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***Belongings in segregated residential areas.***

*A study on identity expression of immigrants living in Rosengård,  
Malmö from a sociological perspective.*

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SOC 344, 41-60 p  
Autumn term 2006  
Supervisor: Alhadi Khalaf

## ABSTRACT

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This study revolves around how the adult immigrants who live in Rosengård think and feel about living in this segregated area, the impact such place has on identity creation and how identity development is seen in the background of their integration into the Swedish society. In this study the qualitative method has been used – six interviews have been conducted with residents of Rosengård.

On the basis of the empirical study, it is claimed the informants feel stigmatized not only by living in this neighbourhood but also by the fact that they are immigrants. This causes disruption between them and those who live outside Rosengård. It is proposed that “unhealthy” contacts between “Rosengårders” and “non-Rosengårders” depict problematic relation the host country has towards immigrants that makes the housing estate such as Rosengård a stigmatized place. Marginalization/ stigmatization/ segregation experienced by residents of Rosengård will reduce their life chances and influence formation of their identities. Some residents of Rosengård can use this stigma as an explanation for difficulties in finding employment which partially can explain the high unemployment rates in Rosengård.

Seen from the results of the study, environment can be stigmatizing for its residents but only outside Rosengård. In Rosengård the surroundings play a very important part in creation of identities of its residents giving rise to development of collective identification. Residents of Rosengård do not see this housing estate as a restricted area but as a place they are welcome and where they are “themselves” since created social bonds result in feelings of security, acceptance, attachment and solidarity. However, collective identity will be viewed differently by its members based on different life experiences each of them encounters.

*Keywords:* collective identity, immigrants, residential segregation, stigmatization.

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*”Identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvement with others.”* (Weeks, 1990, p.88)

## **1 BACKGROUND**

Many cities in Western Europe are characterized by spatial division between natives and immigrants. This ethnic residential segregation implies socio-economic differences between those groups of people, argues Bråmås (2006). Such places are known for its worse socio-economic position compared to other districts of the particular city as well as the high level of its residents with foreign background. One of such places in Sweden is Rosengård - a town district placed in Malmö, Sweden's third largest city. Rosengård was built in years 1960-1970 with the Million Programme. Year 2006, 21,447 residents were living there. This area characterises high level of immigrants (85 % year 2006) and high level of the unemployment rate (63 % year 2004) (City of Malmö, 2006). According to the City Investment on Rosengård (2003), Rosengård is a residential area well known not only for those who live in Malmö but even to people in the whole of Sweden. The image of Rosengård presented by media is related to social problems such as unemployment and segregation. Such a negative depiction has also an impact on how residents of Rosengård perceive their district (City of Malmö, 2003).

Since residential segregation is crucial to the process of socialization, development of identity will take place. Kalm (2003) claims that when the immigrants and the natives live separately, the feeling of "we – they" is likely to originate. Hence people with foreign backgrounds are the most marginalized persons in Sweden e.g. in the housing and labour markets. This fact even deepens division between "them" and "us". Kalm (2003) argues that according to Pripp, immigrants who have lower ranking in labour and salaries are usually stereotyped by the surrounded community – they are perceived as a homogeneous group, seen as deviant from what is considered to be normal and their actions are described as stemming from their culture. Because of the cliché image, people from those groups are limited in their search for identification.

Identity develops in relation with each element perceivable in one's environment. It may be a person's relation with the physical environment as well as with activities and people associated with this location. Based on it people create an idea about themselves and their environment that can increase or reduce their self-esteem. The feelings one has towards a particular environment can have its basis in one's own experiences as well as in the opinion of the society. The difference between those two viewpoints can be enormous which is noticeable especially in segregated areas (Lilja, 1999).

## 1.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of my study is to get an insight into how residents of Rosengård think and feel about living in a segregated area: how they see themselves and their lives as well as how they perceive being seen by others in terms of living in a restricted neighbourhood. How does it affect development of their identities? By using both the theoretical framework and the qualitative method, I will try to find answers to my questions. The central concepts used in the analysis are stigmatization, strangeness and identity. I want to show how they are linked to each-other – with other words, how stigmatization and connected to it feeling of being a stranger in the society can affect identity of residents of segregated areas.

The main research question based on the ideas presented above is:

- How does living in a segregated town district affect its residents?

This question implies a follow up question such as:

- What consequences does it have on their lives?

## 1.2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Here I would like to present some existing research within the area of my interest.

### 1.2.1 ELIAS & SCOTSON'S RESEARCH ON OUTSIDERS

Exclusion of one group by another is according to Elias and Scotson (1965/1994) a universal phenomenon that can occur between two groups of people living close to each-other and depending on each-other. It is about stigmatization of groups of people by labelling them because of its “negative” characteristics and has nothing to do with the individuals the group consists of. Those characteristics are considered to be: unreliability, lack of discipline and lawlessness. The weaker group can experience insults, shame and exclusion based on their belonging to this particular group. Elias and Scotson (1965/1994) say that the inferior group will probably live up to such expectations. The reason of such a treatment of the weaker group is:

*“Exclusion and stigmatization of the outsiders by the established group were thus powerful weapons used by the latter to maintain their identity, to assert their superiority, keeping others firmly in their place.”* (Elias & Scotson, 1965/1994, p.xviii)

The powerful groups usually think of themselves as better persons (caused by differences in “the moral values”) and they often “infect” this opinion on the other group:

*"(...) the more powerful groups look upon themselves as the "better" people, as endowed with a kind of group charisma, with a specific virtue shared by all its members and lacked by the others. What is more, in all these cases the "superior" people may make the less powerful people themselves feel that they lack virtue – that they are inferior in human terms."*  
(Elias & Scotson, 1965/1994, p.xvi)

Because of "moral differentiation", differences in power will arise. The outsiders will be ascribed the negative traits that characterize their worst behaving part, while the established will be described as exemplary because of their best behaving part. Although it does not look like this in the reality, the minority of each group is an example for the whole. Because of this distorted picture, the established can "prove" their view of the situation.

It is only necessary to belong to the particular group in order to be assigned some characteristics. It is not the individual's own qualities that determine whether s/he will be excluded and stigmatized - reason for this is the collective belongingness. This way to treat the weaker group affects the way they think about themselves. They will be suppressed and the way they live will be depreciated by the established. According to Elias and Scotson (1965/1994), the labelling creates a new status for an individual. When one belongs to the lower social group, s/he can be classified as outsider and treated as such.

### 1.2.2 STUDIES ON COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Petersson and Clark (2003) based on their research state that by being a member of a collective identity, community can benefit the individual because s/he experiences greater security and emotional satisfaction. On the other hand, those who do not belong to this particular "larger body" can be perceived as "the Other" or even as the enemy and treated as such. Identities are based on boundaries, where boundary is seen *"as a spatial metaphor for categorization, maintaining the line between them and us."* (Petersson & Clark, 2003, p.13). For Peters (2003) collective identity can also be understood as constructed by boundaries as well as by preservation of differences between in-group and out-group as well as by exclusion of the other and by emphasizing contrasts between those who belong to the group and those who do not. Petersson (2003b) says that by creation of distance between us and the other group we feel more secure in our own community. However, those others do not necessarily have to be seen as the enemies.

Development of collective identities often is connected with how people outside the group perceive, define and treat the group in question. Groups can embrace such definitions but also reject them totally. The collective identity can be created when the group experiences hostility, rudeness or harm (Peters, 2003). Stereotypes about social memberships are socially constructed “frozen images” because they constitute almost unchangeable beliefs about attributes of the particular group spread by upbringing, education and media. The stereotyped group of individuals is seen as “not part of Us” and is perceived to have many threatening traits: they are seen as strangers, marginalized and excluded (Petersson, 2003a).

Sackmann (2003) says that self-localization consists of different kinds of identifications and one of them is collective identity seen as a part of the culture of a group. It constitutes symbols shared by at least majority of its members. It is impossible for the group members to share the same collective identity because they are not homogenous. Differences (generational or based on gender or social class) have an impact on the relationship the group members have in order to develop collective identity.

According to Peters (2003) collective identity is not a feature of individuals but a social phenomenon. Relevant questions here are: “who are we”, “what kind of group are we”, “what binds us together”, “what are we striving for”. By participation in collective identities, individual identity is being created. Collective identity can be found where the collectivities are. Peters says:

*“Collective identity might just be understood as the sum of collective representations, of symbols and meaning which refer to the collectivity itself, as a special part of the collective culture.”* (Peters, 2003, p. 17)

Significant for collective identity can be: acceptance as a member of the group by group members or by others, being loyal to the group, feeling proud of the membership in the group, being interested in the prosperity of the collectivity. The importance of collective identities varies from person to person. Peters calls them “thick” and “thin” collective identities because they can be more important to some members, while the others do not have that strong solidarity with the group.

### 1.2.3 ÅLUND'S STUDY ON A MULTIETHNIC SUBURB

Ålund (1999b) made a study on Rinkeby (outside Stockholm). She claims, in the multiethnic suburbs like Rinkeby, children grow up with the feeling of “shared exclusion”. Social relations are characterized by feelings of community, friendship and belongings; the residents feel safe and secure, although there are some fights from time to time. However, the world perceives them in a stereotyped and a narrow-minded way. Big issues in such a suburb are according to Ålund: exclusion, unemployment and poverty. The feeling of “strangeness” is emphasized by powerlessness, geographical isolation from the rest of the city as well as few Swedish people living in this suburb. “Ghettoizing” of the city suburbs creates gaps, conflicts and distance between people.

The above presented studies show that segregated residential area plays an important role in identity development. In this process it is significant how persons identify themselves with the place they live in as well as how the uniqueness of the particular location influences them.

### 1.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Previous research shows that environment is crucial in the creation of identity. In this paper I propose a theoretical framework enabling me to research on identity development of residents of segregated areas that will combine perspectives on stigmatization, strangeness and identity. I would like to explain position of immigrants in their new country by using Simmel's classic theory on the “stranger”. Goffman's ideas on “stigmatization” will be helpful to explain the way residents of Rosengård feel treated by the larger society, as well as creation of the “Rosengårder's” collective identity and will help to understand the “alien status” this particular residential area has. Finally, theories from studies on identity will be used in order to understand the process of identity creation. Here I will concentrate on development of the collective identity.

*Keywords:* collective identity, immigrants, residential segregation, stigmatization.

### 1.4 PERSPECTIVE ON IDENTITY

There are two extremes in the way researchers view identity: essentialist perspective that says that identity is clear and given; and constructionist standpoint that identity is changing and fragmented, being constantly under construction (Macionis & Plummer, 2005). According to the essentialist view, membership in some group (either it is culture, religion or

neighbourhood) creates some prejudiced characteristics of those who belong there that are perceived as typical. Some forms of collective identity may be seen by essentialists as pre-given, such as traditions within a group, solidarity among its members as well as identification with a collective. Peters (2003) criticizes this view and argues that many of the essentialist explanations are *“the result of manipulation or self-deception”* (Peters, 2003, p. 23).

The perspective of identity used in this paper is based on the constructionist standpoint that says identities are changeable, adaptable and dependent upon different situations. Although residents of segregated districts are often given a fixed identity, the aim of this study is to find out what kinds of identities the residents create themselves. These identities can be influenced by a large number of factors which means identities do not remain fixed and stable.

As Peters says:

*“Collective identities are not given by nature or biology, and they are not unchanging essences. Instead they are changing, adaptable and “socially constructed.”*  
(Peters, 2003, p. 22)

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 STRANGENESS ACCORDING TO SIMMEL**

Simmel (1908/1981) describes the stranger as somebody who does not originate from the place he lives in. Although this makes him not to belong there, he still lives in the new society. The qualities of the stranger are different from those of the natives, which forces upon him a different role in the society. The stranger has two roles: he constitutes a part of the community but at the same time he is perceived as someone outside it:

*“The stranger is part of the group, in the same way as the poor and the various “inner enemies”.* (Simmel, 1908/1981, p. 149, own translation).

This double function, being both distanced and close at the same time, constitutes him being mobile which creates “strangeness”. Simmel explains that it is possible for the stranger to be mobile because he can have a temporary contact with “each element” but is not “organically connected” to any of them. Although the stranger is geographically close to the larger society, he is still distanced from it by different social and cultural practices. This creation of “strangeness” is closely connected to the principles of normality which means that what is considered to be a norm in the overall society is a measure for deviation. (Ålund, 1999a).

Objectivity is another characteristic of the stranger and means “*combination of distance and closeness, indifference and commitment*” (Simmel, 1908/1981, p.151, own translation). In this context objectivity does not mean “*non-participation but a positive form of participation*” (Simmel, 1908/1981, p.151, own translation). Simmel compares this kind of objectivity to freedom because such a person does not behave accordingly to any known rules – he can look at the situation from a distance and create another perspective on it. Objectivity created by closeness and distance causes the abstract relationship with the stranger:

“*With the stranger you only have some general characteristics in common.*”  
(Simmel, 1908/1981, p.152, own translation).

Relationship people have with the stranger has a character of a “non-relationship” because he is not a member of the group. Simmel gives an example of people born in other countries: in the new society they are not perceived as individuals but as strangers – they are seen only as foreigners. Ålund (1999a) says that the stranger becomes “the Other” which nowadays it is equal with the immigrant. The heterogeneous group of people is treated as less worthy and is transformed into a socially and culturally degraded collectivity.

## 2.2 GOFFMAN’S IDEAS ON STIGMATIZATION

It is the society that sets up norms by which its members determine what characteristics are seen as normal and what attributes are not acceptable. This kind of labelling Goffman (1973) calls a failing or a handicap - with other words “stigma”. According to him, there are three types of stigma: abominations of the body, blemishes of character and tribal stigma such as race, nation or religion. Goffman also points out the importance of the degree of visibility of the stigma. The more perceivable the stigma is, the bigger the risk that the stigmatized will be treated based on it.

Goffman (1973) emphasises that although the term stigma is used to describe a discrediting characteristic, it does not define attributes but social relations. Those who have stigma are discriminated in different ways which reduces their life chances. The stigmatized person can be ashamed of such attribute because of not feeling fully accepted and equally treated. Having a stigma can also mean that an individual will use it as an excuse for his/her ill luck in order to receive “secondary gains”. It is possible that both “normals” and people with stigma will arrange their lives in a way to avoid contacts with each-other. The stigmatized person may feel anxious about how the others perceive him/her and what they really think of

him/her. The stigmatized persons often feel being questioned, especially when they incidentally behave inappropriate because the “normals” will understand it as being caused by their stigma.

Image construction of an individual is connected to his/her social identity. Being a normal person or a stigmatized one is not really about them as human beings but about the kind of perspective they are seen from. Such perspectives stem from the social interaction between these two. Being a minority group member indicates his/her difference from the “normals”:

*“The special situation of the stigmatized is that society tells him he is a member of the wider group, which means he is a normal human being, but that he is also “different” in some degree, and that it would be foolish to deny this difference. This differentness itself of course derives from society, for ordinarily before a difference can matter much it must be conceptualized collectively by the society as a whole.”* (Goffman, 1973, p. 149)

The others not only perceive the identity – they are also co-creators of it. They do it by labelling and by treating individuals in a certain way.

Goffman (1973) says that most people who are stigmatized are likely to call others within the same stigma category as “we”, “our people” or “our group”. There is the tendency for them to gather into social groups and having relationships with each-other but the intensity of it can vary and can go through different stages:

*“Given the ambivalence built into the individual’s attachment to his stigmatized category, it is understandable that oscillations may occur in his support of, identification with, and participation among his own. There will be “affiliation cycles” through which he comes to accept the special opportunities for in-group participation or comes to reject them after having accepted them before. There will be corresponding oscillations in belief about the nature of own group and the nature of normals.”* (Goffman, 1973, p. 51)

### 2.3 IDENTITY

The idea of identity refers to sameness and separateness: sameness with those who share the same characteristics, and separateness that differentiate us from others. People create awareness of themselves by viewing the “inside” – our personal view of ourselves - and the “outside” – identification with others, helps people to conclude who they are and who they are not (Macionis & Plummer, 2005). According to Bradley (1996) the first one that can be called personal identity is about how we perceive ourselves and how, in our opinion, others see us. The life experiences individual gathers develop his/her personal identity. The other one, social

identity, applies to how individuals place themselves according to their role in the society as well as how they see other people as locating them. Social identities stem from different kinds of inequality such as class, gender, race, ethnicity or age.

Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2005) explain that identity is created by perceiving oneself:

1. as an individual (uniqueness based on one's life experiences and personality)
2. in comparison with how others view us (family, peers, co-workers)
3. in comparison to socio-cultural norms (similarities we share with others that create our membership of a social group)

Each individual is simultaneously a member of numerous groups. Some of those groups, for instance our nationality, are automatically ascribed to us, while belonging to other groups such as political affiliation, we can consciously choose.

Formation of ethnic or cultural identity goes through the following three phases:

1. absence of consideration upon ethnic identity that usually appears in the teenage years
2. recognition of ethnic identity and "investigation" of it, e.g. discussing and participating in ethnic activities
3. accomplishment of the ethnic identity through its internalization into the self which degree can vary with different individuals

Social identity can be affected by cultural factors such as status of the particular ethnic group in the society – whether it is a minority or majority group; or what kinds of relationship different ethnic groups have.

### **3 METHOD**

The aim of this study is not to generalize but to gain a deeper understanding on the relevant to this subject questions. Two kinds of qualitative method have been used: observation and interviews. Purpose of choosing these methods was to gain more information. At two occasions I made observations of the environment and people who live there – mostly immigrants. Three interviews with residents of Rosengård were taken in Swedish, two in English and one in Polish; they were recorded and took in one case 30 minutes, the other two 40 minutes and three other 50 minutes.

I started the analysis by writing down the notes from the observations right away to avoid the risk of forgetting. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed in exact manner as the informants were expressing themselves. After reading the text many times, I marked the main words in bold type in each part of the sections that helped me to group the answers on particular topics that are: Role of (un)employment, “We” and “they” – contacts with the Swedish society, Solidarity and “Rosengårder’s identity. The number in the bracket by each quotation shows the author of the particular quotation.

A limitation of my study was participation of only adult immigrants who speak Swedish (although there are some Swedish people living in this area). This means there are no new arrived persons or elderly people or others who were not able to master the language.

### 3.1 CHOICE OF INFORMANTS

The plan was to find informants in different age groups and from different nationalities in order to gain variation of views from people with different backgrounds. I tried to select as different persons as possible because according to Sackmann (2003) how the collective identity is perceived is influenced by persons’ sex, age or social class. This kind of heterogeneity among people means they do not share the same collective identity. In the study, I concentrated on the adult immigrants. I tried to get contact with some older people but none of them could speak Swedish sufficiently. I was prepared to find as many informants as needed and at the end I felt six interviewees helped to achieve the satisfying amount of information.

Decision of choosing the Rosengård Mall – “Rosengårds centrum” as a place to meet three of my informants was taken after my first observation - I realized that I could meet many people there. I have not seen many people outside the houses – the only crowded place was the shopping centre. If I did not know anything about Rosengård, by looking at the area, I would think it is an average housing estate in Sweden. There were many institutions placed close to the centre – that is why I decided to ask my informants the reason why they think there are many institutions at Rosengård. Although the residential area looked “Swedish”, the mall did not remind of a typical Swedish shopping centre – people as well as stores looked foreign. It was obvious that this centre plays an important part in peoples’ lives. Many people were just standing and talking, some sitting in the café; no one seemed to be in a hurry.

It was not difficult to get contact with residents of Rosengård - I had the feeling that they were flattered that somebody cared and wanted to know their opinions. It was also easy to gain access to the place I was observing – I did not stand out which made it possible for me to blend with the residents. Despite the fact that first three interviews were conducted at the mall, I chose the quietest places there to avoid disturbances. Such places were the café upstairs where nobody besides us was sitting, a store where an informant worked (no customers present) and a bench outside the mall when the weather was nice. The fourth informant was found with the help of a friend of mine and the two other respondents were found by the previous informant. These interviews took place at informants' homes.

### 3.2 PRESENTATION OF THE INFORMANTS

1. 24-year old man from Kosovo, secondary school, recently started working as a car mechanic, has been in Sweden for fourteen years, living in Rosengård for twelve years.
2. 56-year old woman from Bosnia, university degree, working as a native language teacher, has been in Sweden for fourteen years, living in Rosengård for twelve years.
3. 28-year old woman from Iraq, secondary school, recently started working as a seller at the mall in Rosengård, has been in Sweden for fourteen years, living in Rosengård for fourteen years.
4. 22-year old man from Nigeria, secondary school, unemployed, has been in Sweden for three years, living in Rosengård for five months.
5. 36-year old man from Lebanon, university degree, attends SFI (school for beginners in Swedish), has been in Sweden for one year, living in Rosengård for ten months.
6. 42-year old woman from Poland, university degree, unemployed, has been in Sweden for nine years, living in Rosengård for nine years.

### 3.3 METHOD DISCUSSION

Petersson (2003b) claims that it is difficult to study collective identities because there is nothing “concrete” about them which I also could notice while conducting the research.

*“Collective identities are to be understood as perceptions and sensations of feelings of individuals about belongings to a larger community.”*  
(Petersson, 2003b, p. 35, own translation).

I tried to use the given time for interviews as much as possible – by using semi-structured questions the interviewees stuck to the topic. Petersson (2003b) does not advise to use the

open interview form when studying identities. Instead he recommends structured but flexible interviews. My interviews reminded more of a conversation but I made sure that all the topics I wanted to discuss were used. The questions were open – most of them were prepared in advance and they worked as guiding lines that I was able to adjust to each person, so the interviewees could in their own words describe how they understand things and how they feel about certain subjects. The second interview lasted only 30 minutes and this short time could have affected the response of this informant by preventing her from going in deep. Petersson (2003b) says that even through the interviews it is impossible to totally capture “the inner world of the interviewee” because one can not know if the interviewee expresses himself/herself in his/her own terms and how much the interviewer affects the interview. I - the researcher – have my own collective identities (one of them is being an immigrant in Sweden) and these together with my previous understanding will affect how I interpret the outcome of the research (Petersson, 2003b). I am sure that being a foreigner affected the conversations in some ways. On one hand it was easy to get the access and “trust” of my informants - I do not think they felt questioned because I looked and “sounded” as one of them. It also could be that they or I assumed that we understood each-other well and there were things that need not be explained. Each constructed situation influences the gathered data. However, the fact that I am not from Rosengård, not even from Malmö, helped me to remain open. Besides, the informants could see me as a person who does not know much about living in Rosengård and needs all basic information.

The fact that three interviews with residents of Rosengård were taken in Swedish and two in English which is not a native language either for them or me could have contributed to problems of one not fully expressing oneself. I tried to minimize the risk of misunderstanding by asking the interviewees in cases where I was not sure whether I understood their utterances correctly. The other factor was that I had to translate four interviews into English and some originality of their expressions could have been lost in translation. I am also conscious of the fact that the background of my respondents such as their age, gender and nationality affected their perceptions of the discussed subject.

#### **4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

In this part of the paper I will discuss connection between my empirical study and the chosen theory. I will use the quotes of the interviewees and see if my theoretical framework is possible to apply there.

#### 4.1 SEGREGATION AND NEED OF ACCEPTANCE

In this section I concentrate on consequences that living in a divided area may have on its residents. I discuss this subject in terms of unemployment that faces many residents of Rosengård.

##### 4.1.1 ROLE OF (UN)EMPLOYMENT

Half of my informants are employed but as they say, to find their current work was not easy. They express feelings on what employment (or lack of it) means in Rosengård and what impact it has on them.

One interviewee shares his difficulties in finding work as well as being differently treated caused in his opinion by place of residence:

*“There is no order here, and the name, you know, Rosengård... Because of this, it’s difficult to find a job. When I was unemployed, I was looking for many jobs and the employers were interested in me but then I think they checked the address and finally said “No”. It never happened that the employee told me directly in my face that he won’t employ me because I’m from Rosengård. But... once I started to work at one place. We were two friends... and I told them that I live in Rosengård - why should I lie? Three months later I was fired. People there... they were afraid because I live here... For them, living in Rosengård is the same as being a criminal. And he is still working. They told my friend: “He lives in Rosengård. He must be in some gang.” When I went to the locker-room, everybody left... You are f...up if you live here.” (1)*

This respondent experiences Rosengård as a stigmatizing neighbourhood. In his all other utterances, he clearly expresses that all the failures in his life are due to living there which made him want to move out from this district.

A similar viewpoint can be perceived when listening to another informant. He feels being different from the overall society as long as he lives in Rosengård. He tries to overcome the hindrances of finding an occupation as well as meeting Swedish people where, as he believes, his motivation and determination will be helpful:

*“I would like to live close to Swedish people but I don’t have so much money to buy an apartment. And besides I am not Swedish, I don’t have a job- they can’t accept me. And I can’t work because they tell me I don’t know enough Swedish. I try to do my best – I learn the language and struggle... and then I want to find a job. I think that when I know the language, I can get a job and then it will be much easier for me to find an apartment outside Rosengård.” (5)*

This respondent's believe that living close to the Swedish people will make his feelings of "otherness" disappear, shows that he blames Rosengård for it. In this area, neither he is able to practice the language nor does he have the chance to make friends with Swedish people.

Next respondent is disappointed in the "unwritten" rules existing in Sweden which according to her does not enable immigrants from Rosengård to be equal with the Swedish people. She says:

*"Don't misunderstand me, I like this place but sometimes... there are moments when I think I should move out from here. It's strange but I don't see myself as knowing much about Sweden although I've been living here for such a long time. (...) I still can't find a job; I haven't made any real Swedish friends... I just live among others like me... And it's nothing wrong with it; it's just that they [Swedish people] make you feel bad about yourself because they don't accept you the way you are... Somehow... they have problems with accepting people who come from Rosengård. It happened to me e.g. during my trainee post that I felt I am not really wanted there. They were rather cold. I felt I am there only because I have the right to have a trainee post according to the Swedish law." (6)*

This utterance shows that the interviewee felt like a stranger during some contacts with Swedish people. She also explains difficulties with finding work by blaming her place of residence.

Another interviewee also shares opinion that unemployment and living in Rosengård are linked to each other:

*"(...)But one thing is true: there are many people here without work and this can be the cause of all the problems in Rosengård." (2)*

However, she does not mean it is difficult to find an occupation based on the place of one's residence but that people who live there take an easy way out and use it as an excuse when they are facing difficulties in their lives. She thinks there are no differences between this district and other areas in Malmö:

*"I can't say that my experiences have to do with living in Rosengård. It could have happened if I would live in any place in the world. All these problems - that you can't find any apartment or any job... you can't blame it on the fact that you live in Rosengård." (2)*

One respondent discusses discrimination on the labour market. According to him he was biased because he is an immigrant, not because he lives in Rosengård:

*"When you come to the job aspect, there is a big discrimination. It isn't only me... When I was looking for a job, I called one place and they told me that I have to send the application and my CV. Then my ex- Swedish girlfriend - in my presence - called the same place and they*

*told her to come to work next day! Can you imagine? This is unfair. (...) I even didn't mention that I'm from Rosengård, they didn't ask me where I live either, the most important is that they see your name, that you are a foreigner. They only want to hire Swedish people.” (4)*

Problems with finding occupation as well as difficulties with dealing with co-workers most of my interviewees put the blame mainly on living in Rosengård. However, Goffman (1973) explains, stigma does not have to do with the shameful characteristic itself but it describes social relations among people. Reason for this is the stereotypes about “personal characteristics” of the stigmatized: people without conscience. According to this view, perceiving somebody as living in a segregated neighbourhood such as in this case Rosengård can diminish his/her opportunities to find a job. It can be seen in the way informant (1) expresses himself about Rosengård as well as in his attempts to move out that he is most affected by the negative way he thinks others perceive him. People who live in other parts of Malmö, based on the preconceived opinion about this area, can expose residents of Rosengård to discrimination or an adjust behaviour when e.g. the last ones try to find employment. This can cause feelings of marginalization and unfairness as stated by Goffman (1973). In fact, many of my interviewees have suffered because of the way they were treated by some Swedish people - suffering that they connect to living in Rosengård. Goffman's theory applied here helps to understand importance of contacts among people living in Rosengård and those “outside” and its impact on the lives of the first ones. It is not “fault” of a residential area itself that its residents have difficulties e.g. finding occupation but because of contacts among people.

Opposite to most of the informants, interviewee (2) does not want to explain problems in her life by blaming on Rosengård. Goffman (1973) mentions that people who are stigmatized can use their handicap to explain their failures in life which can in reality be based on other circumstances. By interpreting Goffman's idea one could say it is easier for residents of Rosengård to hold the stigma (living in Rosengård) responsible for their problems (play a victim role by blaming on stigma) than to face those difficulties. The informant (2) is satisfied with her work as a native language teacher. By taking herself as an example – in spite of her age, she managed to create a good life in the host country and she believes that if she managed, everyone can do it too.

Accordingly to Simmel's perspective (1908/1981) it is the society that forces a special role upon the stranger which causes the stranger cannot have a relationship with the overall society

since he does not belong to it. As Simmel explains closeness to and distance from the overall society results in the “abstract relationship” that develops between the stranger and the society. It means feelings of outsider hood would be easily created. According to respondent (1), the society sees residents of Rosengård as criminals. Co-workers did not want to have anything to do with him, afraid of his “otherness” – national registration in Rosengård. My informants complain about this “non-relationship” with Swedes since it excludes them from the full participation in the society. Because the stranger cannot be a part of the majority group, the relationship “normals” have with him/her is “non-relational”. Almost all informants experience this kind of a “non-relation” - either (1) or (6) have adapted well in the new country among the natives. Interviewee (5) fights against this new status given to him because he experiences that living in Rosengård has been forced upon him. One respondent implies that even more important than living in Rosengård is being an immigrant, which is another kind of shame according to Simmel (1908/1981). He says people stemming from different countries are not necessarily seen as distinct persons but only as foreigners, treated as any other outsider group. By using this theory it is possible to understand why immigrants from Rosengård feel they are treated negatively by the Swedish. Their stigma / “otherness” will “follow” them having further impact on their lives.

Ideas presented by both Goffman (1973) and Simmel (1908/1981) seem to be relevant when linked to utterances of my interviewees. Most of them experienced being rejected and labelled by the Swedish society, which is especially visible when discussing occupation issues. It is not only the lower life standard that is one of the consequences taken by the informants, affecting their and their families’ lives but also a worse self esteem which influences identities of my respondents.

## 4.2 IDENTITY

In this section I look at identity construction in the context of social space where a segregated housing area has to be understood as a mirror of contacts prevailing between groups.

### 4.2.1 “WE” AND “THEY” - CONTACTS WITH THE SWEDISH SOCIETY

This section discusses recognition of existence of “our” group and “their” group by my respondents. This social consciousness caught in the interviews is also to be seen as recognized hindrances in contact with Swedish people. These issues are connected to identity development as well as marginalization/ stigmatization in the Swedish society.

The informant who feels stigmatized because of his residence in Rosengård is disappointed that living in this multi-cultural neighbourhood prevents him from having closer contacts with Swedish people:

*“There are a lot of negative things about living in Rosengård and I feel like there is nothing positive at all. I actually regret coming here. If I lived in some other place, I think it would work better with the school and language because it would have been easier to get into the system. When you see Swedish people on daily basis, you learn how they live and then I think it is easier to be integrated in the society. Here, in Rosengård, there are only fellow countrymen – you can’t call it Sweden. I’ve been living here for fourteen years and I still don’t speak so good Swedish. I never had one single Swedish friend – all the people I have contacts with are foreigners, and most of them come from my country.” (1)*

This person describes Rosengård as a self-sufficient place that reminds him of prison:

*“You can find everything in Rosengård: a job centre, a care centre, a pharmacy, social insurance office, you name it. You don’t even need to leave Rosengård and go to the city because everything is here. I believe the authorities organized it this way, so that residents wouldn’t go out from here – it’s like a prison. I don’t think it is better when there are all institutions in one place. People should be able to go out and be able to live together with the Swedish and socialize with them in order to get into the system. Personally I even don’t know any Swedish person who lives here.” (1)*

It is only him among the interviewees who has strongly negative feelings about living in Rosengård. Even in this example one can see that he feels excluded from the Swedish society. He thinks the neighbourhood he lives in is segregated because Swedish people do not want to have anything to do with its residents.

This person believes that even in the future it would be impossible to be closer to the Swedish people because as he says, there exists an “unwritten law” according to which residents of Rosengård should remain in this neighbourhood and not move out. If they try to do it, they would face many difficulties due to the fact that they come from Rosengård:

*“It’s difficult to move out from here. After living here for some time, my family realized that it’s impossible to stay here longer and we tried to move out. But we never found any apartment. Many people say that those who live here shouldn’t be able to move out. I don’t know if it is true or not but I know many people are willing to move out but it’s not easy. When other residents’ associations find out that you live in Rosengård, they don’t want you. They even don’t check if you have any payment remarks or if you have a permanent job – it’s enough when you say that you are from Rosengård.” (1)*

None of the informants says that (s)he is well integrated into the Swedish society. They do not have Swedish friends, barely know Swedish people, their social life is almost entirely limited

to Rosengård and to immigrants from other areas of Malmö. Living in Rosengård limits their contacts with Swedes:

*“It is really bad with the integration. I don’t know many Swedish people – it’s almost impossible: I work at the Rosengård mall and 95 % of those who work here are foreigners. Where should I meet Swedish people actually? There are some older Swedish neighbours in my building but we only say: hi.” (3)*

She shares difficulties she believes people have when they want to move out from Rosengård and rent an apartment in other areas of Malmö:

*”The negative thing with living here is that when you want to move out, you will be asked where you lived before and if you answer Rosengård, then it will be more difficult to get an apartment if you want to rent it. For instance all my siblings had to buy their apartments. Of course there is nobody saying anything publicly... but firstly they see a foreign name, where you lived and if you have a job or not.” (3)*

This informant explains she did not have many contacts with Swedish people and most of those she knew, were teasing her for living in Rosengård:

*“It was enough that I mentioned where I live and they always rolled up their eyes to heaven... (...)Previously, when I was a teenager, I was very affected by living here, especially when I had friends from Limhamn. When I was asked where I was living, I felt little... embarrassed...I felt somehow... less worthy.” (3)*

She thinks the core of the problem is that people outside Rosengård create a terrible picture of this place and they are not especially interested in getting to know people who live there. She felt “less worthy” and points out the existence of negative values about Rosengård in the society. She thinks people outside Rosengård do not look at this neighbourhood in a positive way hence her embarrassment caused when being asked about place of living. As this interviewee tells later on in the interview, her insecurity when meeting peers from other districts were tightly connected with fear what they would think when they find out that she lives in Rosengård.

One informant points out that not only Swedish people look down on residents of Rosengård but also immigrants from other districts of Malmö:

*“Foreigners that live outside Rosengård... they think they are something special – better than people from Rosengård. But we all are foreigners! Why would you think of yourself as better just because you live where mostly Swedish people live? Maybe they think they have more money than those who live in Rosengård, I don’t know. But for me they are foreigners... it doesn’t matter where you live.” (4)*

He feels as a stranger not only by Swedish but even by people with whom they share another stigma - that is immigrants living in different parts of Malmö.

A similar experience of marginalization connected to living in Rosengård is shared by another respondent:

*“People are directly afraid of me. The first time I went to Lernia, they asked me where I was from. When I said I was from Rosengård, the teacher laughed and other students sighed. I was like a monster to them. It doesn't matter who you are... Swedish people and immigrants think directly that I'm a bad guy when I say I'm from Rosengård.”* (5)

In this case facial expression such as laughter or sigh is perceived by the informant as the unspoken opinion about residents of Rosengård. The respondent feels that others are frightened of him and expect him to do harm.

He perceives problems with segregation based on separated residential areas:

*“I think the problem is that people in Rosengård live separately from the Swedish, they don't have much contact with Swedish. If I would have had contact with Swedish people, I would know more about them and they would know more about me. Maybe Swedish don't like foreigners because they are afraid of them, I don't know... If they mix a little bit with Swedish and people from Rosengård move to other districts, it would definitely be better. (...)Every time I watch TV you can hear that when they talk about shooting and robbery, they mention foreigners. I'm not like this but I think when the foreigners hear about it all the time, they will be like this. They will be bad. Because Swedish only see me as a bad guy, I will be bad.”* (5)

This respondent has some ideas about what could be done to avoid this negative reputation.

He thinks this could be achieved by bringing Swedish people and immigrants from Rosengård together.

Another informant has a similar opinion about segregation in Rosengård and states that contacts between Swedish people and immigrants from this district are limited. According to her Swedish people do not try to make an effort to learn anything about immigrants:

*“Living here can make it more difficult to learn anything about Sweden because we don't have possibilities to meet Swedish people on daily basis. I feel that we are separated – like there is something between Swedish people and immigrants stopping from having good contacts... I think immigrants are more open towards Swedes but it is the Swedish people who don't even want to get to know immigrants. That's why we live in different districts of Malmö and have no contacts with each-other.”* (6)

The informants believe that living in this restricted community and having limited contacts with Swedish people have negatively influenced their possibilities in life. All of them think

that being closer to Swedish people would have helped them becoming part of the society. However, they do not know many Swedes and with those they know they have only a superficial contact. Most of the interviewees give different examples of situations where they felt excluded and experienced being stigmatized due to their place of residence. All of them mention that being accepted by the larger society is a very important issue for them. Because this does not seem to happen, they find recognition by each-other – they feel secure and comfortable in the company of other residents of Rosengård.

Goffman's theory (1973) has been very useful for understanding this perceivable division between "Rosengårders" and "non-Rosengårders". When talking about living in Rosengård, my informants see themselves as a group and engage in deep contacts with each-other which according to Goffman it is what happens when group of people shares the same stigma. At the same time, their behaviour will automatically show difference from the larger group, so called "normals" and they will be judged according to it since stigma is socially related. Examples above indicate that living in a segregated area and what it follows lack of interaction or a negatively experienced interaction among "Rosengårders" and others affects my respondents. Applying Goffman's theory, construction of identities of people living in Rosengård will be affected by exclusion experienced in their lives.

Most informants believe it is the Swedish people who want to avoid contacts with the immigrants and thus this separation in residential areas because the Swedish people refuse to move there. Using Goffman's theory (1973) this can be explained that both "normals" (overall society) and stigmatized ("Rosengårders") can organize their lives in such way that enables them to stay away from each-other.

My informants do not feel being treated equally in the Swedish society; they have the sense of "sticking out" and often being questioned. Explanation for this brings again Goffman (1973) who emphasizes significance of the visibility of stigma. The better perceivable the stigma is the more chance that the person is going to be condemned according to it. One informant mentions the foreign name which can be an indicator of "strangeness" but even the ethnic facial characteristics can reveal one's stigma. Another stigma can be created by living in a restricted community such as Rosengård.

Theoreticians used in this paper claim social interaction among people is crucial for development of their identities. By comparison, Simmel (1908/1981) believes, the stranger's role is to be part of the society s/he lives in but at the same time s/he does not belong there.

This theory helps to understand feelings of my respondents when they talk about being outside the society – not only spatially, by living in a restricted community looked down at by others but also by being ostracized by them in different ways.

Simmel has a similar view as Goffman on what causes this distance from the society and explains it is because of “social and cultural practices”. Since the practices of the overall society constitute what is and what is not “normal”, “strangeness” will be easily visible (Ålund, 19991). In Rosengård this “strangeness” comprises many things; one of them would be living in a restricted community itself. Most characteristic traits for groups of people who live there are race, ethnicity and class. Division of groups “we” and “they” can be based on these differences.

Simmel (1908/1981) also explains such people are given the role of a different person in the society. This implies that the residents of Rosengård are negatively labelled just because they happened to belong to this group of “strangers”. By applying Ålund’s thoughts on the stranger (1999a), they can be seen as a “socially and culturally degraded collectivity” in spite of heterogeneity prevailing among them. Living in restricted Rosengård and at the same time being an immigrant will make them “the Other”.

#### 4.2.2 SOLIDARITY AND “ROSENGÅRDER’S” IDENTITY

This section revolves around how informants perceive themselves as group members seen in the background of their residential area.

My interviewees strongly identify themselves with Rosengård and feel they belong there. Their perception of this neighbourhood is mostly positive, although they are aware of its unfavourable reputation existing in Sweden. Despite what one can hear about Rosengård being dangerous; they feel secure in the streets. One of the informants explains it in the following way:

*“I feel at home here, as if I were in my home country. I feel accepted here. But as soon as you leave Rosengård, it doesn’t matter where, as soon as you start speaking, then you are a foreigner. But here in Rosengård I don’t feel like a foreigner, here I’m myself. And everybody is equal. Of course we come from different countries and we all are immigrants but it doesn’t matter here. There is no one here who looks down on you as...as if you came from Mars.” (1)*

One person recognizes the importance Rosengård has on immigrants in terms of maintenance of their cultural values that creates feeling of security:

*“I think when immigrants move to Rosengård, they feel safe here, more than in other parts of Malmö. Here they can find everything they need. If you come to Rosengård, you can speak your language and buy favourite food from your home country. It means security for them. Even after a couple of years, I don’t think that they want to move out because during this time they will make friends... why then should they move from here?” (3)*

Another interviewee developed roots in Rosengård and feels she just belongs there:

*“I can’t even imagine moving somewhere else because all people I’ve known since I came to Sweden are here and if I moved, I would have to come to Rosengård and visit them! So... I’d rather stay here. Rosengård is my area. If anyone says anything negative about Rosengård, then...” (She shakes her fist and laughs). (2)*

The informants feel that it is not fair to be negatively labelled as *“those who come from Rosengård.”* They feel strongly about their place of residence and want to protect it from the negative commentaries:

*“I’m always irritated when people question my decision of living in Rosengård. “What are you doing in Rosengård? Why don’t you move?” I just look at them and say: No, I’m not going anywhere. If you want to remain my friend, you have to continue visiting me in Rosengård.” (2)*

Another respondent feels secure and satisfied with his belonging to the community created in Rosengård:

*“When I go to the shopping plaza [in Rosengård], I don’t feel outside, as I can feel when I shop in other places. I feel like one of them. And I’m so happy because I feel like I’m a mix of those people. Although they come from different parts of Europe, Africa or South America. (...) I feel very secure here because there are a lot of people like me – other foreigners. Somehow I feel I’m one of them. Nobody here feels more special than the other, like I’m Swedish, I speak Swedish. Because people here speak Arabic, African and other languages, you don’t feel like a foreigner. You feel like one of them. But when you live where Swedish people live, they show you that you are not Swedish. They don’t like what you are doing but in Rosengård you feel secure and accepted.” (4)*

One person, who in spite of the fact that he would like to move out from Rosengård, perceives strong relationships people in this area have with one another:

*“Neighbours in Rosengård do things together; they have a lot of contacts with each-other, not like the Swedish. Palestinians, Iraqis and Lebanese usually gather together, drink coffee and talk. My wife has been here for a longer time, she can speak Swedish well and she knows many people from different countries. But I’m new here so I know only people from other Arabic countries, because we talk the same language and share similar culture. So here in Rosengård I know only foreigners, no Swedish at all.” (5)*

Next interviewee also experiences strong bonds with other residents of Rosengård, especially with her neighbours:

*“I think the best with Rosengård is that people who live here hold together... you can feel strong solidarity, people care for each-other. It’s almost like a big family... I don’t know if it is because we who live here have a lot of time to be social because many of us don’t work...I know a lot of people here, they are so open and friendly. I often talk to my neighbours and we visit each-other, some of them are my best friends. We usually invite each-other for dinner or just a cup of tea or coffee. I really don’t think I could be treated so nicely by Swedish people in a Swedish neighbourhood. Here people are more open; willing to talk and to find out what is going on with you. Here everybody is immigrant; there are no differences between people.”*  
(6)

My informants socialize with other fellow countrymen and maintain their culture rather than learning about the Swedish lifestyle. In Rosengård they are not perceived as outsiders hence feelings of acceptance among them. Being an immigrant is not an issue in Rosengård – most of the people there are foreigners and this makes them feel they are all equal. It shows my informants differentiate between themselves - immigrants from Rosengård and Swedish people. Such a distinction between sameness and separateness – who we are and who we are not gives ground for development of identity according to Macionis & Plummer (2005). It means here, the surroundings (Rosengård) and those who live there (other immigrants), provide basis for their social identity. Most interviewees developed strong collective identification since social bonds they created there resulted in feelings of security, strong attachment and solidarity. The collective identity of my informants that emerged in Rosengård can also be a source of positive feelings such as contentment and sense of recognition perceived from other residents. For them Rosengård is not only a housing estate but a dear place where their friends live. Rosengård is important for immigrants also in terms of maintenance of their cultural values that creates this feeling of security which is one of the profits one can gain from being a member of the group. Most of my informants have a “thick” collective identity displaying the importance of this group’s membership. These informants are devoted to the collectivity – loyal towards the neighbourhood and its residents, proud of it and want the best for the group fellows. Although some informants do not want to be seen as “bad” people from Rosengård, they still see themselves as somehow belonging to this community, having a “thin” collective identity. Why then some of my informants sense they belong “more” or “less” to this community? Goffman (1973) explains that intensity of social bonds between members in a collectivity can go through various stages. Beliefs about the nature of the own group and the nature of “normals” can be shifting. Based on it, my informants can perceive themselves being more or less connected to other residents of

Rosengård depending on the current situation in their lives. Those of the residents who have many friends living in Rosengård and who are satisfied with living there will probably expose a “thick” collective identity.

Another theoretician, Bradley (1996), discusses a different perspective on construction of social identity. She claims it can have its ground in various inequalities where ethnicity might be one of them. She explains it is the reason why immigrants have another role in the society given them by the natives. This theory helps to explain why my interviewees besides living in Rosengård strike importance of being immigrants. Collectivity that they form just by the fact that they all are foreigners living in Rosengård will bring them closer. Since ethnicity is the most visible “otherness”, immigrants can easily feel being differentiated from the Swedish. Inequalities such as ethnicity and residence in Rosengård can be then stigmatizing in contacts with Swedes.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 CONCLUSION REGARDING METHOD AND THEORY**

I think the chosen method worked well for this research. Observations helped me to gain an overview of the situation, while the interviews contributed in receiving a deeper understanding of the studied situation. Chosen theoretical framework helped in the analysis of the results which made it possible finding answers to my questions.

### **5.2 CONCLUSION REGARDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

It is not possible to generalize on the basis of my simple data because it has a particular relevance. The data I received from the interviews with six residents of Rosengård is constructed mainly during the interviews, where I “intruded” in the lives of my informants – Rosengård is thus not a stable and fixed category but it needs to be understood as a social construction. Collective identity will be then perceived differently by different persons affected by various factors. However, the results of this study confirm previous findings.

Aim of this research was to find out how living in a segregated town district affects its residents and what consequences it has on their lives. With help of my theoretical framework I could make following conclusions.

My informants utter feelings of being ostracized by the Swedish that I could explain by using Simmel’s theory (1908/1981). It is creation of perceived “otherness” such as living in

Rosengård / being an immigrant (“stigma” by using Goffman’s terminology) that causes disruption in the interaction between “Rosengårders” and “non-Rosengårders”, having a negative impact on the self esteem of the first ones.

Applying Goffman’s theory (1973) contributed to explanation why a segregated housing estate such as Rosengård can be stigmatized. It shows “unhealthy” contacts between its residents and people living outside it. Since most of its residents are immigrants, I propose the core problem would be issues of immigration and kind of relation the host country has towards the newcomers. At the same time, residents of Rosengård can hold this stigma responsible for problems in their lives, e.g. use it as an explanation for difficulties in finding employment and what it causes, lower life standard. Goffman’s theory could be applicable here which would partially explain the high unemployment rates in Rosengård. Application of Goffman’s theory means that marginalization/ stigmatization/ segregation experienced by residents of Rosengård will reduce their life chances and influence formation of their identities.

Who are residents of Rosengård? How does living in Rosengård influence their identity? Do they only have one identity – “Rosengårders’ identity”? Definitely not. But unfortunately, in eyes of the outside world they might be seen in this stereotypical way. Results of my study show that identity is a complex issue where all aspects of it are intertwined with one-another. One single person has plenty of identities that change depending on time, place and setting. Living in Rosengård – a multicultural neighbourhood perceived in a negative way by the larger society will influence the way its residents perceive themselves. Environment can be then stigmatizing for its residents but only outside its area. Inside it people do not perceive each-other in terms of foreigners living in Rosengård which means inequality based on ethnicity and place of residence does not exist there. Identity construction in the context of social space will be affected by number of factors such as how deep are the bonds between members of a collectivity or how the particular group is seen by others and whether these groups have a good relationship with one-another. In construction of identity it is also important how individuals themselves form their identities – many Rosengårders are influenced by the stigma put on them as the stranger in the Swedish society – both as an individual (foreigner) as well as part of a collectivity (living in Rosengård). Since almost all of my informants identify themselves with other residents of Rosengård, the surroundings play a very important part in creation of their identities.

What does then living in Rosengård mean to my informants? For most of them Rosengård is not a restricted community. It is a place where they can reinforce their culture, be social, talk to people from their home countries – be “themselves”. My interviewees created social network and developed roots in this neighbourhood. They feel very much at home there. They do not perceive Rosengård as a stigmatized place they should escape from but they think of it in terms of their home/family. However, collective identity will be viewed differently by its members based on different life experiences each of them encounters.

I would like to mention Peters (2003) who in his research explains existence of such a connection among people by saying that wherever a collectivity exist, a collective identity can be found.

Proposition of future research: Since focus on this paper only revolves around adult immigrants from Rosengård, it would be interesting to know how identities of Swedish people who form a minority there are created while living in this segregated neighbourhood.

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## APPENDIX

### INTERVIEW GUIDE - in English

1. Background of the informant: name, age, education level, occupation, ethnicity, duration of their stay in Sweden, duration of their stay in Rosengård.

2. How come you live in Rosengård?
3. What do you think about Rosengård?
4. What has changed in your life since you moved to Rosengård?
5. Would you like to move out from Rosengård? Explain.
6. Do you think there are any differences between people living in Rosengård/ you and those who live in another parts of Malmo?
7. What do you think, how are you perceived by other Malmo inhabitants when they get to know that you live in Rosengård?
8. Are there any positive/ negative things that you are facing because of the place of your living?
9. What do you think about your integration into the Swedish society?
10. What impact does living in Rosengård have on your life/ how you perceive yourself?
11. Is there anything you would like to add?

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE - in Swedish

1. Informantens bakgrund: namn, ålder, utbildningsnivå, sysselsättning, etnicitet, hur länge har du bott i Sverige, hur länge har du bott i Rosengård?
2. Hur kommer det sig att du bor i Rosengård?
3. Vad tycker du om Rosengård?
4. Vad har förändrats i ditt liv sedan du hade flyttat till Rosengård?
5. Skulle du vilja flytta från Rosengård? Förklara varför.
6. Tycker du att det finns skillnader mellan de som bor i Rosengård/ dig och de som bor i andra stadsdelar i Malmö?
7. Vad tycker du, hur uppfattas du som person av dem som bor i andra stadsdelar i Malmö, när de får veta att du bor i Rosengård?
8. Vilka positiva/ negativa saker har du stött på i samband med att du bor i Rosengård?
9. Vad tycker du om din integrering i det svenska samhället?
10. Vilken betydelse i ditt liv/ din självuppfattning har det att leva i Rosengård?
11. Vill du tillägga något?