The Weight of Categories: Geographically Inscribed Otherness in Botkyrka Municipality, Sweden

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Abstract: This paper asked a paradoxical question: why have immigrants to Sweden (particularly refugees) become geographically, economically, and symbolically segregated despite the putatively generous provisions of Sweden's welfare state? I sought to understand how people and institutions perceived and deployed categories that created geographically inscribed "Otherness" through a year-long fieldwork in Botkyrka Municipality of the Greater Stockholm area. My analysis weaved together three models for explaining social segregation: the relational, the symbolic, and the spatial. I then augmented these models by taking into account the legal and bureaucratic frameworks that influence social exclusion, as well as historical factors of geographical exclusion. My study revealed how the Swedish government has, despite repeated attempts to integrate immigrant populations into the national identity, nonetheless continued to demarcate immigrant populations both symbolically and geographically, first through a long history of categorizing immigrants as "non-Swedes" (whether as "foreigner," "immigrant," or "people with a foreign background"), and through policies that have inadvertently separated the spaces in which immigrants are able to live. Finally, I concluded that the nation's ethnocultural and *Volk*-centered definition of nationhood makes it almost impossible for immigrants to be integrated into the Swedish society and propose a shift of academic interests in three aspects.

Keywords: segregation; nation-state; otherness; immigration; space

1. Introduction

Sweden has long been considered as the epitome of the social democratic welfare regime (Sainsbury 2012). For immigrants and students of welfare states alike, it is a country that not only follows the principle of "universalism" in its social provisions by including all residents in the country, whether natural or foreign-born, into its welfare system, but it also seeks to "promote an equality to the highest standards" in its welfare programs (Esping-Andersen 1990). Paradoxically, its generous support for immigrants has not led to their integration into the Swedish society, but to a highly segregated one. In reality, Sweden is a society where immigrants, especially refugees, are spatially separated from the urban centers, economically segregated from the native citizens (on account of only being reliant on either low skills jobs or on the welfare system), and symbolically stigmatized in the areas where they live.

Under these circumstances, one may wonder, why did these well-intentioned programs result in a segregated nation? In other words, what is the mechanism of action that caused the stigmatization and exclusion of certain groups of people? I sought to understand how people and institutions perceived and deployed categories that created geographically inscribed "Otherness" through a year-long fieldwork in Botkyrka Municipality of the Greater Stockholm area, which is one of the target areas selected by the Ministry of Labor to mitigate the increasing social exclusion, residential segregation, and unemployment rate among immigrants.

Bourdieu made it clear that the social world is constructed according to different principles of vision and division (Bourdieu 1989, p. 13). Similarly, I argue that segregated residential areas could be perceived as a conceptual place where the paired categories of "Otherness" and "Swedishness" were articulated by the state. The Swedish government utilized concepts like "foreigner," "immigrant," and "people with a foreign background" to classify individuals from all different ethnic backgrounds with their own unique cultures into one homogenized category of "non-Swedes." I will also argue that these categories were influential in shaping public perception about citizenship and further enforcing the spatial distribution of the two distinct categories of people. Furthermore, native Swedes and immigrants' uneven geographical and symbolic division created unequal opportunities, and finally perpetrated these categorical inequalities. Together, the double structuring mechanism resulted in a segregated society with all forms of discrimination, segregation, and exclusion of immigrants in contemporary Sweden.

According to Harvey, the nature of "space" has three implications: a relative space (a relationship relates to each other), a relational space (an internal relation defined by practices and processes), and an absolute space (a thing in itself) (Harvey 2006). This tripartite division corresponds to three research approaches that conceptualize ethnic boundaries and their outcomes: some focus on the relationality in the process of boundary drawing, others locate them in symbolic struggles over the categorical divisions of the social world, while still others emphasize the effects of the physical space has on social life and collectivities (Wimmer 2008, p. 985; Lamont and Fournier 1992). These three approaches, though the distinctions of which are not always so clear-cut, reflect three dimensions of the field that greatly inspire my study in the relational, the symbolic, and the spatial segregation within Sweden.

The relational dimension has a long history in the social sciences and can be found as far back as Max Weber, who, in his term "social closure" described the group-making process. The formation of an interest group is often defined by certain characteristics such as "race, language, local or social origin, descent, residence, etc.," as a barrier to include outsiders from potential social and economic opportunities (Weber et al. [1992] 1978, p. 342). As for which characteristics the group would choose, Weber suggested it does not matter, as long as it follows the principle of convenience (Stone 1995). This interpretation thus put social closure at the center of understanding the dynamics of ethnic and race relations and the struggles over the distribution of positions and rewards that are attached to them.

Building on Weber, both Nobert Elias and Georg Simmel highlighted the indispensability of "Otherness" in group relations. Elias examined how an established group, formed by long-term residents of a community near Leicester, rejected and stigmatized the newcomers so as to preserve power resources and group charisma, despite that the two groups were in many ways quite similar. For Elias, the humiliation of the outsider group is vital for maintaining the social superiority of the established group (Elias and Scotson [1965] 1994). In *The Stranger*, Simmel defined the stranger as one who may be spatially fixed within a group but not socially belong to it; who is simultaneous near and remote, close and detached, yet still an "organic" part of the group (Simmel 1950).

Scholars like Fredrik Barth, Jean-Paul Sartre, Michèle Lamont, Herbert Blumer and Marco Garrido focused on how ethnicity has been used as a way of drawing boundaries in the group-making process. Rather than shared cultural characteristics, Barth revealed how boundaries, especially boundaries between dichotomous ethnic statuses, define ethnic groups (Barth 1969, p. 15). In *Anti-Semite and Jew*, Sartre made it clear that it is anti-Semite, the "Us," who invented the Jew (Sartre [1946] 1995). Lamont and Molnár used the term "boundary-work"—various classification systems that groups utilize to define who they are—to describe how boundaries are embedded in cultural context and shaped by institutionalized practice of cultural membership (Lamont and Molnár 2002, p. 171). Blumer advocated the move from analyzing race prejudice from "a set of feelings" to analyzing "the collective process through which a sense of group position is formed" (Blumer 1958, p. 7). Finally, by looking at interactive practices, Garrido brought to light how a sense of place was enacted through two groups of people's separations in space (Garrido 2013, p. 1349). These studies pinpointed the relationality in

ethnic boundary making process, indicating that the definition of identities and boundaries rely on social relations to a reference group, or a privileged "Other" (Lamont and Molnár 2002).

Along another research tradition, scholars centered on the symbolic mechanisms in producing and reproducing ethnic boundaries and ethnoracial domination. People's common sense led them to believe in bounded groups, taking groups for granted. Scholars from this approach advocated, however, the importance of questioning the existence of groups. They proposed to consider "groupness" along a continuum, to study how and why people believe in the existence of groups and their sense of belonging to collectivities.

Pierre Bourdieu pointed out that struggles over ethnic identity are actually struggles over mental representations, yet this symbolic power based on ethnic recognition would cause people to identify and differentiate from each other, and finally, to treat the unity and the identity of the group as reality (Bourdieu 1991, p. 222). For example, by calling "Occitan" the language spoken by those who are called "Occitans," and calling the region in which this language is spoken "Occitanie," people are forcing it to exist as a nation (Bourdieu 1991, p. 223). Likewise, Loïc Wacquant argued against using the group-oriented approach of studying "race" in favor of seizing those "practices of division" and the institutions that both supported and resulted from them (Wacquant 1997, p. 229). For instance, the meaning of "white" is evolving over time and does not necessarily relate to skin color: Jews and Irish were excluded from the category of "white" at different points in western history, whereas they are now commonly included (Wacquant 1997, p. 226). This shift illustrates that "race" is a social construct rather than a bounded group.

Charles Tilly sought to understand how categories were transformed into inequalities. Through matching or pairing, internal organizational divisions (for example, faculty versus students, manager versus worker, enlisted versus officers) corresponded with external categorical divisions (for example, black versus white, citizen versus foreigner, or male versus female). Over time, mechanisms of exploitation and opportunity hoarding transferred external categorical differences into durable and persistent inequalities (Tilly 1998, p. 76). Therefore, the creation of external categorical boundaries helps to secure scarce and valuable resources from opening to outsiders (Tilly 1998, p. 11). Tilly's work encourages scholars to ask how categories like ethnicity are proposed, propagated, institutionalized, and finally organizationally entrenched in administrative routines.

Rogers Brubaker broadened Tilly's theory in the mechanism of producing and reproducing inequality by adding in the presence of "positions." He proposed that it is through the allocation of persons to reward-bearing positions, the social production of persons with differential channeling and social separation, and the structuring of positions and their rewards that inequality was generated and solidified (Brubaker 2015, p. 42).

Nationhood, according to Brubaker, was one of the abstract categories grounded in citizenship, history, descent, race, language, the way of life, or shared political experience (Brubaker 2015, p. 9). For instance, the different definitions of the citizenry in France and Germany—the territorial basis of the French citizenry (*jus soli*) and the German emphasis on blood descent (*jus sanguinis*)—actually reflects different national self-understandings (Brubaker 1992, p. 84). While the former expresses a universalist, rationalist, assimilationist, and state-centered definition of civic nationhood, the latter represents a particularist, organic, differentialist, and *Volk*-centered definition of ethnic nationhood (Brubaker 1990, p. 386).

Similarly, Andreas Wimmer emphasized that ethnic conflicts and racism are an integral and essential part of the modern order of the nation-state. He believed it is when groups previously excluded from the national "we" gain access to the collective goods or even full citizenship status that social closure were crystallized (Wimmer 2002). In terms of where the boundary between the ethnic "Us" and "Other" should be drawn, Wimmer argued that the political alliances of state elites formed in the early days of the nation-state are crucial in deciding which group should be considered as a part of the nation (Wimmer 2008, p. 985).

The third research approach emphasized the importance of space in the study of ethnic boundaries. Scholars from this school of thought tend to view physical space as one of the sites where power is exercised and where social distance is measured, and they examine how physical space affects social life and collectivities (Bourdieu 1989; Gans 2002). For example, black-white segregation has been profoundly discussed in the United States. Wilson held that it is the structural cleavage that separates African Americans in the ghetto from other parts of the society (Wilson 2012). Wacquant extended his research interest to urban ghettos but brought the "race question" back to the discussion. He used the term "territorial stigmatization" to describe the racial division in the United States (Wacquant 2008, p. 169). Territorial defamation often produces corrosive outcomes; as the residential area became a "blemished" setting, it led to physical dilapidation, social separation with its various institutions, and further reaffirmed territorial stigmatization stressed by the outsiders (Wacquant 2008, p. 176). In addition, Wacquant found that the judicial system in the contemporary United States serves as a "reserved space" to house a large amount of young black men who were otherwise considered redundant due to the combination of employer discrimination and the failure of the labor market (Wacquant 2002). He concluded that the prison is America's new form of dark ghetto.

Massey and Denton perceived residential segregation as a key factor in concentrating poverty (1993). They argued that under conditions of high segregation, a simple increase in a group's poverty rate would concentrate deprivation in the whole neighborhood and finally transform the area into an underclass community (Massey and Denton 1993). Sharkey took a multigenerational perspective in her discussion of the urban ghetto. By presenting how places have been passed on from parents to children, she suggested a "durable" urban policy—with the capacity to persist across generations and is less vulnerable to the fluctuations of the macroeconomic environment—is needed to produce sustained changes in black urban communities (Sharkey 2013, p. 23). However, scholars from this camp sometimes reach different conclusions. While Sharkey suggested that one should take space into consideration, Swedish scholar Roger Andersson revealed that external decision-makers are equally important. Anti-segregation policies, according to Andersson, which concentrated on immigrant-dense neighborhoods, actually ignored that ethnic residential segregation as a result of decisions taken by the Swedish majority, who tended to cluster in Swedish-dense neighborhoods (Andersson 2007).

As valuable and contributive as these works are, there are three gaps needed to be filled. First, a gap exists between the bureaucratic routines that define the integration outcome and the everyday life of immigrants. For example, to what extent could an immigrant's *de jure* citizen status correspond to their *de facto* situation? Second, while constructivist scholars center on symbolic struggles over ethnic boundaries, they often overlook the importance of an actual place as a localized practice where symbolic violence is imposed. In real life, the relationship between symbolic and physical boundaries is actually fluid and reciprocal, as Thomas F. Gieryn puts it, "places are simultaneously shaped by people and capable of shaping people." (Gieryn 2002, p. 35) Third, although social space and physical space have been addressed frequently in the third approach, few have paid attention to the historical legacy of space. I argue that to understand why the well-intentioned programs in Sweden have made such minimal progress toward social inclusion, and why certain areas have become increasingly segregated and stigmatized, we need to consider the original position of these places before the implementation of these programs and the changes they have gone through over the past several decades.

By shedding light on the linkage between categories, segregated communities, and immigration policies, this study aims to connect the relational, the symbolic, and the spatial approaches, as they are not mutually exclusive, but overlapping types of analyses. Specifically, I analyzed how categories of ethnicity in Sweden have been historically constructed, how these categories further led to residential segregation and social separation, and how state policies contributed to and articulated the division between immigrants and native Swedes. My study revealed how the Swedish government has, despite repeated attempts to integrate immigrant populations into the national identity, nonetheless continued to demarcate immigrant populations both symbolically and geographically, first through a long history of categorizing immigrants as "non-Swedes" (whether as "foreigner," "immigrant," or "people with

a foreign background"), and through policies that have inadvertently separated the spaces in which immigrants are able to live. I concluded that the nation's ethnocultural and *Volk*-centered definition of nationhood makes it almost impossible for immigrants to be integrated into the Swedish society and propose a shift of academic interests in three aspects. First, I suggest a shift from focusing on immigrants to perceiving the national population as a whole. Second, a transition from centering on the "problematic" immigrant suburbs to probing into their problematized process. Third, I position a move from treating legal categories as given to questioning their deepest social and political foundations as well as their localized practices. To illustrate this argument, I will draw on the empirical case of Botkyrka Municipality to flesh out the analysis sketched above.

2. Results

2.1. Defining the Field

Botkyrka Municipality is geographically located in the south-western part of the Greater Stockholm area. Historically, it has been a working-class or lower-middle-class municipality with very little ethnic diversity. The influx of immigrants during the past several decades, however, has caused it to become the most ethnically diverse municipality in Sweden today. As of 2015, among its 87,000 inhabitants, 56% have a foreign background, encompassing more than 160 different countries of origin (*Botkyrka Kommun* 2014). According to Europe Cities against Racism (ECAR 2013), the 10 most represented foreign nations in Botkyrka are Turkey, Finland, Iraq, Syria, Chile, Poland, Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Iran, and Pakistan (ECAR 2013, p. 11). The majority of migrants with a non-Western country background live in the northern part of the municipality, which consists of three administrative areas: Fittja, Alby, and Hallunda-Norsborg. This geographical region is spatially, demographically, historically, and symbolically sharply separated from the southern part of the municipality. While Northern Botkyrka used to be a rural area, Southern Botkyrka is an urban district in Greater Stockholm where the majority of the population are Swedish nationals. Although close to 25% of the population in Southern Botkyrka possess a foreign background, 60% of them have Nordic or Western backgrounds, many of whom immigrated to Sweden during the European labor immigration period (1949–1971) (*Botkyrka Kommun* 2014).

Altogether, Botkyrka is the least affluent municipality in Sweden, measured based on a median value of net wealth, which is the value of financial assets, real estate, and tenant-owned flats minus debts (ECAR 2013, p. 18).

2.2. The Construction of Categories

In contemporary Sweden, there is no official and comprehensive category to define race and ethnicity. Tracing back to the 1920s, however, there has been a change in terminology in defining people who migrated to Sweden: utlänning (foreigner)—invandrare (immigrant)—personer med utländsk bakgrund (people with a foreign background). Different categories exemplified the nation's different representations of "non-nationals," and these classifications implicitly placed immigrants in an inferior position in relation to the dominant position of the heritage Swedes (Lacatus 2008, p. 7).

2.2.1. *Utlänning*: The Displaced Presence of Foreign Bodies

In order to understand the historical implication of the term "foreigner (*utlänning*)," one must associate the word with the Swedish welfare state's ideal image of *folkhem* (people's home). Proposed by the leading Social Democratic Party in 1928, the concept marked the government's utopian aspirations of a modern Sweden, which symbolized the close bond between the nation and its people:

> A good home's foundations are a sense of togetherness and a shared feeling of belonging.
> The good home does not differentiate between privileged and neglected people, nor does it
> make distinctions between mom's darlings and stepchildren. There, nobody looks down
> on anybody; nobody tries to gain advantage over others. The strong ones do not oppress

or plunder the weak. Similarity, consideration, cooperation, and helpfulness rule in the good home. (Colla 2002, p. 132)

Despite the idea of projecting society as a home where everyone is equal, the metaphor was too vague and obscure (Lacatus 2008, p. 39). To begin with, who is this "folk"? Drawing on "a sense of togetherness" and "a shared feeling of belonging," Mauricio Rojas criticized that the word has created an ideal of a national-ethnic identity (Rojas et al. 2005, p. 56) characterized by similarity, egalitarian national solidarity, and consensus. Certain groups have been excluded from being categorized as "folk" for social hygienic beliefs. For example, Roma, women, and people who were mentally ill were excluded during different periods of Swedish history (Molina 1997). Furthermore, the principles of *folkhem* encouraged ethnic homogeneity, which rendered it hard to incorporate culturally diverse groups of people following the labor migration after the World War II (Lacatus 2008, p. 40). As Arne Ruth puts it, the Swedish model of *folkhem* was actually contradictory. On the surface of it, *folkhem* represented the nation's active pursuit of modernity, yet at its core, it remained to be a reflection of Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* (community) (Ruth 1984, p. 63). In reality, then, *folkhem* has been constructed as an enclosed space inhabited by homogenous people who interact harmoniously. It is also an imaginary place where any kind of social differences ought to be erased in the name of social equality (Lacatus 2008, p. 39).

Guided by these ideological premises, when labor immigration from Finland and southern Europe became common in Sweden after 1949, assimilation was the nation's main approach for dealing with these labor workers. In contrast with "folk," they were defined as "foreigner" (*utlänning*), which implied their displaced presence; they were foreign bodies—foreign to Swedish society and to the nation. In other words, they did not belong. When these "foreigners" failed to share basic national values and achieve social integration, they immediately became, according to Colla, undesirable and unwelcome (Colla 2002, p. 132).

As a result, while the vision of an egalitarian *folkhem* did succeed in promoting the breakdown of privileges and hierarchies, the idea of a united "folk" also institutionally transformed the discourses of ethnic differences into tangible realities (Colla 2002, p. 138; Pred 2000, p. 26). Situated on one side of the map of national identity was the nation's people, mostly consisting of Swedes, while on the other side, was a cluster of other homogeneous "peoples" consisting of labor immigrants, the people who were seen as "unclean," or whoever may pose a potential threat to the autochthons that the nation-state is supposed to protect. Even though the population has become more multi-ethnic, this institutional division has survived and finally crystallized in the Million Program Project.

2.2.2. Invandrare: The "Immigrants" on Their Own Land

By the end of the 1960s, the concept of "immigrant" (*invandrare*) took the place of the term "foreigner," in an effort by the Swedish government to alleviate the negative and discriminatory connotations of "foreigners" and to facilitate the integration and participation of immigrants (*Regeringskansliet* 1999, p. 48). Interestingly, the word "*invandrare*" means "in-wanderer" in Swedish, which connotes a rootless person who has not settled down or one who does not belong (Pred 2000, p. 74). According to the Interim Immigrant Survey 1 (*Invandrarutredningen* 1), there has never been a generally accepted definition of "*invandrare*":

In common usage, the term "*invandrare*" refers to residents of a foreign origin, especially those who have come to Sweden after the World War II. *Invandrare* usually means Swedish-born foreigners. Sometimes, it refers to all foreign nationals in Sweden. While other times, it includes naturalized Swedish citizens. It is difficult to unambiguously define the term *invandrare*. Among the foreign citizens in our country, some of them are of Swedish origin and were born here. In this case, they are not *invandrare* in its usual sense. On the other hand, children of naturalized Swedes who were born in Sweden may in some contexts be justified as *invandrare*. (*Statens Offentliga Utredningar* 1971, p. 51)

This ambiguous definition caused the boundaries surrounding *invandrare* to become porous. Lacatus says the term was an "over-determined" sign that lacks both a "well-defined referent and a stable signifier" (Lacatus 2008, p. 43). Different from its later usage of "people who actually have immigrated and have been reported in Sweden" (*Regeringskansliet* 1999, p. 48), *invandrare* may involve both foreign nationals and naturalized persons (with Swedish citizenship) including their children and descendants. In other words, the concept of *invandrare* includes people who actually have not emigrated from anywhere. Moreover, it is often defined subjectively, for example, by one's appearance or accent. One direct consequence of the all-encompassing terminology was it minimized one's possibility of being identified as "Swedes." According to one Swedish scholar's study, in order to be classified as "Swedes," one needs to fulfill five requirements: being born in the country, having Swedish nationality, with both parents born in Sweden, having Swedish as their first language, and having a "Swedish" appearance—typically possessing blond hair and blue eyes (Mattsson 2005). Based on this understanding, the Swedish nation is conceived as an organic, cultural, linguistic, and even racial community—in the words of Brubaker, as an irreducibly particular *Volksgemeinschaft* (people's community) (1992). This ethnocultural self-understanding suggested that non-heritage Swedes and their children were *de facto* if not *de jure* different from the national "Us." The *invandrare* "Otherness" has thus been engrained in public discourses.

2.2.3. *Personer med Utländsk Bakgrund:* From Everybody into a Nobody

Recently, in 1999, when the Swedish officials decided the key issues were not about whether a person has migrated or not, but was related to their origins, the government replaced the term "*invandrare*" with the term "people with a foreign background" (*personer med utländsk bakgrund*) (*Regeringskansliet* 1999, p. 48; Westin 2006; Lacatus 2008, p. 45). This contrasted with the term "people with a Swedish background" (*personer med svensk bakgrund*), which included everyone who is born in Sweden with at least one parent who was born in Sweden. Thus, contemporary Swedish categories in censuses were built on a combination of the right to nationality based on lineage (*jus sanguinis*) and on the principle of birthright citizenship (*jus soli*) (Brubaker 1992). But again, the prerequisite of "having at least one parent who was born in Sweden" in Swedish citizenry embodied and expressed the nation's ethnocultural and *Volk*-centered (or folk-centered) understanding of nationhood.

While the division between "people with a foreign background" and "people with a Swedish background" seemed to disregard ethnicity, race, language, religion, and nationality, it nonetheless congealed the fluid concept of "*invandrare*" into a solid position that stands in opposition to Swedes. Moreover, this classification system left no room for neither self-identification nor a sense of national belonging to a country assured by a passport (Lacatus 2008, p. 45). Those who were excluded from the category of "people with a Swedish background" immediately fell into the category of "people with a foreign background," as if they did not have their own unique histories, nor could they represent themselves.

To summarize, when looking at the public and political discourses over the span of ninety years, one may notice a trend perpetuating ethnic differences between the Swedes and immigrants. This is achieved through reinforcing the identity of the former while simultaneously making the identities of the latter "invisible" (Pred 2000, p. 63). Regardless of their personal characteristics, generation, and biographical history, immigrants were gathered under a collective ethnic identity of "Others." Denied and deprived of distinctiveness, their life was represented and present only as the negation of the national self. Despite the terminological shifts from foreigner (*utlänning*) to immigrant (*invandrare*) to people with foreign background (*personer med utländsk bakgrund*) in the legislation body, and despite the refusal of using words that implying "ethnicity," the Swedish lineage nonetheless played a determining factor in drawing the boundary between Swedes and non-Swedes (Lacatus 2008, p. 45). In the country's housing project, the monotonous apartment buildings in peripheral urban locations were a perfect illustration of how the construction of a homogeneous group was converted to the political construction of space. I will discuss it in depth in the following sections.

2.3. The Weight of Institutionalized Categories

Social separation, no matter whether it refers to externally imposed concentration in residential, educational, and social-relational space, or to a deliberate strategy of self-organized insulation, is key to the workings of ethnicity (Brubaker 2015, p. 35). Having discussed how concepts of ethnicity evoked the division between the ethnic Swedes and non-ethnic Swedes, I will explore how these institutionalized categories modified Stockholm's human geography. Specifically, I will show how immigrant suburbs like Botkyrka have become a metaphor that represents geographically inscribed "Otherness," marginal and inferior to the more central suburbs inhabited mostly by the ethnic Swedes.

2.3.1. Residential Segregation

According to Massey and Denton, residential segregation is the degree to which two or more groups live separately from each other, in different parts of an urban area (Massey and Denton 1993). In Sweden, residential segregation is mainly reflected in two dimensions: "evenness," which refers to the differential distribution of two groups in a city, and "exposure," which indicates the potential contact between the groups.

In terms of distribution, Botkyrka municipality has experienced twofold segregations. First, there is segregation between northern and southern Botkyrka, and second, between Botkyrka and other municipalities. According to the "Diversity Index" developed by the Nordic Center for Spatial Development, northern Botkyrka is one of the most diverse areas in Stockholm County. The index is created by multiplying the percentage of foreign-born population by the number of countries of birth within each parish, where the parish average is set to an index of 100. As shown in Figure 1, the diversity index in northern Botkyrka (situated at the lower left side of the figure) is above 185, whereas the index in southern Botkyrka is below 15. The stark difference in diversity within the same municipality demonstrates that while persons with various foreign backgrounds tend to reside in the north part of Botkyrka, the ethnic composition of the south part of the municipality remains homogenous.

As diverse and inclusive as northern Botkyrka is, today, there is a missing piece in the diversity puzzle—ethnic Swedes. According to one Swedish resident, " . . . *here in the north end of Botkyrka, it almost never comes a Swedish family. If one family moves away, every time, it is people from other countries comes.*" "*If I go to Hallunda centrum, and I see a Swede, then I have to think, 'Wow! A Swede [is] here! A Swede moved in now!' Because you can point out the Swedes [in this area].*" Therefore, as opposed to "ethnic enclaves," which consist of one particular ethnic group, it is better to define northern Botkyrka as a diverse area, which is sparsely populated by native populations (Andersson 1998). Interestingly, the separation between northern and southern Botkyrka constitute an interfused "unity of opposites," with the north representing non-nationals and the south representing nationals—a perfect juxtaposition of "people with a foreign background" and "people with a Swedish background" (Pred 2000, p. 35).

Aside from the separation in residential space, housing styles and housing ownership also contribute to the north-south division. While northern Botkyrka is predominantly characterized by modernist apartment blocks, most of which are public rental apartments, its wealthier southern counterpart is largely composed of low rise multi-family dwellings and villas, usually owned by the residents. In addition, relative to spacious private yards or private gardens in villas or row houses, a standard three-bedroom apartment in northern Botkyrka is considered undesirable by ethnic Swedes. As a result of this preference, even though the housing in northern Botkyrka was intended to provide quality housing for everyone regardless of their income, these rental houses gradually became associated with immigrants or people who are from a lower socioeconomic status.
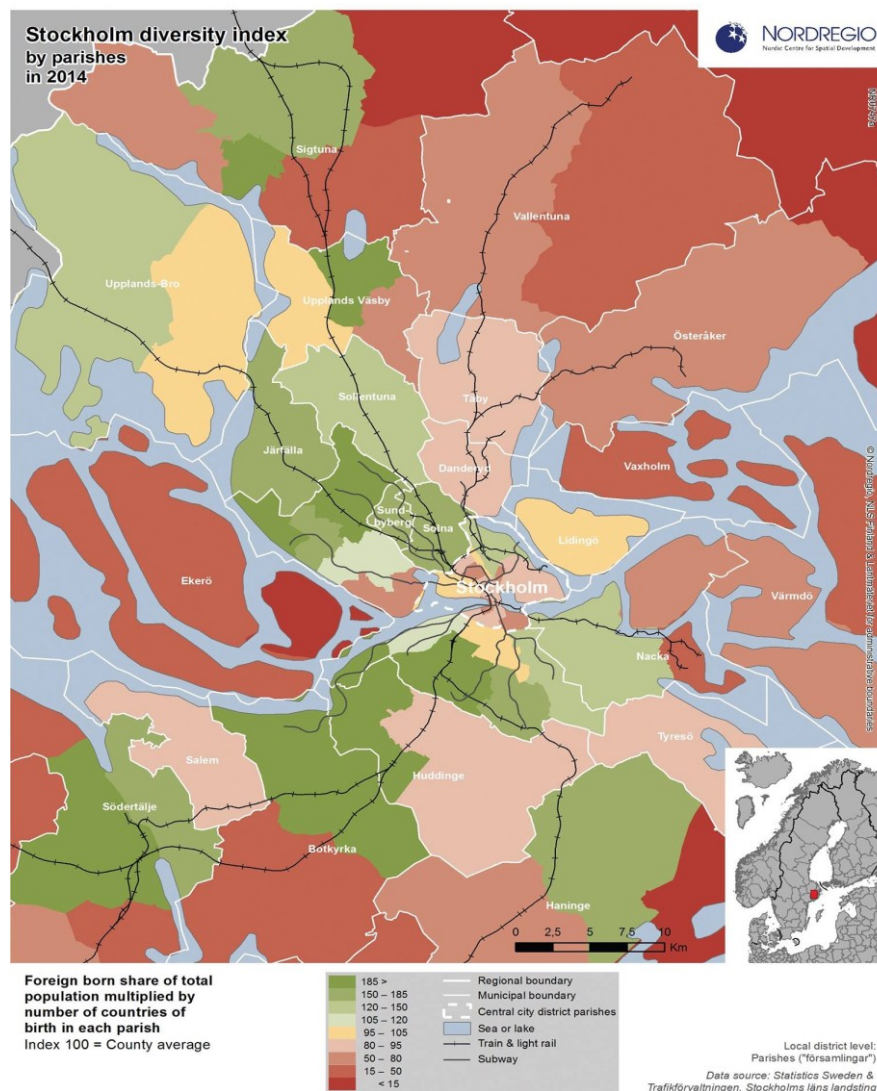
Figure 1. Stockholm diversity index by parishes in 2014. Source: Nordregio (Nordregio 2014).

2.3.2. Public Transportation

The design of the Swedish public transportation system is another crucial factor that limits the potential contact between the Swedes and the immigrants, further reinforcing the segregation within the municipality. There are two different transportation routes available in Botkyrka to reach the Stockholm city center. Residents in northern Botkyrka typically take the Red Line subway (*Tunnelbana*), whereas residents in southern part of the community are serviced by the commuter train (*Pendeltåg*). These two distinct routes minimize the opportunities for Swedes from the south and immigrants from the north to have contact with each other. One Nigerian immigrant told me, "*Here in Botkyrka, you speak Swedish and mix with Swedes only when you are in SFI [the Swedish language class], or when you are at work, or when you go to church. Other times, people don't really want to talk to you.*" Moreover, the bus route that links northern and southern communities is inconvenient. As an example, Tumba in the south, and Hallunda in the north is connected by a bus route with an infrequent service schedule, making it unlikely for people to travel frequently between the two districts, let alone creating social contacts (*Storstockholms Lokaltrafik* 2016).

If the distinct transportation systems are due to the state's negligent decision making, then the Swedish government also unintentionally bestowed a favor to southern Botkyrka inhabitants in the design of the commuter train. The commuter train is preferred because of its speed and

better-maintained facilities. As one of the interviewees puts it, *"Those who live in Tumba and Tullinge say the commuter rail is much better, because you can see the daylight. And it's quicker because there are fewer stops."* The disparate transportation systems thus produced different spatial benefits (Bourdieu and Accardo 2000, p. 127). Since physical distance can also be measured in temporal terms, in the fact that traveling from one place to another may take more or less time, the power over space is also a power over time. In the same vein, travel from Tumba to Stockholm central station by commuter train takes only 26 min, whereas it takes 35 min from Hallunda to the central station by subway, despite the fact that the former is located further from the city center (Hallunda is 16.9 km away from the central station, while Tumba is 19.3 km away). The added convenience of a shorter commute time offers little incentive for people to choose northern Botkyrka over the south.

2.3.3. Territorial Stigmatization and Marginalization

The process in which immigrants and Swedes are distributed to different parts of physical space has generated a twofold layer of inequality. The separation in residential and social-relational space led to territorial stigmatization, which, according to Wacquant, means a "powerful stigma attached to residence in the bounded and segregated spaces" (Wacquant 2008, p. 169). As more immigrants moved into the municipality, while currently more Swedes moved out, the social construct of boundaries began to materialize in practices of internal social differentiation, subsequently converted the symbolic boundaries into a spatial one, and finally resulted in all forms of discrimination, segregation, and exclusion. The uneven distribution of immigrant populations in spaces of disadvantage produces direct deprivation of socioeconomic opportunities, even in the absence of any symbolic discrimination.

To begin with, residential separation has implications of inferiority in its institutions, which reinforces isolation and marginalization of the already segregated municipality. For example, the ability to speak an accurate official language has been utilized to draw the boundaries between immigrant-dense communities and communities where most residents are native citizens. Pierre Bourdieu explained that pronunciation (accents) is one of the cultural and linguistic forms of capital that makes one's place of residence so important (Bourdieu 1991, p. 221). Struggles over language provide one basic principle of the division between those who can speak "perfect Swedish" and those who "have an accent," which legitimatizes the superiority of the former while demeaning the latter. Over time, the stigma that attaches to categories of persons would also be attached to the actual place like northern Botkyrka, as can be seen in the creation of the term "Botkyrka slang" (*Botkyrkaslang*), which is used interchangeably with the term "immigrant Swedish" (*Invandrarsvenska*) (Lacatus 2008, p. 30). Sometimes, more than 85% of children in a class have foreign-born parents, which makes learning Swedish language even harder (Andersson and Molina 2003). As one kindergarten teacher put it,

> [Botkyrka] is not popular here. If you are a Swede, you want your children to go to a school where they speak Swedish, very clear Swedish. [But] if you go to my school, they [the kids would] have an accent, even though they [can] speak Swedish. And you want them to act like Swedes perfectly. So, for a Swedish family, they don't look at the house here. They always live somewhere else, closer to town.

Feeling uncertain about the quality of the school education, many Swedish families tend to move out of the area, whereas those immigrant families that lack economic resources have no alternative options but to stay, thus creating institutional inequalities. In these schools, a teacher may either be less qualified or have to take care of too many children at a time. Additionally, schools may have very limited resources, as municipalities are overburdened by welfare expenditures on newly arrived immigrants and would inevitably curtail funding in school resources and other youth programs (Pred 2000, p. 130).

Limited school resources may place immigrants in a disadvantageous position in the job market. Statistics shows that while the unemployment rate for young adults (between 16 and 25 years old)

in Greater Stockholm is 8.5% in 2013, there is substantial variation between different municipalities: the unemployment rate is less than 6% in affluent Lidingö, whereas the employment rate reaches 11.7% in Botkyrka (Open Society Initiative for Europe Team 2014). Indeed, this variation could partly be explained by the overrepresentation of people with a foreign background in Botkyrka. However, even if we only look at those immigrants who have resided in Sweden for 10 years or more (between 20 and 64 years old), Botkyrka still has the highest rate of unemployment in Greater Stockholm (Statistics Sweden 2017a). In other words, when symbolic boundaries are projected unto certain physical spaces, one may lack certain socioeconomic opportunities simply by living in the area.
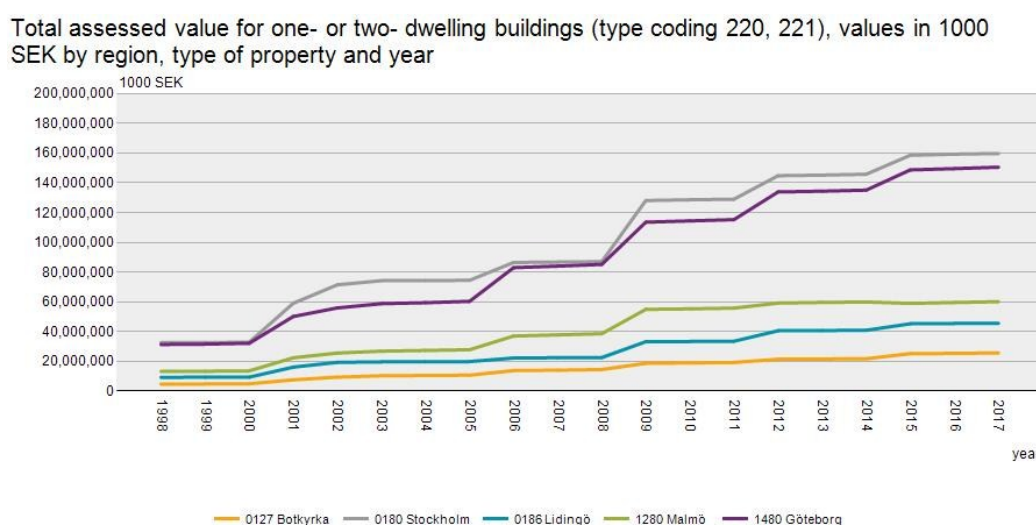
On account of publicity from the media and state institutions, Botkryka is now notorious for its violence and high crime rate, along with a high concentration of immigrants, unemployment, and destitution. According to the 55 "no-go" zones marked by the Swedish police, which indicated areas where "local criminal networks are thought to have negative impacts on the local community" (*Svenske Polisen* 2014), northern Botkyrka ranked the first. Even though the police have erased the report from its website afterward, the community now has been stigmatized as "very dangerous," "problematic," and "very challenging." It is an area where most Swedes try to avoid. One resident recounted her stigmatizing experience associated with this community,

> When you say where you live, they look at you, like "Oh, oh my god!" And I was like, "No, I am not a ... I am not gonna hurt you, don't be worried." Yeah, there are people who tell me like "Oh wow, how can you live there?" And I just say, 'I live there very fine. Thank you very much. Life is great (Laughed).

In the end, these "no-go" areas called out by the Swedish Police facilitated the symbolic image of Botkyrka as a dangerous place and painted its residents as potential criminals. For inhabitants of Botkyrka, questions of "who you are" and "how you are classified" have been replaced by "where do you reside?" People who live in these areas have been deprived of their individual uniqueness and their individual history and homogenized as a part of a place-specific category. When asked about the stigmatization of this area, one interviewee recalled,

> So ... [Botkyrka] this is an area only for foreigners. Some of our friends asked us, "why do you live in Botkyrka?" You know, like people from my hometown, they are not used to foreigners, and they may be afraid of them [foreigners]. Because you heard that if you come from Africa, you do like this and this, and if you are a Turk, you are like that, and you are a Spanish ... so then you don't know ... In a way, it's stigmatizing. It's like all Botkyrkans are like that, we are all so bad.

Territorial stigmatization directly influenced the real-estate value in Botkyrka, which is significantly lower than the housing value in other metropolitan municipalities. Figure 2 illustrates since 2000, the gap in the total assessed value for one- and two-unit residence among Botkyrka, Stockholm, Lidingö, Malmö, and Göteborg has widened. In 2017, Botkyrka had the lowest rate of growth in the total assessed value for one-and two-unit residential buildings among the five municipalities. Residential concentrations in disfavored neighborhoods have therefore resulted in *de facto* disadvantages for local residents, those who are "left behind."

Total assessed value for one- or two- dwelling buildings (type coding 220, 221), values in 1000 SEK by region, type of property and year

Figure 2. Total assessed value for one- and two-bedroom residential buildings, average in 1000 SEK by region, type of property, and year. Source: Statistics Sweden (Statistics Sweden 2017b).

Thus, the interplay between the stigmatized category and the stigmatized place has been established. Immigrants, whether called "foreigners," "immigrants," or "people with a foreign background," are symbolically displaced. It is as though they are already guilty simply because of their presence in another land, and all their other sins would just be aggravated by the original sin of immigration (Sayad 2004, p. 283). But they are also spatially displaced: as their tainted identities are projected upon specific locations, the place becomes displaced too. From then on, all deviant behaviors relate to the place have echoed on the phenomenon of immigration itself, just as all immigrant behavior has repercussions on the place—both lead to deeper disapproval and deeper stigmatization. Together, the paired categories of non-nationals/nationals are transformed into real inequalities in aspects of relatively limited school resources, greater difficulty in acquiring the Swedish language, the highest rate of unemployment, and low real-estate value.

2.4. Bridging Categories and the Site: The Spirit of the State

From the description above, it becomes clear that ethnic residential segregation in Sweden is a physical manifestation of the categorical divisions between two groups of people. However, the mechanism through which the institutionalized categories and actual sites are matched remains unclear. More specifically, one may wonder, if there is segregation, why in Botkyrka? What mechanism has made this municipality into an "immigrant-dense" suburb in the first place?

I will seek to address these questions in the following paragraphs. I argue that the categories through which we think about immigration are in fact national, or even nationalist categories. These national categories are embedded in a variety of national policies, and it is through the implementation of these policies—no matter what euphemism is used—that constitutes the reality of the nation-state, and trains people to think "in a way that the state requires us to think" (Sayad 2004, p. 281).

While it may hold true that ethnic segregation may be caused by voluntary decisions made by immigrants, as people with the same origin tend to stick together, it is hard to explain why Botkyrka has become a residential neighborhood for individuals from over 100 different nations, each with a different lifestyle (Andersson 1998). By contextualizing the issue in a spatial-temporal framework, this section will provide concrete evidence that residential segregation in Sweden is the result of a combination of the Swedish housing policy established between 1965–1974, the "All-of-Sweden" refugee dispersal policy created in the 1980s, and the Integration Policy developed in 1975. Although all

three policies focused on facilitating spatial and social diversity, a clear contradiction existed between the political rhetoric and the spirit of the nation-state. Consequently, none of the policies managed to reduce the level of segregation.

2.4.1. The Million Housing Program

Between 1965 and 1974, the governing Swedish Social Democratic party carried out an ambitious public housing program, *Miljonprogram* (Million Housing Program), to meet the growing demand for affordable housing in urban areas. The program intended to build one million new homes across Sweden over the span of a decade (25% of the current inventory). In contrast to social housing mainly intended for people with low income, the aim of the Million Housing Program was to provide quality housing for everyone, regardless of their income and origin (Hall and Viden 2005). Consequently, large scales of uniform apartment blocks were constructed in many municipalities during those 10 years, with the second highest concentration of these buildings in Botkyrka. Table 1 shows that among 26 municipalities in Stockholm, Botkyrka alone saw the construction of 10,824 multi-dwelling buildings, representing 7.4% of 146,901 public housing in Stockholm County.

Table 1. Number of dwellings in multi-dwelling buildings and number available to let, 2015. Source: Statistics Sweden (Statistics Sweden 2015).

Municipalities	Total Number of Dwellings, Public Housing	Municipalities	Total Number of Dwellings, Public Housing
Country	737,610	01 Stockholm County	146,901
0114 Upplands Väsby	3996	0160 Täby	-
0115 Vallentuna	96	0162 Danderyd	-
0117 Österåker	1585	0163 Sollentuna	5775
0120 Värmdö	2012	0180 Stockholm	70,312
0123 Järfälla	5560	0181 Södertälje	11,010
0125 Ekerö	846	0182 Nacka	-
0126 Huddinge	7131	0183 Sundbyberg	7846
0127 Botkyrka	10,824	0184 Solna	3867
0128 Salem	-	0186 Lidingö	268
0136 Haninge	1953	0187 Vaxholm	-
0138 Tyresö	3192	0188 Norrtälje	2057
0139 Upplands-Bro	1734	0191 Sigtuna	4049
0140 Nykvarn	534	0192 Nynäshamn	2254

However, these housing projects gradually became a magnet for refugees, labor immigrants, or whoever lacked roots in the particular urban site (Andersson 1998; Focus Migration 2009; Pred 2000). Three factors contributed to the unintended outcome: the timing, its peripheral locations, and the regulation of rents. First, with respect to timing, it coincided with the period of labor immigration was replaced by the high volume of refugees and family reunification from developing countries (Westin 2006; Hårsman 2006). During the final years of the program, the demands for housing were drastically reduced owing to the large quantities of the housing inventory compounded with the stagnant economy. In order to cover the program's costs, newly arrived refugees or immigrants were allocated to municipalities with this type of housing.

Second, the locations of the housing project were considered inconvenient and less desirable. Many of the buildings were constructed in peripheral locations, such as developing suburbs of the big towns and cities, outskirts of smaller towns, or desolate raw areas that had previously been hard to build on (Hall and Viden 2005). As one interviewee vividly described, "*You know, 50 years ago, nobody wants[ed] to live here, because it's like bush.*" These neighborhoods were also characterized by low socioeconomic status, even before the arrival of immigrants (Andersson and Molina 2003). Furthermore, local services and public transport often appeared too late or in some cases not at all, which failed to motivate Swedes to move into these newly constructed units (Andersson 1998). The visually monotonous and standardized high apartment buildings with satellite dishes hanging

from balconies did not match with the traditional Swedish ideal of a home, which emphasized their inferior and less desirable position:

> [Houses in Million Program are] Boring houses . . . Well, they are looking like that. They are big and look like a square, no one wants to live there. You know, how our traditional houses look like. The typical house in the countryside. We like to live in the wood house, more beautiful. They [Houses in Million Program] are made of stone, and maybe like five floors. So, no one wants to live there. I guess you have to move there if you don't have anywhere else to live.

Third, most of the public rental housing in Sweden are subject to rent regulation, which keeps rents down in attractive areas with the purpose of reducing socioeconomic segregation by allowing low-income groups to afford apartments in the area (Lind and Hellström 2006). Yet, contrary to its objective, rent regulation, in fact, strengthened socioeconomic segregation. Ironically, the rent regulation policy made it easier for middle-income Swedes to lease preferred housings in the center of the city, whereas this policy did not really benefit refugees who had to rely on social benefits and could not pay the rent by themselves. Consequently, when the housing demand was low, vacancies concentrated in the Million Housing Program areas. When the housing demand rose, they were the last areas to become fully occupied (Andersson 1998; Hårsman 2006). Over time, these areas became the last resort for people who had no housing alternatives or who were "difficult" to be incorporated into the "normality" of people's home (*folkhem*), typically refugees who needed public support, low-income Swedish households, and Swedish citizens who experienced mental illness, drug dependency, and alcoholism (Pred 2000, p. 103; Andersson and Molina 2003; Focus Migration 2009).

To conclude, ethnic residential segregation in Sweden were not caused by voluntary decisions made by immigrants, but rather through the state policy which projected certain groups of people unto certain geographies. Just as the "Others" at that time—Roma, women, and people who were mentally ill—were excluded from the homogeneous *folkhem* in the 1930s, so were immigrants who were systematically distributed to Million Housing Program areas in the 1970s. The neighborhoods that immigrants moved to were on or beyond the urban fringe, where most of the housing were empty apartments. In other cases, the only remaining Swedes in these areas were people with lower socioeconomic status, or people who suffered from alcoholism, drugs, and other problems. Put differently, the policy did not really strive to integrate immigrants into the mainstream Swedish neighborhoods, but rather reinforced their marginalization. The concrete, unappealing housing style of the Million Housing Program further indicated that these apartments served as the counter-image to the Swedish ideal home. These were homes for the "Others." Finally, through rent regulations that favored middle-income Swedes, those with greater socioeconomic resources moved to central cities or built their own Swedish ideal homes. Thus, ethnicity and class were crystallized in these housing projects. As a result, by the 1990s, 65 to 85% of the population in these areas were immigrants, especially people of non-European background and Bosnian origins (Pred 2000, p. 103). Meanwhile, municipalities like Botkyrka experienced steady decrease in the share of people with a Swedish background (Statistics Sweden 2017c).

2.4.2. The "All-of-Sweden" Dispersal Policy

Recognizing the unintended consequences of the Million Housing Program, the "All-of-Sweden" (or "Sweden-wide") policy was put into effect at the beginning of 1985. Also known as the refugee dispersal policy, its intention was to reduce and reverse disproportionate concentrations of the immigrant population in already immigrant-dense neighborhoods (Andersson et al. 2010a; Focus Migration 2009). The government attempted to achieve this goal by shifting the responsibility of immigrant reception from the state level to the municipality level and began to distribute new refugees into municipalities all over the country. Most importantly, the state emphasized that refugees should be settled away from large metropolitan areas.

While the policy did succeed in distributing refugees to most of the localities in Sweden, it did not meet its goal of integration. One major problem was that refugees did not stay in their assigned municipalities. Scholars found that most refugees would undertake a secondary migration once they received their permits to stay in Sweden, moving from small or rural municipalities to urban centers. But why did these refugees undertake this secondary migration? There are several contributing factors. First and foremost, refugees and asylum seekers were deprived of their rights and latitude to choose an initial place of residence. After arriving in Sweden and applying for asylum, asylum seekers would be sent to one of the geographically dispersed refugee-processing camps run by the Swedish Migration Board (*Migrationsverket*) (Pred 2000). If they were granted to remain within the country, it was up to each individual municipality to decide whether to take in and, if so, how many refugees they would like to take in every year, which created a wide variation in the number of refugees each municipality received. Under this scheme, refugees were politicized and bureaucratized more than ever. Regardless of their individual preferences, these refugees' destinies were in the hands of various political institutions.

Since each municipality had the autonomy in refugee reception decisions, it widened the disparity between each municipality. Those municipalities that were economically well-off chose to close their doors for any refugees, either because there was not enough rental housing stock in these areas, or because they did not have an incentive to receive refugees in exchange for state compensation. In one extreme case, a local referendum was held in one of the southern municipalities in 1988, where the majority of the local residents supported the municipal council's refusal to participate in the "All-of-Sweden" program (Focus Migration 2009). By contrast, as government funding to municipalities were in line with their intake of refugees, municipalities in regions suffering from economic difficulty, emigration, and aging declared their willingness to receive more refugees and asylum seekers. Despite their willingness, those municipalities were, according to one interviewee, more likely to be located in "*special places, out somewhere in Sweden . . . more in smaller cities around the countryside.*" Furthermore, these municipalities often have limited work opportunities and had ongoing depopulation. One Swedish teacher remarked on the hardship of finding jobs in these municipalities,

> Because for many people, after they came here, they are just sitting in these refugee places. It's like "I am trying to leave all these bad things behind me and starting something new. And when I get to the new place, I am just sitting here, not doing anything. I am just sitting in this place, not being able to do things. I can't talk to people, I can't go out, I can't work, I can't do a thing." That's sad. So of course, they feel hopeless, they feel tired.

Research also shows that these rural areas often lacked any history of non-European immigration, thus sometimes resulting in an increase in social isolation of immigrants due to these neighborhoods' inexperience in incorporating immigrants into their communities (Andersson 1998). One interviewee criticized the policy saying it has made it difficult for refugees to have interactions with native populations,

> If you see [watch] the news on TV, they interviewed refugees. And they [the refugees] say, "We would like to go to Stockholm. That would be perfect for us." Well, *welcome* to Sweden. You will go to a town far out in the woods. No store. No people. So, it's really hard for them to learn Swedish. [Because in order to learn] you have to see the language in your daily life.

All these obstacles prompted refugees to move to bigger cities after finishing their introductory program. However, once refugees possessed mobility within the country, they often move into suburbs of Stockholm and other large cities with large quantities of inexpensive housing, where they can be surrounded by relatives and friends and expand their social networks. In other words, they migrated into Million Housing Program areas. While a few successful immigrants managed to leave the immigrant-dense areas and achieve upward mobility, these areas continually attracted the newly arrived refugees and remained stable over time (Andersson et al. 2010b).

Ironically enough, the result of the "All-of-Sweden" policy was contrary to its aim of avoiding further spatial concentration of immigrants, as it implicitly silenced the immigrants and made them invisible. In order for the policy to be effective, refugees should have had their rights to move freely within the country, and receiving sites, at a minimum, should be able to offer a reasonable chance of a successful integration (Andersson et al. 2010a). Had immigrants been settled in those suitable and less isolated neighborhoods in the first place, which could provide them with reasonable job opportunities, their secondary migration could have been avoided. Had the dispersal policy been more regulated, the uneven distribution of these refugees would never have happened. For example, one municipality in Stockholm took in more Iraqi refugees (1268 Iraqis) than the whole of US in 2007, while the number of refugees other municipalities took in averaged well below 100 (Focus Migration 2009).

2.4.3. The Integration Policy

In 1975, the Swedish Parliament passed the policy on Immigrant Integration for the Southern European labor immigrants, which has three objectives: equality, freedom of cultural choices, and partnership (Westin 2006; Ring 1995). Following the universal and egalitarian approach, immigrants with permanent residence were granted with equal social entitlements as the rest of the population (Sainsbury 2012). In terms of the partnership, immigrants have voting rights in municipal and provincial parliament elections (Focus Migration 2009). Finally, immigrants are given the freedom of choice to decide whether to assimilate or retain their own unique culture (Westin 2006), which marks the beginning of a multicultural state. However, what underlies "freedom of choice" is that whatever choices immigrants made, it should not be in conflict with Swedish values and standards. Several Swedish citizens mentioned the importance of "Swedish culture":

> I guess the distinction [between Swedish culture and other cultures] is not very difficult to spot because someone who is a Swede will act like a Swede, even if they look like they are not from Sweden . . .

> A lot of Swedish people, they got annoyed by the Syrian people. They [the Syrian people] tell the bus driver, "Wait! My friend has to go to the store." But that does not work here. The bus would pick you up and then leave. You know the Swedish punctual timing. But they [the Syrian people] are used to it. They need people to tell them . . . We Swedes are afraid to be rude. Everything should be perfect. And when they [refugees] come, they are very different from us . . . So my friends ask me, "Helen, teach us. We don't know. Teach us how to behave. Otherwise, people will be angry."

The word "teach" revealed that the so-called "multiculturalism" in Sweden was not different from assimilation in itself. As one immigrant remarks, "*The government wants to project a multicultural image. But Swedish people themselves are not, easy to let it go . . . Things are not always the way as they were projected.*" Given this mentality, it is Swedes who define which cultural characteristics are being produced, what must be produced, and what should be producing. The immigrants, therefore, provide the perfect counterpoint for the "Swedish culture," in the perfect embodiment of "Otherness." Since then, only two categories are acceptable: the assimilable and the assimilated (Sayad 2004, p. 220).

As the complexity of emphasizing both a sense of cultural diversity and the superiority of Swedish cultural become engrained in people's mentalities, cultural differences are treated as emblems of intrinsic and immutable differences between different groups. The immigrant "Other" becomes the opposite of the national "Self," as they could only be defined as someone "who we are not" (Pred 2000, p. 75).

> We are reserved. We don't like conflicts. Compared to many countries, we treat women more equally, and we have a really low margin about what considers as sexual harassment. And we don't have a culture where we punish our kids in the same way, especially people from the Middle East have the culture where they have more severe punishment for the

> kids of how to be a good person, which is not accepted in Sweden. If you want to get a job in Sweden, you might not be too rowdy and loud, and you should be a respectable person, and not invade people's personal space.

> If you want to know which household lives immigrants, just look at curtains in their living rooms. Their curtains are always drawn. Swedish people do not do that. We like to have our curtains pulled aside so that we have a better view.

In 1985, the Immigration Board took over the refugee integration work and proposed a series of ambitious integration plans, of which language and job training have been perceived as the pivotal step. Under the new integration policy, refugees and asylum seekers must attend SFI ("Swedish for Immigrants"), the officially language program, before starting to work. It is worth noting that the program includes both Swedish language and Swedish tradition in its curriculum. SFI usually lasts for two to three years and ends with an examination, which indicates that regardless of an immigrant's educational background, one may have to wait for at least three years before being permitted to work in Sweden. Passing the SFI courses had a direct impact on immigrants' employment. In one Swedish study, the researcher compared the employment rate among three groups: those who passed SFI with good results, those who passed SFI without good results and those who failed or did not take SFI. The employment rate was in proportion to their test results. The policy in effect justified categorical differences by systematically constraining immigrants' choices in employment. Most immigrants in Botkyrka would work as cleaners, cooks, hired car drivers, supermarket porters, and special caretakers, as these jobs require little skills and little language skills. These jobs are either part-time or do not match their education level. As a result, most immigrants are integrated into the lower end of the labor market.

Yet language could also be manipulated symbolically, as one informant describes,

> Look at 90% of the population in Stockholm, what do they speak more, English or Swedish? Everywhere in Stockholm, people speak English. You go to the language school, you learn the [Swedish] language, but everywhere you go, they [Swedish people] speak English to you. They want to compete with you, "You can speak English? I can speak it too." They speak very good English. Still, they want you to learn their Swedish.

3. Discussion

3.1. The Tripartite Division of Ethnic Boundary Construction

Immigration draws the limit of what constitutes the nation-state ([Sayad 2004](#), p. 278). This study speaks to the ways in which institutionalized categories mirror the national understanding of itself and the national "Others," how these abstract categories are projected upon physical space through localized practices, and how the uneven geographical and symbolic boundaries perpetuate these categorical inequalities in contemporary Sweden.

To recap, the case of Botkryka Municipality allows us to explore in detail the tripartite division in the way ethnic boundaries are constructed: relational, symbolic, and spatial. Ethnic boundaries are, first of all, relational: by constructing paired categories of "foreign and folk," "immigrant and native," and "people with a foreign background and people with a Swedish background," Sweden demarcates a nation of "unity of opposites." In this nation, whoever comes from outside of the country (or whoever being considered as "outsiders") is grouped together under the collective ethnic identity of "Others." Denied and deprived of distinctiveness, their life is represented and present only as the negation of the national self. In other words, the existence of the "Other" is vital for reinforcing the collective fantasies of the "We-image."

Ethnic boundaries, and in turn ethnic inequalities, are also produced through symbolic divisions. This is achieved through implicitly placing heritage Swedes in a superior position in relation to the inferior position of immigrants. As mentioned earlier, the prerequisite of "having at least one

parent who was born in Sweden" in defining "people with a Swedish background" in contemporary Swedish censuses indicates that lineage (*jus sanguinis*) still plays an important role in Swedish citizenry. This symbolic division of ethnic boundaries is embedded in a variety of national policies: The Million Housing Program established between 1965–1974, the "All-of-Sweden" refugee dispersal policy created in the 1980s, and the Swedish Integration Policy developed in 1975. Although all three policies focused on facilitating spatial and social diversity, this study demonstrates none of the three policies managed to reduce the level of segregation. A number of reasons contributed to their unintended outcomes.

First, with the implementation of the Million Housing Program, policymakers did not take enough interest in integrating immigrants into the mainstream Swedish neighborhoods. Immigrants were placed in urban peripheries characterized by lower socioeconomic status and whose residents were "incompatible" with the homogeneous *folkhem*, thus creating a metaphor that represents their inferiority and marginalization. By contrast, Swedish citizens were favored by rent regulation to leave those areas and moved to central cities. Furthermore, the concrete, unappealing housing style indicated that these monotonous apartments were contrary to the Swedish ideal home but rather were home for the "Others."

Second, with respect to the design of the "All-of-Sweden" policy, refugees' destinies were in the hands of different municipalities. Those municipalities that were economically well-off were only willing to take in well below 100 refugees or even openly refused to participate in the refugee dispersal program. Consequently, refugees were often settled in less suitable and more isolated neighborhoods with limited work opportunities, which led to their secondary migration into Million Housing Program areas. Over time, with more successful immigrants moved out and newly arrived refugees moved in, ethnic residential segregation was reproduced and reinforced in these areas.

Last, the Swedish Integration Policy implicitly favored the Swedish culture and the Swedish language and therefore perpetuated categorical differences by treating cultural differences as intrinsic differences between different groups. Though immigrants were given the freedom of choice to decide whether to assimilate or retain their own unique culture, what underlies the principle of "freedom of choice" is that whatever choices immigrants made, it should not be in conflict with Swedish values and standards. Furthermore, the ability to speak the Swedish language—by passing the SFI ("Swedish for Immigrant") examination as a proof—had a direct impact on immigrants' employment outcomes, which systematically constrained immigrants' choices in employment. As a result, scarce and valuable resources were secured from opening to outsiders.

The final way ethnic boundaries and inequalities are produced is through spatial processes. When the social construct of boundaries began to materialize in practices of internal social differentiation, the symbolic boundaries became emplaced, and finally resulted in all forms of discrimination, segregation, and exclusion. Residential segregation is exemplified by the ethnic division, physical separation, and economic disparity seen in Botkyrka Municipality, where non-native Swedes make-up the majority in the northern part of the municipality, while the ethnic Swedish population densely populate in the south. Northern Botkyrka is distinguished from Southern Botkyrka in terms of housing styles, housing ownership, and public transportation. When these differences are drawn upon a map of a large urban area such as Stockholm, their positional identities become even more evident in the stark contrast between the marginalized immigrant suburbs and the preferred urban centers. The uneven distribution of immigrant populations in spaces of disadvantage produces direct deprivation of socioeconomic opportunities, as Botkyrka residents have relatively limited school resources, greater difficulty in acquiring the Swedish language, the highest rate of unemployment, and low real-estate value.

3.2. Implications for Welfare State and Further Research

The three aspects of ethnic boundaries (relational, symbolic, and spatial) provides us with another perspective on welfare policies. The unintended consequence of state policies highlighted within this study speaks to the flip side of a welfare state. A welfare state, according to Esping-Anderson,

"is not just a mechanism that intervenes in, and possibly corrects, the structure of inequality; it is, in its own right, a system of stratification (Esping-Andersen 1990, p. 23)." Welfare policies can both promote equality and reinforce social cleavages. The central element in national policymaking is the social dynamic driving those policies (Quadagno 1996). In the Swedish case, that dynamic has been the nation's ethnocultural and *Volk*-centered definition of nationhood (Brubaker 1990). The nation's desire for an organic, cultural, linguistic, and even racial community, on the one hand, cultivates a solidarity of the nation and "its people," while on the other hand, makes it almost impossible for immigrants to be integrated into the Swedish society. Therefore, even though immigrants were granted permission to stay in the country, they ended up staying in the Million Housing areas or homes for the "Others." Even though immigrants received the same welfare benefits as the native Swedes, they may be spatially separated from the national "Us" in residential areas and the usage of public transportation system. Even though immigrants were provided an opportunity to learn the Swedish language by the Integration Policy, language actually became a symbolic power to exclude them from integrating into the labor market.

This ethnocultural understanding of nationhood thus explains why even in countries such as Sweden, where there are strong welfare traditions in providing material support for newcomers, there is still a symbolic barrier in sharing its collective goods with non-nationals (Bloemraad 2006, p. 244). By taking both the material and symbolic aspects of state intervention into consideration, we can understand how Sweden's ostensibly generous immigration policies do not lead to full social, economic, and spatial integration.

Besides looking into symbolic state interventions, further research is also needed to capture important nuances among immigrants who are classified as "Others." For example, certain immigrants may be preferred over others in proportion to their resemblance to Swedes; social status distinctions may separate immigrants from one other, despite they may be seen as homogeneous in the eyes of Swedes.

Finally, to contribute to the study of ethnic boundaries and nationalism, I propose a shift of academic interests in three aspects. First, I suggest a shift from focusing on immigrants to perceiving the national population as a whole. Second, a transition from centering on the "problematic" immigrant suburbs to probing into their problematized process. Third, I position a move from treating legal categories as given to questioning their deepest social and political foundations as well as their localized practices. This way of framing our inquiry may be one of the most important tasks in the study of ethnic boundaries.

4. Materials and Methods

Standard ethnographic methods were applied in this study. Data was collected through participant observation, in-depth life-history interviews, semi-structured interviews, analysis of census and survey statistics, and review of documentary materials. The study involved two stages. The first stage primarily comprised participant observation and in-depth life-history interviews. From September 2013 to May 2014, I worked as an intern in the Hallundakyrkan in Stockholm, Sweden. My weekly schedule included preparing lunch for homeless people on weekdays, sorting second-hand clothes for refugees and asylum seekers, and arranging social events for local residents. In addition, I—along with 26 other students—attended a community-held Swedish language class every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. In my free time, I would either spend time with my refugee friends or visit the Multicultural Center for Swedish documentary materials on immigration policies. Participant observation allowed me to fully immerse myself in this community and the surrounding environment. Using snowball sampling, 20 in-depth life-history interviews were conducted during the first stage, including both students in the Swedish language class and local residents. All my interviews were conducted in English. In order to preserve accuracy, I have quoted verbatim.

The second stage started in January, 2016 and comprised two components: conducting follow up interviews online and researching on official Swedish documents on its immigration policies.

I conducted and recorded 8 semi-structured interviews through Skype, each lasting about 90 min. I deliberately chose individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds with different occupations, including students, teachers (both kindergarten and Swedish language teachers), pastors, cleaners, nurses, and retired citizens. I mainly asked my interviewees about their living experience in the municipality, their understandings of the "Million Housing Program" project and the "All-of-Sweden" policy, their interactions with their neighbors, and various resources that are available near their home. Then I used In Vivo coding technique to code and analyze the transcripts (and the program MAXQDA 12). Codes were derived from the original language used by the interviewees, emerging themes in the data, and special keywords. In addition, I relied on Google Translate to translate Swedish statistical and governmental data from Statistics Sweden (SCB), Nordic Research Institute (Nordregio), Swedish Police (*Svenske Polisen*), and Government Offices of Sweden (*Regeringen*).

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