

# **Media Use by the Syrian Community in Sweden.**

Interviews Examining Media Consumption, Identity and Integration.

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Master Media Studies Media, Culture & Society 2013-2014

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Master Thesis

June 2014

**Abstract:**

This study examines the media habits of members of the Syrian diaspora residing in Stockholm, Sweden, in order to follow up on the conflict and maintain a connection to the homeland. As a result of the ongoing Syrian Civil War, thousands of citizens are forced to leave Syria and settle down abroad every day. At the same time, mainstream media outlets are given limited insight into Syria, the government maintains control over published news content, and a lot of online content is being censored. This raises questions regarding if, and how, Syrian immigrants outside the nation's borders are communicating with potential friends and family left behind; how they are keeping up-to-date with developments of the conflict, and where they are able to find reliable information. Previous studies on the subject of media use among diasporic communities have not taken into account how the Syrian Civil War has affected the media use by members of the Syrian diaspora. Therefore, the study acts to fill a void in diaspora research that specifically considers a homeland in turmoil.

Through ten qualitative interviews, the study examines what traditional as well as new media channels are used by members of the Syrian diaspora in Sweden, and how this affects their conception of the homeland and the nation of residence. Interview respondents are all first-generation immigrants of varied genders and age groups, in order to identify patterns of media consumption among this group. Specifically, data analysis conducted through a constant comparative method of interview transcripts examines foreign and local news and broadcast media consumption, as well as Internet use. Analysis focuses on identifying phenomenological similarities and differences in the perceptions and motivations of respondents. Findings from the conducted interviews consider differences in how different genders and age groups use specific media channels in order to follow up the ongoing conflict in Syria, and how these media affect the respondents' understanding of Syria. Finally, the study also considers how these media channels are used by members of the Syrian diaspora in the process of acculturation and integration into the Swedish community.

**Keywords:** Media consumption, Syrian diaspora, integration, acculturation, transnational media, Stockholm, Sweden, traditional media, new media, Syrian Civil War.

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## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Overview**

According to the Syrian Arab Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, there are an estimated 18 million people living in the Syrian diaspora as of 2014 (Syrian Arab Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, n.d.). Following the start of the Syrian uprising in 2011, the rate at which Syrian nationals are leaving the country and seeking refuge abroad is increasing exponentially. This has resulted in a growing Syrian diaspora in neighboring countries, also extending to North America, South America, Africa, Oceania and Europe. Families and friends are being split up and being forced to make new homes abroad, with news outlets giving limited insight into Syria, and only providing certain details about the conflict.

Today, Sweden has an estimated 50,000 first-generation Syrian immigrants, in addition to the large number of second, third, and fourth generation immigrants of Syrian descent (Scandinavian Broadcasting System, 2013). Through interviews conducted with Syrian immigrants in Stockholm, Sweden, this research explores the media use and media consumption habits of different members of the Syrian diaspora. The aim of the research is to examine how

Syrian immigrants living in the diaspora consume media in different forms to follow up the ongoing conflict of their home country, and how these media affect the respondents' understanding of both Syria and Sweden. The study also considers how these media channels are used by members of the Syrian diaspora in the process of acculturation and integration into the Swedish community.

At the moment, foreign journalists are not allowed inside Syria's borders. The government maintains control of published news content, and a lot of online content is being censored (Reporters Without Borders: For Freedom of Information, 2014). This raises questions regarding if, and how, Syrian immigrants outside the nation's borders are communicating with potential friends and family left behind; how they are keeping up-to-date with developments of the conflict, and where they are able to find the most reliable information.

## **1.2 Social & Academic Relevance**

The study of identity and media consumption by Syrian immigrants residing in Stockholm is both scientifically and socially relevant, because it brings up the role that the media plays in a divided world, and can add knowledge to the existing research on how immigrants living in the diaspora consume media. Most relevant to this proposed research is how the conflict in Syria affects media use by Syrian immigrants residing in Sweden. There has been some previous research conducted on the subject of media use among diasporic communities, which will be outlined at a later stage. However, this research has not taken into account recent phenomenon such as the Syrian Civil War, which will affect the outlook of members of the diaspora on their homeland. Therefore, this study acts to both expand the research on the Syrian diaspora, and fill an academic void in diaspora research that specifically considers a homeland in turmoil. Studying effect of the Syrian Civil War on media consumption is a current and socially relevant area of research, as it examines how a complex situation in the homeland

can affect the immigrant in terms of identity, integration, and acculturation.

### 1.3 Research Questions

As mentioned previously, this research broadly examines the media consumption habits of Syrians living in the diaspora. More specifically, the study looks at how Syrian immigrants in Stockholm, Sweden, are using the media to connect to their country of origin, as well as how it plays into their everyday lives in terms of Syrian identity and Swedish integration. For example, even if an individual does not follow the conflict at all, this still says something about media use and the attraction of keeping in touch with one's roots. The research questions that guide this study is as follows:

*RQ1: How do Syrian immigrants in Stockholm use media to follow up the ongoing conflict in Syria?*

Central to my research question is examining what media forms are used by different members of the Syrian diaspora in Sweden, in order to follow up the conflict in their homeland. For example, it is significant whether members use local newspapers, foreign newspapers, or social media websites in order to reach what they view as the most reliable information. Thus, I have formulated the research question as such in order to encompass all media forms and groups of Syrian immigrants regardless of distinguishing factors such as age or gender. Previous case studies on the subject of media use among diasporic communities have neither focused exclusively on Sweden nor taken into account how the Syrian Civil War may have altered the media use by diasporic Syrians. I expect that the Syrian conflict will affect media consumption habits by Syrian immigrants in Stockholm. Hence, the research question is relevant as it addresses a previously unexamined area that can contribute to existing research.

Furthermore, I wish to further specify how the research question is to be understood and how I will go about answering it. First of all, examining “media use” by the Syrian immigrant community in Stockholm implies an unlimited amount of material. The choice was made to not limit the analysis to any media channels, but to include multiple media outlets. Usually, media research examines two aspects of “media”: traditional (television and newspapers) and new media (the Internet and SNS), both of which are included in this study, with the addition of ICT technologies such as telephone calls and smartphone applications. Given the wide range of activities possibilities both online and offline, it is important that media is open and considers all online platforms and other ICT technologies, in order to ensure a comprehensive study (O’Callaghan et al., 2014, p. 1). That being stated, I am aware that the majority of consumption will take place on the Internet. Here, I do not limit myself to any corners of the Internet. Rather, the interview subjects are asked to describe how they use the Internet in the broad sense, thereby opening up results to everything from social networking sites to blogs, and both online and offline newspapers.

*RQ2: Are there differences in how different genders or age groups use these media?*

I expect that there will be identifiable differences in consumption by different age groups, genders, and generations of Syrian immigrants as well as ideological background. In the process of examining patterns of media use by Syrian immigrants in Stockholm, one must therefore look both at how media is generally used throughout the community, as well as differences among members of the diaspora as representatives of the larger sample in order to make conclusions about an entire group of people.

*RQ3: In what way does the media use by the respondent reflect their image of their home country and the host nation?*



Related to question 2, is how the media the respondent chooses to consume may affect the image of Syria presented to them. Again, different media channels may present markedly different interpretations of the ongoing conflict. Therefore, individuals must make a conscious decision on what they believe and how they interpret it, which ultimately affects their personal image of the conflict and the Syrian situation in general. This question examines what media is used by groups of the Syrian diasporic community, and more specifically how it is used in conveying a particular understanding of the situation Syria and plays into their personal identity as Syrian or Swedish. This question discusses the identity of respondents through their image of both their homeland and host nation.

*RQ4: How do the media choices of respondents reflect the integration and acculturation of this group?*

Lastly, the goal of the final question is to examine how local and transnational media is used in Syrian and Swedish identity formation. Here, I examine how media channels may be used to help respondents in their process of integrating into the new community, should they choose to do so. Similarly, the final question acknowledges if and how media is used by respondents in the process of adopting cultural traits and norms of the nation of residence, if it is at all. This elaborates on whether respondents are using local Swedish media channels as a means to merge with Swedish culture.

## **1.4 Background Information**

This section will provide a brief overview of background information on the Syrian conflict, and more generally about Sweden and immigration. Syria is a nation in the

MiddleEast, bordering Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, and Iraq. As of July, 2013, the nation had a population of 22,457,336 people (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2013). 74% of Syrian citizens are Sunni Muslim, 16% are members of other Muslim groups such as Alawite, and the estimated remaining 10% of citizens are Christian (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2013). The Syrian conflict, also referred to as the Syrian Civil War, began as a string of protests as a part of the Arab Spring in March, 2011. The conflict was perhaps the most pronounced in the news in late 2012, after it was officially declared a civil war by the International Red Cross. Essentially, the war exists between the regime under president Bashar Al-Assad, and the Free Syrian Army, wishing to overthrow the government (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2013). President Al-Assad comes from an Alawite family, a religious group which is an offshoot of Shi'ite Islam. As almost three quarters of the nation's citizens are Sunni Muslims, and these religious differences present one area of conflict. The war has mobilized many civilian protesters as well as extremist groups, and both suicide bombings and nuclear weapons have been used throughout the conflict. Syria's Civil War has caused a death toll exceeding one hundred thousand reported deaths as of 2014. This has caused an estimated two million people fleeing the country and living as refugees in neighboring countries. As of June 2014, the Syrian conflict is still going on and no resolution is underway (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2013).

Today, Sweden is the only country in the EU which offers permanent residency to Syrian refugees seeking asylum (Morris, 2013). Since 2012, Sweden has accepted an estimated 14,700 Syrian refugees, which makes an estimated total of 50,000 Syrian immigrants living in Sweden (Scandinavian Broadcasting System, 2013). In recent years, the number of Syrian immigrants coming to Sweden in recent years has been at a steady increase (Statistics Sweden, n.d.). In 2013, more Syrians came to Sweden seeking asylum than from any other country. Out of 13,158 Syrian immigrants applying, 80% were granted asylum (Swedish Migration Board, 2013). Although never in such large numbers as in recent years, there has historically always been continuous Syrian immigration to Sweden (Swedish Migration Board, n.d.). As of January 2014, Sweden has helped resettle the third most Syrian refugees in the

world, following Germany and Canada (McCarthy, 2014).

## 1.5 Terminology

Before delving into the wide availability of literature on migrants, immigrants, and diasporic communities as presented in the following chapter, I wish to particularize and differentiate between these terms, specifying how they are to be understood throughout this research. Firstly, the concept of migrants is connected to the physicality of *migration*, referring to groups of people having performed the actual movement from one place to another. Migrants, therefore, are limited to first-generation migrants (Dhoest et al., 2013, p. 16). Dhoest, Nikunen and Cola (2013) explain the nature of the term migrant as being susceptible to differences in “evolving migration patterns, temporary and seasonal migration, circular or commuting migration, transit migration and return migration” (Dhoest et al., 2013, p. 15). This is distinct from the term *immigration*, which refers to a more permanent situation. Rather, an immigrant is characterized by an uprooting from a distant home, placed in a situation of new cultures and traditions. While these concepts are similar in their basis in human displacement, the term migrants will not be used in this research. While both migrants and immigrants are first generation citizens, the word immigrants will be used in this research in relation to the interviewees, due to their nature of being forced to abandon their nation of origin, perhaps permanently (Dhoest et al., 2013, p. 15).

Weibull and Wadbring (1998) conceptualize the term immigrant as being defined by either citizenship or place of origin. Defining immigrants based on their status of citizenship is more complex, as citizenship is more inclusive and may therefore underestimate the actual number of immigrants (Weibull & Wadbring, 1998, p. 51). Therefore, immigrants as defined by place of origin includes first generation immigrants, having been born in another nation, and second generation immigrants, born of parents originally from another nation

(Weibull & Wadbring, 1998, p. 51). Therefore, an immigrant as defined by place of origin is the definition that is used, as it provides a better foundation for the research.

Finally is the concept of diasporic audiences, which is more complex and will be further conceptualized in the following chapter. However, briefly put, diasporic audiences differ from immigrants in that they have a history of migration, which must not be in recent generations (Dhoest et al., 2013, p. 16). Rather, the idea of diasporic audiences is a group of people whom have experienced relocation and “who develop and sustain identities and social relations within and across nationstates”. Essential to these audiences is that they are diverse “families” bound together by a common identity, whether it be national, religious, or ethnic (Dhoest et al., 2013, p. 18).

## **1.6 The Media Landscape of Sweden**

This section will focus on providing an overview of how the Swedish print, broadcast, and Internet media markets cater to immigrant groups and information needs. Today, there are print 191 journals, magazines and newspapers in Sweden that target specific minority groups. Of these, there are 5 papers specifically addressing the information needs of immigrants originating from Syria (ImmigrantInstitutet, n.d.). There are two state subsidy systems that allocate financial support to print media. The first is a press subsidy system, determined by the Press Subsidies Council (Ra  ttsna  tet Notisum A.B., 1990). Secondly, there is also a subsidy system under which the Council for Cultural Affairs allocates funds to cultural publications (Ra  ttsna  tet Notisum A.B., 2010). Both the Council for Cultural Affairs and the Press Subsidies Council will support papers regardless of language or orientation, provided that they fill certain requirements. Thus, it is not a question of any particular attention paid to the information needs of immigrants.

A study on *Ethnic Minorities and their Media in Sweden* (2003) by Leonor Camaue<sup>rr</sup> concluded that “the conditions of production of minority media and the policies that affect them is, on the one hand, the heavy reliance of these media on either the voluntary work of members of minorities, state subsidies, or the efforts of the public service broadcasters SR and SVT, and, on the other hand, their low degree of commercialisation” (Camaue<sup>rr</sup>, 2003, p. 84). State media policy for broadcasting channels is put forth by Swedish parliament with the help of the Ministry of Culture, with the goal of encouraging freedom of speech and cultural diversity (Kulturdepartementet, 2013). Unlike the Swedish press, radio and television channels are not subsidized by any state policies, except when receiving finances from associations funding particular projects in which radio or television broadcasts are included. One main reason for the lack of state media policy affecting individual channels is that they are local or regional channels. As a result, there are no local ethnic broadcast media channels that align themselves exclusively as for any particular minority or immigrant group. Within the Ministry of Culture’s budget for state media policy, there is also no specific attention paid to allocating funds specifically catering to the needs of immigrants (Kulturdepartementet, 2013). However, The Council for Cultural Affairs under the Ministry of Culture, is increasing sponsorship of media channels that cater to what they name “the minority languages”: Finnish, Yiddish, Mea<sup>nn</sup>kieli (Tornedalen Finnish), Romani, and Samian (Kulturradet, n.d.). The two broadcast media channels that are the most open about diversity and appealing to a culturally diverse audience are the public service channels SR (radio) and SVT2 (television).

ICT technologies, including the Internet, differ from print and broadcast media as the wide availability of information constantly allows specific information that is relevant for immigrant groups. Although no studies have been conducted specifically on minorities and their Internet use in Sweden, similar research has been executed in other countries. What we can take from these studies is that Internet access is not a problem, rather, difficulty lies in immigrants being able to acquire the necessary digital skills. Also, with markedly different findings between different migrant groups, it is relevant to examine the particular consumption

habits of one particular group. This is especially since one might argue that the Syrian diaspora has a larger inclination to want to use this media channel to connect to a homeland in turmoil. This also means that we can expect to see differences in the Internet use between members of the Syrian diaspora in Sweden.

## **2 Theoretical Framework**

This section presents an overview of relevant concepts in the field of media and diaspora, and how they have been used in previous empirical research studies. I attempt to define these terms with the help of existing work in the field, and clarify how they will be useful in my project, and in ultimately answering my research questions. The subject of immigration and the conflict in the MiddleEast can be a sensitive one. Therefore, it is important to get a thorough understanding of these concepts and how they play into the lives of members of the Syrian community.

### **2.1 Diasporic Communities**

A diasporic community is made up of a single population, scattered across the globe, loosely connected through “a collective memory of their original homeland” (Cohen, 1997, p. 4). A diaspora often refers to a population of members originating from a fixed homeland, such as in the example of people with Syrian immigrants, living in Sweden. However, diasporic communities are not limited to a physical center in the form of a nation-state, but can also refer to a population connected in other ways to a center, seen for example in the Kurdish or Jewish diaspora. Key to diasporic communities is the fact that they feel a sense of community to each other, although they may never meet. Although not physically connected to fellow members of the diasporic community, they share a sense of communion amongst each other (Anderson, 1991, p. 6). Therefore, diasporic communities are often referred to as “imagined communities”. Benedict Anderson (1991) defines the nation as imagined in that it is limited, sovereign, and a community bound by a deep, horizontal comradeship (Anderson, 1991, p. 7). In other words, members are connected by a psychological sense of belonging to a group, rather than a physical space. This imagined sense of “home” connects and empowers members of the diaspora to identify themselves in terms of a collective identity linked to their shared

experience and origin coming from “an imagined, putative or real homeland” (Cohen, 1997, p. 7). This in turn differentiates members in the diaspora from the natives in the new nation. Members of diasporic communities are all different, and therefore the study thereof is extremely socially relevant to understanding human cultural identity. These members reside in a cultural limbo between nations, which affects their identity and understanding of home. Personal experiences and characteristics such as how long an individual has lived in the new nation, or how old they were when they left their nation of origin, all affect their personal understanding of home. While some Syrian immigrants in Sweden may see themselves as still completely Syrian, others may have made the transition to where they view Sweden as their new homeland. Between these two extremes there are also many a transitional state of consciousness between Sweden and Syria where they are still negotiating where they consider home to be.

Members of the Syrian diaspora share particular ethnic commonalities as they live within a more diverse society. Although minorities within Sweden, members of the Syrian diaspora share a sense of belonging with fellow members, in their mutual sense of community that spreads beyond national boundaries (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 4). These commonalities are imagined in that they are not physically real, but nonetheless they can have real consequences and impacts on the everyday lives of diasporic communities. In most cases, migrations out of Syria are forced in that the citizens are forced to seek refuge abroad. This results in strong emotional links and nostalgic reminiscences to the homeland (Karim, 2003, p. 3). Therefore, the impact of a transnational migration is not only psychological, but cultural, political and economic as well (Karim, 2003, p. 5).

I theorize that no matter how long the respondent may have lived in Sweden, they are in some way bound to Syria and affected by the Syrian Civil War to the extent that it may differentiate their media use from a native Swede. This is because they have other connections than obvious nationalistic ones that they may feel the need to uphold. In this sense, “home” can refer to either a physical place or a symbolic idea relating to a sense of belonging



and identity (Morley, 2001, p. 426).

## **2.2 Media & the Diaspora**

Members of the diaspora are held together through shared cultural repertoires and information, for example replicated through different media sources. Print media as well as television and Internet sources can promote a shared identity and collective consciousness on a global scale (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 4).

The emergence of the Internet in particular, as a tool with the capability to cross borders and connect people all over the globe has played a huge role for diasporic communities, allowing them to communicate and form a collective identity. No longer bound by a pure sense of community, members of the diaspora can connect to other members in a way that allows them to identify the presence of fellow members on another side of the globe. Due to the demand by diasporic audiences for transnational content, diasporic media have consistently been quick in adopting new technologies (Karim, 2003, p. 12). New media channels have the capability to form a network connecting members of the diaspora with similar ethnic or religious backgrounds. At the same time, newer technologies are also breaking down hierarchies of traditional media forms (Karim, 2003, p. 13). As a result, a lot of interest has grown regarding how members of the diaspora use these media. Out of this, the academic study of “digital diasporas” and “diasporic media studies” have grown exponentially. Digital media have an undeniable influence in the lives of immigrants outside and nationals inside the nation of origin. Due to the separation of digital media from mainstream media channels and the potential of digital diasporas “to foster democratic values, support integration in the host society, and contribute to security and socio-economic development in the homelands” (Brinkerhoff, 2009, p. 2). Members of the diaspora are no longer limited to any particular media channel when gathering information and maintaining connections to the diasporic community, and are instead

exposed to a multitude of sources in the formation of their collective consciousness. Diasporic media cultures are therefore complex as their imagined community is a combination of local, national, and transnational spaces, which also requires a combination of different media channels to promote belonging (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 4).

Media reach and widespread availability have even played a role in bringing about societal changes such as the beginning of the Arab Spring, which resulted in the Syrian uprising. Also, the global reach of the media “facilitates the flow of people across the planet and the formation, growth and maintenance of diaspora communities and family ties” (Oiarzabal & Reips, 2012, p. 1134). People living in the diaspora recognize the possibilities of the media, and actively seek out cultural products reminding them of their roots and linking them to their nation of origin (Karim, 2003, p. 3). Simply put, diasporic media allow migrants to access cultural content of their home country. However, these media are often limited in their locality-specific programming, “which better recognizes their attempts to negotiate their inclusions into the national community of the place where they are now living as well as affirming their commonality with fellow nationals living in their home countries or other diasporas” (Morley, 2000, p. 443). The Internet has aided in offer a wider array of custom content and in creating a link for maintaining a strong connection to a homeland. Although Internet use and availability of information online varies among diasporic groups, there is a clear trend among members to harness the vast potential of the Internet in new ways. For example, the Internet has many social features that enable connections between people, regardless of physical distance, which is of great importance of members of the diaspora (Karim, 2003, p. 13).

## **2.3 Media Preference**

According to Arjun Appadurai (1996) global cultural flows are developed through the relationships between dimensions of human movement, technological, flow, financial

transfers, technological capabilities, and, most relevant to this research, images created by the media. Appadurai names these the “ethnoscape”, “technoscape”, “financescape”, “mediascape” and “ideoscape” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33). Within the “mediascape”, narratives of another world are those provided to us by the media (Appadurai, 1990, p. 300). This is the dimension in which diasporic groups use the media as a tool to gain insight into a native community that is physically foreign. Media images are the technological means used to bring pieces of this community into the homes of diasporic groups. In addition to this, the mediascape is a space for “social interaction and communication within the diasporic communities” (Georgiou, 2005b, 18). The wide availability of content affects the media selection choices of immigrants and natives alike. The cultural exchange of media that has occurred as a result of globalization, has in turn affected the multicultural society in a way that geographical location does not necessarily define a cultural experience (Tomlinson, 1999: 174). Rather, audience members have the ability to “think across spaces” while consuming media content, meaning that they can be physically and mentally create a dual experience (Aksoy & Robins, 2000, p. 361). Therefore, the members of diasporic communities hold the responsibility for their personal media use, whether it be in order to integrate into a new society or keep in touch with the nation of origin.

Though it was once suggested that media and culture flowed one way from the West to the East as a result of cultural imperialism, the continued migration and globalization of people and products has proven to be more complex. Rather, the contra-flow of global communication is a multi-directional relationship where Eastern countries are also seen as important in the flows of news and cultural products (Thussu, 2007, p. 23). This is for example seen in the worldwide distribution of transnational products such as telenovelas, satellite television and AlJazeera (Wessler & Adolphsen, 2008, p. 441). Diasporic populations in particular have been key in altering the distribution of information and global communication (Georgiou & Silverstone, 2007, p. 33). Migrants promote communications that go beyond the boundaries of the state and the culture of one nation, challenging the dominance of existing local

media players. This results in cultural hybridity and a diverse selection of available media, ranging from the local to the national and the transnational.

Therefore, central to studying culture, media use, and identity, is the concept of the deterritorialization of communities and cultures. Deterritorialization refers to a changing world where cultures are no longer locally bound but globally interchanged (Appadurai, 1990, p. 302). Due to this, diasporic communities are in some cases referred to as “deterritorialized nations” (Karim, 2003, p. 2). Some authors theorize that deterritorialization results in a cultural atmosphere where even the foreign becomes familiar through mutual exposure (Tomlinson, 1999: 176). Media content, therefore, is a vehicle of deterritorialization through manifestations of homogenization, differentiation and hybridization of cultural content (Martí, 2006, p. 93). On the other hand, Appadurai (1996), Tomlinson (1999), and Morley (2001) suggest that media in this way also becomes a vehicle of *reterritorialization*. Reterritorialization expresses a “search for cultural diversity, for particularism, for the reinforcement of the local” (Martí, 2006, p. 94). In other words, there is an attraction to culturally specific local content. Myria Georgiou refers to this as the “universalism-particularism continuum” (Georgiou, 2005b). Georgiou labels it the universalism-particularism continuum as it is a complex contradiction of being drawn to ethnically specific content promoting familiarity and belongingness, yet members of the diaspora “still depend for their existence on universalistic values ingrained in the modern nation-state (that supports them with money and infrastructure), on universal human rights and the freedom of communication (that protects their rights to exist)” (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 45). Morley suggests that when choosing what media content to consume, the audience tends to prefer close national cultural proximity to promote a sense of belonging (Morley, 2001: 443). This becomes more complex when referring to diasporic communities as one cannot generalize whether “belonging” entails the physical location or the imagined home of the immigrant. La Pastina and Straubhaar refer to this cultural proximity as “a new layer of identity, above locality, and in some cases above subnational culturallinguistic communities, supplementing but not necessarily reducing those older layers” (La Pastina & Straubhaar, 2003, p. 277). In other words, La Pastina and

Straubhaar suggest that the term cultural proximity in television needs to extend beyond national boundaries, as in some cases, foreign narratives can promote local cultural identification that can in fact be more attractive to the local audience than national programming. These narratives may draw on shared cultural capital and linguistic and historical experiences that are not limited to the nationstate (La Pastina & Straubhaar, 2003, p. 286). In this way, transnational cultural messages, available through the media are important for integration and the identity formation of immigrants as they increase “the ‘space’ available for cultural clashes and intercultural incomprehension to be overcome” (Sakr, 2008, 295). The importance of exposure of familiar cultural content also underlines the fact that media symbols can be as important as national territory (Sakr, 2008, 296).

Karim Karim (2003), a foremost authority on media and diaspora, accentuates the differences between what is named “ethnic”, “diaspora” and “transnational” television. “Ethnic television” means that the programmes are produced locally, with the goal of appealing to ethnic minorities in the nation. Transnational media content is programming that is produced in one nation (in this case Syria), then imported to and displayed in another. Finally, diaspora programmes “are made ‘usually by local, independent, minority entrepreneurs for consumption by a small, cohesive population’” (Karim, 2003, p. 11). These concepts all take the idea of foreign programming, but differ in both how they are produced and consumed.

Ethnically specific satellite television is one tool for the transnational circulation media content among diasporic communities. Recent years have seen a significant increase of Arab channels available in Europe through satellite television (Sakr, 2008, p. 278). In addition to the national television channels and the Internet, satellite television makes transnational yet identical content available for scattered audiences, thereby becoming an important vehicle for community building and identity formation among diasporic communities (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 1920). Generally, migrant households throughout Europe are made up of a higher amount of satellite dishes and cable television subscriptions than local households (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 20). Arabic channels in particular, are “increasingly recognised as players in global

communications by western governments and other major media players” (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 21). The largest and most important example of Arab transnational satellite programming is Al-Jazeera. Among Arab diasporic communities, Al-Jazeera is a key instrument both for reporting regional news and providing cross-cultural communication, as well as cultivating the imagined Arab community by promoting a sense of fellowship and belonging (Shuraydi, 2006). AlJazeera is the transnational content provider of choice for many Arabs in diasporic communities as the promotion of foreign cultural values is a way for Arabs overseas to maintain a connection to that particular community. In this way, Al-Jazeera in addition to other transnational satellite television channels act as “cultural anchors” that create and maintain the “virtual Arab world” (Shuraydi, 2006, p. 1).

## **2.4 Social Integration & Acculturation**

Members of diasporic communities are exposed to a hybrid of traditions and experiences that shape their everyday lives. In media and cultural studies, the term hybridity refers to the coming together of cultures or identities across boundaries (Kraidy, 2005, p. 5). As a result of cultural globalization, hybridity is represented both in the diasporic members themselves, and in the universal features of media texts worldwide. Immigrants are in a difficult cultural position in limbo between societies and norms. As a result, the hybrid cultures affect the habits and patterns of how immigrants structure their everyday lives, distinguishing them from nationals (Berry, 1997, p. 6).

The concept of acculturation relates to hybridity, as the idea of hybrid cultures coming together for members of diasporic groups is central to understanding the social aspects of establishing oneself in a new space. When two or more cultures meet in such a way, the term acculturation is used to refer “to the general processes and outcomes (both cultural and psychological) of intercultural contact” (Berry, 1997, p. 8). When placed in a new environment,

acculturation refers to the process of becoming a part of the new residence through an adoption of the cultural norms of the new group. In this sense, the displacement of immigrants shape their identity as the merging of cultures causes the “cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture” (Acculturation, n.d.). This cultural change occurs internally in individuals from different cultures as a result of “direct contact with members of the host culture”, which causes changes in the cultural values of one or both groups (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 3536).

Acculturation research, therefore, examines how newcomers in a society become integrated into the existing mainstream culture (Padilla & Perrez, 2003, p. 36). Generally, there are three proposed stages that establish if and how immigrants adjust to the dominant culture following arrival. First comes contact with members of the host nation, which is followed by accommodation on the part of the newcomers in order to minimize conflict. This is usually followed by assimilation into the society through the adoption of cultural patterns such as behaviors, norms, traditions and values (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 3637). Berry (1997) identifies two issues faced by members of the diaspora when immersing themselves and assimilating into a new cultural environment.

These issues are “cultural maintenance”, and “contact and participation” (Berry, 1997, p. 9). First of all, cultural maintenance refers to how these members must consider “to what extent are cultural identity and characteristics considered to be important, and their maintenance strived for”. In other words, individuals must reflect on how important they deem their identity as defined by the cultural practices of their homeland. In this case, Syrian immigrants in Sweden reflect on the extent they wish to preserve their Syrian cultural identity. Secondly, contact and participation considers “to what extent should they become involved in other cultural groups, or remain primarily among themselves” (Berry, 1997, p. 9). In other words, individuals may choose to either integrate through cultural interaction with other groups, or maintain the company of like-minded Syrians. These issues faced by members of the diaspora in the process of integration play into my research question, as the Syrian immigrants

must consider the extent to which they want to uplift their Syrian values and follow up on developments in Syria through the use of media. In response to this issue, the individual tends to embrace one of two strategies of acculturation. First, the individual may choose to assimilate by embracing the diverse environment and interact with other cultures. Alternatively, they may choose to separate themselves from the situation by maintaining and upholding their original cultural roots. Alternatively the individual may choose integration through a partnership of the two, or marginalisation through choosing to do neither (Berry, 1997, p. 9). The emergence of the internet into the everyday lives of citizens have magnified the way that immigrants may either completely immerse themselves in the new culture, or completely stay in touch with the nation of origin. Media use is for many immigrants a means to social integration and helps in the process of adjusting to their new surroundings. Should the individual choose an assimilation strategy of acculturation, local media in the new language and cultural environment allows the individual in question to improve language skills and adopt local cultural norms. On the other hand, should the individual choose to separate themselves, foreign media from the nation of origin allows the individual to maintain their cultural heritage and uphold their mother-tongue (Elias & Lemish, 2008, p. 37). The essential ingredient of acculturation, as mentioned earlier, is “continuous firsthand contact” between the immigrant group and members of the host nation (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 36). Thus, the level of acculturation is up to and controlled by the immigrant in their level of interaction with the host nation. For example, should the individual choose to adopt a strategy of separation, they will maintain their own cultural patterns and not experience a high level of integration into the host society.

A few aspects that affect the level of acculturation consciously strived for by immigrants are cultural awareness, ethnic loyalty, and discrimination (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 38). Cultural awareness refers to the immigrants knowledge about both their culture of origin and cultures of the host nation, when it comes to cultural aspects such as language and history. The level of knowledge affects the level acculturation, because if “individuals show more knowledge of their heritage cultures than they do of the new contact cultures, the model holds



that they are less acculturated” (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 38). This also applies for cases in which the individual is more knowledgeable about the host cultures, thereby making them more acculturated. Ethnic loyalty, as the name implies, refers to the loyalty and dependency on either the country of origin or the host country, in forms such as “the ethnic group membership of their friends, and cultural preferences for such things as recreational activities” (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 38). Loyalty to either the nation of origin or host nation, also affects the acculturation of the individual. Finally, discrimination by members of the host nation also reflect onto the acculturation and identity of the immigrant. The more the immigrant feels discriminated against, either personally or experienced toward other members of the same ethnic group, the more likely the individual is to be more loyal towards their nation of origin (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 3839).

The focus of this research is to examine the media consumption habits of first-generation Syrian immigrants in Stockholm in relation to identity and integration into the host nation. Ethnic identity in particular is interesting because interviewees exist in a meeting-place of different cultures, in this case between Syrian and Swedish influences. Acculturation by definition implies a change in cultural and personal identity as a result of a transition to a new society. As Rumbaut (2005) puts it “ethnic identities are not inevitable outcomes, but complex products of people’s ongoing efforts to interpret, understand and respond to the social structural, cultural, and historical situations in which they find themselves” (Rumbaut, 2005, p. 132). Often, immigrants of today’s world are placed in a complex situation of not knowing how to categorize themselves and their identity. The portion of the study that looks at acculturation and identity considers whether respondents after prolonged exposure to Swedish society consider themselves Syrian, Swedish, or both. In other words, do individuals identify themselves more as a part of the homeland, or the host nation? In addition to this, the research will examine the level of integration and process of acculturation of respondents. Using the definition of acculturation as proposed by Berry, respondents will also be questioned on their cultural maintenance and contact and participation, in order to gain insight on how

important integration into Swedish society is considered by the interviewees.

## **2.5 Socially Mediated Conflicts**

In addition to the obvious networking features of websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, the global reach of these social media platforms has also played a role in informing about and giving insight into conflicts worldwide. The Syrian Civil War can be referred to as one of the first and most socially mediated conflicts ever, given the central role that the media has played in giving the outside world an inside view (Karam, 2013). Given the difficulties for journalists to provide first-hand accounts, “an exceptional amount of what the outside world knows — or thinks it knows — about Syria’s nearly three-year-old conflict has come from videos, analysis, and commentary circulated through social networks” (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 5). In this way, social media platforms such as Twitter and Youtube played a huge part in bringing attention to, as well as stimulating, the Syrian uprising. Throughout the Syrian conflict, there has been a tight control of Syria’s borders that limits the professional output of content, forcing outsiders and members of the diaspora to rely on content of questionable validity. Social media content provide first-hand narratives that are crucial for news sources and individual members of the Syrian diaspora alike. Individual access to social media sites and camera phones has enabled a wide availability of information about Syria that has been posted and spread on social media platforms, as well as by news and broadcast media (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 5). With the absence of journalists allowed on Syrian ground, professional media outlets have relied heavily on activist-generated online content (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 7). When it comes to the uprisings in the Middle East in general, mainstream media outlets established a strong relationship to social media sources. Twitter in particular has been a powerful journalistic tool allowing the mainstream media to reach and hear from on-site sources and citizen journalists. In addition to this, Twitter has been used by media outlets themselves as a means for the rapid global distribution of updates to a wide audience (Lotan et al., 2011, p. 1376). In this way, Twitter

itself has established itself as a forum for political mobilization, as social media has “the potential to provoke and sustain political uprisings by amplifying particular news and information” (Lotan et al., 2011, p. 1380). Therefore, citizen journalists have played a key role in providing international coverage of the uprisings, and are in fact becoming co-producers of the news itself (Lotan et al., 2011, p. 1379). Citizen journalists within the nation’s borders are also realizing the importance of their work of globally displaying the brutality of the situation, as a way of asking the rest of the world to act (Karam, 2013). However, one must then also consider the fact that mainstream media’s reliance on unverifiable social media content may pose dangers in recreating an accurate narrative (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 6).

On the other hand, the Syrian Civil War can also be classified as a socially mediated conflict as the distribution of first-hand pictures and videos were used not only for news broadcasting purposes, but also by armed groups in attempts to spread fear amongst adversaries (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 8). This highlights how social media has been used within conflicts as tools for mobilization of collective action and social movements worldwide (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011, p. 1207).

The socially mediated nature of the conflict has put on display the political polarization of different relevant actors. O’Callaghan et al. (2014) conducted a study on Twitter and YouTube activity by four politically active communities, and found that Jihadist, Kurdish, Pro-Assad and Secular/Moderate opposition groups were present and politically active online (O’Callaghan et al., 2014, p. 3). These groups in addition to news channels and ordinary citizens outside the conflict provide a broad spectrum of media content available. Social media content has been used as a valuable resource both by the opposition wishing to portray themselves as peaceful, as well as the Syrian regime portraying their challengers as radical Islamists (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 8). In this way, competing narratives have posed difficulties in establishing authenticity. This raises a question about how members of the Syrian diaspora consider authenticity when collecting information about the conflict. For example, studies on Twitter use point to an alarming finding that social media platforms like Twitter may “draw

people into like-minded networks that interpret the news through the prism of their own information bubbles”, where authenticity is blindly accepted and seldom questioned (Lynch et al., 2014, p. 26; Himelboim et al., 2013, p. 171). Thus, there is a tendency among Twitter users to “simply highlight pre-existing relationships among people with similar interests” (Lotan et al., 2011, p. 1397). Therefore, one must be aware of the biases represented on social media platforms.

## **2.6 Literature Review**

Looking at previous research that has been conducted, there is a trend among the findings that highlights the interest that diasporic communities have in using maintaining a connection their homeland, and the reasoning behind seeking out culturally specific media content. Below are reviews of articles that bring up this topic. Firstly, Chamarkeh Houssein’s study (2012) tackles this issue of media consumption by members of a diasporic community. Although a different community in a different continent, the content and findings of this article are relevant to my area of study as it considers the issue of Somali-Canadians’ diasporic media consumption in relation to keeping in touch with their nation of origin riddled with conflict and famine. Houssein conducted a questionnaire and found that the Somali community in Canada were very much interested in keeping a strong bond to their nation of origin through sharing images, stories, accounts, and memories of Somalia among family members (Houssein, 2012, p. 100). In this diasporic community, ethnic media played an important part in feeling connected to Somalia and its traditions (Houssein, 2012, p. 100). In this way, “Somali media play an important role in the context of a double constraint; that is, the adaptation to the host society and the difficult situation in the country of origin” (Houssein, 2012, p. 100). In conclusion, the Somali community in Canada found media to be an important tool in keeping in touch with the struggles of their country of origin. The studied Somalis living in Canada made conscious choices on multiple media with regard to identity construction and reconstruction, inviting “the

user to evaluate and negotiate his/her own values, memberships and traditions, in relation to other community members and other socio-political levels” (Houssein, 2012, p. 100). Similarly, a Norwegian study on the consumption of news media by students with minority backgrounds in Norway found that all the respondents followed both Norwegian and foreign news media, corresponding to their nation of residence and nation of origin (Fogt & Sandvik, 2008, p. 124).

As opposed to Sweden which has not conducted any research specifically on minorities and their Internet use, another study in neighboring Norway looked at just this. “Immigrants online” (2010), looked at the Internet use of Norway’s 5 majority minority groups: Poland, Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia and Vietnam during 2009 (Guthu & Holm, 2010, p. 4). The study found that 9 out of 10 immigrants use computers, which is very close to the national public, and 83 percent have access to computers at home. However, immigrants proved to be much less digitally competent than nationals. There were also differences among ages, men and women, as well as minority groups, with Polish immigrants being digitally superior to the remaining groups. Immigrants from Vietnam, Pakistan, Somalia and Iraq had little to no digital competency whatsoever (Guthu & Holm, 2010, p. 3). However, this did not mean that there was no motivation to learn. Rather, the study showed that there was a positive relationship between working away from home and having the necessary ICT skills, meaning that many immigrants out of work found no arenas for learning (Guthu & Holm, 2010, p. 3).

The studies conducted in Norway are in accordance with similar global research that display a tendency of identity construction divided by a complex representation of belongingness among members of the diaspora, which is represented in their media use. For example, Christiansen (2004) examined media consumption among immigrant groups in Europe, but focusing on news, and found that immigrant populations critically consume media on a global level and extensively seek transnational news (Christiansen, 2004, p. 185). Again, this is in line with findings that diasporic communities go beyond the national news and actively seek information pertaining to their nation of origin and worldwide information.

Rinnawi (2012) explores the reasoning behind transnational media consumption, and emphasizes the important role of media access in relation to a sense of belonging and strengthening identification with the nation of origin. Rinnawi analyzed media consumption habits among the Arab minority in Germany, and also addressed media consumption in terms of important differences between genders and generations. The study concluded that “members of the first generation tended to consume mainly television media, while the younger generation, who grew up in the German culture and possess computer skills, tended to rely more on the Internet (Rinnawi, 2012, p. 1451). We can assume that similar findings may arise from the research at hand, at least regarding generational differences relating to digital access and capabilities. Nonetheless, regardless of generational differences, both generations showed a tendency to rely on media forms in order to sustain the connection to a community separate from the nation in which they reside.

Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti go so far as to say that that Syrians living in the diaspora are not only interested in consuming transnational content, but they in fact have a responsibility in maintaining the image of the Syrian uprising that is conveyed to the rest of the world (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013, p. 2185). The authors underscore the importance of diasporic communities in conflicts in their country of origin in today’s mediatized society, especially regarding their power when it comes to political mobilization (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013, p. 2186). By existing outside the nations borders, diasporic communities have access to media forms censored or unavailable within the nation, and thereby hold power in media activism and communication with the rest of the globe. Throughout the article, Syrian media activists in the diaspora are given the title “brokers”, identifying them as “not mere neutral bystanders or aspiring citizen journalists but actors with a stake in the Syrian conflict who want to ‘sell’ their version of the story to the world” (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013, p. 2188). Following the interviews, the authors argue that these diaspora activists are important in how the mainstream media understand events and affect the political infrastructure of the conflict (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013, p. 2200). The role of these “brokers” is to act as a link

between protesters and the mainstream media, due to the trust they have among both sides (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013, p. 2201). The authors thereby conclude that the Syrian diaspora activists are “instrumental in shaping the world’s image of the revolt and thereby intensifying political pressure for regime change in Syria” (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013, p. 2202). Central to my research question is how ordinary Syrian citizens living in the diaspora consume the content of these media brokers, and how and why they use this information. It is also interesting to consider if the emergence of Syrian media brokers hinders or encourages authenticity in the eyes of the average Syrian citizen. Central to this article is the fact that members of the Syrian diaspora must not only be motivated to maintain a connection to Syria, but also have a responsibility to convey the voices of their countrymen silenced within the nation’s borders.

As early as 1998, Weibull and Wadbring looked at how “new Swedes” were using local Swedish mass media (Weibull & Wadbring, 1998, p. 49). The goal of their research was to look at access to and consumption of local media in general among immigrants. However, their research was prior to the emergence of the Internet as a daily tool for accessing media in different forms, which would have had a crucial effect on media use on both nationals and immigrants. As a result of their study, Weibull and Wadbring found that there were relatively small differences between the availability of media for native Swedes and immigrants, especially when it came to second generation immigrants (Weibull & Wadbring, 1998, p. 56). Secondly, the authors also examined general media consumption habits. Here, findings showed, not unsurprisingly, that immigrant groups consumed less Swedish news media than locals (Weibull & Wadbring, 1998, p. 65). The authors attribute this fact to, for example, competition from transnational media forms and language barriers making the consumption of Swedish media more difficult. However, the authors also wish to underline the fact that this is related to an indifference of local news. Again, when it came to second generation immigrants the differences were less palpable (Weibull & Wadbring, 1998, p. 65).

## **3 Research Design & Rationale**

### **3.1 Methodology**

My research project entails data collection through a number of qualitative interviews. I believe that this is a proper method that will be able to give the most insight into the personal consumption patterns of the selected units of analysis. Below I will provide additional rationalization as to why this is an apt method, as well as more specific information regarding data collection and analysis.

#### **3.1.1 Qualitative Interviews**

In addition to surveys and questionnaires, there are two forms of qualitative interview methodologies that are used in audience research to examine media consumption; focus groups interviews and one-on-one interviews, both of which are widely used within media research. While focus groups are a form of interview, they involve a small group of people and a moderator, while the semi-structured, one-on-one interview is a discussion between just an interviewer and a respondent. With both methodological approaches, there are both limitations and advantages, and they are used with slightly different goals in mind.

The goal of the focus group is to encourage a group dynamic that resembles normal conversation, when discussing one or two specific issues. The strength of the focus group lies in having multiple respondents, which allows members of a group to share ideas and voice varied opinions on one specific subject (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 177). On the other hand, and more applicable for the research at hand, one-on-one in-depth interviews are considered more appropriate when dealing with sensitive subjects as the presence of additional strangers may affect the answers of an individual. The one-on-one interview is advantageous when examining personal matters, whereas groups do not delve as deeply into the motivations of the



individual (DiCocco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). Therefore, when dealing with sensitive subjects, it is recommended to use individual interviews in order to create an intimate setting where the respondent is more comfortable opening up (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 241). Because this area of study is more complex, and the interview questions go beyond deciphering general media activity and target the specifics of contacting a homeland in turmoil, the decision was made to conduct individual interviews. This is because it was taken into account that the addition of the topic of Syria may affect how comfortably the respondent discusses their media use among other people. Due to the particularities of the research at hand, topics will bring up respondents' personal views of the turmoil in Syria, in which many still have family, and it is highly expected that this will stir up personal emotions going beyond media use.

As a result, during a one-on-one interview, the research-participant relationship is particularly important in order to create a secure environment, thereby obtaining the most out of the interview while keeping it on subject. It is particularly important for the interviewee to feel at ease in the situation and trust in the interviewer in order for them to feel comfortable talking back, opening up and generating thoughtful and accurate responses (Miller & Glassner, 2004, p. 134). The important role of the interviewer in one-on-one interviews is to keep the subject matter on the prepared topics while building trust with respondents.

Therefore, in this particular case, in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews were deemed more appropriate. In addition to being a suitable format for discussing potentially sensitive subject matter, the one-on-one interview also allows for highflexibility as the conversation may change as a result of interviewee responses. This means that more attention is paid to the individual respondent, allowing them to feel comfortable in the setting to share their perspective (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 221). Furthermore, "interviews are an appropriate method to use when you wish to understand the constructs that interviewees use as a basis for their opinions and beliefs about a particular situation, product or issue" namely, Syria in the media (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 222).

Issues relating to Syria as a sensitive subject were also made very clear in collecting respondents and carrying out the interviews. When collecting interviewees, the first struggle was reaching the group, which is hard to reach if you are not personally included. Secondly, after managing to make contact with individuals, most people simply did not reply, did not want to participate, or did participate but with great hesitation. This is because, since February 2014, news reporting on Syria have brought up the stories of people with Syrian roots living in Sweden, who are going back to Syria to partake in the war, as a serious social problem and even labeling these individuals as a "terror threat" to Sweden (Hansson, 2014). Therefore, potential respondents are weary of being written about, out of fear of being labeled as or associated with Jihadists or terrorists. Even monetary compensation in exchange for participation was declined. Although data collection through a survey was also considered, a low response rate and unwillingness to participate would have posed a problem in yielding significant results. If this problem could be avoided, however, surveys on this subject would be a good addition to further research in the future. In addition to the low response rate, this also lead to relatively short interviews among those who did respond, as they were willing to contribute and answer the questions, but were hesitant to get too personal, which was picked up on during the interviews by the interviewer.

While the majority of the conducted interviews will be face-to-face (8/10), two of the conducted interviews were computer-mediated interviews, which were carried out through email, due to the availability of participants as mentioned previously. Although research literature on email interviews as a qualitative method of data collection is limited, emails as interviews are still used and differ from regular email usage. There is a personal touch to the email conversation as well, and the exchange becomes more of a personalized interview because of the touch of previous email contact before sending any questions. Therefore, this is a valid form of 21st century interviewing, and is distinct from mass email surveys (Burns, 2010, p. 7). Also, analysis of the face-to-face and technology-mediated interviews alike, presented a clear pattern among all the responses, indicating that the findings are nevertheless relevant and

reliable. The conducted interviews were semi-structured with prepared issues and topic areas formulated as questions (see appendix 8.2) as a result of the particularities of the sessions, rather than specific questions that may demand simple answers (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 225). This is due to the fact that the topics (use of print media, broadcast media, the Internet, identity formation, multiculturalism, etc.) are more important than the formulation of specific questions. Semi-structured interviews are called semi-structured as they are a combination of predetermined open-ended questions and also include other questions that may emerge during the interview as a result of the dialogue between interviewer and respondent (DiCocco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315).

### **3.1.2 Data Collection**

As mentioned, the study consists of 10 semi-structured interview sessions. Topics are structured in a way that transitions from the general to the specific. The interview begins with general questions where respondents are asked to share their personal experience of Syria and the Civil War, in order to make a smooth transition to more specific questions about how they choose to follow up on that situation from Sweden. Initial worries that it may be a sensitive and uncomfortable subject are eliminated already after the first interview, as it becomes clear that respondents are very eager to share their story to anyone who will listen. Therefore, these questions are in fact used to make respondents more at ease when they sense that what their answers are being heard and taken seriously. After the respondents are asked to share their personal experiences, the interviewer will provide open-ended, specific questions that are designed to reach the core topics of the research. Focus will lie in studying present media use, as these responses will be the most easily accessible by respondents and unaffected by having to remember previous activity. Although these questions may not be formulated as such during the interview, the answers to these sub questions, and patterns identified therein, will provide information relevant to answering my research question. Data analysis will therefore occur through the transcripts of the interviews. These topics are:

1. What media (television programming, newspapers, and/or online websites) do the respondents consume?
2. How often do the respondents consume these media?
3. Why do the respondents consume these media/What do they get out of the content?
4. Where do the respondents believe that they find the most reliable updates?
5. How does willingness to connect to the nation of origin affect media consumption of the respondents?
6. How is media used by the respondents in the process of integration into the Swedish community?
7. How is media used by the respondents in the process of acculturation to Swedish culture?
8. How does the selected media affect the identity of the respondent?

The decision was made to conduct 10 interviews, as this an adequate number in order to achieve data saturation while ensuring variety, yet avoiding repetition of insights (Guest et al., 2006, p. 74; Small, 2009, p. 28). Even after 3 interviews, there was a clear pattern among the media use habits of respondents. This is also with a varied sample of interviewees, which was composed of different ages and genders. A complete overview of specific interview respondents and the composition of the interviews is provided in Appendix 8.1.

Analysis of the discussions and opinions formed by these interviews will then provide insight into the patterns of media consumption among different sections of the Syrian community in Stockholm. When recruiting participants to take part in the study the only criteria were that participants had to be of Syrian origin and of varying ages. Respondents varied in the time they have spent in Sweden from less than one to over twenty years, yet the decision was

made that the sample be exclusively made up of first-generation immigrants. This is because first-generation immigrants will feel a stronger sense of belongingness to the nation in which they were born, than a second-generation immigrant born and raised in Sweden. In this way, the insights and media consumption habits of first-generation immigrants will be more related to following up on the turmoil of a distant homeland, and will improve the quality of responses. Also, the Syrian population of Stockholm in particular represents an adequate sample as Stockholm is the capital of Sweden, and the nation's largest city. With approximately 900,000 people, Stockholm is the most populous city in Scandinavia (Stockholms Stad, 2014). As of 2012, Stockholm's population was made up of an approximated 30 percent of people with foreign backgrounds, and this number is increasing every year (Statistik om Stockholm, 2012).

When planning the interview, the formality and familiarity of the setting in which the discussion takes place can play a central role in how the conversation plays out (Pitour & du Plooy, 2006, p. 308). Therefore, when determining the setting for my interviews, I kept in mind the goals of encouraging a sense of casual conversation in a relaxed and informal setting, that is also close in proximity to the homes of participants, in order to ensure a higher response rate of willing contributors. In order to ensure the ease of interviewees, the face-to-face interviews took place at a variety of places, such as the educational facilities Competens Va"llingby and Competens Ho"gdalen, as well as the National Syrian Association establishment in Va"llinby, in May 2014 (Competens Utbildning Sverige AB, 2014). In physically carrying out the sessions, there was also an additional member present to act as moderator and translator if needed. The entirety of the sessions will be both recorded and later transcribed. The language used during interviews will be Swedish, which will require basic knowledge of the language and more integrated participants, or Swedish along with a translator present, which will provide the insights of newer arrivals.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

Following data collection and transcription of the sessions, the next step is to process and analyze the data generated from the interviews. It is the transcriptions and audio recordings that will provide the basis for analysis. Analysis will be conducted through revisiting transcripts of the conducted interviews to process and conduct a qualitative analysis of the data. Central here is identifying patterns and drawing valuable conclusions from the interviews. There are different methods of analyzing data produced during interviews, thus one must determine how to analyze the transcripts in order to generate findings relevant to the area of research. The most relevant method of data analysis is dependent on the goal of the research. When the goal is the in-depth exploration of a topic in which there is limited insight, a descriptive data analysis is ideal for identifying similarities and differences in the opinions and motivations between individuals (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 109). As mentioned earlier, the units of analysis will vary in disposition from age and gender. Therefore, data analysis will focus on identifying patterns of media consumption within the Syrian immigrant group in Stockholm, Sweden, with individuals representing members of the larger Syrian population in Stockholm (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 112).

In order to achieve this, a descriptive methodology of data analysis will be applied through a constant comparative method alongside summaries of the separate transcribed sessions (Harding, 2013, p. 66). Analytic emphasis will lie in identifying phenomenological similarities and differences in the perceptions and motivations of the respondents. In other words, what media do they use, and what are their reasons for doing so in relation to connecting to Syria, identity formation, multiculturalism and integration? The constant comparative method is a way of distinguishing trends by examining transcripts of the interviews, thereby identifying similarities and differences between sessions (Harding, 2013, p. 66). As implied by the name, the analysis is based on the comparison of ideas within a single interview, which is then compared side-by-side to subsequent transcriptions (Boeije, 2002, p. 395). For

this particular research design, the constant comparative methodology is ideal for analyzing the data as it allows the researcher to identify what different interviewees say about the same core issues and compare them accordingly to yield socially and academically relevant conclusions.

Practically, the analysis is conducted through categorizing the content of the interviews by identifying similarities and differences within the sessions, and then connecting them to each other (Harding, 2013, p. 67). First, transcriptions of the sessions are categorized accordingly based on predetermined categories established by the person conducting the analysis, with the research question and goal of the study in mind. As with most qualitative research, this process may be viewed as highly subjective. However, as will be outlined in a chapter 3.3, findings produced as a result of the constant comparative method are scientifically based and measures are taken to ensuring the relevance, reliability and validity of the research. After having established the boundaries of each category, the researcher goes through each transcribed interview, placing segments of the content within the relevant category (Boeije, 2002, p. 393). In this case, transcript segments are categorized according to what interviewees says about 1) media selection, 2) identity formation, 3) social integration into the Swedish community, and acculturation. These categories are defined as follows:

#### *Category 1: Media Selection*

Category 1 acknowledges the media selection of the individual. This encompasses all foreign and local print and broadcast media, in addition to Internet webpages. Media selection also includes frequency of use, reasons behind consuming these media, and what respondents feel they get out of that particular content.

#### *Category 2: Identity formation*

Within the second category will be responses regarding the cultural proximity and identity formation through media selection. This also considers how the consumed media affect how respondents structure their everyday lives as an individual living in cultural limbo between Swedish and Syrian cultural values and norms. Finally, identity formation also brings up the image of the homeland as interpreted by respondents through media depictions.

### *Category 3: Social Integration & Acculturation*

Using the definition of hybridity and acculturation as proposed by Berry (1997), the final category considers responses in relation to questions regarding how media is used in the process of acculturation and integration into Swedish culture. Looking at responses acknowledging the origins of media texts used by the respondent, is there a consumption of hybrid cultures and identities? Does the individual consume solely local content? Or does the individual consume solely transnational content? The hybridity of used media content reflects the acculturation of the respondent, and to the extent that they have chosen to adopt Swedish cultural content. The third category considers to what extent respondents are consuming Swedish media channels in the process of integration, as opposed to maintaining Syrian cultural values through the use of foreign media, as well as using the Internet with the primary goal of following up on the conflict in Syria and maintaining those connections. Finally, social integration and acculturation also considers the offline efforts of integration by respondents.

Using this procedure, the goal is to discover patterns and variety within insights developed in the interviews. The established guidelines for each category, outlined in the following section, are carefully defined and followed in order to limit subjectivity and ensure the reliability of findings. Also, having valid categories in turn establishes a “solid basis for generalizing the concepts and the relations between them to units that were absent from the sample, but which represent the same phenomenon” (Boeije, 2002, p. 393).



### 3.3 Reliability & Validity

Qualitative methodologies often bring up questions regarding reliability and validity of analysis. This section will briefly acknowledge how this research will be conducted in order to ensure high reliability, internal and external validity.

Reliability considers whether a second researcher were to recreate the study and come up with the same results. In order to be socially relevant, research findings must be replicable in order to be applied to a larger group. This is often difficult, however, in qualitative studies due to their subjective nature (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 78). In this study, the reliability of the findings is increased through the applied methodology which requires the establishment and execution of clearly defined categories. This is done through conceptualizing the predetermined categories for data analysis of the transcripts and creating clear definitions for each. A second researcher is thereby able to understand and personally apply these definitions to the same transcripts, thereby ensuring reliability. The perimeters of the categories are established through acknowledging and defining the variety that exists within behaviours and perspectives, so that transcripts can then be compared side by side based on the same criteria (Boeije, 2002, p. 393).

In order for a study to have internal validity, the research must accurately reflect “the social world of those participating in the study” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 79). Internal validity is increased by basing the results on the personal words and perceptions of interviewees, which are replicated in transcripts of the interviews, and not the researchers interpretation. External validity acknowledges whether or not the analyzed sample group can be understood as a social representation of a larger, academically relevant, group (Lunt & Livingstone, 1996, p. 14). In addition to internal validity, correctly executed constant comparative analysis also ensures external validity (Boeije, 2002, p. 393). If the analyzed group

is accurately sampled and is homogeneous in disposition, this provides a solid basis for generalization. In this way, external validity ensures that the findings are able to be applied to units from the same group that were absent from the sample (Boeije, 2002, p. 393). This would entail that the interviewed respondents are representations of the larger group, which is in this case first-generation Syrian immigrants in Stockholm.

## **4 Results**

This section will provide a descriptive overview of what was said by respondents regarding the subjects of media selection, identity formation, integration, and acculturation. The upcoming section will follow with analysis and discussion of the themes and patterns that were presented, and what that means for the study.

### **4.1 Media Preference**

#### **4.1.1 Print media**

Although research showed a wide variety of available print media sources including both local and transnational print news sources available, there is a resounding negative view of print media with regards to reporting on Syria. Of ten interviewees, only two reported reading local print media, and only one reported doing so regularly. Rasha, brings Swedish newspapers to her classes as a tool for her students to read about Syria and other global events while practicing Swedish. Therefore, she regularly looks at the newspapers 8 Sidor, Metro, and Aftonbladet, but says that the few times they do report on Syria, the stories cannot be viewed as being neither accurate nor reliable. She claims that Sweden does not receive an accurate picture of events in Syria, due to the political affiliations behind newspapers (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014). This viewpoint that one cannot trust the content of Swedish newspapers was also mirrored in the only other respondent claiming to read these newspapers occasionally (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). Rasha adds that it is unfortunate, but that it is not only Syria that receives unfair treatment from Swedish print media. For example, she claims that the same biases can be seen in the negative images shown when reporting on Russia. She says, “we have experienced, for example, that Sweden does not like Russia. And we know that when we read these news stories, that they purposefully show

everything that is not correct, everything that is not good”, which is exactly what is happening with the situation in Syria (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014).

The remaining 8/10 respondents all had reasoning behind avoiding Swedish print media forms, justifying their choices. First of all, broadcast media and Internet news websites are able to provide more up-to-date stories. Therefore, some interviewees feel that by the time news reaches the public, it is no longer relevant (FCH, personal communication, May 20, 2014). In addition to this, print news does not tend to correct what they print, should news developments occur. This reflects negatively on the accuracy of print newspapers. One respondent explains, “what you read in foreign newspapers is not always accurate, and therefore you want to have direct contact with your family...My understanding of Syria comes from stories told by my family members. You can’t trust Swedish newspapers” (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014). As a result, there is a wide distrust of print media. Another mentions that they feel newspapers can be too sensationalistic, explaining that “we don’t really need newspapers, because many just write things just to sell newspapers” (Azmeah, personal communication, May 21, 2014). The largest criticism of the updates on the Syrian Civil War in Swedish newspapers is that there simply aren’t enough updates or reliable information. Therefore, interviewees felt that newspapers are not the best way to receive news.

All interviewees claimed that although they read some news, they do so in an online environment or watch broadcast news. This is because these channels have certain advantages over print media channels. Chamoun, for example, says he relies on Arabic broadcast media, purely for the fact that Swedish media does not report enough about Syria. Instead, reports on Syria are a rare occurrence (Chamoun, personal communication, May 9, 2014). In another example, Dahham reported following Swedish newspapers in the beginning, as the conflict was just starting. However, he claims that as the conflict continued, reporting on Syria ended, and as a result he stopped reading those newspapers altogether (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

#### 4.1.2 Broadcast media

Eight respondents (80%) reported watching local television and/or listening to local radio in order to receive updates about the situation in Syria. Out of these eight, not a single person said that they fully trust broadcast media representations of the conflict in Syria. One issue many viewed as a problem in reporting is the insufficient coverage. One interviewee commented: “I always follow the news in Sweden. P1 (radio) is my favourite, and I try not to miss Rapport (TV). But at the moment Ukraine is first on the agenda and Syria is left in the dark. Then this coverage is not enough” (FCH, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Although television consumption was relatively high among respondents, the fact that Syria was not featured on news broadcasts posed a problem for all of these respondents. G Touma agrees that reporting on Syria has today been pushed to the background, because of other news stories stealing the limelight. They explain, “reporting on Syria has decreased, it doesn’t seem interesting for foreign media anymore” (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014).

For all respondents, this means that broadcast news coverage when used, is used as one tool among others, all which show different angles that together make a full and more accurate depiction. Dahham explains, “I listen sometimes when I sit in the car and drive while listening, but it’s common, you know, they don’t mention it a lot. I mean I will hear something from the TV for example, and then I contact friends and they will tell me more. It’s often I go on Facebook and my friends and contacts will further explain what they mention for a few seconds on TV...They used to speak a lot about Syria, but recently it has stopped. It’s not just Sweden, it’s many, unfortunately. I don’t know why. It’s politics, and history” (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014). Knowledge among respondents about the insufficient coverage on Syria reflects on their willingness to receive this information, and that receiving updates on Syria is their primary motivation behind media use. Another respondent specifically mentioned that he does not watch local TV or radio, simply because they do not write anything about Syria (Chamoun, personal communication, May 9, 2014). This is also true for Arabic

channels. “Before it was all the time. I watch Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya and Orient, but I think they have stopped updating. I mean I have around sixty channels, but it is not all the channels that take up the real things, the truth”, Dahham explains (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

Additionally, when Syria is brought up in the media, all respondents mentioned that they are critical of the content. Primarily, this distrust stems from the political agendas behind media outlets. Although existing behind the scenes, all respondents reported being very aware of political affiliations when consuming television and radio content. Western media outlets in particular, were viewed as politically skewed, were viewed as promote an inaccurate or only partly accurate representation of events in Syria. One respondent elaborated that, “the problem with television is that they are often political and want as much excitement as possible. Everything becomes slanted on TV. You can’t trust television news because they never tell the whole truth, only what is the most sensational. Sometimes they choose the governments side, sometimes the rebels side” (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Although the images are real, Azmeh claims, the reports on them are only what is deemed interesting for the station. Therefore, it is only half the truth (Azmeh, personal communication, May 21, 2014). “They will say a little of the truth and they will spice it up a bit”, Dahham explains (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014). This criticism of the sensationalism of broadcast media was also represented in views on print media.

Swedish media in particular received a lot of criticism from respondents. For example, Ismail mentioned that they are taking sides between the government and the rebels, even though they do not really know the situation. Ismail describes that he will watch Swedish television, but he does not completely trust the reports, because it is made with an agenda in mind specifically for the television audience (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). This criticism of Swedish television was echoed in the answers of all fellow respondents. Azmeh describes that the problem with Swedish news is that they are not informed enough about the situation to report on it, saying that “I will watch SVT if it’s on, but Swedish people do not

know a lot about the war. They give the president all the fault but even though he has done a lot wrong, a lot of people are also afraid of the rebels and the islamists” (Azmeah, personal communication, May 21, 2014).

Though responses mainly focused on television and news broadcasts, one interviewee also mentioned the inaccuracy of documentaries portraying Syria. Rasha explains, “two-three days ago there was a program on SVT about people making bombs (in Syria), but none of them were Syrian citizens. It’s people coming to Syria and fighting. And that doesn’t show us...” (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014). Abbe proposes that one of the reasons the whole picture is not shown, is because it physically cannot be accessed due to limits inside and outside Syria. Abbe, being from Homs, watch a series on Homs that was shown on SVT. On the subject of accuracy by the media, he explains that “It was true, but they could not access the entire area, because it is large and there are borders. They only take northern Homs. And therefore, they leave a lot out. I don’t think it is totally accurate on television, or on the news” (Abbe, personal communication, May 7, 2014). Rasha expressed more critical view of why Swedish news broadcasts do not report on Syria. She describes a government conspiracy where “Sweden doesn’t want to stop what is happening in Syria. It is a project. They are controlling to keep the situation as it is....That is why they are not showing what is happening, because people would not allow it” (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014).

Knowing where to receive accurate information is an important consideration for this community. Rana explains that she has both Swedish and Arabic channels, but it becomes confusing because the Swedish channels show a different depiction compared to the Arabic channels, which are also different compared to what she reads on the Internet or hears from friends and family members (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Therefore, she watches television mainly for information when she cannot speak to her family with other tools such as the telephone or the Internet.

Even among foreign broadcast media outlets that are closer to the source, there

is a pattern of distrust among respondents. Although all respondents mentioned following watching Arabic channels through either through satelliteTV or Internet streaming, seven respondents specifically mentioned watching critically due to an awareness of political agendas behind reports. Stive explains that in his view the political agenda of the channel affects how much of the truth will be revealed. He explains, “You know watching news, it depends about the channel. It's who has founded, you know? That's the politic things. So you can't know the truth. Only from the people who live in the deep of the event. Yes. You know, I don't trust any one channel” (Stive, personal communication, May 8, 2014). This has led to a very negative view of news reports in general. Rasha denounces all news broadcasts, saying, “we don't think that everything they say is correct. We know that they are politically controlled” (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014). Even information from within Syria is questionable, Ismail says. He claims that Syrian television is too closely connected to the Syrian regime, which is why he has turned his attention elsewhere. Ismail explains: “Now I have satellite at home, so I watch Arabic channels such as Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya and those, that show journalists on the ground, accurately showing what happens. So I use them. Personally, living in Syria, I do not trust the regime in Syria, because I know them. I lived there. But special channels, Al-Arabiya or BBC, I trust to about 80% because they show both sides” (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

As a result, satellite-television is consumed alongside the Internet, and sometimes print media, as they complement each other in order to provide a complete representation (FCH, personal communication, May 9, 2014).

#### **4.1.3 Internet use**

Conducting the interviews, it was immediately clear that the Internet was the tool of choice for following up on the conflict on Syria. While not all respondents found that they



had the time or interest to use print and broadcast media, all respondents reported regularly resorting to the Internet. The primary tool for connecting to Syria was Facebook, which is used daily by all respondents. Facebook was used both as a means of receiving news updates, and keeping in contact with family and friends in Syria. Also, unlike print or broadcast media, all respondents viewed Facebook as providing the most reliable updates on the situation. One reason behind this is because the openness and global reach of the platform allows members of the diaspora to connect to people in place, who are able to share their personal experiences. Azmeh, for example, mentions not even reading any news online, unless it is available through Facebook. This is because Azmeh views Facebook as ultimately reliable, as “Facebook is updated all the time by everyone who can and wants to, and is not politically driven. Anyone can say anything” (Azmeh, personal communication, May 21, 2014).

For those reluctant to believe the output of politically driven print and broadcast media channels, the Internet acts as a more neutral alternative to news reports. On television for example, “all the channels they show their side. But online they show both. In Syria, and online, there are two sides” (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). This allows for a wider perspective, which Ismail claims is needed to fully understand the complex situation within Syria (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). G Touma adds, “the Internet is the best because everyone can blog and use the Internet...it is always good to have different sources. Therefore, you should listen, read, and look in order to get an objective view” (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Chamoun, who mentions avoiding print and broadcast news coverage due to their silence on the issue of Syria, instead looks to Facebook to find the information he feels he lacks from mainstream media channels. He explains, “on Facebook I follow what happens a lot. What happens in Syria, and what happens in the cities. Aleppo, Homs, Damascus...it always comes up on Facebook. I have friends and acquaintances there and I follow what they write on Facebook” (Chamoun, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Unlike the regulations controlling mainstream media, “the Internet is ideal because it is open, and you can find a lot of different people contributing” (Azmeh, personal communication,

May 21, 2014).

Facebook allows users to personally know who is posting the content, which for people with a critical view of political affiliations is an effective way to check the reliability of sources. Therefore, all respondents reported that they were more inclined to believe what they see on Facebook than what they read in newspapers or see on TV, because they know where the information is coming from. In most cases, it is from friends and family members in Syria or neighboring countries. As a result, for many, this is the one place where they feel they get “real information” (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014). Rana says, “if I do not speak to them on the phone, I write on Facebook with my sister in Lebanon or my sister in Damascus. We write every day. When I have time, I will check Facebook. When I wake up the morning, I open Facebook” (Rana, personal communication, May 7, 2014).

So, while many reported reading news online more so than in print newspapers, speaking to relatives is where they feel they get the most reliable information (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014). Therefore, when news websites are frequented, it is with the purpose of not limiting themselves to one source, but of widening their perspective to include multiple viewpoints (FCH, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Rasha, for example, mentioned reading everything she finds online, in order to stay updated. However, when it comes to reliability she finds it important to consider the source and frequent legitimate Syrian newspapers, not blogs or amateur websites (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014). While Facebook was by far the most popular platform for updates and communication, four respondents (FCU, Azmeh, G Touma, and Dahham) were also active users of other online platforms, such as YouTube, blogs, and the National Syrian Association website.

#### **4.1.4 ICT Use**

Additional methods of communication and receiving information that arose that exists in addition to print media, broadcast media, and the Internet that has not yet been

discussed but was used by some respondents are telephone calls and Internetbased smartphone applications.

All respondents reported regular phone calls with contacts within Syria's borders, to truly get an unfiltered update on developments. This was viewed as the ultimate way to reach the truth. G Touma explains, "I don't think Swedish people understand what is reported, because if you want a better understanding you should have contact with people on the ground in Syria" (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Abbe adds, "If you live there you know more, and you can explain exactly what is happening" (Abbe, personal communication, May 7, 2014). In all cases, telephone communication with friends and family was deemed far superior to any mainstream media sources. G Touma elaborates, "I don't really need to see the news, since I have contact with friends and family that know better what is going on anyway" (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Rana for example, only watches television for information as a last resort to when she cannot reach her family via other tools such as telephone or the Internet (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Explaining the reasoning behind this view, Azmeh mentions that television and radio only provide half-truths, which she experiences due to contrasting stories from relatives (Azmeh, personal communication, May 21, 2014). Instead, news when consumed in order to complement other sources such as contacting your family, in order to get the best understanding of developments (G Touma, personal communication, May 20, 2014). Dahham explains, "I have the real source. I mean I come from Deir ez-Zur. Why should I hear about what happens in Deir ez-Zur in the western mass media when I can contact someone who lives there?" (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

Abbe, Stive, FCH, and Rana, all mentioned that their primary form of contact with their families, was not only through Facebook but also the more direct tools of WhatsApp and Viber. While Facebook was used primarily for updates, WhatsApp and Viber were used as cheaper alternatives to daily telephone contact with friends and family. Abbe explains that WhatsApp is the easiest way for his contacts in Syria to also contact him. He says that it takes

more time than simply looking online, but that it's worth it to find out what is happening (Abbe, personal communication, May 7, 2014). Abbe also Skypes with his friends and family every day. Rana also mentions that the telephone is the most important means of communication for her. "When I turn on the TV and it is anything about where my sister lives", she says, "I will call her immediately. And if she cannot answer she will write to me on Viber" (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014).

#### **4.1.5 Patterns of Media Use**

Before conducting this research, I expected that there would be identifiable differences in media consumption between different age groups, genders, and depending on how long the individual has spent in Sweden. One of the interviewees also shared this suspicion, suggesting that the Internet is more commonly used by the younger generation, while the print newspapers and broadcast news is more common among older members of the community. Interestingly however, quite the opposite seemed to occur and patterns of media use were relatively unanimous among interviewees. Gender, for one, did not play any part in what media was consumed. Additionally, there was one small difference in that the younger people did not read print news. However, they did still watch television to the same extent as their older counterparts. Finally, the Internet was the primary source of information for interviewees, regardless of age. This sample seems to suggest a truth that can be applied to the larger community of Syrians in Stockholm, which is that print and broadcast media are seldom used and widely distrusted, as the functions of the Internet have surpassed them as a source of up-to-date and relevant information for people living in the diaspora.

The central theme that emerged when discussing media preference was a preference towards Arabic media in different forms, stemming from a distrust of the West and Western media outlets. As will be expanded upon in Chapter 4.3, a majority of respondents feel betrayed as citizens of the world by other countries failure to intervene or help bring an end to the conflict. About the United States, for example, Ismail says, "you call yourself 'Big

Brother', but then how can you allow this to go on?" (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

## 4.2 Identity formation

In each interview, the emotional connection that respondents feel to Syria immediately becomes abundantly clear. All respondents have a difficult time talking about the hardships going on in their home country, and express how important it is for them to keep in touch with Syria and developments within the nation's borders, as it is a part of their collective identity. Respondents were asked about if and why it is important for them to use media channels to communicate with Syria. Responses made it very clear that keeping up-to-date on the situation in Syria is a high priority. For all respondents, transnational television and Internet content coming directly from the source is favourable to Swedish media content. In addition to this, all respondents reported wanting to get as close to the source as possible, preferring to get updates through friends and relatives on Facebook.

The identity of respondents is strongly tied to their Syrian roots, which is not disturbed even when placed in a new culture. All respondents expressed the importance of keeping in touch with Syria and maintaining their cultural heritage through contacts and activities which will be further outlined in the following section. Azmeh, for example, explains that although physically in Sweden, this does not make them any less connected to Syria and concerned for their relatives (Azmeh, personal communication, May 21, 2014). Rana mentions being disturbed by the image of Syria that is reflected in the news, claiming that it negatively impacts how other people view her Syrian identity. She explains, "It's sad, you know, no one thinks, Syria, what a nice country" (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Therefore, it is also unsettling to look at news reporting on Syria, Rana explains, mentioning that she will look at the stories and think "Wow, is this really my country?" (Rana, personal communication, May

8, 2014).

Central to the question of identity for members of the diaspora is where they feel they belong, as a result of their placement in between two cultures. The easiest way to find out the ethnic identity of respondents, is to simply ask them where they personally feel they belong. When faced with this question, 9/10 respondents reported identifying themselves as Syrian. Regardless of the connection they feel to the host nation, which will be expanded upon in the following section, 90% of respondents claim they are first and foremost Syrian. All of these respondents acknowledge that they are not Swedish. Azmeh, for example, consistently describes Syrians as “us”, in opposition to “Swedes”.

FCH, the only remaining respondent, has lived in Sweden for 33 years. FCH reports identify himself as both Swedish and Syrian. FCH claims that “I grew up in Syria and love it with all my heart, Sweden is of course parallel with Syria” (FCH, personal communication, May 20, 2014), meaning that they are as important to him. But length of stay does not seem to be the deciding factor for identity formation. For Dahham and Chamoun, who have both lived in Sweden for 28 years, both consider Syria their home (Chamoun, personal communication, May 9, 2014).

Another way to consider where respondents feel is home, is quite literally where they see themselves living in the future, and where they want their children to live. Rana, for example, identifies herself as Syrian, and expresses how difficult it is for her that her son, who was born in Sweden, does not feel a connection to Syria like she does. Rana explains, “Johannes was born here in Sweden. He has only been in my country when he was 1 year old. He doesn’t know it at all” (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Although she will continue to live in Sweden, she wishes she could visit Syria regularly with her son, so that he will also be able to feel in touch with his heritage. Her son Johannes, has an Iraqi father and Syrian mother, but considers himself to be Swedish as it is all he has ever known. Rana wants her son to know about his heritage, but nevertheless they see themselves still living in Sweden in the

distant future. Eight respondents (80%) see Sweden as their future homeland. This figure was very related to time spent in the host nation, as it was the three most recent arrivals that see themselves moving back to Syria as soon as the conflict is over.

Abbe has only lived in Sweden for a little over a year, and thereby considers himself undoubtedly Syrian. As a result of this, he feels a sense of guilt for having abandoned his home country. He says, “sometimes I feel cowardly for leaving my home country and coming to Sweden. But that’s what happened” (Abbe, personal communication, May 7, 2014). Abbe also describes wanting to return to Syria shortly after his arrival, but he no longer can (Abbe, personal communication, May 7, 2014). He will wait until the conflict is over, and then he wants to return. Similarly, Ismail, who has lived in Sweden for 3 years, says that he will move back as soon as the situation improves (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). Stive however, has only lived in Sweden for 3 months, but is prepared to move on with his life in Sweden, and live there as long as he needs to, finishing his studies and then finding work in Sweden (Stive, personal communication, May 8, 2014).

Although he hopes for peace in Syria, Stive is not as explicit in his desire to move back immediately as Abbe and Ismail. Although there are widely different views on Syria and the situation there, with views ranging from that Syria needs outside help in order to resolve the conflict (Abbe, personal communication, May 7, 2014), to that the world needs to stop acting as a puppeteer and remove their grasp from Syria (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014) these views are all grounded in a hope for the situation in their homeland to improve, and their identity as Syrians remains just as strong.

### **4.3 Social Integration & Acculturation**

Exposure to hybrid cultures as experienced by members of the diaspora, put immigrants in a difficult position between old and new norms. Social integration and

acculturation acknowledges the extent to which respondents have become accustomed to Swedish culture, adopting these norms, and increasingly becoming a part of society. Of the ten interviewees, 2 (20%) display patterns of low integration and acculturation, while 8 (80%) respondents are highly acculturated. It is a low pattern of integration when members of the diaspora decide to primarily remain among fellow nationals and not adopt the norms of the host nation. The primary norm that allows for closer integration of the host nation, is the language, which encourages conversation with nationals. Of the ten interviewees, three interviewees decided they were not comfortable conducting the interview in Swedish, and needed a translator. One of these interviewees has stayed in Sweden as long as 7 years (Azmeah, personal communication, May 21, 2014). In remaining among a community of fellow Syrians, one tool that facilitate a cultural environment that closely resembles that of Syria, is the National Syrian Association. Four interviewees reported being active members of this association (Stive, G Touma, Chamoun, Rasha). Another, Dahham, is a member of Syrian Global Help, an organization of Syrians in Sweden bringing aid and resources to Syrian refugees in Jordan. However, Azmeah and Ismail were the two respondents who were the least integrated, which was evident in both their language skills and view of the host nation. Those who choose not to integrate see Sweden as a temporary pit-stop while the situation unravels, and hope to return as soon as possible. Ismail, for example, has been in Sweden for three years, but is still unable to speak any Swedish, while Abbe can hold a conversation on his own after just over 1 year. Ismail says, "I hope that Syria will become good, and I will move back" (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

Acculturation of the culture of the host nation is a conscious choice driven by personal convictions. The immigrant must be willing to do so, and stray from the easy choice of staying in the familiar environment. One aspect that can affect the willingness to integrate, is how the immigrant feels about their host nation. If the immigrant feels discriminated against, for example, they are more likely to remain among fellow Syrians. Ismail, for example, is not very integrated, and also has a resoundingly negative view of Sweden as well as the rest of the world,



claiming that they are being “quiet”, and want the people of Syria to continue suffering by not speaking up for them (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). In this sense, he feels betrayed by Sweden and feels like an outsider (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014). Dahham shares this view of Sweden as a not caring about Syrians hurt in the war. Upon my request to speak with him, he mutters, "oh, suddenly you (Swedes) decide to care?" (Dahham, personal communication, May 6, 2014). There are also other factors that affect and may even prohibit integration by immigrants in the host nation. Rana, for example, explains that her sister is very eager to integrate by working in Stockholm, saying that "when you have a job, there is no problem", but difficulties for new arrivals to find work in Sweden limits their opportunities for immigration (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014).

On the other hand, it is considered high integration when the individual decides to become involved with new cultural groups and continue their life in Sweden as an integrated member of society. Naturally, respondents who have lived in Sweden for over ten years display a higher level of integration than newer arrivals, as they see Sweden as their future homeland. Nonetheless, 9 out of 10 respondents were had or were currently making an effort to become acculturated. Two of these people, Abbe and Stive, were the most recent arrivals. Stive, although having arrived just three months ago, is prepared to continue his life in Sweden to the fullest through his studies and work. He explains, “I’m always being sad about...I still have my friends there, and relatives there... But I have to move on. So I have to keep with all the developments and things here, and...I have to move on here and continue studying, working after that” (Stive, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Stive accepts that he cannot halt his life in Sweden while waiting for the situation to improve, and must integrate and continue on to the best of his ability in Sweden (Stive, personal communication, May 8, 2014). He is now taking courses in Swedish and doing other activities at the National Syrian Association to become more integrated. Similarly, Abbe has lived in Sweden for just over one year but is taking his Swedish courses seriously and already has enough control of the language to conduct the interview in Swedish. This is because there are also a lot of responsibilities for members of the diaspora,

whom still have friends and family in the nation of origin. Rana describes the high amount of pressure to earn money which they must then send back home. It is the price to pay for a "blessed" life in the host nation (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014).

Rasha and Chamoun are both course leaders at SYRF, the National Syrian Association, and are holding courses and creating activities to both interact with fellow Syrians, and help them become more integrated. Rasha claims that people who take their courses find it easier to become acculturated as a result. In addition to courses in the Swedish language, the National Syrian Association organizes courses in other subjects, cooking classes, field trips, events, and activities that bring its members together and help them get to know the community (Rasha, personal communication, May 9, 2014). Four interviewees are voluntary members of this organization.

In the same way that less integrated members have a less positive view on Sweden, the highly acculturated respondents are very approving of Sweden. Whereas several describe Syria as very corrupt and distressed, Sweden presents a more stable and welcoming environment for those in need. All 9 integrated respondents describe a positive view of Sweden as helpful to its immigrants. Rana explains that there are many little things that make Sweden a safer and more comfortable living environment, such as free health care for one's children until they are 18. These integrated immigrants share Rana's positive view that "Sweden helps Syrians a lot. There are a lot of them coming to Sweden. It's really good here in Sweden. My sister she also came here, and they helped her. She is able to go to the doctor, her son has started school. They are very happy here...I have many relatives that come to Sweden and they are all happy" (Rana, personal communication, May 8, 2014). Ismail explains that he is very happy with the life that Sweden has been able to provide him, but sees it as his duty to help fellow Syrians within the nation's borders. He mentions, "We live very well in Sweden. But we must do more. We need help from the state, the Swedish government" (Ismail, personal communication, May 6, 2014).

## 5 Discussion & Conclusion

### 5.1 Discussion

The purpose of this study has been to examine the media consumption habits, identity, integration and acculturation of a group of Syrian immigrants living in Stockholm, Sweden. Findings regarding the media consumption in terms of identity and integration of members of the Syrian diaspora living in Stockholm displayed a group with strong ties to their homeland, regardless of time spent in Sweden. This is reflected in their personal views on their ethnic identity and acculturation, as well as media consumption. Interviews displayed a clear trend of Syrian identity and Internet use to maintain it, that was prevalent among all respondents. Four research questions were outlined and answered during the course of the interviews, to reach the core of the research. Below is a outline of what interview responses reflected regarding the research questions.

RQ1: How do Syrian immigrants in Stockholm use media to follow up the ongoing conflict in Syria?

The results presented above showed that media selection was for all respondents based on 1) availability of information, and 2) the reliability (in their view) of that information. There was a clear pattern among respondents that highlighted the importance of finding reliable and up-to-date developments on Syria, which allowed them to keep in touch with their nation of origin. For this reason, the Internet was used daily among all respondents, and was the most frequently consumed media platform. Facebook in particular was the primary tool for receiving these updates, and also directly communicating with friends and family in Syria. Print media was seldom used, as the content therein is viewed as late and unreliable. Similarly, broadcast media was criticised due to the scarcity of updates and unreliability of

information presented.

Arabic broadcast channels such as Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, and Al-Mayadeen, available through satellite-television were more widely used by respondents due to the perceived reliability and cultural proximity of that content, but nonetheless respondents were critical of the political affiliations of these channels. All respondents reported watching Arabic news as reached through satellite-television channels, but were still critical of the political affiliations reflected in the content. Instead, this form of broadcast media was used a supplement when respondent's could not personally reach family members, or as a complement alongside the Internet. Many respondents expressed a negative view of the superpowers of the West such as the United States and Russia, not necessarily for causing the war, but for keeping it going out of personal interest. Thereby, the want for Arabic cultural proximity is strengthened by a distrust of Western content.

Most widely used and trusted among all respondents were social media websites, in particular Facebook, as well as certain internet-based smartphone applications such as Viber and WhatsApp that allow individuals to personally contact friends and family in Syria. Due to their negative view of both local and foreign news, in print and media form, Syrian immigrants in Stockholm choose to follow up the conflict through personal interaction with people whose accounts they can trust. This is done through Facebook or telephone messaging and phone calls. Having personal contacts in Syria, affects the subsequent media choices of respondents in terms of receiving news updates. Having witnessed first-hand the skewed messages of Syria portrayed in print and broadcast media channels, respondents are led away from these sources and prefer Internet and ICT channels that allow for several different perspectives. All respondents report feeling that Swedish news does not take up the issues in Syria to a sufficient degree. The implications of this is that respondents do not feel that Sweden cares about them.

Looking at the media choices of respondents, it was obvious that this group

strives for cultural maintenance and prefers media content with close cultural proximity which connects them to their homeland as it is a part of their collective identity. For this diasporic community, the globalization of media products has implies reterritorialization of cultural content, reflected in their demand for culturally specific content.

RQ2: Are there differences in how different genders or age groups use these media?

The patterns of media use as discussed above were consistent among all respondents, regardless of gender or age. Print news media, while not used by younger respondents, was hardly used by older members either. Only two respondents reported consuming print newspapers, and only one reported doing so regularly. This was attributed to the perceived accuracy and efficiency of newspapers in spreading relevant information. All respondents, regardless of age, gender, or length of stay in Sweden regularly watched broadcast news on television or radio, but all respondents were also critical of the content displayed. According to respondents, there are not enough updates about the situation in Syria. As a result, all respondents reported daily use of Facebook as a primary form of communication, alongside the telephone.

The fact that there were no differences in the media use between age groups, even with the inclusion of both traditional and new channels, acknowledges the perceived accuracy and importance of these media channels as a form of communication for members of the diaspora. The idea that there were no differences between ages or genders in itself speaks volumes for the space in time in which the interviews were carried out. Had the research taken place just 5-10 years ago, while the Internet was still in its infancy, there may have been a larger generational gap in e-literacy. However, the Internet having overwhelming support as the tool of choice when getting news updates as well as communicating with the nation of origin for 100% of respondents highlights its undeniable importance for members of the diaspora.

RQ3: In what way does the media use by the respondents reflect their image of their home country and the host nation?

9/10 respondents reported feeling first and foremost Syrian, while the remaining two respondents reported feeling Syrian-Swedish. The media habits of respondents also support this trend. Media use by the respondents reflect a strong connection to Syria and a lesser interest in Swedish content, where they feel they are left out of reports. It is obvious from interview transcripts as presented in the section above, that content that encompasses a “cultural proximity” as experienced by respondents, such as satellite television and Internet content coming directly from the source is favourable. Therefore, when choosing what media content to consume, the respondents clearly embodied what was also discussed in chapter 2. All respondents showed a clear trend toward preferring content promoting a close national cultural proximity to promote a sense of belonging. In this research, respondents showed to have a wide distrust of Swedish media channels, feeling that they are excluded from news reports. Instead, they preferred watching Arabic television channels and talking to contacts in Syria. In the eyes of all respondents, print and broadcast news are not accurate, and present a politically skewed image of Syria. Therefore, respondents reported that their image of what is happening in Syria comes from their contact with individuals in the form of friends and family members within the nations borders. Respondents claim that use of media channels run by organizations present an inaccurate image of their home country.

This shows that the identity of respondents is strongly tied to their Syrian roots which is not disturbed even when placed in a new culture. All respondents expressed the importance of what Berry calls, “cultural maintenance”, referring to how respondents consider their cultural identity, and the maintenance thereof, to be extremely important (Berry, 1997, p. 9). In this sense, sources as close as possible to the conflict are favourable in maintaining their sense of community and connection to home.

Theory on identity and diasporic communities bring up the idea of a collective identity linked to a shared experience of coming from a common homeland, suggest that for many diasporic communities select media channels that will promote that shared identity and collective consciousness (Cohen, 1997, p. 7). The availability of this content therefore has proven to be an important vehicle for community building and identity formation among scattered diasporic audiences (Georgiou, 2005b, p. 1920). Instead, they preferred watching Arabic television channels and talking to contacts in Syria, because of the cultural proximity of this content that recreates a foreign narrative that is more attractive to the Syrian audience. This was true for all respondents, showing their distrust of Western media outlets, which to them were foreign.

In this sense, the Syrian identity was closely bound to sources promoting a Syrian cultural proximity, enhancing their sense of being members of a group tied together through a shared culture and history (La Pastina & Straubhaar, 2003). As a result of migration and globalization changing the cultural shaping of the world, authors have theorized about a cultural atmosphere of either deterritorialization or reterritorialization. To recap, deterritorialization results in a cultural atmosphere where even foreign cultural content becomes homogenized and familiar through mutual exposure (Tomlinson, 1999: 176), and reterritorialization expresses a search for and attraction to culturally specific local content (Martí, 2006, p. 94). The responses of respondents support the idea of reterritorialization as they depict a strong desire to achieve quick and accurate culturally specific content originating from as close to Syria as possible.

RQ4: How do the media choices of respondents reflect the integration and acculturation of this group?

How individuals choose to structure their everyday lives through media choices and individual interests reflects their social integration and acculturation (Berry, 1997, p. 6).

Social integration by members of a diaspora into a new host nation acknowledges “to what extent should they become involved in other cultural groups, or remain primarily among themselves” (Berry, 1997, p. 9). This can be done either through digital diasporas and different media channels to support support integration in the host society, or in the offline behaviour of immigrants in their cultural involvement (Brinkerhoff, 2009, p. 2).

During the interviews, respondents reflected on their personal cultural maintenance, through the extent to which they to uplift their Syrian values and follow up on developments in Syria through the use of media. With regards to Berry’s (1997) proposed strategies of acculturation, respondents may choose to assimilate into the new environment, separating themselves from the new culture, integration through a partnership of the two, or marginalisation through doing neither (Berry, 1997, p. 9). The first strategy of acculturation, assimilation, can be encouraged through the language and cultural values presented in local media, which allow the individual in question to improve language skills and adopt local cultural norms. The alternative trend of acculturation, separation, can also be encouraged through media, by consuming foreign media from the nation of origin, thereby allowing the individual to maintain their cultural heritage and uphold their mother-tongue (Elias & Lemish, 2008, p. 37). As introduced in the previous section, two interviewees reported reading local print media and eight interviewees reported watching local broadcast media, yet all interviewees expressed that they regularly watch foreign broadcast media in the form of Arabic satellite channels. This depicts a group that have collectively adopted an integration strategy of acculturation through a combination of assimilation and separation from Swedish culture. It is important to note, however, that the group have high cultural maintenance and the tendency of separation from Swedish culture through the consumption of foreign media was slightly higher.

Media, though widely used in different forms, was however not used by respondents with the purpose of using it in the process of acculturation and integration. It was primarily a source of information regarding developments in Syria. Therefore, they find foreign (Arabic) media channels more trustworthy than local Swedish ones, but that does not mean that



they are not integrating into Swedish society. Instead, this is done through real-world interactions and activities such as participation in courses to improve their Swedish language skills. Thus although this was looked into, there were no solid connections between media use and integration or assimilation. Rather, attempts at integration and assimilation by respondents all occurred offline. The “contact and participation” of individuals refers to these offline activities of individuals in the process of integration. For example, when placed in the new society, does the individual become involved in new cultural groups, or remain among countrymen, thereby integrating less with the new nation (Berry, 1997, p. 9). In the process of integration, respondents therefore either exhibited behaviour either of high or low integration into Swedish society. It is considered high integration when the individual decides to become involved with new cultural groups and continue their life in Sweden. From this standpoint, 90% of respondents were highly integrated into Swedish society.

Interviewee responses reflected integration into Swedish society, while still closely holding on to their Syrian roots. All individuals, although in varying degrees, reported having adopted an integration strategy of acculturation through a combination of assimilation into society, and separation from Swedish culture through Syrian cultural maintenance. While the Syrian identity was strong in all respondents, 9 out of 10 respondents were also very integrated into Swedish society and can see it as their permanent nation of residency. Level of integration in one way evident in the consumption of online and transnational content. In addition to this, personal convictions, adoption of norms and membership in Syrian organizations reflects behaviour patterns consistent with high acculturation.

The cultural awareness, or knowledge about cultural characteristics of the nation of origin, of respondents reflects the level of acculturation, because it stands to reason that in order to be considered integrated individuals must show knowledge about the host cultures (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 38). Similarly, ethnic loyalty, or loyalty to either the country of origin or the host country, also reflects the acculturation of the individual (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 38). 8/10 respondents reflected both high cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty to both their nation of

origin and host nation, making them clear examples of immigrants in between two cultures. Two respondents, however, still held strong loyalty to their nation of origin, which was undisturbed even in the new society.

## **5.2 Limitations & Further Research**

Although research showed clear conclusions that can be applied to the broader spectrum of diaspora research, there were also certain limitations to such a small sample. The findings can be expanded through further research that may include surveys or more generations of respondents to include a wider sample. Also, media consumption habits may not be the most sensitive subject, it is still important to consider that the disposition of the moderator may play into how participants may respond to a question due to underlying biases and suspicions. It is important to acknowledge that my young age (21) and gender may bring participant biases to the surface. However, implications of biases, as well as the limited responses as discussed in chapter 3.1.1., on the findings should be avoided due to the fact that, as mentioned earlier, though it may be a sensitive subject, respondents were very eager to share their personal experiences. In addition to this, the varied ages and genders of participants will still generate relevant findings.

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## 7 Appendices

### 7.1 Appendix I: Interview Sample

#### *Dirar (M)*

Dirar is a prominent figure in the Syrian community in Stockholm. He was very eager to help me in different ways, in exchange for me spreading the word about his cause, and making sure that people do not forget about the crisis in Syria and the people who need our help. There was no interview conducted with Dirar, but he was very helpful in gathering interview respondents and was also present for two of the interviews as a translator when needed. Dirar is an active member of the non-profit organization Syrian Global Hjälp, based in Stockholm, that with the help of donations buys ambulances in Sweden and drive them down to Jordan a few times a year. With them they bring aid and clothing to refugees at the Syrian border.

#### *Dahham (M)*

Dahham is fifty-six years old. Although he has resided in Sweden for twenty-eight years, he maintains a strong connection to Syria. Dahham is also a member of Syrian Global Hjälp.

#### *Ismail (M)*

Ismail is forty years old, and came to Sweden three years ago, just as the situation in Syria was at a boiling point. We conduct the interview in between his classes at Competens, an educational institution that provides language courses for immigrants, with the

help of Dirar.

*Abdullah “Abbe” (M)*

Abbe has only been in Sweden for over a year, but displays an impressive control of the Swedish language, and we were able to conduct the interview without a translator present. Abbe is twenty-six years old and has lived in Sweden for about fifteen months.

*Rana (F)*

Rana is thirty-five years old and has lived in Sweden since 2002. She has not seen any of the turmoil first hand, yet she has many friends and family members still in Syria. Rana also has a young son who was born and raised in Sweden, Johannes, who is present during the interview in her home.

*“Stive” (M)*

Stive is nineteen years old, and came to Sweden just three months ago. He was a university student in Syria. Today, he is learning Swedish at the National Syrian Association in Va̋llingby. This interview was conducted in English.

*“Rasha” (F)*

Rasha is a member of the National Syrian Association in Va̋llingby. There, she holds courses in Swedish for new arrivals so that they can better integrate and have an easier transition into Swedish culture. A few members of Rasha’s class were present during her

interview per her request, as an exercise in Swedish for them. Rasha has lived in Sweden for thirteen years.

*“Chamoun” (M)*

Chamoun is also holds courses in Swedish at the National Syrian Association. Chamoun is in his sixties, and has lived in Sweden for twenty-eight years.

*“AzmeH” (M)*

AzmeH is forty-two years old, and has lived in Sweden for seven years.

*“FCH” (M)*

FCH is fifty-eight years old, and has lived in Sweden for thirty-three years.

*“G Touma” (M)*

G Touma is forty-eight years old, and has lived in Sweden for twelve years.

## 7.2 Appendix II: Interview Guide

Sample questions/topics used in carrying out the interviews:

### Part 1: Media Use

What is your name?

What is your age?

Describe yourself.

How long have you lived in Sweden?

What is your personal experience of the war in Syria?

Do you have family still residing in Syria? If yes, how do you keep in contact with them?

When you are in Sweden, how important is it for you to stay updated on the situation in Syria? Why?

How do you stay updated?

What is your image of Syria when you are in Sweden? Where does that image come from?

What form of media do you use most frequently (TV, radio, Internet, newspapers)? Do you use this every day? What do you get out of this content?

Do you read any local print newspapers in order to read about the situation in Syria? Why or why not? Which ones? What do you get out of them?

Do you read any foreign print newspapers in order to read about the situation in Syria? Why or why not? Which ones? What do you get out of them?

Do you watch/listen to any local TV or radio channels in order to hear about the situation in Syria? (For example SVT, SR) Why or why not? Which ones? What do you get out of them?

Do you watch/listen to any foreign TV or radio channels in order to hear about the situation in Syria? (For example via satellite) Why or why not? Which ones? What do you get out of them?

Which Internet sites do you use in order to receive information about Syria? (For example Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, other)

When online, do you consider yourself an active contributor of content, or are you a passive consumer (For example do you post your own content, comment, etc)?

Where do you think you get the most reliable updates about Syria? Why?

What media channels do you primarily use to follow the conflict? Why?

How do you choose what media to use?

Do you think that the media channel affects the image the individual gets about Syria? (for example using only social media vs local news vs foreign news) How?

How is media used by you in the process of integrating into the Swedish community, if at all?

Do you think that the willingness to connect to Syria affects which media one uses, and how they are used? How/Why?

## Part 2: Identity

Would you want to move back to Syria should the situation improve?

Is it important for you to return to Syria? Either to visit or for permanent stay.

Where do you consider your home to be?

How do you feel about Sweden and how it as a nation has treated you?

How would you describe yourself? (For example, Swedish, Syrian, Swedish-Syrian, Citizen of the world...)

What would you describe as characteristic of Swedish culture?

What do you associate to Swedish culture? (For example food, music, behaviours...)

What do you think is most important in Swedish culture?

What are some elements of Swedish culture?

What would you describe as characteristic of Syrian culture? What do you associate to Syrian culture? (For example food, music, behaviours...)

What do you think is most important in Syrian culture?

What are some elements of Syrian culture?

In which of these cultures do you feel most at home?

Is there a situation in which you feel especially...

Syrian?

Swedish?



To which community in Sweden do you feel that you belong?

Can you tell me about the Syrian community in Sweden?

## 7.3 Transcriptions of all Conducted Interviews

### 7.3.1 Interview I: Rasha

**M: Jag vet inte hur ni vill göra om ni vill gå runt eller, men hur länge har alla varit i Sverige. 00:00:05**

R: Okej, ni ska säga till henne hur länge ni har varit i Sverige (Her students want to share how long they have been in Sweden, go around)...jag 13 år.

**M: Vad har ni för erfarenheter, ni som har varit där när det var krig och sådär, vad era erfarenheter av det var. 00:00:34**

R: Av kriget i Syrien? Okej. Berätta om någonting som ni upplevt där i Syrien när det var krig. Ni berättade häromdagen att när ni skulle på väg till universitetet så var det folk som krigade, alltså med varandra. Och dem var jag inte rädda att bomber ska komma på dem. Du berättade att du satt så där (tack huvudet med händerna) i bussen på väg till universitetet (Speaks Arabic). Ja, det är det. Vad vill du veta, så jag kan...

**M: Mer specifikt vill jag prata egentligen om deras medievanor här. Om dem kollar på nyheter, eller satellit tv, eller Internet för att följa upp det som händer i Syrien när dem är här. 00:01:33**

R: Det...alltså dem gör det. Dem gör det via Facebook, eh Arabiska kanaler, och nyheter, dem läser allt dem kommer åt på Internet när det gäller nyheter och så.

**M: Var får dem den informationen ifrån? 00:01:51**

R: På nätet. Nyheter.

**M: Från tidningar eller bloggar eller... 00:01:56**

R: Ja. Nej nej nej, tidningar. Som kommer i Syrien, alltså kända tidningar. Och så dem ringer sina släkter och vänner där, dem pratar med dem dagligen. Och dem får höra vad som händer där.

**M: Och var tycker dem finns det mest trovärdiga, eller litar dem att läsa nyheter eller är det mer att prata med dem som är där? 00:02:20**

R: När vi ringer våra släkter och vänner, har vi mer tillit till vad dem säger.

**M: Men tycker ni nyheterna brukar ha rätt, eller att det är mer politiska...00:02:41**

R: Styrda?

**M: Styrda, ja. 00:02:42**

R: Alltså oavsett om det är regimen eller den andra gruppen, den fria armén. Vi tycker inte att allt dem säger är rätt. Vi vet att dem är politiskt styrda.

**M: Och i Sverige, läser ni några nyheter? 00:03:23**

R: Läser ni några Svenska nyheter i Sverige? Vad brukar ni läsa här i klassen? Vilken tidning? 8 sidor brukar vi läsa här i klassrummet. Ibland från Metro eller Aftonbladet.

**M: Och brukar dem ha hela bilden, eller brukar det vara rätt? 00:03:41**

R: Nej.

**M: Och varför inte? 00:03:55**

R: Varför inte? Alltså, som vi har upplevt, till exempel, att Sverige tycker inte om Ryssland. Och vi vet att när vi läser dem här nyheterna att dem visar allting som inte stämmer, allt som inte är bra. Det är det.

**M: Men det är inget fokus på Syrien eller? 00:04:31**

R: Hm...nej vi har inte läst så mycket om Syrien faktiskt.

**M: Det var alla mina frågor så, tack så mycket. 00:04:47**

R: Men vad tycker du, då? Tycker du att du får en bra bild av Syrien?

**M: Nej det är ingenting i Svenska nyheterna. Det var ju i början men sedan det bara går ner och ner även fast våldet är ju det samma. Så i nyheter verkar det ju som att...00:04:57**

R: Ja. Och Sverige och dem alla länder...Jag säger till alla att Sverige inte får rätt bild av det som händer i Syrien. Det är verkligen styrt. För 23 dagar sedan var det program på SVT om dem där som tillverkar bomber och...ja du vet vad jag pratar om, och ingen av dem är Syrisk medborgare. Det är folk som kommer till Syrien och krigar där. Och det visar inte alltså inte vår...Svenska TV.

**M: Om mer folk i Sverige visste sanningen, då, tror du att dem skulle vilja vara mer villiga att stoppa våldet? 00:05:43**

R: Ja. Dem ville inte. Alltså, dem vill verkligen inte. Vi är medvetna om att det här är Det är ett projekt, dem styr för att behålla situationen som det är. Det här var planerat för Syrien. Dem hade planerat det här för länge sedan.

**M: Sverige? 00:06:10**

R: Nej alltså inte Sverige. Hela världen. Och det, kolla nu det som händer i Egypten, Tunisien, det här Arabiska Våren som stoppats i Syrien. Alltså, vi har inte hört om Arabisk Vår efter Syrien. Ja, det är det. Det är därför vi tycker att det här är planerat.

**M: Och vad måste hela världen göra för att det ska stoppas i Syrien? 00:06:38**

R: Alltså vi vill att hela världen ska ta bort sina händer från Syrien. För det ska funka i Syrien. Alltså, folket mår inte alls bra där. Alltså jag har släkt där, alltså jag vill inte prata ens med dem får dem mår inte bra, och jag mår inte heller bra när jag pratar med dem. Och jag säger inte att regimen är bra, eller att den andra gruppen är bra. Båda är dumma. Men vem lider? Det är alltså folket. Och dem säger inte...vi har fått massor av journalister hit. Och vi har sagt massor. Men dem hör och skriver vad dem vill höra och skriva om. Det är, alltså säger inte och dem skriver inte det vi vill att den andra ska höra och läsa om. Det är dem här människorna som har upplevt flyktvägen hit. Och du hör kanske om dem som dör i havet i Grekland och, ja.

Det är dem här man ska tro på om varför dem flydde det här landet.

**M: Ja jag hör gärna om er flyktväg hit. 00:08:03**

R: Jag kan berätta. Jag kan berätta massa. Alltså, jag har fått tusentals människor här, sist var det en hel familj som drunknade. Du kanske eh...sett reportaget på TV om det...den där familjen alltså...kvinna med sin dotter, dotterns man, och två barn. Och kvinnans enda barn, vad kallas det för, överlevde. Och mannen, när han såg att hans fru och sina barn drunknade framför sina ögon så tog han av sig västen och valde att drunkna han med. Den tredje, den som överlevde bara, han försökte också och ta av sig den här västen, men eftersom han var jätte kall om fingrarna så klarade han inte av det.

**M: Men var finns han nu? Eller har du pratat med honom? 00:09:15**

R: Jag har pratat med honom och han finns i Grekland nu. Han får inte komma till Sverige. Dem var på väg från Turkiet dit och...från Grekland skulle han smugglas hit. Men han lyckas inte. Min mamma tog samma väg. Med min systers barn, två styckna. Hon ramlade mitt i vägen och hon sa till killarna alltså "lämna mig och fly, ni får fly" men dem lämnade henne inte. Men dem kom helt förstörd. Och dem mår inte alls bra. Varför? Alla dem här som du ser, dem är välbildade människor som har fått lämna sina universitet och allt. Jag säger inte att allt var mycket bra i Syrien under Al-Assad styrning. Men nu är det mycket värre. I alla fall kunde vi, eller dem som

är där, kunde bo och göra sina sysslor. Men nu är det mycket, mycket värre. Och dem som kommer som är inte klara med sin utbildning i Syrien, till exempel, hon är apotekare, 4 av 5 år. Här måste hon göra om allt, eftersom hon inte var klar med examen. (Förklarar utbildningen av hennes studenter: ingenjörer, ekonomistudenter, en frisör). Ja, det vi vill säga alltså, Sverige har gjort massor för dem här som har kommit nu. Men, det var synd för dem som måste komma härifrån, eftersom dem gjorde bra, dem var nästan klara med sina utbildningar. Men, ja, börja från början det är inte lätt. Det kan vara okej för dem här unga, men för dem gamla, det är ännu tuffare. Något annat du vill höra, veta...?

**M: Nej inga speciella frågor så, men ni får gärna berätta, här på Syriska föreningen, vad är det som...Det är flera olika föreningar här eller hur?**

R: Det finns en...SYRF. Riksförbund för alla Syriska föreningar som finns i Sverige. Ja, och vi tar emot alla, oavsett religion, politik, eller, ja, vadsomhelst. Alla är välkomna. Bara dem kan tala Arabiska och kan sitta med oss och att vi ska kunna umgås och prata med varandra. Och vi har fått hjälpa massor av dem. Vi står upp. Men det räcker inte, alltså våra resurser räcker inte. Vi skulle behöva hjälp från andra organisationer.

**M: Men det är mer att ni försöker umgås eller försöker ni ordna 00:13:00**

R: Nej, vi har Svenska undervisning. Samhällskunskap. Vi har aktiviteter. Matlagningskurser. Försöka låra känna samhället. Vi har samhällsorienterande samtal, studiebesök...Och alla dem här har valt att komma och studera på egen vilja. Alltså, dem är inte tvungna. Det här är inte SFI eller något annat. Men dem vill vara klara. Och alla som kommer och läser här klarar SFI mycket mycket snabbare än resten av alla andra.

**M: Jag har varit där på SFI och pratat med några också. 00:13:36**

R: Ja...Dem kämpar. Jag tror att dem kommer att lyckas här. Det kan vara tufft i början. Hur många år har du kvar på din utbildning?

**M: 2 månader. 00:13:58**

R: 2 månader. Journalistik, va? Till vilken tidning go''r du det ha''r reportaget, eller bara...

**M: Det a''r min avhandling, da', som jag och min handledare vi jobbar a''ven fo''r att den ska bli publicerad i en journal som...ja en medie och kulturjournal, sa ingen speciell tidning.**

R: Ja''ttebra. Men om du vill ta mitt telefonnummer sa' kan du ho''ra av dig om du undrar na'gonting eller vill ho''ra andras asikter eller...du vet. Att allt ska komma i reportaget. Inte bara den ena sidan eller den andra sidan. Och dem kan skicka bilder, visa bilder, nu a''r vi vana, folk har fa''tt sina hja''rtan uppa''tna, huvuden huggna, sa' vi har vant oss, tyva''rr att se dem ha''r bilderna. Jag skriver mitt telefonnummer. Du fa'r skriva det pa' din telefon sen. Vad var det du hette?

**M: Michelle. 00:15:24**

R: Michelle, dem undrar om en sak om du vill kunna hja''lpa oss om det. Dem fragar sa'ha''r, alltsa' varfo''r Svenskar na''r dem pratar sa' sa''ger dem (andas in) hela tiden?

**M: Jag studerar i Holland, och dem fragar ocksa', varfo''r go''r Svenskar sa' hela tiden?  
00:15:43**

R: Kan du svara varfo''r?

**M: Jag har fa''tt ho''ra att det a''r, det kommer fran'...norra Sverige, att det betyder ja. Dem tycker det a''r ja''tte konstigt ocksa', jag kan inte hja''lpa att jag sa''ger sa' hela tiden. Ha''r a''r ocksa' min information, om ni skulle ha na'gon fraga eller sa'. 00:16:17**

R: Ja. Du vi sa''ger sa'ha''r, jag talar fo''r mina deltagare, om du vill komma na'gon annan gang', vill du ho''ra precis alltsa' vissa historier eller na'gonting du kan fa' nytta av i din reportage, sa' a''r du va''lkommen, bara ring en dag innan sa' besta''mmer vi tid och plats. Jag a''r villig prata om det.

**M: Ja ttebra. Tack så mycket. 00:16:56**

### **7.3.2 Interview II: Rana**

**M: Vi kan bo rja med: hur gammal a r du? Hur många år har du varit i Sverige?**

**00:01:55**

R: Jag föddes '79. Eh, och jag a r ha r i Sverige från 200...3.

**M: Hur kom du hit då? 00:02:06**

R: Jag träffade min man i mitt land, och sedan efter jag träffade min man, ett, två, tre månader stannade jag i Syrien. Na r det a r klart med mina papper och sedan jag kommer ha r till Sverige.

**M: Så du har familj kvar i Syrien? Eller har alla flyttat? 00:02:26**

R: Jo, jag har min fa, min mamma, pappa, min syster, eh, hon har två barn. Min bror också. Min lillasyster hon flyttade till Libanon. Du vet, det a r inte bra da r. Nu min syster också hon i Damascus. Min bror också. Dem a r...allt a r inte bra da r i Damascus.

**M: Men hur håller du kontakt med dem ha r? 00:02:50**

R: I Damascus jag har det finns ibland jag kan prata i telefon eller Internet, bara min mamma och pappa dem bor andra sidan. Det a r bara 9 timmar, bara nu det a r 15 timmar mellan Damascus och min mamma pappa da r dem bor. Det finns mycket. Bara det finns inte telefon hos mamma pappa. Bara igår jag, eh, såg på Facebook min kusin. Och jag skriver lite. Dem sa ja, dem mycket ba ttre. Bara jag kan inte prata med dem. Na r dem i Damascus jag pratar med min mamma pappa, och sedan dem tillbaka hem.

**M: Så det ibland ha nder att du kan? 00:03:28**

R: Ja, ibland. Bara Facebook na r det finns Internet, jag kan. Min kusin hon har, inte mamma



pappa, hon har hemma.

**M: Så du flyttade ut innan konflikten bo rjade och så? 00:03:42**

R: Innan Syrien? Jo det finns från, eh, Damascus och andra sidan, da r mamma och pappa dem bor. Det finns från Damascus det finns en timme. Innan i Syrien, det finns. Och det finns i andra land. Det finns eh, jag vet inte vad det heter, det andra land på Svenska. Inte ha r i Sverige, nej. Det finns en land fo rutom Syrien, det finns da r. Bara det kan inte.

**M: Har du varit tillbaka och ha lsat på sedan konflikten bo rjade? Eller har du någon erfarenhet av det? Att det a r så va ldigt jobbigt da r nu. Eller a r det mest det du ho r? 00:04:29**

R: Nej, jag kan inte åka. Jag ko pte biljetter, Johannes (Hennes son) och jag skulle åka, precis na r dem bo rjade. Min man han a r från Irak. Och hos min mamma och pappa det finns ingenting da r dem bor, dem bor på andra sidan. Och det finns många dem åkte till Syrien, dem sa det finns ingenting. Jag a r ja tte ra dd. Johannes han a r inte...jag kan inte åka. Det a r sju år jag har inte tra ffat min familj.

**M: Så allt det du ho r om Syrien och konflikten som a r da r nu, att det a r jobbigt och så, det a r från det du ho r från din familj? 00:05:25**

R: Ja, det finns mycket. Och det finns, jag har, kusiner dem a r do da också...da r. Det finns, dem har, eh, vad ska jag sa ga? Dem har inte dem ha r, eh, från AlAssad. Dem andra, dem a r do da. Mina kusiner.

**M: Na r du a r ha r, a r det viktigt fo r dig att kolla på nyheter och så och la sa tidningar eller så fo r att se vad som ha nder da r borta? Eller a r det mer prata med dem du ka nner? 00:05:55**

R: Jag kan inte titta på TV. Jag kan inte. Nu har jag Arabiska TV nu. I två veckor nu min man

han lägger Arabiska TV. Jag hade bara Svenska. Jag såg också på Svenska när, från Syrien, när det finns där. Jag höorde också bland mina kompisar, när jag ringer och pratar med min syster. Min syster också, från två veckor jag pratar med henne. Hon åker bussen och handlar. Hon sa "min son han behöver skor till påsk". Det finns en bil framme, det kommer en bomb. Hon sa "jag såg ingenting framme, jag var just rädd och min son han gråter och är just arg. Jag vill bara tillbaka hem". Jag tänker också på dem. Bara jag kan inte titta på TV. Och ibland på Facebook står det om det, dem är just dumma. Jag förstår inte varför dem dödar dem som är från samma land, människor.

**M: Ja, jag tror vi i Sverige har inte så just mycket av en idé. I mina andra intervjuer, det var en som visade just mycket bilder och så. 00:07:19**

R: Ja, det finns mycket. Dem vill komma, min familj, här. Bara dem behöver mycket pengar. Jag tänker jag ska hjälpa min bror. Jag och min man, vi skickar honom pengar. Och sedan han åker till Turkiet. Och han har problem där, så. Och min pappa han är sjuk, han har, eh, hjärtat. Han behöver operation. Och det kostar just mycket. Sedan jag har pengar, jag ger till min bror, så han kan kom hit här till Sverige. Min pappa han gör operation och sedan min bror han är tillbaka i Syrien. Han kan inte komma. Och nu jag skickar varje månad från min lön. Jag lånar 100,000, och nu jag betalar varje månad. Det är inga problem, jag vill bara att dem mår bra i Syrien. Min syster, min storsyster hon bor här. Hon kommer med hela familjen. Hon kom i mars. Första veckan från mars hon kommer från Sverige.

**M: Och får hon stanna här? 00:08:39**

R: Ja. Bara om hon betalar mycket pengar. Hon har problem med sonen. Många problem med hennes barn. Det är därför hon vill komma hit från Syrien. Och det är bra, dem kommer. Om dem har pengar dem kan åka. Bara dem har inte pengar dem stannar där. För allt du behöver pengar.

**M: Så när du är här kollar du mer på...Tycker du det är bättre med SVT eller Svenska kanaler eller Arabiska kanaler för att få en bättre bild av Syrien? Som är mer rätt?**

**00:09:30**

R: Jag tittar på Svenska kanaler också. Och nu lite Arabiska också. Dem är så olika, det är inte samma. Det är olika. Och på Facebook också säger dem olika. Och när jag ringer och pratar med mina syskon eller vad som heter där dem så också att det finns mycket. Det är ibland inte samma. När jag öppnar TV och det finns om min syster, där hon bor, jag ringer direkt. Det finns inte Internet där jag prata med telefon med viber, hon skriver, jag kan inte prata nu. Ibland det är samma dem säger på TV.

**M: Så när dem säger olika på TV kanaler och FB och så, var känner du att du kan tro på? 00:10:28**

R: Åh, jag är jätte ledsen. Jag vet inte. Det är inte lätt med hela familjen där, och det är hela landet, det är mycket. Det är jätte mycket. Ingen tänker att Syrien, det är ett jätte fint land. Det blir så. Mycket kommer in, det finns olika länder, dem kommer in.

**M: Var i Syrien är det du kommer ifrån från bo rjan?**

R: Inte Damascus, andra sidan, nära Turkiet. Jag bor nära andra sidan.

**M: Är det där dina föräldrar bor också? 00:11:39**

R: Mmm. Min bror han kan inte åka tillbaka. Han bor i Damascus nu. Det finns inte mycket jobb där. Och nu också, han har inte jobb. Bara han stannar där, hos min syster och kusiner.

**M: Tycker du det är viktigt, när du är här, att man vet vad som heter där borta? 00:12:08**

R: Ja jag vill veta. Det är mitt land. Alla min familj och kusiner är där och så. Jag vill veta allt. Och allt är svårt nu. Min mamma och pappa, dem kan inte jobba. Min bror, han vill jobba, det

finns inte så mycket jobb. Ibland han jobbar. Min syster nu också hennes man han jobbar inte. Det är rätt svårt också. Och allt är rätt dyrt. Min syster hon bor i Libanon. Hon vill ta spruta, hon har en lite pojke, han är 34 månader. Dem vill ha till exempel 2000 SEK. Och här det finns gratis till man blir 18 år. Allt är gratis. Hon betalar för en spruta till barnen 2000.

**M: Så vad gör dem när dem inte kan jobba? 00:13:12**

R: Hon jobbar friso. Till sista dagen när hon födde hon jobbar. Till sista dagen. Det finns människor där dem hjälper min syster också. Dem har tjejer hon jobbar med dem som friso. Ibland jag hjälpa, ibland jag kan inte. Jag har också mycket jag betalar. Jag jobbar inte heltid också.

**M: Du sa att du vill veta allting som händer, hur kan du veta allting? Eller hur får du den informationen? 00:13:48**

R: Det...ibland det är Facebook jag tittar. Jag ser på Facebook. Ibland är det TV. Eller ibland jag öppnar, jag pratar med mina syskon i Damascus. Eller kusiner. Dem berättar hela tiden. Eller mina kompis. Dem berättar någonting. Det finns så...alla dem pratar. Där det finns inte till exempel telefon, alla dem skriver, idag det kommer telefon, du kan prata nu. Det finns...det är mina kompisar och kusiner. Alla dem vill veta, det är inte bara jag.

**M: Pratar du med dem varje dag? 00:14:36**

R: Ja mina syskon. Om jag inte pratar telefon, jag skriver Facebook eller...Med min syster i Libanon eller min syster i Damascus. Varje dag vi skriver.

**M: Och TV eller så, kollar du också varje dag? Eller det kanske mest är när ni inte kan prata? 00:14:59**

R: Ja. När jag kan inte prata, jag tittar mycket TV. Johannes han sitter och tittar på TV också. När jag har tid jag tittar på Facebook. När jag öppnar Facebook när jag vaknar på morgonen

jag öppnar Facebook. Jag ber till Gud, sedan jag öppnar. När jag öppnar ibland dem lägger "oj, den har dött". Och alla dem är kusiner och det är...om det inte är kusiner det är grannar...det är inte bara kusiner eller grannar det är människor. 20, 30, 15, barn. Det är inte roligt. Det är inte bara att tänka på min kusin, det är alla. En gång jag öppnar jag såg det är 4 syskon. Jag tror den stora hon är kanske 10 år.

**M: Det är mycket barn? 00:16:03**

R: Ja. Mamma och pappa dem är borta. Dem är själva. Det...det är inte bara att tänka på min familj och så, tänker på alla. Stackars barn, ingen skola...ingen...dem kan inte gå till skolan. Det finns många som inte kan gå. Min syster nu hon kan inte skicka barnen till skolan.

**M: Dem är hemma hela dagarna? 00:16:26**

R: Dem är hemma. Hon vill skicka, bara det finns, eh, Damascus dem...en skola för alla Syrianska. Dem kastar bomber där. Jag tror hon sa en barn eller två barnen dem är döda. Och dem är klippta händer eller händer (mimics severed arms and legs)...du vet. Det var 60 barn. Varför? Och dem är alla kristna. Det finns många, jag ska inte säga det är bara kristna eller muslimer. Det finns många muslimer också. Det finns många också, inte bara kristna. Det finns olika. Det är olika. Det är många som är muslimer eller kristna, det finns många. Dem är döda. Jag såg det på TV också. Många kyrkor dem är...det finns ingenting. Varför?

**M: Du säger att, em, för att veta allting måste man kolla på TV och på Svenska kanaler och på Arabiska och på FB. Tror du att någon som kollar bara på Svensk TV, att dem får rätt bild av Syrien eller inte rätt? 00:17:45**

R: Jag vet inte...Jag kan inte säga...om det är rätt på bara det Svenska. Jag kan inte säga, jag vet inte.

**M: Tack ändå. Något mer du vill berätta? 00:18:08**

R: Ja...det a''r hemskt, mitt land. Det a''r mycket. Det a''r ja''tte mycket. Jag vill bara att alla dem lever bra och jag saknar mycket mina fo''ra ldrar och sa.

**M: Kommer du aka tillbaka om det blir ba''ttre? 00:18:30**

R: Jo om det finns ingenting och a''r tillbaka samma som innan också, jag kan aka. Jag kan aka till Libanon. Bara det kostar mycket. Om jag ska aka hos min familj jag bor gratis. Jag tra''ffar alla da''r. Bara om jag ska aka till Libanon jag maste hyra ett hotel eller en la''genhet och om min familj kommer till Libanon också det kostar ja''tte mycket. Innan det kostar biljetter bara 1000 exempel flyg. Men nu det kostar 6 eller 7000. Till Damascus. Och sedan fran Damascus det blir också 34000. Och dem har ingenting. Jag ta''nker om jag ska aka, jag och Johannes, till Libanon, dem kommer att beho''va kanske max 5060.000 om jag kan ko''pa biljetter och mat och la''genhet och min familj också. Dem har inte pengar, jag maste betala. Ko''pa mat och sa.

**M: Hur mycket skulle det kosta om na''gon vill aka fran Syrien till Libanon eller sa till flyktingla''ger? 00:19:37**

R: Eh, det kostar fran Syrien till Libanon jag tror det kostar 34000 fran Damascus till Libanon. Det a''r na''ra, 7 timmar bara. Bara min familj, om dem aker dem maste aker, du vet 9 timmar. Om du aker flygplan det a''r 1 timme bara. Till Damascus. Det a''r 1 timme det kostar 6000, inte kronor. Jag tror det a''r 6 eller 7 jag vet inte. Och sedan dem beho''ver taxi också det kostar till min syster. Det blir mycket. Och sedan taxi till Libanon också. Dem beho''ver mycket pengar. Och jag a''r ja''tte ledsen. Johannes a''r ja''tte ledsen. Han ka''nner inte dem i Syrien.

**M: Har han varit i Syrien? 00:20:35**

R: Johannes han fo''ddes ha''r i Sverige. Jag var med Johannes i mitt land na''r han var 1 ar och 1 manad. Han ka''nner inte. Han sa''ger "varfo''r dem kan inte komma ha''r? Jag ska ga till polisen och prata med polisen. Jag vill dem kommer hit till Sverige. Alla dem kommer har mormor och morfar dem ha''mtar fran skolan, jag har ingen". Min mans mamma och pappa dem a''r do''da. Jag

ärr själv här, jag vill också att dem kommer hit, vad ska jag göra, Johannes? Jag kan inte....Jag är jätte ledsen, Johannes han känner inte dem. Min mamma också hon sa kanske jag ska do jag kan inte träffa Johannes och dig. Nej mamma prata inte så. Du vet inte, du kan inte komma och jag kan inte komma. Varje gång jag pratar med henne hon gråter. Varje gång. Pappa också. Kom till Libanon. Det är Libanon där det är bättre. Jag behöver mycket pengar jag kommer till Libanon. Det är inte lätt. Vad ska jag göra? Hoppas bara dem är bra. När jag kan...Min man han sa du kan åka själv och Johannes stannar här jag sa nej. Jag vill Johannes också träffa. Dem vill också träffa Johannes.

**M: Tror du om mer människor i Sverige visste vad som händer där borta att dem skulle vilja sluta? Tror du att folk inte vet eller att dem inte bryr sig? 00:22:40**

R: Vad sa du?

**M: Sverige hjälper inte dem i Syrien. Tycker du att dem borde hjälpa? 00:23:00**

R: Jo då, i Sverige dem hjälper mycket Syrien. Det finns många dem kommer här till Sverige. Dem hjälper mycket. Dem fick lån dem fick allt. Dem hjälper mycket här i Sverige. Det är jätte bra här i Sverige. Min syster också, hon kommer, dem hjälper. Hon fick bara nu hon väntar hon har tid för att gå till läkare. Min systers son han börjar skolan. Dem är jätte nöjda här. Nej jag har många kusiner dem kommer här till Sverige. Jag har många dem kommer till Sverige och dem är alla nöjda.

**M: Hur lång tid tar det för att kunna komma till Sverige och få alla papper och så?**

R: Eh det finns många...Det är olika. Det är olika. Nu min syster hon kommer här och hon väntade länge min syster. Bara direkt hon kom och hon säger komma här till Sverige och hon går till Måsta immigrationsverket, dem bor där, dem fick ett rum, 6 sängar. Dem äter frukost gratis, lunch, middag. Och dem frågar alltid vad som händer där i Syrien, dem berättar vad dem har i Syrien. Och sedan dem åker till andra ställen till Halland, nej Gävle. Dem stannar där

också 7 dagar. Sedan dem skickar dem till andra sidan bara det är jätte långt, 45 timmar. Och det finns ingen dem pratar, dem kan inte Svenska. Barnen dem är 27 och 17 och 11. Och dem börjar gråta "jag kan inte stanna här, jag kan inte bo här, det finns ingen här. Det finns inte en familj vi pratar tillsammans". Jag kan inte...jag har lägenhet. Min syster hon stora hus. Hon har radhus. Dem sa "kom bo här". Bara min syster hon har inte jobb, och dem är stor familj också. Min storsyster. Dem är 5. Hon sa "jag kan inte mycket med mat och hjälpa". Dem kan bo gratis bara med mat det blir mycket. Hon sa "nej nej nej jag fick låna." Dem fick 2000. "Om jag har jobb, inga problem". Bara min syster hon har inte jobb. Och dem är 5. Min andra syster dem också är 5. Det blir mycket. Det kostar jätte mycket. Dem kom här hos mig 4 dagar, jag kan inte. Jag köpa allt och göra allting. Det blir trångt och min man han...en dag dem har tid i Hallonbergen och jag går med dem. Jag och Johannes, min man han sover. Och sedan dem sover till klockan 10 barnen, jag och min syster står i köket. Min man han vaknar klockan 1 och vi sitter tillsammans. Eller dem går, min man han har kusiner här i centrum, han vaknar han sitter i köket och dricker kaffe efter frukost sedan han går och promenera. Jag visar vägen. Det är bra. Bara inte dem är hela tiden här, det blir kaos. Men Johannes han blir...han kan inte. Dem är hela tiden tillsammans och han är hela tiden själv. Så om det kommer en familj det blir...han orkar inte. Han är 11 min systers son, dem börjar lite bråka...barnen. Bara jag är jätte glad att dem är här också...Min man ha sa "okej om jag har stort hus eller villa, okej, det är inga problem. Vi kan hjälpa. Jag vet när jag kommer här till Sverige också från 30 år. Bara dem kommer dem har inte mycket kusiner, bara nu hela familjen är här." Men vi har lägenhet. Min man jobbar hela natten han kommer hem klockan 5, han måste sova. Han jobbar taxi. Det är inte...med lägenhet det är lite svårt. Det är nu, min syster har större radhus bara det är också med barnen dem bråkar mycket. Vi alla står där. Nu dem vill åka hit på helgen jag säger nej jag orkar inte (haha). Jag sa nej...Det är tyvärr med Syrien, det är ett jätte fint land. Jag säger "Syrien? Mitt land är så?". Dem säger det blir bättre men när? När det blir bättre? Dem bombar hela tiden, hela tiden. Idag jag pratar med min mans kusin, dem bor i Syrien. Hon sa en mamma det kommer en bomb och tar hela huset. Dem mår inte bra. Och grannar också, det är samma.



Och andra.

### 7.3.3 Interview III: Abbe

**M: Du kan bo rja med att bera tta hur gammal a r du, hur la nge har du varit i Sverige?**

A: Eh...jag a r 26 år gammal...jag har bott i Sverige fo r 1 år 3 månader sedan.

**M: Okej. Så då var du i Syrien na r protesterna fortfarande ho ll på.**

A: Jag var i Syrien na r kriget bo rjade. Sedan flyttade jag med min pappa bara till Jordanien. Efter...nej fo rst till Damascus, till andra staden, andra det blev problem da r också. Vi fo rso kte att flytta till andra land och vi gjorde det. Vi gick till Jordanien, jag och min pappa bara fo rst. Efter det kommer min familj. Eh...mamma, pappa och jag kommer till Jordanien på... på gra nsen, alltså. Med...ra tt sa tt. Mina bro der med deras familjer kunde inte go ra det. Dem kommer genom, till, vad heter den? Kamp. Efter det, dem ga r in i landet, i Jordanien. Jag...jag var hem...i Baghtasiya, da r jag bodde, na r kriget bo rja. Vi brukade mo ta da r efter...fredag. Vi...alltså vi...Alltså vi bo rjade...fo r barnen i andra staden. Milita ren kom da r och barnen skriker på va gen. Din tur, efter...efter upproren da r i Egypten, dem skrivde på gatorna, på va ggarna, att det kommer din tur, Bashar AlAssad. Vi ska ta bort dig, vi ska ta upp dig, du ska bort. Milita ren do dade dem, dem barnen. Vi fo rso kte dem go ra, milita ren, gick till Dar'a, and staden, att tysta dem, stoppa dem. Vi da r i Homs gjorde uppro relse, mot kraften som milita ren har. Det blir i två sta derna, inte bara en. Inte tysta oss. Men...den gata da r jag bor a r speciell. I Homs da r har vi olika religioner. Vi har kristna, vi har muslimer, och det finns olika muslimer. Det finns muslimer som Sunni och muslimer som Shia. Vi har båda da r I Homs. Och na stan samma, alltså, halv procent. Vi bor na ra varandra, men dem...varje grupp på någon område alltså. Vi folket som bodde i Homs, vet den område fo r muslimer Sunni, fo r muslimer Shia, fo r kristna. Da rfo r man fo rso ker, om man a r muslim Sunni, man fo rso ker...skaffa sina grejer som beho ver varje dag genom...alltså inte ga till gra nsen. Till milita r gra nsen. Dem stoppar oss, och vi var

tvungen att visa dem vår legitimation. Och genom efternamn kunde dem veta vilken religion har du. Eller, alltså, vi har speciella namn, förstår du?

**M: Ja. Så spelade det någon roll, då? För militären? 00:05:03**

A: Va?

**M: Spelade det någon roll för militären, vad ni har för efternamn? 00:05:07**

A: Nej. Det inte spelar ingen roll.

**M: Men ni måste visa iallafall? 00:05:12**

A: Ja, du...man måste visa.

**M: Så var du med någonting i protesterna och såg dem? 00:05:17**

A: Jag hade förtagen, precis bredvid gränsen. Området för kristna. Dem tåk från bojan, asså dem känslan att jag är kristen. Och vi behöver inte handla om. Jag försökte inte prata om vad har för religion. Asså jag vet att om dem visste att jag är muslim Sunni eller någonting, kanske dem försökte att stoppa mig, gripa mig kanske...jag vet inte faktiskt. och det händer så. När dem visste i min förtag, jag fått ett samtal av min granne, och han sa till mig dem kommer där inne din förtag och dem gör det där där inne dem kollar. Dem vill slå någonting, dem vill se någonting, men dem hittade ingenting. Efter den kunde jag inte tillbaka. Jag försökte resa till Damascus. Där bodde jag i lägenheten, jag var ensam när jag reste till Damascus. Eh...efter hittade jag lägenheten, ringde jag till mina familj. Dem kunde komma...men inte på en gång, alltså. Det tar lite tid. Det tog lite tid. Och...där i Damascus bodde vi i område som...sen min äldre bror var...gick till Homs. Alltså han behöver någonting för att fixa passport. Vi kan inte fixa det papper från Damascus, vi måste tillbaka. Och han vill kolla han om hans lägenheten. Vi hämtade ingenting med oss. När vi lämnade våra lägenheter, vi flydde alltså. Det var klockan 12 på kvällen. Jag hörde att dem sköt och skulle döda alla som dem ser. Det var klockan 12. Vi

har bil, vi hade bil. Och vi sovde, vi sov hos våran kusiner, på annat område. Ja. Med brorsan, med bror, äldre bror, gick till Homs. Dem stoppade honom. Griper honom, och han gick till fångelse. Varför, vet vi inte. Men vi hade, alltså, där det finns system faktiskt, om man betalar pengar man kan lösa största problem. Och vi gjorde så. Nästan 1 miljon har vi betalat. 1 miljon allira

(ca 45,000 SEK). Och...det är så att han spendera natten där i fångelse. Efter det, vi bestämde att vi kan inte stanna mer där i Syrien. Jag kontakta, alltså, jag hade kontakt med en tjej här i Sverige redan. Vi bestämde att vi ska träffas i Jordanien. Hon är intresserad mycket om kriget i Syrien också. Jag reste till Jordanien först med min pappa. Och jag gjorde en rapport, alltså, att man pappa ska göra...vad heter den, om man är sjuk? Om man sjuk, göra vad med sin kropp? I sjukhuset, vad gör man i sjukhuset?

#### **M: Man opererar. 00:10:25**

A: Opererar. Att man...att min pappa ska operera sig. Och jag ska följa med honom. Alltså, han är gammal, så här. För att dem stoppade inte mig, och jag betalade pengar redan. Jordanien...stannade jag 1 månad. Sedan blir största problemen i Damascus. Och det var i Ramadan, speciell månad. Min pappa kom tillbaka och hämtade mina...min mamma. Sedan mina bröder med sin familj, dem kommer utan gränser. Då...fixade jag...alltså den tjej

som jag har pratat med, och vi sitter där i Jordanien i en månad. Sedan jag reste till Sverige. Vi tänkte att resa till Sverige. Men det var lätt få uppehållstillstånd haft jag (det var lätt för mig att få uppehållstillstånd). Om man vill jämföra med andra som kommer från Syrien. Alltså, jag har en som kommer från Homs, en kompis som kommer från Homs, han är i Sverige just nu. Han kommer med den båten som kommer från Libyen och sjunkade...sjönk. Han såg död. Sedan han upplivade igen. Han har i Sverige. Så här.

#### **M: Hur reste ni till Sverige? Från Jordanien? 00:12:24**

A: Ja fixade papper, så.

**M: Så flygplan bara? 00:12:29**

A: Flygplan. Jag haft inte så, så svårt.

**M: Om man ja''mfo''r? 00:12:34**

A: Om man ja''mfo''r, ja. Det var ja''tte la''tt. (Tittar upp) Tack.

**M: Så a''r hela familjen i Sverige nu, eller a''r någon kvar? 00:12:42**

A: Nej. Hela familjen a''r Jordanien. Och jag har två systrar med sina familjer i Saudi Arabien. Ja...

**M: Och hur håller du kontakt med dem ha''r? 00:13:00**

A: Med min familj? Faktiskt jag kontaktar med mina kompisar da''r i Homs, mer a''n med min familj. Jag a''r så intresserad vad ha''nder med dem. Idag dem klev av Homs, dem kunde inte...dem beho''ver mat. Två år dem levde med maten som det finns. Den tre sista månader, dem skaffade lo''v, och kokade med vatten och drack. Jag pratar med dem på Skype, viber, genom Internet, Facebook.

**M: Så nu na''r du a''r ha''r, vad mer la''ser du? La''ser du några tidningar fo''r att se också bilden vad som ha''nder I Syrien? A''r det några Svenska tidningar?**

A: La''ser jag? Faktiskt jag gjorde en presentation ha''r i skolan, om Syrien. Jag gjorde det. Jag...gick till demonstration. Da''r i Syrien, vi bo''rjade med demonstrationer som vanligt, asså. Asså det var...utan plan. Det var slump. Efter, vi...tvåtre killar pratade om barnen da''r, hur...varfo''r dog dem? Dem a''r barn. Varfo''r? Vi vill inte. Vi vill inte. Sedan vi skra''cka. Vi vill inte det.

**M: Tittar du på några kanaler, satellitTV som AlJazeera eller så? 00:15:08**

A: Ja, jag har kollat på den...den programmet som, Tillbaka Till Homs. Så det...Men jag har en fråga som jag fått inte svar på. Det finns två journalister som vi vet dem var kidnappade då i i Syrien. Dem är tillbaka i Sverige. Vem har kidnappat dem? För dem är fria just nu. Varför säger dem inte? Om dem säger, vi vet vem dödar. Om fri militären gjorde så här, jag som människa vill inte att fri militären kommer att bli...ansvar på mig. Eller om regeringen gör så här, också vill ha inte den. Alltså, vi kommer för tillfället rösta. Vi folket som kommer därifrån vet

hur man röstar. Man tvungen rösta, alltså om man tar papper, det finns tre val som man väljer en av. Dem är tre skrivna Bashar Assad. Man får välja själv.

**M: När är det valet då? 00:16:42**

A: Va?

**M: När ska ni välja det? Eller är det klart redan? 00:16:44**

A: För tillfället dem gör annonser. Det finns någon annan, inte bara Bashar. Men vi vet. Om någon annan ska välja, dem ska välja Bashar Assad, dem ska inte ens välja sig själv.

**M: Em, är det någonting mer förutom använder du Facebook och läser bloggar och så när du är här? Hur har du kontakt med Syrien? 00:17:19**

A: Ja, jag har kontakt genom WhatsApp, ofta. Alltså det är jätte lätt för dem. Oftast dem har inte android. Dem har oftast inte android. Men det programmet behöver inte android. Alltså, vanliga mobiler man kan skriva, men inte med röst, bara skriva. Men i allafall man kontaktar, asså. Det tar lite tid men det är ingen fara. Man vill veta.

**M: Och du väljer hellre att prata med folk än kanske titta på nyheter eller titta på YouTube eller? 00:17:57**

A: Asså...jag tar inte rätt...eh...den rätt som rätt. Från TV eller från nyheterna.

**M: Det är inte rätt? 00:18:17**

A: Det är inte helt rätt. Alltså, om man bor där man vet mer, man kan förklara vad precis händer. Alltså om man kollar på den varför dem lämnar Homs till byr utanför staden alltså. Varför gör dem så här? Ofta dem säger, dem har ingen...dem...alltså dem vill att Bashar Assad blir fortfarande som president. Men dem vill inte ha honom, men dem vill ta. Dem ska dö för maten. Det är jätte svårt i två år.

**M: Hur tycker du att den bilden som är i nyheter då är fel? Du som har varit där när konflikten har varit och så? Harifrån, ser du någon skillnad hur det är inte helt rätt där?**

A: Vilken tidning menar du? Eller vilken...alltså jag var intresserad med Tillbaka Till Homs det programmet som TV4, på TV4. Det var sant, men dem kunde inte, jag vet att dem kunde inte besöka hela området, hela Homs. Alltså, det är stort och det finns gränser. Det..det är jätte svårt. Dem tar bara...norra Homs..norra Homs ja. Så andra området det är Qarabia bara, och Qosoor, Qarabia...Al-Qahiragatan. Dem trefyra områden som är nära varandra, och dem är speciellt muslim områden. Och...det var regeringen utanför. Men för tillfället dem är på. Dem är där inne.

**M: Det var alla mina frågor, så har du någonting mer du vill berätta? 00:20:48**

A: ...Ja. Jag vill...alltså jag tittar konstigt. Jag såg någon gång demonstrationen som, om du kommer ihåg, Amerika sa någon gång att dem ska komma och ta bort Assad. Men det händer...dem fixade demonstrationen här i centralen mot att Amerika kommer. Vad är det det looser om Amerika inte kommer? Alltså, för tillfället vi vet alla att Bashar Assad fortfarande för att han för fyra år sedan fyrtio år sedan eh...rädda gränsen med Israel. Och dem är rädda att om någon kommer och det blir krig där. Därför vi visste att Amerika störsa...kan bestämma. Ja,

men...

**M: Så du vill att andra länder kommer in och hjälper? 00:22:23**

A: Ja. Det finns ingen lösning.

**M: Så tror du om mer människor visste det som länder, att dem skulle vilja komma in och hjälpa då? 00:22:40**

A: Ja. Faktiskt jag känner mig ibland omodig för lämnade jag mitt hemland och kom här till Sverige. Men det händer så. Faktiskt man tycker om sitt liv.

**M: Och vad gör du nu här i Sverige? Du studerar? 00:23:10**

A: Jag kämpar...jag ville tillbaka efter 3 månader. Men jag vet inte varför gick jag inte.

**M: Planerar du att hälsa på till Jordanien eller så eller till gränsen? 00:23:46**

A: Om jag gick till Jordanien jag skulle komma in i Syrien. Det kunde inte jag. När jag är där i Jordanien sedan tillbaka till Sverige. Det kunde jag inte.

**M: Tack så mycket för att du pratade med mig iallafall. 00:24:04**

A: Stort tack.

#### **7.3.4 Interview IV: Ismail**

I: Eh, jag prata om honom vad det börja där borta, vad händer. (00:00:42) Han sa att dem börjar med...naken bröst och ta någonting på händer och så. Det börja protest, dem vill ha bara friheten. Och så efter så han flyttade till Sverige efter 2 månader, 3 månader efter protest. Så han kommer berättar för dig, den här första 3 månader som han ser på (...). Men ändå han kontaktar fortfarande med folk i Facebook och Internet och så. Som jag säger från början, 99 av folk, dem använder Facebook och Internet. För att dem litar inte fortfarande med TV...

Varsågod... Så du kan bo rja och fråga.

**M: Ja. Vi kan bo rja bara; hur gammal är du? Hur länge du har varit i Sverige?**

**00:01:35**

I: 40 år. Ja...cirka 3 år.

**M: Ehm, nej men om du vill berätta själv först får du göra det...**

I: Du kan bo rja och fråga.

**M: Jag kan bo rja bara med...läser du några Svenska nyheter? Eller tittar på Svenska nyhetsprogram på TV för att höra om Syrien? 00:01:59**

I: Han sa han tittar på TV Svensk, Svensk TV, och han läser tidning ibland också. Men ändå han...Facebook och nätet.

**M: Tycker du att det är...man kan lita på den bilden som man ser av Syrien på TV eller är det bättre på Facebook och sociala medier? 00:02:26**

I: Han sa TV, på grund av TV, han tar mycket procent av regim i Syrien. TV i Syrien och så dem som bakom regim i Syrien. (Interviewee says something in Arabic) Ja, det är andra sidan också, han litar inte på dem så mycket. Han litar mest av nätet, på grund dem visar båda två sidor, vad dem gör. Så dem har rätt, och dem har...bättre...Ja, dem har båda två sidor. (Interviewee says something in Arabic) Han sa ändå Syrien det blir rasat alla lägenheter, familjer eh...rasar så blir det rätt. Men han litar mer om nätet och så, grund av att dem visar båda två sidor.

**M: Är det några mer sidor, eh sociala medier förutom Facebook, till exempel YouTube och Twitter eller bloggar? 00:03:56**



I: Nu han har satellit hemma, så han kollar på Arabisk kanal som AlJazeera, AlArabiya och dem, som dem visar dem ha''r eh...journalist och dem på marken dem visar ra''tt, vad ha''nder. Så han ko''r dem.

**M: Em, tror du att det a''r mer trova''rdigt trova''rdiga uppgifter man får på Facebook eller på AlJazeera och satellit TV? 00:04:41**

I: Han sa ra''ttigheten, om jag ska han ska kolla på TV, alla TV dem har deras sidor. Men na''tet dem visar båda två. (Interviewee says something in Arabic)

**M: Tror ni att...om man va''ljer att kolla på nyheter eller gå in på Internet att det påverkar den bilden som man sjä''lv får av konflikten i Syrien? 00:05:21**

I: Han sa på TV, sjä''lvklart dem kommer visa på TV sidan. Till exempel Svenska radio na''r dem ska visa till Svenska folket. Och i Syrien så...och också på na''tet, på na''tet finns 2 sidor. 1 sidan a''r med regim i Syrien, andra sidan med folk sidan. Och han kollar båda två så han vet vad ha''nder i (Syrien)...(Interviewee says something in Arabic). Han sa om personlig som han lever i Syrien, och han litar inte på...regim i Syrien, på grund av han ka''nner dem. Han bodde da''r, han levde da''r. Han litar inte alls. Men specialist kanal, Al-Arabiya, det program TV, Arabiska TV, eller BBC och Arabiska, Al-Arabiya det heter, han litar 80% av dem fo''r dem visar båda två sidor. Så personligen. (Interviewee says "det jag tycker")

**M: Mmm, och na''sta fråga då, hur anva''nder han medier på något sa''tt fo''r att integrera i det Svenska samha''llet, eller a''r det mest fo''r att koppla till andra, eller tillbaka till Syrien? 00:07:34**

I: Han sa, jag hoppas att Syrien det blir bra och han kommer att och flytta dit tillbaks. Men aldrig det kommer, som han sa''ger, med o''gon, på TV och så. Hela va''rlden va''rlden dem tyst. Europa tyst, America tyst, aldrig det kommer inte bli ra''tt. (Interviewee says something in Arabic) Han sa i Syrien...eh, det krig inte mellan regim och folk, sitt folk. Nu det blir krig i hela

världen dem dörr i marken i Syrien, så det är problemet. Tror ingen vill säga rätt. Alla dem tysta. Dem som förlorar barn, kvinnor, och ungdomar och handikappade. Dem som förlorar, fattiga, dem dörr, som du ser på bilden. Eh, jag hoppas om du kan fråga om hur det börja med att protesta första månad, för han har varit där. Hur det börja protestera? 00:08:43 (Interviewee answers in Arabic) Eh, han sa först när det började dem började protestera, han börja på andra sidan av Syrien protestera, för att det började med Öster mot Söder. När dem börja protestera, dem börja fri. Dem vill ha frihet, dem vill ha rättighet, dem vill ha den samma saker. Men regimen i Syrien vad han gör, han ha mta vapen, och börja döda folk. Så efter några veckor till dem fortsätta att protestera för friheten. Så ändå han andra regimen bestämma och fortsätta att döda folk. Han bryr inte sig. Varför? För att ingen kan stoppa han. Så.

**M: Men det var alla mina frågor. Tack så mycket. 00:10:05**

I: Det är nästan nu två personer, men imorgon du har fem personer.

**M: Det är jätte bra.**

I: Jag hoppas att du kommer att fråga dem mest av protestera av inne i Syrien, och nu, problemet i Syrien. Vi vet, alla vi vet, att regim han har makt från Iran, från Ryssland, från Kina. Alla vi vet. Vi är inte barn, att någon kommer och leker med oss. Precis som jag har sagt till dig du fem minuter, tio minuter - ett barn med bil krashar i USA, jag kommer veta inom tio minuter här. Ingenting kan gömma. Sluta Obama, sluta Mubarak, sluta Iran, sluta Kina. Nu det finns folk som 23 miljoner dem dör. Vi måste stoppa den här jävla-heten. Det är inte, som jag har sagt till dig, det är ännu värre om ett år. Jag har visat dig bild, Hitler han gjorde inte så. Jag vet att du är en stark tjej, om du inte är stark, du kommer att gråta. Du har alla bilder som bevis nu. Jag vet, som jag säger till dig, 90% soldater i Syrien från Iran. Dem pratar persiska och dem känner dem. Det finns från Irak, från Hezbollah i Libanon, Afghanistan, Yemen...Som Amerika mot dem, dem har jättegilda att komma till Syrien, varför vi kan inte stoppa dem? Det är min fråga. Varför det är storebror, som Sverige kallar Amerika. När vi har storebror som heter Amerika, kom och stoppa den här världen. Varför inte? Det är min fråga faktiskt. Tack. Så du vet nu, du har nyhetssidan du har allt...nej du har inte min hemsida, du ska ta hemsidan också. Skriv Syrien global hjälp, så det är...ja det är den första. Kom ner. Här i Turkiet som vi fick present i...av 280 där borta. Vi som fick den vi som jobbar för fria folk. Kom ner också, den och den står

här i Sverige. Här i intervju med TV4 i Jordanien, det är TV4. När vi delade kläder i Jordanien. Du kan komma ner också, här vi också, till exempel han. Vi Mohammad, Mohammad, och jag, som du känner. Så om du vill veta mer, kom upp. Tryck bara bildspel. Så då kommer alla bilder, du ser alla. Men vi saknar, det finns massa filmer också, kort film. Så den i Jordanien kommer, gå ner. Det finns en film jag ska visa dig, det är jätte fint faktiskt. Det är några dem börjar gråta...Här. Tryck på den. Det är YouTube och Facebook och Twitter. Det är en person han bor i Europe och det kallas den...inflytning. Det betyder så. Både på Engelska och på Svenska. Den som bilden som vi sover, jag har redan förklarat för dig. För att vi har inte...ekonomi dåligt. Vi har inte. Vi är själva, vi samlar allt. Om vi ska betala till hotell, vi ska betala bästa mat, bästa resa. Vi tror själv att dem som där borta dem ger barn, flykting och så. Vi samlar pengar ger dem små pengar till dem. Vi lever här i Sverige jätte bra. Men vi måste göra...vi kan göra mer. Vi behöver hjälp av staten, Sverige staten. Vi vet att Sverige staten dem delar mycket pengar varje år. Till utflyttning och så vidare. Men vi själva i Syrian Global Hjälp, vi har ingenting. Så du kommer hjälpa oss på den när du har produkten klar. För att vi har 400 personer minst, som jag säger till Charlotte. Du kommer att berätta till dem 400, en av dem, hans familj med staten hans familj med TV, och så hjälper vi dem. Och jag vet, Karlaplan jag vet. Jätte roligt, jag vet dem kommer höra. Det finns någon, några killar från Syrien dem är Svensk medborgare dem har bra jobb. Vi måste hjälpa dem. Den jag vill ha ditt hjälp, och jag vet du kommer. Det är på natten vi samlar...och det är vidare. Vi berättar om dem här barnen som jag har sagt till dig. Han förlorar mamma och syskon och sedan hans pappa han tar stora skjorta och skor. Vi berättar om honom. Titta barnen, dem sover, dem är trötta. Dem har ingenting. När du lyssnar på musik också, det är så ledsen. Med sång också. Det är under en bil som han sover. Jag vill ha ditt hjärta också, för jag vet det har påverkat. Du kommer inte att med en halv sida, det jag har visat dig, du ska komma ihåg och berätta. Det är en läkare han står med oss som och ger kläder. Så du kan ta vad du vill filmer, bilder, fixa den. Och när du är klar vi ska, ring upp till mig jag ska komma och lyssna också. När du är klar med ditt projekt. Så, vi kommer överens. Jag fortsätter att jobba på den här sidan, och du när du är klar jag kan komma lyssna. Jag står med dem här 400. Jag blir så glad faktiskt. Du ska göra med projektor och kamera, eller bara...

**M: Jag vet inte.**

I: Jag tror det, du gör det, det är bäst. Men med dem 400 du kan inte visa dem dåligt bild. Så du kan visa dem barnen som dem sover under bilen, med snö, på gator, så du kan visa. Sådana dem accepterar. Men bilderna som jag visade, som den här med killen som dem slår honom, ingen orkar. Så du kan inte fortsätta. Jag tror dem kommer gå...400 om du fortsätter du kommer...

**M: Ingen kvar (skrattar)**

I: Dem säger: Michelle, hejdå. Okej, vi säger så. Du ska vänta på mig, från mig en signal idag, vilken tid imorgon vi börjar i Högdalen, kanske vi fortsätter till Huddinge. Du ska följa med mig idag till Ambulans och ta bild? Bra. Du kan vänta 5 minuter, till jag ska visa honom en sak. Jag har mycket att göra faktiskt (Skrattar). Fortsätta, du kan skriva.

**M: Ja, tack så mycket.**

### **7.3.5 Interview V: Chamoun**

**M: Det är mer specifikt just Syrien**

C: Jag vet, men det är uppsatsen, du ska göra uppsats om medel...Middle-East eller om Arabländer, eller bara Syrien?

**M: Bara Syrien**

C: Jag menar din uppsats är den om kriget, fred och kriget, eller vad händer...

**M: Om media och kriget.**

C: Media och kriget, okej. Vad vill du säga till mig? Måste jag skriva mitt namn eller bara sådär eller (gesterar signatur)?

**M: Du behöver inte skriva ditt namn om du inte vill, om du vill får du skriva ditt namn där, annars**

C: För att...uppsats ska du dela till, till vem?

**M: Den kommer publiceras i höst, så om du vill ge bara förnamn, eller ett påhittat namn, eller.**

C: Ska jag skriva här?

**M: Ja.**

C: Bara efternamn kan jag skriva eller?

**M: Ja.**

C: (Signerar) Ja, så. Varsågod, vi kan börja nu

**M: Du hade varit här i 28 år? 00:01:25**

C: Ja

**M: Hur kom ni hit? 00:01:30**

C: Jag kom med visum. Jag kom bara för att...besöka mina föräldrar som bor i Södertälje, och jag stannade två månader, sen bestämde att ja, jag ville stanna här i Sverige. Och jag ansökte till Migrationsverket, men det var svårt att få uppehållstillstånd här. Och det ända som kan jag stanna här, var att jag måste gifta mig här. Och...sedan på 87, jag kom hit november 86, och 87 jag träffade en tjej som, jag kände inte henne förut men vi träffades genom släkt och...bekantas och så. Och sen vi gifter oss, och fortfarande tillsammans. Och jag hade två barn, en flicka och en...en dotter och en son.

**M: Och har ni varit tillbaka mycket och här i Syrien? 00:02:42**

C: Nej jag har inte varit i Syrien. När jag kom hit hade jag inte tid. Jag hade inte tid att åka tillbaka för att jag tänkte att om jag ska åka till Syrien jag måste stanna en månad, två månader för att hälsa mina vänner och bekanta som är kvar i Syrien. Jag hade inte tid. Eh, därför...jag har gjort militär...lumpen...och eh, jag utbildade till arkitekt, jag själv är arkitekt, och sedan jag jobbade i mitt...i min stad i Syrien och jag jobbade där ett par år. Det är allt klar, det är inten...jag kan resa och åka tillbaka det är inga problem för mig, men jag hade inte tid när jag började att jobba här och hade affärer här. Och...du vet, när jag, jag driver en firma jag måste stanna hela tiden bara jag reser 10 dagar, 15 dagar till andra länder. Till Grekland, Turkiet, så. Men 2008 åkte 10 dagar till Syrien och göra runt med ungdomar här från föreningen i...vi åkte bil där och tittade på...kulturrese vi kan säga. Sedan vi kom tillbaka och stannade här hela tiden.

**M: Så när ni är här, är det viktigt att höra om vad som höra i Syrien? 00:04:33**

C: Självklart, det är mitt land. Det är hemland. Jag måste följa alla eh...händelser som finns.

Genom nyheterna, Arabiska nyheterna, jag har parabol och jag lyssnar hela tiden, Svenska media, vad skriver dem om Syrien, och tyvärr dem skriver inte mycket i Svenska medier. Dem bara skriver bara lite lite lite men det är mest vi tittar på Arabiska nyheterna.

**M: På Svenska är det nyheter på TV eller skrivna? 00:05:08**

C: På TV, på radion, på tidningarna, det står ingenting.

**M: Är det någonting på Facebook eller sociala medier? 00:05:19**

C: På Facebook följer jag också mycket. Som händer. Som vad händer i Syrien, hur händer till städerna. Det är Aleppo, Homs, Damascus...det är alltid på Facebook kommer. Dem följer, jag följer jag har vänner där och...eller bekanta som det kommer på Facebook vänner och vi följer med dem.

**M: Var tycker du att det finns mest pålitligt då? Är det Arabiska kanaler eller är det Facebook eller? 00:05:56**

C: Heh...det är politik här. Det är politik...det är politik på hela världen. USA bestämmer på hela världen om vi kan säga. Och kolla på Irak, vad händer i Irak? Som det USA, dem måste...Irak måste dela till tre delar. Och dem följer, dem delar till tre delar. Dem vill Syrien det samma sak, det ska bli. Men dem...dem tänkte inte så, att dem under en månad, två månader det blir klart allt. Men dem visste inte att militären bakom presidenten, bakom hela...bakom regeringen, att det är regeringen som bestämmer. Dem vill inte...vi vill inte bli...krig i Syrien. Vi vill ju bli fred. Och om vi...om vi kommer och göra någonting rätt i Syrien...där för bli krig. Vem krigar? Vem krigar mot vem? Det bara Syrien mot Syrien, folk mot folk, men vem bakom vem är bakom dem där rebellerna, om vi kan säga? Det är två eller tre Arabländer som...det är Saudiarabien, det är Qatar, plus det är Turkiet bakom den. Och vem styr alla de här länderna? Det är USA. Där för det blir kriget så. Blod överallt. Där människor överallt. Demokrati inte på det här sättet. Det kommer inte demokrati på den här sättet. Demokrati kommer genom

dialog. Jag kan prata med dig, du kan prata med mig. Vi kan komma...vi kommer oöverens med varandra. Men inte kriga med varandra. Krig...det leder till krig. Det leder till blod, till döda människor. Ja. 00:08:23

**M: Så måste...vad måste haända för att det ska bli bättre? 00:08:25**

C: Det måste bli fred.

**M: Hur? 00:08:29**

C: Hur kommer bli fred? Det vet jag inte. Vi väntar på...efter en månad hade vi...har vi presidentvalet. Vem kommer till makten? Är det här president kommer kvar, eller det kommer andra? Efter den kanske det blir någonting annat. Vi väntar.

**M: Tack så mycket för att du prata med mig. 00:08:55**

C: Varsågod.

### 7.3.6 Interview VI: Stive

**M: So how long have you been in Sweden? 00:00:03**

S: Eh, about 3 months. Yes.

**M: And how old are you? 00:00:10**

S: I'm 19.

**M: Okay. So do you want to tell me about your journey to Sweden? How you came here? 00:00:20**

S: Yes, uh, I was in Aleppo in Syria. So there was no way to go out of Aleppo 'cause the

terrorists was surrounded us. When the army has opened the way, uh, from Aleppo to other cities, so we out from Aleppo to Homs. And from Homs to Beirut. So it was very dangerous road 'cause, uh, we have stopped...It takes from Aleppo to Homs about 12 hours. In normal situation it takes only 2 and half hour. So we have stop on the road because there was some exploding things on the road. They have stopped us to clean the road. And we saw some cars are burned and...I didn't know what has happened. After they cleaned the road we keep...moving. And we arrived there. And after a few days we have to go to Beirut. And from there we came to here. By visa.

**M: So by plane? 00:02:01**

S: Yes.

**M: And do you want to tell me maybe more about your experience in Syria? Of the war and the protests? 00:02:12**

S: Yes. Um, you can say we were living a normal life, but there was dangerous things. That they were throwing to our areas....A type of rocket. And they were creative. There were making them more and more dangerous. They put exploded things inside and it was very dangerous. So we were going to cafes, we were go to university, but they have many rockets they were throwing to our areas. It it was very very dangerous. Maybe in each moment you walked from this street, you pass the street, and it come. The rocket. So that was the dangerous. And the terrorists was make...they had destroyed the electricity factories. They were no electricity, no water. They had destroyed it also the water factories. So that was the hard part. There was no electricity, no water, 'til now. That's the hard...how to bring the water. The electricity it doesn't matter. You can bring a motor to re....recharge...the electricity. And there was hard to bring the live things in life. Like food or, or anything like this. Because we were surrounded. Aleppo was closed by the terrorists there. There was nothing...Could come to Aleppo. Like food, help, or something.



**M: Did you take part in any of the protests? Or how did you follow them?**

S: I didn't hear you?

**M: Oh, sorry. Did you take part in any of the protests? Or did you just go to university and were trying to live normally? 00:05:09**

S: It was normal life. Yes. In our areas. Because...in my opinion we have in our area a high mentality. So they can...we can't bring the terrorists and make them be with us.

**M: So now that you've been here do you think it's important to follow up and hear what is**

**happening back in Syria? 00:05:42**

S: Uh, I always hear...I'm always being sad about...I still have my friends there, and relatives there. Relatives. But I have to move on. So I have to keep with all the developments and things here, and...and it's important to also, to keep up with what is happening in Syria. Yeah, but I have to move on here and, uh, continue studying, working after that. Yes.

**M: And how to you follow up about Syria? Is it through news, or the Internet, or...Arabic TV channels? 00:06:29**

S: How we were spending time you mean?

**M: No, how when you're here, how you are able to hear what is happening in Syria?**

S: Yes, uh, using whatsapp with my friends.

**M: No watching news or cable? 00:06:44**

S: You know watching news, it depends about the channel. It's who has founded. You know? That's the politic things. So you can't know the truth. Only from the people who live in the deep

of the event. Yes.

**M: Do you trust any channels, or do you always think of who's behind it? 00:07:12**

S: You know, I don't trust anyone channel...any channels. But maybe there's one, it's...it put the spotlight about the most truth...what happened in Syria.

**M: What channel is that? 00:07:29**

S: Uh, It's called Mayadeen. Yes.

**M: Is that on cable TV? Or Satellite? 00:07:36**

S: It's from the parabol. Yeah.

**M: Anything else you want to tell me? 00:07:44**

S: Eh, no...if you want to know anything you can ask me.

**M: It's just interesting to hear you share your experience. 00:07:53**

S: Yes, but, we were...you know, we love to live. I was going to parties and universities and it was normal life. Only the hard things was no electricity, no food, no water. Okay, we can take it easy if there is not electricity or food, but no water, it's very hard and dangerous.

**M: So how did you get water then? 00:08:25**

S: We can buy those in...flasks?

### **7.3.7 Interview VII: Daham**

**M: Hur många år har du bott i Sverige? 00:00:14**

D: 28

**M: Och hur gammal är du? 00:00:21**

D: Eh, 56.

**M: Så det jag kommer prata om först och främst är liksom mediananvändning, och delar upp det i tryckta medier, TV och radiosändningar, och sen även hur ni använder Facebook och sociala medier. Först och främst handlar det väl hur ni använder medier här för att kunna följa upp konflikten när ni inte är inom gränserna, eftersom det är ganska mycket censur och så. Läser ni några lokala Svenska tidningar, just för att få uppdateringar om Syrien? Eller ni kanske inte tycker alls att dem visar hela bilden?**

**(...) Vilka Svenska tidningar? 00:01:35**

D: Tidningar, ja. Jag har inte följt några. Det är bara i början, du vet. Sen ska man sluta. Även TV:n dem pratade mycket om Syrien, men senaste tiden det har slutat. Det är inte bara Sverige, det är många, tyvärr. Jag vet inte varför det händer. Det handlar mycket om politik...och historia. Det är även Arabiska kanaler som slutar om Syriska frågor eller problem eller så. För det är hela tiden. Nu det har gått mycket. Varför (inaudible...)

**M: Finns det några Svenska tidningar som du tycker, eller Svenska TVkanaler eller radio som tar upp konflikten tycker du? 00:02:24**

D: Om Syrien?

**M: Ja, nu för tiden. 00:02:28**

D: Ja så, jag följer inte mycket längre.

**M: Några utländska tryckta tidningar då?**

D: Jo då, det är massa. För mig för information får jag på olika sätt. Från dem här vanliga

kanaler, Arabiska kanaler, eller från telefon eller Facebook.

**M: Så vilka utländska kanaler kollar du på? 00:03:01**

D: Det är mest AlJazeera eller AlArabiya och...Orient.

**M: Eh, lyssnar ni någonting på radio? 00:03:16**

D: Nej, men jag har när jag sitter i bilen och kör jag lyssnar, men det är vanligt, du vet, dem pratar inte mycket.

**M: Så det är mest satellitTV du tittar på? 00:03:36**

D: Ja. Bara på Arabiska.

**M: Internet, då 00:03:41**

D: Facebook.

**M: Ja, är det Facebook du använder mest? Eller så har du YouTube eller Twitter eller någonting sådant? 00:03:46**

D: Ja, YouTube också.

**M: Hur ofta använder ni dem (sidorna)? 00:03:54**

D: Varje dag. Minst några timmar varje dag.

**M: Vad tycker du att du får ut av det? Av att använda Internet? 00:04:01**

D: Ja det är mest att jag har kontakter, och får information. Antingen dem som är där nere eller dem är i andra länder som har också kontakter i Syrien. Vi får riktig information om vad som händer där.

**M: Är det människor innanför gränserna också? 00:04:28**

D: Både. Både och.

**M: Så hur väljer du bort vilka att använda? Vilka hemsidor att använda? Väljer du hellre Facebook över nyhetssidor eller så för att få just uppdateringar? Hur väljer du där? 00:04:46**

D: Det är som det finns nu. Sedan jag började Facebook och jag tänkte...(inaudible) det ska vara från en bra källa.

**M: Som om du tänker på det vi har pratat om, som tryckta nyheter eller TV, radio eller Internet, var tycker du du får dem mest trovärdiga uppdateringarna om just Syrien? 00:05:25**

D: Det är som jag säger, det är ofta dem kompletterar varandra. Jag menar jag får höra från TV till exempel eller sedan jag kontaktar vänner och dem berättar ännu mer. Det är ofta från Facebook eller mina kontakter dem förklarar vad dem säger några sekunder på TV.

**M: Tror ni att det gör någon skillnad om man vill, villigheten att koppla band till Syrien, tror du att just villigheten, att man vill koppla band till Syrien påverkar vilka medier man använder?...Tror du att någon som vill koppla band till Syrien, liksom vill hålla kvar den kontakten, använder medier annorlunda än någon som kanske vill mer integrera in i det Svenska samhället? 00:06:49**

D: Eh...jag förstår inte riktigt frågan. Jag vill inte svara bara sådär, jag vill förstå frågan.

**M: Ja absolut, men till exempel, vilka sidor, vilka människor man kontaktar, vilka kanaler man kollar på på TV kanske, att det gör en skillnad om man vill känna mer att man vill... 00:07:13**

D: Jo självklart. Det är klart.

**M: Är det någon skillnad? 00:07:20**

D: Jo vi pratade...En del kanaler...jag menar jag har runt 60 kanaler, det är inte alla kanaler de som tar upp det riktiga, dem som är sanna. Dem säger sanningen en del dem kryddar lite grann. Jag jämför bara att jag har...rätt källor man kan säga för information därifrån. Genom mina bekanta och när man hör när andra, vad dem säger, då vet jag vad är som...det är något inte riktigt.

**M: Och tror att den...om man till exempel tittar på Facebook i jämförelse med Twitter eller nyheter, att det påverkar den bilden man själv har av Syrien? Att du får olika bilder beroende på var man får den? 00:08:16**

D: Jo men jag nämnde, jag nämnde från början att det mycket, det handlar mycket med politik och göra. Mm.

**M: Ehm, spelar just att ni vill hålla en kontakt med Syrien roll i hur ni använder, vilka medier ni använder, vilka personer ni pratar med...på Facebook? 00:08:41**

D: Ja det är som...

**M: Att det är ett medvetet val, liksom? 00:08:45**

D: Medvetet val...jo, men jag har nämnt vad jag gör och jag nämnde att kontakter, dem människor jag känner, bekanta...dem som...en del av dem dem kämpar mot regimen där...så...jag tycker att när jag kommer till den riktiga källan, varför ska man höra andra som...tänker så har ett något annat...syfte. Så jag har den riktiga källan, jag menar till exempel jag kommer från Deir ezZur...varför ska jag höra om vad som händer i Deir ezZur i Svensk massmedia medan jag kan kontakta någon som bor där? Ja.

**M: Och tror du att användandet, att man kan använda media på något sätt för att**

**integrera mer I det Svenska samhället? ...Till exempel om man är nyanländ från Syrien, att man kan använda...medier 00:09:56**

D: Svensk medier?

**M: Svensk media för att integrera mer. 00:10:01**

D: Varför inte. Men...friheten...för dem pratar mycket om den. Men ibland när det kommer vissa frågor, då ser man ingen frihet, genom att det kommer inte sanningen, hela sanningen åtminstone. Så oavsett vad är det, det är nyheter...och så jag har, det kommer massor med händelser, stora händelser, som massmedia ibland, dem pratar om. Jag kommer ihåg 1900...jag vet inte...eh, vad var det? 89 tror jag. Eller 90. 90. Då fanns när det händer i Balticum, också nyheter, så dem...journalisterna dem blev...såda är. Och jag kommer ihåg det var en kvinna som var blek (?) i ansiktet. Om det är rätt eller så, men bilden är, talar mycket ...så jag jämför med det som händer i Syrien varje dag. Var är familjen? Var är friheten? Var är jobbet? Mycket. Så det måste finnas.

**M: Jättebra. Tack så mycket. Det räcker så. 00:11:40**

### **7.3.8 Interview VIII: Azmeh**

**M: Vad är ert namn?**

A: Azmeh

**M: Hur gammal är ni?**

A: 42

**M: Hur länge har ni bott i Sverige?**

A: 7 år

**M: Vad har ni för personlig erfarenhet av kriget i Syrien?**

A: Mina kusiner har omkommit 2011.

**M: Har ni familj kvar i Syrien? Om ja, hur håller ni kontakt med dem?**

A: Ja, mycket släktingar är kvar. Några har flytt vidare till Libanon. Vi har kontakt via telefon och Facebook

**M: När ni är i Sverige, hur viktigt är det för er att hålla er uppdaterade på situationen i Syrien?**

A: Även om vi är i Sverige så är vi ledsna för våra släktingar, så det är ju väldigt viktigt att veta vad som händer hela tiden

**M: Hur håller ni er uppdaterade?**

A: TV, Facebook, telefon med familj

**M: Vad är er bild av Syrien nu när ni är här? Var kommer den här bilden ifrån?**

A: När man kommer från Aleppo så vet man hur det var. När man nu ser på TV bilderna från staden så kan man koppla de ihop. Man pratar mycket med släktingar som är kvar.

**M: Läser ni några lokala tryckta tidningar för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien?**

A: Nej

**M: Läser ni några utländska tryckta tidningar för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? Varför eller varför inte?**



A: Nej bara om det finns på FB. Vi vet bra om situationen i Syrien, vi behöver inte utlänska tidningar egentligen, eftersom många skriver saker bara för att säga tidningar

**M: Tittar/lyssnar ni på några lokala TV/radiokanaler för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? (T.ex. SVT, SR) Varför eller varför inte?**

A: SVT om det står på, men svenskar vet inte mycket om kriget. De ge bara presidenten skulden men även om han har mycket fel så är många rädda för rebellerna och islamisterna.

**M: Tittar/lyssnar ni på några utländska TV/radiokanaler för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? (T.ex. satellitTV) Varför eller varför inte?**

A: Ja vi har satellit TV

**M: Vilka Internetsidor använder ni för att gå information om, och en koppling till, Syrien? (T.ex. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Bloggar, andra hemsidor)**

A: Facebook

**M: Var anser ni att ni får dem mest trovärdiga uppdateringarna om Syrien? Nyheter, TV, Internet? Varför?**

A: Facebook är uppdaterad hela tiden av alla som kan och vill och är inte politiskt alla kan säga någ. TV visar riktiga bilder men talar inte sanningen, bara vad som intressant för dem.

**M: Vilka medier är det ni först och främst använder för att följa upp konflikten? Varför?**

A: Facebook och internet och ibland aljazeera.net

**M: Hur väljer ni vilka medier att använda?**

A: Internet är alltid bra för det uppdateras hela tiden. Och det är enkelt, man har inte alltid att

titta på TV. Man litar inte på TV och radio eftersom det är bara halva sanningen. Det vet vi genom vad familjen berättar

**M: Tror ni att vilka medier som används (t.ex. om någon använder bara sociala medier till skillnad från bara nyhetssändningar) påverkar vilken bild individen får av Syrien? Varför?**

A: Ja, om man bara använder Facebook är det bättre än titta på TV. Internet är också bra eftersom det är öppet och man kan hitta många som skriver.

### 8.3.9 Interview IX: G Touma

**M: Vad är ert namn?**

GT: G Touma

**M: Hur gammal är ni?**

GT: 48

**M: Hur länge har ni bott i Sverige?**

GT: 12 år

**M: Vad har ni för personlig erfarenhet av kriget i Syrien?**

GT: I 2000 tog Bashar Al Assad makten, och då började det redan blir oroligt. Sedan alla historier från familj och bekanta som är kvar i Homs.

**MT: Har ni familj kvar i Syrien? Om ja, hur håller ni kontakt med dem?**

GT: Ja, jag kommer från en stor släkt som bor i Homs och Damascus. Kontakt via telefon, FB,

ibland Skype och mobiltelefon

**M: När ni är i Sverige, hur viktigt är det för er att hålla er uppdaterade på situationen i Syrien?**

GT: Mycket viktigt eftersom en stor del av familjen finns kvar. Mycket viktigt för att veta vad som händer och vart i Syrien. Det man läser i tidningen i utländskt media är inte alltid sant och därför vill man ha direkt kontakt med familjen.

**M: Hur håller ni er uppdaterade?**

GT: Sociala medier. Olika bloggar, prata med syrier i Svenska föreningen, prata med släkten som är kvar, Facebook etc

**M: Vad är er bild av Syrien nu när ni är här? Var kommer den här bilden ifrån?**

GT: Det är krig i Syrien och mycket förstörs varje dag. Regeringen ljuger och rebellerna ljuger också. Kriget började 2011 genom demonstrationer, precis som i de andra länder i regionen. Men i Syrien använder regeringen våld för att tysta demonstranterna, men nu har även Hezbollah och Jihadisterna blandat sig i och man läser mycket i tidningen om vad de gör. Min bild från Syrien kommer från berättelser av min familj, det går inte att lita på svenska tidningar.

**M: Läser ni några lokala tryckta tidningar för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien?**

GT: Nej, bara nyheter via internet

**M: Läser ni några utländska tryckta tidningar för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? Varför eller varför inte?**

GT: Nej, jag har bara de svenska tidningar. Men via internet kan man läsa dagligen om kriget i Syrien, även om mycket som skrivs inte är sant.

**M: Tittar/lyssnar ni på några lokala TV/radiokanaler för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? (T.ex. SVT, SR) Varför eller varför inte?**

GT: Jag tittar oftast på nyheter när jag hinner. Spelar ingen roll om det är TV4 eller SVT. Jag tycker att rapporteringen om Syrien har blivit mindre, verkar inte så intressant längre för utländska media. Men jag behöver egentligen inte se nyheterna, för att jag har kontakt med mina vänner och släktingar och vet ändå mycket bättre vad som pågår.

**M: Tittar/lyssnar ni på några utländska TV/radiokanaler för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? (T.ex. satellitTV) Varför eller varför inte?**

GT: Ja men bara via internet. Ibland Al Jazeera.

**M: Vilka Internetsidor använder ni för att gå information om, och en koppling till, Syrien? (T.ex. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Bloggar, andra hemsidor)**

GT: Genom Facebook och bloggar, genom olika internetsidor. Genom syriska föreningen.

**M: Var anser ni att ni får dem mest trovärdiga uppdateringarna om Syrien? Nyheter, TV, Internet? Varför?**

GT: Internet är bäst eftersom alla kan blogga och använda internet. Problemet med TV är att de oftast är politiska och vill ha så mycket uppståndelse som möjligt. Det blir alltid vinklat på TV.

**M: Vilka medier är det ni först och främst använder för att följa upp konflikten? Varför?**

GT: Internet i Sverige men även sidor från Tyskland och Frankrike där många från Syrien har flytt. När man tittar på TV så kanske Al Jazeera.

**M: Hur väljer ni vilka medier att använda?**

GT: De se ger bäst info, så det kan vara olika.

**M: Tror ni att vilka medier som används (t.ex. om någon använder bara sociala medier till skillnad från bara nyhetssändningar) påverkar vilken bild individen får av Syrien? Varför?**

GT: Ja, men det är alltid bra att ha olika källor. Därför ska man både lyssna, läsa och titta på nyheterna för att skapa en objektiv bild. Nyheter och kontakt med släkten ger den bilden man vill ha. Man kan inte lita på TV nyheterna eftersom de aldrig bär ut hela sanningen, bara det som är mest sensationellt. Ibland väljer de regeringens sida, ibland rebellerna sida. Jag tycker inte att svenskarna förstår det som rapporteras, för att om man vill ha en bättre förståelse bör man ha kontakt med folk i Syrien på plats.

### 8.3.10 Interview X: FCH

**M: Vad är ert namn?**

FCH: FCH

**M: Hur gammal är ni?**

FCH: 58

**M: Hur länge har ni bott i Sverige?**

FCH: 33

**M: Vad har ni för personlig erfarenhet av kriget i Syrien?**

FCH: Kriget 1973 med Israel & alla berättelser från nära och kära som vi kontakter direkt eller

har tagit sig hit.

**M: Har ni familj kvar i Syrien? Om ja, hur håller ni kontakt med dem?**

FCH: En stor släkt som är utspridd nästan över hela Syrien. Alla tillgängliga medel, telefon, mobil, skype, viber etc.

**M: När ni är i Sverige, hur viktigt är det för er att hålla er uppdaterade på situationen i Syrien?**

FCH: Det ytterst viktigt att hålla mig uppdaterad om allt som händer där, dels för att jag växte upp i Syrien och älskar det av hela mitt hjärta, Sverige ligger naturligtvis i paritet med Syrien och dels för den mänskliga lidande och i mina ansträngningar att mana till dialog och uppnå fred. Syrien är vaggan för vår civilisation, det är inte ok att förstå det.

**M: Hur håller ni er uppdaterade?**

FCH: Dels genom att följa media, hemsidor, bloggar, Facebook, youtube och dels genom att tala direkt med folk som bor och är direkt drabbade eller de som är riktigt insatta och försöker att hjälpa andra och dels genom att träffa några som har lyckats fly hit och fått deras berättelser.

**M: Vad är er bild av Syrien nu när ni är här?**

FCH: Var kommer den här bilden ifrån? 2011 började folk med fredliga demonstrationer och krävde demokrati. Plötsligt blev "revolutionen" militariserad och massor med vapen. Facit i hand kan vi konstatera att kriget var väl registrerat och planerat där många intressen spelade roll och försåg/förser rebeller och Jihadister med pengar och vapen. Från dag ett manade jag/vi till dialog. Bilden har jag fått av att se och analysera media och nyheter och fakta och logner och försöka att ta det så objektivt som möjligt. Jag är en som kräver ett system som är demokratisk och sekulärt så att alla är lika inför lagen, oavsett färg, religion, könn eller tillhörighet.

**M: Läser ni några lokala tryckta tidningar för att få veta mer om det som pågår i**

## Syrien?

FCH: Nej, då är de gamla när de kommer fram.

**M: Läser ni några utländska tryckta tidningar för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? Varför eller varför inte?**

FCH: På nätet vissa artiklar och analyser eller avslöjanden. Det för att få en bredare perspektiv och infalls vinklar.

**M: Tittar/lyssnar ni på några lokala TV/radiokanaler för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? (T.ex. SVT, SR) Varför eller varför inte?**

FCH: Jag följer alltid nyheterna i Sverige. P1 är min favorit och Rapport försöker jag att inte missa. Men just nu är det Ukraina som är på tapeten och Syrien frågan har hamna i skymundan. Då räcker inte denna rapportering.

**M: Tittar/lyssnar ni på några utländska TV/radiokanaler för att få veta mer om det som pågår i Syrien? (T.ex. satellitTV) Varför eller varför inte?**

FCH: Jag både Satellit kanaler och Internet kanaler i radio och tv för att få så komplett bild som möjligt.

**M: Vilka Internetsidor använder ni för att gå information om, och en koppling till, Syrien? (T.ex. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Bloggar, andra hemsidor). Var anser ni att ni får dem mest trovärdiga uppdateringarna om Syrien? Nyheter, TV, Internet? Varför? Vilka medier är det ni först och främst använder för att följa upp konflikten? Varför?**

FCH: Al Jazeera, Al Mayadeen, BBC Arabic m.fl.

**M: Hur väljer ni vilka medier att använda?**

FCH: Min erfarenhet av deras sannings halt och objektiviteten samt bredden av nyheter.

**M: Tror ni att vilka medier som används (t.ex. om någon använder bara sociala medier till skillnad från bara nyhetssändningar) påverkar vilken bild individen får av Syrien? Varför?**

FCH: Givetvis, ju mer man hörs desto mer man kan påverka. Vi i Sverige tendera på att vara bekväma av oss och inte söka eller se från andra håll och perspektiv.