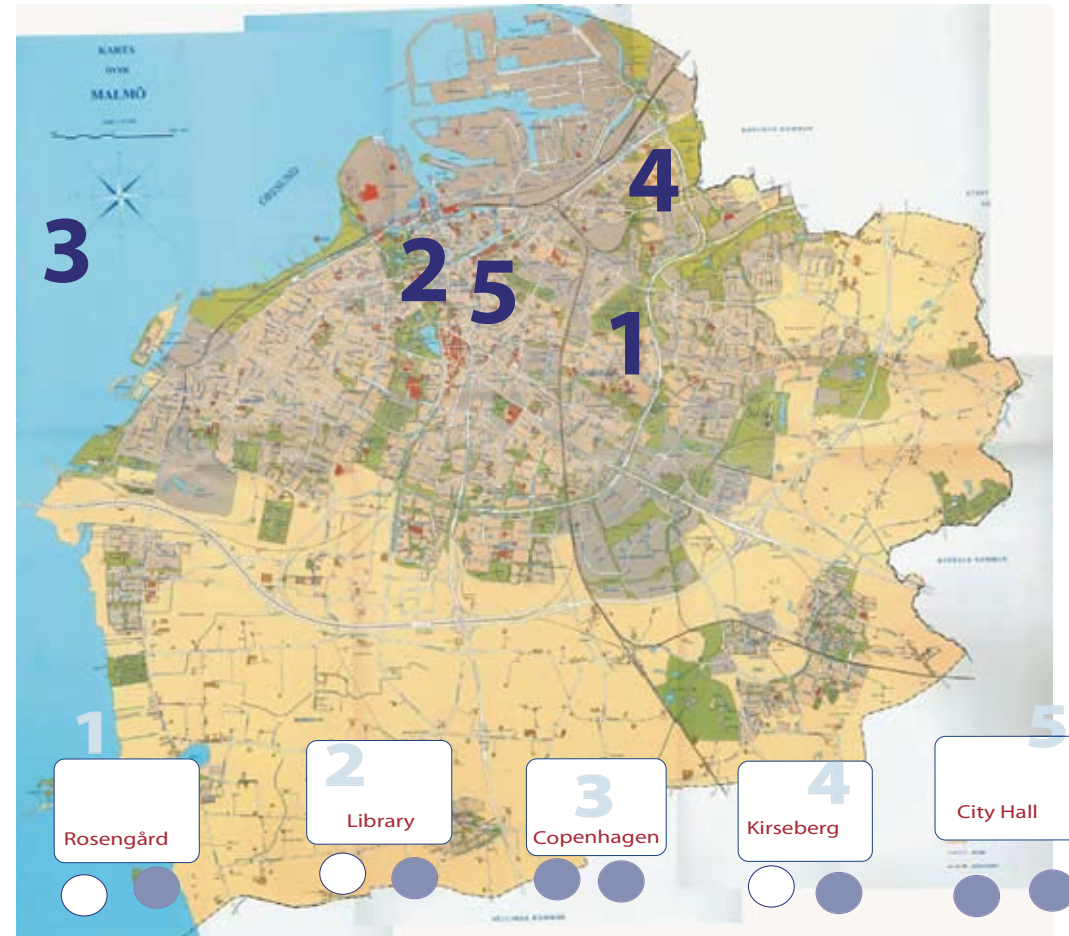


new horizon tour Workshop 6.9–1.11 2002

—reflecting on integration in Malmö



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Preface

Become a creative ideas consultant to business and industry was a one-year programme* offered by the adult educational association Folkuniversitetet i Malmö, Sweden in 2001/2002. The aim of the programme was to take advantage of the synergies that arise when the arts and the world of business meet, by offering further education for people in the arts so that they could become entrepreneurs and business consultants. The participants in the programme, including dancers, artists, musicians, actors, writers, lighting engineers and designers, set up their own projects.

One of the participants was Unni Gjertsen, an artist whose project was *Humaniora Shopping*, in which she offered individually-tailored workshops to companies wanting to give their personnel further training or to expand their business activities. Unni became acquainted with the company by studying its annual reports, its written vision, etc. and by having discussions with management.

The City of Malmö became interested in *Humaniora Shopping* when a new action programme and vision for integration was being planned, and Unni developed a special workshop for the city. She named it *New Horizon Tour*, and it was the first commission she carried out within the *Humaniora Shopping* project.

The New Horizon Tour Workshop was held in autumn 2002 for the City of Malmö Strategic Development Department. Together with the four participants, Unni spent five days over the course of the autumn at specially chosen venues. The group read and discussed texts by sociologists and philosophers, as well as a report on integration in Malmö produced in 1996, with a view to clarifying personal values related to integration.

Annelie Nilsson

* The programme was offered in 2001/2002 in collaboration by Folkuniversitetet in Malmö and the Danish Musicians' Union in Copenhagen (Dansk Musiker Forbund). The Swedish financing was provided by the Swedish ESF Council and the Employment Exchange in the Arts (Arbetsförmedlingen Kultur) in Malmö. The ESF Council is the administrative authority for the European Social Fund, the main EU financial tool for the promotion of employment and the stimulation of growth in the member states.

To prepare for the first day of the workshop the participants had studied an essay, *The Significance of Place*, written by Pierre Bourdieu. In the text he discusses how social status manifests itself in the organisation of physical space, and how what he calls social, cultural and economical capital, regulates the access to different spaces.

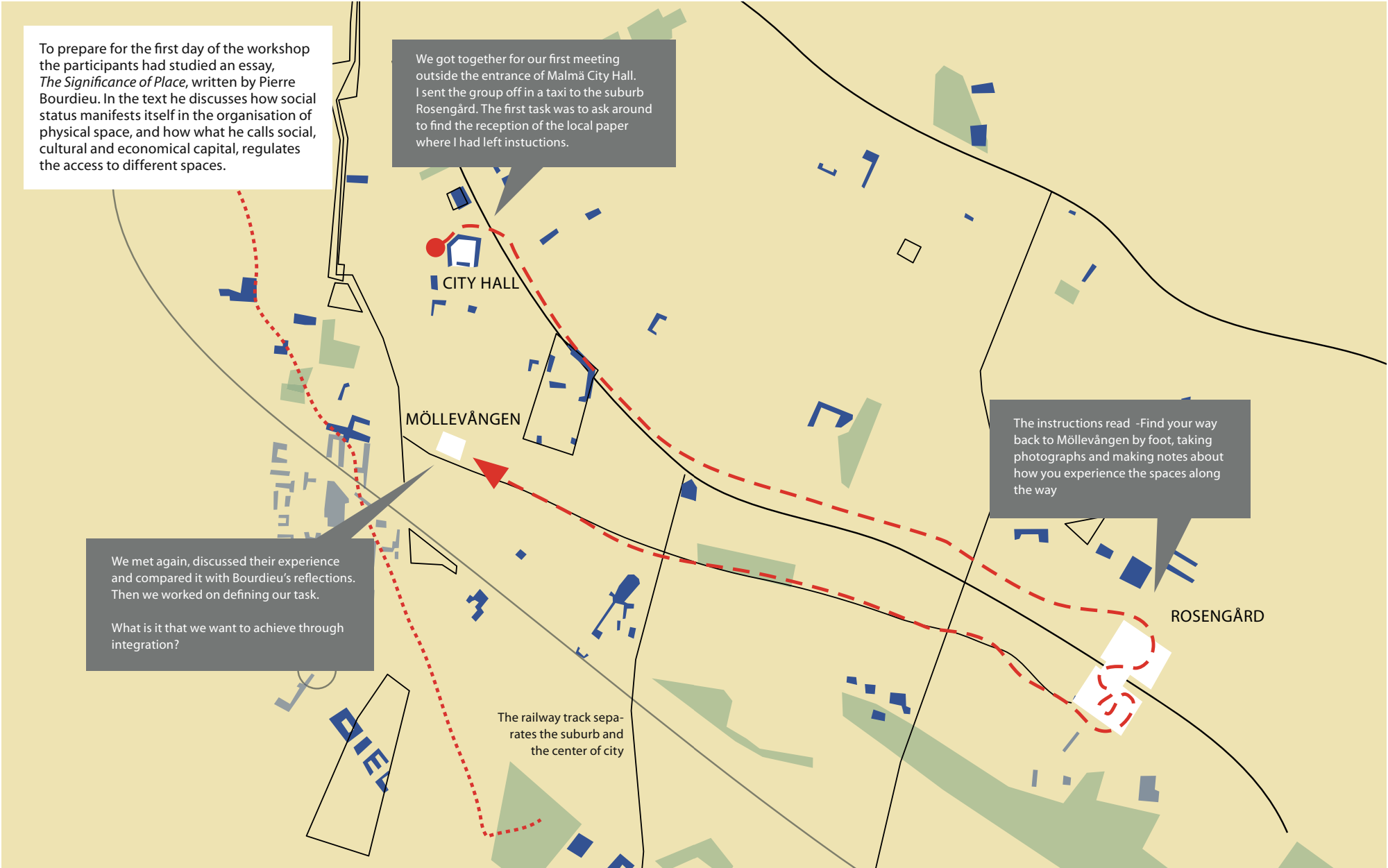
We got together for our first meeting outside the entrance of Malmö City Hall. I sent the group off in a taxi to the suburb Rosengård. The first task was to ask around to find the reception of the local paper where I had left instructions.

The instructions read -Find your way back to Möllevången by foot, taking photographs and making notes about how you experience the spaces along the way

We met again, discussed their experience and compared it with Bourdieu's reflections. Then we worked on defining our task.

What is it that we want to achieve through integration?

The railway track separates the suburb and the center of city



According to the participants, the goal to be achieved by integration was the possibility for everyone to live a life that is experienced as meaningful. Furthermore the most typical characteristic of a meaningful life was independence (meaning foremost the ability to support oneself, with a work-based income.)

I decided that the focus for the workshop would not be "the other" but our selves and trying to understand the cultural context in which independence and work had become such celebrated values.



Beer Street, engraving by W. Hogarth, 1751.
"For Hogarth bodies touching each other signalled social connection and orderliness..." *

It was important to see and experience how segregation has both physical and psychological aspects to it.

We could dwell with the physical aspects by experiencing the city with our bodies and analysing our paths of thoughts.

To examine psychological aspects, we needed to study some cultural critique. Could it be that our ideas of values are not universal? Could it even be so that we have a part in producing the same hierarchies and segregations that we try get rid of?.

* Quote from Richard Sennet's essay *The Power of the eye*, on experiencing the city through the senses.



What kind of interface, meeting point, common ground, both physical and mental, would it take to avert segregation in Malmö?

After playing bocce, we went to the library to discuss *Malmö – den sociala visionen*, a report that was a part of a large scale scenario that had been developed by the municipality of Malmö leading up to year 2000. Some interesting ideas had been suggested, to change the norm for defining what is social, and when do we have a social problem. The established definition of what is social had been pretty much synonymous with what is normal. The accepted norm for normal has been a person with an income based on work.

In global culture a lot of things are normal, and to have a job is not necessarily one of them. The report suggests a definition where normal is the same as social competence, meaning a person who is competent in relating to other people. The advantage of this approach is that it does not establish a receiver (in Swedish the word for employer translates work-giver, and worker can translate work-taker) which implicates a hierarchy. The traditional understanding may even prevent unemployed people from getting work since it indicates that the unemployed are already not-normal.



We went to Copenhagen and Ytre Nørrebro Kulturbyrå where the artist Åsa Sonjasdotter talked about the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt.

Arendt states that the basic human condition is dependence, as opposed to independence.

To accept that dependence is something everyone has in common may be a fruitful approach in the ambition to stimulate integration, avoiding the hierarchy that is introduced by saying: "You are dependent. I am independent."

Hannah Arendt divides Vita Activa into three categories

labour – work – action

It is through action (the third category) and speech that man becomes human. It is a process that takes shape when stepping out of the private into the public, to be amongst other human beings.

What we talked about in the group as meaningfulness, would probably have been filed under action, while we had placed it with labour or work, the categories of pure necessity and production.



Independence has been an important ideal in the construction of the modern self. Nina Björk interprets typical stories of modern man, *The Odyssey*, Goethe's *Faust* and Lars von Trier's film *Breaking the Waves* in her book *The Song of Sirens*. She shows that the story of modern identity is a story of a man who resists the irrational temptation of aspects that the woman is made to represent: nature, body, irrationality, pre-modern conditions. His journey goes out in the world, away from home, to become self in separation, doomed to permanent homesickness.

This is along the lines of Freud's understanding of self. We live in culture longing for nature. The theory of becoming self, in the process of leaving the symbiotic relation with the mother, also creates a hierarchy. The liberated man is on top, separated from woman, children and less liberated men (Odysseus gives earplugs to his rowers, so they would be spared from hearing the sirens' tempting song).

In *The Song of Sirens* Björk points at an alternative theory of construction of self, presenting the American psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin. Benjamin resists the observation of babies that the symbiosis theory is based on. She claims that the baby is connecting to the caretaker, woman or man, and that the relation is between two subjects. That the creation of self is characterized by connection and relations, rather than separation.

To define dependence first of all as a situation specific to a person who lacks work generating income (and therefore receives social welfare), and not as a general human condition, may stigmatise unemployment as shameful. Suggesting a hierarchy where employers are givers, and unemployed people are receivers. Such an understanding could possibly prevent integration rather than stimulate it, even maintain unemployment for those already unemployed.

To dwell on the moral aspects of work, I decided to bring in Max Weber's theory about the protestant ethics of capitalism.



The last day of the workshop the participants had read Homi Bhabha's text on how "the other" remains a mystery. If the relationship is based on a hierarchy where you are on top, "the other" will carry a mask reflecting your desires and hiding his/her own.

I revealed that I had received social welfare for a period leading up to when I held the workshop (and my life had not been meaningless.) It would have been impossible for me to let this mask fall earlier, or I would not have been taken seriously. This also reads, if we tell immigrants trying to survive in Sweden that work is what gives meaning to life, they will mirror this understanding of meaningfulness. Therefore a real dialogue about what is meaningful would not be likely.

Workshop program

The purpose of the workshop was to generate reflection on integration in Malmö, as a part of the preparation for developing future visions for the city.

6/9

I sent the workshop members in a taxi to the suburb Rosengård. They had to return by foot to Möllevången in central Malmö, while documenting the journey with a camera.

Discussion based on the experience from the walk, and Pierre Bourdieu's text *The Significance of Place*. We were based in a small public space run by the local community group Möllevångsgruppen.

Debating our terms. What is meant by integration? What is to be gained by it? What is meant by equality?

13/9

The participants were to play bocchia in Pildamsparken. While playing I asked them to reflect on some questions I had given them, concerning their own thoughts about other bocchia players in the park, and people in general who spend time in public places during the daytime.

Gathering at City Library. Discussing our valuations. To what extent are they part of classical modern ideals? What is the modern idea of self?

Homework: To choose a public place in the city, and write a small essay on its special qualities, concentrating on factual details rather than evaluating the place.

24/9

Travelling to Copenhagen and Ytre Nørrebro Kulturbyrå, where Åsa Sonjasdotter had prepared a talk for us on the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt.

Visiting local community projects in Ytre Nørrebro.

Trying to apply Arendt's conception of labour, work and action to our concerns.

11/10

Lunch in Kirseberg, a neighbourhood in the eastern part of Malmö.

Task: Each person to walk around the quarter by themselves, reflecting on how they see and are seen by the people they pass.*

City Hall. How have the differences in influence between men and woman been established and maintained in our society? I gave a lecture on feminism and queer theory in order to bring the attention to back to ourselves and to focus on how dichotomical thinking creates segregation.

1/11

Evaluating our process.

Suggesting adjustments to a plan for stimulating integration, to be decided on by The City Council in Malmö.

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*The walk was taken out of the schedule because of time pressure. I kept it in the program to illustrate the importance of spacial aspects which was kept alive in the discussions through the workshop.