



Stockholm/Brussels: a retrospective in fine prints

by Emil Ems

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Language: English, German, French

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Pictures: 120

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The author is a retired public servant and academic with a long and distinguished career in Swedish and international administration behind him. This book contains short flashbacks from Stockholm and Brussels, the cities where he spent the bulk of his adult life.

Emil Ems was born in a little village in south-east Austria, in war's last year, just when the soviet army overran the last remnants of the German forces. The terror playing out around the newly born has formed his life forever and shaped him as a man plagued by anxieties and insecurity.

Barely 18 years old, he migrated to Sweden, where he thought to find a new and secure home. But anxieties and insecurity re-emerged in more mature age and he travelled onwards, first to Switzerland and finally Belgium. Not before retirement was imminent he understood that a

man without roots has to find his homeland and security in himself. In consequence, he decided to return to Sweden, choosing Stockholm as his ultimate home.

The author tells this story in four essays. But the book is foremost a presentation of pictures depicting Stockholm and Brussels, taken during the author's spare time over a period of forty years. On the surface, these fine prints represent "urban landscapes"; though, if scrutinized carefully they provide the viewer with rare insights into the author's inner life. With his own words:

–Even if time has come for retrospection, I am at a loss of words to describe my life and inner self. I am not a poet to forge metaphors germane to the task; nor am I a painter or composer. I have only my prints to tell my story. This will have to do!

"It is a pleasure and privilege to preface this book. It presents a travel to two impressive cities, but is foremost about travelling within the mind." (Pierre Schellekens, formerly Head of the EU Commission Representation in Sweden).

"I have known the author since the mid-'eighties as a diligent and striving civil servant as well as an outstanding economist and analyst. But I was not aware that he is also a master in the art of photography." (Ambassador Anders Ahnliid, Head of Sweden's Permanent Representation to the EU).