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## **Stockholm - Homogenous Diversity**

### **Introduction**

There can be no doubt that cultural diversity is on the increase in the Western world. The flow of forms, styles, objects and ways of living and thinking, over all kinds of social and cultural boundaries, is more intense than ever before. The origins of this increasing diversity are diverse, and include migration, tourism, globalised consumer markets and new technology. In Sweden this cultural diversity is included in the concept "multicultural" Sweden.

### **The When, Where and How of Multiculture**

What is "multicultural Sweden"? In newspapers, books, TV and radio, Sweden is portrayed as a place where diversity is on the increase. The equation is simply expressed: as the numbers of immigrants and refugees increase also the diversity of people, languages, styles, genres, entire cultures increases. In 1930, approximately one percent of Sweden's population was born abroad, in 1995 almost eleven percent. In 1930 there were perhaps a dozen languages spoken in Sweden, today around 150. Sweden, then, is multicultural. But is it really so simple? What is cultural diversity comprised of? Where can it be found? In the Swedish National Encyclopaedia (NE), localisation has been built into the explanation of what multicultural is: "characterised by many different lifestyles, languages and experiences. Residential areas with high proportions of immigrants from different countries, e.g. Rinkeby in the suburb of Stockholm, are characterised by multicultural experiences and values." [trans.] What NE relates is a summary of widely disseminated conceptions that equate "multicultural" with immigrants. A few city suburbs have been pointed at as particularly "multicultural". One thorny consequence is that a highly symbolic boundary has arisen between two different sorts of Sweden, one "multicultural" with many immigrants and one "ordinary", "normal", inhabited by Swedes. All of the talk about immigrants and refugees in scientific literature and political debate, TV and radio programmes makes up a multicultural discourse that is now firmly rooted in Swedish reality. The question is, however, what equivalents this discourse has in everyday practice

### **Homogenisation and Diversification**

The talk of a pluralistic, multicultural Sweden refers often to a surface layer that has deliberately been made visible. At the same time, the underlying fundamental patterns -- political and economic power structures, etc. -- have a completely different outline. Sweden has in certain respects never been as homogenous as now. Whether we live in Stockholm or Visby we can shop in outlets that are part of national or even international chains, stay at Best Western or Sweden Hotels, eat at McDonald's and Pizza Hut, watch the same TV-programmes and listen to the same kinds of music. The "multicultural" landscape's variegation stands in glaring contrast to the brands' uniformity. Pluralism, diversity, multicultural are dependent on uniform structures -- a versatile society requires a stable infrastructure. Regular flights, the tourist industry, transnational companies for production, distribution and sales of sound and image, the Internet and other sorts of transnational motorways belong to the fundamental structural prerequisites of increased diversity. A rapid and powerful monopolisation and globalisation by a few gigantic industrial conglomerates is underway within these structures. Almost the entirety of the avalanche of texts that nowadays stream out across the world do so with Bill Gate's and Microsoft's blessing. Most of the incredible numbers of programmes transmitted over radio and TV networks across the world reach their public via radio and television sets from Sony and Matsushita. In other words, the growth of "multicultural society" has gone hand in hand with capitalistic and technological development, not least in the area of music. The range of music on offer has been diversified as never before thanks to the new globally distributed music technology. More genres and artists reach a public over increasingly

large areas. It is now possible for Sweden's Greek population to find themselves in the same type of musical space as Greeks in Athens and Thessaloniki. At the same time, music technology has contributed to an increased homogenisation of music throughout the world, by mediaization and global distribution of a handful of megastars. In 1996, we carried out a survey among music store customers in Stockholm. Each music store we visited had specialised in an "ethnic" range. One of the questions we posed was what artists the customers listened to apart from the music they were looking for at the moment. The most common answer among young music consumers was Michael Jackson and George Michael, regardless of the customers' national or ethnic origins or whether the music store they visited was in central Stockholm, or in one of Stockholm's suburbs.

### **Many Questions -- Few Answers**

In summary one can say that the questions surrounding "multiculture" far outnumber the answers. The problems with the concept of culture are many and extensive. With the prefix multi- they increase in number and difficulty. Is "multiculture" a descriptive, normative or political programmatic concept? Does it relate to a decisive deep change in Swedish society or a surface phenomenon that has been dramatised for particular political purposes? Does "multicultural Sweden" exist only as representations and ideas in the "spoken reality", or does it also exist as a lived reality in everyday life? Despite all of these problems, the government has decided that Sweden is a multicultural society. Since 1 May 1999, Swedish employers are required by law, Swedish Statue Book 1999:30, to actively promote ethnic diversity in the labour market. If the law is to be followed, they must know what the concept multiculture/diversity means. But the translation into concrete practice is not easy. Under the threat of penalties many institutions, companies and organisations are now attempting to understand what it is they are actually supposed to do to promote ethnic diversity in working life. In any case, it is reasonable to stick to the first and simplest question: "Multicultural Sweden", what is it? Or rather, where, when and how is "multiculture" given shape in Sweden today? In what arenas and in what contexts? By what means and expressive forms? We have tried to wrestle with these questions by looking further into "multicultural" Stockholm, the place in Sweden with the highest proportion of immigrants, every third person having a foreign background

### **Diversity in Different Dimensions**

When multiculturalism is interpreted as ethnic diversity, the difference between the major cities in Sweden and the country-side is huge. In Stockholm County, the Swedish county most densely populated by immigrants, almost half a million, nearly 29% of the population (Statistics Sweden 1995) have immigrant background. Almost every third Stockholmer has a "foreign background". The basis of the population ought to be a sufficient basis for multicultural cultural life in Stockholm. According to the 1995 population statistics, Stockholm County is the one most densely populated by immigrants in Sweden with 28.6 % first and second generation immigrants.

Stockholm, like many other larger cities, has a long history as an immigrant city. The city was largely created by central Europeans and the German dominance during the Middle Ages is especially well documented. While the countryside has been depopulated, immigration from other countries has increasingly been aimed at the cities. In April 2000 there were 223 immigrant associations in the municipality of Stockholm registered at the Immigrant Institute. In the rest of Stockholm there were a further 262 associations, altogether 485. Is this multiculturalism that we see reflected in the immigrant statistics? Whether people born

in other countries "have" or represent different cultures is of course an important question in this context. Approximately 30% of those in Stockholm County who were born abroad have emigrated from the other Nordic countries. To what extent do they contribute to a multicultural Stockholm? Saami, Romanies and Jews belong to Stockholm's multiculturalism but despite this are not in the statistics as so many of them have lived in Sweden for such a long time that they are not counted as immigrants. Differences in habits and ways of life are related to the country of origin, but there are many other perhaps more important factors. The daily paper *Dagens Nyheter* published two articles under the collective name "Separate Worlds" in March 2000. In the articles two immigrants from Stockholm were presented. The two young men, Yashar from Iran and Eyüp from Turkey, both appear to have the same prerequisites, but when examined more closely have nothing in common other than the fact that their families come from two adjacent countries in the Middle East.

*Yashar Maradbakhti is counting on success in life. He lives at Gärdet in Stockholm and is studying to become a computer engineer at the Royal College of Technology. Eyüp Akdag lives in Flemingsberg south of Stockholm. He dreams of becoming a mechanic but first of all he must fill the gaps in his primary school education and qualify for secondary school. Both young men are immigrants but they live in separate worlds. (Svensson 2000) [trans.]*

Yashar Maradbakhti was born in Teheran in 1979. His parents belonged to the Iranian upper class. His father was managing director of a large company and his mother a well-paid economist. The change in regimes in Iran occurred the year Yashar was born. The family's situation changed successively and in 1986 they decided to flee to Sweden. His parents decided to "get into" Swedish society and therefore moved to a flat at Gärdet in Stockholm's inner city.

*"I grew up as a Swede," says Yashar. "For a long time we were the only immigrants in the building, and I had almost only Swedish friends." He graduated from high school with good grades from a three-year scientific programme at the Gymnasium on Östermalm. He is now studying computers at the College of Technology in the same part of town. (Svensson 2000) [trans.]*

Both of Eyüp Akdag's parents are Turkish immigrants. He was born in 1982 in Sweden and grew up in Flemingsberg, an area with many immigrants south of Stockholm. Eyüp's parents were for a long time uncertain if they would stay in Sweden or move back to Turkey. They chose therefore to place their son in the Turkish class at school in Flemingsberg, which he attended for the first six years. He learnt Turkish well but no English and poor Swedish.

Today he has considerable problems continuing his education to become a mechanic because his knowledge of the basic subjects is lacking. The *Dagens Nyheter* article shows clearly how that what can be described as multicultural when simplified in reality hides more complex contexts. Eyüp and Yashar are young men of the same age with their origins in Western Asia. They nevertheless live in "separate worlds". Cultural diversity in Swedish society quickly slides over to social diversity, which can most easily be described as class differences. It is clear that the population of suburbs like Flemingsberg or Botkyrka in the north have different advantages and opportunities to those in Stockholm's inner city or in "Swedish" suburbs like Täby and Djursholm. Differences in education, wealth, status and language skills, factors of a decisive significance for people's prerequisites in life, are hidden in the talk of immigrants as a unitary category or representatives of "their culture".

### **A City of Differences**

The ethnic and social differences between Stockholm's inner city and outlying areas are great. In the inner city the dominant immigrant groups are Britains, Germans and Americans (Järtelius 1993:68). Immigrants with origins in poor countries who move into central Stockholm have, like Yashar Maradbakhtis' parents, often chosen to live a "Swedish" life. Immigrants are most numerous in the southern and western suburbs, Skärholmen, Vårberg, Tensta, Rinkeby and Hallonbergen, and in the municipalities of Huddinge and Botkyrka south of Stockholm. Botkyrka has the most immigrants with over 48%. The Stockholm County municipality with the fewest immigrants is Norrtälje at 15.6%. Furthermore the concentration varies significantly between different parts of the municipalities. Relatively few immigrants live in southern Botkyrka while there are all the more in the northern part. The municipal sub-district of Fittja is usually highlighted as being the area with "the fewest Swedes" in Sweden (Andersson 1998). According to the latest population census (December 1997) Fittja had 6,941 inhabitants (Lernebo 1999:2). Approximately 60% of them were born abroad. If we also count second-generation immigrants, 88% of the population in Fittja had an immigrant background. Unemployment in Fittja is high, approximately 8%. But the so-called hidden figure is approximately 30%, which means that almost every third adult in Fittja is not registered as gainfully employed, studying, unemployed or in early retirement. The hidden figure is made up of people whose occupation is not known to the authorities. A large part are probably housewives, but there are also black market workers, criminals and people whose prerequisites are so disadvantageous that the labour exchange does not regard them as being at the labour-market's disposal. (Lernebo 1999) The average income in Fittja is SEK 94,100

p.a. to be compared with and Stockholm's SEK 160,000. Fittja is thereby, in official statistics, placed under the heading "extremely low income", together with a few areas in the municipality of Malmö. The cultural geographer Roger Andersson (1998:23p.) describes the connection between the ethnic hierarchy" in Botkyrka and the population's economic prerequisites. First generation immigrants from Iraq, Lebanon, Chile and Turkey live to a very high degree in areas with few Swedes.

*This ethnic segregation of domiciles possibly offers a form of basic security in the confirmation of identity, preservation of the ability to communicate, etc., and if it did not also reflect an economic-structural subordination and material vulnerability in the form of small cash margins and dependency on benefits it would hardly of itself be a cause for municipal and state attempts to intervene. The overriding problem is that the ethnic hierarchy in terms of the location of domiciles very clearly reflects the hierarchy of the earnings situation. (Andersson 1998) [trans.]*

In Fittja the segregation of domiciles has clearly both social and ethnic causes.

Unemployment rates are high and incomes very low among Fittja's "Swedish" population when compared with the rest of the country. Among the unemployed in Fittja, both Swedes and immigrants, levels of education are also very low. In a survey conducted in April 1992, 52 of job-hunters possessed only primary school education. (Lernebo 1999) Fittja's diversity of ethnic groups does not seem to be the answer to the question of where multicultural Sweden is to be found. Fittja's stereotypical blocks of flats and indoor town centre has more in common with other dormitory areas of Sweden from the same period than with the inhabitants' different homelands and cultures.

### **The Multicultural Restaurant Scene**

Perhaps it is when we look at the restaurant scene that Stockholm really appears multicultural? Food from other cultures is nothing new. Stockholm's Grand Hotel had an "Indian Taverna" in 1900 and in the 1940s, Russian food was served at Restaurant Kremlin in the city centre. The first pizzeria in Stockholm was opened in 1959 (Järtelius 1993). At the beginning of the 1970s there was an explosive increase in pizzerias while at the same time Chinese restaurants became a common sight. Since then the Swedish restaurant world has been increasingly "ethnified". A clear sign is that the restaurants in the Yellow Pages' "Restaurant Guide" in today's telephone directory are sorted by the food's ethnic origins. There are, for example, Greek, Persian, German and American restaurants. Of 34 restaurant

categories, 21 are references to where the food comes from. Over and above this there is a range of categories with links to certain geographical or cultural origins, e.g. "kebab restaurants" and "pizzeria". The category "Swedish restaurant" is also in the guide nowadays, another sign that "the Swedish" has now definitely taken its place in this multicultural arena.

### **A taste of Greece**

Marketing a restaurant as "Greek" demands that one offers a comprehensive image where the supporting elements quickly and simply create a Greek atmosphere: food, drink, music, the appearance of the staff and their clothes, decorations, etc. At Restaurant Esperia the customers are offered "A taste of Greece" -- an appetiser. at is in any case what it says on the matchboxes on the tables. When we arrive at the restaurant it is still early evening, but it is already half-full of customers. Some are eating, others sit and sip a glass of Retsina or stave off their hunger with a little bread and tzatziki while awaiting company. Esperia's atmosphere is part of the presentation of the restaurant as genuinely Greek. But the restaurant is at the same time very Swedish, it is situated on Södermalm in Stockholm and is part of another whole, an ethnic range of restaurants that are typical of Western European cities. As a Swede one feels like a tourist, which is naturally the whole idea. The staff is Greek, the music is Greek, the wine is Greek, the food -- even the scents in the premises -- are Greek. And precisely as on the Greek tourist islands Kos or Rhodes the customers are predominantly Swedish, at least this early in the evening. Esperia is a family business. The waiter Sakis Karafanos runs it with his father, brother, sister and cousins. The restaurant is frequented by both Swedes and Greeks. Sakis tells us:

*Just over 60 of our customers are Swedish. At the weekends it is mainly Greeks, they come when we have live music.*

*Do you think Greeks choose places with music?*

*Yes, if they have the choice that's what they choose. They listen to a lot of old Greek rebetika. It still works, everybody knows those songs.*

*Do you mean that the songs from the 1930s are still popular among young people?*

*They still work.*

*Would there be any differences if this restaurant were in Greece?*

*This is not a restaurant like those on Rhodes, but they are not representative of Greece, this is more like in northern Greece.*

*What do you do to make it more Greek?*

*It's always a plus if you can make the customers relive old memories.*

*Do you think there are many Swedes who come here and relive holiday memories?*

*I've heard it said many, many times... But for the Greeks the music is especially important. One wants to feel that one is Greek.  
So music is especially emphasised?  
It is essential. Everyone wants to dance... If there is a party without music, everyone goes home.  
(M.DL960203)*

When we have spoken to Greeks in other situations -- at parties, at home, in sports associations, we also meet a different Greece, a "Greece in Exile" which lives through the life of associations. It is to be found on the premises where they meet and talk, play board games, party and dance. In the Greek Association's restaurant in the Stockholm suburb Skärholmen there is none of Esperia's consciously presented "Greekness". For those who do not know where to look it can even be hard to find. At the entrance there is a simple sign in Swedish and Greek: "Greek Association. Skärholmen". A counter for self-service that leads to the till borders the restaurant's long room. There are simple quadratic tables with checked tablecloths and steel-legged straight-backed chairs. Apart from the Greek flag crossed with the Swedish on the wall behind the counter, there is nothing here that promises "a taste of Greece". The restaurant does not have much in common with Esperia, but instead is like the majority of cafés beyond the tourist strips in Greece.

Kostas Malouchous moved to Sweden 26 years ago. He was much involved in the Greek Association during the first few years. Kostas often visits the restaurant in Skärholmen. A majority of Stockholm's Greeks are members of Greek associations, which makes it easy to meet friends on their premises.

*Why do you go there?  
To meet other Greeks as it is now. To have parties, to celebrate Greek holidays.  
To maintain the culture and language. Today the association's primary objective is to preserve the culture and...15 or 20 years ago there was another problem.  
en we had immigrant problems.  
What were they?  
The dream of returning to Greece. We couldn't speak the language. There were always problems with insurance, pensions and everything else.  
(M.DL960201)*

The high point of Greek immigration to Sweden was during the 1970s. Today the Greeks are for the most part established in Swedish society and the function of the Greek associations has changed in keeping with that. During the 1970s, for example, their most important task was to support their members in the difficult social situation that is exile -- unemployment,

elimination, and social problems of various kinds. Today the associations are more focused on cultural activities and unity. Together they celebrate religious festivals and arrange parties, almost always with dance, music and guest artists from Greece.

### **Cultural Activities**

How is cultural diversity reflected in Botkyrka's institutions and living environment? One might expect schools, youth clubs and other institutions with schooling in music to have a "multicultural" content in their activities. In a survey of musical activities among Swedes and immigrant youths in northern Botkyrka it was established that immigrants were very significantly under-represented in practically every instance (Thorell 1999). George Varney, who is responsible for music training in Rinkeby, says the same thing of the music school in Rinkeby. The result also very much agrees with similar studies from Copenhagen (Fock 1996/1997). Young people with immigrant backgrounds are almost completely absent in aesthetic secondary school education, in municipal music schools and other municipal musical activities. In Botkyrka there are two youth clubs with a musical profile. One is Musikhuset (The Music House) Kårsby in Norsborg. Visitors to the youth club are representative of the rest of the population in Norsborg i.e. more than 50 have an immigrant background. In Musikhuset there are nine rehearsal rooms, a concert hall, a recording studio and a "rock school" with teachers from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. At the time of the survey there were 23 bands using Musikhuset's premises. In two of them, a rock group and a hip hop group, there were young people from Latin America. It seems likely that the popular Swedish rap group Latin Kings have played a large part as role models for Latin American youth. There was also the band Elfquest with two Syrian boys who play techno and a lone Turkish hard rocker. The other 20 bands at Musikhuset all had Swedish and Finnish members, often in mixed constellations. The Finnish young people are musically active and are part of the same grouping as the Swedes in northern Botkyrka. This reflects differences in musical practices that also exist in the countries of origin. Pop music enjoys a similar significance in Sweden and Finland. The same connection to musical practices in countries of origin underlies the fact that young people with, for example, Polish and Hungarian backgrounds devote themselves a great deal to music. The interest in music relates often in such cases, to genres within "the Grand Tradition", i.e. Western art music.

## **Musical Education**

At Botvid's Gymnasium in northern Botkyrka 8590 of the pupils have an immigrant background (Lernebo 1999:26). The "most Swedish" course is the aesthetic music programme, pupils with an immigrant background comprising about 20 . orell reports that one "...notices an eye-catching shortage, or rather a total lack of pupils born in or with parents from Turkey, Syria and Iraq..." [trans.] Similarly, "Swedish" pupils dominate municipal schools of music. Ann-Birgit Idestam-Almqvist, who is responsible for music training at the Municipal School of Music in Botkyrka, is of the opinion that pupils with an immigrant background are "exceptions" in her music school. (Thorell 1999:7) However, there has been instruction on several occasions in saz -- the Turkish long-necked lute -- that attracted Assyrian/Syrian and Turkish pupils (c.f. Hammarlund 1993). Thorell states that a partial explanation for the low numbers of immigrants taking courses in aesthetic music, in Musikhuset and in the Municipal School of Music are the differences in taste -- that these institutions are primarily occupied with music that does not appeal to young immigrants. The Municipal School of Music is associated with Western art music, Musikhuset like the aesthetic music programme, is based on rock from the 1960s and 1970s. The young immigrants in orell's study preferred to watch MTV on which modern soul and similar genres dominated. Guitar groups of the type prevalent during the 1970s, which have a great influence on the choice of music in the aesthetic music programme, were for the main part entirely absent from their preferences. At the same time one cannot ignore the fact that musical training is a question of class, or perhaps rather a class-related question of culture. Music training is not included in most Turkish parent's horizon, which has to do with both their cultural values and their class background. The point is that culture and class are interwoven and that that which was previously interpreted in terms of class is now often interpreted in terms of culture or origin. For the majority of poor Turkish immigrant families, the idea of letting the children attend music school is quite simply alien. Compared with immigrants from, for example, Germany, Yugoslavia, China and Poland, the groupings that dominate in northern Botkyrka seldom pursue further education. Nabu Poli from Tumba in Botkyrka is the first Assyrian to have studied at the Musicology department at Stockholm University. Nabu's father, Aziz, is proud of his son's playing and desire to advance himself in music. Without his support Nabu would not have chosen a musical education. Aziz Poli has several reasons for supporting his son's choice of education. Practising music was opposed in his homeland by the church and therefore, he thinks, it is more important to exploit the opportunity for musical

education here in Sweden. But music is not a profession of choice for the majority of Assyrians. Why? In a conversation about music as a profession the members of the Assyrian music group Qenneshrin (in which Nabu Poli plays the keyboard) gave quite a unanimous answer. A musician has low status and earns little money. The musician's profession is attractive to youth but is not something to be contemplated in the long run. The three young musicians in Qenneshrin described the status of the profession among Assyrians and their own plans for the future as follows:

*NABU: ey go about and people ask of course what you're doing, what are you studying, are you studying anything? You say that yes you're studying to be an engineer or economist or something, then you've got higher status. Ah, he's studying... But if you say you're a musician or something similar, then it's still this...*

*GABRIEL: I think a lot about what I earn myself. I've wasted my time at school and all that. The only thing I thought about was when would I get training and when was I going to play at the next party and so on. Now I think, a musician, what's that? I've wasted my time. But if you're a singer you earn well. en maybe you think that this is good both financially and as a hobby and you have more status. Yes the status; that's the thing, a singer has much more status; that's how people think. I think that way myself. It's all about money. Many have a good education but they don't earn much. If you see someone working at the post office you're bound to think he didn't finish school and begun working at the post office straight away. But he's also been to college. Doctors earn a lot of money, a lawyer earns money. at's why you think, you should become a lawyer because then you'll have status, you'll make money. Everything is about money.*

*EMANUEL: No, it's not the same values, but deep inside you know that it's two worlds [life as a musician and the "ordinary" professional life]. In other words you deceive yourself. I think music is great and so on, but then I sit there at home and think "what the hell have I done, wasted my time on music." It was worthless. Deep down inside you know what reality is like.*

*(M.DL970226:2)*

What should one be if the musician's profession is not an attractive prospect? Synth player Gabriel Masso's view of his future also represents many other young Assyrians in Botkyrka.

*What are you going to be then?*

*Me? Either I'll continue studying something economic or I'll start my own company.*

*And do what?*

*Hotdog stand or tobacconist. Hamburgers, do you want fries with that...(laughs).*

*(M.DL970226:2)*

## **Multicultural Stockholm**

*The pulse of Johannesburg's lively streets, the exuberant delight of Quebec's blend of cultures, the power of afro pop's capital Paris and the magic of Delhi's art music. The world in the north is immersed in the buzz of the cities of the world -- obvious meeting places where new and old traditions are constantly born and rediscovered. Världen i Norden (The World in the North).*

The quote comes from the music project Världen i Norden. It describes the face of multicultural positive cultural cross-fertilisation. These special cultural meeting places do not arise of themselves. They are often, as in Världen i Norden, the result of initiatives from institutions of culture. We find consciously presented expressive multicultural in central Stockholm at music and dance arrangers like FolkoFolk (people&people), Föreningen Omåttlig dans (the immeasurable dance association) and Mix music café or in projects such as Forum för världskultur (Forum for world culture) with Stockholm Folk Big Band and Världsmusiklaboratoriet (The world music laboratory). Multicultural is a description of levels of society that cannot be applied to individual or group level. No individual or group is multicultural, but some societies can be. Multicultural also has to do with those who describe it. There is a hidden hierarchical structure that makes some peoples' descriptions of society as multicultural more valuable than others'. There is a paradox built into the description of "multicultural Sweden", namely that cultural diversity is least apparent for a visitor in the areas where those who are identified as its cause -- the immigrants -- live. Alby centre is comprised of rows of identical tower blocks cast from the same mould. In other areas, diversity and individual differences are greater, e.g. the inner city. There is greater homogenisation of diversity's public forms of appearance in Fittja, and greater diversification in Stockholm's inner city. This is of course related to the opportunities people have to realise their ambitions, in the form of access to money, products and specialists, etc. The availability of products and specialists has increased in Fittja but the availability of money has not. The question is, however, whether it really would be so very different if people in Fittja also had a lot of money. It all depends on what aspirations for "institutional completeness" the inhabitants have, whether the goal is to live in a "Turkish", "Swedish" or perhaps quite simply "Fittjish" way. It is here that different groupings differ from one another. However, there are also differences between generations in the same group and between refugees and imported labour, etc. An important line of division passes between that which is consciously produced to represent multicultural and that which people "just do". Consciously produced multicultural is found where there are people who are interested in such things, among policy-makers, in

the city centre rather than on its fringes. The multicultural is a sort of display not just of what we have, but of what some think we ought to have, or ought to get. In this way the multicultural is part of a political project that reminds us of the way the national project set sail at the turn of the century, with Swedish Flag Day, the Nordic Museum and the open air museum "Skansen". Those who were behind this had a vision -- they had "seen the light". They had realised something that others had not (that nations existed and that Sweden was a nation) and their mission became to spread the word, this insight, to others. Stockholm's multicultural potential has become a concern for those who have "seen the light" in today's Sweden. In the 1998 budget bill (1997/98:1) the government suggested that a pilot project, named Forum för världskultur (forum for world culture), would commence in the spring of 1998. The project would aim to increase the artistic and cultural diversity in Sweden by taking initiative in and co-ordinating the presentation of expressions of culture from throughout the world. In December 1997, the Swedish Parliament approved the running of the project in accordance with the aim given in the bill (bet. 1997/98:KrU1, rskr. 1997/98:97). In the bill we read that:

*The aim is to give all of Sweden's population, regardless of ethnic or cultural background, new possibilities to convey or experience a diversity of cultural expression.*

- to initiate, stimulate and co-ordinate activities within existing institutions and organisations,*
- to realise own projects aimed at presenting culture in different forms from throughout the world, whereby large scope shall be given to new cross-ethnic and cross-cultural expression,*
- to arrange meetings between artists and cultural workers with experience of different cultures,*
- to inform about world cultural events,*
- to take the initiative in cultural societal debate in different forms,*
- to develop co-operation with cultural institutions, cultural associations and municipalities across the land with the purpose of drawing up proposals for a plan of action for a multicultural cultural policy, which has the aim of building a new cultural community in Sweden.*

An agreement was reached between the government, the City of Stockholm and Stockholm County Council on the organisation of the forum. According to the agreement, the forum would be run as a committee within the Department for Culture. The committee would be comprised of three delegates representing the government, Stockholm County Council and the City of Stockholm. A programme advisory comprising of at the most five experts "with a cultural background" should be attached to the committee. One of the forum's projects is

Världsmusiklaboratoriet (the world music laboratory) that was run at the premises of Södra Teatern in 1999.

*When new exciting "cross-road music" arises, it is normally seen in large metropolises or in other places where people have been set to migrating so that large culture-bearing groups come to live in close contact with each other. It is there, in the daily meetings of peoples, that the crossing of cultures arises spontaneously and naturally (if not yet without friction...), but in towns like Stockholm, Gothenburg, Värnamo or Sundsvall, the immigrants are too few and too isolated for this to take place spontaneously. The consequence is that immigrant musicians easily become isolated, or exclusively directed to their own cultural group. In Sweden such crosscultural meetings could instead take place as pilot experiments in our world music laboratory. [trans.]*

That they call the project a laboratory says a lot about the conditions of multicultural. The multicultural becomes a special case, a special type of cultural expression that can arise and sometimes even be produced by researchers and cultural politicians in societies with the right ingredients. The multicultural arena becomes part of cultural diversity, a genre among many others. The multicultural is in several ways "a project" that is run by certain people with particular aims. A concert pianist who only plays for a small circle of art music enthusiasts in a small number of arenas in Stockholm's inner city would never be described as "isolated, or exclusively directed to their own cultural group". It is the immigrants on the fringes of society with their small traditions who should be brought out of isolation. The world music laboratory is part of an adult education project like the one social democracy ran to take the working class out of its "cultural isolation". An "ethnocentric" characteristic is hidden in the idea of adult education -- the idea that the educator's culture is better than the pupil's.

## **Conclusion**

In two case studies we have searched for multicultural expressions in small-town Visby and big-city Stockholm. In the example of Visby it becomes clear that discussion of cultural diversity in society must be held in a way that does not reduce it to just being about immigrants and Swedes. Gotland is an island and a thinly populated area, which lacks the population basis to allow, for example, several different ethnic groupings to maintain independent "cultures".

The requisite expertise is often lacking among their expressive specialists. In that respect, however, the majority of ethnic groupings in Stockholm are also islands and thinly populated areas with similar problems financing their cultural production. Despite the fact that the

Assyrian grouping in Sweden comprises upwards of 50,000 people, musicians are brought in "from outside" on certain occasions. When the Assyrian hip hop artist Addo wants to make his music "extra Assyrian" by adding an ethnic wind instrument, he engages the Turkish zurna player Ziya Aytakin.

The concept of multicultural is a frame that "produces" a certain way of seeing and describing reality. The meeting of musicians is described as something strange, remarkable, and creative or boundary-crossing. Theatre manager and debater Ozan Sunar describes the problem:

*There is something seductive about grand words. How often do we hear phrases like "Now we will tear down the walls and build bridges between cultures". One can easily get the feeling that cultures are immovable blocks of granite, separated by almost untraversable gulfs. A simple meeting of people is transformed suddenly into gigantic building projects, which must be administrated with precision engineered by the cultures' builders complete with dungarees. (Sunar 1997) [trans.]*

The studies of Visby and Stockholm show that multicultural is a special way of organising social and cultural diversity, which arises in particular arenas under special circumstances. In multicultural arenas differences are focused and the actual blending is central. Styles and forms are presented in contrast to each other and this creates a form in itself. "Multicultural Sweden" is, in other words, not a description of the Swedish cultural landscape but of its parts. *The multicultural can be described as one of many forms for expressions of culture, a genre side by side with others within Swedish diversity.*

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