

Colonial pasts & possible futures

- a case study of the Louis de Geer monument

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Abstract

This thesis is critically investigating Swedish colonial heritage in forms of monuments and statues in public spaces. This thesis suggests that public spaces with colonial heritage should be decolonized and investigates how this is possible through the medium of architecture.

The aim of this thesis is to show how Swedish colonial heritage can exist unchallenged in a public space and explore how it could be handled in a different way. This is researched with literature studies of Swedish colonialism, postcolonialism and decolonization projects. Together with qualitative interviews with local citizens and institutions this creates the theoretical framework and background.

The theoretical framework is applied to a case study of the monument of the former slave trader Louis de Geer, at the square Gamla Torget in Norrköping. The monument brought attention when the story of Sweden's participation in the transatlantic slave trade became more known to the public, especially after a local art exhibition in 2018 and the George Floyd (BLM) protests in 2020.

The theoretical framework of Sweden's colonial history and postcolonial theory shows a strong connection with colonialism and ideas of races and

racism. It also shows how Sweden have participated in colonialism, and therefore how Sweden also is responsible for inherited racial injustices. The reference examples and postcolonial theory does not give an unequivocal answer to how a public space is decolonized, rather that it is strongly dependent on context and that there are many strategies to use.

Through five implementation strategies, explorations on how the monument could be approached are developed. The implementations are exploring *acceptance*, *communication*, *addition*, *transformation*, and *subtraction* for the specific case. The implementations are then discussed in connection to postcolonial theory, reference projects and local citizens opinions, aiming for continuing the discussion on colonial heritage in public spaces.

This thesis shows that there are several alternatives and combinations in between the extremes of doing nothing and total removal which can inspire for a broader discussion or contribute to other ideas and solutions.

Keywords: colonial heritage, decolonization, postcolonial studies, monument, Norrköping

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1. Introduction



Figure 1: A cardboard sign stating: *the father of the Swedish slave trade* was placed at the statue of Louis de Geer in Norrköping, in June, 2020 (Nygren, 2020).

In June 2020, a homemade cardboard sign was placed by the statue of Louis de Geer at the central square Gamla Torget in Norrköping, Sweden (Nygren, 2020). The sign stated *the father of the Swedish slave trade*, referring to how Louis de Geer, an entrepreneur and businessman from the 17th century, is often described as *the father of the Swedish industry*. Louis de Geer is a well-known historical person, especially in Norrköping, but a less known story is that Louis de Geer established the trading company *Svenska Afrikakompaniet*, which traded with ivory, gold, and enslaved people from the Swedish colony Cabo Corso, in today's Ghana (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

Just a month before the cardboard sign was placed by the statue, the African American George Floyd was killed during a police arrest in Minneapolis, USA, which spired to the George Floyd protests and the Black Lives Matter movement becoming even more global than before (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). The protests in the USA aimed at racism and police brutality but protestors also turned to target statues and monuments of former slave owners and others associated with racial injustices (Taylor, 2020). These protests and the critique of monuments also spread to Europe, Sweden and Norrköping.

During the summer of 2020, the chairman of the local anti-racist organization *Ett Norrköping för Alla (A Norrköping for Everyone)*, Jimmy Jonsson, also handed in a citizens' initiative to the municipality (Jonsson, 2021). The initiative suggested to supplement the statue with a sign clarifying Louis de Geer's part of Sweden's colonial and racist history, but the initiative was dismissed.

The debate of Louis de Geer and the slave trade started already in 2018 in Norrköping when an art exhibition, *Släkten och slaverna (the Family and the Slaves)*, was showcased at the local art museum Norrköpings Konstmuseum (Scragg, n.d.). The exhibition was made by the artist Carl Johan de Geer, a descendant to Louis de Geer, who had recently got to know how his ancestor participated in the transatlantic slave trade. The exhibition showed Carl Johan de Geer processing and dealing with his own family's history. During the exhibition Norrköpings Konstmuseum also had a collaboration with the city museum Norrköpings Stadsmuseum, where a pedagogical program aimed for elementary school pupils to learn about the different sides of the history of Louis de Geer, was presented (Kindahl, 2021).

The story of Louis de Geer is though only one part of Sweden's colonial history and

Cabo Corso is not the only colony Sweden conquered (Lindqvist, 2015). The Swedish colonial history is in general not known or told and there are no public monuments or memorials acknowledging it (GIBCA, n.d.).

Many former colonized nations around the world have after gaining independence started a process of *decolonization* (Nayar, 2015). A process where, for example, a national cultural identity can be shaped and established. Decolonization can be performed in former colonial powers

as well, even though this process differs from the ones in former colonies. This thesis suggests that public spaces with colonial heritage should be decolonized and investigates how this is possible through the medium of architecture. With postcolonial theory and reference examples this thesis explores five different implementations for decolonizing in Norrköping and shows how the monument of Louis de Geer could be approached in a different way.

Purpose and aim

The aim of this thesis is to show how Swedish colonial heritage takes place in a public space and explore how it could be handled in a different way. This is both to raise awareness of Sweden's colonial history, which could be recognized and discussed to a higher degree and raise a discussion around elements in public spaces that could be perceived as very

offensive. With an analysis of a case study, five implementations for the specific case are presented, aimed at continuing and broadening the discussion. The study and the implementations can be used as a basis for a further discussion in Norrköping or as a pre-study to a larger in-depth work which could be led by the municipality in Norrköping.

Research questions

How can architecture contribute to the effort of decolonization?

How is Sweden's colonial history represented in Norrköping?

How is colonial heritage in public spaces in Norrköping handled today?

How have other countries and cities acted towards decolonizing public spaces?

Methods and process

This project contains a theoretical background and a case study with possible implementations for the specific case.

The theoretical framework is made with literature studies of postcolonial theory, this gives a background to how colonial pasts affects us today and possible futures.

Postcolonial studies: an anthology (Nayar, 2016), which contains texts by key authors, have been used for an introduction to the field. Nayar's *The postcolonial studies dictionary* (2015) has also been used for clarifying terms specific for postcolonial theory. Ania Loomba's *Kolonialism/Postkolonialism* (2005) has also been used as an introduction to the field.

The case is a statue of Louis de Geer in Norrköping, this case was chosen since there is an ongoing discussion in Norrköping about the statue and Louis de Geer. The case is also interesting since Louis de Geer was crucial for Norrköping when developing into an industrial city in the 17th century. Louis de Geer's direct involvement with slave trade also makes it to an urgent issue to discuss today since the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement is strong and active.

The theoretical framework also contains an overview of Sweden's colonial history, history of Norrköping and Louis de Geer. These issues have also been researched by literature studies. The main sources have been Herman Lindqvist's *Våra kolonier: de vi hade och de som aldrig blev av* (2015) for information of Louis de Geer's and Sweden's involvement in the transatlantic

slave trade during the 17th century and *Norrköpings industrilandskap vid Motala Ström* (Festin, n.d.) for the brief chapter on Norrköping's history.

The already ongoing discussion in Norrköping around Louis de Geer has been researched by interviews with local citizens, all of them involved in the discussion in different ways. Interviewees have been Anette Kindahl, curator at Norrköpings Stadsmuseum who produced the pedagogical program Historiebruk. The chairman of local anti-racist organization (NGO) Ett Norrköping för Alla, Jimmy Jonsson, has also been interviewed since he submitted a citizens' initiative regarding the statue.

Helena Scragg, curator at Norrköpings Konstmuseum and Erik Wahlberg, receptionist during the exhibition *Släkten och slaverna* have provided information of the exhibition and visitors reactions. The book *Släkten och slaverna* (2019), by Carl Johan de Geer has also been used as background for this chapter.

The focus during the interviews has been the public's reactions to Louis de Geer's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, background information on how the discussion have been moving and whether this has been new information to the citizens of Norrköping.

Based on reference projects, five implementations have been formulated for possible actions regarding the statue. The implementations regard *acceptance, communication, addition, transformation,*

and *subtraction*. The implementations are designed by the author, if nothing else is stated. This method, with several possible

Delimitations

This thesis will not research the life of Louis de Geer or Swedish colonialism in depth, since this is not the focus. It will neither research the George Floyd protests or the tearing down of monuments in the USA or other countries in depth and references to other examples of handling colonial monuments will only be references.

The implementations are not intended to be detailed proposals but visualizations of ideas and strategies that could be implemented on the case. The aim is neither to make a general guide on “how to” or a universal solution.

This study contains a limited number of interviews with, and information from, citizens of Norrköping which does not give a complete picture of the public’s opinion. The study has also been carried through during the COVID-19 pandemic which has limited the encounters and interviews to digital meetings only. Physical meetings with more citizens in Norrköping could

implementations, has been chosen since neither postcolonial theory nor reference projects agree on one correct answer.

have given a broader basis. The study though shows an insight to some opinions and thoughts by citizens in Norrköping, and the ones interviewed has all been engaged in the question in different ways which make them relevant as interview subjects. The interviews have not been quantitative but qualitative.

This thesis is written by an author with no experience of racial discrimination, schooled in a Swedish context, which makes the perspective of the author a limitation. Since postcolonial theory criticizes “Western knowledge production” one could argue that an academic thesis itself could not be an act of decolonizing. It can therefore be questioned if a project with a decolonizing agenda can be carried through from this position. This thesis does not intend to resist or hide the position of the author and is not expecting or aiming towards a solution for the difficult problems of Sweden’s colonial history and heritage, rather to address the question.

Reading instructions

The thesis starts with a theoretical chapter, introducing Sweden’s colonial history, postcolonial theory and how postcolonial theory can be applied when analyzing space and architecture.

The third chapter is presenting the case study of the statue of Louis de Geer, this chapter presents background information on Norrköping and the ongoing discussion. Information from interviews with local citizens are presented here.

After the case study the implementations are presented in chapter four. In four of the five implementations, an action regarding the statue is presented, this action is presented with illustrations and a written description. The written description has an italic font and the title *A possible future*.

This is followed by the last chapter, the discussion, where the different implementations are compared and reviewed. In the Appendix a historical timeline is presented.

2. Swedish colonialism, postcolonialism & decolonization

Sweden's colonial history

In the 16th century the European colonialism started to spire, this was due to the new sea routes found going around Africa's southern coast in 1488 and to America in 1492 (Nowell, Magdoff, & Webster, 2020). Main acting nations were Portugal, Spain, the Dutch Republic, France and England. These, and other European nations conquered, settled and exploited huge areas of the world. In the 1930s, 85% of the earth area was colonized or was a former colony (Loomba, 2005). Less known and recognized is Sweden's colonial whereabouts. Sweden have had several colonies throughout history, both abroad and in Scandinavia, some of which are presented and discussed below.

Scandinavia: Sápmi

12th century –

Sápmi, the traditional area of the Sami people in northern Scandinavia can be seen as one of the first colonizing projects by Sweden. Sápmi has been colonized by not only Sweden but also Norway, Denmark, Finland and Russia (Sametinget, 2018).

The colonization started in the 12th century by Bottenhavskusten, the Swedish north coast towards Östersjön, but the oldest settlements found informs of contacts between the Sami people and Vikings already from the 11th century.

In the 14th century the Swedish Crown claimed areas north of Hälsingland and during the 16th century there was a clear goal to claim and control Sápmi. This continued during “the Era of Great Power” in Sweden and in 1634 the Swedish Crown expressed their hopes for Norrland to become the new Swedish Caribbean, a colony with opportunities for new resource exploitation and richness, just as the other European colonies in the Caribbean. During the 17th century several cities were established, and this continued throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th century.

During the 19th century the colonization grew due to the needs of natural resources such as silver, iron ore, hydroelectric power and woods. The increasing Swedish population and the need for new land areas to exploit, was also a reason for continuing

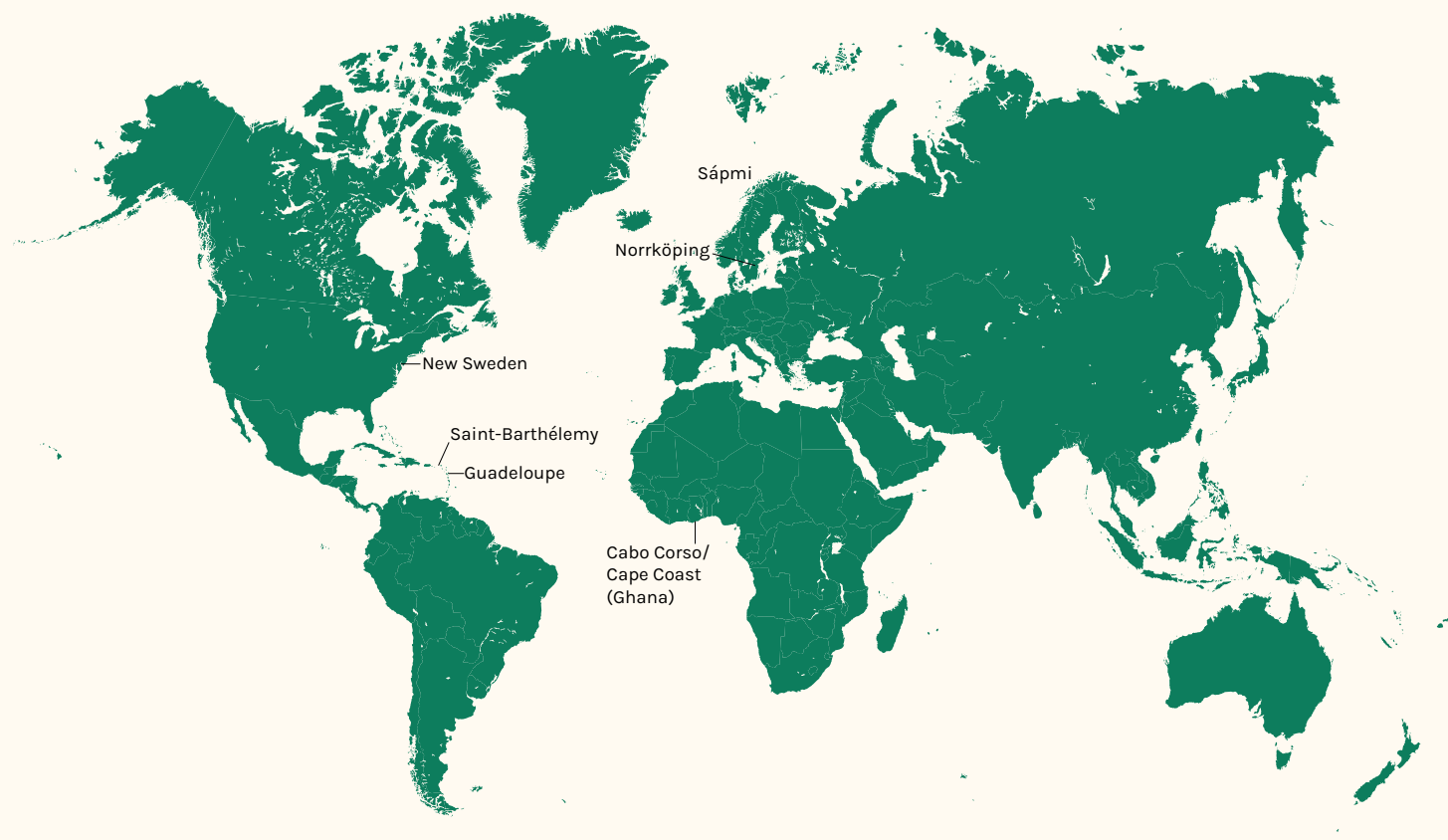


Figure 2: Map of Swedish colonies (Graphics Factory CC, 2021).

the colonization. When settlers arrived to Sápmi, conflicts of the rights to fishing and pastures arose between settlers and the Sámi people, these conflicts were most often won by the settlers.

The Swedish Crown also carried out missionary to spread Christianity into the Sámi communities to convert the Sámi people to “faithful Swedish subjects”. Christian churches and schools for Sámi people were established but met resistance. Through force, threats, and revival movements the Sámi indigenous religion was forced away (Sametinget, 2018).

In the 19th century, several Swedish researchers developed theories of “long skulls and short skulls”, where the shape of the skull determined if you belonged to a higher or lower race (Hansson, 2009). These researchers measured and photographed people’s heads and bodies and the Sámi people were one of the specially targeted and exploited groups. The problem with the research was that it did not fit the expectations, the researchers had already decided what the results were supposed to conclude and customized the huge amounts of numbers to fit their predetermined ideas, for example that the Sámi people belonged to a lower race. This “research” is considered to have been the foundation for the establishment of what became the Swedish State Institution of Racial Biology, established in 1921, where similar research continued. Sweden was the first with an Institution of this kind, financed by the State (Hansson, 2009).

There are still ongoing conflicts of land areas and natural resources in Sápmi where one of the current one is with the State timber company *Sveaskog* (Röstlund, 2021). Sveaskog states that the negotiations with the Sami people work well, while the Sami people states that Sveaskog always gets their way around and that the deforestation destroys the conditions for reindeer husbandry, the biodiversity, and the forest as a cultural heritage of Sápmi.

North America: New Sweden

1638-1655

Sweden did not only conquer areas in Scandinavia during the Great Era of Power in the 17th century, but also colonized across the Atlantic. New Sweden was a Swedish colony between 1638-1655 in North America, established by the Delaware river, where the borders of the states Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey meet today (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). Many other European countries already had colonies in North America and together with the Netherlands, Sweden formed a trading company, *Söderkompaniet*, later *Nya Sverigekompaniet*. In 1638 two ships arrived on the American east coast, *Kalmar Nyckel* and *Fågel Grip*, and the commander Peter Minuit bought land from the Native Americans and started to build a fort, *Christina*, to establish the new colony. The relations with the Native Americans are described as mostly good, but

relations with other European countries in the area were strained. In 1655 the Netherlands took over the colony and Sweden failed several attempts of gaining the area back or getting a compensation (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

In 1938 a monument was raised to commemorate the 300 years anniversary of the colony (Delaware Historical & Cultural Affairs). The statue was made by Carl Milles, and the Swedish Crown Princess Louise of Sweden and Prince Gustaf Bertil attended the inauguration as well as the U.S president Franklin D. Roosevelt, among others. A copy of the statue in Delaware can be found in Gothenburg today by the central travel center *Stenpiren*.

The Caribbean: Saint-Barthélemy & Svenska Guadeloupe

Saint-Barthélemy 1784-1878
Svenska Guadeloupe 1813-1814

In the middle of the 17th century, the Swedish Crown expressed their hopes for Norrland to become the Swedish Caribbean and in the 18th and 19th century Sweden in fact colonized two islands across the Atlantic. The colonies both belonged to a group of islands, the Lesser Antilles, in the Caribbean.

Saint-Barthélemy is today a small French island and was colonized by France in 1648 (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.) and according to the story, the island was not inhabited until the French colonized the island (Hult,

2019). In 1784 the island was traded to Sweden, in exchange for *Franska Tomten*, a site of land giving the French free trade rights in Gothenburg (GIBCA, n.d.). The colony mainly traded with enslaved people until 1847 (GIBCA, n.d.) and was controlled by Sweden until 1878 when it was sold back to France since the economic benefits were too small (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

The documentation of the enslaved people is sparse, but researcher Fredrik Thomasson at Uppsala University has researched Swedish court protocols from Saint-Barthélemy (Zachrisson, 2013). These protocols testify on how Sweden were just as cruel as other nations towards black enslaved people. According to Thomasson these protocols are very important since they are almost the only documentation of the enslaved inhabitants.

The second colony, also in the Lesser Antilles, was *Svenska Guadeloupe*. Guadeloupe is a group of several small islands and was colonized by France in 1635 (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). The islands were under Swedish rule between 1813-1814 and after this once again returned to France. Guadeloupe is still today a French department.

West Africa: Cabo Corso

1650-1658 & 1660-1663

During the 15th century, the Portuguese established *Cabo Corso*, today Cape Coast in Ghana in West Africa, which was a Swedish colony and trading station in the middle

of the 17th century (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). Louis de Geer initiated the establishment of *Afrikanska kompaniet* with approval from the Swedish Queen Kristina in 1649 which had monopoly on trading rights in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean and was established to be able to buy gold, ivory, and enslaved people in West Africa (Lindqvist, 2015). During this period, Sweden was in need of money and had at the same time a growing export of copper and iron, due to this, several trading companies were established at this time (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

Louis de Geer had already set a preliminary deal with Queen Kristina for establishing a trading company with trading rights in Africa in 1648 and therefore two ships, *Christina* and *Stockholms slott*, were sent off to Africa with fabric, copper, iron and tin etc. (Lindqvist, 2015). The ships were loaded in Amsterdam and the ship *Christina* went off to West Africa, brought enslaved people to São Tomé and from there loaded sugar, going back to Sweden. The other ship, *Stockholms slott*, shipped enslaved people, gold and ivory and spices from West Africa to the Caribbean. From the Caribbean sugar was shipped to Bremen-Verden in Germany.

During this period, four children, three boys and one girl, were also taken from West Africa to Sweden, as some kind of samples. These children were seen as funny creatures and were also a symbol of status for the nobility and the royals. It is unknown what happened to these children, it is only known that one of the boys ended

up with Axel Oxenstierna, a Swedish count and statesman.

After the preliminary deal and when the first two trips with the ships *Christina* and *Stockholm Slott* were successful, *Svenska Afrikakompaniet* was established on the 15th of December in 1649. Louis de Geer held the majority of the shares of the company, almost 85%. The main harbor for the company was placed in Gothenburg, even though it mostly was run from the Swedish controlled city *Stade* in Bremen-Verden.

Cabo Corso was recommended as a suitable place for a trading colony by the manager of the company, Henrik Carloff. Cabo Corso was at this time run by the Portuguese who were not that present in the area at this time. The local name for Cabo Corso was *Oguaa* and belonged to the Kingdom *Futu*, inhabited by the *Akan people*. The King Bredera of Futu and the Swedish Queen Kristina, agreed on a deal where Sweden could establish a trading colony.

After establishing the contract with King Futu, the company started to build a fort in Cabo Corso, which became the foundation of the fort remaining today (Roth, 2009), at the same place where the Dutch formerly had started, who had also been operating at the site (Lindqvist, 2015). Building material was sent from Sweden with the ships *Johannesburg*, *Norrköping* and *Stockholms Slott* and King Futu contributed with enslaved people as work force for the building.

In 1658 Denmark took over the colony, but in 1660 it was again controlled by Sweden and was so until 1663 when the Dutch conquered the colony (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). The fort is today known as Cape Coast Castle and the building left is the result of a great rebuilding and expansion made by the

British rule in the late 17th and during the 18th century (Roth, 2009). The fort is now a museum where tours are held, showcasing for example the dungeons where enslaved people were held before they were forced to enter the ships which would carry them across the Atlantic.

Postcolonial theory

The discourse *postcolonial theory* is analyzing how colonialism has affected ideas about modernity, humanism, and civilization and is problematizing how Western knowledge production is connected to global power relations (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). Postcolonialism shows the historical connections between colonialism and racism and ethnic discrimination today. It can also be explained as “the relation between European nations and areas they colonized and once ruled” (Chousein, 2013).

Some key concepts in postcolonial theory are for example a very binary idea of the “West” and “East”, natural and cultural, structural and ornamental (Yeoh, 2001). A key writer in postcolonialism is Edward Said, who published the book *Orientalism* in 1978. Said describes how there was a huge interest from the European academy to study the Orient in the late 18th century and how this has affected

the “West’s” attitude towards the Arab-Asian world (Nayar, 2015). He suggests that the “western” study of “the Orient” is not at true study of other cultures but a broad generalization of Oriental, Islamic and Asian cultures which describes them as static, non-developing, barbaric and uncivilized. This generalization tends to erase the differences between these cultures.

Because of European views and ideas about ‘the other’ in the 19th century, Europeans were also very afraid of hybridity. Hybridity is a term which describes mixing of races and cultures (Nayar, 2015). Europeans in the 19th century were against hybridity since they believed this would weaken the European culture, races were supposed to be preserved in their pure form. The ideas of hybridity were supported with ideas of racism and Social Darwinism¹. Some cultures were seen as superior to others, and hybridity would make the racial dominance weaker.

1. Definition of social Darwinism
: an extension of Darwinism to social phenomena
specifically : a sociological theory that sociocultural advance is the product of intergroup conflict and competition and the socially elite classes (such as those possessing wealth and power) possess biological superiority in the struggle for existence (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

According to *The postcolonial studies dictionary*, the term *decolonization* describes two issues, the first describes the changed relationship between the colonial power and the colonized (Nayar, 2015). The first decolonization in the modern era could be described as when colonies in North and South America, settled by Europeans, revolted against the British rule in the 18th and 19th century. The second one describes the independency on an intellectual, political, and philosophical level, this definition is the one mostly referred to in postcolonial theory. This cultural process of independency has particularly been seen in former colonies in Asia and South America.

One answer to problems formulated by postcolonial theory can be to give space for voices who have been silenced, the *subaltern*. The subaltern is a term by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci which describes classes of people with little or no political and cultural power, and which are dominated by the elite class (Nayar, 2015). Gramsci suggests that these classes are seldom represented in a nation’s history, since their identity and histories are not perceived as important as the elite class’s, this is due to how political and economic powers were established.

Creating a European and non-European identity

In Europe, Christian identities were constructed in opposition to Islam, Judaism, Paganism, especially Islam (Loomba, 2005). Racial stereotypes

existed before colonialism, but these were intensified during the European colonialism and the construction of nations in Europe. The ideas about Islam and black people’s religion and culture enhanced in connection between these categories. Characteristics such as laziness, aggression, violence, greed, promiscuity, brutality, primitivism, and irrationality were attributed to Turks, Africans, Jews, Indians, Native Americans, Irish as well as the working class and women in Europe.

Europeans also established a European identity of culture and confirmed a difference between Europeans and “others”. By stereotyping non-Europeans, a European identity could also be established.

Europeans had created racial stereotypes of Africans before colonizing Africa, and the stereotypes were used as an argument and as justification of exploitation. During colonization, missionary of Christianity was highly common in the 16th and 17th century. Through Christianity, Africans could be converted and saved, through this process the connection between skin color and attributes was abolished. This also caused the fear for the opposite to happen, in other words Europeans being contaminated by non-Europeans.

The ideas of contamination were strengthened by the scientific racism that grew during this time. Carl von Linné was the first to try to create a scientific race classification system for the human (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). He sorted the human race into the four categories

European, Asians, Africans and Indians (Native Americans) in his *Systema Natura* in 1758. The four categories were given different characteristics, the European was described as sanguine, meaning happy and carefree. The Asian as melancholic and the African as phlegmatic, slow. The Indian (Native American) was described as choleric, meaning angry or ill-tempered. Mixing of races was at this time a horror scenario.

Today, skin color is a strong indication of identity, but it is now known that “races” are a social construction, and not scientific biology. Even though culture and history are often associated to skin color, these experienced and constructed racial differences leads to real inequalities by colonial or racist regimes and ideologies. Racial constructions are created from specific historical contexts and in combination with other social hierarchies (Loomba, 2005).

Colonial heritage in postcolonial cities

Postcolonial theory can be helpful for analyzing cities since the creating and maintaining of European identities are still appearing today. Colonial heritage can be found in the urban landscape, both in former colonies and former colonial powers. A formerly colonized city will have traces and inhabit heritage which belongs to both the pre-colonial past, the colonial era, as well as the postcolonial (Yeoh, 2001).

When nations are colonizing and are being colonized, economics, culture and people will intertwine. When a nation gains independency from a colonial power, recreating and claiming a national identity can therefore be difficult and complex. To try to extract what is the true non-colonized self and what belongs to the former colonizer may be impossible and may require that the former colonizer can be identified as something *other*. The postcolonial identity is a mix of both the colonial and the precolonial pasts.

This situation will create questions on what should be mapped and valued as heritage, and what should not. In the postcolonial city there are several different groups that will have ideas and wills on what should be heritage, like what the city should not *forget to remember* as well as *remember to forget* (Yeoh, 2001).

Creating and maintaining a national identity can be equally important for a former colonial power, which can be one reason as to why the question of statues related to colonial violence and racial injustice have created such a heated discussion.

“Not only are the ‘colonial city’ and the ‘imperial city’ umbilically connected in terms of economic linkages as well as cultural hybridization, but their ‘post-equivalents’ cannot be disentangled one from the other and need to be analysed within a single ‘postcolonial’ framework of intertwining histories and relations.” (Yeoh, 2001, p. 457)

What does decolonization mean?

Decolonization could mean several things; it can both include practical actions and theoretical elements. This chapter explores some different decolonization projects and how monuments and colonial heritage have been handled.

One example of what decolonization could be, is shown in *Decolonizing the Mind* by the Kenyan writer Ngugi (1986). Ngugi argues that if the African writer writes in a European language, they are also writing for a European audience (Nayar, 2015). Other anti-colonial writers have also described this as an intellectual colonization in need of decolonization. Another example of decolonization could be pride and revival in indigenous culture and knowledge production.

Some critics of postcolonial theory suggest, that since several main postcolonial theorists such as Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are trained in the “West”, and their language and their audience are “Western”, postcolonial theory is itself producing “Western modes of thinking”, which it aims to criticize (Nayar, 2015).

Examples of decolonization projects

Decolonizing or de-commemoration architecture can be done in several different ways. Different places and histories are of course reasons on why different approaches have been used to

tackle changes in society when for example a leader or regime has been overthrown.

The removals and vandalization of statues and monuments after, and during, the George Floyd protests in the USA is one example. The George Floyd protests criticized police brutality in the USA and began after the African American George Floyd was killed during a police arrest in Minneapolis, Minnesota on the 25th of May in 2020 (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). The protests and civil unrest then broadened to target racism and spread across the USA and to Europe and was supported by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement (Taylor, 2020). The monuments targeted in the USA were for example commemorations to the Confederate States of America and former slave traders and slaveowners, among others.

In Belgium, several statues and busts portraying King Leopold II were removed and vandalized (Porterfield, 2020). King Leopold II was known already during his life, in the 19th century, for his extreme cruel policies in the Congo Free State (today, the Democratic Republic of the Congo), which was under colonial rule by Belgium. Similar events have occurred in the United Kingdom where statues and monuments connected to British colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade have been removed or vandalized. These are only a few examples of many removals that have occurred after and during the George Floyd protests and the increasing BLM movement which have evoked the question of dealing with the history of former colonial powers.



Figure 3: Muzeon park of Arts, Moscow, Russia, 1991 (Kadobnov, 2020).



Figure 4: I am Queen Mary, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2018 (Altmann Krueger, 2018).



Figure 5: A statue of John C. Calhoun (former vice president and slavery advocate) is removed in Charleston, South Carolina, 2020 (Rayford, 2020).



Figure 6: A fascist monument in Adis Ababa, Ethiopia, complemented with The Lion of Judah at the top (Capuano, 2020).

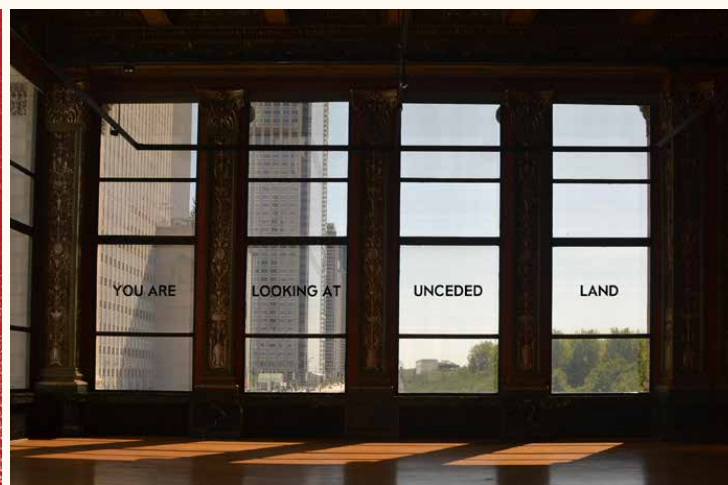
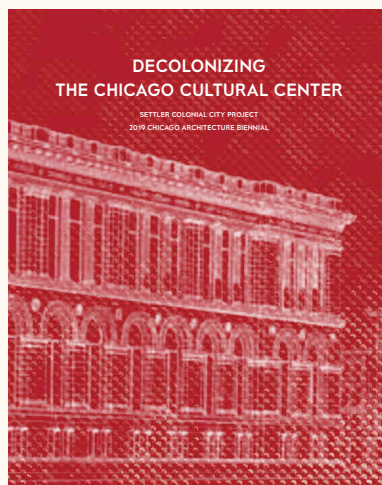


Figure 7 & 8: Decolonizing the Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago Architectural Biennial, 2019 (Settler Colonial City Project, 2019).

The recent and current protest are not the first to remove targeted statues. The *Muzeon park of Arts*, a sculpture park in Moscow, is presenting several statues where the most famous ones are former Soviet leaders such as Lenin and Stalin (moscovery.com, 2021). The park was established in 1991 when the Soviet Union fell, and several monuments and statues were removed. The park has also gained addition of sculptures that are commemorating the victims of Stalin's regime. This may not be included in the term decolonization but rather *decommunization*. Russia also went through a process of *de-Stalinization* after Stalin's death in 1953, a process where changes were made to change the culture and politics established during Stalin's regime (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). After Soviet collapsed, several names of Russian cities were also restored to their original name, for example Leningrad became St Petersburg again (Shevchenko, 2015).

In Denmark there is a different example of approach to dealing with the country's colonial history. In Copenhagen, outside the former West India Warehouse, a monument called *I am Queen Mary* was erected in 2018 (Belle & Ehlers, n.d.). The monument pictures a former labor leader, Mary Thomas, who led the largest revolt in Denmark's colonial history at the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1878. The monument is an embodiment, with inspirations of illustrations of Mary Thomas, a photo of Huey P. Newton (the leader of the Black Panther Party) and of Belle's and Ehlers' bodies. Belle and Ehlers 3D scanned their bodies and had them merged digitally

to then produce the statue in a plastic material. This is the first statue of a black woman in Denmark.

In Ethiopia, who was occupied by the fascist regime of Italy between 1936-1941, a fascist monument in Addis Ababa has been changed to decolonize it (Petti, Richards, Wallinder, Löfberg, & Hovberger, 2019). The monument from 1936 pictures a stair with 14 steps, the steps representing the fourteen years since the Italian fascist party was founded. When Ethiopia became free from Italy a sculpture of *the Lion of Judah* was placed at the top of the stair. The Lion of Judah is an important national symbol for Ethiopia, referring to Haile Selassie who was the Emperor of Ethiopia between 1930-74, which gives the monument a different meaning than the first intended one. Instead of symbolizing the years of the fascist party, it can be seen as a symbol of Ethiopia's victory over the fascists.

At the Chicago Architectural Biennial in 2019 another type of decolonizing project was exhibited. The project was called *Decolonizing the Chicago Cultural Center (DCCC)*, a project made in collaboration between the research collective *Settler Colonial City Project* and the *Americans Indian Center of Chicago*. The project is criticizing how the Cultural Center is described as a "people's palace" when "The building for the people of Chicago, however, was only made possible by the extraction of land, labor and resources from other people." The project therefore describes the Chicago Cultural Center as "an archive of the exploitation of colonized

people". The DCCC project describes that decolonizing the Cultural Center "starts with revealing and making visible the histories of violence and erasure".

The research collective DAAR (*Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency*) is also working with decolonization in relation to space and architecture. The research collective was founded in 2007 in Beit Sahour, Palestine by Sandi Hilal, Alessandro Petti and Eyal Weizman (DAAR, n.d.). The research collective is a combined architectural studio and an art residency which gathers architects, artists, activists etc. to work collectively on issues regarding politics and architecture.

DAAR describes decolonization as an act of profanation² and refers to the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben:

"To profane does not simply mean to abolish or cancel separations, but to learn to make new uses of them." (Hilal & Petti, 2018)

DAAR describes to profane as to "transgress lines of separation" and to decolonize architecture (Hilal & Petti, 2018). They compare secularization to profanation and how they differ from each other. They describe secularization as to separate and that profanation is the inverse, which is to restore things to common use.

By this they suggest reutilizing colonial architecture would mean that the power

is dislocated, and its operation is reversed when changing the use of it. Because of this, it is important to see the difference between profanation and secularization, since secularization is not destructing the power structure but merely moves it, but profanation can destruct the power structure *"and restore the common use of the space that power had confiscated"*.

"imagine the reuse of colonial structures for different intentions than they were originally designed for" (Hilal & Petti, 2018)

The Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art (GIBCA) has since 2019 had an ongoing project around Franska tomten (Packhusplatsen 4) in central Gothenburg. Franska tomten was in 1784 traded by the Swedish King Gustav III, for the Caribbean island Saint-Barthélemy in a trade agreement with France (GIBCA, n.d.). During the project artists and others have been invited to seminars and made artistic commissions to discuss the visual representation of "Sweden's colonial past and its contemporary consequences" in public spaces. In the project *Possible monument?* artists have responded to Franska tomten and its history.

GIBCA states that Sweden's colonial history has not been made visible enough and is also generally not told with the history of Sweden becoming an industrial Welfare state.

"...there are no public monuments or memorials in the country as a whole acknowledging Sweden's colonial relations and those who suffered their consequences" (GIBCA, n.d.)

"How can we open existing monuments to re-contextualization? What role can art play in making Swedish colonial history publicly visible? How can new monuments, be it material or immaterial, trace past to present? How should a potential future commissioning process be conducted to avoid reproducing existing structures of inequality and exclusion? Is there indeed such a thing as a possible monument, and if so: for whom and by whom should such monuments be made?" (GIBCA, n.d.)

2. Definition of profane:
transitive verb
to treat (something sacred) with abuse, irreverence, or contempt (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

3. Case study

The case study is of the statue of Louis de Geer in Norrköping. The statue stands at the oldest square in Norrköping (Kristensson, n.d.), Gamla Torget, a central square which is both well visited, and a place often passed by. Louis de Geer is represented in several places in Norrköping except for the statue, there is also a bust at Rådhuset (the Town Hall), and a street, three schools and institutions are named after him, for example De Geersgatan, De Geergymnasiet and the concert and congress hall, Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress. Louis de Geer is also represented in other cities, De Geergatan exists in Gothenburg and in the small villages Lesjöfors in Värmland and in Karlholmsbruk in Uppland and Louis de Geer's old palace at Götgatan in Stockholm is today the Embassy of the Netherlands.

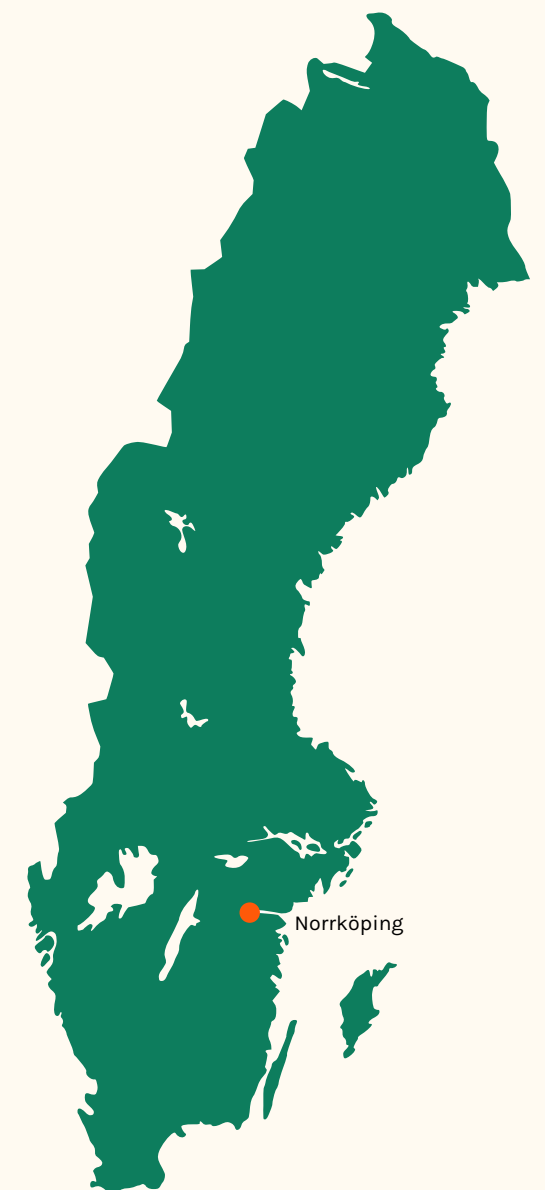


Figure 9: Map of Sweden (freevectormaps.com, 2021).



Figure 10: Map of Norrköping 1:50 000, created from aerial photo ©Lantmäteriet (2021).





Figure 11: Gamla Torget and Industrilandskapet seen from east (Norrköpings Kommun, 2015).

Norrköping

Norrköping, belonging to the county Östergötlands län in the end of the bay Bråviken, has approximately 140 000 citizens living in the municipality (SCB, 2020). The city is a former industrial city but is today changed in many ways, Linköping University has established a campus in the city and the branding of the city is today focused on being a city of knowledge (Stadsbyggnadskontoret, 2013).

An industrial city

Norrköping is well known for preserving and renovation of their former industries and factories. The preserved industrial buildings are called *Industrilandskapet*, this urban landscape is unique in Europe (Festin, n.d.). Industrilandskapet is in the central parts of Norrköping around the river Motala Ström, which goes from the lake Vättern in the west to the bay Bråviken in the east. Most of the buildings were built between 1850-1917 and are recognized by their red brick or yellow plaster facades. Large industrial windows with an arched top and lattice work are also typical for the area.

During the 19th century Norrköping was one of the biggest and leading industrial cities in Sweden, almost all of Sweden's wool fabric was manufactured in Norrköping, which sometimes was called Sweden's Manchester. Already in the 17th century Norrköping had a major weapon factory, brass mills, and textile manufacturing. When the hydroelectric power was developed the industries grew

and the number of inhabitants doubled in a few decades.

The working conditions for the factory workers were very poor, a normal working day could be 13 hours with salary barely enough to buy food. Many also suffered from "cotton lungs" due to the dust from the textiles. Moa Martinsson, whose mother worked in the textile factories, has portrayed the life of the working class's women, based on her mother's life, which have made her to a famous writer in Sweden (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.). A statue in bronze of Moa Martinsson is found in Industrilandskapet at Grytstorget, the statue is made by sculptor Peter Linde in 1996 (Festin, n.d.).

Until 1870, Norrköping was the leading city in Sweden in wool manufacturing, but after the textile crisis in the 1950s the last factory (YFA) had to shut down in 1970. In 1970, Holmens bruk, a large paper mill, also moved out from the central city to be able to expand. Industrilandskapet was at this point decayed with only very small industries left. The municipality of Norrköping decided to renovate the area, instead of the alternative, tearing it down and build new, and find new uses for the buildings and the area.

Today, Campus Norrköping and several museums such as Arbetets Museum (The Working Museum), Stadsmuseet (The City Museum) and Holmens Museum can be found in Industrilandskapet. The concert and congress hall, Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress as well as the statue of Louis de Geer at Gamla Torget are also part of Industrilandskapet.





Figure 12: Map of Norrköping 1:5 000, created from aerial photo ©Lantmäteriet (2021).





1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

- 1. Norrköpings Stadsmuseum
- 2. Arbetets Museum
- 3. Weir behind Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress
- 4. De Geergymnasiet
- 5. The Town Hall
- 6. Motala Ström and Industrilandskapet viewed from west.



6.



Figure 13: Gamla Torget seen from southeast (Norrköpings Kommun, 2015).

Development of Industrilandskapet

Industrilandskapet is one of Norrköping's prides and have gone through huge renovations. The City Planning Office has created a vision on how to work with Industrilandskapet, presented in *Industrilandskapet Vision 2030* (Stadsbyggnadskontoret, 2013). Dialogues with companies and citizens operating and living in Industrilandskapet has been held to create this vision.

The City Planning Office wants to develop the University as a major priority, this to continue the development of the city as a "city of knowledge". The environments of the University should be more accessible for the public and in general, there is a request to create more sights to attract more visitors and there is a desire for a higher "pulse" in the area.

Gamla Torget & the statue

Gamla Torget is the oldest square in Norrköping and works as an entrance to Industrilandskapet from the commercial center of Norrköping. The square holds a mix of small business such as a nail salon and a shoemaker but also offices, restaurants, and housing. During summer, the square has outdoor seating for the restaurants. The square lays right next to Motala Ström and the entrance to Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress is just

at the southwest corner of the square. North of the square lays Knäppingsborg, a block with restaurants, cafés, design shops and where culture events are held. Nearby, south of the square lays the block Konstantinopel which indicates how Norrköping was an important city for trade with international connections (Festin, n.d.).



Statue of Louis de Geer at Gamla Torget, 2021.

The square property is owned by the municipality, just as the statue. The famous Swedish sculptor Carl Milles is the artist behind the sculpture which was erected in 1945 (Norrköpings Konstmuseum, n.d.). The statue is made of black granite and portrays a 3,5-meter-tall Louis de Geer facing Motala Ström and the Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress. By his feet there is a landscape of industrial buildings and people by a river which symbolize

the past Norrköping. Beneath his feet one can see a brass mill and ships sailing, animals a map of Belgium and southern Scandinavia. The statue itself gives a robust and powerful impression, both because of the height of the statue and the way his face slightly looks down at the spectator. The statue shows a strong man portrayed with aesthetics of sturdiness, arisen from the city.

*Louis de Geer, 1587-1652. The father of the Swedish industry. He established weapon factory and brass mills in Norrköping and founded the city's textile industry. During wartime he forged our weapons and was a faithful support for the King and the people. The monument is raised close to the shores where he once listened to the rapids roar and the songs of the workers. (Text by the statue, 2021, **my translation**)*



Figure 14: Exhibition Släkten och slaverna (©Tillgren, 2019).

Current discussion about Louis de Geer

The statue and Louis de Geer have been discussed since the story of the slave trade became more known to the public during an art exhibition in 2019. The discussion grew even more during the summer of 2020 when the BLM movement became even more global. During this period, a citizens' initiative was also handed to the municipality regarding the statue.

The exhibition Släkten och slaverna

In December 2018, the exhibition *Släkten och slaverna* (the Family and the Slaves) opened at Norrköpings Konstmuseum. The exhibition showed installations by the artist Carl Johan de Geer (CJ de Geer) a descendant to Louis de Geer born in 1938 (Scragg, n.d.). His full name is Carl Johan *Louis* de Geer, Louis, a name he shares with all his male relatives and which he has also given his son (de Geer, 2019, p. 7). CJ de Geer describes himself as a part of a generation with the mission to abolish inequalities and have for long worked with criticizing his own heritage, coming from a noble family (de Geer, 2019).

In the early 2000s, CJ de Geer for the first time got to know the story of his ancestor Louis de Geer's trading colony in Ghana. The news came as a shock to CJ de Geer, even though he already was familiar with his family's history of weapon manufacturing and so on.

Later, CJ de Geer met a Brazilian man, Antonio Geraldo Costa, who told CJ de Geer about how his family traced back to

an African who was sold as slave by Louis de Geer. Antonio Geraldo Costa is one of approximately 70 million descendants of enslaved people in South America. CJ de Geer had earlier written about his family's history and the slave trading in his book *Jakten mot nollpunkten* in 2008. This became the basis of the exhibition in Norrköping.

The exhibition shows seven installations, cut and demolished family furniture, fabric, and pictures. One piece is an old school bench with an ugly sculpture portraying a monstrous version of Louis de Geer's head, this to comment the lack of education on the history of Sweden's participation in slave trade in the Swedish school system. CJ de Geer proposed to make a permanent sculpture of this installation and add to the square, to show another side of the story. Helena Scragg, curator of the exhibition describes the installation as a confrontation between CJ de Geer and his own family history. Scragg also suggests that the exhibition have helped Norrköping and its citizens to understand their own history from another perspective.

What is the blind spot of our time? The future will have to tell. (Scragg, n.d. my translation)

The staff at Norrköpings Konstmuseum, both Scragg and staff in the reception, experienced an appreciation from visitors and that visitors understood the point and problematics of the exhibition as well as their own part in the history, rather than just blaming Louis de Geer (Wahlberg, 2021).



Figure 15: Pedagogical program Historiebruk (Kultursidan, 2019).

The pedagogical program Historiebruk

During the exhibition *Släkten och slaverna*, Anette Kindahl, curator at Norrköpings Stadsmuseum initiated a collaboration between Norrköpings Stadsmuseum and Norrköpings Konstmuseum (Kindahl, 2021). The collaboration became a pedagogical program aimed for middle school and gymnasium students to educate on the different sides of the history of Louis de Geer.

The program was called *Historiebruk*, a 2,5-hour program with visits to Norrköpings Stadsmuseum, Norrköpings Konstmuseum and the statue of Louis de Geer at Gamla Torget. At Norrköpings Stadsmuseum the students were presented to the exhibition *Den första staden* (The first City), an exhibition of Norrköping's history from the Viking Age to "the Era of Great Power" (Norrköpings Stadsmuseum, n.d.) and at Norrköpings Konstmuseum they took part of the exhibition *Släkten och slaverna*. The program was performed with theatrical elements, the guide impersonating different historical characters and involved discussion on how different the same story can be presented, depending on who is telling the story.

Kindahl expresses the struggle to get bookings from schools for the program, all together about 10 classes went through the program. Kindahl experiences that the school has come to a more pressured situation and that it is generally much harder to get schools to book pedagogical programs. She addresses that the cause

could be the time consumption of the program but believes it stands as a good complement to the regular lectures.

A citizens' initiative to the municipality

In June 2020, a citizens' initiative was handed to the municipality (Jonsson, 2021). The proposition was written by Jimmy Jonsson, a citizen in Norrköping and chairman of the local anti-racist organization *Ett Norrköping för Alla* (A Norrköping for Everyone). The initiative had three demands:

- Supplement all statues portraying Louis de Geer owned by the municipality with information that clarifies his racist roll in the colonial history and the human trafficking.
- Deal with Norrköping's role in the colonial history and the human trafficking.
- Map how the profits from the slave trade have been used for building and developing Norrköping. (MittSkifte, n.d. *my translation*)

Ett Norrköping för Alla also started a petition through MittSkifte, a digital platform for operating campaigns and petitions operated by the organization *Skiftet* (MittSkifte, n.d.). The petition was aimed towards the municipality politicians and the headline stated: *Deal with the racist history of Louis de Geer!* where the

same demands handed to the municipality was written (MittSkifte, n.d.).

The initiative was handled by Kultur- och Fritidsnämnden (the Culture and Leisure Board) but was dismissed in December 2020. In the protocol from the board meeting where the proposal was dismissed, the board states the importance to broaden the history and supplement with facts and that this is an already ongoing process in the municipality through exhibitions, digital forums, and city tours etc. The board also states that there is a need for making the public art accessible, with more than a sign with title, year and material which now is the case for public art owned by the municipality. They also explain that there are no resources to make a full investigation, as suggested by Jonsson, but that Norrköpings Konstmuseum has started a review of the signs by public art, by this the board states that the work by the municipality and Norrköpings Konstmuseum is already aligned with the initiative from Jonsson.

Jonsson first got to know the story of Louis de Geer through the organization Ett Norrköping för Alla, where he met people connected to the Division of Migration, Ethnicity and Society at Linköping University, where the story of Louis de

Geer and the slave trading was known. But it was at first during the George Floyd protests in the USA it was acknowledged at what range Louis de Geer was involved.

Ett Norrköping för Alla is a part of *Tillsammansskapet*, an organization gathering local grassroots movements in Sweden, with the common values of freedom and equality for all humans (Tillsammansskapet, n.d.). The aim for Ett Norrköping för Alla is to counteract the idea that racists want to mediate, that people cannot live together and that multicultural would lead to the fall of democracy, says Jonsson. Ett Norrköping för Alla is a place for people with different origins to gather and meet and arrange various demonstrations and manifestations.

As mentioned earlier, CJ de Geer offered to make a counter-project, an addition in form of a sculpture telling another side of the story. Jonsson welcomes the idea but think a new statue would meet reactions and probably vandalizations from a local group of Nazis. He describes them as a small but active group that for example disturbed an exhibition, *Medlöperi och Motstånd*, portraying the local history of Nazis at Norrköping Stadsmuseum in the beginning of 2020.

I do not really see the problem in actually bringing forward the whole story behind a person you are so proud of, for me, it is quite uncomplicated to tell that he was also a slave trader. (Jonsson, 2021, my translation)

4. Implementations

The case study shows how Louis de Geer is present in Norrköping, not only as a statue at Gamla Torget but strongly intertwined in the history and development of Norrköping and its pride Industrilandskapet. There is an ongoing discussion which is mostly focusing on spreading information and knowledge of the colonial history, but the discussion is vivid and engage many which is a great starting point for continuing the discussion.

There are several examples on how to deal with monuments, buildings and places after colonial rule or other type of suppressing regimes. There are examples of removing monuments in the USA and renaming streets and places after the fall of Soviet Union. There are examples of new monuments, such as the *I am Queen Mary*, changing existing monuments and places seen in the former Italian fascist monument in Addis Ababa and in the

ideas by the research collective DAAR. The *Settler Colonial City Project* states in the *Decolonizing the Chicago Cultural Center* that unraveling hidden stories is one way of decolonizing.

These different approaches could be translated to different strategies on how to deal with colonial history, four of them where actions are taken: *communication*, *addition*, *transformation*, and *subtraction*. The fifth, and the most common way of dealing with colonial heritage in Sweden, and with no actions taken, would be described as *acceptance*.

When designing implementations, it is important to ask the question, *what is the aim of decolonization?* Is it to remove offensive elements from public spaces? Is it to broaden the perspective on history? Is it to change inherited racial inequalities? Or something else?



The statue at Gamla Torget, the Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress in the background. 2021.

Acceptance

What if... we let it be.

In late June in 2020 there was a letter to the editor of the local newspaper NT.se, calling for keeping the statue of Louis de Geer (Eriksson, 2020). The letter was an answer to another letter calling for the removal of the statue, published a few days earlier. The writer of the letter described the situation as a witch-hunt and that Louis de Geer is an important part of the history of Norrköping and its former industries. The writer concluded with that he did not want to become *history-less*.

To *accept* the situation would in this case mean leaving the statue to be, to see it as a historical object and a part of the cultural heritage of Norrköping. Simultaneously as the discussion around de Geer grew, Swedish statues of Carl von Linné were also targeted since he was the first to divide the human into races and give them stereotypical characteristics.

In the student journal *Lundagård* an article regarding statues owned by Lund University was published in September, 2020 (Axelsson Därth). Axelsson Därth describes how a racial biologist from the early 19th century, Sven Nilsson, is portrayed with a statue in front of the old and central university building. Sven Nilsson was a student of Anders Retzius, another racial biologist who is portrayed with a bust placed and owned by Karolinska Institutet (Bylund, 2020). Anders Retzius's father, Anders Jahan Retzius, was a student to Carl von Linné, which clarifies the connections between Linné's research and the racial biology. The

research Anders Retzius and Sven Nilsson developed considered measurements of skulls, where the Sámi people were one of the targeted and exploited groups. Their research is considered to have been the foundation for the establishment of the State Institution of Racial Biology (Axelsson Därth, 2020).

Even though the history is clear, when Axelsson Därth contacts the university management to ask them of their opinion of the statue of Sven Nilsson and its placement, he gets an avoidant answer. These statues and busts are let be even though the history of the State Institution for Racial Biology is well known, but maybe not so often spoken of.

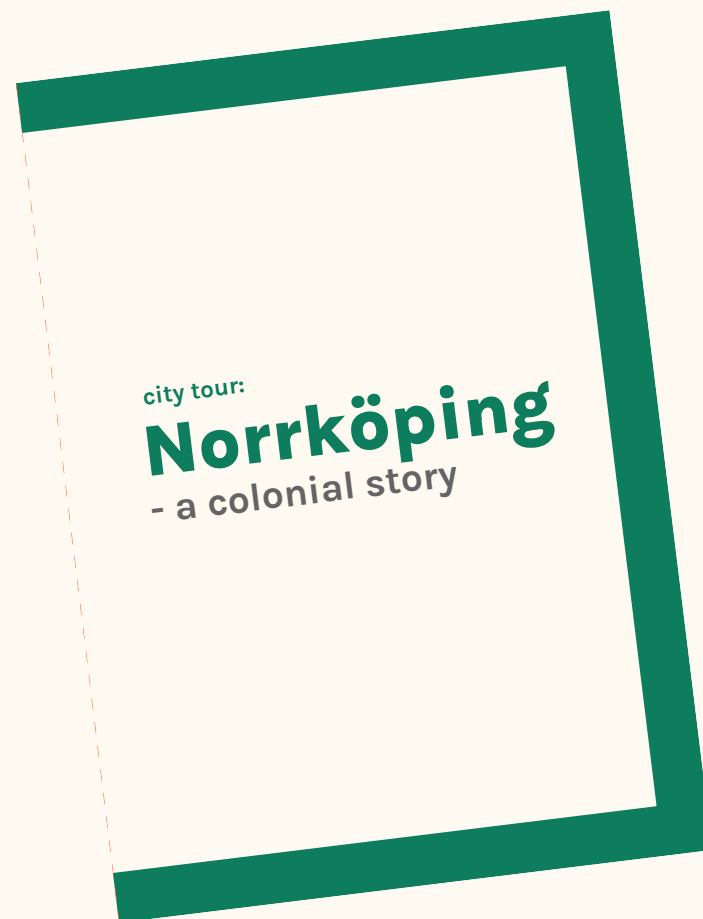
These are different examples of acceptance, and this is a common way of handling colonial and racist parts of the Swedish history. In the project Possible Monuments by GIBCA, they state that there are no monuments or memorials in Sweden acknowledging the colonial violence (GIBCA, n.d.). Even if stories and evidence are presented, not much is done to deal with the history. One could argue that acceptance in this case equals *denial*, denial of even having a history, problem, or question to address.

The monument of Louis de Geer was erected to commemorate his contributions as an industrial man who founded the industries and contributed to the development of Norrköping. The meaning of the monument has changed though, Louis de Geer is no longer only representing development and

successful industries, the statue is today, or was at least during the summer and autumn of 2020, a representation of the unacknowledged colonial violence and the consequences still left today.

By this, acceptance in the form of remaining in the status quo, could be seen as equivalent to accept racial inequalities

still prominent. It could also be interpreted to that those who suffered and are suffering from the colonial violence are not perceived as an important part of the national history, just as how Gramsci describes the term subaltern. This leaves us with the question, are not all lives and stories equally important?



A brochure to a permanent city tour, inspired by the pedagogical program Historiebruk. Made by the author.

A possible future

The pedagogical program Historiebruk is now developed to a permanent city tour for local citizens and tourists to take part of. The tour includes stops with direct contact to Louis de Geer and the colonial history: the bust at the Town Hall, the statue at Gamla Torget, Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress, Norrköpings Stadsmuseum, the de Geer-schools and Industrilandskapet. The tour can both be followed with a guide or by oneself with a brochure.

Communication

What if... we had a broader perspective on Norrköping's history?

In June 2020 a cardboard sign was put by the statue, stating with: the father of Swedish slave trade (Nygren, 2020). The citizens' initiative to the municipality by Jimmy Jonsson also suggested to complement the statue with a sign. These kinds of actions strive towards communicating a broader perspective on the history of Louis de Geer and Sweden. The art exhibition Släkten och slaverna and the pedagogical program Historiebruk could also been seen as different ways of communicating the history of Swedish colonialism and slave trade.

The project and exhibition Decolonizing the Chicago Cultural Center by the Settler Colonial City Project in the USA could also be an example on how to unravel histories and a different way of seeing architecture and history. The project itself describes that decolonizing the Cultural Center "starts with revealing and making visible the histories of violence and erasure".

If decolonizing in the DCCC project could mean revealing a broader perspective on history, as a way of dealing with and acknowledging the history, a communicative action in Norrköping could also be successful. It is important to add though, that the DCCC project was a collaboration between the research collective Settler Colonial City Project and the Americans Indian Center of Chicago, if this was to be executed in Norrköping it would also be important to involve people with experiences and stories that

should be made visible. This could for example be people with experiences of racial discrimination. To communicate the history of Louis de Geer could be enhanced in several ways, one way could be to strengthen the already ongoing projects.

To mount a supplemental sign by the statue which "clarifies his racist roll in the colonial history and the human trafficking", suggested by Jonsson, would be a strong symbolic act and could make the information accessible for people passing by, but a city tour could give a deeper understanding of the history and its consequences.

The advantages of a communicative implementation are that the statue is kept as an historical object, preserved as cultural heritage, and kept for the future. This could be seen as a benefit since our perspective on history in the future probably will be different from the perspective and ideas today.

The disadvantages with using only communication as implementation is that it does not consider the problem of the statue as an offensive object. Depending on what type of communication the implementation will get different effects. One can assume that it is more likely for a recurring visitor of the Norrköpings Konstmuseum to visit an exhibition, the same for a visitor of Norrköpings Stadsmuseum and a possible city tour. It is also more likely for someone with opinions in line with a critical standpoint to visit an exhibition or city tour in this case.

Norrköping

- a colonial story

The Swedish colonial history is present in Norrköping with statues, names of institutions and so on. The clearest traces are after Louis de Geer (1587-1652), a businessman and entrepreneur with Walloon origins, born in Liège, in today's Belgium and who came to Sweden in 1627 (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

Louis de Geer was an important businessman in Europe and the most important one in Sweden during this time. He contributed to create the Swedish export of the iron cannon, leased several ironworks from the Swedish Crown and took over all weapon factories formerly owned by the Swedish Crown. Though, his most important companies were a weapon factory and a brass mill in Norrköping.

In 1649 he established the trading company Afrikanska Kompaniet, which had monopoly in the trading rights in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. The company established a trading colony, called Cabo Corso, in today's Ghana, which traded with gold, ivory and enslaved people.

Rådhuset
bust of Louis de Geer

At the square Tyska Torget Rådhuset (the Town Hall) can be found. The building is designed by the professor I G Clason and was finished in 1910 (Norrköpings Kommun, 2014). Except of the Town Hall, the square Tyska Torget is framed by the church Hedvigs kyrka, Elite Grand hotel and the building for the former bank Norrköpings Enskilda Bank, today Handelsbanken. The square is in this sense interesting since it collects important institutions of society, the political power, the church, the economy, and the leisure. The Town Hall holds facilities for the municipality and civil weddings, and in this building, which not only hold power but also radiates power itself, a bust of Louis de Geer is to be found at the main stairs, reached from the main entrance at Tyska Torget.

Gamla Torget
statue of Louis de Geer

At the oldest square in Norrköping a statue by the famous sculptor Carl Milles from 1945 is erected (Norrköpings Konstmuseum, n.d.). The statue is carved in black granite and stands on a grey granite plinth. By his feet there is a landscape of industrial buildings and people by a river which symbolize the past Norrköping. Beneath his feet one can see a brass mill and ships sailing, animals, a map of Belgium and southern Scandinavia.

By the statue an inscription can be read: Louis de Geer, 1587-1652. The father of the Swedish industry. He established weapon factory and brass mills in Norrköping and founded the city's textile industry. During wartime he forged our weapons and was a faithful support for the King and the people. The monument is raised close to the shores where he once listened to the rapids roar and the songs of the workers. (Norrköpings Konstmuseum, n.d. my translation)

Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress

The Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress was inaugurated in 1994 as a part of the renovation of Industrilandskapet and is an important culture institution of Norrköping (Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress, n.d.). The oldest parts of the building origins back to the 17th century, in these premises a weapon factory used to operate. A paper mill also used to operate in the building, led by Louis de Geer. The main building dates to 1954 and was designed by architect Ivar Tengbom and used to hold machines for paper manufacturing. The building is today named after Louis de Geer and in remembrance for his development of the city.

Norrköpings Stadsmuseum

At Norrköpings Stadsmuseum the permanent exhibition Den första staden shows how Norrköping grew and developed from the Viking Age to the Great Era of Power (ca 11-17th century) (Norrköpings Stadsmuseum, n.d.). The exhibition portrays four

historical persons to illustrate this period of the history, one of them is Adrienne de Geer who was married to Louis de Geer. The exhibition shows how the family de Geer came to Sweden and their importance and contributions for developing Norrköping to an important city during the 17th century.

De Geergymnasiet, De Geers skola & De Geers Förskola

Three schools are named after Louis de Geer for his importance for Norrköping becoming an industrial and harbor city, the preschool De Geers Förskola, the elementary school De Geers Skola and the gymnasium De Geergymnasiet. The gymnasium was inaugurated in 1868, at this time it was called Norrköpings Högre Elementarläroverk, 10 years later the name was changed to Norrköpings Högre Allmänna Läroverk. About 100 years later, in 1964, the Swedish parliament decided on a reformation of the Swedish gymnasiums, in connection to this, a new name for the gymnasium was chosen again (Gustafsson, 2018).

The elementary school, De Geers Skola, used to be called Västra skolan, referring to the street Västra Promenaden. Today this street is called Södra Promenaden, this part of Södra Promenaden, west of Drottninggatan, used to be called Västra Promenaden until 1958.

When discussing new names, there were suggestions of renaming the school after city districts, famous persons, former principals, or donors but naming a school after city districts was only seen as appropriate for elementary schools and the idea of naming the gymnasium a famous person was more welcomed. There was a problem though, the elementary school close by, was already named De Geerskolan. It was then decided that the gymnasium would take over the name De Geerskolan and the elementary school had to change to De Geers skola, two very similar names which caused problems for the postal services.

Industrilandskapet

Louis de Geer is represented in several ways in Norrköping, cultural institutions, schools are named after him and sculptures picturing him are seen in central public spaces. He even has a street named after him in the north east parts of Norrköping and he is in general presented as a role model and hero for Norrköping.

The colonial heritage can also be read in the buildings and development of Norrköping. Louis de Geer was Sweden's most important businessman during this period and his most important companies were placed in Norrköping. One of the ships sent to the trading colony Cabo Corso in West Africa was also named Norrköping. Louis de Geer built the foundation for Norrköping to become an industrial city and Industrilandskapet is a highly appreciated cultural heritage, unique for Europe, and is an important part of the promoted identity of the city. By this, one could conclude that the building and development of the Norrköping is connected to the economic benefit made in the colonial operations by Louis de Geer.



1. Rådhuset,
bust of Louis de Geer

2. Gamla Torget,
statue of Louis de
Geer

3. Norrköpings
Stadsmuseum

4. Louis de Geer
Konsert & Kongress

5a. De Geergymnasiet
5b. De Geers Skola
5c. De Geers Förskola

6. Industrilandskapet

First page of brochure, information of the places visited in the city tour. Written by the author.

Second page of brochure, a map guiding the tour. Map by the author, background image ©Lantmäteriet, 2021 (figure 11).



Figure 16: Exhibition Släkten och slaverna. Carl Johan de Geer's prototype for an additional statue (Richardson, 2020).

A possible future

The additional statue is placed at the other end of the square, giving the square a new version of Louis de Geer, an ugly reflection of the first statue. The paving stones, put in patterns of squares at the square, are re-organized by the new statue, giving the addition an equally large framing as the first statue. The addition is an attempt to create a balance and show a more nuanced and neutralized perspective of the history.

Addition

What if... we added more stories?

In the exhibition *Släkten och slaverna* Carl Johan de Geer presented a piece which he suggested should be placed permanently at the square Gamla Torget. The piece was an old school bench with an ugly sculpture picturing Louis de Geer's head. This piece was supposed to comment the lack of education on Sweden's participation in the transatlantic slave trade.

To make an addition would be to take it one step further and could mean that more people would be reached with the information on Swedish colonialism and reflect over it. The additional statue would also be a more up front and forced implementation towards the people passing by than a sign or city tour.

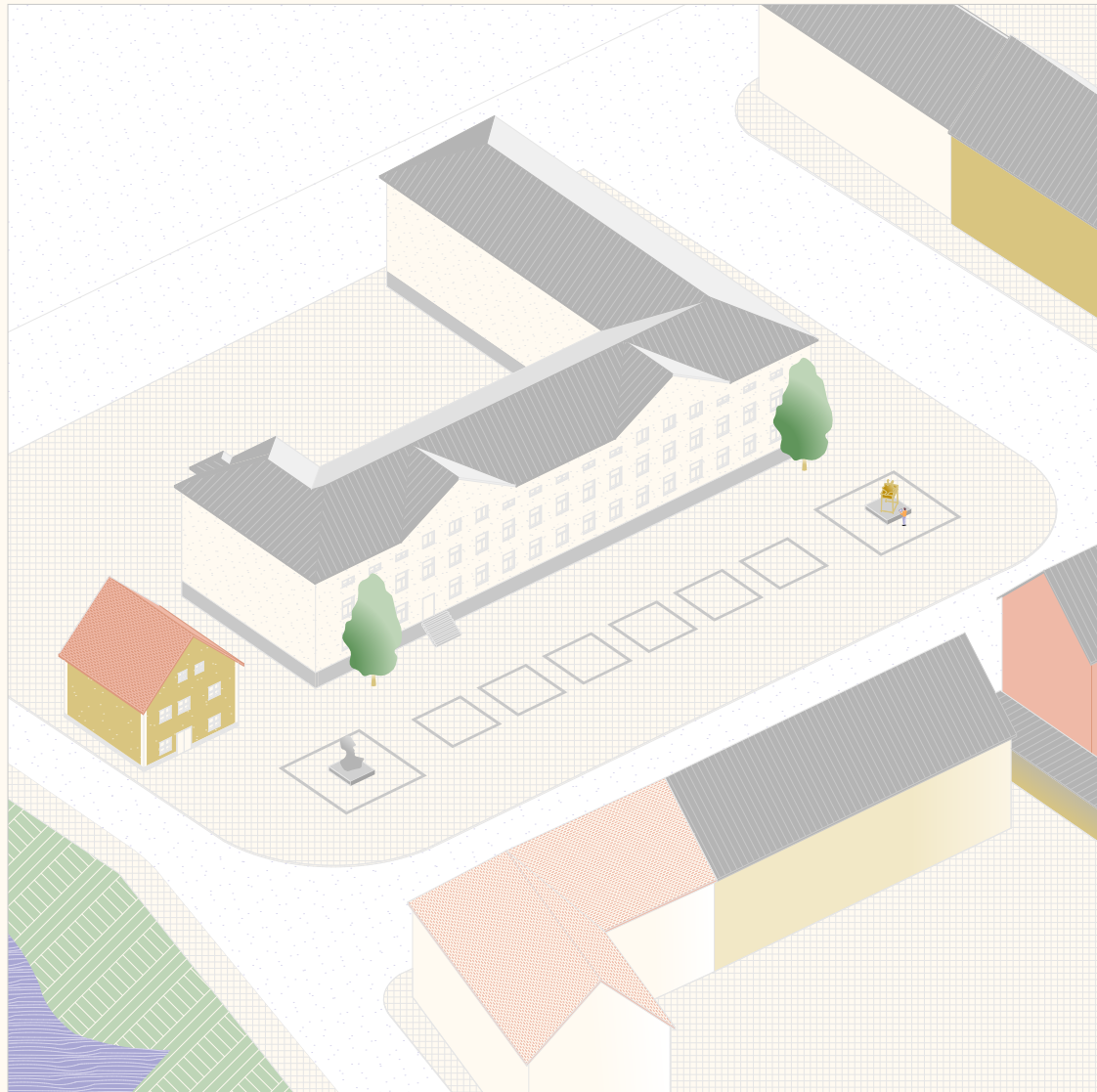
This implementation is also in line with the project *I am Queen Mary* in Copenhagen. The monument, an embodiment of the artists Jeanette Ehlers and La Vaughn Belle who have created the monument (Belle & Ehlers, n.d.), shares both similarities with and differs from Carl Johan de Geer's proposal. They share the critical agenda and stating a resistance towards the history itself and how it has been told. Despite this, they come from very different points of departure because of who they are.

It can be questioned though, which Carl Johan de Geer himself also does, if a white man from the de Geer family can talk about

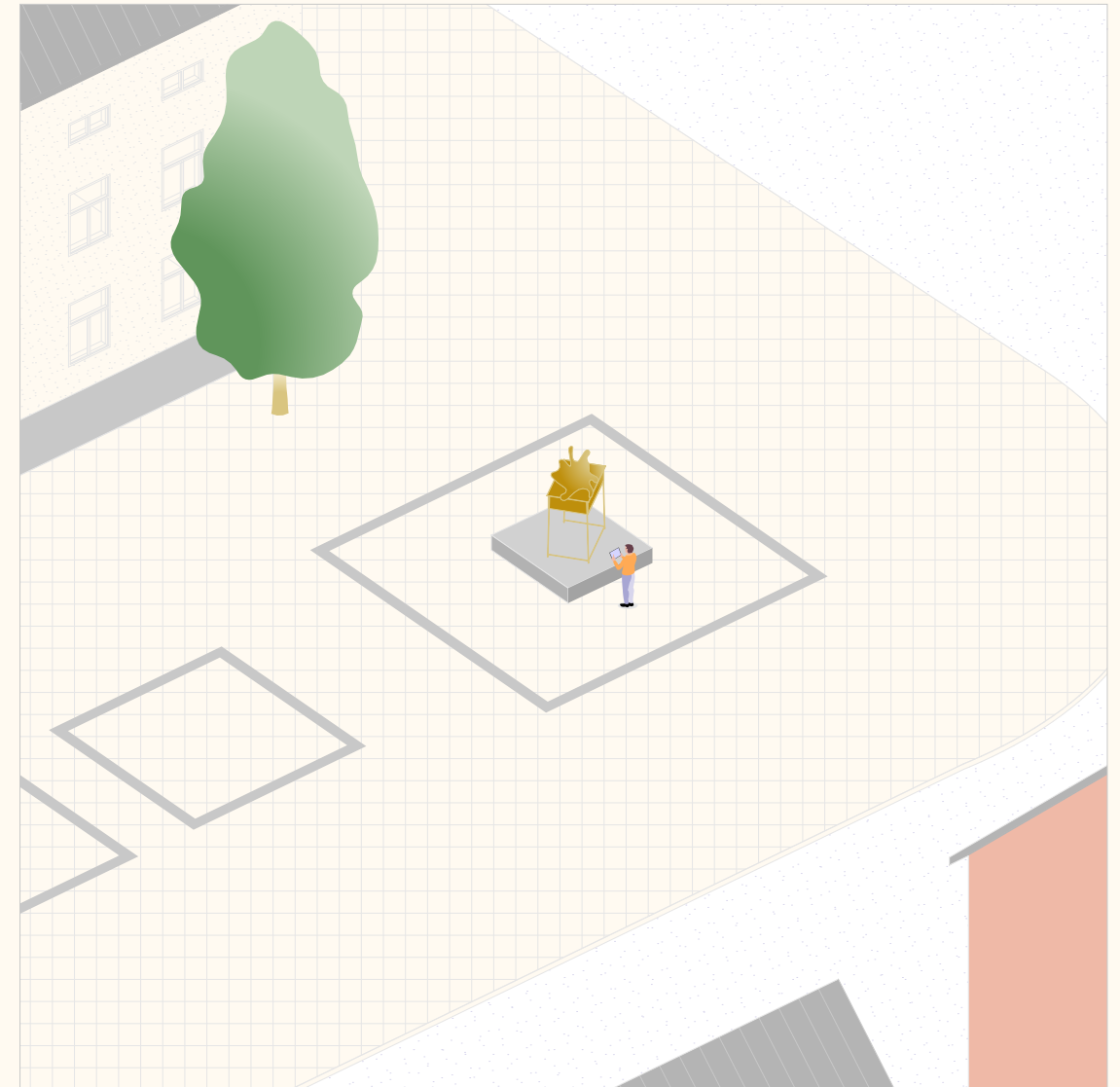
colonialism and decolonization. The artist Belle and Ehlers are two women of color, with origins in the Caribbean, and because of this, one must address the question, is it important *who* performs resistance?

Has Carl Johan de Geer inherited the guilt of his ancestor, is that even possible? If seen to the fact that he probably grew up under privileged circumstances and still holds a privileged position with a well-defined cultural capital. One could then argue that he has profited on the social class and economics of his noble family. Assume therefore he in fact has inherited the guilt. Then, it can be questioned if giving more space to a member of the de Geer family would be considered as a decolonial act. If one on the other hand argue that he for a long time has challenged and criticized his origin in his artistry, maybe he should be given the chance to deal with and take a stand against his family's past?

Does gender and skin color matter? Should we not see pass that at this point? During the European colonization and creating of a European identity skin color was made important. Europeans fear of hybridity and the constructed racial beliefs are still present and are causing consequences today. Therefore, one could argue, since people still are judged based on skin color, it does matter *who* performs resistance and *who* is given space and acknowledgment in public spaces.



A possible future where an additional statue by Carl Johan de Geer is erected at the other end of the square. Illustration by the author.





A possible future where the statue is transformed into a memorial monument. Design by the author.

A possible future

The statue is now transformed into a part of a memorial monument, to remember those who have suffered and are suffering from Sweden's colonial violence. The statue is framed by a stone fountain, bringing in the water into the monument which is already a very present character in the central parts of Norrköping in form of the river Motala Ström. Motala Ström and its old weirs are creating huge waterfalls which creates powerful roars, and the water is at many places gushing wildly.

The water is living and unpredictable and creates a contrast towards the very static statue. By bringing in the water into the transformed monument, it is both reutilizing the statue and giving it a new purpose and characteristic. The water is gushing in front of the statue, hides it, but sometimes, the old statue can be glimpsed behind the waterfall.

Transformation

What if... the place was transformed?

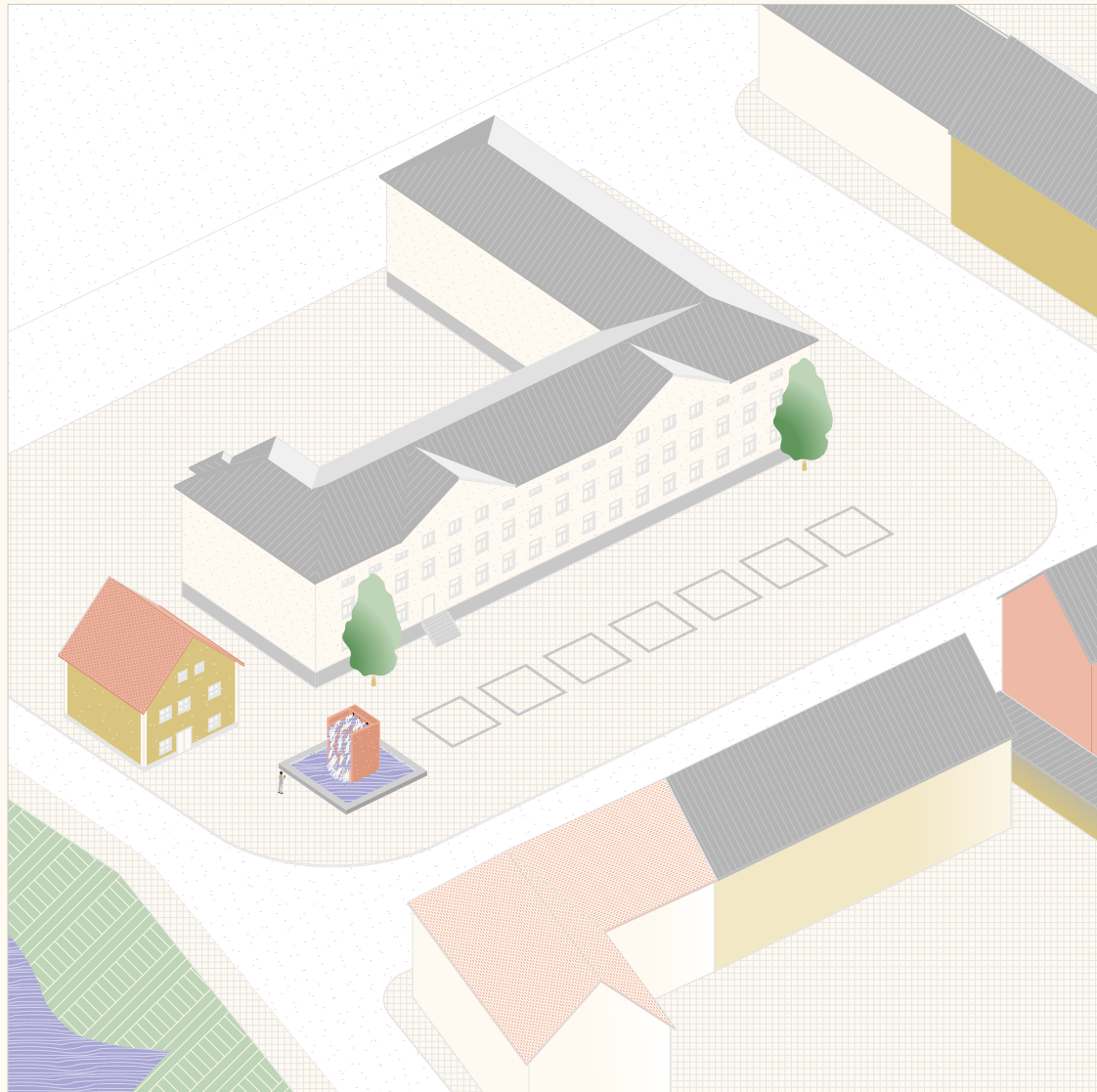
In the article *Shuffling Times*, Benedikte Zitouni and Valérie Pihet reflects over time (Pihet & Zitouni, 2016). In one section, Zitouni uses King Leopold II, the former King of Belgium known for his cruel regime over Congo, for an example of postcolonial memory-making. Zitouni suggests that even though the deeds are known to practically everyone in Belgium, there is still denial and for many, "Leopold II is an exemplary King". By this Zitouni asks the question, *What if unveiling the deeds is simply not enough?* Even though Zitouni's argument is regarding *shuffling times*, a way to stop seeing time as something linear, removing the clear lines between past, present and future, it is interesting to ask the same question in the case of Louis de Geer in Norrköping.

The research collective DAAR (Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency) suggest that decolonization is an act of

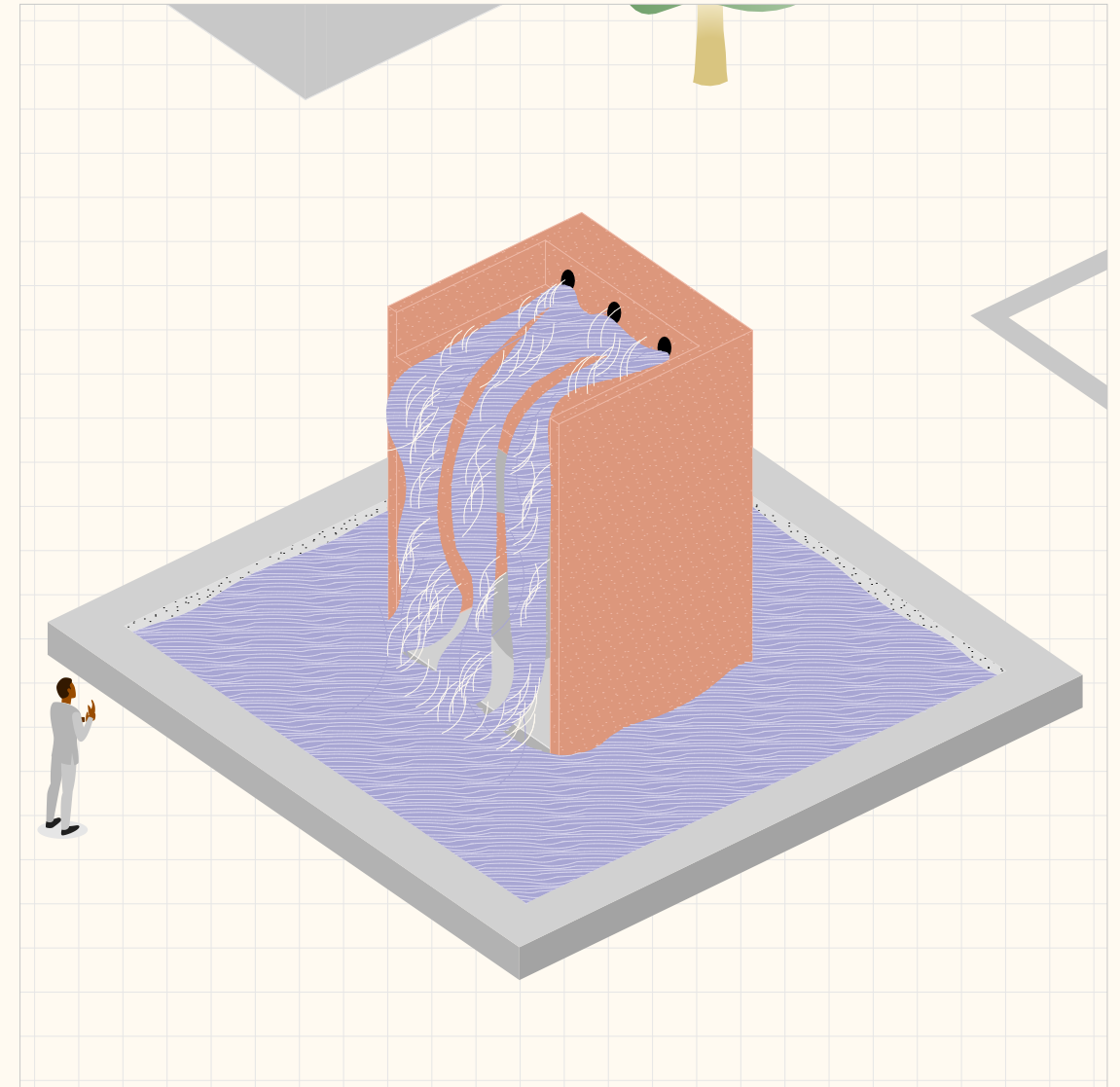
profanation, violence. They also suggest that to decolonize colonial architecture, the architecture needs to be reutilized. So, what if unveiling the deeds is simply not enough. What if the statue and square needs to be reutilized?

To transform would be to take even one more step which most surely would evoke thoughts on the history. This implementation will also give the square a new spatially character, which will be difficult to miss or avoid.

The act of transformation could have been pushed even further than presented in this implementation. In this case, the statue is not touched, it is merely surrounded and hidden. To transform and reutilize, as described by DAAR, could also been interpreted as that the statue would have needed to be targeted more directly. It could have been pushed so far that the stone itself would have to be deconstructed and demolished for a new purpose.



A possible future where the statue is transformed into a memorial monument.
Illustration and design by the author.





A possible future where the statue is removed and the plinth is kept and used as a seating place. Illustration and design by the author.

A possible future

The statue of Louis de Geer is removed, now standing at Norrköpings Stadsmuseum, as well as the bust from the Town Hall. The three de Geer-schools are all renamed, they now go by the name Södra Förskolan, Södra Skolan and Södra Gymnasiet, referring to the main street by the schools, Södra Promenaden. Södra Promenaden used to be called Västra Promenaden, and back then, the elementary school was called Västra Skolan (Gustafsson, 2018). Louis de Geer Konsert & Kongress is also renamed, and is simply called Norrköpings Konsert & Kongress. De Geersgatan in Norrköping is renamed to Stora Tvärgatan, referring to how it connects two main roads in Norrköping, Riksväg 55 and Finspångsvägen.

Left at the square Gamla Torget is though the plinth of the statue, this to remark and remember the decision that was taken to break from the past. The plinth also has a new function, wooden ribbons are mounted at the top of the plinth which makes it to a comfortable seating place. The plinth is also a reminder of that someone used to be erected and raised (even praised?), but later was condemned because of his cruel actions. These values could no longer be represented in a public space.

Subtraction

What if... we subtracted?

The notion of removing statues and erasing former leaders from history is not a new invention. Several Roman Emperors were condemned to *damnatio memoriae* after their deaths, a Latin term which translates to “condemnation of memory”, with removed statues and even erasure of their names in inscriptions (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

In 1991 when the Soviet Union fell, several of its former republics banned communist symbols (Shevchenko, 2015). In Ukraine, several communist names were removed, and in 2015 Ukraine forbade any communist or Nazi symbols. In Russia, some of the monuments of former communist leaders were removed and placed at the Muzeon Park of Arts in Moscow (moscovery.com, 2021). These actions would maybe not classify as examples of decolonization rather decommunization but are interesting references in relation to Norrköping since the also regard targeted statues.

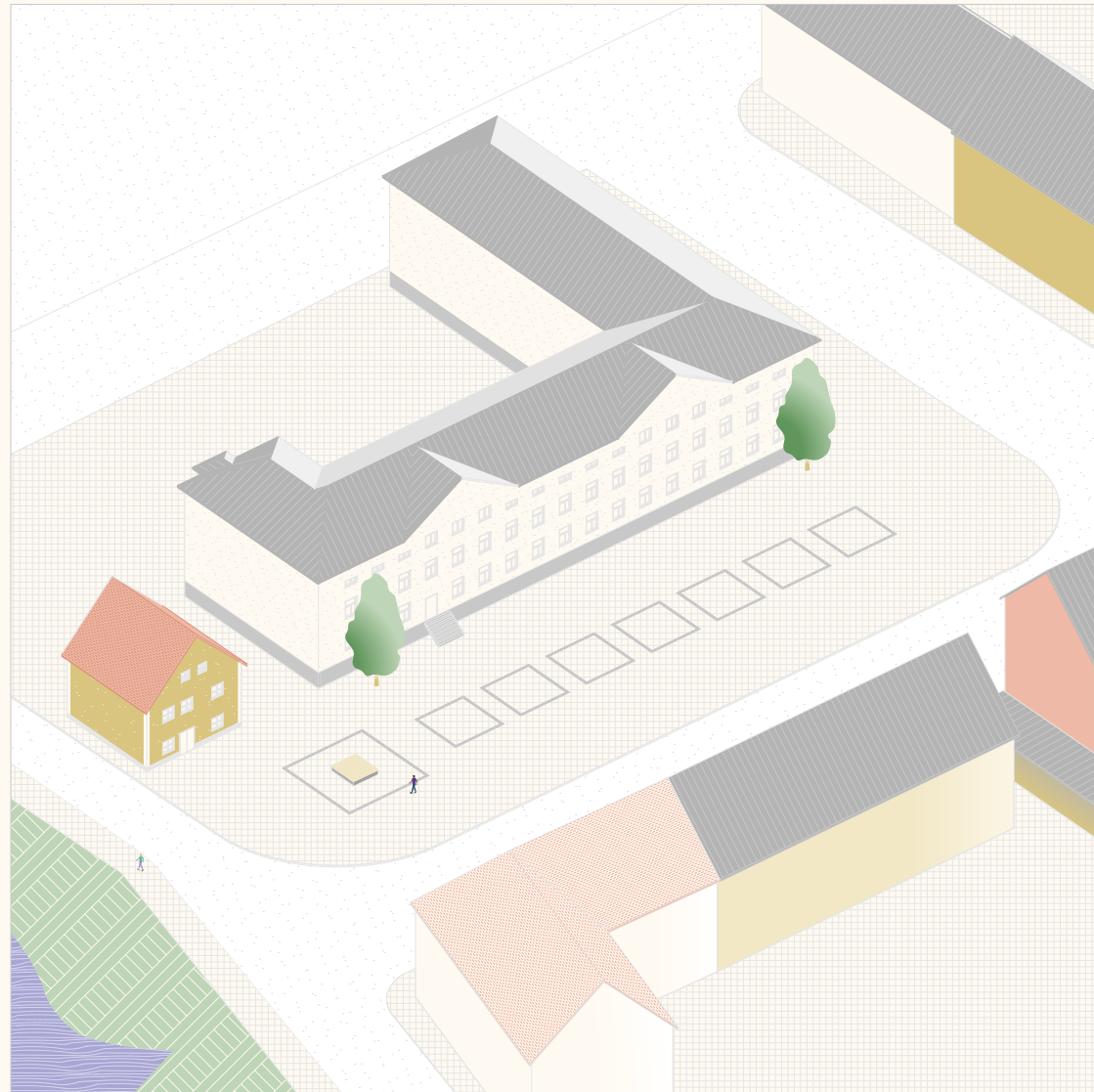
This scenario would be in line with what happened in the former Soviet republics. To remove statues of Stalin in former Soviet republics and statues associated to racial injustice in the USA is maybe not comparable to the context of Sweden, but this implementation is presented to show how far one could go, to give perspective on what decolonization could be, even though no citizen of Norrköping with opinions in line with this, have been encountered during this study. If to perform this scenario, one must also ask

the question *How far should we go?* since this easily can become a huge project of change. Is it only elements and names in Norrköping that needs to be changed or should this apply to all of Sweden?

The street De Geersgatan in Norrköping is not the only street named after de Geer, the same street also exists in Gothenburg and in the small villages Lesjöfors in Värmland and in Karlholmsbruk in Uppland. Louis de Geer’s old palace at Götgatan in Stockholm is today the Embassy of the Netherlands, do we need to deal with this as well? If we do, it is important to ask if that would bring consequences to the relation between Sweden and the Netherlands since Louis de Geer is also an important figure in the history of the Netherlands.

It is also relevant to ask who else was responsible for the slave trade, Queen Kristina permitted Louis de Geer to engage with the slave trade and establish the trading colony in Ghana, should we remove statues and other elements related to her as well? This discussion could continue and grow and result in a broader discussion on what and which elements should be allowed in public spaces.

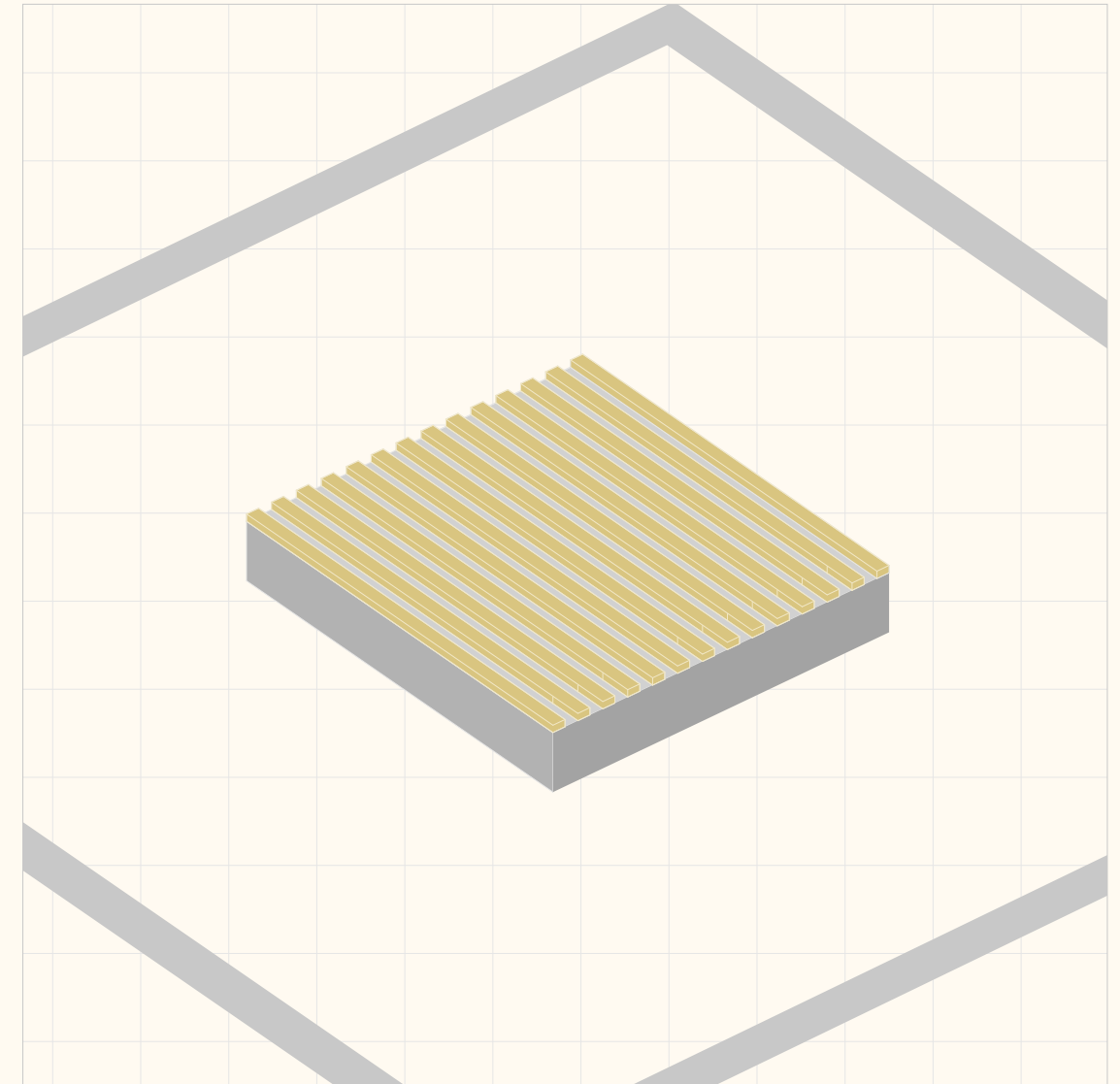
To subtract Louis de Geer from the square and other spaces is maybe the most radical implementation, this gives a new spatial identity for the square which most certainly will create reflections for the citizens of Norrköping. The aim of learning from history and reflecting over one’s own contemporaries could still be done by seeing the statue in an explained context at Norrköpings Stadsmuseum.



A possible future where the statue is removed and the plinth is kept and used as a seating place. Illustration and design by the author.

To remove the statue would be a strong symbolic act, a break from the past and the values connected to it, but it can also be argued against, as these acts are not really making any difference and are merely a

type of censorship. Removals of statues is however nothing new and the act itself could therefore be seen as a part of history, a type of memory-making (Lorenzoni, 2017).



In this implementation it is also interesting to consider what the city should not *forget to remember*, as Yeoh (2001) put it, but especially in this implementation, is this something we should *remember to forget*?

One could ask oneself, *What future does one want? What is worth to carry with from history? What could be left behind?*

5. Discussion

Swedish colonial heritage is present in public spaces in several ways, but the history of Sweden's colonialism is not in general known to the public or processed and dealt with. This thesis suggests colonial heritage to be discussed at a higher degree and public spaces in Sweden to be decolonized. Based on reference projects the study shows several ways on working with decolonization with the medium of architecture and new stories and perspectives can be read from the public space using postcolonial theory.

The theoretical framework of Sweden's colonial history and postcolonial theory shows a strong connection with colonialism and ideas of races and racism. This strengthens the argument that the presence of colonial heritage in public spaces should be discussed. It also shows how Sweden have participated in colonialism, and therefore how Sweden also is responsible for inherited racial injustices. The reference examples and postcolonial theory does not give an unequivocal answer to how a public space is decolonized, rather that it is strongly dependent on context and that there are many strategies to use.

The discussion in Sweden has occasionally been treated as if there are only two options, to keep or to remove. In Norrköping the discussion has

especially continued with different ways of communication. This thesis shows that there are more alternatives and combinations in between the extremes of doing nothing and total removal, which can inspire a broader discussion or contribute to other ideas and solutions.

Several of the implementations touch upon or enhance the already ongoing discussion, especially the idea of communicating the history and the proposal of an addition by CJ de Geer. This study shows that citizens of Norrköping hold a mix of opinions, from fear of becoming history-less to being positive to an additional statue. The board which handled the citizens' initiative from Jonsson also send out signals of mixed opinions. When they dismissed the initiative but also praised the importance of broadening history and supplementing it with facts, it gave a contradicting impression. An impression of admitting the problem, but to not want to deal with it.

To formulate advantages and disadvantages of the different implementations, the aim of decolonization needs to be addressed. Is it to remove offensive element from the public environment? Is it to become aware of the history? Is it to change inherited racial injustices? Or do we want to make the colonial history visible from another perspective in public spaces? These

questions raise some of the qualities of the different implementations.

If the aim is to simply remove elements from the public space which are considered offensive the implementation of subtraction is the way to go. Transformation, in this case, could also be an option since it covers up the statue. If the aim also is to leave behind the idea of statues portraying persons, idols and heroes, subtraction also supports this. Even though the actions of Louis de Geer were particular cruel, people tend to act within the norms and expectations of their society and historical era, so who will be *good* forever? When a person will be judged within their lifetime, a public statue will be judged much longer.

For spreading knowledge of the history and communicate a broader perspective on history the implementations communication, addition and transformation are useful. To spread knowledge in these different ways could be beneficial since it gives a deeper understanding of history. This could bring forward reflection and discussion among people which could inspire to other changes. Just like the exhibition Slakten och slaverna made visitors reflect of their own part of history, the implementations could enhance this in different ways. *What is the blind spot of our time?* as curator Scragg at Norrköpings Konstmuseum put it (Scragg, n.d.).

Communication, through a city tour, could give a deeper understanding of history but may access a smaller number of people,

where the implementation transformation could access almost everyone passing by the square but may not give the same depth of knowledge and understanding.

The disadvantage of communication could be that even though it acknowledges the history and the crimes of Louis de Geer, do they deal with them? Since addition, transformation and subtraction include more direct actions on the statue, they could give a higher sense of acknowledging the colonial violence than the others. Informing of the history through a city tour is closer to admitting the history, but then what?

If the aim of decolonization is to change inherited racial inequalities, one must ask what the effects the different implementations do. Even though the implementation subtraction can be seen as the most radical implementation, it can be questioned if the square will become a more equal and less racist public space if the statue is removed. Or is a removal an important part of memory-making, as Lorenzoni described it? Then the removal of a statue, could be seen as an equally important part of history, as the erecting of one.

A first step could be to communicate the history, before more active actions could take place. But it is important to remember, as in the case acceptance, informing of the history does not solve everything, rather it can easily end up with denial. Even though the BLM movement became even more global than before in 2020, along with stories of racism and violence, still

many were left with denial and argued for the importance of keeping statues left uncommented. One such example is the case of King Leopold II in Belgium.

One can conclude that the different implementations have different qualities and choosing one as a solution is therefore difficult. They could benefit from being combined with each other though, but not necessarily all of them at the same time. Addition and transformation are in these implementations depending on the existing statue as it is today. If addition and transformation were combined with subtraction, the removal of the statue, the concept and idea of them would be less clear. The additional statue by CJ de Geer would have been an antipole to the existing statue, and if the existing statue would have been removed, the concept of the ugly version of Louis de Geer would have been less clear. The same goes for combining addition and transformation. To be able to combine all of them, and benefit from all their different qualities, one can therefore add the parameter *time*, and ask what implementation to do *when*.

Decolonization could be read as a process, to create new identities for a former colonized nation takes time and in the same way, to process the colonial history, heritage and present in a Swedish context, will take time since it has been done to such a low degree so far. It will both take time to spread information but mostly for it to be processed since it requires people's thoughts and ideas about themselves and others to change. So maybe the act towards the statue does not need to be one act,

rather *acts* that are performed during a period.

This study could be used as a basis for a further discussion to continue in Norrköping. As Yeoh described regarding postcolonial cities, the question on what should be mapped and valued as cultural heritage depends on who you ask. There are several groups and identities in a city that needs to be represented and it is therefore important to ask *who* if continuing this with an in-depth project. *Who* gets to decide what or which implementation(s) to execute? *Who* gets to make an additional statue? *Who* gets to transform the monument? *Who* gets to remove the statue?

The work would therefore benefit from a collaboration where Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Norrköpings Stadsmuseum and Ett Norrköping för Alla were involved and engaged. The advantage of involving Ett Norrköping för Alla is that they are not an institution, but a non-profit, nonpartisan organization which manage to gather people with different origins. It is important to take this into consideration and not to try to work against racial inequalities without including people with experience from it. The Division of Migration, Ethnicity and Society at Linköping University could also be beneficial to include since this is a knowledge source on the colonial history of Louis de Geer. Citizen participation is of course a complex matter, and maybe especially in this case. Therefore, one must be prepared for friction, a friction that may

6. References

be important and a must for the question to be discussed and developed.

Not to forget, the issues of colonial heritage in public spaces is merely one of many problems left from colonialism. Therefore, it is important to remember, creating a solution for this specific case will not solve all of them. The statue at Gamla

Torget and other monuments around the world have become a reminder of racism, violence, economical injustices, and lack of acknowledgement. In this sense, these statues become much more than just statues and dealing with them is therefore urgent, even though it will not immediately solve all the injustices they are representing.

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Other photographs and illustrations are made by the author, spring 2021.

7. Appendix

Timeline

1100s	The colonization of Bottenhavskusten (Sápmi) starts.	1800s	Norrköping is one of Sweden's leading industrial cities.
1300s	The Swedish Crown claims areas north of Hälsingland.	1813	The islands of Goudaloupe belongs to Sweden but returns to France in 1814.
1400s	Oguaa is named Cabo Corso by the Portuguese.	1850-1917	Most of the buildings in Industrilandskapet in Norrköping are built.
1500s	The Swedish Crown has clear goals to claim and control the Sápmi areas.	1938	A monument by Carl Milles is raised in Delaware to commemorate the 300 years anniversary of New Sweden. Carl Johan de Geer is born.
1600s	Norrköping has a major weapon production, brass mills, and textile manufacturing.	1945	The statue of Louis de Geer is erected at Gamla Torget in Norrköping.
1634	The Swedish Crown express their hopes for Norrland to become the new Swedish Caribbean.	1950s	The textile crisis in Sweden.
1638	The colony New Sweden in North America is established by the Delaware River.	1970	The last wool factory shuts down in Norrköping. The last major industry in Norrköping moves out from the central city.
1648	Louis de Geer and Queen Kristina makes a preliminary deal to establish a colony in West Africa. Two ships, Christina and Stockholms slott are prepared for departure.	2018	1 st of December. The exhibition Släkten & slavarna opens at Norrköpings Konstmuseum.
1649	15 th of December. Svenska Afrikakompaniet is established, 84,7% of the shares are owned by Louis de Geer.	2019	April. Norrköpings Konstmuseum and Norrköpings Stadsmuseum present the pedagogical program Historiebruk.
1650	The ship Christina arrives to today's Ghana.	2020	25th of May. The African American George Floyd is killed during a police arrest. The next day the George Floyd Protests begins in Minneapolis, USA, and several monuments related to racial injustice are destroyed and removed. The BLM movement becomes global. June. A homemade cardboard sign is placed by the statue of Louis de Geer in Norrköping. A proposal for adding a sign by the statue is handed in to the municipality by Jimmy Jonsson. December. The citizens' initiative by Jonsson is dismissed by the board Kultur- och Fritidsnämnden.
1652	Louis de Geer dies at age 64.		
1655	Karl X Gustav becomes King of Sweden and names the fort in Cabo Corso to Carolusborg. New Sweden is taken over by the Netherlands.		
1658	The Danes takes over Cabo Corso.		
1660	Sweden takes control over Cabo Corso again.		
1663	The Dutch conquers Cabo Corso.		
1748	Saint-Barhtélemy is traded to Sweden from France, in exchange for Franska Tomten, in Gothenburg.		