du da?
 - ii. Hvordan reagerer du i dag når du tenker på de(n) episoden(e)?
- e) Opplevde du at du noen sinne var i livsfare rett før flukten/reisen?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du da?
 - ii. Tenker du fortsatt på de(n) episoden(e)?
- f) Hva var det verste med å flykte/ reise?
- g) Opplevde du noe underflukten/ reisen som du fortsatt sliter med?
- h) Kan du fortelle meg hva det er du fortsatt sliter med?

- i) Opplevde du å bli adskilt med noen du flyktet/ reiste sammen med som var viktig for deg?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du?
 - ii. Hender det at du fortsatt tenker på den episoden?
- j) Opplevde du å bli ydmyket under flukten/reisen?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du?
 - ii. Hender det at du fortsatt tenker på den episoden?
- k) Opplevde du å bli fysisk/psykisk under flukten/reisen?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du da?
 - ii. Hvordan reagerer du i dag når du tenker på de(n) episoden(e)?
- l) Opplevde du at du noen sinne var i livsfare under flukten/reisen?
 - i. Hvordan reagerte du da?
 - ii. Tenker du fortsatt på de(n) episoden(e)?

Selve flukten/avreisen:

- a) Hvor gammel var du da du flyktet/reiste fra -----?
- b) Hvem flyktet/reiste du med?
- c) Hvor lenge flyktet/reiste du/dere?
- d) Har du bodd i flyktningleir?
- e) Hvor lenge var det?
- f) Hvordan var det?
- g) Hva husker du best ved flukten/flukten/reisen?
- h) Hva var det vanskeligste med flukten/reisen?
- i) Når du i dag tenker på selve flukten/reisen hvilken tanker gjør du deg?
- j) Synes du det var verdt det?
- k) Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?

Første møte med Norge

- a) Kan du huske dagen du kom til Norge? Kan du fortelle meg om minner fra den dagen, hva du tenkte om det ”nye livet”, om Norge, Og hvordan det føltes å komme til Norge (på den dagen)?
- b) Opplevde du at du ble forstått av Nordmenn når det gjeldt hva du hadde gjennomgått i hjemlandet?

c) Hvor bodde du den første tiden i Norge?

Appendix C:

Request of participation in the study “Identity, attachment and marginalization”.

The following is information about the study “Identity, attachment and marginalization”. “Identity, attachment and marginalization” is a study in psychology. The purpose of the study is to examine how identity, relationship to parents, role models and perceived exclusion from the Norwegian society affects youths and young adults whose income is based partially or fully on selling narcotic substances. Those who agree to participate in the study will be interviewed on topics such as relationship to parents, their thoughts about the government and the police and their relationship to friends.

The study will be carried out by Mehdi Farshbaf and Nicolay Nørbech who are students from the department of psychology from the University of Oslo (UIO). Supervisors are Sverre Varvin (head supervisor) and Mona-Iren Hauge. The project will start in spring 2006 and end in November 2006. The study will be an important part of a thesis that will be finished in the spring of 2007. The study is not initiated or financed by any private or governmental institutions.

All information given by those who participate in the study will be handled in a confidential way. The information that will be published in the thesis will neither directly or indirectly be possible to use to identify the informants. All stored information will be erased at the end of the study in January 2007, unless something else has been agreed upon with the informant.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary and those who participate can at any time and for any reason decide to end their participation.

You do not have to decide right away if you want to participate in the study. You have seven days to decide if you want to participate in the study or not.

This project is approved by the National committees for research ethics in Norway (REK) and by the Committee for the protection of personal data in research at the Norwegian social sciences data services (NSD)

Declaration of participation:

I have received written and verbal information about the study and I am willing to participate.

.....
(Place and Date)

.....
(Name)