



MALMÖ HÖGSKOLA

Life stories of Swedish Third Culture Kids: Belonging and Identity

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Malmö 2011-01-10

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Malmö University,

Culture and Society,

International Migration and Ethnic Relations, 61-90

Abstract

Everyday lives of Swedish Third Culture Kids (TCK) are characterized by their experiences of living among worlds. As the Swedish TCKs return to Sweden they try to find a sense of who they are and where they belong. This thesis examines the effects of growing up among cultures in connection to identity and belonging. The purpose is to understand how TCKs perceive themselves and their identity and how this affects their sense of belonging. The thesis is based on a multiple case study, which examines the life stories of eleven TCKs who all have lived abroad and now returned to Sweden. The research design was based on a review of the literature on TCKs and Adult Third Culture Kids (ATCKs), covering issues such as sense of belonging and identity. Within this context we discuss; nationalism, home, traditions and language. First hand data were gathered through a questionnaire and in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. Later links between the available literature and the personal experiences of the TCKs' were developed. The result of our research is that belonging for a TCK is to know who they are as a unique person and they find a sense of home in their relationships with family and friends rather than a place.

Key words: *Identity, Third Culture Kids, nationalism, language, traditions, Sweden*

Sammanfattning

Svenska Third Culture Kid (Tredje Kultur Barn) påverkas vardagligen utav deras erfarenheter av att leva i olika världar. När TCKs återvänder till Sverige söker de efter svar på vem de är och var de tillhör. Denna uppsats undersöker effekterna av att växa upp i olika kulturer i relation till identitet och tillhörighet. Syftet är att förstå hur TCKs uppfattar sig själva och deras identitet och hur detta påverkar deras känsla av tillhörighet. Den här uppsatsen är baserad på multipla fallstudier som undersöker livshistorier från elva TCKs som alla levt utomlands och nu har återvänt till Sverige. Studien är baserad på befintlig litteratur om TCKs och Vuxna Tredje Kultur Barn (ATCKs), där vi sedan behandlar problem som känsla av tillhörighet och identitet, där vi diskuterar nationalism, hemmet, traditioner och språket. Första-hands information samlades ihop dels genom ett frågeformulär och dels genom att semi-strukturerade djupintervjuer utfördes. Sedan länkades tillgänglig litteratur och TCKs' personliga erfarenheter ihop och utvecklades. Resultatet av vår undersökning är att tillhörighet för en TCK är att veta vem de är som en unik person och de finner en känsla av hem i deras relation med familj och vänner snarare än en plats.

Nyckelord: *Identitet, Tredje Kultur Barn, nationalism, språk, traditioner, Sverige*

Acknowledgement

This thesis became a reality because of the support we received from many individuals and it is a pleasure to thank those who made this thesis possible.

First, we must thank each and every TCK and ATCK who has shared his or her life story with us. We really appreciate the time and willingness that you set apart to be interviewed. We also want to thank you for your openness and honesty that you showed through the interviews. We really enjoyed interviewing you and there would have been no thesis if it were not for you so thank you very much!

We are also greatly thankful to our supervisor, Maria Appelqvist, whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final level enabled us to develop an understanding of the subject. Anyone who writes on third culture kids is automatically in David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken's debt for their book *Third Culture Kids: the Experience of Growing up among Worlds* (1999, 2009). Without their well-written books this topic would not have been thought of. We would also like to say many thanks to Kristen Clarberg for proof reading this thesis during her Christmas holiday.

Our final words of gratitude go to a supporting wife, Eva Guan, and husband, Kam Koolash, for their love, encouragement and understanding. Thank you!

Henrik Wu & Rebecka Koolash, 2011-01-10

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Sammanfattning	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
Abbreviations	v
Our Definition of Concepts	v
1. Introduction	1
2. Aim and Significance of the Study	4
3. Research Questions and Hypotheses	5
4. Methodology	6
5. Previous research	10
5.1. Third Culture Kids – who are they?	12
5.1.1. Level 1 – Organism or body	15
5.1.2. Level 2 – The Individual.....	16
5.1.3. Level 3 – Group Member	25
5.1.4. Level 4 – Society participant.....	26
5.1.5. Theory linked to Analysis	33
6. TCK-Life Stories	35
6.1. The Individual - Who Am I?	35
6.2. A Group Member – Belonging	40
6.3. The Society participant– Swedes versus the Third Culture Kids	43
6.3.1. Nationalism – Swedes?.....	43
6.3.2. Language	49
6.3.3. Traditions.....	51
7. Conclusion	57
References	60
Appendix 1. Initial letter for recruiting participants for the thesis	62
Appendix 2. Questionnaire for the interviews	64
Appendix 3. Original quotations in Swedish	66

Abbreviations

TCK	Third culture Kids
ATCK	Adult Third Culture Kids
CCK	Cross Cultural Kids
MK	Missionary Kids

Our Definition of Concepts

Passport country	The country that is stated in your passport as your nationality.
Host country	The country that you are living in but in your passport you have a different nationality.

1. Introduction

There are countless children around the world today who grew up with feelings of not belonging anywhere in the world. It might be the Japanese child who grew up in Australia, the American child who grew up in Singapore, the African child who grew up in Canada (Pollock & Van Reken 1999:5), or the Swedish children who grew up in different parts of the world. It is a person who's "*life story uses the phrase "then we went to..." at least five times*", who's "*best friend lives thousands of miles away*", (Kerr 2007:26) and who "*[w]hen travelling around the world... [can] feel at home in other countries even though... [they] haven't lived there*" (Kerr 2007:25). It is a person who can "*slip into another language when...mad*" (Kerr 2007:44.), and who "*flew before... [they] could walk*" (Kerr 2007:1). These are the global children of today, the Third Culture Kids.

Being a Third Culture Kid (hereafter, TCK) comes with benefits and challenges in life (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:8), as we shall discover together through this thesis. Pollock and Van Reken wrote two books on TCKs and they said "*Third culture kids (TCKs) [children who spend a significant period of their developmental years in a culture outside their parents' passport culture(s)] are not new, and they are not few. They have been a part of the earth's population from the earliest migrations*" (Pollock and Van Reken introduction 2009: xi). Then why have we not heard much about them? Who are the TCKs really? "*They are normal people with the usual struggles and pleasures of life. But because they have grown up with different experiences from those who have lived primarily in one culture, TCKs are sometimes seen as slightly strange by the people around them*" (Pollock and Van Reken introduction 2009: xi). However, this is mostly because they are misunderstood or unknown by the society.

Previous TCKs grew up with little help coping with their cross-cultural experiences and affects. Even though the support has become better over the years, surrounding people still find it difficult to know that support might be needed and what kind of support TCKs need. However, TCKs have managed to go through different cultures, relationship losses and other challenges when moving, and still most of them have developed a positive sense of identity. But some Adult Third Culture Kids are still struggling. There are many who have not come to terms with their childhood, and this is expressing itself through loneliness, depression, isolation, rebellion, anger and despair.

This has ruled their life instead of the joy they could have. Growing up in two or more different cultures gives the benefits of understanding more about others and at the same time putting personal experiences in different perspectives. Many TCKs might look successful on the outside but on the inside they are battling with questions like “Who am I?” and “Where am I from?” They know and feel that they are different but they cannot figure out why (Pollock & Van Reken 1999:269). That is why we feel it is important and an opportunity for TCKs to tell their story since the society can learn from their experiences.

Living and working abroad is getting more and more popular. Through globalization the degree of cultural complexity is growing. Globalization is making people more mobile due to the improvements in transportations (aircraft, ferries, cars, etc) and updated due to communications (TV, telephone, internet, etc), which have become cheaper and more effective and at the same time more available for the people, which is making the world smaller but at the same time bigger. Multinational companies are contributing to the globalization by sending their employees to be stationed in various places around the world where they have factories or offices. The cultural identity then is constantly challenged since the settings of your surroundings are changing. The cultural settings at home, in school, in society or among friends differ from each other, which can be difficult to sort out for a child. Traditionally we have assumed that an individual has belonged to a particular race, ethnicity and nationality. Today these assumptions are constantly challenged by our TCKs, whom have shaped their identity in a diversity of cultures rather than just one. Through diversity programs we can see the outside difference of culture such as ethnicity, race and gender; the hidden diversity is often never noticed (Pollock & Van Reken 2009: introduction xi). Cultural adjustment are being studied, however, little attention has been given to people who come back to their passport country after living abroad. If re-entry were simple it would not matter and it is usually this assumption that many have. However, as we shall see though this thesis it is not as simple as many may expect.

We are aware that adults are also struggling with the lack of belonging and cultural identity. However, the difference is that TCKs move while they have not really developed their personal and cultural identity yet. It is important to remember that it is an interplay between factors rather than one single factor alone, as well as personal

characteristics (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:40). Each person is unique and this thesis could only include a few TCKs life stories, we are aware that each TCK could probably write their own book on all their experiences and none of them might be similar to each other. It is, after all, a deep personal experience. However, by listening to a few TCKs' life story certain traits can be discovered.

In this thesis we will look at key issues such as identity and belonging that will contribute to our search for understanding who the TCK are and where they feel like they belong. Our purpose of this thesis is to make the voices of today's TCKs in Sweden become heard as well as learn from their experiences. In the first part of our thesis we will examine previous research on Third Culture Kids and Adult Third Culture Kids. We will also look at research on identity, group member, and social participant as in nationalism, language and traditions. Which all give a valid point to understand TCKs and where they belong. In the second part, we will do our analysis based on the answers that we received from our interviews with the support of the theories established in the theory chapter. Here we will look at "Who am I" as a TCK and "where is home?", who is a Swede and how nationalism through language and traditions are being kept while abroad. We hope that our thesis will open up for more discussions regarding TCKs and increase the understanding of cultural diversity.

2. Aim and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine who the Swedish TCKs are and where they belong in relation to “home”. How the Swedish TCKs find a sense of identity and belonging during the re-entry process, we are interested in defining issues in this process. The purpose is not to make any generalisations, instead, we are rather interested in the individual and his or her life-stories during the re-entry process.

The significance of the study is that there is not much research on TCK in general and it is almost non-existent regarding Swedish TCKs. As Pollock and Van Reken points out, there are more and more people who join the category of TCK and with this, new concerns are rising. For example in some cultures where there is a strong cultural tradition TCK creates a new phenomenon, which can be seen as a threat of the home culture. To deal with this some countries have suggested different ways to reprogramming them because their new way of thinking is disturbing or unacceptable for the host culture (Pollock & Van Reken 1999: 254). We want to point out that it is very few countries that react in this way towards TCKs. This could be a sign of fear of the unknown, instead of taking advantage of the new experiences of the TCKs. Therefore, this study is important to make the situation of many TCKs visible and creates a continuous discussion around this topic. TCKs are a growing phenomenon due to the globalisation and eventually TCKs might become the norm rather than the exception.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Hypothesis:

1. If home is a place, then Sweden may be the home for Swedish TCKs.
2. If home is a feeling, then home may be where Swedish TCKs identify themselves.

The main research question for this study is: How do Swedish third culture kids find a sense of identity and belonging in their re-entry process? In order to tackle this question, TCK literature will be examined and semi-structured interviews will be conducted. The main focus on this research is; identity and belonging. To be able to do a study on our research question these two areas have to be investigated; therefore we have chosen to bring up sub-questions.

1. Different countries and different cultures; what happens to TCKs identity during the re-entry process?
2. Where is home for a TCK? Where do they feel like they belong?
3. How does nationalism contribute to a sense of “Swedishness” and home?
4. How does a TCK define themselves?

4. Methodology

The subject of the thesis is close to our hearts because we, Henrik and Rebecka, both have experience of being a TCK in different ways. Since we live in Sweden we have chosen to do interviews with TCKs of Swedish passport country in order to gather first hand information of their individual life stories and experiences. We are focusing on this particular group because we are in Sweden, so we found this the most adequate way of collecting information for this thesis.

In our search for informants we found a group on *Facebook* (a social network on the internet) that was called “Sweden Third Culture Kids/Adults (TCKs)”. We contacted the administrator to help us send out an interview request (see appendix 1) to all fifty-three members of the group. The administrator sent them out to all the members and we received answers from three persons who were interested in participating in an interview. Those three were also kind enough to forward our interview request to their family and friends. Additionally, Rebecka sent out the same letter to another eleven of her *Facebook* friends and Henrik managed to gather two through his contacts. In the end we ended up with twelve candidates, of which we chose to interview eleven since one person did not fit into the requirements we had set up for our focus group (see Appendix 1). Our focus group consisted of one male and the rest females in different ages. In our interview request we did not limit possible informants by specific age or gender because we wanted the informants themselves to identify themselves as TCKs. Since we were interested in their life stories we believe that age and gender are not as important as their experiences. The mutual denominator was that they all have spent a significant part of their lives in another country than Sweden and have later moved to Sweden. It took approximately three weeks to complete all the interviews. Each interview took around 1 hour for both group and individual interviews.

We conducted semi-structured interviews both individually and in groups. Our goal from the beginning was to have one group interview with all the participants, whom were interested in participating. This idea was something we had to abandon during the early stages since the participants were located in various places in Sweden. It would have been very time consuming and costly to gather them all to one place for a group interview, or for us to go and visit them.

Semi-structured interviews require some preparations since it is different from an unstructured interview, which is more of a social interaction. As part of the preparations we as interviewer need have some kind of script with questions or issues we would like to bring up during the interview and use it as a guideline for the interview. Therefore, as interviewers we need be flexible and exclude questions if the interviewee already answered by telling his or her story. The main idea is to have the interviewee freely tell their story, share their experiences and express their personal opinions. Another important point as interviewers is to stay alert and ask supplementary questions, which we have done when needed (Davies 2008:105-106). This is a good way for the interviewee to clarify and be more detailed about what they mean. We as researchers then do not need to guess or interpret what they really mean when things are unclear.

We were able to conduct two group interviews with our focus groups, which were a semi-structured group interview. It was the same here as above; that we had our guideline in order to stay on topic and our role was more of moderators rather than interviewers. The benefits with group interviews are that we can have many individuals at the same time and there was the possibility for them to interact with each other during the interview at the same time as they interact with the interviewers (Davies 2008:106). The interactions among the participants release data and insights that would have been less accessible otherwise (Davies 2008:117).

Our previous experience (B-thesis in 2010) with group interviews was that they were very dynamic and informative. Also, there is a different atmosphere during the whole session; it is more relaxed rather than tense. This is because group interviews are more a social meeting with people of same interest and not a formal academic group interview.

We have tried to meet our informants in person as far as it has been possible. But as mentioned earlier, due to long distances between the informants and ourselves, it was not possible to meet all of them in person. We solved this issue by having the interview through Internet via webcam using Skype. We believe that this is the closest we could get to an "in-person" interview. In addition, it was practical and affordable for us since we had all the technical equipment and Internet connection was available at Malmö Högskola or at home. We conducted four interviews via Skype, which all of them had access to. It was a new experience for us to conduct interviews through Skype. We felt

it went smoothly and our informants seemed to be very comfortable using a webcam when communicating through Skype. However, conducting interview through the internet is not the same as conducting an “in-person” interview. We believe it is mainly for two reasons. Firstly, since using a webcam we are not able to see the whole person we are interviewing, usually only from the shoulders and up. This way we miss out much of the body language, which is used to emphasize or illustrate statements. Secondly, it is the standard of the technical equipment. With low standard equipment we will receive bad quality picture and sound, which causes moments of irritation. This is something we cannot control and the only thing we can do is to make sure that our own technical equipment is up to the standards. However, we did not experience any difficulties in regard to the technical equipment. There was a difference of quality of the video and audio among the interviews conducted but none of them were of so poor quality that it caused any irritation.

There are difficulties in doing semi-structured interviews that we need to take in consideration. In order to have a good flow in the interview the informant must be willing to share his or her thoughts and experiences. If the informants prefer only to answer the questions in a minimalistic way, we as interviewers need to be more active and post more supplementary questions in order to get whole stories instead of only bits and pieces (Davies 2008:107). An interview is an interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee and a mutual understanding and trust need to be established in order to get good results from interviews (Davies 2008:109). Before starting the interview we always gave a short introduction about ourselves and our purpose of the interview. For the focus group we also provided some coffee, tea, sandwiches and cookies in order to create a more relaxed atmosphere. We met different kinds of people when we did our interviews. A few gave very short and specific answers, but most of them were easy to have a conversation with since they were very open and willing to share their stories.

In focus group interviews there are other difficulties to take in consideration. Since there is more than one informant, the interview can lose direction and become less focused. The participants stimulate each other by posing questions, which can be good, but there is also a risk that the discussion will lose its focus (Davies 2008:115-116). The discussion might become sidetracked by things that have nothing to do with the aim or the decided topic of the interview. The validity and reliability of our thesis and

interviews can of course be questioned since it is our own interpretation of what they said and meant. However, all our interviews but one (we did not have the recording equipment at that time) were recorded audibly. This was for us to be able to listen to the interviews again and make deeper analyses of the data collected from our informants. The extensive, but necessary, works of transcribing the interviews were difficult. We had great technical equipment, so the recordings turned out great. The difficulty was to transcribe the focus group interviews. Since there was more than one informant it was hard to distinguish the individuals from each other. Sometimes the participants would speak at the same time, which made it even harder to sort out who said what. Other things that are almost impossible to catch in a transcription are body language and eye contact between the participants (Davies 2008:128). When participants are not responding to the previous speaker, but someone even earlier, it is usually announced by a gesture (pointing, facing, nodding, etc.) or eye contact with that person. So listening to the conversation through the audio recordings again was sometimes hard to follow since you do not know who is responding to whom immediately. However, we have done our best to be as accurate as possible. The extracted quotes that we use have been double-checked for accuracy. Even though it was very time consuming to transcribe all the interviews it was necessary in order for us to quote our informants. In respect of the integrity of our informants we are using fictive names when quoting them in this thesis. Despite all the work with transcribing the interviews it was well worth the effort since we ended up with great life stories and quotations. We would also like to mention that through out the thesis we have also called our informants, participants, interviewees and interview candidates. This is because of the variation in the text, but we mean the same group, our TCKs.

The way we have been working with the analysis is that we have picked the life stories that we found most interesting. Most of all we have wanted the TCKs life stories to speak on their own as much as possible. We have reconnected the life stories with our theoretical chapter.

Last, we want to emphasise that we are aware that our thesis is not a scientific research establishing facts, since we are using our own interpretations and only a few individuals' life stories. However, our hope is that this thesis may be used as a platform for further needed studies within the area.

5. Previous research

When we try to explain something that has to do with people, in this case TCKs, it is usually so complicated that we need to use several different theoretical tools to be able to reach what is important (Nilsson 1996:129). To be able to discuss a human being we need to talk about the different aspects of a human being, these aspects can also be called “perspectives”. Perspectives have to do with what we see, like looking at the world through a lens. By doing that, we can see different things, for example on the floor we will get the child’s perspective of the person “up there”, and from an observation tower we will get a birds perspective of the social life “down there”. In this way perspectives are about the physical reality and if we translate this to how we interpret and comprehend people then perspectives and aspects basically means “outlook” (Nilsson 1996:11). In other words separate perspectives usually mean that we see different things within one and the same phenomenon. The reason it is a good idea to do this is to try to see the same thing from different angles to be able to get a more complete picture of it (Nilsson 1996:129). It is important to get as complete picture as possible since our values and theoretical apprehensions influences what we see, what we think is important and not important. The difference in perspectives can cause us to see things that we might have missed at first, to watch an ingrained and familiar environment from another perspective can lead to finding new qualities within the environment (Nilsson 1996:11). This process is important because reality is difficult to catch. Theories and methods provide the knowledge and tools of analysis to help us catch this reality. A large “theoretical toolbox” is helpful since it will prepare us to tackle the problem and questions that we encounter (Nilsson 1996:130).

The social psychological approach that Björn Nilsson provides of looking at a human being we believe is useful here. In this way we will try to catch a person’s, here TCKs, reality from different perspectives or levels. The reason we have chosen this approach is because we felt that it was most relevant, concerning the issues that came up in the interviews, besides it was a good way to explain our line of thought. It is not our intention here to go in any depth and explain social psychology. Also, we will not go into previous research on social psychology. However, that said, we just want to explain that we are aware that all social psychology theories contain certain foundation statements, foundation valuations and conditions that are not able to be tested and yet,

contain truths. We are also aware that these foundations influence our choices of questions, definitions of concepts, choice of method and our interpretations of our results (Nilsson 1996:11). One definition of social psychology as defined by Thomas Gilovich, Dacher Keltner and Richard Nisbett is “the scientific study of the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of individuals in social situations” (Gilovich 2006:3). What social psychology tries to do is to understand how individuals act in relation to others in social situations (Gilovich 2006:6). Social psychology is a branch from psychology, which deals with the fact that we live our lives in connection to others (Gilovich 2006:45).

One way of being able to look at the connection between an individual to the society is according to Björn Nilsson to separate different function into four different levels by looking at a person as:

1. an organism or body,
2. the individual,
3. a group member and
4. a society participant (Nilsson 1996:11)

The four different levels or dimensions enable us to, on each level, notice different factors and find different reasons for experiences and behaviours. We do this because, for example, if we only look at a person first as a body, then it is easy to see her objective but to underestimate psychological and social factors influences. If we see the person only from a social perspective, we lose the individual process relevance (Nilsson 1996:12). Each theoretical perspective can interpret and describe the same social situation in many different social ways, sometimes so different that one could think that they are not describing the same people or situations. That is why it is important not to forget to look at the whole picture here (Nilsson 1996:129). We want to use these levels when we look at the TCK life when trying to find out who they are and where they believe that they belong. We will look at different perspectives to investigate this issue. We will look at it from an individual perspective where we will look closer at the identity process. We will also look at the group, since we are social beings. And we will also look at TCK in a society participant perspective where we will take a closer look at

nationalism and how this affects the TCKs perspective on home and belonging. It is not an easy job we have set out to do, to define a TCK and belonging. However, we believe that it is important to do this since there is so little research on TCK it is sometimes easy to misinterpret who they are and where they belong. Are they (our informants, Swedish TCKs,) immigrants? Are they Swedes? How do you define a person who has been brought up in another country? This process of answering these questions is difficult for a TCK themselves, as we shall see, even more difficult for us. We will look at this in more detail in the section of *TCK-who are they?* That said we want to clarify some thoughts here. First, they are not immigrants because one of the things that distinguishes them from an immigrant is that after living a significant period outside their passport country there will come a day when they return to their country and culture (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:225). It is impossible for us to look at all aspects of a TCK; therefore, we have narrowed it down to only be looking at the process of when the TCK is coming back to their passport country. This process is called the re-entry process. And from this stage we start our research on TCK, the reason why we have chosen to look at this particular process is because this process is particularly difficult for a TCK. Some reasons revolve around the challenges faced when moving, such as, the grief of losing a world they have come to know or the struggle to find belonging. It might seem strange, but this is the most difficult transition they go through (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:226). Before we can go any further let us define the Third Culture Kids.

5.1. Third Culture Kids – who are they?

When we first decided that we wanted to write on Third Culture Kids (TCK) we had no idea that we were starting a long and interesting journey on just trying to define the concept of “Third Culture Kids”. Our first mistake was to assume that there was an easy definition and we struggled just by trying to tell people around us about this subject. Our first encounter with a definition was through David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken’s book, *Third Culture Kids: the Experience of Growing up among Worlds*, written in 1999. In this book the term Third Culture kids are defined as:

“A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her development years outside the parent’s culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each

culture are assimilated into the TCKs life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background.” (Pollock & Van Reken 1999:19)

Pollock and Van Reken continue their definition by describing that there are many reasons why children have become TCKs. Some have parents that have been studying abroad. Others have parents who have been working abroad, for example, in the military, the diplomatic corps, international businesses or religious missions. Pollock describes TCKs as living in a neither/nor world. It means that the children did not fully grow up in their parent’s culture or of the other culture. Because of this, TCKs develop their own lifestyle different from those who are brought up in one culture and place (Pollock & Van Reken 1999:6). This definition seems quite straightforward at first glance, however, through our experience of trying to find interview candidates it was proven otherwise. When we first sent out our interview letter (see methodology) the replies were not all so straightforward. We noticed that many more wanted to be included in the concept of Third Culture Kids than we first anticipated. When reading the new edition of David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken’s book *Third Culture Kids: the Experience of Growing up Among Worlds*, written in 2009, we noticed that the authors had also encountered this issue. They describe in their introduction that they became aware of how much this topic has grown over the years and described their dilemma to write the new edition by saying that “...the traditional TCK experience itself has become more complicated for many” (Quoted from Pollock & Van Reken 2009: introduction xii). The main difficulty in defining TCK is expressed by many; one person who came up to Pollock and Van Reken after their seminar said: “I am not a TCK as you talk about, but I related to nearly everything you mentioned as part of the TCK Profile. Why?” Some had grown up as immigrant children, or refugees, or in different cultural worlds in one country. Others were international adoptees or children of minorities.” (Quoted from Pollock & Van Reken 2009: introduction xiii). This is a problematic issue, so many people can relate to the TCK experience without being a traditional TCK. When we say traditional we mean according to the definition written in 1999 by Pollock and Van Reken, as previously mentioned.

Pollock & Van Reken tried to investigate this issue further by connecting with other researchers. They met a sociologist from Japan, Dr. Momo Kano Podolsky who has

done research on TCK but under a different name. The observation that Dr. Momo had done differed from Pollock and Van Reken who had mainly focused on the impact of this experience on the individual, while the Japanese study had been focusing on TCK reintegration and how it impacted the whole society (Pollock & Van Reken 2009: introduction xii). Even though it sounds exciting to write about the effect on TCK in the society we will not do that in this thesis because of limited time, space and research opportunity. However, an interesting point was made: they discovered that something connects all children who have grown up among worlds. Because of this they added a new term in 2001; Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK), this was to be able to include all children who, no matter what reason, had been growing up with the experience of two cultures. The prediction was that in the future, the TCK would be the norm rather than the exception. However, by adding a new term they did not solve the issues, it continues to be difficult to compare these experiences. Pollock and Van Reken's conclusion was that all CCK's could learn from the traditional TCK profile (Pollock & Van Reken 2009: introduction xiii).

Let us go back for a second to where it all started. The term TCK was first used by Dr. Ruth Hill Useem, professor in Sociology at Michigan State University while she was doing research on children of American businessmen abroad. She discovered that there were differences in the way they thought and acted compared to the children that had grown up in the home country (Johansson 1993:83). This is where she introduced the concept Third Culture Kids (TCK) and she is generally regarded as the founder of TCK research. She conducted several research projects on TCKs by travelling to 76 countries for her research. She was especially focused on how the childhood of TCK affected or impacted their adulthood (Smith, Carolyn D. (n.d.)).

There has been very little research on TCKs in Sweden. The earliest book that we could find was Birgitta Johansson's (1993) book "*Barn av 2 Världar: En Bok om Missionärsbarn*" a book on missionary kids from Sweden. Due to this, we had to turn to American literature that seemed more advanced in their research than Sweden. The first book that we found on specifically Third Culture Kids was David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken's book "*Third Culture Kids: the Experience of Growing up Among Worlds* from 1999. They now have a new edition to that book that came out in 2009. However, there have been earlier studies focusing on Third Culture Kids such as the founder for the

term Ruth Hill Useem & John Useem in their book *“The Western–Educated Man in India”* from 1955. Craig Storti is another author that has written several books on the topic of TCKs. For example, he has published two books called, *“The Art of Coming Home”* (2001) and *“The Art of Crossing Cultures”* (2007). In Sweden we could not find any previous research on TCK except the one on missionary kids written by Birgitta Johansson in 1993. In this book she mentions that there is not a lot of information about missionary kids, however the earliest account that is available of the first Swedish missionary children is from the nineteenth century (Johansson 1993:7). The Swedish Church mission (Svenska kyrkans mission) started Swedish schools between 1920-1923 in three parts of the world; South Africa, China and India. However, missionary kids issues have since been put forward and the first international conference on missionary kids was in the Philippines 1984. In 1986, a group was created to work with questions concerning missionary kids by organising seminars and courses to bring attention to missionary kids needs (Johansson 1993:8). This is the first recorded sign of Missionary Kids (MKs), which are included in the concept of TCK that we could find.

We do want to clarify that even if we define these children as a group they are different individuals. They do not all look the same, think the same, or act the same. However, there are several properties that are common between intercultural kids and which somehow characterises them (Johansson 1993:84). No one knows how much time it takes for the child to become intercultural. Of course, a long period of time has a significant meaning but also a short amount of time can also have an effect. Each child is unique and they are affected in different ways (Johansson 1993:83).

This definition in mind let us move on to the perspectives, here presented as levels and go through each level one by one and hopefully after this theoretical part we can understand in more detail who the TCK are and where they belong.

5.1.1. Level 1 – Organism or body

The first level is to look at the person as an organism or a body, which is the only thing that is concrete in a person, the only thing we can touch. However, at this level it is the inside of the body that is looked upon, for example hormones and genes, which are used to explain behaviour and experiences (Nilsson 1996:12). But, in this thesis, we

will not be looking into this level due to limitations of time and space, which prevents further discussion on this topic here.

5.1.2. Level 2 – *The Individual*

The next level is the individual level, a person as a psychological being. The word “individual” means not divided, which is about thought and feeling, body and soul. In this level, concepts such as identity, experiences, memories and knowledge are being discussed; these are relevant when explaining the psychological development. These concepts are close to what we think of as “self”. The identity is connected to self; it is the person’s experiences of oneself, of being the same over time. The word identity comes from the Latin word *idem*, which means “the same” (Nilsson 1996:12). Identity is central to social scientists, philosophical and religious studies because all of them are concerned about how humans understand themselves and others (Edwards 2009:20). Since we are also interested in understanding a human being, in this case a TCK, we will have a closer look at identity and how this can help us understand a TCK.

There is a plethora of literature on *identity* that presents many different approaches and that emphasises the identity process differently. Identity construction is complex and because of that, there is a need for methodological and theoretical approaches from many different disciplines; sociology, political science, linguistics, psychology, history and geography (Hutchinson & Smith 1996:7). Because of the many disciplines that use the term identity, it can be confusing and sometimes seem like people are not even talking about the same thing. However, as Jonathan Rutherford puts it “one thing at least is clear – identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty” (quoted from Rutherford 1990:43). This assumption of a fixed, coherent and stable identity makes it relevant for our thesis because identity is also about belonging; it is about what you have in common with other people and the things that differentiate you from them. It gives a sense of personal location, the foundation to your individuality. However, it is also about your social relationships, which can be both confusing and complex. As Rutherford explains; we all live with potentially contradictory identities, which are in a consistent battle, for example; men or women, black or white, British or European and it could go on and on as well as our possible

belongings. The *identity*, which *we* focus on, depends on several factors. The main theory we will use relates to Rutherford's definition, which builds upon the values we share with others (Rutherford 1990:88). The quest for identity often shows conflicting values or as Rutherford puts it, "by saying who we are, we are also striving to express what we are, what we believe and what we desire" (Quoted from Rutherford 1990:89). The problem is not only that these are often in conflict within communities, but also within individuals. These values are not only speculations of the world and us in it; they go much deeper than that. They are issues about who we are and who/what we want to become (Rutherford 1990:89). TCKs are not the only ones who try to answer questions like "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" All children face a countless of developmental tasks while growing from a baby to a healthy adult. One of these things is to develop a personal identity as well as a group identity. Traditionally these answers are mirrored back to the child from the family and the community and thereby the child sees its image reflected in them. Since this process of learning identity happens so unconsciously and we do not really think about it, we will address this because it is a key to understanding TCK characters (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:41). The identity approaches that we will raise here, each give a valid point to the identity process that we find relevant when looking at the TCK are: *Personal Identity*, *Group Identity* and *Cultural Identity*. The following approaches are only a general summary of the main points; the purpose is to highlight their contribution.

a. Personal identity

How would you define yourself? Or as Harré puts it, what is your "sense of self?" Sometimes it can seem easier to define someone else rather than oneself. Others do not have access to your identity; however they might ascribe identity to oneself and one might relate to them. For example, if others view of self has validity then you might accept it (Weinreich & Saunderson 2003:22). A person has to interpret how others view oneself. One can only have an interpretation of that perspective (Weinreich & Saunderson 2003:23). Defining one's self is difficult and many have tried, Harré says that "to have a sense of self is to have a sense of one's location, as a person, in each of several arrays of other beings, relevant to personhood" (Weinreich & Saunderson 2003:34). Which basically means that one's location in the past or future varies and

thereby can have secondary consequence of one's intention, which are contributing to a person's sense of self (Weinreich & Saunderson 2003:34). The fundamental characteristic of identity, according to Weinreich and Saunderson, is the continuity of oneself experiencing ones activities and the social world. The things that you do in the past are reconstructions in the present (Weinreich and Saunderson 2003:22). To describe someone's personality might be another way of defining oneself. According to Giddens, personality is replacing *Enlightment's* belief in natural "character". Personality shows the difference between people and their behaviour represents their inner selves. And when it comes to personality development, it is rather about feelings than about rational control of action in the formation of self-identity (Giddens 1991:171). Personal identity or personality is basically our characteristics, dispositions, traits and what defines the "uniqueness" in every human being (Edwards 2009:19). According to Erving Goffman, personal identity can be seen as "positive markers" or "identity pegs" (Goffman 1990:74), which has to do with the uniqueness of an individual (Goffman, 1990:73). Each peg is the history of each person. It has to do with the thought that the person can be different from all others and to these differences, social facts can be attached (Goffman 1990:74). An identity peg or marker could be the photographic image of a person (Goffman 1990:73), there is only one person that fits into that image at a time, another example would be fingerprints (Goffman 1990:74). The process of personal identification can be seen, for example, in a large impersonal organization, such as a state government. Here, the individual is recorded, using a set of marks that are used to distinguish that person, for example by birth certificates, names and social security numbers. Once an identity peg is ready, material can be attached to it and a collection of documents can be developed (Goffman, 1990:75). TCKs come back to Sweden with all their identity markers attached to them, all their experiences. These experiences can be difficult to handle when returning to Sweden.

Pollock and Van Reken have found three common reactions in TCK when they struggled with finding themselves.

- Chameleons – those who try to find a "same as" identity. By clothes, language and attitudes they try to hide the fact that they have lived in other places to behave according to social, acceptable constructions.

- Screammers – those who try to find a “different from” identity. They make sure that other people around them know that they are different and they do not have the intention of becoming the same as them.
- Wall owners – those who try to find a “non-identity”. They decide not to participate, at least for a while, in activities rather than being exposed from not knowing the cultural rules (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:57).

We shall have a closer look at these reactions in the analysis section under the “Who am I?” part.

b. Group Identity

Edwards points out that identity rarely exists singly, instead we all possess numerous identities, which can change depending on the context. He argues that personal and group identities connect. The attributes of identity are not unique but are drawn from the same social store (Edwards 2009:2). According to Edwards the connection between individual identity and ‘groupness’ is *continuity*. On the personal level, it is what reassures me of my own integrity and on a group level, it is what is born in history and carried down through traditions (Edwards 2009:19). There are so many types of groups that it makes it a difficult question to answer (Gilovich 2006:49). One definition, as given by Cartwright and Zander, says that a group is “a collection of individuals who have relations to one another that make them interdependent to some significant degree” (quoted from Gilovich 2006:49). Because of this, the people in an elevator only becomes a group when, for example, the elevator breaks down and they have to join actions and in this way they become interdependent and more of a group (Gilovich 2006:49).

We believe it is important to look at group identity when it comes to understanding the TCK because, according to Giddens, the outward behaviour is influenced by the person’s social environment. In public places the person has to be able to interact with others but also where the outward behaviour is expected to meet certain generalized criteria of competence. However, the person also have to be able to have appropriate behaviour in many different settings. Of course a person adjusts themselves both by appearance and outward behaviour according to the demands of that specific setting. Because of this, it has led some to believe that the self becomes broken up and that the

person tends to develop many different “selves” where there is no inner core of self-identity. But, according to Giddens this is not the case. Instead the maintaining of different outward behaviour in different settings of interactions is one of the most important ways of self-identity to be able to hold together normality. The potential for investigating self-identity is kept in place because the outward behaviour keeps a link between, as Giddens puts it, “feeling at home in one’s body and the personalized narrative”. The outside behaviour has to be integrated into that narrative for a person to be able to keep “normal appearance and at the same time be convinced of personal continuity across time and space; in most circumstances this is accomplished without great difficulty” (Giddens 1991:100).

c. Cultural identity

First, we need to define what culture is. When we think about the word culture for most of us the first things that will come to mind might be food, clothes, language and actions. But culture is more than that. It is a learning process of values, beliefs and shared concepts. It is the framework from which we make sense of life and the world around us. As Paul Hiebert puts it “culture is learned rather than instinctive – something caught from, as well as taught by, the surrounding environment and passed on from one generation to the next (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:41). *Cultural Identity* can be defined in two ways according to Rutherford. One is that it is a shared culture is like a collective self that, for example, people with the same history and ancestry have in common. Cultural identity here reflects the common historical experiences and cultural codes that make us into one people (Rutherford 1990:223). The second is about becoming and being, it is the future as well as the past (Rutherford 1990:225). According to Rutherford cultural identity is not something that is of fixed origin. It has histories; it has a past that speaks to us through memories, fantasies and myths. Cultural identity is the point of identification, which is made within the discourses culture and history (Rutherford 1990:226).

We learn both personal and cultural identity in relationship to the world around us. There is an aspect of cross-cultural living that has a specific influence on a TCKs’ life. It has to do with the changing nature of how the TCK relates to the surroundings (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:54). A TCK experiences many different cultures as they

are growing up. But they are also moving from one place to another where the culture may be very different. The result of this is that their identity has to be compared to the world and culture in which they find themselves (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:54). The difficulty that a TCK faces with their identity is that when they are abroad they know that they are different and they know the reason why; they come from another country. However, when they go back to their passport country where they are suppose to be the same as everyone else, they find themselves different, they have a problem because they do not understand why they do not fit in (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:54).

From this line of thought, David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken came up with this model:

<p>Foreigner Look <i>different</i> Think <i>different</i></p>	<p>Hidden Immigrant Look alike Think <i>different</i></p>
<p>Adopted Look <i>different</i> Think alike</p>	<p>Mirror Look alike Think alike</p>

(Pollock & Van Reken 2009:55).

- *The Foreigner who looks different and think different:*

When the TCK is in their host country they are related to as foreigners. They are different from the people around them both when it comes to the appearance but also when it comes to the worldview. The people around them, as well as they themselves, know that they come from a different place. The visible cultural layer reflects the invisible. In this category “*what you expect is what you get*” (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:54).

- *The Hidden Immigrant who look alike but think different:*

This term was first used in the 1980's by Norma McCraig and David Pollock to describe TCKs experience on returning to their passport culture. This basically means that you look like the people around you whether it is in the host country or your passport country, but you have a totally different worldview than those around you, just like a foreigner. This is problematic because people around them of course assume that they share the same cultural and worldview because of their appearance, they look like they belong to their group. This can be tough for a TCK because no one around them will grant them allowance of not knowing the cultural knowledge as they would with an immigrant or foreigner. In this category "*what you expect is not what you get*" (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:55).

- *The adopted person who looks different but think alike:*

This category can also relate to immigrants and foreigners who have been brought up in the host country. They do not look the same as the dominant culture but they share the same worldview. But this can also relate to the TCK because sometimes they can appear physically different from the people around them in the host culture but since they have lived there for so long they behave and share the same worldview as they have in that culture. The TCK may feel more comfortable in this situation than in their passport country and they do not like it when others treat them as foreigners (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:55). In this category it is the same as earlier "*what you expect is not what you get*" (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:56).

- *The "Mirror" category that includes people who look alike and think alike.*

This is the traditional category of people who are raised in their passport culture. Sometimes TCKs feel like there is nowhere in the world where they would fit into this category. Some TCKs grow up in the host culture where they look like them and lived there so long that they have adopted the culture as well. No one would know that they do not come from there unless they see their passport. Sometimes the TCKs return to their home culture after being abroad for just a few years or when they were away when they were very young. Even though they have lived abroad they still have remained rooted in the home culture and identify with it completely. Perhaps it is only in an

international school where no one looks alike that the TCKs find that they mirror each other and reflect to one another an understanding of what it means to grow up globally. Either way, this is a comfortable box to be in. In this category “*what you expect is what you get*” (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:56).

The anthropologist Gary Weaver suggests that we should look at culture as an iceberg. An iceberg is divided into two parts, one small part that shows above the water and then a big part that is under the water. The visible part of the iceberg is the behaviours, language, customs and traditions; basically the things that we can see. Underneath the water we find the hidden part of the iceberg where we can find values, beliefs, worldviews and thought process (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:42). The thought about these illustrations is that the visible layer is traditionally used to identify the bottom part, the invisible part. But also the visible part is where the invisible is expressed. The result of this is that what we see can make us make assumptions and put expectations on others. The danger of defining people based on their appearance is that stereotypes and racism can come from these assumptions. This model helps us understand many historical and present situations. Weaver also points out that the result of a globalized world with TV, internet and movies can make the visible layer of culture of people around the world is perceived as similar to us. If we assume that our beliefs, worldview, thoughts, (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:43), language and behaviour are the same when we look at a person who look like us, there can be cultural clashes because the reality is that we exchange cultural cues like food and clothes more quickly today than we change values, thoughts and beliefs (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:44). This can be difficult for a TCK who return to their passport country and are defined by their appearance but may not have the same worldview, thoughts and behaviour.

Pollock and Van Reken describe something that they call “cultural balance” which means that, when we have stayed in a culture long enough to know the customs and know what is humorous behaviour in certain situations, it gives a sense of stability, belonging, and security. We might not have the answers to why, but we will know how our culture works (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:44). TCK often feel quite out of cultural balance and this is because the rapid culture change has been their norm when they change worldview, behaviour and language (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:45). Before they know how to behave, they have to know where they are. TCKs are often caught

doing something that others consider as being dumb and a mistake. They do something that they believe they are performing the right cultural behaviour but they are not. The funny thing is that it is not because TCK struggle with a sense of cultural balance and identity differently from anyone. It is because they learn it exactly the same way as everyone else does, by catching on to it from the environment around them rather than reading a book about it (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:46).

To help explain the “hidden immigrant” and “adopted” boxes, Paulette Bethel and Ruth Van Reken came up with the term *hidden diversity* which they defined as “a diversity of experience that shapes a person’s life and worldview but is not readily apparent on the outside, unlike the usual diversity makers such as race, ethnicity, nationality, and so on” (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:60). Other people may also find themselves in one of these boxes. However, the difference for TCK is that they keep changing boxes depending on where they are. For example, they may be foreigners one day and hidden immigrants the next. As they move between various cultures TCK not only have to learn new culture rules but they also have to understand who they are in relationship to the culture around them. So that means that each move they make becomes a question of identity “where do I belong and how do I fit in?”. It can be difficult when there is a constant change of relationships to others (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:56).

In conclusion, most youth feel insecure and questions of identity like “Who I am?” and “Who shall I become?” are included in the process of becoming an adult. This process is more difficult for children who have been living abroad (Johansson 1993:74). This is because as they are trying to develop a personal identity while the world around them keeps changing and mirrors back changing definitions of who they are (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:59-60). They can find themselves in different boxes depending on where they are. Sometimes they can be the *Foreigner* who looks different and think different, another time they are the *Hidden Immigrant* who look alike but think different or the *adopted person* who look different but think alike or in the “*Mirror*” category that includes people who look alike and think alike. Because our experiences are attached to us like identity pegs or positive markers, TCKs react to these box changes in different ways. When returning to Sweden they often react as chameleons, screamers and wall owners. However, having a sense of “who we are” is much more than knowing

our culture or nationality, even though this can be part of it. It is a matter of answering questions such as “Who am I as this person? Where do I fit in or belong?” (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:142). Or as Harré says “to have a sense of self is to have a sense of one’s location, as a person, in each of several arrays of other beings, relevant to personhood”. Identity is a process through life, therefore facts and clear answers are not able to be presented here since each person is a unique individual. Sharon Willmer (ATCK and TCK therapist) said that, regardless of race, nationality, education, or economic background each person is an intelligent, emotional, relational, creative, volitional, physical and spiritual being. When we are born we do not have any cultural influence that is the essence of what it means to be human. Therefore, each person has a need such as “the need for strong relationships: a sense of belonging, of being nurtured and cared for, of internal unity, of significance, of being able to make meaningful choices, and a feeling of knowing ourselves and being known by others” (Quoted from Pollock & Van Reken 2009:141-142). Personal Identity, Group Identity and Cultural Identity all play a part in this process in trying to define oneself, or answering the question “who am I?”

5.1.3. Level 3 – Group Member

The third level is the group level. The concepts that are usually discussed under this level are communication, relationships, group belonging, roles, influence and status. People are formed in their relationships and group belonging. We do not behave the same way in a group as we do when we are alone (Nilsson 1996:12). There are few things that we do as human beings that do not affect others and/or is suppose to affect others. We live a great part of our lives in a group. We are often in a group or on our way into a group or from a group. Groups are so common to us that we sometimes forget about them; especially if you think about friendship groups, workgroups, and family groups. We of course see the individuals in the group but the effect that the group has on us or the pattern that we are showing in the group does not have to be conscious (Nilsson 1996:35). A person’s identity is partly grounded in our identification and interactions with others (Weinreich & Saunderson 2003:7).

This is how the English poet John Donne (1573-1631) wrote about people’s relationships to one another:

No man is an island, entire in itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main...
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind;
And therefore never send to know
For whom the bell tolls, it tolls for you

(Donne in Nilsson 1996:71).

In other words, a person is a social being. The reasons why people come together in groups are, according to Björn Nilsson, to tackle mutual problems but also have companionship (Nilsson 1996:36). He continues to say that the things that bring people together are needs and goals. The individual has several needs that can only be fulfilled together with other people such as confirmation and belonging. People with mutual needs create common aspiration to a shared goal. People's goals are the thing that, when put together, they create motivation (Nilsson 1996:39).

5.1.4. Level 4 – Society participant

The fourth level is called the society; this is about the society culture, language, norms and power. In other words, the society level is about the regularity in the individual's life and group life. Institutions are about how people are being led from within by identifications and internalisations (Nilsson 1996:12), and from the outside by power and force. The society structure is about how language, power, economy and politics affect the person's everyday life. However, the individual and the little group have almost disappeared from the arena. People are interesting because they are part of the social system, which is the most important part in this level (Nilsson 1996:13).

For the human being it is important that there are groups that they can be part of in order to have fellowship and meaning and to be part of the society's norms and behavioural patterns. For the society, it is important as well that we have small groups (Nilsson 1996:35). It is through the small groups that we meet our society. The group is the link between individuals and society and they become the foundation stones in the

society's organisation. It is through these small groups the society can be able to influence the individuals to adopt and live according to the social norms so that these norms become legitimatise and absolute (Nilsson 1996:35). The small group is also the most satisfying way for people. We are part of social units that are small enough so that personal or close contacts shall be possible, but also big enough for variation and stimulation (Nilsson 1996:35).

a. Nationalism

A big part of how the society influences people is through nationalism. That is why we will take some time here to define what nationalism is and does. Nationalism is a modern phenomenon and was developed in Europe during the time of the French Revolution (1789-1799) (Hylland Eriksen 2002:100). In English, the concept of nationalism was first used in 1836 as a theological term (Smith 2001:5). During the years, the concept of "nationalism", has taken many different meanings. According to Anthony D. Smith, the five basic and most important meanings are:

- A process of formation, or growth, of nations
 - A sentiment or consciousness of belonging to the nation
 - A language and symbolism of the nation
 - A social and political movement on behalf of the nation
 - A doctrine and/or ideology of the nation, both general and particular
- (Smith, 2001:5-6)

In our thesis we will use the term "nationalism" as the third meaning; "a language and symbolism of the nation", because it is related to TCKs and how they have preserved "Swedishness". This has been done intentionally, by the influence of their parents, or unintentionally by speaking Swedish at home. The parents, or the adults, play an important role in passing on the Swedish traditions, customs and language to the next generation. We will see in our analysis that celebrating holidays according to Swedish traditions was very important for our TCKs. Also to keep the language by Swedish classes at Swedish schools abroad, by distance classes or at home. A lot of effort was spent on this, which shows that the sense of nationalism is strong and worth

keeping. We will not explore the other four meanings further since they are not relevant to our thesis. However, we might touch upon them during our way to define nationalism.

As mentioned earlier, nationalism has been defined in many different ways by many different researchers, but what all these definitions have in common is "... that [it] places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being" (Smith 2001:9). This is the wide and overall definition of nationalism and an unclear definition of what a nation is. In order to get a more accurate definition we need to narrow it down and we will find three generic goals that a nation cannot exist without: national autonomy, national unity and national identity (Smith 2001:9). We will look more into national identity later on since that is more relevant for our thesis. However, nationalism can exist without a nation, which we will see further down, but before we continue, we should see and explore how nation has been perceived earlier. The discourse on nations itself is not what our thesis is about nor is it very relevant. However, nation is the foundation of nationalism so we find it hard to discuss nationalism without mentioning nation.

Those whom have defined the concept of a nation can roughly be divided into two opposing sides. One side is stressing the "objective" factors of the nation and the other is stressing the "subjective" factors. "Objective" factors could be languages, religions and customs, territories and institutions, while "subjective" factors could be attitudes, perceptions and sentiments (Smith 2001:11). An adherent of the "objective" factors was Joseph Stalin, who said: "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture." (Stalin in Smith 2001:11). To balance it out we have Benedict Anderson, who is a supporter of the "subjective" factors, who said: "it is an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign." (Anderson in Smith 2001:11). Both these opposite opinions have their shortcomings in defining a nation. The "objective" definitions are excluding existing nations such as Mauritius. Mauritius is an island that consists of Indian, Chinese, Africans and French descent while the official language is English (Hylland Eriksen 2002:115). This is opposing many of the "objective" definitions. "Subjective" definitions on the other hand are including too many groups as nations. An

example is the Kurds, who have their political leaders and many of the characteristics of a nation but are not considered to be a nation (Hylland Eriksen 2002:14).

Nationalism is a way of creating a sense of “groupness” (Edwards 2009:186). In order to do so, language can be used as a tool (as we shall have a look at later on in more detail), since common language is a symbol of unity but also a way of making the administration of the nation less complicated. This was done through compulsory mass education of the people (Hylland Eriksen 2002:103). Homogenizing the people was necessary because of big changes in societies as a result of industrialization. The factories required a large workforce with same skills and knowledge in order to be efficient but also as a stock when workers needed to be replaced. Societies changed from being agrarian to industrialized, which in turn required different ways of organising themselves. The early agrarian societies were small and consisted of only a few hundred people. They built their society by structures of roles based on kinship, while this way was impossible in the industrialized society due to the large number of people and the lack of kinship. Structure and kinship were replaced by language and culture to create the same sense of “groupness” (Smith 2001:64).

Swedish TCKs who have grown up abroad and returning to Sweden will not feel part of this “groupness” since they were never part of it. This is one of the reasons they are facing many obstacles in their re-entry phase. They are expected to know the social customs and habits, but they do not, they are, as we mentioned earlier, under cultural identity, *Hidden immigrants*.

Creating a national identity has been crucial in the foundation of the nation, which in turn is the centre of the idea of nationalism. However, nationalism is linked to ethnicity and it is supported on several points. The present traditions, memories, symbols, myths and values descend from the early population, community or area (Smith 1991:20). Before we continue we need to clear out what we mean by ethnicity. We have chosen the following definition: “...is marked by shared culture or even to point at ‘specific traits’ such as shared religion, language and/or customs.” (Hylland Eriksen 2002:34). We are aware of that this definition is not complete nor the only definition of ethnicity. However, we believe this definition is serving our thesis and on the right level in order to bring our thesis forward. Ethnicity is approached from different angles. We have the primordial (or the natural) approach, which considers

ethnicity as something that has always existed and will exist without the influence of time. The other extreme pole is the one seeing ethnicity as situational. Their idea is that ethnicity changes over time since it is based on attitudes and perceptions. With the changes of situations of the individuals, the attitudes and perceptions in the community will also change. This makes the ethnic identity of the community floating and changeable (Smith 1991:20). These approaches are two extremes and none of them are really relevant for our thesis. What is relevant to this thesis are those approaches that are in between these extremes. They emphasize “the historical and symbolic-cultural attributes of ethnic identity” (Smith 1991:20). Myths of descent and common historical memories, religion, customs, language and institutions are cultural attributes that unite the ethnic community. When analysing ethnic communities around the world we can find six attributes they all have in common. Some of them are more or less emphasized during different periods of time, but they all play an important role for the ethnic community. The six attributes are:

- A collective proper name
 - A myth of common ancestry
 - Shared historical memories
 - One or more differentiating elements of common culture
 - An association with a specific “homeland”
 - A sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population
- (Smith 1991:21)

The more of these attributes a community has or shares, the closer it is to what is considered to be an ideal ethnic community, as we shall see in our analysis section. Again we will see that the parents and the adults spent a great deal of time and effort in passing these attribute to our TCKs.

All of this only exists in relation to others. Without other national or ethnic identities there would not be national or ethnic identity to talk about. If all societies were the same, there would be nothing to distinguish one community from another (Hylland Eriksen 2002:110). Instead, to distinguish one ethnic community from another we must look upon the objective attributes such as language, customs, religion or colour

(Smith 1991:23). According to Smith, the best way of illustrating this is in the area of international sports where athletes are competing in the colours of their nation. They compete for glory and honour and dream of the moment when they stand on top of the podium watching their national flag being hoisted with the national anthem playing in the background and returning to the nation as a national hero.

b. Language

Because of several theories on nationalism, there are several theories on the function of language in nation state formation. Language is important to one's identity because it provides a platform of expression of one's experiences, memories and socialization. According to Anthony Giddens, all human experience is mediated by socializing and, in particular, of the development of language. Memory and language is essentially connected, both when it comes to recalling and the establishment of the collective experience. A human being is the most important and the original way of 'time-space distancing', raising human action beyond the immediacy of the experience of animals. Language is like a time machine, which makes it possible to re-enact generations of practices while it also makes it possible to make differentiations with the past, the present and the future. The spoken word is the means by which something is communicated or expressed, a discovery whose existence in time and space is able to have a harmonious relationship with the preservation of meaning across time-space distances because of human language skill's structural characteristics. Both tradition and the spoken word are so inevitably closely related to one another (Giddens, 1991:23).

c. Tradition

"A love for tradition has never weakened a nation; indeed it has strengthened nations in their hour of peril." - Winston Churchill Speech. House of Commons 1944. (Quoted from Camp 1989:398)

Tradition has a way of looking into the past and at the same time including the future. Manning Nash puts it this way; "tradition is the past of a culture, as that past is thought to have continuity, a presence, and a future. These features of tradition bestow

upon the past a weight of authority; the very fact of survival, pastness, and continuity give an aura of authority, legitimacy, and rightness to cultural beliefs and practices” (Quoted from Hutchinson & Smith 1996:27).

Traditions can be looked at and include different perspectives. In this thesis, we have chosen to bring up the most basic term of tradition, '*traditum*', which, according to Shils, means “anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present” (Quoted from Shils 1981:12). It does not matter what is handed down; whether it is an object, cultural construction or particular process, it is handed down. This definition does not give us much insight because it does not tell us how, when and whether it is passed down orally or in writing. It does not explain if there is a truth in the tradition or who the authors or creators are. It does not include what expectations there are, if it should be appreciated, accepted, re-enacted or assimilated (Shils 1981:12). However, interesting as it is, we will not be answering these points in this thesis, but instead we will be looking at what '*traditum*' means.

Created by human action, traditions have been handed down the generations through imagination and thought. Traditions include things that are handed down such as material objects, beliefs, images of persons, events, institution or pictures, for example books, buildings, paintings and so on. “It includes all that a society of a given time possesses and which already existed when its present possessors came upon it and which is not solely the product of physical possesses in the external world or exclusively the result of ecological and physiological necessity” (Quoted from Shils 1981:12). When it comes to institutions and practices that are made up by human actions, it is not the specific action that is transmitted, because that is not possible. An action stops existing once it has been performed. Human actions only last the time that is required for their performance and after that, they cease to exist. The transmissible part is the pattern, the image of the action that they indicate, the belief requirement to be able to act out those patterns. Specific actions at certain time are leaving a memory or an image that affect our future actions. (Shils 1981:12).

Those who accept a tradition do not necessarily have to call it that because for them it might be obvious. Because when a tradition is accepted, it is both as valid and vital for the person as any other belief or action. It is the “past in the present” although it has present in its action. When we speak of tradition we speak of a person or a thing serving

as a typical example or a person who has responsibility for taking care of something. This is the *traditum*; something that has been and is now handed down. Something that was created, believed or performed in the past and is now transmitted down to future generations. *Tradita* can become objects of passionate attachment to the quality of past which is seen in them. They may be accepted in a way which takes them for granted to act or believe (Shils 1981:13).

The performance of, for example, a celebration is not a tradition according to Edward Shils. Neither are words and an act of expressing a condition of opinion and belief. None of these ideas are a tradition in itself, but all of them in different ways be transmitted as tradition and become traditions. “They reoccur because they are carried as traditions which are re-enacted. The re-enactment is not the tradition; the tradition is the pattern which guides the re-enactment” (Quoted from Shils 1981:31). In the analysis section we will look at how TCK keep traditions as it contributes to belonging and a national feeling.

5.1.5. Theory linked to Analysis

If we think about it, it is not so strange that a person is active on different levels. It should also be obvious to see the different levels as a whole (Nilsson 1996:13). What Björn Nilsson means is that the different levels are important in order to get different perspectives of a person. What we should not forget is that it is the same individual discussed, but in different perspectives.

Here are three summarizing points of what we have discussed so far:

1. We have been looking at the perspective of the individual where identity has a central part. The identity approaches of *Personal Identity*, *Cultural Identity and Group Identity* were discussed. Identity is not fixed but rather a process that is affected by our experiences, but it is also shaped by the discourse of culture and history. For TCKs this means that they are changing categories established by Pollock and Van Reken, *Foreigner*, *Hidden Immigrant*, *Adopted* and *Mirror*, depending on where they are for the moment. Through their stories we will discover their ways of finding an identity.

2. We had a look at what it meant to be a group member. In this section we learned that a person is a social being and we live in relationships. We also learned that a person's identity is partly grounded in our interactions with others. People are constantly part of groups (friendship, work, family, interest, etc) neither consciously nor unconsciously. Reasons for this are people with same needs and goals try to tackle the same issues but also for the companionship. In the analysis we will discuss belonging and what our informants perceive of as home.

3. We have been looking at the society participant and learned that the society structure is about how language and traditions, which are part of nationalism, effects the person's everyday life. This is creating regularity in the individual's life internally by identification and externally through power and force. The smaller groups are linking the individuals with the society. The ideal is to have groups small enough for personal relationships but big enough for variation and stimulation. In the analysis part at this level we will discuss the re-entry processes of the TCKs and in connection to that we will also discuss Swedes as an example of nationalism.

We are not suggesting here that this is the process and experiences of all TCKs. Some TCKs might not have any of these experiences at all; others might recognize one or two. However, through our interviews, as you shall see in the analysis section, we have noticed that there are some common traits.

6. TCK-Life Stories

In this section we will have a look at what came up in our interviews and reconnect it to the theory chapter above. Our aim here is to let the TCKs life story speak on its own and only try to point out the connection to belonging and identity. In doing so we are touching upon topics such as nationalism, “Swedishness”, language and traditions.

We will do our analysis with the help of the different levels established in the theory section, which were: the organism, the individual, the group member and the society participant. As mentioned earlier, we excluded the first level organism since it was not relevant. We have intentionally tried to keep this part less formal because we believe it goes well with the citations of TCKs life stories that we have used.

6.1. The Individual - Who Am I?

Who am I? You may have asked yourself this question at some point. For a TCK, with meetings with different cultures, people and a stressful re-entry process, this question is most relevant. We found a poem written by a woman called Ludie who expressed these thoughts very well. She explains: “this is the first poem that I ever wrote. I think that I was 16. I sat in front of a mirror in my room in Haiti and started to question my identity and what everyone else in that little town that I lived in thought of me. In that culture they are very quick to judge by the outward appearance, which really troubled me. But after living there for a while, this is what I came up with . . .”

Who Am I?

I am who I am

No matter of what you may think of me,

Because I am me,

As you can see

OUTWARDLY.

But inwardly what do you see?

Do you see me differently?

Can you compare this inner me

With the outer me?
Who am I? I ask myself.
Myself being many books upon a shelf.
In a quest for character I search myself.

I do not doubt that I am someone...
A different someone.
Most different someone,
Because I am me,
Most definitely,
INWARDLY.

Because ALL of me,
Inwardly and outwardly,
Makes up me (*Ludie 2009*).

We could spend a lot of time breaking the poem down and defining the meaning of each word. However, the purpose here is rather to let it speak on its own.

As we mentioned, in the *personal identity* section under previous research, that personal identity can be seen as an *identity peg* where information is attached to us to make us a unique human being. All our experiences are attached to us, for a TCK it can be difficult to make sense of all their experiences, especially when moving back to Sweden. One TCK expressed it this way “Out there, I knew who I was. I had a place, a function. When I got home [to Sweden] at the age of 16 I lost my identity. Now after four years I have found an "I" again, I know who I am” (Freely translated by us, Johansson 1993:73). The process of coming “home” to Sweden, the so called re-entry process, has brought forth certain common traits that we brought up in the cultural identity section under previous research. The three common traits that were mentioned were; *chameleons* the ones that try to fit in, the *screamers* those who try to find a difference from identity and the *wall owners*, those who try to find a non-identity. Through our interviews we could see these traits in the people we talked to.

The first is Stephanie, a TCK who was born in Sweden but lived in Cyprus for a few years, when she came back to Sweden she noticed that she was different from everyone else and she wanted to fit, she became a *chameleon*, finding a “same as” identity. Stephanie tells us her story.

“I had very high expectations on Sweden, so when I came I was disappointed! I had hoped for so much. When I came here and I tried to make friends, I did it the same way as I always had done while moving, I tried to make contact with people and I said “Hi!”, however, the Swedish people were very “closed people”, so it was difficult to make friends. I had no idea what was in fashion, so I was wearing old inherited clothes. It was difficult to fit in because I was different from everyone else, I thought differently, I did different things and I dressed differently. It wasn’t easy to be different when I was trying to make friends. I came to middle school I think, so it was difficult. However, I have been able to let go [her TCK experiences], or I have wanted to let go for a while because I wanted to be Swedish and fit in. I believe I am very Swedish, although I might do unconscious things, that I think, and do, that might still be with me. But there was a time that I just wanted to get rid of all the strange things that I did, that no one else could understand and at that time I let go of a lot of things.”¹ (Stephanie)

All our interview candidates expressed a difficulty to fit in when returning to Sweden. This is expressed in different ways. One way was the *chameleons*, as we just read, where Stephanie tried to hide who she really was to be able to fit in with her peers. Another way to react in the re-entry process is the *screamers*, those who try to find a “different from” identity; Pia tells us her story of when she moved back to Sweden after living in America for many years.

“I had some friends that said to me one evening: It’s ok Pia, we see you as Swedish anyways. I got so mad! I have never been so angry in my whole life! I stood up and walked out. I was so angry because I am not Swedish, I don’t feel Swedish. And if they see me as Swedish then what am I? Then I’m nothing, suddenly my whole world changed.”² (Pia)

As we discussed, in the *cultural identity* part, we mentioned David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken's model with the four different boxes. The *Foreigner* who looks different and think different, The *Hidden Immigrant* who look alike but think different, The *Adopted* person who look different but think alike and The *Mirror* category that includes people who look alike and think alike. This story by Pia really expresses the hearts of the TCK of answering the question *Who am I?* She said "*I am not Swedish, I don't feel Swedish. And if they see me as Swedish then what am I?*" This is also an example of the *Hidden Immigrant*: who looks alike but thinks different. Pia looks Swedish, and people around her expect her to be Swedish, and her friends probably thought that they were kind when they told her that "*It's ok Pia, we see you as Swedish anyways*", but it had the opposite effect since Pia thought and felt differently. This is the dilemma for many TCKs; they look alike but think differently. It can be hard for Swedish society to understand this, because the Swedish TCKs are expected to act and behave Swedish by the Swedish society. The cultural clashes occur when the Swedish TCKs do not act according to the norms of the Swedish society. We also mentioned the term *hidden diversity* which basically meant that the experiences we have shape our life and worldview, although this might not always show on the outside. Giddens mentions in the *group identity* section, that our outside behaviour is also influenced by our environment. To have a normal appearance, the outside behaviour and our experiences have to come together.

The last trait, the "*wall owners*", those who try to find a "non-identity", here, Elisabeth who lived in Ethiopia for many years gives her story when she came back to Sweden.

*"Grade 9 in Lund was a difficult experience. I remember it as a grey haze; it was very difficult to adjust. I couldn't identify with anyone, the things that were normal. I couldn't share my own experiences with anyone. Of course many asked questions about how it was to have lived in Ethiopia, however, they did not have the patience to listen to my answer, and it was too strange for them. And in the end I just got quiet..."*³

(Elisabeth)

We were curious to know if all these experiences and meeting with people during their childhood had any effect on their personality so we asked them and all agreed that their growing up abroad had affected and changed their personality very much. Sune, a TCK who grew up in the Middle East, answered the question in this way:

“Yes, it most definitely has! Partly, it has given me another image of the people that I meet. I have a different attitude to the people I meet here that comes from different countries. Another type of curiosity and interest and maybe understanding and empathy or sympathy. Partly because they come from different countries and I know their situation, and partly because I can understand how it is to come to a different country. You get an understanding. And it also affects ones personality that I don’t always act Swedish, there is behaviour in the Swedish way of behaving that I don’t really want to assimilate. One example could be to talk to strangers or to build up a front. Swedish people are, how do you say it, stone cold outwardly many times. It is many Africans and others who say that it is very difficult to make contact and form a close friendship with a Swedish person. But once you start talking [to a Swede] then they can be very nice and when you finally come a little closer, then you can get to know them very well. Other Swedish people have a, you walk past each other, they are being perceived as cold. So you kind of have a face. Other culture doesn’t have this in the same way. You are more open and see people in a different way. I also believe that a part of the personality I have taken upon me by living in a different country you lock away. Because if I should walk around with a big smile and say hello to all the Swedish people here someone would think I am crazy. However, I would have liked to be able to do that. So you lock it away. In reality I have a personality that, how shall I put it, that is affected by the culture I have lived in but I don’t allow it to come forward when I live here [in Sweden]. Sometimes I can experience when I come to another country that suddenly I am the fish in the water, in my right element.”⁴ (Sune)

In conclusion, the identity process for TCKs and how they choose to face the re-entry process are different. Some choose to face it as chameleons, some as screamers and others as wall owners. Whatever way a TCK choose to face the re-entry process, one thing is clear, it is difficult and the ending for Stephanie, Pia and Sune are still to be

seen. However, one thing can be said, identity is a process through life where identity markers are being attached to make us into the unique human beings that we are.

6.2. A Group Member – Belonging

In this section we will discuss how the TCK look at themselves as a group or term. We are trying to find out who they perceive themselves and where they feel like they belong. We asked our candidates what they thought a TCK was and why they feel included in that term, and if they could think of any collective traits. We received the following answers from some of our candidates.

*"I am. Sometimes you feel you perhaps fit in better in other countries, some times it feels "awesome" to be in Sweden after all. And you have a lot experiences you cannot really share with other people, only to tell and they can only try to understand and still they cannot. It is a person who has a lot of experiences but still pretty lost because you carry a lot but don't know what to call home. Usually a person with an outside of one country but an inside of another. Perhaps a Swedish person who has been living all his life in Africa, so you look Swedish but behave lika an African."*⁵ (Stephanie)

*"Divided! That's the right word. You are very divided. Divided is perhaps the best word because you are drawn towards different directions and different parts of cultures you like and things you want to identify yourself with. Perhaps a little bit outside, which I have always been. A little bit outside of the norms of Swedishness. At the same time a very positive side, an understanding and closeness with people of other cultures. It has it sups and downs."*⁶ (Sune)

*"It would be that you have a wider perspective of cultures. You cannot be narrow-minded, it's impossible!"*⁷ (Pia)

*"I believe no matter what you have in your trunk you will carry it with you and you will have good use of it and you will never just let it be. On the contrary it will always be a part of you, both good and bad."*⁸ (Fia)

“You have experienced so much things that, things that you cannot imagine unless you experience it yourself.”⁹ (Petra)

Here we can see clearly two things that are positive which are that they get a larger cultural understanding and understanding for other people. However, the downside is also very clear, a feeling of being divided and a feeling of being alone in their situation. We have also through our interviews encountered an expression of relief and joy to be able to belong to a group: Third Culture Kids and the meaning it can have for the individual. According to John Edwards, group labels provide a connection between the individual and the collective. A group name also signifies that those outside the self-description suggest that those outside the group are different (Edwards 2009:36). Petra expressed her feeling of belonging to a group and the difficulty she encounters by not being able to share it with someone.

“MBT’s [Missionary kids meeting, a camp] are always good, other missionary kids. You can still a little bit [share experiences], you can try to share if you have a friend who perhaps has a parent who is not Swedish can understand you a little bit better than someone who has parents of one nationality. But it is also up to that person.”¹⁰ (Petra)

Birgitta Johansson explains that when the children feel like they lost their identity they can also feel like they lost their confidence. The knowledge and experiences they have acquired suddenly feels worthless. They do not have the knowledge that is important around their peers. They behave in the way that was OK in their host-country but in Sweden it does not work and they do not understand what is wrong. They become confused and do not know how to handle the situation (Johansson 1993:73).

When we asked our candidates where feels like “home” was we received the following thoughts:

“I think Sweden feels more like home, but it took some time for me to admit it. I feel that after being a missionary kid I don’t have a problem living anywhere abroad. Home is probably where I feel at home, with people I get on well with.”¹¹ (Stephanie)

*"One tries to make the place that I am to feel like home. It's like Fia said before, where the pillow is, is at home. But my home is here now. I have two children, I'm married. And my husband is not so interested in going abroad, only to Denmark. One needs to ensure that home is where you are; otherwise you wouldn't be happy."*¹² (Ida)

*"Before I moved to Osby, I didn't like it in Sweden at all. I'm very happy here because I have made a life here. I have good friends, I'm married, I have kids. Here is home, but as soon as I go over to the U.S. and feel the smell and the feeling of being there, automatically I will feel at home. I can go into an American shop and see American candies, which makes me feel at home. But that does not mean I do not feel at home here. I feel at home in my everyday life. But in terms of culture, when I come to the United States, then in some way I just breathe out, now I'm home. I feel a relaxation. I think that I am tenser here, without even thinking about it."*¹³ (Pia)

*"Home is where you sleep. Malmö is home. Everything is like home where I have been for a little while, for me anyway. Linköping, Malmö, Lund, also. Beijing is home as well, where I stayed a bit longer. Losaka also."*¹⁴ (Anna)

*"I was thinking the other day that now I feel quite at home. Before, I always felt like I do not know if I'm supposed to stay here, it felt so uncertain. But now it's the first time that I am in control if I am moving. Before home has always been at my parent's house, not because we have moved so much since we moved back from Zambia. Now it's the first time I feel that I'm in charge, now it's my choice if I want to move. Glad no one else can control over whether I should move or be somewhere else."*¹⁵ (Anna)

*"So, where you currently live? Yes, something like that. And a little bit where the family is. Since I was a missionary kid, or TCK, and travelled around a lot the close family becomes very important. Because it is them I have had with him everywhere. All other friends have been replaced. So where the family is, is also very important."*¹⁶ (Sune)

"Yes, I am beginning to realize more and more the on one hand, it is this contact you have with old friends, classmates, and people who have the same background as me. But also I feel more that it is in Norrbotten. Although there is much that I can not identify with either really, but a lot more in northern than southern Sweden."¹⁷

(Elisabeth)

"So home, home is here. But another thing is where you would most like to be. Because Spain where we lived before has changed, so it would not feel entirely at home to be there. Even if that's the place I would like to be."¹⁸ (Petra)

"Yes, that's a pretty tough question. Because I still have my friends down there. So as soon as I come down there then I am at home because you've noticed that they have not forgotten me, so then you are of course at home as soon as you get down there. But then as soon as one has come up again, I say, "At last I'm home again". Because here I have my family, the house, this is where I live. So home is in both places."¹⁹ (Stina)

In Conclusion, TCKs perceive themselves as someone with abroad cultural perspective cultural diverse and flexible. It is an experienced person but also a person who feels like an outsider. Home for a TCK is more in relationships rather than a place, to sum it up; home is where the heart is.

6.3. The Society participant– Swedes versus the Third Culture Kids

6.3.1. Nationalism – Swedes?

In the theory section earlier we discussed nationalism and how it was related to ethnicity. We also defined that ethnicity "...is marked by shared culture or even to point at 'specific traits' such as shared religion, language and/or customs." (Hylland Eriksen 2002:34). To continue our discussion and bring it to the next level we need to find out who the Swedes are and how others perceive them. This is a crucial point if we want to understand why the society is having the customs and values it has since the characteristics of the individuals will reflect on the values of the society. We will see

this while we move on. A surprising issue that has caught our attention through our interviews with TCKs is their difficulty in understanding the Swedish people after returning to Sweden. The TCKs that we are focusing on are Swedish by nationality and raised by Swedish parents, who returned to their own people and their own country, so why is it difficult? What can be said to be the typical Swedish characteristics?

According to Åke Daun, strangers interpret Swedes to be emotionally cold. They do not show much emotion, they do not really argue against something or someone, they do not shift moods or temper but prefer to speak with a low and moderate voice. These observations are based on prejudice, but are the results of strangers' observations (Daun 2005:12). This is also a reflection of what Swedes consider as good manners. For example you should not speak loud and fast, you should not interrupt when someone else is speaking or being obstinate. Expressing your personal opinion or attacking someone with a different opinion would also be considered as bad manners. Avoiding sensitive and hard topics is a way to maintain the "nice and calm" atmosphere. To quote one of the foreigners giving his thoughts of Swedes in, we think, a comical way:

"Sweden is a clean country where quiet and cold people eat sweet bread and commit suicide." (Daun 2005:13, our translation).

There are other characteristics that are given to Swedes that Swedes themselves consider as positive. Foreigners consider Swedes as educated, organized, reliable, rational, effective, honest, willing to compromise, punctual, quiet and "just enough" (Daun 2005:61). How you value different characteristics differs between countries and cultures. However, Åke Daun brings up many examples from the business world, but we are only going to mention a few of them here.

For example, in an international context being organized means a lot of reports, evaluations and reports again, which are considered as unnecessary and bureaucratic. Being punctual for Swedes mean to have schedules. Meetings are scheduled to start at a certain time and finishing at another. This is part of being effective and rational, but the foreign colleague might consider this as lack of interest. Since you never know how the discussion during a meeting will develop, the foreign colleague would find it odd if a discussion had to end because time is up. The foreigner then would consider the Swedes

lacking interest, unsympathetic and stiff in their personal relations (Daun 2005:63). Time is obviously very important for a Swede. Ida and Fia expresses their disappointment of Swedes being so structured and time oriented.

“That is what I find most difficult. In Sweden you should preferably call two days ahead if you want to meet.”²⁰ (Fia)

“You cannot just show up, which you can in Africa.”²¹ (Ida)

“In Africa you just show up. Even though I have 100 other things I have to do I just drop everything I do because I have received a guest and it is so much more important. I would have liked the Swedes not to be so bound with just only the Swedish, but could embrace some of the other.”²² (Fia)

“I want to have the open home where people can just show up and it is not a problem.”²³ (Fia)

Then we also have what Swedes consider as negative characteristics; lack of social skills, shyness, self-satisfaction, stiffness, jealousy and fear of making a fool of oneself (Daun 2005:65). Again, this is a reflection of what is considered “correct” behaviours by Swedes and ways of interactions in Swedish society. This is challenged by especially highly educated Swedes who have been travelling around the world a lot. They tend to develop a condescending attitude towards fellow Swedes. International Swedes adopt and change their behaviours and manners and become more talkative, more easy-going, flexible and socially generous (Daun 2005:65). These Swedes are not following the norms and are therefore being excluded in one way or another. Stephanie explains how her behaviour changed while living in Cyprus and how difficult it was for her to come back to the Swedish society where there were different norms.

“And then there are some attitude things, ways of perceiving things that I have adopted from Cyprus. Some of the attitude of making things happen they had on Cyprus: “I am the best and I know this.” So “I can fix this!” Perhaps that is the way you still feel. That

you are not as shy. It was a lot that “I am the best”, “I know this”, you help yourself. And I was like that in Sweden as well but it was not really appropriate.”²⁴ (Stephanie)

As we spoke to our candidates we realised that sometimes norms are connected to our perception of nationality. Many of our informants were facing this issue when they returned to Sweden after some time abroad.

“It is like this, if I only say that I am Swedish and they see me talking with other persons they tell me “You are not Swedish. Because you are more open, which means that you are originally from another country.”²⁵ (Stina)

Quotes like this are confirming the stereotype of the Swedes as sometimes being an emotionally cold and shy people. Ida illustrates this by the following quote:

“I guess typically Swedish is having this square and “Do not come inside my sphere, my private sphere!” While I can feel very “Come! Come!”²⁶ (Ida)

As we continue our interviews we realise that nationality and belonging is not as obvious as many might think. Both Swedes and our Swedish TCKs find it difficult in identifying the TCKs belonging. Elisabeth described this as a journey of maturity and it had to do with how you personally getting more mature. At a young age she was against everything that had to do with Sweden just to make a statement:

“Almost all my life I have hated Sweden and loathed everything that had to do with Swedish culture. Astrid Lindgren and Evert Taube have been able to make my heart pound of national pride, but everything else I have loathed.”²⁷ (Elisabeth)

Despite these strong statements against Sweden Elisabeth would consider herself Swedish, even though she cannot really put her finger on what made her feel Swedish:

“If someone asks me where I am from, of course I would say I am Swedish. My parents are Swedish, I have Swedish passport. I can never say what it is that makes me Swedish.

I always add "...but I have been living in a lot of places" or "...I have been moving around a lot". I am never satisfied with just saying I am Swedish because it never feels totally correct. There are so many other things as well."²⁸ (Elisabeth)

During our interviews it was more common that our informants were caught in between two cultures. They could not really identify themselves as Swedes, neither were they accepted as Swedes.

"But for example if I am in Sweden and say I am Swedish then some would say "No, no, you are Spanish!" and other would say "No, no, you are Swedish, but you have your roots in Spain!" A lot of people can tell a difference of me from other Swedes because they think I am more foreign that way than Swedish."²⁹ (Stina)

Using a quote from earlier, we have Pia, who did not feel part of Swedish, society or Swedish, during the initial time after moving to Sweden from the United States:

"Then you are being reminded all the time for not being Swedish. I had a couple of friends telling me one evening: "It does not matter Pia, we still consider you as a Swede." I got furious, I do not think I have been so angry in my whole life. I rose and left. I was so angry because I am not a Swede, I do not feel like a Swede. But they consider me as a Swede so what am I? Then I am nothing, suddenly my whole world changed."³⁰ (Pia)

We also had more certain answers with no doubt and one that is almost the total opposite:

"But what!? We are Swedes!"³¹ (Emma)

"Never, I believe you will never really feel Swedish."³² (Ida)

The biggest issue though is to be accepted by the Swedish society. Jacklyn, who has been living abroad in several countries in Europe for many years, told us that she finds

it very difficult to make new friends in Sweden, even though she knows the language and the culture. She finds it much easier to establish contact with people with a foreign background. Her social network in Sweden at this point consists of Swedes she met during her time in Belgium, whom also moved back to Sweden, but at an earlier stage.

When talking about the Swedish society and the difficulty of fitting in as a TCK we have given many examples. We would like to give one more that expresses in a particular way one reason why TCK find it so difficult to assimilate into Swedish society. Pia expressed frustration about something called Jantelagen (in English it would be translated as Jante's law or the Law of Jante):

“The law of Jante, that you are not allowed to be good at anything.”³³ (Pia)

What is the Jantelagen? To really define it and explain the meaning of it we would be required to write another thesis. However, since Pia is mentioning it, we feel obliged to at least introduce it and explain it briefly. The whole phenomenon of Jantelagen is, according to Appelqvist and Pedersen, very complex and has existed for as long as humans have been living in groups. It was put on paper by the Danish author Aksel Sandemose in 1899-1965 (Appelqvist and Pedersen 2009:25). In Scandinavian people are more generally living according to it, even though it might be done unconsciously (Appelqvist and Pedersen 2009:28). The Jantelagen are several unwritten laws within society to keep you in the group. It is a heritage from the agricultural society when it was important to stay together and have a “nice and quiet” atmosphere (Appelqvist and Pedersen 2009:29-30). The basic idea of Jantelagen is “You shall not stand out nor shall you believe that you are in any way better than anyone else”, which means that it is preventing you from personal development.

As we mentioned previously our targeted TCKs are Swedish by nationality and who have come back to their own people and their own country but find it difficult to fit in. We believe that the diversity of answers from our informants is confirming that establishing fixed characteristics associated with Swedes is difficult. On the other hand it sometimes confirms our assumption that these characteristics exist and the majority of the Swedish population would probably fit into these characteristics. This is also the

reason our participants have been, and still are, facing obstacles in the Swedish society as well as in their own search for their self-identity.

6.3.2. Language

President Theodore Roosevelt once said: “We have room for but one language in this country and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding-house” (Quoted from Crawford, 2000, p.8). In this quote Roosevelt pointed out the importance of language by linking the American national identity with the English language. Having a national identity is important not only for the individual but also for a country, one way of building national identity is through language. It was not our first intention to write about language so we didn't ask any questions about language to our interview candidates. However, it kept coming up through the interviews and we realized that it is an important part for a TCK, therefore a reason to be discussed. It is not our purpose to discuss the origin or the construction of language here since we find it irrelevant for this thesis. However, through our interviews many TCK have expressed a mix of frustration, excitement and difficulties in not fully comprehend the Swedish language during their re-entry process, Ida had a difficult experience when she came back to Sweden:

”It was difficult to come back to Sweden... we came home to Sweden when I was going to start first grade and at that time I could barely speak any Swedish at all. It made it hard to be understood.”³⁴ (Ida)

Sune had a more positive experience when he came back to Sweden and realised that:

“All of a sudden I could understand what people around me said! That was so cool! Other people could speak Swedish!”³⁵ (Sune)

Many of the TCKs that we spoke to had difficulty with the Swedish language. It seemed like their parents did not encourage this very much, however Sune did say that his parents did try with a distance learning course.

”Yes we tried. We got books that we had ordered from Sweden, so that we could take distance learning course where we were suppose to read these Swedish books and follow the course. However, we were not so good at keeping it up.”³⁶ (Sune)

How much of the Swedish language that the parents encouraged we don't know. According to Birgitta Johansson it is important to develop a mother tongue when the child is very small. By giving a child the Swedish language, it also means that we transfer gestures, faces, and body language that are connected to the Swedish language. Even if, as adult, we are very good at speaking other languages it is very important to speak in our mother tongue to express our feelings (Johansson 1993:62). Children in Sweden often learn their first language in pre-school and day care; however, abroad they might have a foreign nanny who will teach them another language. Furthermore, if the parents are away a lot then it is more important for these children to learn Swedish than for those who live in Sweden (Johansson, 1993:63).

Pia tells her story of her difficulty with the Swedish language when returning to Sweden after several years in America.

“It was pretty fun to make fun of me, to joke with someone who didn't know the language, even the teachers joked with me. I remember once when my Physical Educations teacher told me, he stopped me one day and said that “we are going to make a physical test in gymnastics today, go and tell everyone that we are going to make a physical test today”. The language barrier there was that I could not hear the difference between an ”Y” and an ”I”. So I run to everyone and told them that we were going to make fart test in the gymnastics lecture today. Today that is pretty funny, however, to be standing there at 13 years old and being the laughing stock of the whole group, which I was though!”³⁷ (Pia)

This quotation was originally in Swedish and in the Swedish language. The mistake she made here was that she could not hear the difference between the letters “y” and “i”. The word physical in Swedish is spelled “fys” and the word fart in Swedish is spelled “fis”. So in other words, she pronounced the word wrong and she ended up saying fart instead of physical.

According to Dr. Ruth Useem, 90 percent of children who grew up abroad were able to speak another language. Many were able to speak more than one language and all of them found it easier to learn a foreign language than they would have otherwise (Johansson 1993:85). Stina and Petra, two sisters who grew up in Spain and learned to speak Spanish fluently. They describe how they keep their host country language when they have moved to Sweden and how this is still part of their identity in Sweden today.

Stina – “I speak the language often! Sometimes if I am upset with Petra I might use Spanish because it goes faster.”

Petra – “It is easier to scream on each other. No Swedish understand as well. So if one is angry it works excellent!”³⁸

Anna Reet Gillblad describe the importance for children who are brought up abroad to learn the Swedish language, and how this is connected to nationalism. *“Each language represents a culture which in turn represents of display values, lifestyles, and ways to use the thought. Language as a mediator of these values is a prerequisite for national feeling and affection”* (Quoted from Johansson, 1993:62, our translation).

In conclusion, language is important in many aspects, both as a part of nationalism but also as part of identity and as we learned from Giddens in the language theory section, language is a platform where one can express ones experiences, memories and socialization.

6.3.3. Traditions

Swedish traditions are often celebrated with special care abroad, taking the best parts of Christmas, Easter and Mid-summer celebrations. According to Birgitta Johansson it is good to explain the reasons why we celebrate these traditions since this knowledge contributes to a national feeling. It is important to know that you are

Swedish, even if you are a Swede abroad (Johansson, 1993:65). This is because traditions cause people and groups to feel united. They become visible characteristics of history, purpose and relationship. We can see this in nations, in ethnic groups and on a family level (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009:220). We asked our candidates if they kept any Swedish traditions while living abroad, Stina explains:

*"We had all the Swedish traditions. At home we lived within the Swedish culture. We did eat Spanish food, but on major holidays it was always Swedish."*³⁹ (Stina)

Most of our candidates said the same thing; at home they were Swedish and kept to the Swedish traditions. Home in this sense is the house or compound in which they lived. Even though they were Swedish at home, they showed a willingness to participate in local traditions. It seemed like all our participants had a very positive attitude when it came to local traditions and culture. Pia gives her story.

*"My parents adopted the entire American culture. We were very much Americans, except Christmas Eve. Some Swedish traditions and [my parents] had of course brought some of their Swedish upbringing with them which meant that we were grown up a little bit different, but we adopted the American culture and my parents say they feel more at home in the U.S. than they do in Sweden today. It was a choice, an active choice to adopt the American culture. They fell in love with the country and wanted to become Americans. And we never thought of anything else. When I moved here, I was very American."*⁴⁰ (Pia)

Pia was a TCK from America; however, TCKs from Africa expresses the same attitude towards the host countries culture. Fia and Ida who lived in Kenya and Zaire for many years explain:

*"I think especially when you move to Africa where there is so much cultural difference; you must adopt the culture. You have to do it because otherwise, you are so far outside the culture that you never get to fit in. Therefore, you must embrace everything, whether you think it is right or wrong."*⁴¹ (Fia)

*"If you will live in a country like Africa, for example, a country like Kenya I mean, you just had to be prepared to adapt to the culture. That it is not as in Sweden. So you adopt the local culture to maximum."*⁴² (Ida)

It is interesting to hear their open attitude and respect towards a new culture and to be willing to adjust to it even though they might not, as they put it, think it is right or wrong. Sune, a TCK from Yemen expressed the same care and awareness of other cultures, and traditions as Fia and Ida did. In Sune's story we can also see the same things as we mentioned before, the switch between being Swedish at home in the house or compound and cultural aware outside. Sune tells his story:

*"What we can say is that we took of course good care during Ramadan and its festivities. These things you didn't have to think about when you came to Sweden. Ramadan was about that you could not eat anything until the evening. Then when we kids ran around ... I remember on one occasion when we took a raisin and an Arab man came up to mom and became very angry and said, "You shall not keep on tempting us during Ramadan and fasting time like that." So we watched ourselves very carefully. When we are outdoors, we cannot eat something because we cannot tempt those who are fasting. So, we respected their holidays when we lived there, but when we came home [to Sweden] we didn't have to think about that anymore."*⁴³ (Sune)

TCKs might be more open for new cultures than keeping the Swedish one. According to Birgitta Johansson it is important for children to have knowledge of Swedish culture. If they acquire this knowledge, they will be able to integrate more easily when returning to Swedish society. Parents have this responsibility for, they are able to, through books, newspapers, and conversation convey their knowledge to the children. As adults it can be easier to miss some since it seems so obvious (Johansson, 1993:64). One "Swedish" tradition that was kept by all our interview candidates was Christmas. Christmas was one tradition that seemed to be especially popular and most of our interview candidates had an experience or memory that they were willing to share.

*"In the U.S., they celebrated on Christmas Day, everyone opened their presents on Christmas Day, and we always had Christmas Eve Mass' in church on Christmas Eve at 18: 00 and when I came to church with all my Christmas presents and everyone was so jealous of me, and I was so happy! We always had Swedish Christmas."*⁴⁴ (Pia)

*"Yes, we always celebrated Christmas in the Swedish way. In Holland, we were always home for Christmas. We also dressed up as Santa's elves and handed out gingerbread at my father's job in Taiwan."*⁴⁵ (Emma)

*"Christmas songs, things like that. That we had left when we were in Cyprus, where we sang Christmas carols always like this, Swedish songs. I think we had recorded Donald Duck actually, that we watched the same time every Christmas. We put it on DVD or VHS. We had this kind of three lanterns that we had at the window that we put up that might not be so common in all countries."*⁴⁶ (Stephanie)

*"Yes, we did! We would definitely have a Christmas tree on Christmas Eve in Yemen. So we picked up a palm tree, then palm branches as we sat in a pot. Then we decorated it to a Christmas tree. So it was a way of trying to preserve. Then I believe my father and mother searched for commodities of various kinds, thus Swedish goods, to cook the food."*⁴⁷ (Sune)

According to Pollock and Van Reken something can become a family tradition very easily. You start out doing something you like and without realising it has become a tradition because it will not feel the same without it. This is how a family builds a sense of identity and belonging. However being a TCK and away from many family reunions it requires conscious planning to keep tradition going. To developed tradition in a cross-cultural setting is important and can also be a lot of fun. As new ideas are taken up from different places, traditions also become a way to make family history (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:220). They continue this when they are back home because it is now part of the family history (Pollock & Van Reken 2009:220). We asked our interview candidates what traditions they brought back to Sweden.

"Yeah, we have gained a bit of food knowledge, and some interior."⁴⁸ (Stephanie)

"Christmas songs. I like Spanish Christmas Carols more. We have a lot of Spanish Christmas candy that we like. Turrón, Polvorones."⁴⁹ (Petra)

"We might sometimes make some Spanish food."⁵⁰ (Stina)

*"We were very Swedish when we were in Cyprus, but what we got from Cyprus and the other countries I think we have kept. You notice it when talking with other families. But its pretty commonplace for us, I do not think much of it actually that it is different."⁵¹
(Stephanie)*

Food and songs were popular to bring back from other cultures. However, while talking to our candidates we discovered that there were a lot of cultural traits that they wanted to bring back from their host culture to Sweden but felt it very frustrating and difficult to keep them or introduce them in the Swedish society. Fia tells her story (same quotation as used on page 45):

"In Africa you just show up. Even though I have 100 other things I have to do I just drop everything I do because I have received a guest and it is so much more important. I would have liked the Swedes not to be so bound with just only the Swedish, but could embrace some of the other. I want this open house where people can just turn up and there is no problem."⁵² (Fia)

Three of our candidates mentioned the Swedish bus trip as being very special. Here Stina and Petra shares their experience:

"For example here in Sweden if you want to travel on the bus people choose to sit on their own, and only sit next to one another if they have to. In Spain there will be people that sit next to you and start talking about half his life without knowing who you are. You do not have to know the person to sit next to you."⁵³ (Stina)

“Even if someone is sitting alone on the bus and they would go and sit next to you even if they could have chosen any seat in the bus otherwise.”⁵⁴ (Stina)

In conclusion, TCKs keep an open mind and attitude toward the cultures that they live in. However, the Swedish traditions are still kept while living abroad in the safety of the home, or house. They are being celebrated with special care, especially Christmas. Traditions are important to keep since they create people and groups, in this case a family, to feel united. It is how a family builds a sense of identity and belonging. The knowledge of the Swedish traditions helps TCKs when they return to Sweden and the Swedish society.

7. Conclusion

“Home. Is there a more evocative word in all the English Language?”

– The artist Thomas Kinkade (Kinkade 2008).

Home can mean so many different things. It can be the house that one lives in or a country; it can be a relationship, a family. It can also be something that is so familiar that it brings a feeling of home. Home can have many different meanings for different people. What does “home” mean for a TCK who have been brought up in different cultures, where there have been changes not only in country, house and surroundings but also changes in their relationships? What does it mean coming back to Sweden, an unfamiliar country but where people greet them “Welcome home!”? With these thoughts in mind we set out to do our thesis on Swedish TCKs. By looking at theories of identity, group belonging and nationalism we connected it with TCKs life stories of today.

In the beginning of our thesis we introduced four different levels, three that we used; the individual, the group member and the society participant. The reason we did this was to enable us to learn as much as possible by looking at different perspectives of a TCKs’ life. In the individual level we introduced *identity*; personal identity, group identity and cultural identity which all contributed to understanding and defining a TCK. We learned that there was a definition for TCKs from David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken, which said that a TCK is a person who has been living abroad during his or her developing years; during these years they have built relationships with several cultures but does not have ownership of any, so they end up developing their own culture. TCKs perceive themselves as someone with diverse and cultural experience but also a bit like an outsider. This is because they identify with being a *hidden immigrant* when they return to Sweden, those who look alike but think different. It can also be called *hidden diversity*, which means experiences that shapes a person’s life and worldview but do not show on the outside. This is because all our experiences are attached to us like *identity pegs* to create the unique human being that we are. Like the words we read in Ludie’s poem “Inwardly and outwardly, Makes up me.” Identity is a

process through life, for a TCK there is a specific process that can be very stressful, the re-entry process. In the re-entry process three common traits were identified as TCKs reactions when returning, in this case to Sweden. It is important to know oneself because by knowing oneself contributes to knowing where one belongs.

In the group member level we learned that we live a great part of our lives in a group, for example a family. There are few things that we do as human beings that do not affect others. We are social beings which live in groups, the groups are needed because it is in groups that we meet our society, they are the links between the society and the individual. There is a need for people to come together in groups to tackle mutual problems and have companionship. TCKs sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. A person's identity is partly grounded in our identification and interactions with others. TCKs feel at home in relationships rather than a place.

In the society participant level we looked at how nationalism creates a sense of belonging through language and traditions. We wanted to find out how nationalism contributed to a sense of "Swedishness". Society and the individual are linked, this way social norms can be learned and influence. In other words, when TCKs miss out on these social norms because they live abroad it is difficult for them when they return to Sweden as we have seen through the stories that have been told. Language and traditions are two ways of creating national identity for TCKs, since it is important to know that one is Swedish even if one is a Swede abroad. Language also provides a platform of expression of one's experiences, memories and socialization. Traditions have a way of looking into the past and at the same time including the future. The tradition definition that we used here, the *traditum*, which is something that has been and is now handed down, such as Christmas that is being celebrated by all our interview candidates. This way TCKs remember where they come from and keep a little bit of their nationality with them when abroad. But it does not hinder TCKs to be open-minded and have a positive attitude toward the host countries cultures that they live in. The difficulty that TCKs have when coming back to Sweden is that they have difficulties understanding the Swedish people. This is because as Åke Daun says, Swedish people are sometimes perceived as emotionally cold. We also brought up the phenomenon of *Jantelagen*, "you should not be better than anyone else"-attitude. Which

also contributes to a difficulty when TCKs are returning from abroad where they do not have this phenomenon. To integrate in the Swedish society is proven to be a difficult task for TCKs, which is why they act like chameleons – those who try to find a “same as” identity, as screamers – those who try to find a “different from” identity and as wall owners – those who try to find a “non-identity” to be able to somehow fit in.

Our first hypothesis was “If home is a place, then Sweden may be the home for Swedish TCKs.” We were wrong in this assumption since we have realised after this research that home is not a specific place for a TCK. Home is rather here and now. For a TCK this can mean in a small village in Africa, or a big city in America, or it can be where the family is at that particular time. Or it can be a decision that is made; “Here I will make my home.” Our second hypothesis was “If home is a feeling, then home may be where Swedish TCKs identify themselves.” This assumption turned out to be more complicated than we first thought. The feeling of home or belonging is difficult to define since it is personal and abstract. Some of our informants defined home as where one’s pillow is, another said where the family was, a third said where you sleep is where your home is. Our aim for writing this thesis was to look at how the Swedish third culture kids find a sense of identity and belonging in their re-entry process. We have tried to identify issues in Swedish TCKs life stories of today as best we can. Writing this thesis, using the words of a TCK, “*You realise it really is a small world after all*” (Kerr 2007:8). Home can mean so many different things. It can be a feeling of belonging made by nationalism through language, traditions, and it can be to know who I am as a unique person, a Third Culture Kid.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Initial letter for recruiting participants for the thesis

Hejsan!

Vi heter Henrik Wu och Rebecka Koolash och vi är studenter på IMER (Internationell Migration och Etniska Relationer) på Malmö Högskola. Vi kommer att skriva vår C-uppsats den kommande terminen och den kommer handla om *Third Culture Kids*. Fokus kommer att vara på individens identitet efter att ha bott utomlands en längre tid och sedan flytta till/tillbaka till Sverige.

Vi är intresserade av att få göra en intervju med dig! Allra helst en personlig intervju, men av förståeliga logistiska skäl kommer det inte vara möjligt i de flesta fall. I så fall kommer intervjuerna att ske via telefon alternativt Skype. Vi uppskattar att en intervju kommer ta ca en timme. Om du är man eller kvinna, har bott utomlands i minst ett år under åldrarna 5-20, har tid och är villig att ställa upp på en intervju vänligen kontakta oss då! Kontaktinfo hittar du i slutet! Tack på förhand!

Du får gärna vidarebefordra detta brev till andra personer som du tror kan passa in på beskrivningen ovan. Vi vill gärna ha svar senast den 1 november 2010, så att vi kan planera in alla intervjuerna.

Med vänlig hälsning,

Henrik Wu, henrik_wu@hotmail.com, Mobile: 0700-608 139

Rebecka Koolash, rebecka_koolash@yahoo.com, Mobile: 0761- 383 379”

Our English version of the letter

Hi!

Our names are Henrik Wu and Rebecka Koolash and we are students at IMER (International Migration and Ethnic Relations) at Malmö University. We will write our C-thesis this semester and it will be on Third Culture Kids. Focus will be on the identity of the individual after living abroad a significant time and later moving to/back to Sweden.

We would like to meet you for an interview! Preferably a personal interview, but we know it will not be possible in most cases due to logistic reasons. In those cases the interviews will be conducted through phone or Skype. We estimate an interview to take approximately one hour.

The person we are looking for:

If you are a male or female, have been living abroad at least one year during the ages of 5-20, have time and are willing to participate in an interview, please contact us! Contact information can be found at the bottom of this letter. Thank you in advance!

Please forward this letter to other persons you think might fit in the description above.

We would like to have a respond latest 1st of November 2010, in order to book and plan the interviews.

Sincerely yours,

Henrik Wu, henrik_wu@hotmail.com, 0700-608 139

Rebecka Koolash, rebecka_koolash@yahoo.com, 0761- 383 379

Appendix 2. Questionnaire for the interviews

1. Vad kan du berätta om hur det var för dig att komma tillbaka till Sverige? Vill du beskriva dina upplevelser som kan vara positiva och negativa. Hur lång tid tror du att det tar att känna sig hemma i det svenska samhället?
2. Gjorde ni något aktivt för att bevara svenska traditioner när ni bodde utomlands? Vad? Har ni fortfarande dessa traditioner när ni kom tillbaka till Sverige? Har de förändrats sedan ni kom tillbaka till Sverige?
3. Identifierar du dig som svensk? Varför, varför inte?
4. Hur talade ni om "hemma" när ni bodde utomlands?
5. Hur var känslan att komma "hem"? Var det som du hade förväntat dig?
6. Hur mycket av den lokala kulturen adopterade du när du bodde utomlands? Har du bevarat dessa influenser även när du flyttat till Sverige?
7. Har utlandsvistelsen påverkar din personlighet? På vilket sätt?
8. Vad känns "hemma" för dig?
9. Hur skulle du definiera en "Third Culture Kid" och varför ser du dig själv som en "Third Culture Kid"?

Our English version of the Questionnaire for the interviews

1. Can you tell us something how it felt for you to come back to Sweden? Can you give us an example of something positive and something negative? How long do you think it takes to feel at home in the Swedish society?
2. Did you do something active to keep Swedish traditions when you lived abroad? What? Do you still have these traditions when you came back to Sweden? Have they changed since you came back to Sweden?
3. You identify yourself as a Swedish? Why, why not?
4. How did you talk about "home" when you lived abroad?
5. How was the feeling to come "home"? Was it as you expected?
6. How much of the local culture did you adopt when you lived abroad? Have you kept these influences even when you moved to Sweden?
7. Has the time abroad affected your personality? In what way?
8. What feels like "home" for you?
9. How would you define a "Third Culture Kid" and why do you see yourself as a "Third Culture Kid"?

Appendix 3. Original quotations in Swedish

¹ ”Jag hade väldigt höga förväntningar på Sverige så när jag väl kom dit så blev jag lite besviken. För att man hade hoppats på så mycket och så kom man hit och försöker komma in bland vänner och man agerar precis som man alltid har gjort när man har flyttat omkring man försöker få kontakt och säger ”Hej”, men i Sverige så var dom ganska stängda människor, så det var ganska svårt att få vänner. Och jag hade ingen aning om vad som var modernt, så jag klädde mig i gamla ärvda kläder. Det var svårt att passa in för att man var lite annorlunda, man tänkte annorlunda, man gjorde annorlunda saker, klädde sig lite annorlunda och det var inte så lätt att vara annorlunda när man skulle skaffa kompisar. Jag kom ju till mellanstadiet eller nått tror jag, så det blev lite svårt. Men, jag har nog kunnat släppa det, eller jag har nog velat släppa det ett tag, för att man ville bli svensk och passa in. Jag är nog ganska mycket svensk, men det kanske är omedvetna saker som jag inte tänker på riktigt som jag gör och som jag tycker och tänker som finns med. Men det var ett tag då jag bara ville göra mig av med allt konstigt som jag höll på med som ingen annan förstod mig och då släppte man verkligen mycket.” (Stephanie)

² ”Man påminns ju hela tiden att man inte är svensk. Jag hade några vänner som sa till mig en kväll: ”Det gör ingenting Pia, vi ser dig ändå som svensk.”. Jag blev vansinnig, jag har nog aldrig blivit så arg i hela mitt liv. Jag ställde mig upp och gick därifrån. Jag var så arg för jag är inte svensk, jag känner mig inte svensk. Och om dom ser mig som svensk vad är jag då för någonting? Då är jag ingenting, helt plötsligt så förändrades hela min värld.” (Pia)

³ ”Sedan gick jag årskurs 9 i Lund, det var också en svår upplevelse. Det minns jag som ett grått töcken, väldigt jobbigt att anpassa sig. Det där att man inte kunde identifiera sig med någon och att man... Det som var normalt, man upplever för sig själv, kunde inte dela med någon. Många ställde självklart frågor om hur det var att bo i Etiopien, men så orkar de inte lyssna på svaren, liksom det var för främmande för dem. Och sedan tystnade man bara till slut.” (Elisabeth)

⁴ ”Ja, det har det absolut gjort! Det har det gjort. Dels har det gett en helt annan bild av de människor man har mött. Man har en annan inställning till de människor som man möter här som kommer från andra länder. En annan typ av nyfikenhet och intresse och kanske förståelse och empati eller sympati. Dels för att de kommer från andra länder och man vet deras situation, men dels också att man förstår hur det är att komma till ett annat land. Man får en förståelse. Sen så påverkar det ens personlighet också att man inte alltid beter sig helt svenskt utan det finns beteende i det svenska sättet att vara som man inte vill ta till sig riktigt. Till exempel kan vara att prata med främlingar eller att bygga upp en fasad. Vad då bygga upp en fasad? Svenskar är ju vad heter det, stenkalla utåt sett många gånger. Det är många afrikaner och andra som säger att det är jättesvårt att ta kontakt och komma under skinnet på en svensk. Men när du väl börjar prata då kan de vara jättetrevliga och när du väl kommer lite närmre, då kan du komma under skinnet väldigt snabbt. Annars har svenskar en... Man går förbi varandra, man uppfattas väldigt hårda och så där. Så man har lite grann av en fasad. Det har inte alla andra kulturer på samma sätt. Utan man är betydligt öppnare och ser människor på ett annat sätt. Sen tror jag också att en del utav den personlighet som man har tagit till sig från att ha bott utomlands låser man in lite grann. Därför att om jag skulle ta ett brett leende och hälsa på alla i Sverige här så skulle någon ganska snart tycka att jag är en tok av något slag. Men jag skulle egentligen vilja göra så. Så man låser in det lite grann. Man har egentligen en personlighet som, vad heter det... Som är påverkad av den kultur man har levt i men man tillåter den inte helt och hållet komma fram när bor här. Ibland kan jag uppleva när man kommer till ett annat land att helt plötsligt är man som fisken i vattnet, i sitt rätta element.” (Sune)

⁵ ”Jag är det. Man känner sig ibland att man kanske passar bättre in i andra länder, ibland känner man att det är ganska ”gött” ändå att vara i Sverige. Och man har så mycket erfarenheter som man inte riktigt kan dela med andra människor utan man kan bara berätta och dom kan bara försöka att förstå men så kan dom ändå inte det. Det är nog en person med mycket erfarenheter men ändå ganska vilsen, för man har med sig mycket men man vet inte vad man kan kalla hem. Det är oftast en person med ett yttre av ett land men en erfarenhet, en kultur av ett annat land. Kanske en svensk människa

men som har bott i Afrika hela sitt liv, så man ser svensk ut men man betar sig som en afrikan.” (Stephanie)

⁶ ”Delad! Det är väl rätt ord. Man är väldigt delad. Delad är nog det bästa ordet därför att man liksom dras åt olika håll och olika delar av kulturerna man tycker om och olika saker man vill definiera sig vid. Lite utanför kanske, det har man alltid varit. Lite utanför den här normen av svenskhet. Samtidigt en väldigt positiv sida, en förståelse och en närhet med människor från andra kulturer. Det har sina positiva och negativa sidor.” (Sune)

⁷ ”Det skulle nog vara det att man har en bredare kultursyn. Man kan inte var trångsynt, det är omöjligt!” (Pia)

⁸ ”Jag tror att oavsett vad man har i bagaget så har man det med sig och man drar nytta av det och man kommer aldrig bara låta det vara. Utan det kommer alltid att vara en del av en, på gott och ont.” (Fia)

⁹ ”Man har ju upplevt massa saker som, grejer som man inte kan föreställa sig om man inte har upplevt det själva.” (Petra)

¹⁰ ”MBT:are [Missionärs barns träffen, ett läger]går alltid bra, andra missionärsbarn. Man kan ju ändå lite [dela erfarenheter], kan man ju dela med sig om man har någon kompis som kanske har en förälder som inte är svensk kan förstå en lite bättre än om man har någon som har föräldrar av en nationalitet. Men det är ju också upp till personen.” (Petra)

¹¹ ”Jag tror att Sverige känns hemma, men det tog nog ett tag att erkänna det. Jag känner att efter det här med missionärsbarn så har man inget problem med att bo någon annan stans utomlands. Hemma är nog mer vart man trivs, med människor man trivs med.” (Stephanie)

¹² ”Man får ju försöka göra stället man är till hemma. Det är som Fia sa innan, där kudden är, är hemma. Men mitt hem det är här nu. Jag har två barn, jag är gift. Och min man är inte så jätteintresserad av att åka utomlands annat än till Danmark. Man får ju se till att hemma är där man är. Annars så trivs man ju inte.” (Ida)

¹³ ”Innan jag flyttade till Osby så trivdes jag inte i Sverige över huvudtaget. Jag trivs väldigt bra här för jag har gjort ett liv här. Jag har goda vänner, jag är gift, jag har barn. Här är ju hemma, men så fort jag åker över till USA och är där så på nåt sätt så bara man känner doften och känslan utav att vara där så automatiskt så känner man sig hemma. Jag kan gå in i en amerikansk affär och se amerikanska godisar, då känner jag mig hemma. Men det betyder inte att jag inte känner mig hemma här. Jag känner mig hemma i min vardag. Men kulturmässigt när jag kommer till USA, då på nåt sätt så pustar man ut, nu är jag hemma. Alltså man känner en avslappning. Man går nog och är lite mer spänd här utan att man ens tänker på det.” (Pia)

¹⁴ ”Hemma är där man sover. Malmö är hemma. Allt är liksom hemma där man har varit en liten stund, för mig iallafall. Linköping, Malmö, Lund också. Beijing är väl också hemma, där jag bott lite längre. Losaka också.” (Mia)

¹⁵ ”Jag tänkte härom dagen att nu känner jag mig ganska hemma. Innan har jag alltid känt så här att jag inte vet om jag ska vara kvar, att det känns så ovisst. Men nu är det första gången som det är jag som styr om jag flyttar. Innan har det alltid varit hemma hos mina föräldrar, inte för att vi har flyttat så mycket sedan vi flyttade tillbaka från Zambia. Nu är det första gången som jag känner att här är det jag som bestämmer, nu är det mitt val om jag vill flytta. Skönt att ingen annan kan styra över om jag ska flytta eller vara någon annanstans.” (Anna)

¹⁶ ”Så, där du bor för tillfället? Ja, lite så. Och lite grann där familjen är. Eftersom jag var missionärsbarn så, eller tredje generationen barn, och rest runt mycket så blir den nära familjen väldigt viktig. Därför det är dem man har haft med sig överallt. Alla andra vänner har man bytt ut. Så där familjen är, är också väldigt viktigt.” (Sune)

¹⁷ ”Ja, jag börjar inse mer och mer att dels är det den här kontakten man har med gamla vänner, klasskamrater och så som har samma bakgrund som en själv. Sedan känner jag mer att det är i Norrbotten. Trots att det är mycket som jag inte kan identifiera mig med heller riktigt, men mycket mer i norra än södra Sverige.”
(Elisabeth)

¹⁸ ”Alltså hemma, hemma är ju här. Men en annan sak är, var man helst skulle vilja vara. Därför Spanien som vi bodde innan har ju ändrats, så det skulle inte heller kännas helt hemma att vara där. Fast även om det skulle vara där man skulle vilja vara.” (Petra)

¹⁹ ”Ja, det är ju en ganska svår fråga. Därför att kompisarna där nere har man ju fortfarande. Så då så känner man ju att så fort man kommer dit ner att så är man ju hemma på grund av att man har ju märkt att dom har inte glömt bort en, så då är man ju hemma så fort man kommer ner dit. Men sen så fort man har kommit upp igen så säger man ”Äntligen är jag hemma igen”. Därför att här har man slakten, huset, det är ju här man bor. Så hemma är ju både och.” (Stina)

²⁰ ”Det tycker jag nog är det svåraste. I Sverige ska man helst ringa om man ska träffas två dagar innan.” (Fia)

²¹ ”Man kan inte bara dyka upp, det kan man bara göra i Afrika.” (Ida)

²² ”I Afrika dyker man bara upp. Även om jag har 100 andra saker som jag egentligen ska göra så släpper jag allting jag ska göra därför att jag har fått en gäst och det är så mycket viktigare liksom. Jag hade önskat att svenskar inte var så inbundna med just bara det svenska, utan att man faktiskt kunde lite anamma det andra.” (Fia)

²³ ”Jag vill ha det där öppna hemmet där folk bara kan dyka upp och det är inga problem.” (Fia)

²⁴ "Och sen finns det lite attityd grejer, sätt och se på saker som jag har med från Cypern. Lite det här att ta tag i saker som de hade mycket i Cypern: "Jag är bäst och jag kan det här". Så "Jag kan fixa det här!". Kanske lite så känner man väl fortfarande. Att man inte är lika blyg Det var mycket det här "Jag är bäst", "Jag kan det här", man tar för sig. Och det var jag även i Sverige men det passade inte in riktigt bra." (Stephanie)

²⁵ "De är ju så att om jag säger att jag bara är svensk och så ser dom mig prata med andra personer så säger de att "Du är inte svensk. Därför att du är mer öppen, det betyder att du kommer ursprungligen ifrån ett annat land." (Stina)

²⁶ "Typiskt svensk det är väl att man har den här fyrkanten och "Kom inte innanför min sfär, min privata sfär!" Medan jag kan känna mig väldigt "Kom! Kom!" (Ida)

²⁷ "Jag har nästan hela livet hatat Sverige och avskytt allt som har med svensk kultur att göra. Astrid Lindgren och Evert Taube har kunnat få mitt hjärta att slå av nationell stolthet, men allt annat har jag bara skytt." (Elisabeth)

²⁸ "Om någon frågar mig var jag kommer ifrån, det är klart att jag säger att jag är svensk. Jag har svenska föräldrar, jag har svenskt pass. Jag kan aldrig säga vad det är som jag gör att jag är svensk. Jag lägger alltid till "... fast jag har bott på många ställen" eller "... jag har flyttat mycket". Jag kan aldrig nöja mig med att bara säga att jag är svensk för det känns aldrig helt rätt. Det är så mycket annat också." (Elisabeth)

²⁹ "Men sen till exempel om jag är här i Sverige och säger att jag är svensk då säger vissa "Nej, nej, du är spanjorska!" Och andra säger "Nej, nej, du är svensk, men du har dina rötter i Spanien!" Men många ser ju en skillnad mellan mig och andra svenskar för dom tycker ju att jag är mer utlänning på det sättet än vad jag är svensk." (Stina)

³⁰ "Sen är det att man påminns ju hela tiden att man inte är svensk. Jag hade några vänner som sa till mig en kväll: "Det gör ingenting Piaandra, vi ser dig ändå som

svensk." Jag blev vansinnig, jag har nog aldrig blivit så arg i hela mitt liv. Jag ställde mig upp och gick därifrån. Jag var så arg för jag är inte svensk, jag känner mig inte svensk. Och om dom ser mig som svensk vad är jag då för någonting? Då är jag ingenting! Helt plötsligt så förändrades hela min värld." (Pia)

³¹ "Men vaddå!?! Vi är ju svenskar!" (Emma)

³² "Aldrig, jag tror aldrig att man känner sig riktigt svensk." (Ida)

³³ "Jantelagen, att man inte får lov att vara duktig på någonting." (Pia)

³⁴ "Det var svårt att flytta tillbaka till Sverige. Vi har bott i Zaire och vi har bott i Kenya. När jag var 4 år så flyttade vi till Zaire och vi kom hem till Sverige när jag skulle börja första klass och då pratade jag nästan ingen svenska. Det var ju lite svårt att göra sig förstådd då." (Ida)

³⁵ "Det var ju att helt plötsligt förstod man vad folk sa runt omkring mig. Det var ju jättehäftigt, att andra pratar svenska." (Sune)

³⁶ "Ja, vi försökte. Vi fick böcker och så som vi hade beställt ifrån Sverige, så att vi kunde gå en distanskurs där vi skulle läsa de här svenska böckerna och följa kursen. Men vi var nog inte jätteduktiga på att hålla det." (Sune)

³⁷ "Det var ganska kul att mobba mig, att skoja med någon som inte kunde språket, till och med lärarna skojade med en. Jag vet min gympa lärare sa till mig, han stannade mig en dag, vi ska göra ett fysiskt prov i gympan i dag spring och berätta för alla att vi ska göra fys prov. Språkbarriären där var ju att jag hörde inte skillnaden mellan 'y' och 'i' då. Så jag sprang tillbaka till alla och sa att vi skulle göra fis prov i klassen på gympa lektionen. I dag är det ganska kul men då var det inte alls roligt, att stå där 13 år gammal och vara "the laughing stock" av hela gruppen. Det var tufft. Det har nog påverkat mig mer än vad jag har förstått, just kulturmässigt att det har varit en sån stor

kulturkrock trots att man inte riktigt kan föreställa sig att det är sån stor kulturkrock mellan Sverige och USA.” (Pia)

³⁸ *”Jag pratar ju språket ofta. Ibland om jag blir lite sur på Petra så kanske jag använder spanskan eftersom att det går betydligt fortare.” (Stina)*
”Lättare att skrika på varandra. Inga svenskar förstår det heller, så är man arg så funkar det utmärkt.” (Petra)

³⁹ *”Vi hade ju alla svenska traditioner. Hemma fick vi ju leva inom den svenska kulturen. Vi fick ju även äta spansk mat men på de stora högtiderna så var det ju alltid på svenskt.” (Stina)*

⁴⁰ *”Mina föräldrar adopterade den hela amerikanska kulturen. Vi var väldigt mycket amerikaner förutom julafton. Viss svenska traditioner och sen självklart har dom ju med sig en del av sin svenska uppväxt med sig vilket gjorde att vi var ju uppväxta lite annorlunda, men vi adopterade den amerikanska kulturen och mina föräldrar säger att dom känner sig mer hemma i USA än de gör i Sverige i dag. Det var ett val, aktivt val, att adoptera den amerikanska kulturen. Dom förälskade sig i landet och ville bli amerikaner. Och vi hade aldrig någon tanke på någonting annat. När jag flyttade hit så var jag väldigt amerikansk.” (Pia)*

⁴¹ *”Jag tror att speciellt när man flyttar till Afrika där det är så stor kulturskillnad, där måste man adoptera kulturen. Du måste göra det för annars är du så pass långt utanför kulturen att du aldrig kommer till att passa in liksom. Därför måste du anamma allt, vare sig att du tycker att det rätt eller fel liksom.” (Fia)*

⁴² *”Om man ska bo i ett land som Afrika tillexempel, ett land som Kenya menar jag så måste man ju vara beredd på att anpassa sig till kulturen. Att det inte är som i Sverige. Så man adopterar väl den lokala kulturen till max.” (Ida)*

⁴³ *”Det man kan säga är ju att vi höll ju god vakt på oss under Ramadan och deras högtider. Sånt behövde man inte tänka på när man kom till Sverige. Mera åt det hållet.*

Ramadan var ju att man inte fick äta någonting förrän på kvällen. Då när vi sprang runt barnen så... Jag minns vid ett tillfälle när vi tog ett russin och en arabisk man kom upp till mamma och blev jättearg och sa "Ni ska inte hålla på och fresta oss under Ramadan och fastan så här.". Så vi fick ha väldigt god vakt på oss. När vi är utomhus får vi inte hålla på och äta någonting för att vi inte kan fresta de som är i fastan. Så vi respekterade deras högtider när vi bodde där, men när vi var hemma då hade man inte det längre att tänka på." (Sune)

⁴⁴ *"I USA så firade man ju på juldagen, alla öppnade sina julklappar på juldagen, och vi hade alltid Christmas Eve Mass' i kyrkan på julafton kl.18:00 och då kom jag till kyrkan med alla mina julklappar och alla var så avundsjuka på mig, och jag var skit glad! Vi körde alltid svensk jul." (Pia)*

⁴⁵ *"Ja, vi firade alltid jul på svenskt vis. I Holland var vi alltid hemma på julen. Vi var även utklädda till tomtenissar och delade ut pepparkakor på pappas jobb i Taiwan." (Emma)*

⁴⁶ *"Julsånger, sådana saker. Det hade vi ju kvar när vi var på Cypern, då sjöng vi alltid sådana här julsånger, svenska sånger. Jag tror att vi hade spelat in Kalle Anka faktiskt, och så såg vi det samma tid varje jul. Vi satte på den dvd:n eller den vhs:en. Vi hade sådana här tre ljuslyktor som vi hade vid fönstret som vi satte upp som kanske inte är så vanligt i alla länder." (Stephanie)*

⁴⁷ *"Ja, det gjorde vi! Vi skulle definitivt ha en gran på julafton i Jemen. Så vi hämtade en palmgran, alltså palmkvistar som vi satte i en kruka. Sedan dekorerade vi den till en gran. Så det var ett sätt att försöka bevara. Sedan tror jag att min pappa och mamma sökte råvaror av olika slag, alltså svenska varor, för att laga den maten." (Sune)*

⁴⁸ *"Jaa, vi har fått med oss lite matkunskap, och lite inredning." (Stephanie)*

⁴⁹ *"Julsånger. Jag gillar mer spanska julsånger. Vi har ju mycket spanskt julgodis som vi gillar. Turrón, Polvorones." (Petra)*

⁵⁰ *"Vi kanske kan ta någon spansk maträtt." (Stina)*

⁵¹ *"Vi var väldigt svenskar när vi var i Cypern, men det vi fick från Cypern och de andra länderna de har vi nog kvar. Det märker man när man pratar med andra familjer. Men det är ganska vardagligt för oss, jag tänker inte så mycket på att det faktiskt är annorlunda." (Stephanie)*

⁵² *"I Afrika dyker man bara upp. Även om jag har 100 andra saker som jag egentligen ska göra så släpper jag allting jag ska göra därför att jag har fått en gäst och det är så mycket viktigare liksom. Jag hade önskat att svenskar inte var så inbundna med just bara det svenska, utan att man faktiskt kunde lite anamma det andra. Jag vill ha det där öppna hemmet där folk bara kan dyka upp och det är inga problem." (Fia)*

⁵³ *"Till exempel här i Sverige om du ska gå på bussen så blir det ju att folket sitter helst på en annan plats och sätter sig inte bredvid en annan om man inte måste. I Spanien så blir det att folket sätter sig bredvid dig och börjar prata om halva livet utan att veta vem du är. Du behöver inte känna personen för att sätta sig bredvid dig." (Stina)*

⁵⁴ *"Det kan vara själv på bussen och så går de och sätter sig bredvid dig även om de hade kunnat valt vilken plats som helst i bussen annars." (Petra)*