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## **Realistic Grown-Ups?**

### **A comparative analysis on how the formation of an integrated subject is conceived in Sweden and Denmark**

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#### **Introduction**

This paper discusses the norms involved in framing who you should be in order to be a subject for integration - and hence the prescriptive elements involved in the make-up of an integrated subject.

The analysis refers to data produced in connection with an ongoing research project on public integration measures in two municipalities in the Øresundsregion: One on the Swedish side of Øresund and one on the Danish side. The analysis has not been finalised and the paper is thus 'work in progress'. 'Integration' refers at the outset to the specific array of public measures aimed at a group of people which is simultaneously carved out by categorising those deemed to be outside the insiders' order of things. In this sense integration is but one part of the larger arena of welfare provisions, where processes of regulation, normalisation and categorisation intersect with each other.<sup>1</sup>

The data includes written material on integration measures produced for political and/or administrative purposes in the two municipalities. The main bulk of data, however, consists of interviews with public employees involved in the day to day practices of integration. The 'frontline bureaucrats' are positioned at the outposts of the public administrative system - on the one hand their positions, job descriptions and practices are prescribed by the range of logics that make up the system. On the other hand they perform interactions and negotiations on a daily basis with individuals' deemed to be in need of integration. This means - in principle - that their professional practice is juxtaposed between the relation to

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<sup>1</sup> This view takes its cues from the Foucaultian perspective on (bio)power and governmentality. Foucault 1977, 1990; Burchell et al, eds 1991, Poovey 1995, Rose 1999.

the system and the relation to the individuals they are employed to ‘apply the system to’.<sup>2</sup> A rather straightforward example of this could be the immigration officer whose practice is prescribed by the legal categorisations specifying who has access to stay more or less permanently in a given state. In many cases the profile presented by the person seeking admission will not comply with the legal categories, and the officer will therefore have to establish a connection between profile and category using the interpretive devices he or she has in the bag. Immigration control is an extraordinarily (and increasingly) finely grained administrative system, closely connected with equally detailed legal provisions. This means that the relation to the individual case is heavily premised on the legal and administrative system. The professionals in the public integration business generally have a broader space within which they may relate to the specific person in front of them. The contents of their bags of interpretive devices may in other words be more diversified, and the regulative practice that they perform takes another - positive - form than the - negative - prohibitive powers of the law (to refer to Foucault’s (1990:136 ff) distinction between the negative deductive powers of the Law (the Sovereign’s power over death) as opposed to the positive and productive powers of regulation etc. captured in the notion of biopower - i.e. the power to give life.

Based on these considerations it is my claim that the analysis of the data I have produced in the two municipalities may say something about how integration as a public measure is performed and rationalised by the persons who act it out in relation to the recipients of integration services. It will in addition say something about the positions offered to or opened for the receivers of integration (‘the integrants’). These positions may in varying degrees be influenced by the direct interaction between municipal employees and individual integrants. What I cannot, however, say anything about on the basis of my investigation is how the integrants negotiate, take up, refuse and intersect with these positions.

## **The analysis**

I have conducted 10 interviews with 13 persons in the Danish municipality, covering different strands of the administration (the social services, school administration, adult language teaching for immigrants, labour market initiatives and the Integration Council). On the Swedish side 10 interviews have been conducted including 11 persons. The Swedish municipality has a decentralised administration, and the interviews have been conducted both in the centralised part of the administration and locally in three different areas of the city. Broadly speaking the same areas of administration have been covered in Sweden with the exception of the school administration (I did, however, participate in a meeting where different integration projects in the municipal schools were presented).

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<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that other factors are not present as well, such as political views and positionings that refer to a professional ethos (see for instance Kåhl 1995, Salomonsson 1998).

The analysis aims at establishing what order of integration and (un)integrated things emerges in the accounts and reflections of the ‘frontline bureaucrats’ as well as the statements contained in the official documents - the governing documents, as they are termed in Swedish. For analytical purposes ‘integration’ hence is viewed at the outset as an empty signifier which emerges as signifying in specific, varying and floating ways in the course of analysis. It is important to note that this move is analytical - in the different strands of social practice integration is always already tied to varying chains of other signs. The frontline bureaucrats as well as the official texts use differing contextual resources in order to establish the web of meanings that make up the field of public integration practices. The analysis aims at establishing the recurring patterns as well as contradictions that seem to organise this web of meanings across the bulk of interviews in the two municipalities.

A number of alienating tricks are involved in the analysis - these tricks aim at disturbing that which is naturalised and taken for granted in the shared space of meaning. I thus read *along with* the accounts of the texts and interviews in that I try to establish and see these as meaningful and ‘true’ in their own right, and against them in that I try catch sight of and disturb the taken for granted assumptions and categorisations that underlie interpretive patterns.

One alienating trick has been the construction of the category of ‘integrants’. This category signals that I cannot take for granted who is in it, I need to ask, and I need to ask not only for a generalised definition, but also for definitions tied to the specific contexts.

This move is partly theoretical in that it posits social categories as continually produced and reproduced in the power-invested processes of social practice. It is, however, also based on the observation that the definition of who is to be a beneficiary of integration varies over time and place. Persons of a Polish descent have for instance on the background of their new EU membership, wandered (in a legal sense at least) from being the kind of outsiders that make up the integrant category to being part of a ‘we’ that posits them in another category. Across the different departments in the municipal administration, there is furthermore a difference when it comes to the definition of who populates the category in need of integration. A fairly recurrent feature is for instance that departments dealing with the labour market will place persons of Danish/Swedish descent in the integrant category alongside immigrants and refugees.

Finally, the ‘integrant’ category serves as a reminder to me and to my readers that the integration administration does not deal with a ‘naturally existing’ category of persons, on the contrary: the category is constructed or posited backwards so to speak by the administrative regulation.<sup>3</sup> Or in Judith Butler’s words:

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<sup>3</sup> In a discussion Jonas Otterbeck from the IMIO research group has pointed out that grammatically ‘integrant’, due to the suffix -ant, is an active substantive. This has not been in my thoughts when I

As that which relies on categories that render individuals socially interchangeable with one another, regulation is thus bound up with the process of *normalization*. Statutes that govern, who the beneficiaries of welfare entitlements will be, are actively engaged in producing the norm of the welfare recipient. (Butler 2004: 55)

The comparative approach is another way of *reading against*. I study two different versions of public integration measures, and this offers me the possibility of confronting the figures found in the analysis of the body of interviews in the two municipalities with each other. This move is primarily analytic, in the sense that the confrontation between two different (or converging as it may be) ways of constructing a field may illuminate features that would otherwise stay in the dark. Using a comparative approach in this analytic sense is therefore not premised on choosing two different national contexts. Had I chosen two municipalities in Denmark, the comparative approach would have told me something about how - within the same legal and (state) institutional framework - the local set-up would converge or vary, and in that way I would have been able to say something about what is open and what is foreclosed in the local performance of public integration measures. In my case the national level is however also part of the picture and there is a contextual and explanatory ambition involved in this set-up. Sweden and Denmark are comparatively similar when it comes to the make-up of the welfare state. There are however differences when it comes to the social and political history and specific differences in the way the welfare institutions have been set up and developed over time (for a suggestive if short comparative account see Knudsen & Rothstein 1994, but also Linde-Laursen 1993). Furthermore, the differences in the political language involved in the formation of the field of integration have recently been the subject of a heated debate across the national border: how can you legitimately speak of the other - the immigrant or refugee, and what are the consequences of different legitimacies? It might be noted that this debate entails an agreement on another level: language matters.<sup>4</sup> I'm interested in investigating if and how these differences are involved in the make up of integration as it unfolds on the municipal performative level.

## **The two municipalities in outline**

The two municipalities are somewhat different. One has a long established conservative majority rule, while the other is just as consistently governed by the social democratic party. In both settings the majority rules have, however, recently been replaced by the need to cooperate with other political parties. One has a population of 260.000, the other is

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constructed the category, but it provides food for thought when it comes to the work that might be done by using it.

<sup>4</sup> I have explored this further in my PhD dissertation in the context of Danish parliamentary debates on integration and migration policies. The point is that whether you adhere to the view that the silencing of a problematic reality is the problem or on the contrary that the excessive and problematising loudness is what constitutes the problem - there is indeed an agreement on the fact that talk is crucial in this field of politics (Hvenegård-Lassen 2002).

significantly smaller with its 90.000 inhabitants. Both are urban municipalities with a long history as such, and both have established immigrant populations of some size.

The Danish and the Swedish states have relatively different political histories when it comes to immigration and integration. Since 1999 there has, however, been a tendency towards a greater convergence in the basic make-up or structuring of the administrative field. In 1999 the former Swedish minority policy shifted towards an integration policy<sup>5</sup> and in Denmark the Integration Act was passed. There are notable differences in how you can legitimately debate immigration and integration in political and public arenas. My assumption (which has to some extent been confirmed) has been that these differences have no necessary or logical fit with the actual administrative practices.

Swedish integration policies today are in principle guided by a commitment to diversity as a goal for the development of society: diversity according to Swedish policies is an asset in itself. Since 1999 the basic pattern in state integration policies is that newcomers to the country are in need of special treatment, which they are offered during app. the first three years after they have gained permission to live in the country. After this, special individually oriented measures are supposed to terminate. The state sponsors introductory programmes for refugees. In my Swedish municipality, the politicians have decided to offer introductory programmes to the rest of the newcomers as well, and these are financed under the municipality's ordinary budget. In addition, however, the state has sponsored a large programme aimed at improving conditions in run-down city areas which typically house large numbers of immigrants (Storstadssatsningen)<sup>6</sup>. This is connected to the fact that the central question in this political field in Sweden concerns segregated living areas in the larger Swedish towns.<sup>7</sup>

In the Swedish municipality there has been some kind of public integration programme for immigrants arriving in Sweden since the late 1960s (in the beginning mostly Swedish language courses for adult immigrants). Some of the professionals I interviewed have been in the integration business since then, one has spent her entire professional life in this line of work, and is now about to retire, and many of the other interviewees have several years of

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<sup>5</sup> Until 1999, the policy area was unified under the term minority policy, while it afterwards was split up into an immigration policy, an integration policy and a minority policy. The aim of integration policy is twofold: 1) it is supposed to further diversity on the societal level, and 2) on the individual level, a special effort is to be made concerning newcomers, but otherwise the administrative measures should be 'normalised'.

<sup>6</sup> The state also sponsors agencies that deal with diversity and discrimination.

<sup>7</sup> I might be overdoing this observation. There does, however, seem to be a difference between Sweden and Denmark here. Both states prioritise a work strategy when it comes to integration - a job is thus the key to integration in both states, and unemployment hence the problem that integration should solve. In Sweden it seems to me that there is a consistent connection between segregated living areas and unemployment, a very strong link in a signifying chain so to speak, which is not the case in Denmark. The 'ghetto' problem (which is the 'Danish term' for it, not used in Sweden) occupies another position in the Danish context.

work behind them in this sector. Policies as well as administrative arrangements have undergone several changes since the late 60s - this goes for state policies as well as local policies. The professionals tell me that integration is an important political issue in the municipality and that any politician (from any political party) will have a qualified and knowledgeable opinion on the subject.

Generally speaking, Danish integration policies were until 1999 only very loosely regulated by the state. The overall heading for the policies is and has been the goal of equality: immigrants and refugees should be able to function or participate in society on an equal footing with Danish citizens. This goal should in principle be reached by using the existing institutions and measures. But special integration courses have been offered to refugees since the 80s (paid by the state, but carried out by the Danish Refugee Council), and since the act on integration went into force in 1999 all newcomers from non-EU countries have access to these courses, which are now organised by the municipalities. The central question in Danish integration policies is self-sufficiency and employment.

In the Danish municipality, integration programmes have been a specialised field in the administration (social services) since the beginning of the 1990s. The tragic background for this was the murder of a case worker, who was stabbed with a knife by a frustrated refugee. In the Danish municipality, integration is not a hot political issue, and the administration has been the locus for the development of the field. Some of my interviewees tell me that initiatives consistently were taken by the frontline bureaucrats and then taken through the hierarchy of the administration to the politicians, who usually would endorse them without comments.

### **What characterises an integrated person?**

As the last question in all interviews, the interviewees were asked to characterise an integrated person. The question was deliberately posed in individual terms - all the professionals were employed in the integration business, and their job was and is to do something to or with the individual person arriving in their office. My speculation therefore was that they must have some idea of the desired result in individual terms. And I was interested in exploring if and how the answers were connected with the political statements governing the field of state integration policies. Would I for instance be able to detect the difference in state policies between Denmark and Sweden in the answers of the interviewees? And in what way would the answers be connected to the municipal practice? In the analysis I have, as a first move, isolated the answers given to 'the integrated person question' and focused on the categories used in each interview, and subsequently compared these across the interviews in each municipality. As a second move I have, for each interview, confronted the isolated section with the rest of the interview, and subsequently looked for recurring patterns across the body of interviews, again for each municipality individually. Finally, I have compared (or rather am in the process of comparing) the body of interviews in the two municipalities with each other.

## Denmark:

The recurring elements in the answers can be categorised as follows:

- *'Objective' criteria*, i.e. most often employment and linguistic competence, to some extent also having a network (most often with Danes).
- *'Subjective' criteria*. This is about feelings, it is about feeling integrated for instance, but also about motivation, attitude and willingness, and about being happy about one's own position (for instance one's job).
- *Criteria pertaining to action* which has to do with being independent, realistic and active. This dimension is often associated with choice - being integrated is to be able to make the right and realistic kind of choice.

Apart from this the borders of the integrant category emerges as fuzzy. In answering this question, several of the interviewees widen the category to contain some Danish citizens (with long family lines in the country) as well as immigrants. This widening of the category is mostly triggered by a reflection on the connection between the ideal state of integration and economic self sufficiency. One line of reasoning goes as follows: A job doesn't in itself effect integration, you need to be part of a network that exceeds the family or the nearest relations, but immigrants and refugees are not the only subjects that do not fulfil this criterion. Another line of reasoning points to the fact that immigrants and refugees are not the only ones queuing in the unemployment line. In some cases these speculations lead to an extension of the integrant category, in others the category is maintained as exclusive: you wouldn't talk of Danes as unintegrated, as one interviewee puts it.

That the *objective criteria* are present is hardly surprising - more surprising is perhaps that they are often only mentioned in passing, and sometimes do not appear at all. The employment criterion is often followed by some kind of disclaimer, which I see as a reaction to the massive focus on employment in politics and new administrative measures. It has to be a meaningful job, you have to be happy about having a job, or work is a *tool* for integration, but not necessarily indicative of integration in itself. One interviewee stresses that you need to strike a balance between freedom of choice on the one hand and the employment requirement on the other - at the moment the scales are tipping towards the requirement side. This statement points back to the fact that the interviewee has to comply with new rules, where any job will be preferred to education. That the work requirement has a clear normative and symbolic value is apparent in several interviews. One interviewee puts it this way:

It is difficult to imagine that someone could be integrated without having a job, or at least *wanting* to have one, on the other hand there is more to integration than a job. (my italics)

The *subjective criteria* stress the state of mind of the integrant as indicative of integration: you need to be happy with your job, you need to be interested in the Danish society, and you must be satisfied. Integration thus seems to be a normatively required state, which in principle is synonymous with all good things. The reverse side of this is that all bad things

in the same move are expelled not only from the minds and bodies of the integrated subject (to come), but also from the notion of Danish society, which in this connection emerges as free of unhappiness, conflict, inequality etc. This would - in the context of the total body of interviews - *not* be the description of Danish society any of the interviewees would use, had I asked them to describe it outside the context of integration. To some extent, integration thus appears as bound up with an impossible and ideal notion of the good society. In my interpretation, the interviewees are not idiosyncratic - rather they employ notions that cling to the concept of integration as it circulates in everyday life: integration generally appears as a 'greater good'.

The last dimension above - the dimension of action - sets the utopian notion of integration in stark relief, and here the interviewees relate more closely to their own practice as employees in the administrative procedures associated with integration. As mentioned above, there is an emphasis on being realistic and on making the right choices. One interviewee says:

(An integrated person) is able to make choices consistent with the possibilities that exist in society (...) the realistic possibilities. You might say, it is to be a grown-up in one's own society. You know what you do, why you do it, and where to go. (...) You have to have insight into your own assets and limitations as well as the possibilities and limitations of society - otherwise you won't be able to make choices.

This is the most elaborate formulation around being a realistic grown-up, who decides for him- or herself among a (limited) range of options. Society in this context emerges as providing openings and closures alike, and the realistic individual will be able to match his or her profile (limitations and assets) to the relevant slots in societal space.<sup>8</sup> Being a grown-up thus means that you have acquired the relevant dispositions (including a reflexive view of these dispositions) which enable you to make the right choices which again fit these dispositions.<sup>9</sup> The argument emerges as circular: the right dispositions are the 'items' that enable you to choose, but at the same time these dispositions mean that you fit in a certain way which preconditions your choice. Integration has to do with persons who are not realistic grown-ups, their dispositions or their reflexive views on these dispositions are irrelevant in their current living circumstances. Integration (as a process) then has to do with acquiring either new and relevant dispositions or a (new) reflexive evaluation of already existing dispositions.

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<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, what we see highlighted in this statement is the proposition that freedom of choice is premised on the specific make-up of society. This means that freedom as well as choice are always already staged as well as limited by specific social and political circumstances. In this sense freedom of choice can never be an individual enterprise, see also Butler 2004.

<sup>9</sup> Nikolas Rose places freedom and choice at the centre of what he calls the advanced liberal governmentality characteristic of the present (Rose 1999:84). This observation is also pertinent in a number of recent studies of social work; see for instance Järvinen et al, red. 2002 and Järvinen & Mik-Meyer 2003. For an analysis from a 'Luhmann' perspective, see Åkerstrøm Andersen 2003.

When I look through the total body of interviews, the notion of realistic adults reappears in different guises in several interviews, sometimes in the form of slips, such as the interview, where the instructors of the adult immigrants (age-wise) working in the municipality's employment project are called "the grown-ups". Seen from this angle the integrants are constructed as (ignorant) children, who are in need of an upbringing, which is supplied by integration. In other cases it is a question of knowing the wrong things, and integration here becomes a practice of - in some cases - translation between different systems of knowledge or - in other cases - a kind of re-learning process. I have been speculating if and how these different constructions on the same scheme affect the individual integrant, who is exposed to them. My claim would be that they probably work in different ways. I have also been considering how learning processes could be conceived of differently within the cultural resources available or whether a different conception would explode the framework completely.

There is also an answer of a more specific nature to what the contents of realism (and therefore the realistic choice) are. This answer seems to be posited by the integration measures themselves. One interviewee for instance tells me that "earlier we used to let them dream a little longer" and further:

Society has changed and we must not deceive them. Maybe we have had too low a priority on the demands of the labour market. It is no use to educate them to an area which has no vacancies.

The interesting consequence of this, coupled with the conditions laid down in the integration regulations, is that the realistic choice is unskilled, low paid and often insecure jobs. This is openly stated as a fact by the interviewees. They may not like it or at least some of them don't, but the regulations they abide by mean that these are the options open in the field and therefore constitute the realistic options on the basis of which dispositions can be reflected upon or taken up by the integrants.

Thus the grid of meanings attached to integration and what it means to be an integrated person is suspended between the seemingly paradoxical opposites of on the one hand, a notion of society as a happy (and otherwise unspecified) utopia and on the other, a stratified and unequal field, where the realistic position of the integrant is located at the lower strands of the field.

## Sweden

The categorisation initially used to systematize the statements of the Danish interviewees above can be applied to the Swedish body of interviews as well. I have, however, added a fourth group, and the contents of the criteria are not necessarily identical.

- '*Objective criteria*': Employment is mentioned in most interviews, with a few exceptions followed by disclaimers (work cannot stand alone, freedom is only acquired if you have a well paid job) or qualified as a means to something else (a

meeting place, or the way to independence - freed from the control attached to the benefit system). Language is only mentioned by one interviewee. Social relations, meeting places and culture appear in a few interviews in an objectified sense.

- *'Subjective criteria'*: Feelings of being of equal worth, being happy and thriving, wanting to belong, feeling a part of Sweden, having evaluations or views on society that comply with the law, being mentally present.
- *Criteria pertaining to action*: Freedom to choose and to do what one wants. Participation in the life of society, deciding for oneself, to have the ability and the right to exert influence on society.
- *Society/community*: The individual in relation to society (integration is not an absolute state: you can be differently integrated in different fields, it is about functioning in society or having a platform of your own). Statements about society disregarding the individual (it is a community where 'we' is all of us, the Nordic idea of community, integration has to do with society and it doesn't make sense to use in the context of individuals).

Since the interviews in Denmark were conducted first, I tried to find out whether the integrant category would also emerge as fuzzy in the Swedish context in connection with this question. And since only two of the interviewees said something to that effect on their own account, I asked. This most often provoked some kind of statement about there being unintegrated persons of Swedish descent as well, but it was clearly not part of their own reasoning on the matter. This might have something to do with the fact that integration (or some measure with another name but the same kind of administrative logic) has a longer and more entrenched history in the Swedish administration than is the case in Denmark. The integrant category is therefore also sedimented in another way and to a greater extent. This interpretation is to some extent supported by the fact that inter-administrative struggles between the different departments come up in varying forms in many of the interviews in Sweden, pointing to the fact that the administrative system has a history and a number of established positions which in themselves are part of what makes up the meaning of 'integration'.

The *objective criteria* follow the same pattern as was the case in Denmark, i.e. they are not prominent and the employment criterion is often followed by some kind of disclaimer. The *subjective criteria* establish, again in the same way as in Denmark, an obligation to feel certain things. But there is a slight difference in the content of the feelings. In Sweden there seems to be a higher priority on society or community, whereas in Denmark the feelings are most often oriented towards the individual's position in society. This difference reappears in the *action* requirements.

Statements about *society or community* play a rather prominent role in connection with the characterisations of the integrated person in the interviews. The agency in the statements is distributed more or less evenly between the individual integrant and society, i.e. on the one hand the integrant must do or feel different things, and on the other hand society has to facilitate these actions or feelings. A few of the interviewees tell me that integration is about

society, not about individuals. In other words, they point to the genesis of society itself, and in this move society becomes an active and changeable factor (it is about how we want to live and what kind of society we want, as one interviewee puts it). The statements on society draw on a number of different sources, but they very rarely reproduce the official statements of 'the governing documents'. Personal experiences loom large as a resource (which I'll return to below) and these are coupled with political opinions or general world views, for instance human rights, non-discrimination, and the Nordic concept of an all encompassing society.

The most striking feature in the Swedish interviews is the fact that the definitions offered of the integrated person, with a few notable exceptions, are unrelated to the contents of the rest of the interview. Since the preceding part of all interviews has circulated around what the interviewees *do* in their respective positions and what is done in the municipality in general, this means that the definitions offered are somehow sealed off from that field of practice. Throughout many interviews I am offered different statements about integration, diversity and the multicultural society which refer to the municipal, local or company policy and strategy. These statements are often uttered in the first part of the interview, but do not reappear in the answers given to the question about how to characterise an integrated person, posed towards the end of the interview.

One of my interviewees has for example been employed in a large company (formerly a state agency) which on contract with the municipality organises most of the introductory programmes offered to newcomers (the courses are obligatory if you receive social or introduction benefits). The employment strategy is and has been a company priority, and the interviewee offers a substantive general argument as to why employment is *the* important element in the process. Nevertheless, employment is completely absent in her reflections on the integrated individual.

Hers as well as most of the other interviewees' answers are apparently constituted from some other point. Personal experiences seem to be one large reservoir for the interviewees of whom 3 have immigrated to Sweden from various countries - though not the typical origins encompassed by the integration effort. One is married to an immigrant and another has spent time working abroad. Others refer to experiences with friends of immigrant origin and others to their children's school experiences, and one interviewee uses herself as an example: a white, middle-class and middle-aged woman, who lives in the wrong place, does the wrong kind of things and whose children attend the wrong kind of schools - am I integrated? She asks.<sup>10</sup> This leads her on to a reflection on norms and normality, and she concludes that being integrated is being able to choose freely for yourself not to comply with or perform the norm. This requires, she states, that you know the norm and that you are allowed not to choose it - your choice should not be guided by who you are, but by the

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<sup>10</sup> The information on personal experiences or background does not appear in the interviews because I ask for it as part of the interview routine, but it is presented to me in the answers to 'the integrated person' question.

desire to choose in itself. In this way, the picture she draws of the integrated person is actually her own image emerging in the mirror.<sup>11</sup> In the other interviews, the personal experiences are not quite so mimetic, but the logic is similar. In two interviews employment is highlighted as *the* central component of what makes up the integrated person. One of these interviewees adds that any job will do, and thus complies pretty closely with the official discourse. He has, however, also his own personal angle on this, which has to do with his own life experiences.

## **Across the border**

Having seen the juxtaposition between the (meagre) possibilities open to integrants and the utopian notion of the non-stratified good society as a recurring figure in the Danish interviews, means that I am able to find traces of this in the Swedish interviews as well, but the figure would not have presented itself as such, had I only had the Swedish interviews at hand. This has to do with the fact that the category of society becomes signified in different and problematised ways in relation to 'integration' in Sweden, and in this process of specification the unspecified utopia loses its innocence, so to speak.

The figure that most readily comes out of the analysis of the Swedish interviews has to do with the gap between practice and official formulations on the aim(s) of integration on the one hand and the picture drawn by my interviewees on the other. Two cautious reflections on this could be: 1) the official formulations are not actually integrated in the practice of the integration administration, and 2) the interviewees are readily able to reproduce the official documents but they are not central to their view on these matters. This may have to do with the fact that the interviewees do in fact have personal experiences gained in other domains of social life than the administration they work in.

The fact that the political aims and the ensuing official documents operate with the genesis of society as well as the individuals encompassed by the integrant category, seems to be formative for the structuring of the field in the accounts of the interviewee - if not for the contents. In the comparison between Denmark and Sweden, the category of society stands out as differently invested in the two bodies of interviews. In both municipalities, the relation between the individual and society/community is highlighted. In Denmark the active part in the relation is the individual, while society stands as a rather immobile and inactive component - the individual feels and does something in relation to society. In

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<sup>11</sup> It occurs to the interviewee during the sequence referred to here that she is perhaps more voluntaristic in her account than she likes, and this triggers a statement about the constraints of economy. The rationale referred to above bears some resemblance to the reflections on choice and dispositions in the Danish case, even if the conclusion is almost the opposite: integration is not about finding the appropriate slots in the stratified field of society, but rather on acquiring a disposition which enables you to choose not to fit in. The point here is, however, that the resources used to build the argument follow a pattern that is found in the other interviews in Sweden.

Sweden, society (also) appears as an independent factor with an existence of its own, and a logic that opens the way for certain individual positions and seals off others.

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