

## **The Ugly Duckling and the Academy\***

by

**Tomas Hammar**

**Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations  
Stockholm University**

Congratulations! It is an honour to be invited to speak at this opening conference of AMID, and a great pleasure for me to welcome this new Academy into the Nordic family of research units specialising in the study of international migration. We are known under various names, and AMID is the first Academy in the family. As research units we develop different profiles, such as ethnic studies, research on minorities, on marginalization, on aliens rights, on citizenship or studies of linguistic or bilingual minorities, historic emigration or immigration, comparisons of migration and migration policies in several countries and across time etc. etc. But the core of our field of study is the same: international migration, and broadly taken its causes and consequences. We have all in our centres and fora tried to introduce ourselves in short and accurate descriptions and definitions of this field. I must admit that your presentation of AMID and of this conference on "Multicultural Citizenship and Integration of Ethnic Minorities" is short, sharp and stimulating, one of the best presentations we have so far.

I want to wish you great success in your important work. International migration is still after several decades a new research field that is small and disparate, not furnished with basic resources, not fully recognised by most faculties, and seldom promised a permanent status or the long term continuity necessary for its purpose. Our societies are in great need of more knowledge about the social processes which are the background of and also the result of emigration and immigration. The need for research on international migration, and in this case this means good multidisciplinary research, are not and cannot be met by the traditional universities as they use to function. For even if several university faculties and many subjects pay some attention to migration, there are few co-ordinating units, responsible for the development of the

---

\* Keynote lecture presented at the AMID Opening Conference "Multicultural Citizenship and Integration of Ethnic Minorities", Aalborg University, Denmark, August 29, 2001.

entire research field. International migration is seldom taught as a regular alternative in undergraduate studies, and specific PhD programmes in migration have not existed till recently. They are just about to begin. In sum, I am talking about our own dismal experience in the Swedish universities, but I think I can talk also for the other Nordic universities and for many others. During the last 30 years, many attempts have been made to change this situation to the better but with little success. Most of them have been restrained and stopped

Preparing for this moment, I have come to think about Hans C. Andersen's fairy tale *The Ugly Duckling*. It is a very good story which we all like for its humour, its poignant observations of nature, animals and human beings, and for its wonderful double sense. This duckling adventure is a tale about prejudice, mobbing and if you like, racism. No doubt, already for this reason this tale belongs to our field of research. But it struck me that Ceifo in Stockholm and other research units in Swedish universities have been victims of something similar to the mobbing of the ugly duckling. We have also been bit on the neck and we have been told in our faculties that we didn't look like everybody else, meaning that we were not regular subjects or disciplines but some ugly kind of multi- or cross-disciplinary unit. Well, I understand that this is my own personal reading of this story. But please think about it and think around it, it has a message which I hope will help me to focus on and summarise what is most important in my presentation and I shall therefore not forget the ugly duckling but return to him later.

## **Short History of Migration Research**

We have, as I mentioned, various names for our common research field. I shall here try to use the name Migration research or Migration studies and not say IMER as I so often do. But as I may by mistake mention IMER once or twice, let me explain this acronym which is today widely accepted in Sweden and Norway. It stands for International Migration and Ethnic Relations as a tribute to these two broad subfields: migration and ethnicity. IMER is a password, for instance, if you want to check our websites, and I can recommend especially the IMER-Bergen news service which is very useful.

University research on migration is young. In the 1950s and 1960s when large numbers of foreign labour were employed in West European industries there was still almost none in European universities. Only a few short projects and some studies initiated by scholars because of their personal interests. My own dissertation in 1964 on Swedish immigration policy is an example.<sup>1</sup> For most social scientists migration was of little interest. The field remained peripheral. Only when in 1973-74 the oil crisis and also an accumulated social and educational crisis brought labour recruitment to a halt and the first integration programmes started, some sociologists and economists were asked for policy advice, and so for the first time politicians expressed a public interest in migration research.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hammar, T. (1964): *Sverige åt svenskarna Invandringspolitik, utlänningskontroll och asylrätt i Sverige 1900-1932*. Stockholm: University Dissertation

If this is a view of the continental European case, the Swedish experience was somewhat different. Sweden had also recruited workers from Greece and Turkey but most immigrants to Sweden were from Finland. Already in the 1960s, Sweden had started to develop its integration policy. Migrant workers had to join the trade unions and they should as members enjoy equal wage and working conditions, and if they lost their job they were allowed to stay in the country and entitled to unemployment benefits. The public interest in this integration policy came certainly a bit late also in Sweden but it started ten years earlier than in most other European countries, and probably therefore, migration research also started early.

In the 1970s neither Sweden nor other states produced more than a few short-lived research projects placed at some university institutions and sponsored by government money. Some countries, like Sweden and the Netherlands, spent more money and started more projects. They gave high priority to integration and appointed special commissions for immigration research. The Swedish commission sponsored a sociology study, comparing the integration of immigrants in a small town and a big city (Harald Swedner), and a study of the economic impact on the country, the industry, the labour market and the immigrants (Eskil Wadensjö). A third study (Arne Trankell) dealt with social and ethnic relations and in particular attitudinal and behavioural relations between Swedes and immigrants. When in 1975 the Riksdag welcomed a Government initiative to establish a special university centre for immigration research, no university was prepared to harbour such a centre on its campus and this splendid idea was not realised till much later. The Swedish Government continued to sponsor projects, however, and several times officially declared that migration research was given high priority in order to "give guidance to policy reforms, evaluate ongoing activities and develop close relations between research and policy administration".

Almost from the start about 1975, I have been involved in attempts to initiate migration research within the universities in Sweden. The special commission on immigration research (first called Eifo and later DEIFO) worked from 1975 to 1990 as the Government's promoter in this field. Starting from budgetary grants enough for about 12-15 researchers at the end of the 1970s, in the 1980s funding amounted to money for about 20 and a further substantial improvement, something like a threefold increase, came in 1990. A new national research authority (SFR, the Swedish Council for Social Science Research) was instructed to support migration research. In 1983 two interdisciplinary centres were started; one by the humanities in Uppsala (the Centre for Multicultural Research) and one at the social science faculty at Stockholm University (the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations).<sup>2</sup>

In short, migration has been a priority field in Swedish social science at least since 1975. This start, which is early compared to that of several other immigration countries, can to a large extent be explained by Sweden's relatively liberal immigration and positive integration policy. The initiatives and the resources have come from local and national government, from political parties and interest groups. The universities were willing to co-operate in some projects but started few of their own. No formal

---

<sup>2</sup> Hammar, T. (1994): *Om IMER under 30 år. En översikt av svensk forskning om internationell migration och etniska relationer*. Stockholm: Socialvetenskapliga forskningsrådet (SFR).

study courses were integrated into existing undergraduate studies and no new graduate programmes were developed. The migration centres in Uppsala and Stockholm functioned relatively well as organisers, producers and distributors of research but they were not acknowledged status as new subjects and schools.

The Swedish universities' total output of migration research is difficult to measure, but in the 30-year period from 1964 to 1993 in all about 100 doctoral dissertations were accepted. If we divide them into five-year periods, migration research reached already in 1973 a yearly average of three dissertations. During the next 15 years this average never exceeded four dissertations per year. No real increase occurred till early in the 1990s, when within four years 28 dissertations were discussed in Swedish universities, i.e. seven per year. Some years later, at the end of the 1990s, the numbers were even higher and this trend seems to continue today.

I have been talking now about Swedish migration research because I know it best. Every immigration and emigration country has its own experience and research profile. The Nordic countries are good examples. It is obvious, that both the size of migration and the country's migration policy have a strong impact on research. All the Nordic states have initiated major research programmes. Among the first were interesting studies in which the emigration country of Finland and the immigration country of Sweden together studied how to monitor emigration to Sweden and also how to improve the living conditions of Finnish emigrants. Big projects followed in Sweden during the 1970s and in Norway in the 1980s and thereafter. Several ambitious programmes have been launched both in Norway and in Denmark. The IMER centre for research and study in the social science faculty of the University of Bergen is of special interest here, represented at this conference by Yngve Lithman. And I want to mention the Danish centre which, among others, organised one of the great Nordic conferences on migration and ethnic relations, I am talking about the centre in Esbjerg at the University of Southern Denmark directed by Jan Hjarnø. This academy here in Aalborg, AMID, is, however, the most ambitious Danish programme in this tradition.

Sweden is the Nordic country that has received most immigrants both in absolute and in relative numbers. Swedish migration policy was before 1989 the most liberal, the Finnish instead the most restrictive. Norway's and Sweden's policies, although also different, are in many respects alike. Denmark and Norway have both a long experience of xenophobic populist political parties, and this has made the political debate and the public opinion heated and outspoken, compared to the Swedish and Finnish debates which were long almost silent, even tabooed. Indeed, we know far too little about the interrelations involved in migration and refugee affairs between policy decisions, parties and political debates and opinions. We ought to study them more just in the Nordic context.

To sum up: Nordic research on migration has everywhere been supported by the state. Among factors behind these initiatives I have mentioned the size of migration in each country combined with the fear of more and sudden immigration, and then also the migration policy and the public opinion towards immigrants. Most of the research has been made in the universities but until recently, no social science faculty has decided to open a special permanent institution for study and research in migration. Why has migration research – during a period of 30-40 years of large migration –

remained so weak in the Nordic universities as well as in the other European universities? And what can we expect? Are there hopes for a better future?

### **A Multidisciplinary Subject**

There is no choice: research on migration has to be interdisciplinary. In fact, many social science disciplines study migration: demography, geography, economy, sociology, political science etc. etc. But migration is not the core of anyone of these disciplines and no one combines all these and many other aspects, including those represented by anthropologists, linguists, philosophers, historians, and lawyers. Described in this way, migration studies are a good example of an interdisciplinary field or research which obviously does not fit into the disciplinary structure of many universities. The consequences are drastic but before I discuss them and their causes more in detail, let me share with you some observations from multidisciplinary migration studies which I have participated in or followed.

In migration research many approaches are applied, theories are borrowed from many disciplines and hard and soft methods are combined. Researchers and teachers must be able to co-operate across disciplinary borders with colleagues who have received another education and training within other research traditions, and such co-operation often results in conflicts with the established university departments. The conflicts are about power and money, about courses and research project, and more generally, about the right to interdisciplinary teaching and research.

Another more fruitful but also toilsome and time-consuming sort of conflicts sometimes take place within new multidisciplinary teams which have not worked together before. People may have excellent training and competence in their own subjects, and they may join the team with enthusiasm but after a while find that the differences between them are bigger than they expected. Research projects often last only a few years and if co-operation has not begun earlier, the first two-three years may be a good introductory phase and not much more. Only after several projects the work may become really efficient and produce interesting results.

Imagine for instance a project on "citizenship and identity", and say that we want to include a lawyer, a social-psychologist, an economist, a political scientist and a linguist. We have decided to work together, not just sit together and talk side by side, but listen, discuss, teach and learn from each other, and so finally do the research. If we are successful, the results will be of great interest and in the best case they will be rich, new and unexpected. But we may fail already because such a project often needs more time than the few years we have got funds for. Therefore, what is needed is more time and a research organisation which is perhaps not permanent but at least guaranteed a long mandate. And today the two sister centres in Uppsala and Stockholm, both about 18 years of age, wish that the Academy in Aalborg will enjoy such a long and an even longer lifetime and – I shall soon return to that – that AMID will be allowed to work under better conditions than we have had.

We have also other good wishes to bring to you. Multidisciplinary migration research is not always judged fairly. In our experience, those who assess the quality do not always consider or understand the special conditions under which we are working, such as those just described, namely the fact that it takes time to start a good research

unit. Our wish is, of course, that you will obtain all the resources needed to develop new perspectives and knowledge in this field and that your achievements will be well received, recognised and appreciated.

When I talk in this manner about my fascination of working in this complex research field interviewers often ask: "Is research on migration really so meaningful? Could you give a single example of a study which has had some kind of political impact?" Yngve Lithman has given me one good answer: "We have produced new knowledge, it is written down and published. This knowledge is being spread, and it may take time but it will have a political impact." What we know for sure is that we started from scratch some 30 years ago and that we knew little about the long processes involved in migration and integration, that we have learnt a lot but still are just in the beginning.

Moreover, in recent years international migration has become a highly politicised issue within the Nordic and European countries as well as between the North and the less developed countries in the South. Labour immigration is not wanted and therefore strictly controlled. Some immigrants are still admitted into the North, however, and it is reasonable to believe that their numbers will increase and that emigration from the South will tend to increase especially among those who will be the first to benefit from future improvements in the standard of living in developing countries. The countries of the North try to stop trafficking. But the more we use visa systems and border controls, the more will this smuggling of human beings grow. The North and the South have conflicting interests here. Human rights are violated and ethical and democratic values are threatened when systems of immigration control are made too tight and efficient. These are issues that migration research must tackle.

A negative decision by the immigration authority may be a disaster for a family and a matter of life and death to an asylum seeker. Foreigners are detained for long periods because their deportation is hindered. Basic questions are: who is entitled to stay and who is protected against administrative deportation? How is the right of asylum understood and applied? Are human rights and humanitarian grounds realised in practise? Can we as researchers in this field make use of the administrative and legal categorisations which immigration authorities have constructed to fit their own purpose? For example, categories like refugee, asylum seeker, illegal immigrant etc.? Or should we define our own terms in our observations and analyses? On whose side are we? We have to raise these ethical questions also because it is obvious that migration research has a political impact.

## **Migration Theory**

Several international guests are invited to this conference as a manifestation of the fact that migration research must be international and comparative. The Nordic countries have long officially co-operated in aliens legislation, in population statistics including statistics about foreign citizens and also directly in research. The Nordic labour market commission (NAUT) within the Nordic Council has sponsored more than ten conferences for migration researchers from all our countries. At least two of them took place in Denmark. The new European immigration and refugee regime that is being developed within the EU and Schengen has intensified and broadened this co-operation

and also led to a number of new comparative studies. We need them and not least the Nordic comparisons. We are exposed to the same economic and political international trends, and our policy reactions are often similar. If one Nordic country decides to allow dual citizenship or to refuse entrance to a new group of asylum seekers, this directly affects the other Nordic countries.

The complexity of our field of research has many dimensions. Leaving a country of origin and staying in a receiving country means on one side detachment from and on the other involvement and integration into most sectors of both countries: sectors like labour market, housing, health service, schools etc. Specialists who study these sectors full time may now and then touch on (or even some time dive deeply into) migrants' participation in the labour market or discrimination of migrants in the housing sector etc. But most of the time migrants are not covered in their research. We must as students of migration enter all these sectors. We could therefore say that our field is both multidisciplinary and in this sense poly-sectorial

Moreover, migration research works on all levels of aggregation; from the individual and family levels to the highest international level, from the local minority groups to the transnational networks of migrants that include in the countries of origin and in the host countries both temporary and permanent migrants, return migrants, commuters – but also those family members who never left the country of origin.

Note, migration research is also about non-migrants. If we want to know why people go to another country, we must also learn why some others do not go. In a project on migration theories, I have (together with Grete Brochmann and other colleagues) started to think about this question fundamental to migration but also to the cohesion of all societies: the prince Hamlet of Denmark question of "to go or not to go", whether to chose migration or immobility.<sup>3</sup> We found some tentative answers taken from several disciplines, and we found it fruitful to compare and combine our theories and our different ways of thinking. I cannot go into details here but we liked the experiment all of us and we hope that others will continue. To build on pieces of migration theory does not necessarily mean to aim at a general theory explaining everything but more modestly an investigation of where we stand, how far we have come, and how we can further develop theories in our field. The importance of this work has been emphasised also in recent publications, for example by the sociologist Douglas Massey, and last year in a book called "Migration theory, talking across disciplines" by Caroline Brettell and Jim Hollifield.<sup>4</sup>

## **Migration Studies as a Social Science Subject**

The consequences of the present structure of social science in traditional universities are drastic. My examples here are now the old Swedish universities of Stockholm, Uppsala, Lund, Göteborg and Umeå. In all of them social science subjects enjoy a

---

<sup>3</sup> Hammar, T., Brochmann, G., Tamas, K. and Faist, T. (eds.) (1997): *International Migration, Immobility and Development. Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Oxford, New York: Berg.

<sup>4</sup> Massey, D. S. et al (1993): Theories of International Migration. A Review and Appraisal. *Population and Development Review* 19:431-66; and (1994): An Evaluation of International Migration Theory: the North American Case, *ibid* 20: 699-751. Brettell, C. B., and Hollifield, J. F., (eds) (2000): *Migration Theory, Talking Across Disciplines*. New York: Routledge.

large degree of autonomy. They have their own budgets. With regard to study programmes and research projects, they hold a monopoly position which means that regular courses and examinations take place only within subjects and not in multidisciplinary fields outside and across the subjects.

A subject is also the employer and its localities, the working place for teachers and students. The subject is in other words the legitimate power structure of a discipline. Strategic decisions are taken here and it is also here that the interpretation is made of the subject's content: what is the object of study and research, which are the limitations, what is the breadth and depth of the subject and what is central and not peripheral?

A subject is also characterised by the research problems, the theories and questions deemed relevant and by the methods applied. This makes a subject a matter of identity and belonging. Those who work, e.g. in history, economy or geography have after long studies of "their own subject" learnt to know a certain literature and acquired perspectives and methods regarded as central in the subject. They identify themselves with the discipline and they can represent their discipline with a certain authority as long as they do not "interfere" with other subjects. Finally, the subject is the career: as a rule academic advancement takes place within the discipline. This is why doctoral candidates, assistants and junior researchers are dependent on their superiors, who will during their career repeatedly function as judges of their merits.

But remember – social science disciplines are not given *a priori*. They are artefacts, man-made constructions for research and instruction and also for practical reasons and in order to satisfy various interests. Moreover, they undergo constant change although subjects most of the time use their power to maintain status quo and to guard their interests, rights and privileges. In principle, all agree that the role of research is to question, investigate and find new ways to acquire knowledge. Administrative systems and vested interests should not be a hindrance but unfortunately they are.

## **Risk Factors**

I have personally long been blind to these structural hindrances. I have much too naively accepted the university system as given, not understanding that this relatively free and autonomous system is a rigid one which cannot easily be amended. I shall try to point out what I now see as the "stones in the pond", stones that can hinder us from doing good multidisciplinary research on migration. Risk factors are:

1. *When subjects have a monopoly on study programmes:* i. e. when undergraduate and graduate studies are offered only within and by the subjects, and when PhD dissertations are judged within a subject and not presented to the faculty.
2. *When the power of the purse is used in the interests of the subjects already in the faculty:* Faculty members represent their subjects in the faculty. Appropriations to the faculty are allocated to the subjects, mainly according to previously negotiated "keys". This may result in a system of protected interests and in stable maintenance and low change and flexibility.
3. *When career and promotion take place only and exclusively within the subject.* Students and young staff are then dependent on superiors. Merits gained in one's

own subject tend to be more valuable than outside merits. The idea prevails that some research questions are more central, others more peripheral, in relation to the subject. (According to this idea, migration could be studied in any social science subject but it is peripheral everywhere.)

4. *When multidisciplinary research is not assessed on its own and proper conditions:* Preliminary research proposals as well as final research reports tend to be judged by senior researchers in the applicant's discipline (and if it is multidisciplinary research often by a senior researcher in the discipline where the applicant was originally trained – in my case in political science.) Migration research may therefore be evaluated from the perspective of one subject, without consideration of the extra efforts made to combine theories and methods from several subjects.

Migration studies and research have indeed encountered problems of this kind in the old and traditional universities. In most social science faculties migration has therefore remained a peripheral and underdeveloped field of study. Nevertheless, we must not underestimate the research efforts which have been made nor the results which have been achieved. A growing literature has emerged during the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and thanks to government subsidies and the personal engagement of many professors new competence in the field has been acquired. But such competence has also been lost quickly as there has been and still are extremely few positions available in the universities.

It is only during the last few years, at the very end of the 1990s, that some changes in the Swedish university system have attained a visible and favourable impact on migration research and studies. With a population of about 9 million, Sweden has gone from six to nine full universities. In addition, during the 1990s several new local or regional university colleges have started and expanded. In this reorganisation of the university system, the new units have been given a lot of freedom to develop their own programmes and several of them have chosen migration as their profile in education and research. They have been looking for problems of interest directly to their region, and also for research fields that were neglected by other universities, and several have found that migration is such a field. Examples of this trend are the new colleges in Södertörn (South Stockholm) and Malmö and also the new university of Växjö. Simultaneously, Linköping University has started a new thematic graduate and doctorate programme called "Ethnicity" with three full professors and a quickly growing number of doctoral candidates. Moreover, it is in the university college of Malmö that migration and ethnic studies for the first time in Sweden has been organised as a regular subject in which several hundred undergraduate students can achieve elementary training during up to four semesters (two years) as the main part of their BA-examination and as an eventual basis for future university studies.

How can we explain that these new colleges and universities are able to meet the challenge to develop migration studies in Sweden which the older universities have faced for years without positive response? The answer seems to be that the new are not, as are the old universities, hindered by structures and traditions. Subjects and faculties have been organised anew. Courses have been developed to meet current interests and demands. The internal distribution of money has not been bound by

compromises made long ago and by demarcations drawn to protect appropriations won in previous years.

In other words, the introduction of new colleges and universities has paved the way for migration studies in Sweden. The full outcome of this break-through can be seen only after several years. But the fast growth in academic staff is already visible. Up to recently, there has been very few lecturers for undergraduate programmes and now only Malmö has directly employed about twenty university teachers. There was only one full professor in all of Sweden up to 1994, while seven years later there are more than 10 professors in the country. At the same time, no change in the old and traditional universities. Will they ever learn?<sup>5</sup>

## **Open the Social Sciences**

The problem which I have discussed is a general one. It has a negative impact not only on migration research but also on many other interdisciplinary activities, and it is therefore a serious and general problem for the social sciences and the universities. Thanks to recent positive trends, I am now convinced that migration studies within a reasonable period of time will be established as a subject for teaching and research on all levels. I welcome all efforts to realise this and I see the opening of AMID as an important step taken in this direction here at Aalborg University today.

I want to strengthen my arguments here by quoting a strong recommendation for fundamental and radical reforms of the social science faculties that was published a few years ago. It is written by an international group of ten well-known researchers from several disciplines chaired by Immanuel Wallerstein. Their argument is in short, that the traditional division of labour within the social sciences was established during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The present system is a historic result of a long development, a product which has stiffened or become set in a fixed mould. New ways must be found to "Open the social sciences" and the authors give some practical examples.

The objective is, according to them, to provide good conditions for research and studies especially in fields which have become relevant because of recent major changes in the world, changes which require multidisciplinary co-operation in flexible combinations. Broaden the graduate training of researchers, is one of their recommendations. See to that all doctoral candidates take courses in several subjects and that they get tutors from at least two subjects. Faculties should not allocate all research and teaching positions to the established subjects but reserve some for new multidisciplinary subjects like migration and ethnic studies. Allow dissertations in multidisciplinary fields and open the careers within the old subjects also for applicants with multidisciplinary training. Search for new methods in research and training, in assessment of dissertations and merits, of research proposals and results. The aim is not to do away with the present system of social sciences but to abolish the monopoly

---

<sup>5</sup> The titles and labels of these university positions differ somewhat, but I include here those which include migration and ethnic studies (or in several cases both).

of the old established disciplinary subjects. In line with these radical reform suggestions the title of the report is "Open the Social Sciences".<sup>6</sup>

### **Conclusion: the Moral of the Story**

Let me now finally return to H. C. Andersen's ugly duckling. You may remember from the story that this young duckling, a drake, much later than the other ducklings came out of an unusually big egg. He was himself awfully big and ugly and when he began swimming among the other ducks in the big pond something happened. I quote:

"one of the ducks flew over and bit the ugly duckling on the neck. ... - 'Leave him alone!' shouted the mother. 'He hasn't done anyone any harm.' - 'He's big and he doesn't look like everybody else!' replied the duck who had bitten him. 'And that's reason enough to beat him.'"

The ugly duckling could not stay in the pond. He had to escape and against many odds he managed to survive the long, cold and severe winter. We know how difficult life may be but we do remember that Spring came and then also the happy end. The little ugly duckling had grown into a big bird, and swimming in a lake he suddenly saw a picture of himself reflected in the water: he saw that he was no duck but a wonderful swan. When three other wonderful swans landed on the lake, they directly accepted him and called him the most beautiful of all beautiful birds.

The mobbing was over. No one would bite him anymore. He had won recognition by his fellow swans. And let me quote H. C. Andersen again and allow me to translate the duck's language into a modern university conversation about exclusion of newcomers. Some old ducks in the pond said:

"What do we want that gang here for? Aren't there enough of us already? Pooh! Look how ugly one of them is! He is the last straw!"

Or translated into university language: "We need no more subjects. Aren't there enough disciplines already? This one is the last straw!" Budgetary resources are always scarce. Just as food is always scarce in the pond. And social science faculties believe that they know best and therefore decide that resources shall be distributed among the old subjects and that no newcomers are welcome.

The happy ending to Hans Andersen's story finally gives a hopeful view of the future for the Academy for Migration Studies in Denmark and also for other multidisciplinary research and teaching units and not least for social science faculties in general. In the language of the fairy tale it is a hope that AMID will develop into a magnificent swan, flying with strong and powerful wings, recognised as the most beautiful among all the other birds. In translation it would read: Good luck to you, and may social science become more flexible and open and may thereby the conditions for all kinds of multidisciplinary studies be improved. But finally also a wish that especially AMID and the field of Migration Research will be free to grow and to fly on strong wings, recognised by the other swans in the world of Academia.

---

<sup>6</sup> *Open the Social Sciences*, Report of the Gulbekian Commission on the Reconstruction of the Social Sciences, 1996, Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University. I svensk översättning kallad, *Öppna samhällsvetenskaperna*, 1996, rapport från Gulbekian kommittén, Göteborg: Daidlos.

”Quack, quack!” said the duck. Good luck, or in Swedish ”Simma lugnt!”

*The Ugly Duckling and the Academy*  
© Tomas Hammar

ISSN 1601-5967

Published by:

AMID

Aalborg University

Fibigerstraede 2

DK-9220 Aalborg OE

Denmark

Phone + 45 96 35 91 33

Fax + 45 98 15 11 26

Web: <http://www.humsamf.auc.dk/amid>

**AMID** – Akademiet for Migrationsstudier i Danmark  
The Academy for Migration Studies in Denmark

Director: Professor dr. phil. Ulf Hedetoft

The Academy for Migration Studies in Denmark, AMID, is a consortium consisting of researchers at research centers representing three institutions of higher education and two research institutes. AMID is supported by the Danish Research Councils of the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

The Consortium consists of the following members:

**Aalborg University**--Department of Sociology, Social Studies and Organization, Department of Economics, Politics and Administration, as well as *SPIRIT* (School for Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Research on Interculturalism and Transnationality) and Institute for History, International and Social Studies. Aalborg University is the host institution.

**The Aarhus School of Business**--CIM (Centre for Research in Social Integration and Marginalization).

**Aarhus University**--Department of Political Science.

**The Danish National Institute of Social Research** (Socialforskningsinstituttet, SFI).

**The Institute of Local Government Studies** (Amternes og Kommunernes Forskningsinstitut, AKF).