

## Final Interview Guide

### Individual Exile Experience

To start, we would like to ask you about the circumstances of your personal exile experience. Can you tell us where you are from and for how long you have been in Germany?

What caused you to leave your home country? What were the main motivating factors behind your move?

To what extent was this move a voluntary decision?

#### 1) EXPERIENCE

Literature shows that migration of any kind involves a variety of severe losses as you leave your familiar surroundings behind, but can also bring about gains as you settle in a new context. Can you indicate some of the losses that you have experienced through your exile experience, or possibly some of the gains you encountered?

Being in exile includes tremendous emotional adjustments and can evoke a range of different feelings. Could you describe the emotional processes that you have undergone throughout your exile experience?

What have been the dominating feelings and emotions throughout the process of leaving your home country and adjusting to a new context?

Do you feel that this process has it been a rather negative or a more positive emotional experience? Can you describe the most negative / positive aspects of it?

Many academics feel ambivalence about their situation. Do you regret your decision to come here? If so, why? Are you planning to stay here or do you hope to return?

What struggles have you faced within the experience of exile, if any? Are they usually emotional or physical struggles?

Have you encountered any disruptions within your academic profession that obstructed your career? Has your exile possibly opened up new opportunities?

Do you feel that your move has impacted your emotional well-being in any way? Has it had a positive or negative effect on your self-confidence/self-esteem? Do you feel that your sense of self-efficacy/agency has changed?

#### 2) ADAPTATION AND ACCULTURATION

Now that we've covered your personal emotional experience as an exile academic, we would like to know more about your acculturation process within your host country.

Can you summarize your personal experience with adjusting to life in an unfamiliar environment?

What steps have you taken to adapt to your new environment?

Could you describe how easy or difficult it has been for you to get by in your new environment? What has helped you adapt? What has it made difficult?  
Have you perceived your new environment as welcoming or hostile towards newcomers?

To what extent do you find it necessary to adapt to the German culture? Do you wish to adapt more or do you prefer to remain the same?

What has helped you maintain ties to your home country?

In relation to the academic focus, do you feel that the university system in Germany is accessible to newcomers or have you experienced exclusion in that context?

When trying to integrate in a new country, the language barrier can commonly hinder adaptation, especially when working in the academic field. If there has been a language barrier in your experience, how has it affected you personally and your academic career?

### 3) SELF AND IDENTITY

One of our biggest posing questions is if there has been a perceived change or stability in identity through the experience of being an academic on the move.

Therefore if you feel comfortable and willing, we would like to have a more personal understanding of your perceived self and identity through this experience.

To start, can you tell me how you would define your identity. What parts of your identity are the most important to you?

As identity is such a complex topic, research has yet to come up with a universal definition of what it is. However, the literature proposes that there are various dimensions on which identity manifests, which include among others the personal, social, relational, ethnic, cultural, political and professional level.

Could you tell us which of those dimensions (cultural, social, professional, political) are the most salient in your personal self-definition? In what ways does your identity manifest on those different levels?

Can you explain which of the roles you act in most define who you are?

Do you feel like your identity changed through your exile experience in any way? Or has it remained mostly stable?

What aspects of your self-perception have changed? Can you tell us if certain roles of your identity have become more or less salient in the context of exile? Do you feel like you have lost certain aspects of your identity or possibly developed new facets?

Have you embraced this change as a positive development, or do you regret it in any way?

Do you have any specific aspirations for your life that you want to achieve? Maybe in the academic field?

Have any of these aspirations changed or have you developed new ones through being an academic in exile?

Do you feel any kind of resentment against your home country/host country due to your forced exile? Do you resent your academic profession as it was one cause for your exile?

**Thank you for your contribution!**