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New Social Housing Models in Sweden: From *Folkhemmet* to Automobile Perceptual Regimes

The article sheds light on the relationship between architecture and corporatism in Sweden, paying special attention to Cøsta Esping-Andersen's *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, and *Democracy and the Welfare State: The Two Wests in the Age of Austerity* edited by Alice Kessler-Harris and Maurizio Vaudagna. It examines how the automobile, as a physical and perceptual presence, has influenced the relationship between welfare landscapes and social housing in Sweden. Starting out from Gro Hagemann's statement – in "Paradise Lost: Social Citizenship in Norway and Sweden" – that "[s]ocial integration was a key part of the *folkhem* idea, and social marginalisation and exclusion remain low in both Sweden and Norway", it explores how architects and urban designers in Sweden began to take the car into full consideration when designing new social housing ensembles, neighbourhoods and cities. During the 1970s, in contrast with the American drive-centred suburbia, the design of the Swedish suburban environment, as described in the late-seventies issues of *Human Environment in Sweden*, was based on the intention to minimise as much as possible the "suburban use of the automobile".

In cases such as the Vällingby suburban district, design strategies were explicitly set against the "excessive reliance on the automobile as the means of transportation" characterising American suburbs. In contrast with the Vällingby households that, as David Popenoe notes, had "two cars, and a significant percentage (35-40) [had] [...] no car", Järvalyftet – a large-scale project that intended to renew a section of northern Stockholm with a population of ca. 60,000 – envisioned a renewed role for the motorways and their connection to housing design, as becomes evident in the description of this project in the *OECD Reviews on Local Job Creation, Employment and Skills Strategies in Sweden*: "The new motorway around Stockholm will go nearby, which better connects the areas to other communities". This article explores the shift from the model of the so-called *Folkhemmet* (The People's Home) to the incorporation of new ideas of proximity enhanced by the integration of motorways in the design of social housing in Sweden during the last few years. Analysing the impact of automobile perceptual regimes on the dominant social housing models in Sweden will help us better understand the role of the car in 21st-century social housing design and its social relevance within the welfare state.