The Swedish suburb
as myth and reality[1]

Pål Castell[2]
Chalmers University of Technology

The purpose of this thematic paper is to introduce the context of Swedish rental housing areas, with a specific focus on the stigmatisation and marginalisation of the so-called 'suburbs' (it should be pointed out already here that the Swedish notion of 'suburb' has completely different connotations than when the term is used in, e.g., American literature; indeed, the meanings are in many regards quite the opposite). The first part of the paper concentrates on the rental housing market and the role of the municipal housing companies in Sweden. The remaining part discusses the development and content of the contemporary 'suburb' notion, connected to the issue of residential segregation and possible policy responses to urban deprivation.

Swedish rental housing

There are no reliable statistics on tenure forms in Sweden since the last population and housing census in 1990. Since then, Statistics Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån, SCB) has estimated the housing stock by keeping track of registered new developments and demolitions. Although these figures may give a fair idea of how many houses and dwellings there are, they do not show whether the dwellings are rented or owned by the residents. According to recent estimations, there were 4.47 million dwellings in Sweden in 2007, of which 45% were in 'one-to-two-dwelling buildings' and 55% were in 'multi-dwelling buildings' (Statistics Sweden, 2009a).

When it comes to tenure forms, however, the official statistics are vague. According to the 1990 population and housing census (which is still not updated in official statistics), half of the Swedish dwellings were owned by private persons; one sixth were cooperatively owned; and about one third were owned by public organisations or private companies, which could be assumed to correspond approximately to the stock of rental apartments (compare to Figure 1). A yearly Swedish questionnaire confirms that approximately one third of adult Swedes live in rental apartments, and this figure has been relatively stable since the mid-1980s (Statistics Sweden, 2004). Also concerning new developments during the past decade, the statistics show that about one third were built as rental apartments (Statistics Sweden, 2009a). These indications of a stable proportion of rental housing of one third is notable, consider-

---

[1] This article is published as a 'thematic paper' in Castell (2010), *Managing yard and togetherness: living conditions and social robustness through tenant involvement in open space management*, Chalmers University of Technology, Göteborg.

[2] Contact details: pal.castell@gmail.com, +46 (0) 70 242 37 83

ing the common image that rental housing is on the decline in Sweden (e.g. Gustavsson, 2008). However, what is not measured in the official statistics are transitions from rental to cooperative housing, a phenomenon which has been highly debated, particularly concerning the gentrification of central areas in the larger cities (e.g. Bodström, Ponzio & Ramberg, 2002).
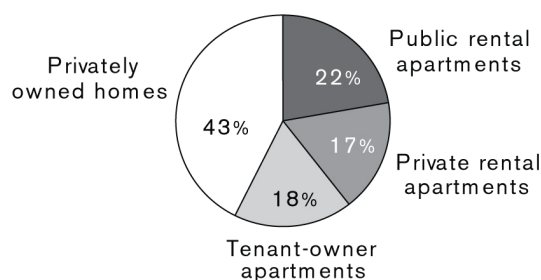

Figure 1. Estimated proportions of different tenure forms in Sweden at the beginning of the 21st century (drawing from SABO, 2007).

The 'People's Home' and Swedish municipal housing

A central notion in the building of a welfare state in Sweden is the 'People's Home' (*Folkhemmet*). As formulated by social-democratic party leader Per-Albin Hansson in 1928 (quoted in Ramberg, 2000, p. 90):

> The foundation of the home is the feeling of togetherness and cohesion. […] In the good home equality prevails, as do attention, cooperation, helpfulness. Applied to the people's and the citizen's home at large, this would mean a tearing down of all social and economic barriers now dividing the citizens into privileged and deprived, rulers and dependent, rich and poor, propertied and pauperised, plunderers and plundered.

Ethnologist Klas Ramberg places the People's Home period between 1930 and 1980. In the early 1930s, contemporary with the launching of functionalist architecture ideals, an intense debate around housing standards arouse, with sociologist Alva Myrdal and economist Gunnar Myrdal playing key roles. Ramberg (2000, p. 90) describes it as a time when social-democratic ideology shifted "from class struggle to a politics which looked to all citizens, a new politics for the large home – the nation". Although it took until after the second world war before the new ideas were concretised in a comprehensive housing law with social ambitions, the principles of an interventionist housing policy whereby public authorities took on a leading role in providing decent standard housing for the citizens was formed already during the 1930s. The local municipalities became main actors and were encouraged to establish their own housing companies, which should not strive to generate maximum profit but instead be led by 'general interests' (*allmännytta*). These *general interest* housing companies (often referred to in English as *public*, *social* or *municipal* housing companies) had an economic advantage over the profit-driven housing companies, as they were guaranteed governmental loans at a lower interest rate. Moreover, a rent-setting system was applied, whereby the rent levels of the municipal housing companies (defined through negotiations between SABO and the Union of Tenants) became a model rent for private

landlords as well. This means that suspicions of exorbitant rents can be reported to and examined by a state rent tribunal, whereby houses are compared based on various standard criteria

The municipal housing companies are still very important actors on the Swedish housing market. However, their privileged position has been changed, particularly when subsidised loans were abolished in the mid-1990s (see, e.g., Turner, 1997; 1999). The system of regulated rent levels defined by standard qualities is now also at stake, and many promote a transition to more market-adapted rent levels (see, e.g., Ellingsen & Englund, 2003; Lind & Hellström, 2006; Swedish Government, 2006b). Others fear that this will accelerate the problems involved with segregation in the cities, making it even harder for poor households to get access to dwellings in attractive areas (see, e.g., Bergenstråhle, 2008).

Compared to other countries, the Swedish system has not been unique. In countries like Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria, publicly owned housing companies have had the role of regulating the rents in an integrated housing market (Bengtsson & Kemeny, 1997). In other countries, however, such as England, Ireland, the US, New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, Finland and Iceland, there have been two separate housing markets: one without regulations, for profit-seeking companies; and one subsidised and highly regulated market accessible only to people with particular needs who cannot afford other housing (ibid.).

Social housing

As has already been noted, the Swedish concept of *allmännyttan* is usually translated into either 'municipal', 'public' or 'social' housing. Municipal housing or public housing may be regarded as relatively neutral translations, as *allmännyttan* is owned almost fully by local municipal authorities. Social housing, on the other hand, is a more controversial translation. In a critical article, Ingrid Sahlin (2008) reflects upon the discrepancy between the self-image of Sweden as a progressive welfare state and the current housing policy. She notes that the concept of *social housing* is almost taboo in the Swedish debate, which, she argues, is a typical symptom of an absence of social mission. Particularly since the previous change of government in 2006, when the Social Democratic party had to hand off to a right-wing party alliance, the dismantling of general welfare goals in the housing policy has taken effect. Among other things, she points out a changed formulation of the overall goal of housing policy as a sign of a shifted approach. In the new formulation, phrases suggesting a social pathos are replaced with a more sweeping economic language (prop. 2007/08:1, quoted in Sahlin, 2008):

> The goal for housing issues is long-term well-functioning housing markets whereby the demand of consumers meets a supply of dwellings which match the needs.

This can be compared with the previous goal formulation, which had been more or less the same for 30 years (prop. 2005/06:1, quoted in Sahlin, 2008):

> Everyone should be given opportunities to live in good dwellings at feasible costs and in a stimulating and safe environment within a long-term, sustainable framework. The living and building environments should contribute to

equal and dignified living conditions and, in particular, support good growth for children and youth.

There is an important distinction between providing opportunities for "everyone" and meeting "the demand of consumers". There are many people today who have no accessibility to the housing market and therefore do not pose any consumer demand, as Sahlin points out. She questions whether there are any social ambitions in the new housing policy, "as those who lack housing and means can hardly be counted as consumers or their needs as demand, and as the instruments for measuring or meeting the housing needs have been removed" (Sahlin, 2008).

The dismantling of social ambitions in Swedish housing policy was under debate long before the last change of government. Bengt Turner has written several internationally published research articles on the issue, suggesting that the system of a general provision of decent housing at feasible costs has gradually been reformed towards a system of a divided housing market (see, e.g., Turner, 1997; 1999; Turner & Whitehead, 2002). The same warnings are also raised by Bo Bengtsson and Jim Kemeny (1997), who criticise the 1996 governmental housing commission's report for diverting from the principles of an integrated housing market and thus leading to a profit-optimising system with a limited supply of cheaper dwellings – a "selective allowance policy making a clear demarcation between 'suppliers' and 'needy'" (Bengtsson & Kemeny, 1997, p. 17). The debate has thus focused on the social risks involved with giving up the traditional integrated housing market of general welfare supply for a system of a non-regulated housing market for the majority and a social housing market for the disadvantaged. However, as Sahlin (2008) argues, in reality we are leaving the integrated general supply system for a market-oriented housing system *without* support mechanisms for the disadvantaged. Sahlin calls to mind the situation in Sweden at the time of the social housing commission in the 1930s, where the rents on the non-regulated housing market made it impossible for large low-income groups to access decent housing. Pointing at the fact that a growing part of the population already now are excluded from the formal housing market – becoming homeless or forced to rent illegally – Sahlin suggests that social housing would be a much more humane solution than what we are heading towards now.

The changes of the Swedish housing policy are partly an attempt to adapt to EU legislation. In the directives for the last governmental housing commission, the aim was to solve the potential conflict between the European Commission's principles of free market competition and the privileges of Swedish municipal housing companies (Sahlin, 2008). However, The European Commission permits exceptions for "social services of general interest", among which social housing is mentioned (COM, 2006:177). The definition of social housing which is commonly referred to is that it provides "housing for disadvantaged citizens or socially less advantaged groups" (COM, 2006:177, p. 5), although there is no consensus among the EU countries on how social housing should be understood in practice. Laurent Ghekiere has analysed the development of housing policies in the 27 EU member states and concludes that there are three different conceptualisations of social housing (Ghekiere, 2007, pp. 78-84):

1. As a *residual* concept, social housing should be aimed at giving disadvantaged persons access to adequate housing when the market fails to do so. This means that social housing is a narrow sector only for those who qualify in an individual needs assessment based on a set of criteria which excludes them from the private housing market. Such a system is practiced in the UK and Ireland, and in many of the "new member states" which today have a highly privatised housing market, e.g. the Baltic States, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania.

2. As a *generalist* concept, social housing should be aimed at regulating the private housing market to keep prices and rent levels down, making adequate standard housing available to broader low-income groups and not only to certain needy households. This system is practiced in most older member states, e.g., Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy and Finland; and in some of the new member states, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. However, many of these countries are moving towards a more limited social housing market, i.e., towards a residual rather than a generalist conception.

3. As a *universal* concept, social housing is not supplied for any specified target group, but refers more broadly to non-profit housing of general interest, which is integrated into the private rental housing market. This system is practiced only in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. It is also a system on trial, because it "does not comply with the definition of social housing as a service of general interest given by the European Commission in its assessment of the manifest abuse, as it goes far beyond the social demand".

It should be noted that Ghekiere emphasises the possibility of providing social housing in forms other than rental housing. Many countries use subsidised homeownership as a means to provide adequate housing to their citizens. As he introduces the content of social housing, it should be understood as (Ghekiere, 2007, p. 22):

> …any dwelling whose supply is subject to specific obligations, in order to enable necessitous persons who have difficulties in housing themselves under prevailing market conditions to access and remain in decent and affordable housing. […] Social housing, regardless of whether it is rented, homeownership or in mixed or progressive tenancy, constitutes the permanent response of public authorities to a structural failure of the housing market.

The current context of municipal housing and private rental housing in Sweden

In contrast to many other countries, in Sweden there is no clear stigma attached to living in municipal housing. Following the principles of the housing policy formed after the second world war, the goal of municipal housing was good dwellings for *all*. Thus, a conscious strategy of many municipal housing companies was to provide not only cheap apartments for the neediest, but also highly attractive housing for middle- and high-income groups (see, e.g., Ericson & Johansson, 1994).

As in all countries, though, there are areas in Sweden with lower standards and higher numbers of impoverished groups than elsewhere. There are areas which are avoided by the more affluent, but which are home to large groups of people who have no means to move elsewhere. In short: there is socio-economic housing segregation in Sweden. Recent reports also show that polarisation is increasing, e.g., in terms of income divides and ethnic composition (see, e.g., Andersson, 2006a; Bergenstråhle, 2006; Swedish Government, 2006a; Andersson, Bråmå & Hogdal, 2009).

As discussed above, there seem to be ambiguities regarding the responsibility and role of municipal housing companies in addressing structural social issues. Anecdotally, several of the municipal housing company managers and directors I have encountered during my research on the management of residential yards have seemed highly unwilling to express social pathos. Even those obviously engaging in social projects tend to hold firmly to the rhetorical mantra of profitability as the only legitable motivation for their action. In other words, what they do in terms of social improvements is expressed as a means to make the business more profitable in the long term and not the other way around. Meanwhile, some of the larger private housing companies who have invested in more 'unattractive' large-scale housing areas seem to acknowledge the same connection between social and economic issues, setting aside funds for tenant influence and social projects in a similar manner as municipal housing companies have been doing since the 1970s. Although it could be argued that municipal and private housing companies now compete on the same housing market there are still, however, important differences. As stated by Gunnar Blomé (2006, p. 14):

> Municipal housing companies in Sweden reside in the borderland between the public and private sectors, with a businesslike corporate structure, a role of looking to the common good, and an application of the principle of free access to public records with the Act on Public Purchase.

Important to note is that local authorities have the means to direct the strategies of municipal housing and thereby develop policies to tackle housing segregation as well as homelessness, even if the political will to do so seems low.

The 'suburb'

All over Europe, on both sides of the old Iron Curtain, there are large-scale, uniform apartment blocks on the outskirts of cities, built mainly in the 1960s and 70s. Some of these areas are today associated with social problems, bad technical quality of buildings, and a poor outdoor environment. These areas "are beyond the central streets that tourists usually frequent", as noted by Thomas Hall and Sonja Vidén (2005). In many places around the world, large numbers of buildings in such areas have even been demolished (Goetz, 2000; Arthurson, 2004; Wassenberg, 2004a). The most famous example of this is probably the demolition of the housing estate Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, US, which has often been projected as a symbol of the failure of modern architecture (see, e.g., Newman, 1996, pp. 9-12).

The Million Homes Programme

In Sweden, as a part of the political vision of a modern welfare state where every citizen was given the opportunity to live a good life (and as a continuation of the successful 1950s political slogan of the People's Home), 1.4 million new dwellings were constructed between 1961 and 1975, later referred to as 'the record years' (see, e.g., Hall & Vidén, 2005). The most well-known label for the large-scale building of the time, though, is the *Million Homes Programme*, which refers to the period 1965 to 1974, following a parliament decision targeting one million new homes in ten years. Generous state loans were provided and new large-scale construction methods had been developed, which made it possible to reach the goal. During this time about 100,000 new apartments were constructed per year, which was a great deal, considering that there were no more than 3 million dwellings in Sweden 1965 (Hall & Vidén, 2005). Thus, the Million Homes Programme resulted in a growth of the housing stock in Sweden by one third in ten years. The Million Homes Programme also resulted in a great improvement in general living standards, reducing overcrowding from 34% to 5% and turning a severe housing deficit into a surplus (Hall & Vidén, 2005).
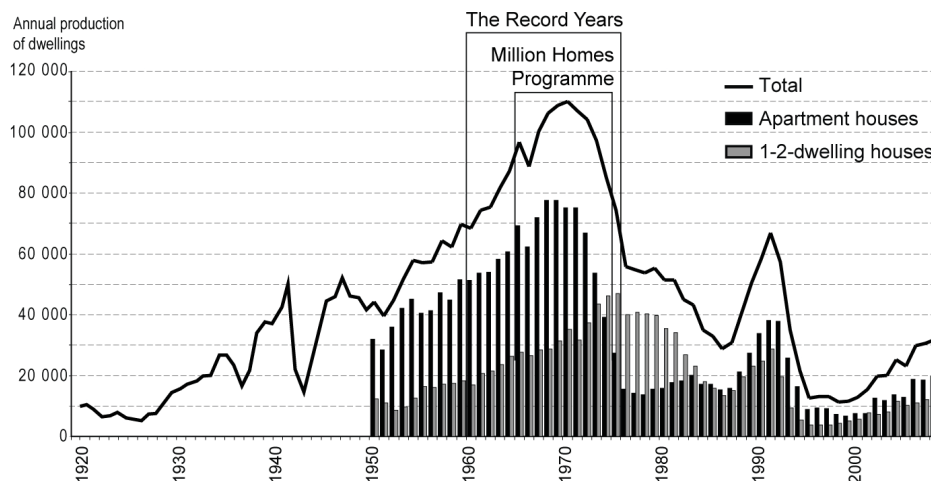

Figure 2. Number of apartments built per year in Sweden. (drawing from Wigren, 1997; Vidén, 1999; Statistics Sweden, 2009b).

As can be seen in Figure 2, there is good reason to look back at the housing production during the 1960s and early 1970s as record years. However, the graph also reveals that something dramatic took place in the early 1970s, when the production of multi-dwelling houses fell by 80% over five years. Several coinciding factors lie behind this sudden drop in apartment house production. The oil crisis and subsequent impaired economic conditions may have played a role. The previous housing deficit had actually been eradicated, which means that landlords began to have difficulty filling all the new apartments with tenants. Another important reason for the change in housing production in the early 1970s was also the emerging debate that questioned the qualities of the new, modern neighbourhoods.

7

As is evident in Figure 2, the drastic drop in production of multi-dwelling buildings was partly compensated for with a substantial increase in production of small houses. The tax system made it highly advantageous, especially for high-income households, to take loans and buy a house of their own instead of renting an apartment (see, e.g., Franzén & Sandstedt, 1981, p. 31; Ramberg, 2000, pp. 166-167). Although limitations to the loan interest subsidies to house owners were introduced during the 1980s, the debate on discriminating conditions for the rental tenure form continues.

Today, the Million Homes Programme is primarily associated with "uniform, large-scale housing estates with buildings of grey pre-cast concrete slabs" (Hall & Vidén, 2005). However, the very large-scale and high-rise buildings commonly portrayed in critical articles are not representative of the Million Homes Programme as a whole. Actually, one third of the dwellings consisted of single-family houses; only about 30% were higher than three storeys; one fourth was built in areas with less than four buildings of the same kind, and another fourth in areas with four to nine similar buildings, i.e. not extremely large-scale; about 30% were built for tenant-owed cooperatives; and only about 15-20% were constructed with pre-cast concrete elements (Hall & Vidén, 2005). Figure 3 shows some examples of common types of areas built during the Million Homes Programme period.

Figure 3. Three examples of building structures common in Million Homes Programme areas: (a) freestanding eight-storey slab blocks; (b) semi-enclosed yards with three-storey slab blocks; (c) two-storey row houses.

The suburb stigma

The general view of the industrial housing production suddenly shifted focus around the time of the symbolically loaded inauguration of Skärholmen Centre in Stockholm in 1968 (Franzén & Sandstedt, 1981, p. 17; Ramberg, 2000, p. 169). In contrast to previous descriptions of the new modern facilities and the successful People's Home policies, criticism of mass consumption at large, and specifically of the brutal aesthetics of the new functionalist suburbs, arose in newspapers and other mass media. The original image of these areas, inspired by the earlier modernist avant-garde, featured spacious green outdoor environments, free from cars and ideal for social contacts as well as children's play. However, this image transformed drastically. Critics instead pointed at inhuman scales, monotonous design, neglected and apparently desolate outdoor environments – criticism which could be efficiently communicated through grey-scale photography (see Figure 4 for an example). One of the building materials itself – concrete – came to symbolise the whole idea of the

suburbs: hard, chilly, industrial, and grey. This 'concrete architecture' soon also came to be associated with different social problems, which will be discussed further below.

Karl-Olov Arnstberg (1999) reflects on how the image of the inner city's 'stone town' (*stenstaden*) was first used to symbolise the dirt and unhealthiness from which the early 20th-century upper-class fled to the garden villa suburbs; and how the same notion now stands for positive values of the attractive old city cores. He raises the question of whether the negatively loaded 'concrete suburb' notion in the future will experience a similar cleansing process and become fashionable again. Ulla Berglund's (2005) answer to this question is no, arguing that the material concrete itself carries the image of clumsiness and maintenance problems. However, concrete is still a popular and functional building material, repeatedly honoured in fashionable terms in architecture magazines. And, as will be described below, the concrete suburb has become a kind of brand for parts of the youth culture.

Figure 4. A photography of Rosengård, Malmö in the early 1970s, from the report *Barnen och betongen* (The Children and the Conrete) (Insulander, 1975)[3]

Actually, the 'suburb' notion itself has come to be associated with the most large-scale housing areas from the 1960s and 1970s, and these are also typically the most stigmatised areas in Swedish towns and cities. Originally, as Berglund (2005) points out, 'suburbs' referred to the new lush villa settlements outside the cities which functioned as resorts for the affluent. In the 1950s, the notion was adopted to connotate the modernistic neighbourhood units constructed with housing, working places and commercial centres outside the cities. Still, suburb was mainly a positive notion. However, the term was reconceptualised during the 1970s and 1980s and took on a primarily negative meaning. Berglund notes that the original suburbs are no longer

---

[3] Photographer: Beppe Andersson / Lars Mongs

thought of as suburbs, but as 'villa suburbs', while some housing areas which are indeed located within the city boundaries are still regarded as suburbs due to their building structures and cultural identities.

Ove Sernhede has written a book about youth culture and social exclusion in a typical Swedish Million Homes Programme suburb, with the illustrative title *Alienation is my nation*. He describes the changing general image of the suburb, emphasising that it is an image created by others than those who live there:

> Stereotype conceptions about criminality, about racial, cultural and religious conflicts, have produced moral panic which not only contributes to the legitimisation of the division in 'us and them', but also enforces the experience of exclusion for people in these areas.
> (Sernhede, 2002, p. 56)

What has dominated the media image of the suburb since the 1960s, according to Per Markku Ristilammi (1994, referred to in Sernhede, 2002), is that it is conceived as something different from the rest of the society. First, it was different in regard to the utopian visions and the modern social engineering. During the 1970s, the socio-economic differences were in focus and the new suburbs were seen as social dumps, lowest in the hierarchy of residential areas. During the 1980s, the ethnic differences became increasingly more acknowledged and the suburb gradually came to be conceived of as the immigrants' habitus, viewed as an increasingly threatening otherland.

Another way of describing the stigmatisation of the Million Homes Programme suburbs is that they first received an environmental stigma, being conceived of as grey, boring an inhuman in scale. Second, a socio-economic stigma was added, and the suburbs were associated with drugs and criminality. Third, the image was supplemented with an ethnic stigma, as many of these areas have become populated by an increasing proportion of immigrants from distant countries. These three components are strong constituents of the current conception of the Swedish suburb. However, the negative image can also be questioned:

1. The *environmental* stigma is based on a partly justified criticism: In many places, the design of outdoor environments was neglected; the scale of buildings was sometimes better adapted to a 1:10,000 plan than to functional everyday life; often, the interface between private and public spaces could have been given more attention to facilitate social contacts; indeed, it was not a successful principle to create barriers to the rest of the city in terms of traffic roads and barely accessible nature corridors; and the uniform monotony in facades and structures did not help the areas in creating local vital identities. However, there are also many strengths in the physical layouts, which seem to have been forgotten in the debate. Typically, there are generous semi-public open spaces featuring play grounds and other facilities; large parts of the areas are commonly free from car traffic; there is often good access to nearby recreation areas; and apartment standards are much better than in many old inner-city houses. As physical environments for children to grow up in, most of these suburbs would do much better than the today often-celebrated stone town with its narrow, dark courtyards, little access to playing areas, and crowded noisy streets.

10

2. The *socio-economic* stigma is based on a factual segregation. Looking at indicators such as average income, unemployment, education levels, health conditions or household subsidies, it is obvious that there is a higher representation of disadvantaged people in many of these areas. However, the inner city is still a more dangerous place to visit than the suburbs, considering crime and drug statistics (see, e.g., Sernhede, 2002). The socio-economic status of residential areas is a dynamic phenomenon, whereby previously stigmatised areas sometimes go through rapid gentrification processes.

3. The *ethnic* stigma can be connected to the socio-economic stigma, as people with non-Swedish ethnicity are generally discriminated against and economically disadvantaged. However, there are several dimensions to the multicultural identity of the suburbs, and it should be noted that it is also acknowledged by many as a strength, which will be discussed below.

The general image of the suburb is not only shaped by new research and mass media reports. The suburb has also become a common subject in popular culture, i.e. in novels, music and films. As such, it is used not only as a representative contextual arena for the drama, but also as a part of the drama itself. One typical example is Peter Birro and Agneta Fagerström-Olsson's television mini-series *Hammarkullen*, filmed in the suburb with the same name. It received high ratings when it aired in 1997, and won several prizes. However, the series was also highly criticised, which lead to an interesting debate. Birro states that his aim was to "restore the suburb" (quoted in Arnstberg, 2000, p. 121), and indeed the series contributed to the branding of Hammarkullen as well as other similar suburbs as multi-cultural and dynamic places, which is perhaps more positive than the common image of monotonous concrete, drugs and crime. However, many of the inhabitants of Hammarkullen protested loudly when they saw their neighbourhood presented as a disorderly and bizarre piece of fiction. "The series did not give me any familiar giggles. […] The series can be seen as mobbing. The others are having fun at our expense. *Those who know the least about our situation are laughing the loudest*" (a resident quoted in Arnstberg, 2000, p. 126, original emphasis).

Figure 5. The yearly carnival in Hammarkullen attracts tens of thousands of visitors.

Moa Tunström points at the contradiction in the 'suburb' generally being conceived of as a type of place that lacks architectural urbanity, and at the same time is often described as a contemporary incarnation of the classical ideal of urban liveability – cultural diversity, meetings, creativity and movement. "Paradoxically, the 'suburb' may feel like a city without looking like one, while new-built areas may look like cities without feeling like them" (Tunström, 2009, p. 91).

Another issue is that the large-scale Million Homes Programme areas in many regards may provide relatively good conditions for environmentally friendly lifestyles, not least considering the opportunities for small-scale food production and access to recreational open spaces near the homes. This, however, appears to be largely ignored in the debates about the suburbs. As Karin Bradley (2009) asserts, the general conception of 'eco-friendliness' is adapted to a consumerist middle-class lifestyle, and does not problematise issues of proportion of impact between, e.g., recycling milk packages and yearly family holidays to far-away regions of the world.

Managing the suburbs

More urgent than the debate on what was bad or good in the way the new residential areas were designed in the 1960s and 1970s is that many of these areas today face severe problems regarding, e.g., physical decay, unsafety and perceived social marginalisation. Finding solutions to these problems constitutes one of the most important challenges for urban planning (see, e.g., OECD, 1998).

These problems are not new. As mentioned above, the stigmatisation process began already in the 1970s. During the 1980s, governmental funding was provided to improve the physical environments, investments whose results have been disputed. Some reports describe how the quality has been raised (see, e.g., Kristensson, 1994), while a common argument is that the core problems remain the same and that the money would have made a better impact if used differently. The one-sided focus on improvements to the physical environment has been especially criticised. In a major evaluation of 650 upgrading projects from the 1980s (including in-depth studies of selected cases), Thomas Schlyter (1994) establishes that the involvement of residents in the process is the most important factor for success; more significant than a higher economic budget (pp. 71, 73).

A new approach was formulated at the end of the 1990s when a larger governmental initiative was launched, called Local Development Agreements. This time, the aim was to involve the local communities to a large extent and place social and cultural issues in the centre. However, even though the intentions may have been good, there has been a harsh debate about the actual results. One main point of criticism has been that the initiative has failed to involve the local community. For example, Stenberg (2004) asserts that it requires more than rhetorical intentions to integrate local inhabitants in a fruitful participation process.

Besides the challenges of turning the segregation, fighting the sense of exclusion and creating fair participation processes, there is also an ongoing debate about the escalating needs for building refurbishments in the housing areas from the record years. Some 40 years have passed, and many buildings

are facing problems with issues like moisture, which require fundamental renovations to solve (see, e.g., Vidén, Chandra & Schulz, 2006).

An important aspect is that the organisational conditions for housing management are changing. Many housing estates are now owned by foreign companies and there is also an increasing component of speculation involved in transactions on the rental housing market. Many property owners hire contractors for different management tasks, and sometimes the whole housing management is outsourced (see, e.g., Lindgren & Castell, 2008; Castell, 2010). Some housing companies have begun to specialise in rental housing management without owning the houses, taking on many of the roles normally filled by the landlord: the letting of apartments and other administration, information and other contact with tenants, surveying, etc.

The segregation problem

Ethnic and socio-economic housing segregation is often pointed out as one of the most urgent urban challenges in Sweden, as well as in many other countries. While the common use of the concept in daily speech as well as in policies would suggest that areas with a very low proportion of ethnic 'Swedes' are segregated, a consistent use of the notion recognises that segregation implies the comparison of at least two areas with different composition of population. Moreover, it needs to be defined which kind of segregation is at issue. Hence, as stressed by Roger Andersson (2006a), ethnic residential segregation occurs on the city level and results in some areas containing as good as exclusively 'Swedish' residents and others containing hardly any 'Swedes'. As Andersson also concludes, to address the overarching problem of residential segregation, measures to improve the situation for the most disadvantaged groups in the most disadvantaged areas are not enough – efficient measures must also address the ethnic homogeneity in affluent areas.

Although the notion is generally attributed with negative connotations, segregation is not unambiguously problematic. In many cases it is actually practiced intentionally for positive outcomes, e.g. when the youth club arranges a 'girls' night' in response to gender inequalities, or when a cohousing initiative is announced as an opportunity to live with people who share your interests and life situation. It is even sometimes suggested that more homogeneous housing areas (notably regarding cultural backgrounds) would solve many problems (see, e.g., Olsson, Sondén & Ohlander, 1997, p. 218). However, there are both medium-term and long-term problems associated with residential segregation, which become accentuated in areas where marginalised groups become concentrated.

As concluded by Masoud Kamali (2006, p. 17) in a report from the Swedish government, "spatial separation through marginalisation constitutes a seedbed for mental separation". At the centre of the concern are the suburbs from which the 'Swedish' middle class move, thus contributing to their marginalisation. Kamali (2005) stresses that the marginalisation of certain areas and their inhabitants is also connected to ethnic segregation and discrimination in a larger context: on the job market, in the schools, in politics, in meetings with public authorities, etc. The suburbs become a "geographical embodiment of society's deviants", which include different disadvantaged, discriminated and marginalised groups such as immigrants, unemployed, part-time workers with

low-status jobs, long-term sicklisted and former convicts (Kamali, 2005, p. 53). The mental separation is based not only on the dominant society's 'otherisation' of the suburbs, but also on the responding sense of alienation growing among those who feel excluded.

In the anthology *I stadens utkant* (In the periphery of the city), Arnstberg aims to explain to the reader why dwelling attractivity is a multi-facetted and complex factor. He then draws a rhetorical comparison between two apparently similar apartments (Arnstberg, 1997, pp. 49-50): one with a nice view of nature but still centrally located with good service access, and the other facing the backside of a shopping mall, still having worse access to service due to its remote location. Arnstberg asserts that a formal dwelling assessment would render the two apartments equal in value, while anyone who visited the places would immediately understand why the latter was less attractive. Arnstberg may have a point in that place qualities need to be considered in a dwelling assessment. However, the whole argumentation appears peculiar as the place qualities, concerning the potential attraction value of the physical environment in the near surroundings, often ought to be higher in many of the most stigmatised suburban areas than in the attractive inner cities. The nice view of nature is hard to find in our inner cities, but is characteristic of many of the Million Homes Programme areas on the urban fringes. Similarly, there is generally better access to play grounds, sports grounds, grilling places and lawns, not to mention lakes for swimming and mushroom forests within biking distance for those who want to escape the city's noise and stress (which certainly is a main argument for many households for moving away from the inner city and who usually end up in villas with much worse service access than the criticised tenement suburbs). Contradictory to what Arnstberg and many others claim, I find it very unlikely that limitations in the potential of the outdoor environments are a driving force in the stigmatisation process at all. Poor service supply is probably an important factor in many cases, but the fact is that even many of the disreputable suburbs are fairly well-equipped in terms of service supply, as compared to more attractive central parts of the cities. During the years I have lived in the Million Homes Programme areas around Frölunda Torg I have been closer to all possible commercial shops as well as healthcare, sports facilities, the library and other public service than any of my friends living in central areas such as Majorna, Linnéstaden and Vasastaden. Even the cultural opportunities are impressive in Tynnered and Frölunda, due to an active engagement by the local public administration and civil associations. The same can also be said about Angered Centrum, where I have performed research field studies: As far as I can judge, this is one of the areas with the highest supply of opportunities in Göteborg, considering its combined good access to great recreation areas, shopping, schools, sports, culture, healthcare, and public transportation. Still, it is an area whose residents tend to feel ashamed of their address.

The source of the stigma befalling these deprived suburbs cannot be addressed with a simple explanation of architectural failures. Even though the large scales and the uniformity in many cases may have contributed to the persisting idea of the concrete suburb, it is a multitude of interrelated factors which over a long time have caused the sense of exclusion which now appears to have been etched into the areas' identity and fuels the segregation. One central factor is the composition of inhabitants. As Minoo Alinia puts it:

"Suburbs are not suburbs because they are located where they are, but first and foremost because they are inhabited by certain groups/categories of people" (Alinia, 2006, p. 65). More than anything else, an area's identity seems to be based on its residents – or, rather, on others' image of who lives there. A 'Catch 22' occurs, as all the reports aimed at mapping the segregation also risk contributing to its reproduction. Particularly newspapers and other mass media have played a key role in shaping the general image of the suburb (Dahlstedt, 2004; see also Hastings, 2004; Wassenberg, 2004b).

Neighbourhood effects

Neighbourhood effects has become an important notion for the discussions about problems involved with residential segregation and high inequalities between different urban districts. The notion was launched by political geographer Kevin Cox (1969), when he suggested that people tend to vote similarly to their neighbour in political elections. Since the 1990s, however, the notion of neighbourhood effects has come to be associated with much more than electoral behaviour – in a broad sense, it encompasses any aspect of how a person's place of residency affects her opportunities in life. In an influential literature review by Jencks and Mayer (1990), the focus is on the differences in conditions for children's adolescence depending on which neighbourhood they live in. Today, the neighbourhood effects debate typically concerns the risk of individuals being stigmatised and excluded from diverse opportunities, such as jobs, healthcare, access to the housing market, or influence on decision-making, on the basis of which area they live in: "does it make my life chances worse if my neighbour is poor rather than rich or a large proportion of my neighbours are poor, or disadvantaged on some other dimension?" (Buck, 2001, p. 2252).

During the past two decades, the discussions about neighbourhood effects have been a crucial issue in academic circles as well as in urban policy debates. First, given the methodological dilemmas involved in taking unbiased and statistically correct measures of multi-dimensional social mechanisms, the very existence of neighbourhood effects has been questioned. Second, a large number of alternative or complementary hypothetical models of how neighbourhood effects work have been suggested and tested. Third, the academic efforts to elucidate the issue of neighbourhood effects call for critical reflection on how the problem of deprived neighbourhoods should be tackled by urban policies.

The methodological dilemma of measuring neighbourhood effects is connected to the problem of distinguishing between what is an effect of the place of residence and what is an effect of other causes, e.g., within the family or the individual. Statistical correlations between residency and different socioeconomic variables are easy to establish. However, it can be suggested that it is the socio-economic position which determines the residency rather than the other way around, and then it is not a matter of neighbourhood effects. To confirm that something is actually a neighbourhood effect, all kinds of non-residency factors must be controlled for, which is a challenge.

Nick Buck (2001, p. 2254) reflects on the fact that the widespread policy of targeting specific urban areas rather than specific population groups to defeat poverty would generally only be justified by the existence of neighbourhood

effects. However, as Buck also notes, society's concern over deprived areas is not only due to the disadvantages it may cause individuals living in these areas, but also more long-term and broader effects on social order, economic growth and institutional performance.

The badlands of civilisation?

Figure 6. Scenes from Clichy-sous-Bois, October 2005.

For a couple of weeks in October and November 2005, news channels around the world showed images of burning cars and violent clashes between armed police and masked youth in a number of French suburbs (*banlieues*). The official trigger was the death of two young men who had jumped into a high-voltage electrical substation in an attempt to hide from a police patrol. Most analysts place the events in connection to underlying tensions caused by things such as economic and environmental incongruities in the banlieues, the structural discrimination of ethnic minority groups, and reciprocal distrust between the inhabitants and the police. As it seems, the solidaristic tradition expressed in the motto of liberty, equality and fraternity does not include the banlieues, which in the common image have come to be conceptualised as the 'badlands' of the proud French Republic (Dikeç, 2007a).

The scenes from France frightened many, and there was speculation about whether or not the same kinds of riots could also occur in Swedish suburbs. For some, it was clear that there was a deeply rooted sense of alienation and severe divides between authorities and local inhabitants. The governmental Commission on Power, Integration and Structural Discrimination released a number of reports around this time, establishing that the situation for Swedish citizens with non-Swedish ethnicity living in stigmatised housing areas is highly problematic (see, e.g., de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Kamali, 2005; 2006; Swedish Government, 2006a). Obviously, society, as represented by teachers, social workers, policemen, judges, etc., who are supposed to guarantee each citizen's equal rights, is generally biased and practices what could be conceptualised as a *structural discrimination* of 'immigrants' from the suburbs, or, in a harsher tone: *institutional racism*. Simon Andersson (2006b) analyses the policing of the suburbs using the allegory of "putting out fire with petrol", implicitly raising the question: If the police are essentially racist in their practices, how can they possibly do anything to improve safety and order in these areas?

In February 2008, suburban riots reminiscent of those in France broke out in Copenhagen and, since then, similar events have taken place in many Swedish housing areas, in the three metropolitan cities as well as in several other cities. A new kind of image of the Swedish suburb has begun to form – the image of burning cars and stone throwing; the image of the lawless 'badlands' where civilised society has lost its control.

Policy approaches to neighbourhood deprivation

As mentioned above, during the past few decades many countries recognised as welfare states have adopted specific urban policies targeting certain residential areas defined as particularly exposed and needy. Such area-based or place-based policies have been questioned. In a way, place-based urban policies confirm the bitter failure to provide a welfare system with equal services to all. There is also a schism between place-based and more general people-based approaches. As British urban researcher Rob Atkinson (2008, p. 118) concludes, reflecting on the French urban policy:

> In practice the French government has been running 'place-based' policies targeted on neighbourhoods for around 20 years while ignoring any conflicts with the Republican ethos and the supposed universal nature of the welfare regime. […] Ironically, because of the largely pragmatic and ad hoc nature of local initiatives in France, neighbourhood-based resident involvement could develop beyond rhetorical statements into more effective forms of participation, although without any coherent political rationale.

The contradiction between the French traditional socialist/liberal ideals of the Republic and the current societal responses to the civic unrest in the banlieues is also a main theme in Mustafa Dikeç's writing. He discusses the development of the French urban policy since the first banlieue riots in the early 1980s, successively widening the gap between the establishment and the excluded. In a first phase, society's response was to seriously take on underlying problems and the country's first official urban policy was formulated to recognise and develop local resources in a relatively dynamic and flexible way (Dikeç, 2007b). In 2005, however, the response was instead concentrated on disciplinary and punitive interventions to re-establish order and authoritarian control. Dikeç emphasises that this repressive turn must be seen in the light of emerging global tensions between the Islamic world and the West.

Annette Hastings (2004) is critical of mainstream discourses on neighbourhood stigma often seeking the causes in social factors and the development of local 'pathological' cultures in places with high concentrations of 'disadvantaged people'. As she argues, we need to move beyond such pathological explanations and recognise the complex interrelation of factors, including both social and economic, internal and external, micro and macro, actors and structures.

There is also the dimension of the physical environment. While many have argued that measures to improve the physical environment have been over-emphasised, Roger Andersson (2006a) is concerned over such programmes having been largely absent in the latest Swedish governmental responses to urban neighbourhood deprivation. Göran Cars and Maud Edgren-Schori (2000) instead urge the adoption of a more process-oriented approach, whereby we shift the focus from top-down implemented solutions to a dia-

logue with residents. They argue that "While the problems are, to a large extent, regional and national in origin, solutions must be based on local conditions and local participation, working through local welfare policies" (p. 262). However, it could be questioned whether real long-term solutions will ever be reached unless the originating problems of structural inequalities are also addressed.

Conclusions

There is a high level of ethnic residential segregation in Swedish cities, and it is increasing (see, e.g., Andersson, Bråmå & Hogdal, 2009). The most accentuated part of the segregation problem is that it leads to the stigmatisation and marginalisation of certain housing areas, normally conceived of in general terms as the 'suburbs'. The contemporary idea of the 'suburb' has developed over time, since the criticism of the Million Homes Programme in the 1970s. Already at that time, the conception of the harsh and large-scale concrete architecture was established, an image of the suburb which has been supplemented with ideas of social problems, multi-culturalism and violence.

There are, however, many dimensions of mismatching between the 'suburb' as a general concept and the realities it is supposed to represent. Although many of the marginalised housing areas face deficits in their physical environments and service deliveries, the situation is often much better than the rumours suggest. Many of the most disreputable areas actually have a combination of qualities which could potentially make them highly attractive in relation to both inner-city and remote villa enclaves: e.g., near play grounds, nature, public transportation, grocery stores and preschools, with a well-developed system of pathways for pedestrians and little traffic disturbance. Also in regard to social factors, the common idea of the 'suburb' as civilisation's badlands must be questioned. The sense of alienation underpinning the violent behaviours of some youth groups in the suburbs may largely be a response to the institutional racism limiting their opportunities to find a role in the mainstream society. Therefore, any successful urban policy must also consider the need for resource redistribution and inclusion on regional and even global levels.

References

Alinia, Minoo (2006). "Invandraren, 'förorten' och maktens rumsliga förankring", in Kamali, Masoud, (Ed.) *Den segregerande integrationen: om social sammanhållning och dess hinder: rapport av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering*. Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2006:73. Fritze, Stockholm. [*The immigrant, the 'suburb' and the spatial anchoring of the power*]

Andersson, Roger (2006a). "'Breaking segregation' - rhetorical construct or effective policy? The case of the metropolitan development initiative in Sweden", in *Urban Studies*, 43 (4), pp. 787-799.

Andersson, Roger; Bråmå, Åsa & Hogdal, Jon (2009). *Fattiga och rika - segregationen ökar: flyttningsmönster och boendesegregation i Göteborg 1990-2006*. City of Göteborg, Göteborg. [*Poor and rich - segregation increases*]

Andersson, Simon (2006b). "Släcka eld med bensin: om institutionell rasism och polisens arbete i förorter", in Kamali, Masoud, (Ed.) *Den segregerande integrationen: om social sammanhållning och dess hinder: rapport av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering*. Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2006:73. Fritze, Stockholm. [*Putting out fire with petrol: on institutional racism and policing in suburbs*]

Arnstberg, Karl-Olov (1997). "Segregation: processer och konsekvenser", in Arnstberg, Karl-Olov & Ramberg, Ingrid, (Eds.): *I stadens utkant: perspektiv på förorter*. Mångkulturellt centrum, Stockholm. [*Segregation, processes and consequences*]

Arnstberg, Karl-Olov (1999). "Genrebilden av miljonprogrammet", in Eliaeson, Pär, (Ed.) *Förorten idag - en annan stad*. Arkitekturmuseet, Stockholm.

Arnstberg, Karl-Olov (2000). *Miljonprogrammet*. Carlsson, Stockholm.

Arthurson, Kathy (2004). "From stigma to demolition: Australian debates about housing and social exclusion", in *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19 (3), pp. 255-270.

Atkinson, Rob (2008). "European urban policies and the neighbourhood: an overview", in *Urban Design and Planning*, 161 (3), pp. 115-122.

Bengtsson, Bo & Kemeny, Jim (1997). "Från en generell marknadspolitik till en bostadspolitik för 'dom andra'", in Turner, Bengt & Vedung, Evert, (Eds.): *Bostadspolitik för tjugohundratalet : återtåg och nya värden*. Meyer, Gävle.

Bergenstråhle, Sven (2006). *Boende och välfärd 1986-2003*. Hyresgästföreningen, Stockholm.

Bergenstråhle, Sven (2008). "Om hyressättning och segregation", in *Ekonomisk Debatt*, 36 (6). [*On rent setting and segregation*]

Berglund, Ulla (2005). *Utanför-staden: Om trygghet, värdighet och engagemang mot förslumning (The outside city: On safety, dignity and engagement against deterioration)*. Working Paper 2005:1. Södertörns Högskola, Huddinge. [*The outside city: On safety, dignity and engagement against deterioration*]

Blomé, Gunnar (2006). *Kundnära organisation och serviceutveckling i bostadsföretag*. Meddelande 6:75. Avdelningen för bygg- och fastighetsekonomi, Kungliga Tekniska högskolan, Stockholm. [*Customer-centric organisation and service development in housing companies*]

Bodström, Kerstin; Ponzio, Mario & Ramberg, Klas, (Eds.) (2002). *Allmän nytta eller egen nytta? Ombildning av allmännyttans hyresrätt till bostadsrätt - konsekvenser för hyresgästerna, husen, företagen och staden*. Hyresgästföreningen, Stockholm. [*General interest or private interest?*]

Bradley, Karin (2009). *Just environments: politicising sustainable urban development*. Department of Urban Planning and Environment, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm.

Buck, Nick (2001). "Identifying neighbourhood effects on social exclusion", in *Urban Studies*, 38 (12), pp. 2251-2275.

Cars, Göran & Edgren-Schori, Maud (2000). "Social integration and exclusion: the response of Sweish society", in Madanipour, Ali, et al., (Eds.): *Social exclusion in European cities: processes, experiences and responses*. The Stationery Office, London.

Castell, Pål (2010). "Involving tenants in open space management: experiences from Swedish rental housing areas", in *Urban Geography*, 31 (2), pp. 236-258.

COM (2006). *Implementing the Community Lisbon programme: Social services of general interest in the European Union*. Communication from the Commission, COM(2006)177 final. Commission of the European Communities, Brussels.

Cox, Kevin R. (1969). "The voting decision in a spatial context", in Board, L.C., et al., (Eds.): *Progress in Geography*. Edward Arnold, London, pp. 81-117.

Dahlstedt, Magnus (2004). "Den massmediala förortsdjungeln: Representationer av svenska förortsmiljöer", in *Nordicom Information*.

de los Reyes, Paulina & Kamali, Masoud, (Eds.) (2005). *Bortom Vi och Dom: teoretiska reflektioner om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering*. Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering, Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2005:41. Fritzes Offentliga Publikationer, Stockholm. [*Beyond Us and Them: theoretical reflections on power, integration and structural discrimination*]

Dikeç, Mustafa (2007a). *Badlands of the republic: space, politics, and urban policy*. RGS-IBG book series. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Dikeç, Mustafa (2007b). "Space, governmentality, and the geographies of French urban policy", in *European urban and regional studies*, 14 (4), pp. 277-289.

Ellingsen, Tore & Englund, Peter (2003). "Rent regulation: an introduction", in *Swedish Economic Policy Review*, 10 (1), pp. 3-9.

Ericson, Birgitta & Johansson, Britt-Marie (1994). *Bostadsbyggandet i idé och praktik: om kunskaper och föreställningar inom byggsektorn*. Lund dissertations in sociology, 7. Lund University Press, Lund.

Franzén, Mats & Sandstedt, Eva (1981). *Grannskap och stadsplanering: om stat och byggande i efterkrigstidens Sverige*. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Almqvist & Wiksell, Uppsala. [*Neighbourhood and town-planning: on the state and the building process in Sweden since the second world war*]

Ghekiere, Laurent (2007). *The development of social housing in the European Union: When general interest meets Community interest*. Dexia Editions, Paris.

Goetz, Edward G. (2000). "The politics of poverty deconsentration and housing demolition", in *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 22 (2), pp. 157-173.

Gustavsson, Andreas (2008). "Hyresrätten - hotad boendeform". *ETC.se* (2008-08-29). Retrieved from www.etc.se.

Hall, Thomas & Vidén, Sonja (2005). "The Million Homes Programme: a review of the great Swedish planning project", in *Planning Perspectives*, 20 (3), pp. 301-328.

Hastings, Annette (2004). "Stigma and social housing estates: beyond pathological explanations", in *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19 (3), pp. 233-254.

Insulander, Eva (1975). *Barnen och betongen: en rapport om barns villkor i en svensk förort*. Lekmiljörådet / Socialstyrelsen. Liber Förlag, Stockholm.

Jencks, C. & Mayer, S.E. (1990). "The social consequences of growing up in a poor neibhourhood", in Lynn, L & McGeary, M.G.H., (Eds.): *Inner city poverty in the United States*. National Academy Press, Washington.

Kamali, Masoud (2005). *Sverige inifrån: röster om etnisk diskriminering: rapport av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering*. Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2005:69. Fritzes offentliga publikationer, Stockholm. [*Sweden from inside: voices about ethnic discrimination*]

Kamali, Masoud, (Ed.) (2006). *Den segregerande integrationen: om social sammanhållning och dess hinder: rapport av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering*. Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2006:73. Fritze, Stockholm. [*The segregating integration: on social cohesion and its challenges*]

Kristensson, Eva (1994). *Fem förbättrade gårdar; en studie av 1980-talets miljöförbättringsprojekt*. R29:1994. Byggforskningsrådet, Stockholm. [*Five improved yards: a study of the environmental improvement projects of the 1980s*]

Lind, Hans & Hellström, Anders (2006). "Market rents and economic segregation: evidence from a natural experiment", in *European Journal of Housing Policy*, 6 (2), pp. 167-189.

Lindgren, Therese & Castell, Pål (2008). "Open space management in residential areas: how it is organised and why", in *International Journal of Strategic Property Management*, 12 (3), pp. 141-160.

Newman, Oscar (1996). *Creating defensible space*. US Department of Housing and Urban Development/Diane Publishing.

OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1998). *Integrating distressed urban areas*. Territorial development. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris.

Olsson, Sören; Sondén, Gerd Cruse & Ohlander, Marianne (1997). *Det lilla grannskapet: gårdar, trapphus & socialt liv*. Centrum för byggnadskultur i västra Sverige, Chalmers & Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg. [*The small neighbourhood*]

Ramberg, Klas (2000). *Allmännyttan: Välfärdsbygge 1850-2000*. Byggförlaget/SABO, Stockholm. [*Municipal housing: Welfare building 1850-2000*]

SABO, Swedish Association of Municipal Housing Companies (2007). *SABO in English*.

Sahlin, Ingrid (2008). "'Social housing' som bostadspolitikens spöke" ("'Social housing' as the ghost of housing policy"). *Alba.nu* (2008-06-12). [*'Social housing' as the ghost of housing policy*]. Retrieved 2008-10-08 from http://www.alba.nu/artikel/artikel_utskrift.php?id=735.

Schlyter, Thomas (1994). *Utemiljöförbättringar: en studie av 1980-talets miljöförbättringsprojekt*. R28:1994. Byggforskningsrådet, Lund. [*Outdoor environment upgrading: a study of the environmental upgrading projects in the 1980s*]

Sernhede, Ove (2002). *Alienation is my nation: hiphop och unga mäns utanförskap i Det nya Sverige*. Ordfront, Stockholm. [*Alienation is my nation: hip hop and the exclusion of young men in The New Sweden*]

Statistics Sweden (2004). *Så bor vi i Sverige: bostäder, boendemiljö och transporter 1975-2002*. Levnadsförhållanden, 107. Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB), Stockholm. [*The way we live in Sweden: homes, the living environment and transportation 1975-2002*]

Statistics Sweden (2009a). *Bostads- och byggnadsstatistisk årsbok 2009*. Statistics Sweden, Stockholm. [*Yearbook of Housing and Building Statistics 2009*]

Statistics Sweden (2009b). "Statistikdatabasen", Statistics Sweden. Retrieved 2009-12-07, from http://www.ssd.scb.se/.

Stenberg, Jenny (2004). *'Hur får vi hela Göteborg engagerade i detta?': utvärdering av storstadssatsningen i Norra Biskopsgården.* Centrum för Kulturstudier, Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg. [*'How do we get the whole city engaged in this?'*]

Swedish Government (2006a). *Integrationens svarta bok: agenda för jämlikhet och social sammanhållning.* Slutbetänkande av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering, Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2006:79. Fritzes, Stockholm. [*The black book of integration: agenda for equality and social cohesion*]

Swedish Government (2006b). *Reformerad hyressättning (Reformed rent setting).* Governmental proposition 2005/06:80, Stockholm. [*Reformed rent setting*]

Tunström, Moa (2009). *På spaning efter den goda staden: om konstruktioner av ideal och problem i svensk stadsbyggnadsdiskussion.* Örebro University, Örebro.

Turner, Bengt (1997). "Municipal housing companies in Sweden: On or off the market?" in *Housing Studies*, 12 (4), pp. 477-488.

Turner, Bengt (1999). "Social Housing Finance in Sweden", in *Urban Studies*, 36 (4), pp. 683-697.

Turner, Bengt & Whitehead, Christine M. E. (2002). "Reducing Housing Subsidy: Swedish Housing Policy in an International Context", in *Urban Studies*, 39 (2), pp. 201 - 217.

Wassenberg, Frank (2004a). "Large social housing estates: from stigma to demolition?" in *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19 (3), pp. 223-232.

Wassenberg, Frank (2004b). "Renewing stigmatised estates in the Netherlands: a framework for image renewal strategies", in *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19 (3), pp. 271-292.

Vidén, Sonja (1999). Chapter in Hall, Thomas, (Ed.) *Rekordåren: en epok i svenskt bostadsbyggande.* Boverket, Karlskrona.

Vidén, Sonja; Chandra, Satish & Schulz, Solveig (2006). *Technical improvements of housing envelopes in Sweden.* (Unpublished working paper). Working group 3B, COST Action C16, Improving the quality of existing urban building envelopes.

Wigren, Rune (1997). "Bygg- och bokostnader: en analys av den historiska utvecklingen till 1995 samt en utblick mot 2020", in Andersson, Åke E., (Ed.) *Bostadsmarknaden på 2000-talet.* SNS (Studieförbundet Näringsliv och samhälle) / SABO (Sveriges allmännyttiga bostadsföretag) / Institutet för framtidsstudier, Stockholm.