Art and the Management of the Racial Archipelago: What is *Äga Rum* in the Million Homes Programmes in Malmö?

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Abstract

In 2015, the Swedish government allocated 130 million SEK to *Äga rum* ('Taking Place'): a three-year program of arts projects across Sweden to address low voter turnout in certain housing areas, but which, in effect, target the immigrants. We argue—through a short account of Foucault's take on the state, biopolitics, race, and governmentalisation—that this is an example of contemporary state racism, which is best understood as an inextricable part of biopolitical governmentalisation through forms of veridiction. We further analyse a specific governmental program (*Äga rum*) and a specific project (anonymised) within that program which takes place in two Miljonprogrammet housing areas in Malmö. Although both the program and the project have clear political agendas of empowerment and anti-exclusion, we argue that they nevertheless end up producing racial divisions and what we call a 'racial archipelago.'

Keywords

cultural policy, the racial state, biopolitics, governmentality, expediency of culture, border as method, participatory art projects

Introduction: Art and the Governmentalisation of the State

Today, art and culture are massively dependent on funding and subsidies from the state and other funding agencies. What this financial dependence means for the practices of the arts and for culture in general is an open question. It is easily observable, however, that heteronomies of various kinds are affecting the arts. It is also clearly observable that the funding agencies are charging art and culture with programmable, political outcomes on an unprecedented scale. These outcomes can be anything from bids to increase the integration of minority groups to advancing and accelerating the processes of digitisation.

Whereas it can be safely assumed that art and culture always have incurred the interest of political power and thus always have been susceptible to appropriations of various kinds (not to speak of the multiple dependencies incurred by capitalism and the development of the various art markets), the type of governmental management of the arts and culture that we see today is a surprisingly recent phenomenon. Even if there are precursors and false starts in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, cultural policy in the form we recognize today can be dated back to the 1950s, when governments in welfare states around Europe decided to incorporate art and culture into their general welfare programmes (Menger 2014; Urfalino 2005; Klockar Linder 2014; Dubois 2008; Dubois 2012). A similar development took place in the US, even if, as Charles C. Mark argues, the US government officially is prevented from adopting 'a policy to govern any social enterprise without enormous effort involving almost the modification of the Constitution' (Mark 1969: 9). Even if this is formally correct, as Toby Miller and George Yúdice point out, much of the cultural policy pioneered in the 1950s and 1960s in Europe had its political and intellectual origin in the US, which therefore can lay claim to have 'invented modern cultural policy in a Federal frame' (Miller and Yúdice 2002: 37).

The 'frame' in this context is the internal structure of the governmental activities where 'the federal establishment [is] providing leadership and guidance while local public and private resources provide the

bulk of the funds and administrative services' (Mark 1969: 11). In this scenario, the federal level is the 'imaginative leader and partner, and the central focus of national cultural needs' whereas the actual activities are funded and managed by local and regional governmental bodies and include a strong presence of non-governmental agencies (Mark 1969: 11). This is also the framework for cultural policy that UNESCO adopted in the late 1960s and disseminated to a number of countries through a series of proceedings and resolutions, and the development of a so-called 'clearing-house,' which oversaw the organisation of international summits, conferences and meetings, as well as the writing of at least 77 national reports between 1969 and 1987, which begin with and are developed from the report covering the US (Clavier and Kauppinen 2018).

The role of the state as a leader of the policy process and the main auditor of the outcomes of governmental activities is in keeping with the enormous transformation of the logic of government that have affected liberal societies in the twentieth century. As Nikolas Rose has argued, the liberal state is now governed through politico-technological assemblages, which 'have involved a reorganisation of the powers of the state' whereby many functions that 'had been the responsibilities of the formal apparatus of government' have been devolved to 'quasi–autonomous regulatory bodies,' associations of various kinds, including private corporations, which are 'regulated "at a distance" by the powerful mechanisms of audits, standards, benchmarks and budgets' (Rose 2007: 2-3). What holds these carefully constructed 'sociotechnical agencements' together are the ways in which the regulatory activity co-produces our contemporary reality, compelling our participation in various ways (Callon 2007: 319). Advanced liberal governmentalisation cannot work, as Rose puts it, without 'an increasing emphasis on the responsibility of individuals to manage their own affairs,' which in turn produces 'an ethic in which the maximisation of lifestyle, potential, health, and quality of life has become almost obligatory, and where negative judgments are directed toward those who will not, for whatever reason, adopt an active, informed, positive, and prudent relation to the future' (Rose 2007, 4, 25). In this sense, our current moment is *hyper*-participatory—it

imposes participation to the point where participation becomes both a private ethic and a governmental shibboleth. This development of *hyper*-participation recalls Jean Baudrillard's idea of an 'operational negativity' at the heart of contemporary politics, whereby the very insistence on a practice 'is metamorphosed into its inverse in order to be perpetuated in its purged form' (Baudrillard 1983: 36, 37).

So far, research on cultural policy has not really registered the complexities of this biopolitical dimension of the prudent, participatory emphasis of the governmental management of the arts. We argue that cultural policy needs to be seen as a form of biopolitics (cf. Yúdice 2004, 25, 30, 49), where *hyper*-participation becomes one of the principal technologies. Sometimes *hyper*-participation takes the form of governmental programmes that directly address the individual as a person on the margins, e.g. as a member of a minority group, or as someone who needs help to integrate into the majority society. In Sweden, the political technologies that mandate this type of inclusion often use the rubric of *utanförskap* (exclusion), producing an almost perfect example of Baudrillard's 'operational negativity,' whereby the very labelling of 'exclusion' becomes a direct way for the state to include the excluded into its grasp, so that they can participate in this new, governmentally purged form. It is in the light of this altered state (pun intended) that we need to approach the question of how art and culture have become objects of governmental reason and problematisation.

We will discuss how the emergence of the state is connected to rationality, how the discourse of race struggle becomes the discourse of a centralising state power, and how racism is manifested in modern biopolitical governmentality through what Foucault calls 'veridiction.' Veridiction is Foucault's way of describing the 'site' of references that tells 'the truth in relation to governmental practice' (Foucault 2008: 32). Veridiction, thus, identifies 'the set of rules enabling one to establish which statements in a given discourse can be described as true of false' (Foucault 2008: 37). Further, we locate Swedish cultural policy in this complex of governmentality and veridiction, and describe how one art program and one project takes part in producing and managing what we call a 'racial archipelago.' By using the term 'racial

archipelago,' we want to connect to Sandro Mezzandra and Brett Neilson's research on the 'proliferation of borders,' by suggesting that the art program and project we are analysing participates in a 'strange form of excision,' whereby certain housing areas are separated from 'ordinary normative arrangements' (208). This excision contains a strong element of 'biopolitical border working' (Mezzandra and Neilson 2013: 175), which is racialising in character but couched in a number of variables and distributions which in themselves are not racial, such as a culture of deficit, low voter turnout, low purchasing power, low trust, *et cetera*. Importantly, this 'islanding' of housing areas through special programmes and projects does not produce 'spaces of legal voidness, [but spaces and zones] saturated by competing norms and calculations that overlap and sometimes conflict in unpredictable but also negotiable ways' (Mezzandra and Neilson 2013: 208). It is this 'folded' and 'nested' governmentalisation which makes it hard to pinpoint and detect the governmental practices that make up the neo-racial state.

Governmentalisation I:
The State as a Reflected Practice of Intelligibility

David Theo Goldberg describes powerfully how race permeates the social space of the modern state:

> In states that are racially conceived, ordered, administered, and regulated, the racial state could be said to be everywhere. And simultaneously seen nowhere. It (invisibly) defines almost every relation, shapes all but every interaction, contours virtually all intercourse. It fashions not just the said and the sayable, the done and doable, possibilities and impermissibilities, but penetrates equally the scope and quality, content and character, of social silences and presumptions. The state in its racial reach and expression is thus at once super-visible in form and force and thoroughly invisible in its osmotic infusion into the everyday (Essed 1990), its penetration into common sense, its pervasion (not to mention perversion) of the warp and weave of the social fabric. (Goldberg 2002: 98)

How did race become the everywhere and nowhere of the modern State? How can it fashion 'the sayable and doable,' demarcate 'possibilities and impermissibilities,' control the 'social silences' of our societies through a balancing act that makes race both 'super-visible' and osmotically invisible? The answer we would like to propose runs along the lines of Goldberg's analysis but leans more heavily on Foucault than Goldberg does. We would like to press a bit harder Foucault's insistence on 'veridiction' as the principle of neoliberal governmentalisation to describe the osmotic capacities of race. Or we could put this differently, and perhaps more critically and provocatively by saying that the racial state should not be conceived of as a definitive or historical entity. Or perhaps more lucidly still: we need to understand racialisation (and the Racial State) not as a noun but as a verb, as a governmentalisation that weaves a world where governmental activity produces a state that takes the shape of a society with people counted and accounted for in racial terms. In this sense, governmental activity racialises, not because this is the intention of the state (nowadays, the intention is often the opposite), but because the knowledge that the governmentalising activity produces—and with which the state acts—creates divisions that racialise. To grasp the new modularity of governmentalisation and racialisation, we need to conceptualise our contemporary state of government through the several processes of rationalisation that have shaped the political landscape of today. This will put us in a quite different place than the early twentieth century conceptions of race and racism.

As Foucault has argued across several cases and domains, there has been a shift in attitude and mode of government, beginning in the sixteenth century but expanded in the eighteenth century with the invention of political economy and the introduction of statistics, which produced the odd effect that government became conscious of itself, i.e. a situation was produced whereby governmental practices needed to reckon with a type of knowledge which was not strictly speaking a knowledge about the object receiving governmental attention, but instead was (and is) a knowledge about government itself. Thus, Foucault writes in *The Birth of Biopolitics*, we can see

> the emergence of a particular type of rationality in governmental practice, a type of rationality that would enable the way of governing to be modeled on something called the state, which, in relation to this governmental practice, to this calculation [*calcul*] of governmental practice, plays the role both of a given—since one only governs a state that is already there, one only governs within the framework of a state—but also, at the same time, as an objective to be constructed. (Foucault 2008: 3-4)

For Foucault, this produces a radically different governmental milieu that is not possible to comprehend through, for example, the theories of sovereignty, or, for that matter, much of classical political science and sociology.[1] What is governed (the practice of government) must become part of a *ratio* which includes a new type of knowledge 'plac[ing] itself between a state presented as given and a state presented as having to be constructed and built' (Foucault 2008: 4).

Rather than thinking of the State (with a capital S) as an entity bounded by borders, protected by force and built by law, Foucault asks us to think of the state as an open-ended project, a site of numerous practices, each of which is designed to 'enable a given state to arrive at its maximum being in a considered, reasoned, and calculated way' (ibid.). In a compelling set of arguments, Foucault traces and re-inscribes the notion of *raison d'État* ('national interest') into a type of *ratio* which seems to foreclose the idea of a sovereign, whose 'decision in the true sense of the word,' as Carl Schmitt would have it, forms the basis of the state (Schmitt 2005: 6). Instead, we find ourselves confronted with an intriguing definition of the state: 'The state is at once that which exists, but which does not yet exist enough' (Foucault 2008: 4).

Contemporary governmental practices inherit from *raison d'État* the expansive and totalising framework of government, but add a subjectivising dimension to it. Governmentalisation, thus, becomes woven into a more general form of power, which, as Foucault explains in one of his last texts, 'The Subject and Power,' 'applies itself to immediate everyday life [and] categorizes the individual, marks him [sic] by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity,

imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects' (Foucault 1982: 781). It is this double function of simultaneous individualisation and *statification* which produces the qualitative difference between modern power structures and those that predate the formation of the modern state and which Foucault's concept of *governmentality* is set up to capture.

What is crucial with this transformation is the role that truth now begins to play in the activities of government, not so much in the sense that government seeks the truth and wants to do what this truth authorizes, but in the sense that all governmental activities now establish 'a particular regime of truth which is a characteristic feature of what could be called the age of politics and the basic apparatus of which is in fact still the same today' (Foucault 2008: 17-18). This 'truth,' Foucault writes in *Territory, Security, Population*, is manifested at first in 'knowledge of the state in its different elements, dimensions, and the factors of its strength, which was called, precisely, 'statistics,' meaning science of the state' (Foucault 2007: 100-101), but which through the development of political economy also encompasses the full arsenal of knowledge produced by the social sciences.

Governmentalisation II: Truth and the Invention of Race

How does race and racialisation fit into this history of the progressive governmentalisation of the modern state? To answer that question, we need to briefly look at how the question of truth first emerges as a question of race, but also understand how this notion of truth and race today is articulated within the economy of simultaneous statificitation and individualisation, which characterizes our contemporary, neoliberal moment.

Foucault's most sustained discussion of race takes place in *'Society Must be Defended,'* and starts by tracking the fundamental change in the late Middle Ages where 'the State acquired a monopoly on war' (Foucault 2003: 48). The 'day-to-day warfare' or ''private warfare'' was eradicated, and war was pushed to the 'outer limits' of the state (ibid). For Foucault, this is the point when politics emerges as an extension

of war, and not, as Clausewitz's aphorism has it, war as 'a continuation of political commerce, a carrying out of the same by other means' (Clausewitz qtd. in Foucault 2003: 21, fn 9). The actual war that is, at times, conducted at the borders of the state, is also conducted, in the name of society, inside the state—*all the time.* It is in this context that the idea and the word 'race' first 'designates a certain historico-political divide' (Foucault 2003: 77), where the state becomes 'an instrument that one race uses against another' (Foucault 2003: 81). This race war produces a specific idea about society: 'The war that is going beneath order and peace, the war that undermines our society and divides it in a binary mode is, basically, a race war [where the] social body is basically articulated around two races' (Foucault 2003: 59-60). Race, for Foucault, then, is a way to articulate how the mechanisms of the state operates on what becomes possible to articulate as 'society,' because for him the state is not primarily a guarantor of security and peace inside its borders (as it is for Hobbes), but a collection of politico-technical apparatuses which one can mobilise to conduct war on another race (another group of people making claims for power) and call it politics. This is basically what Foucault understands by the phrase 'society must be defended.'

Foucault presents the emergence of race as a new martial power of knowledge and truth, and not of violence and arms. The ones producing this discourse are 'people with dust in their eyes and dust on their fingers' (Foucault 2003: 50). For Foucault, it is the dust borne by books and archives that produces the modern state of a permanent war, a society that always needs to be defended against its internal enemies. It begins as an oppositional discourse of the nobility against the sovereign, and ends up defining and normalising the modern state:

> The discourse of race struggle [...] will become the discourse of a centred, centralised, and centralising power. It will become the discourse of a battle that has to be waged not between races, but by a race that is portrayed as the one true race, the race that holds power and is entitled to define the norm, and against those who deviate from that norm, against those who pose a threat to the biological heritage. At this point, we have

> all those biological-racist discourses of degeneracy, but also
> all those institutions within the social body which make the
> discourse of race struggle function as a principle of exclusion
> and segregation and, ultimately, as a way of normalising society.
> (Foucault 2003: 57)

Foucault's delineation of race struggle ends up in 'a State racism: a
racism that society will direct against itself, against its own elements
and its own products. This is the internal racism of permanent
purification, and it will become one of the basic dimensions of social
normalisation' (Foucault 2003: 57). We find here 'the binary schema
that divided society into two' and articulated this division 'with national
phenomena such as language, country of origin, ancestral customs,
the density of a common past, the existence of an archaic right, and
the rediscovery of old laws' (Foucault 2003: 110).

The delineation of dependency between state and race,
governmentalisation and racialisation we have presented above is
captured nicely by Kim Su Rasmussen: 'Instead of the common idea
that racism, fundamentally, is a form of irrational prejudice, social
discrimination, or political ideology, Foucault proposes to rethink
racism as a form of biopolitical government that impinges on
individuals in their most basic relationship to themselves and others'
(Su Rasmussen 2011: 35). This is also Alana Lentin's focus in a series of
articles and books. She argues that anti-racism often misconstrues the
relationship between the notion of race and the state, thereby failing
'to historicize the growth of racism as a political idea used by states,
for example, under the conditions of colonialism, in the treatment of
the working classes, the development of modern political antisemitism
and the regulation of European-bound immigration' (Lentin 2004:
428). Although anti-racism is a multifaceted phenomenon, it is
nevertheless the case that the most dominant versions of anti-
racism have constructed 'racism as a matter of individual prejudicial
attitudes and lack of education,' a position which in turn contributes to
'obscuring the irrefutable reciprocity between racism and the modern
nation-state (Lentin 2004: 438, 441). Just to underline: racialisation
and racism need to be understood as political technologies which once

relied on discourses of phenotypical distinctions, but which today have migrated into number of sometimes competing management regimes which uphold the racial archipelago through different but combinable logics of excision.

If racism is part and parcel of modern biopolitical governmentality, we must seriously question the effectiveness of current state-sponsored 'anti-racist strategies such as popular education, economic redistribution, or the granting of particular rights to ethnic minorities,' and instead pay attention to governmental 'neo-racism,' which does not operate along the biological lines of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of discriminating against undesirable groups, but rather performs a '"supplementary" function' enabling it to 'intervene directly in a number of issues where the market is deemed to be insufficient' (Su Rasmussen 2011: 47). It is precisely in the light of the targeting of specific issues, with specific forms of knowledge that establish significant divisions, at the same time as addressing the individuals' basic relationship to themselves and others that we understand the modern state's engagement with art and culture to work along racial lines.

In this sense, State racism functions on two simultaneous axes: on one axis, as Foucault would have it, 'an axis based upon a fundamental and permanent irrationality, a crude and naked irrationality, but which proclaims the truth' (what Barack Obama termed 'a crude sort of nationalism' following Brexit and the 2016 US presidential elections) and another axis, 'higher up,' which is able to uphold 'a fragile rationality, a transitory rationality which is always compromised and bound up with illusion' (Eilperin and Jaffe: 2016; Foucault 2003: 55). This latter type of fragile rationality is where we understand cultural policy to come in. It is this simultaneous and combinatory logics of irrationality and rationality, truth and illusion, which lies at the heart of contemporary State racism. It is also what makes State racism so profoundly effective. Alana Lentin and Gavan Titley's list of contemporary neoliberal racial grievances—'integration is an issue, and […] it is of pressing importance to the now and future nation-state,' because the non-integrated immigrant poses a threat to 'free-speech,' 'democratic values,' 'the glue of shared history,' 'tradition,' and is

constructed so that 'the problem of integration [can be] diagnosed as one of compatibility with Western societies and democracies' (Lentin and Titley 2011: 193-194)—may be composed of truth claims that are brutally irrational and contradictory, yet they are deeply felt at the level of the individual, where they acquire an objectivising function, irrespective on which side of the racial boundary one finds oneself. The objectivisation is produced precisely because its truths are constituted around a set of '"dividing practices." The subject is either divided inside himself [sic] or divided from others. This process objectivises him' (Foucault 1982: 777-778). This is, precisely, the logic of excision which commands contemporary biopolitical governmentality.

Governmentalisation III:
Race and the Expediency *of* Cultural Policy Action: *Äga rum*

In 2016, the Swedish Ministry of Culture passed a regulation which initiated a three-year cultural funding worth 130 million SEK (about 13 million euros) for 'cultural activities in certain housing areas [*bostadsområden*]' (SFS 2016: 406)[2]. The responsibility of handling the funds was trusted jointly to two government art agencies: The Swedish Arts Council (about 100 million SEK) and Public Art Agency Sweden (about 30 million SEK), who were instructed to cooperate with the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, municipal actors, and the national theatre association *Riksteatern* (ibid). The project was titled *Äga rum* (Taking place), which the Swedish Art Agency runs under the name *Kreativa platser* (Creative Places), and Public Art Agency Sweden under the name *Konst händer* (Art is Happening). Connected to *Äga rum*, the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation passed a regulation of funding for the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning to support development of outside environments in areas of low purchasing power (*låg köpkraft*) to stimulate community building by constructing, for example, 'meeting places for culture' and 'building-related art,' and they were instructed to consult both art agencies in the process (SFS 2016: 398).

Äga rum, then, is clearly not simply or exclusively an art project, but involves considerable sections of the society, and has multiple agendas. Govermentalisation here acts on an iceberg of data and knowledge, which, as Miller and Rose put it, act as '"intellectual technologies" that render aspects of existence amenable to inscription and calculation' (Miller and Rose 2008: 21). These inscriptions and calculations are gathered and politicised in phrases such as 'certain housing areas' and 'low purchasing power,' which are used to mobilise an 'assemblage of loose and mobile networks that can bring persons, organisations and objectives into alignment' around thus created 'objects of politics' amenable to coordinated action (Miller and Rose 2008: 21-22). The new situation for the publicly funded arts and culture is precisely that of being part of this high level of coordinated governmental action, which is not immediately apparent on the level of the programmes and projects put in action. George Yúdice argues that this situation forms a 'new epistemic conjuncture' for cultural policy and programming, supplanting previous understandings of culture as 'canons of artistic excellence' or foundations for identity with an understanding of culture as a resource that can be called upon 'to resolve a range of problems *for* community' (Yúdicie 2004: 23, 25). Art and culture thus become 'expedient,' i.e. in their very essence, government conceives them as remedies for social ills—the deficits of, e.g. low purchasing power, are mirrored as cultural deficits, for which there now is an artistic solution. What happens in the process is something almost contradistinctive to Raymond Williams's famous slogan 'culture is ordinary' (Williams 1989: 4). Instead of being what surrounds us, this type of administered culture arrives at its site with an agenda, a programme, a budget, a set of protocols, toolboxes for auditing outcomes, and metrologies with which to measure its effects. There is nothing 'ordinary' here; it is all down to a purged version of culture and art, provisioned with the kind of 'operational negativity' that will allow for its 'purged' form to emerge.

The government task to the Swedish Arts Council was to prepare 'cultural activities in certain housing areas' (Ku2015/01872/KI), whereas the task to Public Art Agency Sweden was to prepare 'cultural activities in certain housing areas with a focus on artistic performance

[*gestaltning*]' (Ku2015/01873/KI)[3]. Both tasks emphasise the primary commitment to the value of participation in and responsibility for [*delaktighet*] democracy, which is why the areas of low voter turnout are targeted. The expressed idea in the tasks is to 'create knowledge about forms for compassion/sympathy and participation [*deltagande*], democratic participation/responsibility [*delaktighet*] and influence in the arenas of culture and even in other contexts'[4]. At the bottom of the initiative and the tasks to both agencies is the belief that culture and art, and more specifically, access to and participation in culture and art, are an important part of building a sustainable society, a Sweden that 'holds together' (Ku2015/01872/KI).

The connection between low purchasing power, low voter turnout, and cultural participation is not articulated in the documents. However, a constant concern is that these projects should produce knowledge about *how* the participants in the projects can be nudged to be more actively involved in the arts, and by extension, in Swedish society. Such an involvement is understood to increase integration. Although the legal documents latch onto the low voter turnout as a factor for deciding where the funding is given, we learned during an interview with the officials from the Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis (who, at the time of writing, are reviewing *Äga rum*) that in the practice of the Swedish Arts Council, *Äga rum* was from the start seen as 'an idea about certain housing areas,' rather than about voter turnout (Respondent 1 2017, personal communication, 27 November)[5]. Surprisingly, the decision to target these areas was based on another statistical tool, the SAMS-subdivision (Small Areas for Market Statistics) of Sweden into close to 9000 discrete zones. This subdivision of Sweden has been used for a number of studies, most of which have looked at 'neighbourhood effects,' such as the identification of areas of exclusion, the patterns of movements between neighbourhoods, educational segregation, etc. (Amcoff 2012: 94). In the end, the Swedish Arts Council decided not to publish the data on which they based the targeting of these areas, because they did not want to publish 'yet another map of exclusion' (Interview 2017/11/27). Ironically, and perhaps even tragically, this knowing omission of how the government agency arrives at its conclusion about who to target illustrates the 'simultaneous axes of

State racism' described by Foucault: in the background, hidden behind the governmental problematisations of the inhabitants of the million homes programmes is a 'a crude and naked irrationality' proclaiming a truth about immigrants for which the act of withholding the SAMS map works as a fragile and transitory rationality, which covers up the crude truths of the statistical aggregations by an act of illusion, a sleight-of-hand.

The original impetus of the whole project idea began as an import from Britain (Creative People and Places), where the issue of underrepresentation is explicitly related to the racial and ethnic makeup of the people leading and participating in culture and art. In the case of the Arts Council England, no conjuring tricks are necessary, as the question of accessibility to art and culture already is defined as an issue of race. As the Director of Diversity for Arts Council England made clear in a keynote he gave to local and regional policymakers, consultants, artists and entrepreneurs in Malmö, he did not understand how the work to minimise the detrimental effects of racism and other types of discrimination could be challenged without the Swedish government actively seeking to quantify race in relation to the arts, questioning the Swedish governments reluctance to gather racial data (Hussain, public lecture 2017/12/13). Arguably, the focus on the low voter turnout hides the racial and ethnic dimension at the heart of the project, and may be understood as a pragmatic re-inscription of the questions of race. In this specific context, low voter turnout combined with low purchasing power, we suggest, becomes a Swedish, governmental substitute for race. Yet, to go in the direction of Hussain's suggestion would be to make race an even more tangible object: it would be a way for the state to turn racial division into a fact on the ground.

To sum up, *Äga rum* is an art program, targeting a particular population–*immigrants*–a particular problem–*the types of exclusion made available in the SAMS statistics*–in particular locations–*million program housing areas*, also made available by SAMS data. If we look at the areas that received *Äga rum* funding, we see that funding is given almost exclusively to urban areas that can be characterised as 'super-diverse,' i.e. areas marked by 'differential immigration statuses

and their concomitant entitlements and restrictions of rights, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents' (Vertovec 2007: 1025). Out of the 24 projects run by the Swedish Arts Council and 15 projects run by Public Art Agency Sweden, only five are not placed in the million programmes of the biggest cities of Sweden[6]. Yet, as Statistics Sweden's report on voting *Vilka valde att välja?: Deltagandet i valen 2014 [Who chose to choose?: Voter turnout in the 2014 elections]* makes clear, low voter turnout is not an exclusively urban, nor an exclusively 'super-diverse' area phenomenon (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2015)[7]. What is established as a matter of concern and made visible in analyses of statistics about the state (deficit of democracy in differences in voter turnout and low purchasing power) takes on a racial dimension of targeting primarily an immigrant population perceived to embody that deficit. Low voter turnout and low purchasing power thus produce both a high visibility (statistics) and an alarming invisibility (non-participation in democratic practices). This particular configuration of immigrant visibility and invisibility has created an understanding which is called 'the deficit model' (Daboo 2017: 4; Voluntary Arts 2016: 13). 'The deficit model' is the presentation of statistics suggesting that minority communities engage in the arts and other cultural activities to a lesser extent than the majority population, which in turn is believed to foster other social ills—particularly a widespread deficiency of social cohesion. So, the Swedish model of deficit starts from the social ill and proposes art as the remedy (Swedish expediency of culture); whereas the British model starts with the artistic deficit and proposes art as a remedy to stop the spread of concomitant social deficits (British expediency of culture). These models are not in opposition, yet they reveal an interesting divergence in approaches.

Governmentalisation IV: Race and the Expediency of Cultural Policy *in* Action

We have followed one of the projects selected for *Äga rum* funding in Malmö over a period of two years (2017–2018). The million programme housing area in which the project is located is in the city development

plans for the area described as having high unemployment, bad school results, and spaces experienced as unsafe. In the police report on 'Precarious Neighbourhoods: Social Order, Criminal Structure and Challenges for the Police,' the area is represented as a *category two area*, and directly at risk of becoming an 'especially precarious area' (category one) characterised by 'systematic threats and acts of violence against witnesses, plaintiffs and informants,' and where it is 'almost impossible for the police to do their job' (Nationella operativa avdelningen 2017: 10). Furthermore, *the category one* areas are characterized by four specific tendencies: 'the development of a parallel society,' 'fundamentalist extremism,' 'persons travelling to fight in foreign conflicts' and 'high concentration of criminals' (Nationella operativa avdelningen 2017: 10). What emerges is an image about precarity based on a number of statistical devices, some of which are relatively objective (unemployment, school results, voting turnout, receivers of social security benefits), some based on telephone polls and questionnaire surveys regarding opinions and attitudes (Nationella Trygghetsundersökningen NTU 2007–2018), and finally, the knowledge gathered by the method of Problem-Oriented Policing (POP), which identifies crimes and problems not visible in the statistics, e.g. unreported drugs sales and damage to property. It is also through POP that the connection between gangs, drugs and terrorism is made.

Despite, or because of, this 'category two' status that the area has, the project manager of the *Äga rum* project pointed out that the area is often 'forgotten' in discussions of the city's problems, since most of the political and media attention goes to the category one area of Rosengård (Respondent 2 2017, personal communication, 2 February). While these categories identify problem areas, in the current cultural policy context they also signal priority areas where funding for cultural action is directed. In this sense, category one becomes a currency in the economy of cultural policy action. The logic of excision established by Mezzandra and Neilsson is at work here: what looks like a zone of exception becomes a zone 'saturated by competing norms and calculations.' Calculations of crime and measurements of insecurity are combined with negotiations for art project funding, contributing to the establishment of particular islands in the racial archipelago.

In the Swedish Arts Council *Äga rum* page the project is described as follows:

> [The project] is aimed at establishing a platform for creating and promoting culture which represents the residents with their own stories as the focal point. The project will release the culture and creativity within the local residents, improve their self-confidence and participation, and encourage them to have the courage and desire to take their place on the cultural stage. (Kulturrådet 2017)

The idea for the project came from a project manager working from the local youth recreation centre. The project manager then brought in a Malmö community theatre group to be the artistic leader in the project, a Malmö music company/band who had worked with the centre many times earlier, and a large council owned housing company to meet the requirements of having local, municipal, public, and private enterprise partners in the call for funding (Respondent 3 2017, personal communication, 7 February).

The youth recreation centre has recently refocused to work on 'pre-emptive social work,' which in Swedish is *socialt förebyggande* (we note in passing that *socialt förebyggande* is a powerful Swedish governmental idiom, see e.g. SOU 2018: 32) to capture the idea that the centre is not exclusively working with youth and to emphasise that they work pre-emptively on social problems. The centre can be described as a particularly modern social development 'hub' in that it employs project managers, political scientists, psychologists, conflict resolution specialists, behaviour scientists, economists, public relations officers and graphic designers to generate ideas and develop socially beneficial projects (Youth Recreation Centre Web Page, anonymised). An obvious expertise missing from the list is artists. The centre works with problems such as gambling addictions, violent extremism and radicalisation, exit programmes from gangs and criminal lifestyles, mentoring programmes, and equality and empowerment projects. A lot of this work is still focused on the youth.

In a visit to the centre, we find that the building where it is placed is in the same complex as the local primary and secondary school, and the centre has ample rooms for activities on two levels. We interviewed Respondent 3, although other people are present, too. The ground level is dominated by boys, Respondent 3 tells us, sometimes up to 25 years old, and the atmosphere can get quite tough when criminals and drugs are thrown into the mixture of people. To make sure that girls are not turned away by the tough atmosphere, the centre created a 'girls only' space in the basement, which the girls themselves painted and decorated (Respondent 3 2017, personal communication, 7 February). Most of the preparatory work of the project took place in this space, although most activities and performances were planned to take place in the central open areas of the area.

In interviews with Respondent 4, we discover that once the project got funding, a new project manager was employed to run the project. The project manager is not from the area but grew up in the neighbouring city and has an art background: he felt that he had the same kind of background as the people from the area, which he considered vital for a successful running of a project in the area (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 19 April). One has to know the language the people in the area use, and in practice the project manager is the one who has to 'interpret the intentions of the Swedish Arts Council' to form a project (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 19 April). According to the project manager, the language of the Swedish Arts Council is complicated (with its focus on democracy, etc.) and would definitely not work with the people from the area (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 2 October). So, the project manager has to strike a balance between the ideas of culture propagated by the Arts Council and the ideas of culture that the local 'boys' have (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 2 October), which means that the project manager cannot work with the 'usual cultural parameters' (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 19 April). The area has a 'hard climate' for culture; 'culture has no status,' so the project manager needs to make sure people 'feel represented,' they 'need identification,' a 'terminology' and 'language' that they can recognise (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 19 April).

As the project promised to promote 'culture which represents the residents' and to have 'their own stories as the focal point,' the project begins by leafletting the residents, aided by the council housing company—a staggering 12,000 leaflets containing an invitation in Albanian, Arabic, English and Swedish for a first meeting are delivered to mailboxes—asking the residents to submit their stories (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 2 October). However, people do not send their stories, and it becomes clear that people will not simply come to the project; the project needs to go and meet the people. A new strategy to conduct in-depth interviews with the residents is initiated, together with organising workshops on dance, singing, beats and songwriting, film, and acting to stimulate culture in the area, and recruit those who might be eager to continue and be part of the project (Respondent 4 2017, personal communication, 2 October). The project's social media pages also continue to encourage people to send in 'real stories or imaginary tales' (The Project Web Page, Anonymised).

The first information meeting about the project for interested residents took place in the centre on 13 May 2017. Four people who had worked to initiate the project, two people from the community theatre and four others were present: one runs a recreation centre in a neighbouring city area, one works for a Malmö art festival, an artist with roots in South America, and one interested resident from the area. The project manager was entirely right in his analysis of the status of culture in the area; it simply is difficult to engage people with cultural projects, no matter how good and promising the intentions. The ones who turned up for the meeting were people already working with culture. Later when the workshops got under way, more young people got involved in them. When we visited a workshop on film later in the autumn of 2017 (Respondent 5 2017, personal communication, 17 October), we learned that the song workshop had been cancelled due to lack of interest, but the film workshop had about five participants.

The film workshop was run by a well-known Swedish filmmaker. He said that he is running the workshop because he wants to; he does not need the money. He came to Sweden as a refugee himself, and 'wants to give back' to the people, 'a bit like the American way' (Respondent 5 2017, personal communication, 17 October). He himself lives in

the affluent Western Harbour area of Malmö. He was hired to run 13 workshops, but the progress was slow, it was difficult to film in the dark (the workshops took place in the evening 18:30-20:30), and he did not expect the films to be ready by the end of the workshops: the workshop members would have to edit the films themselves in the editing facilities at the centre. He further said that in some ways it would have been better to arrange the workshop in the city centre, where there would have been 'more interest, more people attending' (Respondent 5 2017, personal communication, 17 October). The area he said, 'has its limitations,' but he added that he was quite happy to work with five people, which was in many ways an ideal number, as they worked from scratch, and needed individual attention (Respondent 5 2017, personal communication, 17 October).

The filmmaker came across, above all, as a filmmaker. Although he gave his refugee past as a reason for doing the 'giving back' work, he seemed focused on giving back a skill, not representation of local interests or examples of identification. In fact, he seemed slightly annoyed with the topics that the members of the workshop were working on. People 'just want to work on their situation as if it is unique,' he said, 'but is not, and that is then not interesting (Respondent 5 2017, personal communication, 17 October). For him, the interests stemming from local concerns, then, were not really relevant.

During the same visit, before we could speak with the filmmaker, we had an informal chat with another informant on the site, Respondent 6, who lives in the area. He had a number of reservations about the approach of the project. The posters for the workshops are wrong, he thinks: You do not get the youth interested by placing posters around: you need to meet them in person, talk with them (Respondent 6 2017, personal communication, 17 October). The posters are also wrong in other ways, he continues: they highlight the workshop leader names, but these mean nothing to the youth in the area. The posters should announce an idea, and let the kids develop ideas, not make it look like they are led (Respondent 6 2017, personal communication, 17 October). The mere idea of putting up posters, and the fact that information is delivered in paper format to flats in the area is wrong: nobody reads these papers and posters. You cannot get people involved like that.

Instead, you should have a competition, he says, 'why would they care about doing a film? But if you offer a prize of some kind, showing the film here or there, a little exposure, some merit, that could be something. There has to be a prize of some kind' (Respondent 6 2017, personal communication, 17 October).

Even though the Arts Council continuously emphasises the local dimension of *Äga rum* projects, and even though the project managers claim the status of 'locals,' there is a definite disconnect between the frame of the governmental activities and the local residents who are the supposed beneficiaries of the cultural policy action. This is an example of what we previously called '*hyper*-participation,' where access to culture becomes metamorphosed into its inverse, celebrated in sanitised or 'purged' rituals of participation. This expedient version of culture is simply not practiced locally. This becomes even more evident when Respondent 6 talks about what the locals refer to as culture: for them it is 'meatballs and Lebanese food at home,' maybe breakdancing, but also religion. He says that there is a value clash; at home the youth have different values than out here, for example the idea of dancing is not easily accepted, it is not easy (Respondent 6 2017, personal communication, 17 October). *Äga rum* seems to take for granted a certain continuum between the private life worlds of the locals and the public conceptions of culture and art, which Respondent 6 questions. For him, there is a huge distance between what counts as culture in the area, and what counts as culture in governmental programmes and metrologies. In this sense, the project manager is straddling an almost impossible series of divides.

What may appear as a personal problem for the project manager is, however, indicative of the logic of excision at the heart of contemporary state racism. The targeting of cultural policy action into zones of measurable deficits (low voter turnout, low purchasing power, high unemployment rate) multiplies and highlights the potential deficits in the zones. The population is divided through the competing calculations deployed: in this case the veridictions produced by multivariate analysis of national voting statistics, the sociology and political science of known behaviour conducive to sustaining democracy, the econometrics of purchasing power, and the participatory practice

of engaging people to tell their stories and express their identities. While none of these measurements are racialising in themselves, their combination inevitably brightens the boundaries between the zones and the rest of the society. What emerges from the programme and the project is a racialised and racialising archipelago of cultural and art action, which operates on the logic of *the border as its method*.

Conclusion: Art, 'Freedom Experts,' and the Racial Archipelago of the 21st century

According to Foucault, state racism is not a repressive set of governmental actions aimed at purging the state of undesirable elements, but a set of productive actions geared towards *defending* the society through social normalisation. Foucault's examples from *'Society must be Defended'* end in the biological racism of the early twentieth century. However, as Nikolas Rose points out, the biopolitics of advanced liberal societies produce an 'ethic' which centres around ideas about 'quality of life'— access to and the right to participate in culture and art are among the central measures with which states are increasingly defining 'quality of life.' Even if the participatory and elevatory ambitions of the project are not realised, the project is still successful as a knowledge project about the management of exclusion (*utanförskap*). In this sense, the project works to confirm the 'culture of deficit' made available by the statistics and curate, so to speak, the excision of the targeted population. The expediency of culture, in this case, becomes rather complicated: on the one hand, the integration of the immigrant is the goal, yet that integration is not available as an outcome of the art projects. What remains is the brightened boundary of the culture of deficit—a twenty-first century version of state racism.

Äga rum has also another, less statistical, but still racialising dimension which is suggestive of the proliferation of the border as a method of the state. In Goldberg's terms, an assumption of a 'conserving social sameness,' 'a fabrication of origins, of common heritage' produces a 'naturalised commonality' (Goldberg and Giroux 2014: 31-32). By placing art projects (described as participatory bottom-up art projects, yet defined by the state and evaluated

through governmental agencies, budgets, and metrologies) in these urban problem areas, it is assumed that immigrants are in need of an expression of their own not currently available to them. The diversity of their backgrounds and experiences, once given expression as art, produce something like a social bond with the Swedish society and the housing area in which they live, and by extension, nudge them to partake in the egalitarian Swedish democratic practice, indexed by high voter turnout and high purchasing power, but obviously including a whole barrage of behaviours and values not accounted for by voter turnout and consumer strength. Although these projects aim to allow people in the million programme housing areas to express their own cultural needs, the primary target of the projects is, arguably, to learn what forms of intervention can activate immigrants to cooperate and participate in civil society. What starts out as 'participatory art' with 'local' artists, municipal and civil actors, and people living in million programme housing areas, is joined at the hip with a knowledge project of social control that has clear racial dimensions. This, we think, is a good example of what Goldberg means by race penetrating 'into common sense, its pervasion (not to mention perversion) of the warp and weave of the social fabric.'

Further, we would argue, precisely because the projects are arts projects, they are excellent examples of practices, which—as Nikolas Rose puts it, 'govern[…] *through* freedom' (Rose 2004: 72). These art projects code a particular idea of freedom, where freedom 'is seen as autonomy, the capacity to realise one's desires in one's secular life, to fulfil one's potential through one's own endeavours, to determine the course of one's own existence through acts of choice' (Rose 2004: 84). The artists in the projects become what we might call 'freedom experts,' whose expertise does not operate, as Rose argues, 'through social planning, paternalism and bureaucracy, but […] through transforming the ways in which individuals come to think of themselves, through inculcating desires for self-development that expertise itself can guide' (Rose 2004: 88). Further, the new experts are needed to precisely operate upon 'the territory of the marginalised,' upon those dark spots of concern and danger that governmental knowledge assiduously produces, and where they work in 'para-governmental

agencies—charities, voluntary organisations supported by grants and foundations' (Rose 2004: 89). In *Äga rum*, the grants are coming from the very centre of government, but of course these grants expect cooperation with several local institutions, which also include para-governmental agencies.

The 'neo-racism' of *Äga rum* does not simply operate along biological/ethnic/cultural lines to identify and create groups to be held in check. Rather, it creates divisions along the lines of biopolitical governmental veridictions, where ideas of national unity, immigration, population, and territory mix to produce specific supplementary governmental actions. It is typically supplementary in that 1) a direct socio-political task is an example of contentious heteronomy for the arts, and 2) it is a part of much larger alignment and coordination of governmental action kept out of focus in the programme itself. Further, the production of individualised freedom through participation in the art projects is an essential part of the new racialised archipelago of cultural policy action, and an example of how a racial archipelago may be produced, managed and sustained through a complex proliferation of borders and boundaries.

Endnotes

[1] Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose emphasize this point in *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life*, claiming that '[o]ne of the virtues of the approach to governmentality […] has been further to problematise the forms of political reason […], to demonstrate the debility of the language that has captivated political philosophy and sociology for over a century, with its constitutive oppositions of state/civil society, domination/emancipation, public/private, and the like' (Miller and Rose 2008: 199).

[2] Whenever possible, we use available translations from the government agencies' own publications and websites. Other translations are our own.

[3] The Swedish Arts Council refers to these areas as the Million Programme areas ('Miljonprogrammen') and the Public Art Agency Sweden translates this into English as 'late modernist dwelling area, built 1965-1974' (Public Art Agency Sweden). For a history of the programmes, see Hall & Vidén, 2005.

[4] The Swedish expressions *delaktighet* and *deltagande* both mean participation; the first also carries the connotation of 'responsibility,' the second those of 'compassion' or 'sympathy.'

[5] All interviews referred to in this paper were conducted as unstructured informal interviews. Notes were kept during the interview and complemented with clarifying remarks immediately after the interview. The interview subjects are referred to as 'Respondents,' identified by a number that simply designates the order in which they are introduced in the paper.

[6] Information about the projects can be found in English: The Swedish Arts Council, http://www.kulturradet.se/sv/Kreativa-platser/In-English/About-the-Projects and Public Art Agency Sweden, https://statenskonstrad.se/en/konst/art-is-happening/. Both accessed 25 April 2018.

[7] The report was also a government task to Statistics Sweden to 'compare socioeconomic factors and study differences in gender, age, education, people born in Sweden and people born outside Sweden' in the elections of 2014 (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2015: 9).

Acknowledgments

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