ABSTRACT

Hagberg, Mikael (2016) De individuella och komplexa gränserna [The individual and complex borders]

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Supervisor: Qian Zhang

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This paper is a study in the context of cultural geography, advanced level, at the University of Stockholm. The aim is to improve the understanding of borders based on individual life stories. It builds on the qualitative research to nuance a phenomenon that is mainly constructed upon political and economic interests. The thesis is based on interviews with non-EU refugees living permanently or temporarily in Sweden. The result shows that borders are more than just drawn or dotted lines on a map. They are dividing, but also a symbol of the constant dichotomy between individual’s and authorities. Structure is ever present, agency is more restricted by space. Borders are also strongly influenced by its surroundings. Various attributes of the space and place creates different individual perceptions. Further, the result shows borders as a homogeneous and heterogeneous phenomenon, while being constant and inconstant. Thus, borders are complex and highly concerned with individual beliefs and opinions.

Keywords: borders, boundaries, life course perspective, refugee’s, place, space, agency and structure