

NATIONAL REPORT CATEGORY V: SWEDEN

Migrant experiences in an ambivalent society

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Background

Sweden is typical of those nations that have attracted a steady quota of professional specialists to lands rich in natural resources, and with a sparse population spread over a vast territory. Since the 14th century a steady quota of foreign professionals has been entering Swedish territory, most often at the invitation of the government or interests affiliated with it. The professional technology needed for the development of the mined ores, as well as the securing of Continental markets, brought German, French and Walloon engineers to the northern regions. During the 16th century highly qualified technocrats from Germany wrote the Swedish constitution and established the administrative protocol of the sovereign.

During the centuries that followed, expert engineers and specialist academics were recruited according to need. The under-populated country in the 17th century was extremely short of people to fill essential functions. This meant that the Swedish State became accustomed to the presence of immigrants contributing decisively to the process of building the nation. During the latter half of the 19th century Sweden was an importer of large capital investment, given the vast natural resources that remained untapped (I. Svanberg & M. Tydèn, *Tusen År av invandring i Sverige*. Stockholm 1992). Sweden was a favourite target for foreign investment for large-scale infra-structural projects.

The inter-war period saw a turning of the tide with respect to the flow of capital. Sweden became rather a capital exporter and gradually grew into one of the strongest economies in Europe before World War II. This period however had its darker sides. Systemic racism invaded large areas of the social system. There were vocal protests on the part of prominent groups against admitting Jewish refugees. But many prominent intellectuals also articulated opposing views. Society was absolutely divided. The government and state representatives did not, however, dare to speak out on behalf of refugees and against racism. The politics of faceless neutrality began with the threat from Nazi-Germany. The delicate balancing

act accomplished by the war time coalition government appeared blatantly opportunistic in the eyes of most observers on the Continent and to the rest of Scandinavia.

A Change in Welfare State Immigrant Policies

Throughout the aftermath of the war there existed a profound sense of guilt within political and influential public circles. The grand scale of the social welfare system, built up with considerable success due to Sweden emerging unscathed from the war, constituted one way of compensating for a damaged image and a tarnished conscience. The Swedish welfare state had ideologists of considerable stature, such as the social engineers - the Myrdals, Ernst Wigfors, G[^]sta Rehn, Rudolph Meidner. Their impact upon post-war society was overwhelming, even though they were much more cautious than ideologists and reformers in the British Labour movement.

In 1951 the Swedish model was re-formulated by labour economists Rehn and Meidner. It favoured the already successful export-oriented big industries. The idea was that private industry, which constituted 93 per cent of total industrial capital, should contribute a specified sum of money to a state fund, to be employed when the economy so needed. This meant difficulties for companies on the verge of loss. For big exporters, such as Volvo, Asea, LM Ericsson and others, it was a negligible burden compared with the aid the State could provide during prosperous cycles. In all it implied a hefty expansion on the part of the big export industries, which had little competition in a war-ravaged Europe. Sweden had shifted from importing capital and expertise from abroad, to importing cheap labour from Mediterranean areas, from where Italians and Yugoslavs were recruited to the industrial cities of Gothenburg (Volvo, SKF), Västerås (ASEA) and Stockholm (LM Ericsson). The Swedes now felt a sense of superiority towards immigrants, rather than the other way round, as had been the case in the past.

Two aspects are of importance for the shape of present Swedish immigration policies. The first concerns a basic attitude, which has evolved into a national political philosophy. The doubts, and not least the self-doubts, about the Swedish position during the Second World War prompted a philosophy which promoted the interests of the weaker in society. If the handicapped and weak were taken proper care of, in contrast to the brutal elements of social Darwinism prevalent elsewhere, then Sweden would be above suspicion with regard to her past dealings with Nazi Germany.

The Swedish economic model was also designed so that there were sufficient resources to permit the weakest a dignified life. No other society could possibly match these welfare state norms. A similarly civilised image emerged with regard to industrial relations and the labour market. With agreements dating back before World War II, employers and labour unions set the ultimate rules for peace in industrial life. Swedish industrial relations became famous for their hidden contracts, which were seen as a fail-safe device to obviate strife and secure the growth of wealth. With these processes the State, industry, and the individual citizen prided themselves on acting in the public interest and for the common good of society.

The recruited work force from the Mediterranean countries was seen as inherently weak. In their capacity as immigrant workers on the high salary typical of Swedish multinational companies, they were obviously not being expected to make particular claims for themselves. They settled in standard working class districts. If the family stayed on, which it often did, the second generation followed in the tracks of the first. It was only the third generation that began to show upward mobility, where the opportunity presented itself. Italian and Yugoslav subcultures became rooted in the suburbs with their own political and cultural activities in the city centres.

The next round of immigrants consisted of African and Asian student refugees, who began to arrive in the early 1960s. Since they were elite immigrants, who only in rare cases stayed for Swedish careers, they only constitute an immigrant group in their experience of temporary immigration. Towards the late 1960s they were increasingly followed by political refugees from Spain, the Middle East, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Latin America, notably Chile, and Argentina during the 1970s.

During the 1980s the stream of asylum seeking people increased from everywhere. Iran, Iraq, Tadjikistan, Lebanon, Kurdistan-Turkey, Kosovo, Albania, Chile continuously, East Africa and later more specifically Somaliland. In the 1990s former Yugoslavia, and in particular Bosnia, became places to escape from. Asylum was granted to up to 60 000 Bosnian refugees. The immigration laws were still uncommonly liberal, but as the 1990s wore on, with the effects of financial trouble in Sweden, and the accompanying mass unemployment, the policy changed: limits were imposed and immigrants were increasingly sent back, even though they might have an established family, with children completely socialised into Swedish life and at school.

After the work-seeking immigrants, the first waves of political refugees to arrive were the East Europeans - Balts, Hungarians (1956), Czechs (1968), and 10 000 Polish Jews (1969) - who became absorbed into the general statistics. The Chilean refugees, who started to come in late 1973, were a pioneer group. 25 000 of them arrived during the next few years. They were not passive political refugees like most of those from Eastern Europe, but highly politicised ones. They were followed by more than 10 000 Argentineans and Uruguayans and a few Bolivians, Peruvians and Colombians.

Still later from the 1980s onwards 40 000 Iranians arrived as political refugees, after Khomeini took over, followed by 25 000 Iraqis, many of whom were Kurds from the North and Shiites from the South, 20 000 Assyrians, 20 000 Kurds from the Turkish side, 13 000 Palestinians, 11 000 Eritreans, 9 000 Vietnamese Chinese, 9 000 Somalians, and during the 1990s 93 000 from former Yugoslavia.

The legal and diplomatic incident caused by the Spanish demand to extradite a Chilean ex-dictator from London was a reminder of the strong public and political feeling among both Chilean refugees and democratic governments in Europe. A Swedish parliamentarian, who had arrived in Sweden from Chile as a child in 1973, describes in a newspaper interview how, at that time they were greeted with open arms, even though at the time (the 1970s) Sweden was dominated by narrow minded and old-fashioned values. Today that narrow-mindedness has been replaced with contempt and hatred for immigrants. The dissolution of the old society, with its values stemming from popular movements and solidarity, and the now prevailing individualism, are some of the main reasons. There is a vacuum where space is needed for the solution of conflicts. Explicit racists are relatively few and marginal; at the same time there is a sinister spread of everyday racism. This is, for instance, highly visible in housing and employment. No Swedes want to live in those suburbs built for Swedish working class during the 1950s and 60s, which today are occupied exclusively by immigrants (E. Abascal in Metro Gothenburg, 7 October 1998).

Post-war immigration policy treated immigrants in terms of the welfare state philosophy. That initial policy implied that if an immigrant planned to settle, he/she should forget their ethnic, national or cultural background, and become a Swede by learning the Swedish language, and

thus gradually thinking and acting like a Swede. To illustrate how quickly policies can change, it may in this case, as in many other cases during the post war period, be appropriate to divide the time into fifteen year cycles - 1945 - 1960 - 1975 - 1990. The first cycle concerned 'Swedification'; the second a response to the need for a cultural identity; the third an enlightened multicultural policy; and the fourth a reactive return to a blinkered policy of Swedification.

The State Immigrant Agency

In the early 1960s attitudes had already changed markedly, but they hadn't changed enough. They were, however, now more susceptible to a new orientation. The chief architect of this was Kjell Öberg, who had been ambassador to China up to 1962 and in 1969 became the first Director General of the new State Immigrant Agency. In the mid-1960s he had been the one to examine questions about immigration. He pointed out that the imported labour from the various Mediterranean regions consisted of people whose undeniable needs and rights had been neglected by society. By the mid-1970s, when the first elaborated immigration policy was presented under the heading *equality, freedom of choice and co-activity*. It was so progressive in its multicultural and tolerant approach that it became a model for the rest of Europe. After he retired in 1978 Öberg headed the state investigation into discrimination until 1985. In retrospect his criticisms were quite scathing.

Policies took yet another turn, if not so much in form as in actual content, at the beginning of the 1990s, and from the mid-1990s quite radically so. Immigration policy now shows a degree of indifference and lack of awareness, in the view of Öberg and many other concerned specialists. Serious observers have concluded that the appointment by the Social Democratic government of two rather populist and weak politicians as Minister for Immigration Affairs and the new head of the Commission against Racism, represent clear signs of indifference.

Öberg's general conclusion is that if Sweden had legislated from the outset against discrimination and segregation from the outset, then they could have taken some preventive action against racism. Now Sweden will have to live with excessive problems of racism and segregation. The political leadership appears increasingly ignorant and incompetent in the face of a problem which should have been more easily accommodated by now after so many years of enlightenment in these matters.

In early investigations into the conditions of immigrants during the first half of the 1960s, it was found that several hundred thousand immigrants, with different languages and cultures, existed in conditions of isolation, with neither politicians nor the Swedish public aware of it. Only then did the concept 'immigration' begin to be used; this was a great step forward, since the earlier term had been 'imported labour'. It was largely due to the pioneering and enlightened idealism of Öberg and his collaborators that the ice was broken in relations between Swedish society and the immigrant population during the course of the 1960s. A minor sum of support money was made available by the home office for the publication of information in five different immigrant languages about what rights these immigrants actually had in Sweden, of which they had previously been ignorant.

In the mid-1960s municipalities with any concentration of immigrants were scrutinised by a newly formed state investigating team under Öberg. It found that frequently that where the local authorities claimed that everything was well taken care of concerning adjustment policies, the immigrants themselves were furious at just about everything. In one municipality after another there were chaotic scenes of confrontation in the local Folkets Hus (Peoples' House, a Swedish institutional building in the centre of every municipality - a legacy of the social democratic movement) between the local authorities and immigrant representatives.

The typical Swedish view of immigrants was one of indifference. Apart from a very low level of training in sensitisation to cultural background, Swedes had virtually no information about the immigrants and their background. It was an 'as long as they do not bother me they might as well become Swedes' attitude which generally prevailed. The economy was strong and there was virtually no unemployment. Swedes could not see that the new immigrants actually were emigrants, with indelible roots somewhere else, and that to be exiled is never a voluntary act.

In 1966 a working group for immigrants was appointed by the Minister of the Interior. At that time there was little idea of what should be done. The only certain need was for information services. So a journal was published in five languages, with all relevant information for a newcomer, plus a built-in dialogue with the reader, who was entitled to ask any questions of the journal. The first step was to break the isolation and provide access to required knowledge. The issues of injustice and discrimination could only be addressed when there was sufficient

knowledge among the immigrant populations themselves.

Much criticism was subsequently launched against the Social Democratic government of the 1980s, and the Labour Confederation (LO) who both resisted any legislation against ethnic discrimination in working life. So none was introduced. It is generally concluded that an affirmative action on the part of LO on this question, would, from early on, have reduced tendencies to racism both at the trivial, and at the more serious level, a racism which has plagued not only working life, but Swedish society as a whole during the 1990s.

The progressive policy presented by the Immigration Agency during the 1970s was adopted by the Riksdag (parliament) mostly because no member of this body really cared about it. The formulations in the policy proposal were deliberately vague and without concrete examples, otherwise, it was argued, it probably would never have been adopted. The Riksdag voted for something its members considered to be a generally good thing, but without bothering to pay close attention to the details and implications.

Immigrant Policy Legislation

The adopted policy proposal entailed legal rights to learning Swedish during paid working time, learning of the home language for children in school, teaching of illiterates, education of interpreters, and society's support to organisations formed by immigrants and minorities. Some of these reforms were more or less immediately eroded. One of these was the law on rights to Swedish lessons during paid working time, which resulted in a refusal to hire immigrants who had not already learned Swedish. The alternative teaching of Swedish by the voluntary study associations was never really satisfactory. The teaching of home languages has, ever since it was enacted, been subject to conflicts of one sort or another, which has resulted in a cutting down process, so that now few of its original features remain.

In 1997 Sweden was as far from having realised immigrant policy goals as when the Riksdag enacted them in 1975. The State Immigrant Agency was, however, a small one for many years, at least in relation to some of the more powerful agencies such as the Labour Market Board and the School Directorate, who would have had to have been persuaded to support immigration policy goals if there were to be realised. When this act of persuasion worked, at least partly, it was normally as a result of the

presence of some fiery idealist within one of those major agencies, who would have the civil courage to go against prevailing opinion.

The indifference and recalcitrance on the part of the State to impose effective laws against discrimination at work, was not easily broken down by the Immigrant Agency. The original 1983 law proposal, which was never enacted, was based on the gender equality law, which implied that the plaintiff only had to claim that discrimination could not be excluded. After that the employer would have to prove that non-discriminatory reasons were the basis for his or her decision.

The law against discrimination at work that was finally adopted specified that the complainant had the whole burden of proof, which means that this law, in practice, cannot fulfil its function. Both the Discrimination Ombudsman and legal experts have convincingly shown, in a special investigation, that this law does not work. On top of that it came too late to have any particular impact, as the 1990s have offered employers every power to pick and chose labour.

If the law against discrimination at work had been in place at the time Sweden signed the UN convention against racial discrimination, it would have had some power, which it now lacked. The final report from the State investigation against discrimination was called 'In the Right Direction', when it was published in 1985. All that was before the crisis of the 1990s created a number of racist excesses of a very ugly kind, while at the same time the belief prevailed that the Swedish population was on the right path to overcoming what there was left of prejudice and xenophobia. However many observers have concluded that the indifference on the part of the political class, who never took racism seriously - indeed who almost saw it as an offence against the Swedish people to even hint at the existence of racism and prejudice in their midst - ultimately paved the way for the racist excesses which cost many immigrant lives - 'almost one life a day' the saying went - 'of racist murders' during the darkest years of the 1990s. The Swedish political establishment appears not to have any grasp of these developments, and thus was been taken by surprise at the extent of segregation, racial violence and proto-fascist movements which had emerged.

At the same time immigrant organisations or movements have kept a very low public profile, and in the case of those that haven't, it is mostly because they were from the beginning co-opted by the State who financed them. There was no clear incentive to join them. These organisations were

largely show cases. There was also the creeping fear among leading immigrant intellectuals, that as soon as a successful immigrant movement established itself spontaneously, then the State would immediately co-opt it. So immigrant movements are small and fragmented, mirrors of post-modern society in general. Individual immigrant columnists and public figures have, on the other hand, been very influential on issues limited to their own cause.

Immigrants are vastly under-represented in political assemblies. The first proposal in 1974, advocating suffrage and eligibility in municipal elections, was immediately turned down by one part of the Social Democratic government, though the other half somewhat later agreed to the idea, because it was found in a party enquiry among the metal clubs at ASEA in Våsterås, that the immigrant workers were strongly inclined to vote for the Social Democrats. It was 1975 when the suffrage reform was enacted, and the year after the first immigrant election took place. This reform aimed at two things which could be said to be two sides of the same coin of Swedish opinion formation, and also very proto-typical formulations: in the first place it was meant to empower immigrants in a general manner, so that they would act more politically, and feel part of society; secondly it was meant for the public good, as one means of extending the concept of democracy.

More than twenty years later it is evident that the reform did not have the intended effect. The lack of political involvement on the part of immigrants has been interpreted as a lack of immigrant identification with Swedish society. The electoral participation among immigrants has steadily diminished. Their representation in municipal political assemblies is about a half percentage in relation to the immigrant population as a whole. On local political boards and agencies, such as the cultural agency and the library agency or the leisure time agency, the same is true, quite apart from the fact that immigrants are seldom ordinary members, but rather stand-ins. On the municipal boards their representation has been reduced to an insignificant level in many parts of the country. In the national elections only Swedish citizens may be put up as candidates and vote.

Two investigations, one in 1979 and the other in 1994, revealed that immigrant candidates to municipal councils had, to an overwhelming degree, spent more than 12 years in Sweden by 1979, and more than 19 years by 1994. The average qualification time was in both cases significantly long. What was more, immigrants from Nordic countries were

strongly over-represented among those candidates elected, who are invariably well known and well established persons in society. Symptomatically they would not confine themselves to the issues pertaining to immigrants. They would rather exercise their ambition over the whole range of municipal questions. There is a common assumption among experts on immigrant politics that immigrants as a group do not have sufficient in common with each other for politicians with an immigrant background to be able to truly represent them, and that what would happen would be that they would be inclined, disproportionately, to represent their own group. This leads to a general question of the extent to which the views held by immigrant politicians on immigrants, as the object of representation, have any significance for how they actually act? (P. Rodrigo Blomquist, *Vem representerar invandrare?* Gothenburg University 1997).

In this context social integration may be defined as a large-scale entry of immigrants into cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society, at a primary level. It may also be claimed that acculturation must precede social integration. Thus it may as a whole be argued that counter-cultural elements in Swedish Society, as a medium of cultural distance reduction, will contribute to the social integration of immigrants in this society. In other words, Swedes who associate with immigrants are expected to be more critical towards Swedish culture than those who do not associate with immigrants. Due to an anti-modern tendency in counter-cultural movements, Swedes who associate with immigrants from 'traditional' countries may be expected to be more critical towards Swedish culture than Swedes who associate with immigrants from countries culturally closer to Sweden.

The isolation problem was pointed out early in the initial State investigations. It is still a pervasive problem among most minorities. When, for instance, an immigrant claims to have more Swedish friends than immigrant ones, this may be not so much a sign of social integration as one of isolation from one's own and other minorities. Indeed some immigrants with longer term plans have chosen isolation from their own community as a strategy for faster assimilation. However, a higher degree of association with the members of the host population does not come automatically.

If the ratio of individuals who visit Swedes, sometimes or often, may be taken as an indicator of social integration, the following percentages among four minorities present themselves: Iranians 49.5 per cent, Chileans

58.3 per cent, Poles 67 per cent, and Finns 78.3 per cent. As to the ratio of individuals who have three or more Swedish friends, it is as follows: Iranians 29.1 per cent, Chileans 38.4 per cent, Poles 54.6 per cent and Finns 58.5 per cent. On average two thirds of the respondents reside in the three major metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. These figures show that minorities from the adjacent areas, such as the Finns and the Poles, come top, whereas the Chileans and the Iranians are trailing behind as more alien.

One obvious implication is that the main obstacle to the integration of immigrants in Sweden, and in particular those from the Third World, is the attitude of Swedes towards these minorities. Apart from the immediate juridical measures that can be taken against discrimination, the removal of these obstacles demands a challenging and imaginative policy, and that requires a co-ordinated effort by interested groups of Swedish people and the minorities. In the final analysis it is realistic to expect that no process of integration into a developed nation will come without friction (Cf. H. Hosseini-Kaladjahi, *Iranians in Sweden: Economic, Cultural and Social Integration*. Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Stockholm Studies in Sociology No 4 1997 Diss).

There exists an inevitable concentration of immigrant groups in the three metropolitan areas. Certain areas of the new suburban districts have been rapidly occupied by different ethnic groups. In the early 1980s, for instance, a new district called *Gunnilse* was established. It became a sort of Hackney of Gothenburg, with the difference that *Gunnilse* formed its own football team which, composed of immigrants, has become fully socially integrated, and today is one of the top teams in Sweden. One of its wingers was recently sold to *Bayern München*. *Gunnilse* assembled all kinds of immigrants: Balkan, Middle Eastern, Mahgrebian and African immigrants - south-central African, West African and East African - during the course of the 1980s. Other suburban districts were dominated by specific groups - *Biskopsgården* on Hisingen by Bosnians, *Hammarkullen* by Turks, Iranians, and East Africans, *Angered* by Kurds, Argentineans, Chileans, etc. Politically active immigrants from Iran and East Africa had made a habit of meeting regularly in the respective suburbs. The Latin Americans had developed effective, functional security networks against recurring neo-fascist groups, which from time to time have been rampant in these suburbs. In 1995 there was a civil-war-like tension in and around *Hammarkullen* and *Angered*. In August 1997 it exploded, with regular

street fights, only a couple of weeks after the celebrated ‘day of the community’, when all the immigrant communities offered their traditional specialities at the much frequented and popular food market in *Hammarkullen*. But it broke out there, even though the incident which sparked it off was trivial, and such incidents have occurred before.

Normally the police don’t dare go into the area without being heavily armed and in a battalion. Lone police cars are inevitably stoned and reduced to junk. This time the authorities became much more concerned because of the unusual media attention, and they quickly promised packages for new employment, worth around two million ECU. In the wake of this decision there arose a, at best benign, *Kulturkampf* between the local authorities and the politically advanced immigrant networks, about what kind of *Hammarkullen* should be created - one according to the principles of the classical Swedish welfare state model, or one in accordance with the creative networks of immigrant groups, which could make use of the variations in cultural experiences. Much of this information was in global orbit among a particularly elitist group of Africans.

Hammarkullen, since it was built in the late 1960s, has become a symbol for everything that has gone wrong in post-war suburban planning. Today it is an archetypal form of contemporary segregation and ghettoisation within the welfare state. This goes against the thesis proposed by, among others, Malcolm Cross, that cities in corporatist economies - Sweden used to be *the* corporatist state - do not reveal high levels of spatial exclusion because of the existence of high wages and high levels of social housing.

The Swedish examples - *Flemingsberg, Rinkeby, Tensta* (Stockholm), *Hammarkullen, Gårdsten, Gunnilse, Biskopsgården*, *Kortedala* (Gothenburg), *Rosengård* (Malmö) - show that there are always degrees of spatial exclusion, whether the economy is corporatist or not. Cross goes on to suggest that, in corporatist states, social mobility through education is constrained, because of the low levels of job creation at higher education levels, and that major areas of conflict often arise between worker organisations and ethnic minority organisations. These suggestions are easier to verify, at least in the Swedish case, even though a number of modifying factors also exist. By contrast non-corporatist societies may offer greater opportunities in the service sector to immigrants, but they also

develop ghetto communities to the level of creating sub-cultures which lie beyond control.

The situation in many Swedish urban communities shows that a metropolitan area of more than half a million inhabitants, such as the Gothenburg one, and smaller towns such as Uddevalla, Trollhättan and Vänersborg, which form what is known as the trio of cities, with a total population close to 150 000, have, during the 1990s, experienced an evolution that is rather the reverse of white racism.

Multicultural groups of Swedish, Black, Asian, Arab, Latin-American, Bosnian and generally Balkan and East European background, have today created spontaneous movements against what they perceive as not only racist features in Sweden, but signs of an unacknowledged Swedish apartheid.

There exists, according to both first and second generation immigrant youth, a structural violence in the Swedish society of the 1990s which is segregationist and openly discriminatory. The Ministry of Immigration has become the Ministry of Integration. The responsible minister in the Social Democratic government is a former head of the Metal Workers' Federation, whose skills as a trade union leader are beyond question. Nevertheless, although an honest and sincere person, his qualifications for his present position are severely questioned by the immigrant community. Some of his statements have revealed a lack of sensitivity to the delicate issues at hand. Leading spokesmen for the immigrant community are privately indicating that the present Minister, and the more than doubtful qualifications of the person responsible for the anti-racism campaign within the Social Democratic party, although nobody doubts her dedication, represent evident signs that the Social Democratic government does not take multicultural society and immigration policy very seriously.

During 1997 many public manifestations have been initiated by the political authorities, on both a national and a local level. The immigrant clubs and associations they consulted, which on average have amounted to 120, have without exception demanded more of an open society, and more affirmative action, of which so far there has been none, according to one spokesman.

The rallying point is identification with black culture, which means the whole spectrum, and not only the music. In *Hammarkullen*, for instance, decisive for the identity formation of immigrant youth is their identification of their own situation with that of black youth in the United

States, who represent the experience of social exclusion and discrimination, at the same time as it articulates resistance, and provides alternatives to those identity and life patterns promoted by public servants such as teachers.

This identification with Afro-American culture is achieved partly through the building of bridges across ethnic borders, through the neutral language of aesthetic codes. Hence preconditions for new ethnic amalgamations and alliances emerge, which through a discursive dialogue, establishes a constructive, non-confrontational dialogue with Swedish society. On the other hand today marginalisation and a sense of powerlessness are contributing to the creation of a fascination with the criminal gang cultures of the ghettos, and with a glorification of the armed struggle of black people, that may reinforce alienation, exclusion and segregation. The hostile tendencies towards the dominant culture that already exists in those urban environments where these youngsters grow up may be reinforced through identification with the most obdurate and violence-prone aspects of the black ghetto culture, and thereby legitimise a form of racism in reverse, which is already smouldering in certain areas.

About 100 km to the north of Gothenburg, in the comparatively small town of Uddevalla, where an internationally competitive shipyard existed up to 1985, there are male-dominated youth gangs, of mainly second generation immigrants, with an identification with black culture. One group consists of mainly Latin-American and North-African youth, among whom the sense of loyalty is very high. Their living quarters, in areas of high unemployment, are strongly segregated. In Uddevalla immigrants have experienced viciously xenophobic movements since the late 1980s. In this environment a violence-oriented, arms-obsessed, and aggressively confrontational counter-culture emerged during the 1990s. It is quite clearly under the influence of the gangster rap of the black ghetto culture, since both the Latin-American and North-African youth regard themselves as essentially black. They spend their free time beating up local skinheads, and aim – in accordance with the American model - to transform their district into a ghetto from which all white Swedes are to be ejected. The symbolic ethnicity, that through racism in reverse excludes all Swedish youngsters, stipulates that membership of the group is based on one condition - that you are a 'ablack head' (a word of abuse shouted after immigrants in Sweden).

An equally male dominated but very different group consists of

Latin-American, Portuguese, Turkish, Vietnamese, Lebanese and some Swedish youth. This group is to be found in one of Gothenburg's suburbs, where its underclass identity is dictated by material class positions rather than ethnicity, which is the case in the first group. Their view of their Swedish counterparts is more conciliatory, and the aggressive insignia that distinguished the arms and violence fashion of the first group are not present. An ongoing research project has as its main task to analyse how these two groups emerged. (See O. Sernhede, *Ungdom, etnicitet och rasism*. It is a research project on the relationship between segregation and exclusion of immigrant youth belonging to violence-prone gang-cultures, and trans-cultural everyday praxis (University of Gothenburg, Dept. of Social Work 1996)). How are different identities of protest and solidarity formed under social circumstances which in so many respects appear analogous?

Hammarkullen has become the subject of a TV-series of the same name. The author is a young writer of Italian extraction, and one of the more vocal voices of leftist opposition to the established society. The play deals with the bewilderment, loneliness and fragmentation that are exacerbated by the presence of neo-Nazi thugs on the one hand, and the swift inroads into the area being made by the Russian mafia on the other. The complex picture produced by the play is not easy to digest for the inhabitants of this ghettoised district. They feel ridiculed and stigmatised by the fact that the real name of the district is used in the title of the play. Symptomatically, at least two letters of protest have reached Swedish Radio/TV, signed by several people who have lived in the area for many years, in some cases for more than twenty years.

These districts referred to in fact vary in location and character. This is one of the complaints of immigrant representatives. Many strong but vulnerable political refugees are subject to a segregationist division of society, where many diverse and socially excluded immigrants are herded together into one district. In a way Swedish social problems are being projected onto immigrant groups. We tried to look into this question by investigating one residential district that, since the early 20th century, had been quintessentially working class and supportive of the Social Democrats.

We observed the fact that at the entrances to the apartment houses the names of the inhabitants were foreign, but, oddly enough, it was seldom that several families, or even more than one family of the same ethnic

background or nationality, were to be found in the same entrance. We began to wonder whether this was a deliberate policy of mixed housing so as to avoid the domination by one ethnic group. Five or six households in every entrance would show a typical combination of Finn, Chilean, Somalian, Bosnian or Croatian, and less often, Italian and Iranian, plus one or two Swedish households. The Italians and Croatians stem from the import of labour to SKF, the ball bearing factory, during the 1950s and the 1960s. Most of those who settled in Gamlestaden at that time have long since moved upwards to other districts. Many have returned to Italy, in spite of the culture shock it might entail for some cases. Today it is mainly a district for more recent immigrants, migrant Swedish students and those working class Swedes who slipped through the net of the Welfare State.

The Cases

Ishmail Krakame, my Somalian host, welcomed me at the door. The main street entrance was locked. For security reasons I had to call him first on a door phone. I entered the apartment which consisted of bedroom, hall, kitchen and living room. Their furniture was good quality - simple, comfortable but a bit austere. We drank tea during the interview. Ishmail pointed out that tea is the favourite drink in Africa because it both stimulates the brain and gives an illusion of a more filled and satisfied stomach than is the case.

Farah Bosse entered after five minutes. She was heavily pregnant and in fact was delivered of a daughter some ten days after the interview. The new baby is Farah's third child and Ishmail's fourth. Both of them were previously married and divorced in Somalia. They met in Sweden, in Stockholm in fact, in 1992 and married soon afterwards. Ishmail is a warm-hearted, tall and sensitive intellectual with whom it was easy to establish immediate contact. Farah is an impressive and attractive woman with beautiful features, a strong physique and a captivating personality. You could sense a deep affection and friendship in the room, but something suggested that there is less passion and more reason in the relationship, and a certain incompatibility - his sensitive and delicate manners and her much rougher edged, tougher quality.

Ishmail is around 50 and Farah is ten years younger. Ishmail grew up in an educated, upper middle class family in Mogadishu, who belonged to those social circles which for a long time had dominated Somalian society. Ishmail's childhood was comparatively untroubled. He had two siblings.

He went to one of the better grammar schools in Mogadishu, where Italian was the sole language of instruction all the way up to gymnasium level, and there too Italian continued to be the main language, but other languages such as English and Arabic became equally important to most students. Not only the Italian idiom, but Italian culture permeated gymnasium studies. Alberto Moravia, Antonio Gramsci and Ignazio Silone would prevail over Byron, Dickens and Huxley. However, Aristotle and Kant were basic to all education. In short, Ishmail belongs to the highly educated upper middle class with a marked Italian influence, which today, since the civil war broke out, has been suppressed in favour of the more impoverished, and less educated English-inclined nomadic people of the countryside, who seized power in the public life of Mogadishu, made accessible by the civil war and the very people to which Farah belongs.

After gymnasium every student had, on leaving, to go to a remote village in the countryside and teach for a whole year as a sort of social service. Ishmail stayed for a year in a small village in the interior of Somalia. The teaching was fine since he soon established a friendly relationship with his pupils. But leisure time was awful. He could not establish contact with the parents of the school children, or establish any communication at all with the village inhabitants. They were suspicious and inherently hostile to a young sophisticated and urbane student, albeit with, or perhaps just because of, his radical views. So he did his teaching and then went to his room, and sat there and read without talking to anyone for a whole year. He felt immensely frustrated that he could not talk and socialise with the village people. It was a first cultural and political shock, since he had not realised how wide the gap actually was between urban and rural settings.

He began his university studies in Mogadishu but soon entered political circles. Politics took more of his attention than the natural science and technical studies he was supposed to pursue. He did not feel at ease with his studies in Mogadishu and started to work in an engineering firm, specialising in radio technology. He soon discovered that he needed a firmer educational basis. He got a scholarship to Kiev, Ukraine, where he stayed for five years. In June 1977 he acquired his BSc in television and radio communication at the Polytechnic College of Communication in Kiev, Ukraine.

Now also fluent in Russian he felt that he could easily have stayed longer in Kiev, since studies there had been comparatively easy to pursue.

In 1977 when he came back to Somalia he got employment as a shift engineer at Mogadishu Radio Transmitting Station. He soon edged his way up to a leading position among the radio technicians but he did not stay there beyond 1980. In the early 1980s he began to see the limitations of the organisation and its sources, which brought him into conflict with other interests in Somali radio. He began to take an interest in industrial economics and to take various courses to that end, but felt that he needed more basic foundations to his studies.

Once again he left the country, in 1983; this time a scholarship brought him to Bucharest, Romania, where he studied transport economics, after having acquired a certificate in the Romanian language, which he still speaks fluently. In September 1986 he got his MSc in industrial, construction, and transport economics, *Economi de Studii Economci* in Bucharest. The reason why he had spent, in all, eight years studying in Kiev, Ukraine, and in Bucharest, Romania, - with a sardonic smile he admitted that the Ceausescu years in the 1980s had brought nothing but problems - was that Somalia's political allies at that time tended to be primarily from the Eastern bloc. Scholarships were readily available from Eastern European universities to Somalians during the Soviet time. Now, since the fall of the Wall, opportunities have opened up in the West.

So after he left Bucharest, having spent a short period of time back in Mogadishu, he went through a Financial and Planning course at ENEL in Padova, Italy. He was still a technician, but with his studies in industrial economics and financial planning, he began to orient himself towards logistic and organisational problems, and in particular to transport economics. After the course in Padova, which he enjoyed for several reasons - he likes and prefers the Italian language and the Italian style to other West European ones, which also means that he preferred Italy as an imperial power to Britain, Somalia being divided by the two - he was invited to join in the setting up of a National Symposium on the role of scientific research on management and sources of energy in Somalia. In 1988 he took yet another step towards the West with a Planning, Management and Evaluation Course for a year at Kennedy & Donkins, Mogadishu, Somalia. In between, during the 1980s, he worked at the state radio for a living. But he was now looking for a more adequate occupation as a distribution of resources technocrat in some management capacity. In 1987 he became Head of the Planning Section of the National Agency of Electrical Energy in Mogadishu, Somalia. He held this position until the

civil war made his stay untenable in 1990 when he fled the country.

He had been active in the socialist party long enough to be regarded as a veteran. In 1990 Sweden stood out as a safe haven, a Social Democratic welfare-based country which had opened its gate to political refugees from the Third World in particular, and which had a progressive aid policy towards LDCs. But he obviously knew little of the history of immigration in Sweden. The engineer and urban planner in Ishmail react against the lack of co-ordination in Swedish immigration policy. As he understands it the patchy policy conveys a clear message that immigrants should at best see Sweden as a very temporary safe haven, and desist from settling too deeply into Swedish life.

Some immigrant groups have taken the ideological and political lead - Chileans, Palestinians - and others, the cultural lead - Italians, Turks, Poles, Iranians, etc. As the Swedish state has applied the tactic from the very start of co-opting every new social movement as soon as it appeared, it has tried to duly co-opt leading spokesmen of Chileans and Turks in government bodies and state agencies. The result is that the Chileans are conceived of as having too much influence upon immigrant politics. Other representatives of Mediterranean cultures are perceived as dominating social life, and creating the new language and cultural idioms of the multi-cultural suburbs.

One of the very few immigrants who represent this growing voice in the Swedish Riksdag (parliament) is a Social Democratic deputy with a Latin-American background. He has noted that, during the 1990s, there has been a clear trend for Swedes to take priority over immigrants for the new jobs created, in spite of the fact that immigrants, more often than not, have a higher level of education than Swedes. This has inspired the major trade union confederations - and the white collar one more than the blue collar - to create a union network against racism. The Integration Minister has also sent out signals of alarm concerning the growing racist excesses in Swedish society.

Case History: Ludovic Vallejo from Chile

The interview with Ludovic Vallejo took place in a lunchtime restaurant in central Gothenburg. The meeting seemed more like a working lunch, with very few people at that time in the dining hall - it was 2pm - and the few people who might have listened in would have assumed it was a job interview. Ludovic Vallejo is 38 years old. He came to Sweden when

he was 21 years old, without any of his family. He met his wife here in the Chilean community. She had come here as a child with her entire family. Ludovic Vallejo is troubled and suspicious. There are layers of distrust among people representing public interests in Sweden, not to mention the EU. As an interviewer I felt convinced it would take me some time to break down his hostility if at all. His paternal grandfather had been a mineworker in the north of Chile, and his maternal grandfather had been a tradesman, peddling household appliances. Their wives, that is his grandmothers, were housewives, the paternal one taking care of six children and the maternal one seven. They were busy keeping the household budget down, baking their own bread, keeping poultry where they lived on the outskirts of an urban area, mending and sewing clothes, etc. Both were deeply religious, and thought Church was primary, in spite of their mestizo backgrounds.

In his style of responding Ludovic Vallejo is both frank and reluctant. His answers are succinct and to the point, and not much more. It turns out that his grandparents' households were fairly matriarchal in spite of everything, since the men were seldom at home. The mine worker relaxed with his political cronies, in bouts of drinking and scheming that led nowhere. The peddler moved around a fairly vast district which suited him as he was an inveterate womaniser. The homes became religious bastions, where the women ruled, and where the men were reduced to the function of bread-winning and the formal punishment of the children.

His parents had moved a step up the social ladder. His mother was a teacher in a lower middle class district of Santiago, and his father became a baker with his own shop and half a dozen employees. He had four siblings, none of whom has left Chile. His mother represented to him political consciousness. She had been a devout follower of Eduardo Frei from the start of his career in politics. The oldest child, Ludovic, was born at the very end of the 1950s in December 1959. His mother had become excited by two political developments at the time of his birth. One was the rising star of John Kennedy, on the political firmament of the US, and the other was the liberal Catholic wind that was blowing across the western hemisphere. During the autumn of 1959 her attention was drawn to a lecture in Santiago by another Kennedy, that is the British liberal publicist, Ludovic Kennedy. Hence her first-born son got the name Ludovic.

His father was for a long time obsessed with his little family enterprise. He would rise very early in the morning since he wanted to have full control of his bakery. When Ludovic got back from school in the

afternoon his father would always be fast asleep. Towards the end of the 1960s, however, the family business was increasingly squeezed by inflationary tendencies which the government of Eduardo Frei, at that time, either could not or simply would not do anything about. His mother had the feeling it was the latter reason that applied. Her disillusion with Frei's liberal Catholic policies became deeper. His father only became more depressed as he had to sack one after another of his employees who supported Allende. His father was at first an easy political target, and became an easy political victim for his mother, who became ever more radical and took his father to political rallies where his former workers and work friends assembled. In this way both parents came to strongly support Allende in the 1970 elections.

Ludovic was nearly eleven when Allende was elected. He remembered the immense joy in the entire district where they lived. Ludovic was popular among his friends in the street. But he called himself Luis in order not to constantly have to respond to awkward questions. He was good at school. He felt from the start that he could adjust himself easily to the rigorous, ambitious study and discipline at his school, which was a somewhat better one than the one where his mother taught. He also took good care of his younger siblings when they had problems with homework and the like. Ludovic developed an uncommon discipline and patience.

When Allende was toppled his family saw it as a catastrophe. Both of his parents decided to go into hiding for a while. The family moved up north to a small cottage adjacent to his grandfather's house. There they could move around beyond suspicion. The military didn't come once to look for his parents, though both claimed that they were important Allende activists. The problem was that his father's bakery business had fallen apart, and his mother had become indefinitely suspended from her teaching job. They had but one purpose – to save their own and their children's skins. That was not an easy task. His parents began to do some odd jobs in the region up north. She gave private lessons to the children of more well-to-do families. She tried to imbue the children with militant politics in order to survive mentally, but also to implant a radical dialogue in the area. His father took up carpentry and helped build various private houses. Both parents in other words were relying upon the bourgeoisie for the family's survival. The children actually liked living in a secluded and idyllic rural setting where they could play wild games with friends in the area.

Ludovic moved back to Santiago to attend gymnasium. He stayed with an uncle and his family during those years of continued repression. He finished school with good grades thanks to being liberated from the duty of helping his younger siblings all the time. Ludovic wanted to continue at the University. He had just started in 1978 when he was called upon to do military service. His field was optic and machine technology so he was drafted into the engineering corps. If there was anything he would have dodged it was precisely this, since he sincerely hated the military for what they had done, not only to his family and parents, but for the generally dejected state it had brought the country to. The burning of books for instance was continually at the back of his mind.

So Ludovic, having heard rumours among his friends, opted for the long journey to a 'father-like model country' to use his own expression. He discussed his decision briefly with his parents who understood but at the same time they were nervous for their other children. However, from the way Ludovic put his case, his parents were convinced that he should try to start a new life where they were convinced that his talents would come to fruition. They were aware that many Chileans with a talent for higher education who had been hit badly by the military dictatorship had sought asylum in Sweden. Ludovic was young enough to seek a new future for himself; and who could tell when Chile would ever be a country to live in and function in again.

His parents managed to collect the money for his trip to Sweden. He travelled on a cargo ship, which was inexpensive. He worked a bit on the ship to pay for his cabin. But he also had the money his parents had given him for a start in Sweden. When he arrived in 1981 he reported to the Swedish police and the immigration authorities about asylum. He had thought it would be a routine affair since he came from Chile. But the authorities in Gothenburg, where he landed with the cargo ship, were suspicious, thinking that his coming alone at that age was a straightforward case of draft dodging.

He promised that he would learn Swedish very quickly, and the authorities were persuaded that he was clever enough to do so. But in order to qualify for asylum, he would either have to go to a special camp in the interior of Sweden, where other asylum seekers were gathered, or he would have to demonstrate that he could get a job on the market at once, which would render him eligible for a work permit and facilitate the asylum process. He had always been interested in optics. He knew quite a bit about

the theoretical side of photography. So he got a job with one of the leading firms in the business. That saved him for the time being, and gave him the formal sanction for his continued stay. He tried to get into the University of Technology in Gothenburg, since it was for that he had come to Sweden.

However his qualifications from Chile were not recognised at the time, so he was advised to take new courses in basic mathematics, physics, chemistry etc. in order to eventually qualify. He realised this would take years. He began the courses as he was told to, but he did not feel very inspired since he found the level of teaching too trivial. At the same time he worked on and off at the photography shop. He soon met a Chilean girl who had come to Sweden in the middle of the 1970s. She was in Gothenburg with her whole family. She was one year his junior. He was more or less adopted by her family. In this way he had a new home. He had contemplated travelling back to Chile to see his own family, but he continuously delayed this visit because of the constant insecurity that he felt vis-à-vis the homeland, which did not show any signs of becoming a democracy for a long time. So he maintained communication with his family via letters, which he felt sure that the military security service opened and read.

He got married to Anna, his Chilean girlfriend, in Gothenburg after two years of friendship. It was a natural step since he felt good with her family, who had come here because the father was wanted by the Chilean regime. Even now Ludovic felt an automatic reticence in talking about him for security reasons. The main thing was that they liked each other and that they were on the same wavelength politically and otherwise. He and Anna had their first child soon after marriage, and then another one only 18 months later. He had now to primarily support the family, and studies receded very much into the background. Anna had worked as a nursing aid in a home for the elderly on a temporary basis. Only when the third child was old enough not to need constant care could she go out again to get temporary jobs. By then ten years had elapsed.

During the 1990s the labour market became increasingly more difficult, even for as skilled a craftsman as Ludovic. When he lost the chance to get assignments, even temporarily, at the old firm he felt convinced that the hardening climate, with regard to discrimination at work, had hit him because of his Chilean background. He had not been active politically since he arrived in Sweden in 1981 except for the past three years, when he had formed a debating club with other Chileans and

Latin Americans. Some Iranians had also joined in. Most of what they talked about were practical measures to solve their own immediate labour market problems, but inevitably also wider issues, since they were concerned about their children's situation. The possibilities of opening up their own shops, but not being referred to exclusively in terms of their own grey economy was a constant topic.

Every immigrant family is concerned primarily about their children. As long as the children are doing fairly well at school in Sweden there is a prime motive to stay on. In the background however, Ludovic would admit to an ambivalence about being away from the old homeland, where he might now be very welcome with his professional training which gave him both a sense of curiosity and insecurity. He knows that in Sweden he has access to a welfare state infrastructure, however much it might seem eroded. The facilities he has in Sweden for himself and his children might not be so easy to acquire with a sudden return to Chile. What is more he is aware of the examples of people who have gone back, only to find the situation quite impossible in the Chilean labour market, and then that they can't easily return to Sweden again without being placed at the very bottom of the queue. He recognises that the gap grows between himself and his circle of friends, which today contains a reduced number of Swedes because Swedes are not so interested politically in Chile any more, or in public life in Sweden. Housing segregation has exacerbated this gulf.

In short Ludovic Vallejo is not optimistic when it comes to his own prospects in the Swedish labour market. He is contemplating using the offer from the government called the 're-training scheme', in order to pick up the old studies that might pave the way for him to the University of Technology. But he also feels much older now, and that there is a threshold to cross before consider going back into study, which, on the other hand, he longs to do. He is in a state of ambivalence in relation to what he wants for himself, so he transfers his pessimism and indecision onto what would be good for the children and their future in Sweden primarily, but possibly even elsewhere in a globalised world.

Bosnian Cases as Illustrations of New Questions

The accumulation of anomalies in immigration policies, which according to many even within the governing party seem to have got out of hand, indicates that new social strategies must be programmed if any renewal is to be accomplished. The government has introduced a new

Agency, the Integration Agency, to further the integration of immigrants and to avoid further segregation and discrimination. A young Turk, Ozan Sunar, is one of the sharpest critics of this new Government agency. Sunar was called to the Ministry of Immigration as an expert a couple of years ago. He told the then Minister Leif Blomberg that the term 'immigrant' is an invalid political category. It implies a division that builds upon race and mythological blood ties, an 'us vs. them' thinking which leads to absurd consequences. Still the Swedish-born children of an immigrant parent will forever be regarded and registered as immigrant. It is a stigma even noted in the personal registration number.

Sunar argues that he has a lot more in common with middle class people in New Delhi, New York and Stockholm than with a Turkish peasant who is rooted in a more or less feudal society. Since all analyses and interpretation models, based on class and gender, are not valid for immigrants, it raises the question of what those who are categorised as the 1.6 million immigrants in Sweden actually have in common? Swedish social democracy has to examine its prevailing ideological assumptions and re-evaluate the class structure of today's society. Yet this task has been barely addressed by Ministers responsible and few in the government appear to understand its urgency. To be an immigrant in Sweden in the late 1990s is to be at risk in two senses: one concerns unemployment and discrimination on the labour market, which are both 90s phenomena; the other concerns the existential conditions which have exposed immigrants to suffering a negative identity and insecurity. In their different ways, two Bosnians and one Colombian provide telling illustrations. One of them, Ana, represents moreover the main case of the category.

Ana's Case Story

Ana is a well-groomed, mature young lady with a husband, two children, a well-educated brother and parents who are still living. Both she and her husband are highly qualified MBAs, which afforded them good jobs (he was head of division) with a company important in the expansion of the economy of their own country. What then could possibly be their risk? And even if there are risks, why should they be insuperable? The answer is that it could because she comes from Bosnia.

Ana's family background is one of well-to-do professionals. Her mother originates from a fairly upper-class family, from which she has learnt a greater emphasis on human and family relations than on the

materialistic needs of the day. Ana's maternal grandmother died when her mother was only three years old, and Ana's maternal grandfather failed to give her mother and aunts proper care. This had the effect of creating a very strong emphasis on close family ties and relations along the female lineage. Her father comes from a simpler background, but is a competent craftsman and technician who has worked his way up within the old Yugoslavian system, and has worked abroad in the Middle East, earning good contract money. But he was also a man loyal to the political regime and ideology, and supported the self-management schemes inherent in the Yugoslav experiment in industrial democracy.

Ana seemingly had everything from her home: political faith and idealism, relative wealth, an educated and caring home, a *noblesse oblige* attitude, a mother who emphasised the importance of relations to a young woman during her upbringing. There were accordingly no obvious stumbling blocks on her road to the good life.

When the clouds began to gather, and the first storm warning came with the Bosnian poll results on the autonomy issue showing a positive endorsement for leaving the Yugoslav federation, a number of ghosts and hidden agendas emerged to trouble the population of Bosnia, and so also Ana and her family. Ana and her husband were suddenly made aware of their mixed marriage and the difficulties it would entail. They were already on the alert to leave. Moreover Ana had an obvious country in sight, Sweden, where she had visited relatives as a teenager. That Sweden also had a reputation for both being less prejudiced, and as the symbol of welfare politics facilitated the decision but was not of any overwhelming importance. Ironically with her husband's Serbian background they were able to leave for Sweden with the aid of the Red Cross via Beograd.

Her brother, who is three years her senior, soon followed them to Sweden, evidently because of their flight. There is a bit of a mystery around his presence in Sweden, but quite clearly he wanted to evade being called up to the fighting, which neither Ana nor he thought concerned them. None of them was an ethnic nationalist. Moreover her husband's mother has also come to Sweden with them since she is a widow. His father died just before the fighting started, and it had obviously been his task to take care of her. She lives with them in Gothenburg. Ana has had an uncle in Sweden for many years who constituted her Swedish connection. He disapproves strongly of her marriage to a Serb, and the fact that a Serb mother is living with them which means that her family contact in Sweden is broken.

Bosnia became torn apart as a nation during four and half years of suspicion, deceit and monstrous atrocities. In the shape it has assumed after the Dayton treaty, it has nothing to offer all those who had to escape for fear of their lives. Many of those are, like Ana and her husband, of mixed marriages. There is neither any guarantee nor indeed even mention of any future acceptance or viability of such family constellations in Bosnia. A close reading of the Dayton agreement more than justifies the suspicions and paranoia that every Bosnian suffers at home or in exile, and certainly urges caution on those considering returning.

Swedish policy towards Bosnian refugees, who constitute a substantial number, up to 60 000 if certain minorities from outside Bosnia are included, came under pressure after Dayton. Many families would have to be sent back. This order involved families with many children of school age, who had settled and adjusted well. To send these children back would truncate their education and impose a traumatic future. Nevertheless the authorities have been adamant, even where members of these families have shown suicidal intentions. Other families and individuals have been allowed to stay. The policy has worked haphazardly, so no one in reality has felt safe.

In Ana's case her oldest daughter began in a Swedish school one year early because of her relative precociousness. Her daughter is well-adjusted and finds school work not only easy, but agreeable under the present conditions. She also has friends. These quite evidently represent very strong arguments for Ana to stay where she is.

Ana speaks of their imminent Swedish citizenship with passports, and thus a concrete possibility of returning to visit their parents who were left behind, and who, in spite of losing everything, are unharmed so far. She is frustrated over not having heard from the Swedish authorities about how soon this may be realised. She may be indulging in wishful thinking or there may be real justification for her family - Ana, her husband and two daughters - thinking they'll be permitted to stay forever. Not that it is any wish of hers, since she abhors exile. No exile is good, whether in Sweden, Australia or America. At the same time Bosnia is impossible to return to, though there is an unvoiced wish on her part for being able to return sometime in the future under very different conditions. This is a goal she must sustain in order to make life in exile meaningful. She is forced into an insecure existence of make-belief alternatives.

Whatever her occupation in Sweden, it assumes for her an artificial

character, even if her skills are fully used. Her husband has a temporary job at Volvo, more or less in line with his profession; but when he lost that he took any simple job that came his way. He was offered the chance to take new courses when he was made redundant from Volvo. He now has a certificate for truck driving as well as taxi-driving. Both of them will take any job that comes their way rather than have no job. A job in this situation of exile has less to do with economy than with its role in holding off depression. Any activity keeps the demons of depression and the Bosnian reality away and the overpowering sense that everything is meaningless. The thought of a steady job or career is not contemplated, since they know they cannot compete with their Swedish counterparts. They also study English, another meaningful and therefore distracting activity, given its possible use should an English speaking nation offer itself as an alternative to Sweden.

Ana sees clearly that the outbreak of civil war in Bosnia was completely insane, and that there is not a trace of sanity anywhere in Bosnian society to hold on to since the outbreak of hostilities. Old village neighbours she has known have turned into monsters towards each other over night. How this is psychologically possible has yet to be explored. With her professional deftness and competence she has a way of understanding and handling her life so that she is seemingly able to avoid the worst pitfalls which so many Bosnians in exile have already fallen into. On the other hand her dependence upon close contact with her parents, a relation that used to be her strength, has turned into a weakness since she has not been able to reach them apart from one awkward telephone call.

Contact with other Bosnians in exile is marred by the equally perennial and pervasive suspicion of one another. So this is an ethnic minority of individuals severely marked by the psychological scars of the most atrocious events in Europe since World War II. Their risk is that they have nowhere to go at present that might make their lives meaningful again, apart from the possibility of raising their children to a worthwhile and coherent life. This could take place in Sweden or in Australia or in North America.

Dragan's full story

Although Dragan is not the main case story, his narrative contains so many important features that it may help to recount it in full. In many ways Dragan represents the displaced hybrid reality of the 21st century, a reality

which will of necessity become a novel syndrome in terms of social behaviour. Since he is alone and without a family in his exile, his existence seems the more exposed. Ana is, by virtue of her status as wife and mother, less lost than Dragan, though, at the same time, her objective difficulties are of the same kind.

Dragan was born in a small village on the outskirts of Sarajevo in 1969. His parents were educated. His father was the general editor of a newspaper and his mother was a teacher. His memories of the first eight years when they lived there are restricted to a few spaces between home and a preparatory school. His parents were both loyal to the Muslim cause, even if they did not support it in any active sense. His mother made a point of not making religion a cause of bad feeling or animosity towards other minorities - especially the Croats and the Serbs. His father was rather silent on this topic. When pressed on the question of whether it was bad to mix with Serbs or Croats, he tried to avoid the subject. He had a brother older by five years, and often got himself into fights with Serbs on and around the football field. When he was old enough to take part in the football games, he thought that the brawls between his brother and his friends on one side, and the Serb gangs on the other, were very unnecessary and socially constructed, even if he of course did not know that exact term at the time. He assumed that is why he tried to be friends with any boys on the football field, whatever their background. Sometimes his friendliness was rejected, and even met with violence, which he got used to somehow, and regarded as normal in a basically abnormal context.

His maternal grandparents were both devout Muslims. His grandfather was a doctor in a small village about a hundred kilometres from Sarajevo. His maternal grandmother assisted him in his rather primitive practice. This was before the Second World War. Many of his patients, though, were Croatians. Dragan only heard of one case when he refused to treat a patient because he was a Serb, but this Serb had shouted vile abuse at him, according to his grandmother. He was killed during the war by mistake, and hence very unnecessarily in Dragan's eyes since it did not serve any cause. It was probably a rather typical situation. Dragan's grandfather and some others were travelling to one of the frontlines of the partisans, with whom they sympathised, in order to take care of the wounded. On the road they were ambushed by a group of Serb nationalists who thought the Jeep they travelled in belonged to Croat lackeys of the Germans. Dragan's maternal grandmother became a regular nurse for the

partisans thereafter. With the new regime in Yugoslavia she was used as a nurse in the newly built hospitals where she never felt at ease. She was a dutiful person, someone who felt that she should do her duty wherever it was called for. In this way she wore herself down pretty fast and died in the early 1950s aged 52.

His paternal grandparents were quite different. His father was always rather reticent about their activities and their fate, as if these matters represented a dark secret, a skeleton in the closet. His paternal grandfather was a Serb. He grew up in the little village of Dragas from which Dragan got his name. There he was a craftsman of a certain skill. He did not like educated and bookish people. Hence it was the more surprising that he married the local school-teacher. She did not ever flaunt her relatively high education. But she carved out a life of her own against all odds, which she wanted to bequeath to Dragan's father. There was also a sister, who was some years older than he. She admired the grandfather and married a tailor, and together they managed a workshop for clothing. These two constellations - his grandfather and his aunt on one side and his grandmother and his father on the other – were worlds apart.

Dragan's father obviously experienced a lot of strain during his childhood, due to the seemingly uneven, incompatible couple that his parents constituted. This was due to not only the personalities and the personal orientations, but also a difference in religious background and possibly a perceived ethnic difference. But these cultural discrepancies within the family were so unnoticeable that it was only much later that his father, when he was already old, began to discern in retrospect what had actually transpired in his family. He was both mystified and embarrassed about it and hence his relative reticence on the subject. His line of profession was journalism, and his ambition was to be as independent a journalist as possible; somehow this line was a consequence of his wish to mirror contradictory aspects of human beings and the way false events are inflicted upon individuals under contradictory circumstances.

There was always a note of respect and tenderness between his parents. In spite of Dragan's use of the past tense they are both still alive as far as he knows. He does not quite know where they are at the moment and this worries him.

His memories of his childhood illustrate the quite complex cultural pattern that characterised the small town of his adolescence. His brother was already out of the nest by then. He had got involved in politics, not the

official party, but one of the clandestine opposition groups, more because he wanted some excitement out of life than because he believed very assiduously in anything in particular. He had a feeling sometimes that he was a rebel without a cause. That was Dragan's initial feeling during his early teens, but then he began to see that his brother wanted something specific out of life which could be realised through politics.

One memory that sticks in his mind, probably a typical Bosnian memory from the 1970s, is the following: his family was on an outing to Dubrovnik, which was very exciting for him as a young boy to see. He ran around the city wall several times as if in a state of ecstasy. His brother thought as usual that he was childish, spoiling his brother's chances with the more sophisticated Dubrovnik girls. In the afternoon the family made a trip up into the mountains above Dubrovnik, overlooking the Dubrovnik harbour. The family and two girl cousins were to visit an artist who was a distant relative of Dragan's mother's. In the nearby mountain village they were preparing for a wedding. The girls of the village dressed in a particular way which meant that they were still unmarried; only the bride, the groom and the parents could dress up. The bridegroom was not behaving in a disturbing manner, but remained composed while travelling back to the village from town. However the young cousins, who were more high-spirited than malicious, wanted to explore the hidden truth behind not only the bad relations between their neighbours but the mysterious nature of customs in these hills above Dubrovnik. So they borrowed, or rather took, some clothes - that is the folkloristic costumes strewn about in the artists dwelling - put them on and played about, dancing around and courting each other in a mock fashion. Little did they realise that those clothes had been deposited in the artist's custody for the duration of the wedding preparations. At two in the afternoon these outfits were to be reclaimed by their owners. Dragan's friends were out in the hills playing a kind of hide and seek courtship behind bushes and trees. They were spotted and what seemed like a village gang came after them. Panicking they fled, not thinking of the consequences. Dragan's oldest girl cousin Maria, who was a Serb, got stuck in a thorn bush, and tore her borrowed dress thereby ruining it. They felt that they could not abandon Maria in this tricky situation. They returned to give themselves up. The alarming thing was not just the wrath they encountered from their parents, but the vicious hatred the neighbours showed against Maria because of her background. The foul abuse shouted at this pretty, frail girl still rings in his ears. It felt like an

awakening to the horrible side of life from which he thus far had been protected. There was tragic follow up when Maria, later during the civil war, was attacked by Bosnian Serbs, who caught her protecting some Muslim friends.

There was no fairness, logic, reason or humanity in this war. Thus it was impossible to predict from one day to another what was going to happen, when from social psychology we have learned that human behaviour within certain frameworks is perfectly predictable. There all the cues and symbols which normally control human behaviour acquired other meanings.

Dragan's schooling was quite good under the circumstances, although from the very start he felt bored by the low level of the teachers. After all the family had lived in the vicinity of a cosmopolitan metropolis, albeit a small one, and now lived in a small town, Vikoc, in the sleepy countryside. The much acclaimed reputation of a high level of teaching in Eastern Europe is certainly true for certain urban areas, especially the attractive ones, but in rural Bosnia you sometimes come across levels of learning which are extremely primitive. Dragan was impatient and much too bright for the circumstances, which made him come into conflict with the teachers and most of the other pupils. These conflicts had nothing to do with so called ethnic background or even religion. There was indeed a delicate balance in Vikoc with respect to the various ethnic cultures but everyday life was rarely troubled by any of those problems, at least not openly.

For his own reasons Dragan had few friends except for an older man who had oddly enough moved back from abroad. It was not quite clear where he had lived; he was always somewhat secretive about that. But Dragan gathered that he had lived in an English speaking nation, most likely the US, since he often told stories with an American setting, and he had also lived in Italy, since his Italian was impeccable. He took Dragan under his wing since Dragan seemed to be the only person in Vikoc who was willing to listen to his stories, and what Dragan then called his philosophising.

‘He would never tell me exactly where he had lived abroad. He used faked names for the cities and countries he had visited, as if everything beyond Yugoslavia at that time represented a fantasy land. But he was highly educated and he was the one who introduced me to the great mathematicians - Euclides, G^odel and via Frege to

philosophy. Apparently he had been an engineer with opportunities to earn some money in the West because of his special knowledge. During the war he had been a teenage partisan. He got wounded in one leg that made him limp. All the kids in Vikoc used to follow after him, aping his limp. He did not seem to care.'

Dragan wondered why he had returned to Yugoslavia if his opportunities in the West had been so notably much better. His response was different every time Dragan asked, but Dragan had the feeling he had earned enough money to keep going without too much effort in the little town; apparently he wrote books on popular science which were printed in Beograd and for which he once again used a fake name. According to a rumour which Dragan learnt from his father, who though by nature was reticent but also not averse to passing this rumour onto him, his learned friend used these books for coded messages directed against the regime. He had suffered some major injustice by the regime which he could never forgive. Abroad he had made a lot of contacts with intelligence organisations in the West whom he provided with information about the state of military technology and the political opposition in Yugoslavia - hence the source of his comparative wealth. Dragan still thinks that his father was a bit jealous of Dragan's relation with the man so he didn't trust his judgement on this occasion, and still doesn't.

When he began his university studies in Sarajevo in 1988 he was so absorbed by the new life and the chance to stay in a bigger and more exciting city that he forgot about most of the people in Vikoc. Still under the influence of his friend however, he studied mathematics, physics and psychology. He studied those subjects because he felt at home with them, and never considered what exactly he would do with them. On his first visit back to Vikoc however, his friend was nowhere to be found, and from the few people who had any information about him, Dragan learnt that he had just vanished one day. Maybe it was the security service that had taken him away; Dragan imagined the worst. In fact he never heard of his friend again.

His life in Vikoc with friends was mainly occupied by two things - football and reading. He played in the local junior football team where he was a winger since he could run fast. Apart from the matches there was not much socialising. He rarely met up with others apart from an annual feast, where there was drinking and dancing to a level that he did not identify

with. Frankly there were occasions when he was terrified by the violent games that broke out during those feasts. 'There were very few of my age with whom I could discuss anything at all, least of all books. That was another reason for me to long to get away from Vikoc.' Thus it was a tremendous relief for him to go to Sarajevo where he met friends with whom he could discuss everything. For one thing, he had never had any contact with girls in Vikoc apart from some bashful flirtations. In Sarajevo social life was much more open and contact with girls very easy. In a way life before his student years was marked by a social balance that was however restricting, whereas in Sarajevo life was harmonious and satisfactory, but also much more full of social strains, not least ethnic strains. It had partly to do with the escalation of the nationality question that Milosevic had begun in Kosovo. A battle of symbols began. For instance the nationality plate on cars was changed back and forth to Bosnia and Yugoslavia depending on what faction you belonged to. In the street kids played mock wars with each other which continued in their rhymes. Somehow, wherever you were in 1990, you knew the war was approaching and there seemed no chance of stopping it, in spite of the fact that important citizens' groups in all the republics demonstrated openly against what seemed to be an inevitable war.

Dragan was, interestingly, unable to say whether he and his friends made any plans at all to cope with the war situation. That was typical. Everyone talked as if the war would come. Everyone seemed convinced that it would. But nobody was prepared for it and did not want to prepare for it. Even though they watched what happened in June 1991 as a prelude to the war between Croatia and Serbia that autumn, it was frankly seen as a war between national territorial interests of no concern to them. It was only in March 1992, a couple of months later, that they realised that the conflict had invaded the whole society. Still they - Dragan's girlfriend and himself - had a feeling that it was the business of the political class, that is, political interests without popular backing were behind the military moves. But as the war rolled on there was soon nowhere to hide.

They heard the brutal language in the streets and in public places. The university time had by contrast been good for Dragan. He had taken degrees in those very subjects he was determined to study. One teacher had offered him a position for doctoral studies as soon as he had finished his MSc. His girlfriend is still in Bosnia. She studied literature and philosophy at that time which complemented his inquisitive nature perfectly. They

appeared to have a good future ahead of them. Their friends were also studying combinations of disciplines out of interest rather than for particular professions. They had an inexhaustible desire to explore the world. They could sit until early morning discussing quantum theory, brain research, the driving forces behind entrepreneurship in business, postmodernism in social theory and literature, all topics which had been virtually non-existent before. Not that they knew so much, but their very existence gave them a hunger to explore the discourse of these broad topics.

At that time his relationship with his parents, who were educated people, was at a low point since he identified them with life in Vikoc and the narrow-minded, ignorant and rather primitive style of thinking and behaving associated with the small town. This was unfair. They had been forced to live a confined life, more limited than they had wanted. But he was still in this mood when the Bosnian Serbs caught up with him and his friends one traumatic evening. He and his girlfriend had been to the cinema with friends. Suddenly they heard a roar and some flashes of light against the evening sky as they walked back from the cinema. At the corner of the street where they lived there was a small inn. They decided to go in and take a glass of beer to calm down. Then Dragan remembered that he had left his rather expensive coat at the cinema. So he rushed back to get it. The cashier had taken care of it inside her kiosk. When Dragan got back to the inn fifteen minutes later, there were no familiar faces left. All of them were gone and to this day he does not know of their fate. Raids were common all through that night by the Serbian militia who had penetrated that region of the Bosnian capital. Due to the insecurity of the situation and his panic, Dragan did not wait for anybody to turn up, nor did he find time to enquire at the inn about his friends. He thought that if they just made it through that night, they would all see each other next morning at the University.

But during that night he was suddenly offered the chance by one of his former teachers, in whom he had a great trust, to take a seat in his packed car and escape from the country under the cover of night. Through their mutual friends he had learned that Dragan would be returning to the inn, so he waited for Dragan there. Immediately he ordered Dragan to get into the car, where his wife and one daughter of 15 were. Dragan insisted he had to get his belongings but the teacher said there was no time for that and ordered Dragan to get into the car. Perhaps after a while they would all

be able to come back to Bosnia, and Serbia even, and meet again under happier circumstances. Dragan remembered how his hands began to freeze. But the goal for that day, or rather night, was to reach the border and get into Croatia, from where he had a plan to continue out of the country and get to Germany. He had a cousin in Düsseldorf whom he intended using as a base for some breathing space. He did not trust the Croatians under Tudjman, because, as he expressed it, Croatia under Tudjman had deteriorated. Croatia was like a hurt animal after the fall of Vukovar, and you never knew where their desire for revenge would strike. The Bosnian Muslims were, by nature and definition, suspect, because unlike Croats and Serbs they were not nationalistic. Rather they were seen as agents of foreign interests, even though most of the Muslims had only lukewarm religious affiliations.

So Dragan accompanied this teacher and saviour into the night because there was no alternative. It would be better to get to Germany than be persecuted in Croatia. Also, Dragan had his passport in his wallet which was another argument for not waiting. The situation was so terrible that one moment of hesitation might be fatal. One had to act on impulse.

The arrival in Sweden was the result of a new twist of events that steered his fate. As they were travelling through Croatia they met some Swedish acquaintances of his teacher who once upon a time had studied in Sweden. They got to Zagreb the following day where Dragan's teacher was supposed to pick up some papers and messages from his contacts. All of a sudden in a café he bumped into an old friend from the university of Gothenburg.

Dragan was introduced to the man from Gothenburg (we will call him Per) and they told him their story and the conditions surrounding them. So Per felt an obligation to help him out since Sweden was at that time prepared to accept victims from the war in Bosnia. In fact this had only just started but Per felt he could create a precedence with Dragan's case in the Gothenburg area. Thus Dragan became his protégé for a short time. Per is no longer in Gothenburg. He left for a post in the environmental business two years ago. But he gave Dragan a new lease of life in Gothenburg. He was what Dragan came to think of as the generous conscientious Swede whose desire to help others had become second nature. Later he came to realise that the do-gooder appeared more frequently in a foreign land, in particular for those from a nation in distress. Per managed to get a permit

for Dragan when he returned to Gothenburg via the consulate in Zagreb. This seemed to present no difficulty since Per had great credibility with the Swedish foreign service. Dragan considered himself simply lucky that things worked out so smoothly.

Thus Dragan arrived in early May 1992. He remembers the day as if it were yesterday, since it was a beautiful but rather cold day. The long light in the evenings in Sweden was a revelation to him, as if he had come to a calm, civilised and light country. But it was cold for another couple of weeks until real spring warmth arrived. He felt somehow that this was so new and so remarkable a change in its own right that other more practical problems could wait. He was invited to stay in a guest room arranged by Per in his house in the district of Örgryte and Dragan soon realised that he was very privileged. However, he wanted to start his own life, so that he could say that he had his own base when he tried to reach his family and his girlfriend. Things were very disrupted and he was terrified at the mere thought of what could have happened to them. But just because of that he also felt that he had to have something to offer them and what he wanted to offer was a free space in peace in Sweden. To do this he felt he needed to have established himself independently. During the summer he worked in a restaurant with Yugoslav staff. Even here he was lucky to find such a restaurant in such a central place and nice location in Gothenburg. At the same time Dragan was offered a spare room at one of the nice but expensive student hotels. He realised everything was temporary during that particular summer. The authorities allocated him a social worker, a woman in her early forties, who was very conscious of all the problems of culture shock.

His first encounter with a Swedish physician and his Swedish nurse was a bit of shock – that he had to be thoroughly examined when he'd arrived from a distant country in only the clothes he stood up in. Dragan belonged to the first wave of refugees from Bosnia, a nation nobody in Sweden seemed to have heard of before. Everything was so new to him and to them, the Swedes. The horror stories from Bosnia shook the world over the next couple of months. Ethnic cleansing became a new political concept, in spite of the fact that it had occurred in many places before. But now everyone was confronted with it through the television.

Somehow this may have been in the back of the minds of the doctor and the nurse who were routinely investigating all newcomers so that, as he

understood it, no mysterious foreign germs could be brought into Sweden, or that is what he felt their attitude conveyed. Dragan knew almost no Swedish at the time, just a couple of phrases, and even though his English was quite good they preferred to speak to him through an interpreter, a woman who had lived in Sweden for twenty years and knew the hidden codes, etc.

Nevertheless Dragan still could not quite get over the shock he encountered. Their routine investigation of his state of health felt to him like a trial of someone who was a possible carrier of Mediterranean diseases and even a potentially murderous psyche, since he came from that murderous region, the Balkans. The interpreter once in a while gave Dragan a hint about how to dodge a question but otherwise she seemed so used to the procedure that she hardly reacted. But he reacted and in a rather agitated voice asked them if they could understand the situation he had left behind, and what it was like to land almost by chance in a completely different culture. They had been kind enough to accept his presence, but that did not make him a criminal or a fugitive from suspect circumstances. Both the doctor and nurse shrugged their shoulders in a cold manner and asked Dragan to kindly submit to the medical investigation in a co-operative spirit. He could not resist asking them why Sweden willingly received so many political refugees, and if they really wanted foreigners around. Was it, Dragan had asked, a case of assuming the white man's burden, but unwillingly, forced on them by the evils of the world beyond Sweden. Somehow he had built up resentment against the arrogance he felt he had met on the part of many Swedish officials. and it was at this moment he felt he had to voice it and declare his dignity in this very exposed situation. Had he shrunk from voicing it and in some way admitted his lower status as a human being simply because of his refugee status he would have found it much harder to face those difficulties with which he knew he'd be confronted. The doctor and nurse told the interpreter that Dragan was being difficult, by implication disturbed, something they had no competence to handle. For a while Dragan actually thought this might be grounds for sending him out of the country. This is a fear every immigrant constantly lives with. But nothing happened. But the attitude of the authorities is erratic. The authorities do not act in a predictable way. They often send people home who everyone thought were 100 per cent safe, while others who seemed destined to be sent packing, remain. The irregularity and the apparent arbitrariness of the authorities creates some

heartbreaking stories.

In contrast Dragan, after intensive studies of the Swedish language, began to take courses at the university. He was beginning to get a circle of friends, both of immigrant background and a few Swedes. His intense interest in human motivation made social psychology an obvious choice of study. His need for understanding arose out of deeper need to know what had happened to his family, who in turn probably took it for granted that he now lay in a mass grave somewhere, or was in a Bosnian-Serb concentration camp. He was plagued incessantly by the question of how he could get information about them, and furthermore tell them about his situation and urge them to get to Sweden. Nevertheless he has so far had no news and fears the worst; yet at the same time he still hopes they are safe and sound somewhere outside Bosnia which has turned into a hell on earth. How can it be expected that refugees quietly muse over the absurd turn of events while the war criminals are doing as they please?

Dragan remained remarkably composed throughout the interview. His strategy was to stay cool, philosophical and fatalistic.

However, he has no job in Sweden and as far as he can see only very lucky circumstances will bring him one. At the time of the interview he was very close to sitting a Swedish university exam in addition to the one he had almost completed in Sarajevo, so his accumulated knowledge is good, and his existential knowledge even better, as he remarked ironically. He manages with temporary jobs, mostly within a circle of other Bosnian immigrants and the wider range of immigrant groups in the suburbs of Gothenburg. He has moved out of the expensive student quarters in the inner city to the suburbs where more immigrants live.

He excused himself for expressing himself somewhat brusquely, but he suffered the creeping feeling, frequent among immigrants, that Sweden has given up on the prospects of a multicultural society. Those immigrants with a traumatic background, which often makes them highly nervous, are beginning to sense a solidarity vis-à-vis Swedish society. Immigrants may have excellent relations with individual Swedes, but in general Swedes cannot be automatically trusted; the credibility of any Swede has to undergo a number of invisible tests before complete trust can be taken for granted and contact established for the purposes of, for example, an interview. And Dragan sees it as an existential testimony to the outside world, as a political statement without being explicitly political, and as a

tribute to people like Bernard Henri-Lévy, who made a courageous documentary film about Bosnia.

Dragan's subjects are mathematics, psychology, and social-psychology as part of sociology, and with that combination he could have had good employment prospects, if he were a Swede with a Swedish background. With Dragan's background he is extremely well-placed, better than any Swede, to understand the position of many immigrants. It's surprising that the Swedish authorities do not make use of him. But there seems to be some barrier against such a move that's hard to overcome.

Maria: the Case of a New Syndrome

The next case is Maria from Colombia. Both in terms of background, aims and purposes, she resembles the Spanish case from Las Ramblas in Barcelona - Juan Manuel. Maria's migration to Sweden belongs to that category of individually motivated migration that is becoming increasingly typical of these international movements.

Maria comes from a mixed family of an indigenous father and a European, that is, German-Jewish mother. The two turn out to be difficult to reconcile, and this is reflected in her wish to seek self-realisation elsewhere. Hence she moved first from the coastal city where she grew up to a southern town in order to help with literacy projects, just like Juan Manuel. There she feels sufficiently far from her family to be able to think more clearly. She meets her partner with whom she has a daughter. He is involved in the same mission, but gets fed up with it after a while, though it's not clear if he sees the possibilities of advancement as too limited, if he is critical of the literacy-programs as such, or if he simply wants to move on to more exciting goals. He moves to Sweden to pursue certain interests concerning language research. She follows him without having any real project of her own in Sweden, except for a vague interest in runes.

In Sweden she gradually grows away from her partner. But she insists on staying on, in spite of her family's persistent attempts at bringing her back to Colombia, and the relative hardship she has to endure in Sweden as mostly unemployed, or working as a cleaning woman. Her university qualification from Colombia turns out not to be recognised in Sweden. She has no prospects commensurate with her social background and qualifications. Nevertheless she finds great difficulties in returning. She is willing to expose herself to risk, since self-realisation appears more

possible in Sweden than in Colombia.

The days of the late 1980s, when immigrants had a higher proportion of employed than non-immigrants seem far away.

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