"We are Straining Mosquitos and Swallowing Camels"

- Human Rights Work in a Municipality Context

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Abstract

In this thesis I make a discourse analysis of the Human Rights discourse, and other prevalent discourses in a municipality context, with a special focus on the municipality of Gothenburg. I map where the concept Human Rights is located in my material, that consists of different official documents and meetings with two representatives from the SDF Östra Göteborg, and examine how the Human Rights discourse functions as an orientating discourse in this context. I examine how the municipality is effected by a normalized racist discourse, and here I also draw on examples from national politics.

In my thesis, I find that the Human Rights discourse is sprawling. This results in the discourse not functioning as a discourse that creates orientation in the municipality work. I find that the current depoliticizing trend is prevalent in the municipality, and argue that this risks obscuring inequalities that have material effects on people's lives. I also find a prevalent neoliberal discourse in my material.

I argue that even though a Human Rights discourse, as well as a Gender Equality discourse, are not put into practice, on a national level, they are still discourses that are used in order to create a difference between a national We and an uncivilized They.

Key concepts: Gender Studies, Human Rights, municipality, depoliticization, discourse analysis

Foreword

Table of Content

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The municipality is full of life. It makes me feel alive. People get sick. Retires. I see new faces in the hallway. I can sometimes sense the satisfaction from someone in the staff who is pleased with a decision. There is frustration. Disappointments. But no matter what, people keep working. Things need to get done. The inhabitants are depending on things getting done. Sometimes people have ideas that cannot get done. But things happen. Things are moving. Sometimes too slow. It is vibrant and slow moving. This is where change can happen.

This was a note that I found in my phone in the beginning of this thesis process, that I had written after having spent a couple of days at the city district office next to Kortedala Torg. I did my internship at Stadsdelsförvaltningen Östra Göteborg (the city district administration in Eastern Gothenburg, hereafter called "the SDF"), which is part of the municipality of Gothenburg. I was surprised by how vibrant the environment appeared to me. This place felt full of ideas and action, and, first and foremost, it was full of people who really wanted to improve the living conditions for the inhabitants. I felt immediately that things were happening there.

Before this experience, I had become interested in how institutions can work with different concepts connected to the Gender Studies Field, such as Diversity, Gender Equality and Human Rights, and this interest was re-actualized during my encounter with the municipality work. The concept Human Rights could be found in the budgets and different regulation documents and the municipality also has "development leaders Human Rights/Gender Equality" that are put to integrate a Human Rights perspective in the different parts of the organization. In other words, the concept circulated within the organization in different ways. It became clear to me that Human Rights was a concept of special importance, as it was also described as something that should be a seen as a foundation for all the municipality work. Hence, the concept is supposed to orientate the work, it should shape the actions and the intervention carried out in the municipality. At the same time, I never heard the staff use the concept. I spent eight weeks at the SDF, and the concept was never mentioned or pointed out as this orientating perspective. This thesis is located within a Gender Studies Field, where there is often a critique towards institutions' ways of working with equality issues. Pointed out issues are, for example, that equality plans are often copy

pasted and that the questions regarding equality work are hard to get up on the agenda, that organizations only use the concepts Gender Equality or Diversity in a marketing purpose, that male managers speak warmly about the importance of having an equality plan and then go out and smacks a colleagues' ass… And so on. These issues are probably not lacking in this municipality either. But still, work gets done. And after moving in the halls of the municipality, taking part in everyday conversations with my colleagues, and following my supervisor to meetings with representatives from other SDFs, it was made clear to me that the organization was full of people that had visions and a focus on improving their inhabitants' lives. The visibility of the concept Human Rights on the one hand, and the lack of the usage of the word, on the other, made me curious about how this everyday municipality work related to the Human Rights concept, and how it functions as an orientating discourse?

To write about Human Rights also give me the opportunity to touch upon the current situation with many people fleeing for their lives from war zones, something as I, from the beginning, saw as an integral part of concept Human Rights. That people are forced to flee their homes has of course been the case throughout all times, but at this moment in time, media and many inhabitants in Sweden have in different ways become engaged in the current political situation, sadly often by being hostile and openly racist, and this is something that I found hard to ignore when it was time to write this thesis. In these debates, it is possible to trace discourses connected both to the concept Human Rights, but also examples of a normalized racist discourse.

This thesis is important for the field of Gender Studies, as well as for practitioners working with the concept Human Rights within Public Administration, for several reasons. Firstly, I examine the gap between theory and practice, and what happens when a concept is to be put into practice. I find this discussion to be important both on a personal level, since I am now leaving the academia and will be facing the "reality", as well as for the Gender Studies Field, where the theoretical level of many discussions within the field, sometimes appear to be hard to apply on the world outside academia. Therefore, I think that this gap, and the effects of it, needs to be further examined within the academia. Secondly, the discussions carried out in this thesis can also be applicable on other concepts within the Gender Studies Field, such as Diversity and Gender Equality. Thirdly, a lot of money and resources are devoted to the work with Human Rights, and in order to make this 'money and resources well spent', especially in organizations where there is a short supply of money and recourses, it is important for practitioners to understand how the concept Human

Rights functions. The result of the thesis can also give insights into how a more effective and clearer work with the concept Human Rights could be organized.

The quote found in my title, was a quote uttered by one of the persons working at the SDF, when we discussed the concept Human Rights. She meant that there is a lot of focus on smaller technical things (the mosquitos), while the bigger issues (the camels) are left undiscussed. This became a suggestive image that followed me through the thesis project.

1.1.1. Aim

My aim with this thesis is to examine how the Human Right discourse functions as a discourse that creates orientation, both in a municipality context, and in a national perspective. My questions are: what does the Human Rights discourse contain of? How does the Human Rights discourse help the practitioners in their everyday work? What other prevalent discourses is the municipality work built upon? I will study how the concept circulates within the municipality organization, with a special focus on the district Östra Göteborg.

1.2. The Municipality

In order to understand how the Human Rights discourse circulates within the municipality organization, it is important to have an idea of how the organization is structured, and from where the departments get its directions. Stadsdelsnämnden Östra Göteborg (the city district committee, hereafter called "the SDN") and the SDF are ultimately governed by Kommunfullmäktige (the municipal assembly), which is the highest decision making body in the municipality of Gothenburg. Kommunfullmäktige, constituted by 13 members, appoints Kommunstyrelsen (the municipality executive committee) that have the overall responsibility to coordinate and oversee the work of the other committees and companies owned by the municipality. Kommunstyrelsen have a regulation document that they need to follow. The regulation document states the different work models, orientations and operations that should be carried out, followed up and evaluated. In Kommunstyrelsen's regulation document it is stated that they shall perform their mission based on democracy, principles regarding human rights, and to work against discrimination (Göteborgs Stad, 2016a: 1). The inhabitants in the municipality shall be equally treated (if no special reason advise against that) regardless of conditions, background and where they live and they have the right to an equivalent and qualitative service. Kommunstyrelsen should work to create conditions for the inhabitants to

engage in democratic participation and gain influence and leads the municipal operations by exercising a coordinated control. They are also responsible for formulating the overall objectives, policies and frames for the governing of the entire municipal operation (Ibid: 2).

The most important governing document in the city, is the budget from Kommunfullmäktige. In this budget it is stated that the work in the municipality should be based on the concept Human Rights (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 10). This budget is then interpreted and broken down in the different SDNs. The city of Gothenburg is divided into 10 different SDNs that all have an SDF that works to implement and administrate the political decisions made by the committees, in each district. Apart from the SDNs, there are also 20 other administrations working within specific departments (such as the environmental administration, the park and recreation administration) that are city-wide. The city also has 34 municipality owned companies. The SDF's mission is to provide their inhabitants with services like pre-schools, youth centers, and other educational activities, social services, support and services directed towards people with certain disabilities, schools, schools for children with special needs, libraries and other cultural activities, and public health. The SDNs have the ultimate responsibility for their inhabitants and, also, to communicate with their inhabitants.

1.3. Why this District?

During my Gender Studies, I have become interested in the possibilities regarding effective equality work. I am especially interested in Public Administration, because of the level of impact it has on people's everyday lives. I have been interested in the possibility to challenge power structures by working with equality issues, especially in big organization that can appear to be slow moving and where the equality work has to be adopted to an environment with high levels of bureaucracy. I knew I wanted to continue exploring the Public Administration field, and in the search for an internship I turned to the City of Gothenburg. The SDF in Östra Göteborg offered me an internship at their development department, and I spent eight weeks there, during the autumn 2015.

The district Östra Göteborg contains of the primary areas Bergsjön, Kortedala, Kviberg, Utvik and Gamlestaden. The district has around 49 000 inhabitants and is the second smallest district in the municipality of Gothenburg, based on number of inhabitants. The district is segregated since, for example, Utby is an area with a lot of self-contained houses and high socio-economic status, while some parts of Kortedala and Bergsjön struggles with

high numbers of unemployment and lower annual income. In the budget for 2015, the SDN states that a woman with a foreign background in eastern Bergsjön has the lowest average income and that a man with a Swedish background living in Utby has the highest. They also write that women living in Bergsjön has an average income that corresponds with 31 % of a man in Utby's average income (SDN Östra Göteborg, 2014).

Östra Göteborg is in many contexts framed as a district that struggles with many challenges, and even though this picture is often undifferentiated (especially in media where the focus is on criminal activity and other social problems, see for example Sydvik, 2015, and Ferhatovic, 2016), positive interventions are needed here. The numbers of ill-health and persons depending on financial support, are higher here than in many other districts (Göteborgs Stad, 2015a). What I liked about the SDF, and what made me feel that I wanted to continue working in relation to this organization, was the constant focus on how to improve the conditions for their inhabitants and still have an understanding of them being in a power position and a prevalent awareness that they need to be reflexive in their work to make sure that the inhabitants actually benefit from the interventions. I became interested in how they related this work to the concept Human Rights.

1.4. Theoretical Perspectives

In this thesis I will make a discourse analysis of my material, based mostly on Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse theory, as presented in Marianne Jørgensen & Louise Phillips *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (2002). Chantal Mouffe, and her work *On the Political* (2005), has also contributed to my understanding of discourse theory. Discourse theory is built on the idea that language is structured according to different patterns. These patterns appear when certain things get repeated, and this repetition make certain discourses take shape. In my thesis, I will make a discourse theory analysis, when I follow the concept Human Rights around in my material, and examine if there are certain patterns in the way of writing and talking about the concept, patterns that are repeated, and that makes a Human Rights discourse take shape. I will also read the rest of my material in the search for these repetitions, in order to see what other prevalent discourses that can be found in the municipality context.

Through discourse analysis, certain ways of talking or thinking about something that might seem natural to us, can be problematized. To fill certain signs, for example concepts, with meaning is our way of making sense of the world. Discourses that we follow

when we talk do never neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations instead discourses play an active role in creating and changing them (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 11). There is always power embedded in what is seen as possible to say and what is left out. The meaning of a sign is never totally fixed, but neither is it ever empty. Jørgensen and Phillips state that "[the] aim of discourse analysis is to map out the processes in which we struggle about the way in which the meaning of signs is to be fixed, and the processes by which some fixations of meaning become so conventionalised that we think of them as natural" (2002: 26).

I have chosen to use Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory since I share their view that it is not possible to make any distinctions between the discursive and non-discursive dimensions of the social. Instead, in their view, practices are viewed as exclusively discursive, where they see discourses as material and that entities such as the economy, the infrastructure and institutions are also parts of discourse. When certain patterns are repeated, they become discourses that turn into structures, that in turn have material effects on people's bodies. Therefore, some discourses can be seen as synonymous with structures. For instance, men's violence against non-men that is part of a patriarchal discourse, where non-men are seen as worth less than men, and then that discourse also has effect on how much money that goes to shelters for abused non-men, just to take one example. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory will help me to think in concepts of how certain discourses lead to a naturalization of concepts and meaning. Laclau and Mouffe argues that power produces the social in specific ways. Power creates identities, knowledge and relationships, and we are dependent on power because it creates social orders, which we need, but we are not dependent on a particular order. Other social orders, other possibilities, have been excluded as an effect of power. The notion that we can see something as an objective truth, for example, is because some discourses have become sedimented and this sedimentation stops us from questioning the power and structures behind certain patterns through which we see the world around us, and, also, ourselves natural (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 37-38). The democracy discourse is an example of a strong discourse in the Swedish society and this discourse contains of, for example, everyone's right to vote. This discourse has turned into structures where we, for example, have elections every fourth year and where a big part of becoming of age, is to be given the right to vote. Democracy is in my opinion a good example of a discourse that has become so natural that we think of it as objective. We do not think of the fact that other ways of arranging the society has been excluded.

One concept used in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis is "discursive struggle" which emphasizes that social phenomena is never fixed and this opens up for constant social struggles about meanings and definitions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 32). In my analysis of the concept Human Rights, and the discourses surrounding it, Laclau and Mouffe will help me to think in concepts of what gets taken for granted and to deconstruct the discourses in order to find out which assumptions and power hierarchies the discourses are based on, since these assumptions also shapes social action. To quote Jørgensen & Phillips: "Discourse analysis aims at the deconstruction of the structures that we take for granted; it tries to show that the given organisation of the world is the result of political processes with social consequences" (2002: 53).

When I read *On the Political* (2005) by Mouffe, it was nodding at first sight. In her book, Mouffe writes about the current depoliticization of the political, and states that the political is now played out in the moral register, that "[in] place of a struggle between 'right and left' we are faced with a struggle between 'right and wrong'" (Mouffe, 2005: 5). Mouffe argues that properly political question always involves decisions which requires us to make a choice between conflicting alternatives (Ibid: 10) and that this inability to think politically is to great extent due to the uncontested hegemony of liberalism and the negotiation of antagonism. She states that the rational consensus, that liberals often argue for, does not exist (Mouffe, 2005: 10). Mouffe also wants to show that there is no "natural order" of things, no "common sense", instead, how we do things that appear to be "natural" is always a result of sedimented practices that are based on politics, and therefore, always based on some form of exclusion (Ibid: 18). This reasoning about what becomes naturalized has clear connections to the discussion about power in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis, and I read *On the Political* as a continuation of these thoughts. *On the Political* was the book that gave me the possibility to explain the gnawing feeling in me that concepts such as Gender Equality, Diversity and Human Rights do not have the political charge that I think is necessary for the concepts to cause any change, to lead to any social difference. In my reading of the book, Mouffe states that we need to fill these concepts with some sort of political direction if they are to be put into practice in a way that actually challenges the power structures.

Wendy Brown can be read together with Mouffe, since they both discuss today's depoliticization area. In *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (2008), Brown writes that "[depoliticization] involves removing a political phenomenon from comprehension of its historical emergence and from a recognition of the

powers that produce and contour it" (2008: 15). Brown will be useful to me since she writes about depoliticization in relation to the neoliberal discourse. Brown has described neoliberalism as "a governing rationality through which everything is "economized" and in a very specific way: human beings become market actors and nothing but, every field of activity is seen as a market, and every entity (whether public or private, whether person, business, or state) is governed as a firm" (Brown quoted in Shenk, 2015).

Brown describes the connection between neoliberalism and the current depoliticization like this:

> [when] every aspect of human relations, human endeavor, and human need is framed in concepts of the rational entrepreneur or consumer, then the powers constitutive of these relations, endeavors, and needs vanish from view. As the political rationality of neoliberalism becomes increasingly dominant, its depoliticizing effects/.../makes nearly everything seem a matter of individual agency or will, on the one hand, or fortune or contingency on the other.
> (Brown, 2008: 18).

Brown's understanding of the neoliberal discourse has made certain discourses expressed within the municipality context, such as discourses regarding the right to work and self-support, understandable for me. Browns reasoning made it possible for me to see this neoliberal discourse in my material.

Sara Ahmed and her book *On Being Included* (2012) will help me to think in terms of institutional work. Even though the book is mostly written on the theme Diversity, it has helped me to think further about how institutions can work with concepts connected to equality, and the struggles involved. She writes about how equality work often is ascribed as something that should be embedded or integrated into an organization (Ahmed 2012: 23) and writes about how certain things become habits within an institution and that "when history accumulates, certain ways of doing things seem natural. An institution takes shape as an effect of what has become automatic. Institutional talk is often about 'how we do things around here,' where the very claim of a 'how' does not need to be claimed" (Ibid: 25). This reasoning has made me understand the concept Human Rights in relation to the municipality context. How the municipality want Human Rights to be part of the habit of the organization, and why this appears to be hard to achieve. My usage of the concept "orientation", when I discuss whether or not the Human Rights discourse functions as an orientating discourse, is also borrowed from Ahmed's theories. She writes that "the directedness of the body toward an

action, involves an orientation of the body toward certain things" (Ahmed, 2012: 127). This orientation makes certain things, and not others, come into view, to be within reach.

When I discuss whether or not something is seen as "political" I will be inspired by Mouffe and her view that "the political" is the dimension of antagonism that she as constitutive of human societies (Mouffe, 2005: 9) where groups are seen to have conflicting interests and, therefore, conflicts will appear. In my understanding of the political I want to also add the redistribution of power, which is of course present in Mouffe's definition, but not as outspoken. In my understanding of the political, there needs to be an element of relocation of resources embedded within the struggle.

1.5. Material and Methodology

1.5.1. The Foundation

The concept Human Rights is maybe mostly, or was at least for me, connected to the United Nation and their "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (United Nations, 1948). This declaration consists of 30 articles, with themes stretching from every Human being born free and equal, to slavery and torture, to equal pay for equal work, and Sweden has signed the declaration. It is not a legally, but morally, binding document and the UN regularly monitor the different states and report how well they are complying with what is stated in the declarations. Sweden has repeatedly been getting critique from the different UN committees for having unequal salaries between men and women, that the system with self-governing municipalities risks causing an unequal treatment of children and that Sweden several times have rejected refugees so that they have had to go back to countries where they risk torture, to take some examples (FN, 2016).

The UN declaration has then been adapted to a European setting through the "European Convention on Human Rights" (European Court of Human Rights, 2016) which Sweden has turned into national law (Sveriges Riksdag, 1994). These documents are of importance in this context since they can be seen as the foundation on which the municipality have built their Human Rights work. Though, I will not use these documents as part of my material, since I will not make any close readings or analyses of these documents. The UN convention is sometimes referred to in the municipality's official documents, but most of the time they just write "the Human Rights" without referencing to the UN or the European Convention. Since I am interested in how the concept functions in a municipality context, and how it can be useful for them, it is more rewarding for me to see how they interpret the concept, and not to examine how consistent their interpretations are, with these original documents.

In this thesis I will focus on the budget year 2015. This gives me the opportunity to view the whole chain, from Kommunfullmäktige's budget (hereafter called the city-wide budget since it is directed towards the entire city), to the SDN's own budget and, in the end, the SDN's annual report, in which they state what they have done during the year, and how they have worked to reach their objectives.

1.5.2. The City-Wide Budget 2015

The city-wide budget for 2015 is written by Kommunfullmäktige and by the majority parties of the time, which are Socialdemokraterna (the Social Democrats), Miljöpartiet (the Green Party), Vänsterpartiet (the Left Party) and Feministiskt Initiativ (Feminist Initiative). They were elected to lead the city in the municipal election in 2014 and they will govern the city between 2015 and 2018. The budget is divided into different chapters, such as "Human Rights", "To Promote Life Chances and Counteract Social and Health Related Risks" and "Diversity, Solidarity and National Minorities", and every chapter is divided into a description, (sometimes) prioritized objectives, orientations and followed by concrete missions. The budget is important in my thesis, since it is the most influential governing document in the municipality. In this document, the politicians specify what they see as most important, and from here, the other departments get their orientations.

1.5.3. The SDN Östra Göteborg's Budget 2015

The SDN, meets once a month and is open for the public. The committee consists of 11 members that are proportionally distributed by the number of votes each party received in the last municipal election. The members are politicians on their free time and have other occupations besides politics. The politicians' role is to state what they want the SDF (the administration that are put to administrate the political decisions taken in the SDN) to focus on, and what sort of visions they have for the district. In the SDN, the politicians represent the majority parties, which consist of Socialdemokraterna, Miljöpartiet and Vänsterpartiet, and the opposition parties, which are Moderaterna (the Moderates), Liberalerna (the Liberals) and Kristdemokraterna (the Christian Democrats). Every year the SDN make their own budget based on the city-wide budget, and in this document they specify the orientations for the administration's work. They state their objectives and missions, and how they can interpret the city-wide budget based on their own inhabitants' needs and the district specific conditions. The SDN should write the budget in a relatively general language, and then it is up to the SDF to transform these statements into concrete interventions. This document, written by the majority parties (since their budget got the majority of the votes), is important in my thesis since it shows me how the SDN interprets, for example, the Human Rights concept and what other prevalent discourses can be found.

1.5.4. The SDN's Annual Report 2015

In the annual report, the SDN, based on information from the SDF, make an evaluation regarding the different objectives and missions that were stated in budget. The annual report consists of balance sheets, where they report how well they have achieved the goals and the missions. This material is important since it shows me how the SDF make their evaluation and which indicators they use in order to measure their progress during the year. It can also show me if, and how, they measure their Human Rights work.

1.5.5. Report from SKL, written by Emerga (2015)

A report from the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions ("Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, hereafter called "the SKL"), called *Mänskliga rättigheter i kommuner, regioner och landsting,* and written by the Human Rights consultants Emerga (2015), is also used as part of a material. The SKL is an organization that shall support the Swedish municipalities, counties and regions in this work, and help them to develop methods for working with Human Rights in these settings. SKL is the biggest employer's organization in Sweden and all the municipalities, regions and counties, which are members of the SKL, together employ over 1 million employees (SKL, 2016) and therefore they supposedly have a major influence over their members' work.

The focus in the report is to map and evaluate municipalities' work with issues regarding Human Rights. The data in the report is gathered through both questioners and interviews with practitioners in Swedish municipalities, regions and counties. Many of the discussion points that are taken up in the report are the same discussions that I have taken part of at the SDF. This report will help me to broaden the discussion and see if there are any problems or possibilities in the Human Rights work that seem to be more prevalent than others.

1.5.6. Meetings with the Representatives

All the SDFs in the municipality of Gothenburg have a development department that works to support the four core businesses, which are Education, Elderly Care, Support for Families and Individuals including Disability Issues, and Culture and Leisure. The staff working in the development departments are called development leaders and they have different areas of expertise. They can support the other departments by helping them seek project funding, plan new schools, housings or other development projects. Some of the SDFs have a "development

leader Human Rights/Gender Equality" that works at least part time with these specific issues. Östra Göteborg do not have a development leader within this field, even though other development leaders work with equality issues, for example the "development leaders Public Health", that have a strong focus on how to decrease the differences in living conditions in order to create a more equal city.

My notes from meetings with two representatives working at the development department at the SDF constitutes a material category. Since the SDF does not currently have a person with the title "development leader Human Rights/Gender Equality" I have talked to two other persons that work at the department. We have met approximately once a month and during these meetings we have discussed different aspects of the SDF's work with Human Rights. I have asked them if it is okay that I use parts of our conversation as material for this thesis. These meetings have been a source for additional information, but mostly I have seen the representatives' utterances as part of prevalent discourses within the organization. This material will help me gain knowledge about whether or not the discourses that the representatives express, mirrors the official documents, and if additional discourses can be found.

During my meetings with the two representatives, we discussed different themes connected to the Human Rights work in the municipality. These meetings mostly took the form of informal conversations where all three of us were active in the discussions. We know each other a bit from my time at the SDF during my internship, and even though I look up to them in many ways, and therefore have been wanting to make a good impression, I have felt that all of us have been able to speak our minds. One thing that I think has contributed to creating these feeling of a safe space for all of us during these meetings, is that we all have an interest in question concerning equality work. We have been interested in each-others thoughts and opinions. Even though I have taken the position of "the student" in some ways, by, for example, being clear about the fact that I have no experience of actually working with these complex issues in an organization, I think that they still saw me as someone who knows a lot about Human Rights and Gender Equality and that they respected this knowledge. My relationship to the representatives, and the fact that I like them, has of course shaped the outcome of this thesis. I have not had any interest in "framing them" and our discussions could have been different if I would have been more aggressive and critical. Now, instead, we might have over-agreed in some discussions.

Mostly, our conversations have started with me telling them about my process and what I have found most interesting, and then I have been able to ask them about their, sometimes specific and sometimes very general, thoughts on different subjects. Such as "do you see Gender Equality as a part of Human Rights?" or "do you think it is hard to work with the concept Human Rights?". The reason why I have not wanted to make more structured interviews with them is because I feel that the nature of our relationship is one where it feels more rewarding to sit down and talk more freely about different subjects. I also found it more rewarding to let them speak freely because this could show me which discourses that was closest to them. In the thesis, I will refer to these two individuals as "the representatives". I will not use any titles or other information that can be used to identify the representatives, not because they asked me not to, but because I do not find it relevant for the thesis. I will not use any fake names or make any distinction between which representative said what, simply because I do not find it relevant when mapping and examining prevalent discourses.

1.5.7. Additional Material

During the thesis I will also make references to experience that I have made during my internship, autumn 2015. These eight weeks that I spent at the development department gave me the opportunity to follow my supervisor, and sometimes other people, to meetings and also to participate in the daily talk at the office. I had a special notebook just for writing spontaneous notes during this time, and I have kept this notebook so that I can go back to it. It feels important to be able to make references to experiences from my internship, since this experiences influence my reading of the material. My analysis would probably look very different if I would not have had this pre-knowledge. Somethings might appear to be of importance to me, since it is things that I recognize, that have been repeated.

I will also use articles from national media, since they can be helpful in order to map different prevalent national discourses around topics up for debate. Articles in daily media can be seen both as tools for challenging different discourses in the society, but they can also reproduce and strengthen certain discourses. I will use mostly news articles, but also some chronicles when I want to show that a specific topic has been up for debate.

1.5.8. Reflections from the Process

During my internship, I was given one kind of role based on the fact that I was a Gender Student. I noticed that people sometimes saw me as a person who saw Political Correctness as

something important (which is true, but they did not know, instead, they based this on my Gender Student position. This was before they got to know me). Sometimes, a person at a morning meeting or during a lunch break, would say something to a colleague and then look at me a bit nervously, trying to see whether or not I had a negative reaction to what was being said and then say something like "maybe that was a bit incorrect of me to say?". Not that the person had in any way tried to provoke me, instead I think my presence in the room made them more aware about what they said (when they discussed things such as gender, economy or ethnicity). The way I interpreted it, the person also actually wanted my opinion, it was not just a way of showing me, and the other people in the room, that the person was aware about the possible problematic aspects of what had been said. Sometimes I came to see myself a little bit as their super-ego and sometimes this might have given me a small dose of hubris, when I sort of shook my head a little bit to show that I found the things they had said a bit problematic. Though, I did not get the feeling that the representatives ascribed me this role during our meetings. Though, the staff's way of treating me as someone whose opinion they cared about gave me a confidence which I am sure shaped my discussions with the representatives in different way. I was not afraid of participating in our discussions, instead, I felt that I had something to bring to the table. This participation has surely shaped my thesis in different ways, maybe I sometimes led the discussion back to topics that I found more relevant and interesting, even if my intention was for them to lead the discussions in their own orientation. Maybe other discourses would have been made visible if I would have taken a step back.

One of my ambitions with this thesis was to keep it close to the organization and to focus as much as possible on practical interventions. Different aspects made this hard. My education has not provided me with that sorts of habits, with that sort of knowledge. The literature that I have been provided with, and the seminars in class, have mostly taken place on a more theoretical level (that have, to me, appeared to be located far away from the municipality everyday work) which made that sort of theoretical language more available to me. I do not like to draw a sharp line between the academia and "the Rest", but the fact remains that if I, in a morning meeting at the SDF, would start to talk about Ahmed's theories about phenomenology and orientation, the staff would probably become frustrated since it would be seen as far away from what they are doing and, since they have a short supply of time, they have to priorities what they can take in and put energy on. This does not mean that they are uninterested in, or unable to understand, Ahmed's theories, but they would probably

feel that they had more acute things to take care of. It made me feel a bit frustrated at times, that I have found it hard to meet the expectations of both the academia and the municipality. Even though I have not written this thesis at the request of the SDF, and I have been free to design the thesis in my own way, both me and the staff at the SDF would be satisfied if this thesis could be helpful for the them. I think that in the end, I have focused on trying to make a contribution to the academia, and I will hopefully get the chance to work more with the SDF in the future, and examine how my knowledge could gain their organization.

1.6. Previous Research

The majority of the research on Human Rights is carried out in European or Global Studies, and in the field of Political Science. A Master's Thesis from 2015 by Sara Olténg, *Att tolka och arbeta med mänskliga rättigheter*, written at the Institution for Global Studies at the University of Gothenburg, is closely related to my topic. Olténg examines how different organizations (SDFs and city owned companies) interpret and work with Human Rights. The writer concludes that the practitioners interviewed do not use a human rights based language in their budgets and daily work and that they make different interpretations of the concept depending on where they work. The concept is rarely used in the workplaces and there are many different understandings about how the work with Human Rights should be conducted. This is similar to my findings, but Olténg's analysis lacks the power perspective which I bring since my thesis is located within the Gender Studies field.

In Sweden, much of the recent Gender Studies field that focuses on how to work with equality issues in institutions focus on the concept Gender Mainstreaming. Anne-Charlott Callerstig's *Making Equality Work* (2011) is one example, where the author examines how Gender Mainstreaming is framed within the Swedish Public Sector and effects of the implementation. Malin Rönnblom and Kerstin Alnebratt's *Feminism som byråkrati* (2016) is another example where the authors examine which issues and demands that have been made possible, and impossible, to work with through a Gender Mainstreaming discourse.

Inderpal Grewal's *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalism* (2005) gives a historical and global perspective on the concept Human Rights. The author examines how Human Rights became pivotal in struggles concerning refugee rights, environment, global citizenship, health care etc. Grewal also examines what knowledges and nodes of power the Human Rights discourse produced, who was speaking for

who and what forms of violence these representations performed. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is another theorist that has been writing about the effects of the Human Rights discourse, for example in the text "Righting Wrongs" where she elaborates on the concept in relation to Eurocentrism and international control (2004). Both Grewal and Spivak are located in the field of Postcolonial Studies and are therefore outside of my research area, even though it would have been interesting to move these theories down to the municipality level and see what would have become visible.

1.7. Outline of the Analysis

The following analysis is divided up into four chapters. Chapter 2 can be read as an introductory chapter where I map where the concept Human Rights is located in my material. I follow the concept around in my material and map if there are certain patterns in the way of writing and talking about the concept, certain definitions that are repeated, that makes a Human Rights discourse take shape. I also discuss the concept Human Rights in relation to the aspect of evaluation. In chapter 3, I discuss the effects of Human Rights being seen as a concept that is hard to define and concretize, which leads to the Human Rights discourse being sprawling. I discuss the Human Right discourse in relation to Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, and, by drawing on Ahmed, examine how it functions as a discourse that orientates the work in the municipality setting. In chapter 4, I analyze the Human Rights discourse, and the whole municipality, in relation to Mouffe's theories about the depoliticization of the political. I make a discourse analysis where I make a deconstruction of the Human Rights discourse, and other prevalent discourses in the municipality, in order to trace which assumptions these are built upon and which material effects these could have on people's lives. In chapter 5, I examine the Human Rights discourse in relation to the current political situation in Sweden, with special focus on the refugee discourse. I examine how the municipality's inhabitants reacts to interventions connected to the refugee situation. I also examine how the Human Rights and Gender Equality discourse, described as core values belonging to the Swedish national identity, is used to create a distance towards "the Other".

In the final chapter, chapter 6, I make some concluding remarks and give suggestions for further research.

2. Tracing the Human Rights Discourse

In this chapter I will map where the concept Human Rights is located in my material, and where it is, in my view, lacking. I will follow the concept around in my material and examine if there are certain patterns in the way of writing and talking about the concept, certain definitions that are repeated, that makes a Human Rights discourse take shape. I will also discuss the concept Human Rights in relation to the aspect of evaluation.

2014 the Swedish Government Offices and the SKL entered into an agreement with each-other, with the objective to increase the knowledge and awareness regarding Human Rights within the, among others, municipal organizations, and to increase the respect for these rights. In the report from the SKL it is stated that "[the] public shall respect, fulfill, monitor, and promote Human Rights. This means that all levels and sectors together have the responsibility to maintain the Human Rights in Sweden" [my translation] (Emerga, 2015: 6). A search on SKL's webpage, on the concept "Human Rights" ("Mänskliga rättigheter"), gives 261 hits and under the second tab "Democracy, Management and Governing" on the front page, a lot of information about Human Rights can be accessed. This shows that the concept is present in SKL's work, at least in those contexts where they communicate their work to the public. On the City of Gothenburg's homepage, the concept "Human Rights" can also be found at the bottom of the front page, a search of the concept results in 77 hits, and it can be found in different official documents where they state that it should be a ground stone in the municipality work (for example in Kommunstyrelsen's regulation document, Göteborgs Stad, 2016a). This visibility of the concept tells me that it is something that both the municipality and SKL want the public, the visitors on the respective websites, to notice. Human Rights is, according to these two actors, seen as a concept that a municipality should work with. For example, in the regulation document that describes how the different SDFs shall work, it is written that the work shall be based on the respect for every individuals' equal worth and rights and that a big part of this work is to strengthen the inhabitants' participation and engagement, in order to promote a local positive development (Göteborgs Stad, 2016b). This will, in the long run, contribute to a more democratic and sustainable Gothenburg. In this regulation document they also bring up the importance of improving the work for equal treatment in the meetings with the inhabitants. The concept Human Rights is not used here, but they do write about, for example, the individual's *right* to work, residence and education.

The concept Human Right is not clearly defined in any of the material categories since it is never written out or explained in a way that is said to be exhaustive. Instead, it is always accompanied with words such as "etcetera" and "among other things". Under the headline "Human Rights" in the city-wide budget, they state that Human Rights contain of the right to social security, residence, best possible health, education, occupation and equal pay for equal work with freedom from discrimination, among other things. The possibility to engage in political processes is also mentioned as an integral part of the Human Rights concept (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 11). Other times, Human Rights is used more as an abstract concept, as in formulations such as "every human has the same worth and rights" [my translation], which is the initial sentence in the chapter called "Human Rights" in the city-wide budget (Ibid: 11). In the SKL report, the concept Human Rights is described as containing of civil, political, economical, social, and cultural rights, and that Human Rights is about "everyone's right to a reasonable living standard, free primary school education, political participation and several rights that functions to protect the individual from their own state's possible abuse of power and violence" [my translation] (Emerga, 2015: 7). The fact that the concept is used in both the more abstract sense, as well as directly linked to specific themes, such as residences and jobs, gives a hint of the width of the concept. Though, some aspects are repeated and becomes a pattern that makes a discourse appear, such as the right to an education, a job, and the participation in democratic processes, as well as the equal value that is more open for interpretations.

In the chapter "Human Rights" in the city-wide budget, they also write that the Human Rights perspective is a precondition for carrying out socially sustainable work and that the Human Rights perspective can help the organization to make priorities, and to increase the quality in the different municipality organizations and processes. It is presented as an important concept in relation to case management and decision making processes (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 10). I read this listing of the different aspects where the concept Human Rights is important, as an argument for integrating the concept in as many different processes as possible. The SKL report also has a section in where the focus is on how to integrate the work with Human Rights in the daily routines of the organizations (Emerga, 2015: 33-34). In the report, it is stated that the practitioners "see the importance of integrating the rights perspective in the work already performed" [my translation] (Ibid: 33). Ahmed discusses how the institutional nature of Equality work (in Ahmed's case "Diversity work", but I see her discussion as applicable to Human Rights work as well) is often described in

concepts of integrating or embedding diversity into the ordinary work or daily routines of an organization (Ahmed, 2012: 23). This integrating discourse is used both by the SKL and the municipality. The integrating discourse, to me, also entails that the Human Rights work is seen as a work that should not be dependent on certain roles, or positions, because that can make the work vulnerable. In several of my meetings with the representatives, they talked about how it is a necessity that everyone who work at the municipality, regardless of position or department, have a basic knowledge about Human Rights and how to integrate it in their everyday work. This seemed as an alternative more available to them than, for example, hiring a development leader Human Rights/Gender Equality. In the report from the SKL it is discussed how the individuals that are put to lead the Human Rights work in the municipalities, have all different kinds of titles (for example "Public Health coordinator" or "Children's Rights strategist"), but normally it is not one single person that has the overall responsibility to integrate the Human Rights perspective in the rest of the municipality organization (Emerga, 2015: 17). It is not stated in the city-wide budget, either, that there need to be certain people that have an implicit responsibility for these questions in the organization. Even though several of the SDFs have a "development leader HR", I would still say that the municipality is part of the discourse that Human Rights work should be conducted by everyone. This was also something that was stated in the meetings with the two representatives, that the responsibility to integrate the Human Rights perspective is put on everyone.

The concept Human Rights can be found in two protocols from the SDN's meetings during 2015. Both of these times, the concept is mentioned in relation to a proposal from Stadsledningskontoret, (the executive office) about re-organizing the work with Human Rights and to move the responsibility of Human Rights issues to certain committees. The SDN decided to reject the proposal and attach an official statement to the rejection, as a response to Stadsledningskontoret. The official statement, written by persons working with question of Public Health at the development department at the SDF, suggests that the current work model functions well enough and that focus should be on improving the current work model instead of making a big organizational change. The fact that the concept is only mentioned in two protocols, and that when they have a specific proposal to respond to, tells me that there is not many interventions and decision that the SDN makes that they themselves see as directly or expressly connected to the concept Human Rights. It also shows that the concept Human Rights is not used in the daily talk at the SDN. The concept does not seem to

be used in the SDF's daily work either, at least at the development department. During my work with this thesis I have been asking staff members at the department whether or not they use the concept in their daily work. All of the six staff members that I asked, with responsibility for Public Health, Urban Development, Facilities and EU questions, said "no". A few of them said that they definitely talk about aspects that *could* be connected to the concept Human Rights - such as in the talk about sustainability, availability, or gender issues - but they do not make the connections outspokenly, when they, for example, are in dialogue with the managers that they are put support, with the aim of developing and increasing the quality in the municipality work.

In the district specific budget for Östra Göteborg, the SDN specifies three objectives that the SDF shall work with during 2015. The strategic objectives are 1) to improve the living conditions so that all inhabitants can have the possibility to live a good life 2) for the school to increase the children's and students' opportunities to acquire and develop their knowledge, skills and values, and 3) to increase older people's influence (SDN Östra Göteborg, 2014: 5). They write that "the human has complex needs and rights which requires a holistic view, but also that we cooperate with other actors so that we can best respond to the inhabitants' needs and right" [my translation] (Ibid: 7). I read this as a form of rephrasing of the concept Human Rights, where they do not make a connection to the municipalities work with Human Rights, that is argued for in the city-wide budget (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 10), but they touch upon the Human Rights discourse when they mention the word "rights". This is the only section in the SDN's budget that can be linked to the concept Human Right. Since the city-wide budget is the document that the SDN should make an interpretation of in their district specific budget, I do find it interesting that the concept Human Rights, which is pointed out as something that should be integrated in all processes, is more or less lacking in the document, depending on how you interpret the rephrasing above.

While discussing the lack of the concept, I do want to open up for another interpretation of this, namely that they do not feel the need to write out the concept Human Rights, because it is something that is taken for granted in their work. In one way it could be possible to read this as a success, since it could point to the fact that the municipality actually has managed to integrate and embed this work into their routines and that it is not something they need to add because it is otherwise left out. Though, this reading of the lack of the concept does not fit with the discussions I had about Human Rights with the two

representatives or a reading supported by, for example, the report from SKL. Though, it is worth mentioning that this lacking of the concept can be read in another way.

In the SDN's annual report (SDN Östra Göteborg, 2015a), where they make an evaluation of the previous fiscal year in order to see whether or not they have reached the objectives stated in both the city-wide and the district specific budget, they use a grading scale that goes from "good achievement", to "some achievements", to "no achievements" when they measure the result of specific interventions made during the year. The grade "good" means that there has been a positive development during the year, connected to the specific objective, "some" means that it is has been a positive development, but that the trend is weaker and "no" simply means that there has been no development or even a negative trend. There is also room for a comment where they can describe the development.

The SDN has chosen to only leave a comment when they have chosen the grade "no achievement", but the comments are short. Therefore, I do not get that much information about how they have worked with the different objectives – especially not where they have had "some" or "good" achievement – or examples of what they define as a positive or negative trend. For example, the objective to "even out the conditions between the inhabitants" is graded as "no achievements" with the comment that "despite several interventions, there are still big differences in living conditions" [my translation] (Ibid: 14). Regarding the objective "the city's processes shall be gender equal", they have chosen the grade "some achievements" but without leaving any comment (Ibid: 14). Being an outsider and reading this document it is hard to get a clear picture of how the SDN measures development and the effect of their processes, in relation to their objectives. I do not know if this lack of information about which indicators they have used, for example, depends on a confusion from the SDN about how to measure their work, or if they just find it unnecessary to take this up in the annual report. The concept Human Rights is not mentioned in the SDN's annual report, that is in turn based on reports from the SDF. That the concept Human Rights is not used in the annual report is not surprising in that sense that it goes in line with the concept not being used in the district specific budget either. Since they do not connect any objectives, in the city district budget, to the concept Human Rights, it is hard to make any follow-up in relation to the concept.

In the report from SKL, the problems around the follow-up aspect of the Human Rights work are discussed. They state that the follow-up is done in a variety of ways in the municipalities, and the report emphasizes that the follow-up methods need to be developed in

order for the municipalities to be able to measure the processes from a Human Rights perspective. Only a few of the practitioners that has responded in the SKL report, answer that they have identified specific indicators that can be used as a way of measuring the success of the progress of implementing Human Rights in the different organizations. These indicators are often related to equality plans, action plans related to the Children's Convention or policies that focus on disability issues (Emerga, 2015: 24). In general, the organizations that are present in the SKL report lack explicit connections between, on the one hand, governing and evaluation, and on the other, Human Rights. The biggest problem with this, that is also brought up in the SKL report, is the fact that this lack of indicators and methods for making follow-ups in relation to Human Rights make it hard for the municipalities to know whether or not the inhabitants can access their Human Rights (Ibid: 5). The fact that the annual report from the SDN does not contain the concept shows that the lacking of development indicators is a potential problem for them as well.

Summary

The mapping of the concept Human Rights in this chapter has shown that there are many different aspects that the municipality and the SKL see as belonging to the Human Rights discourse. The components stretch from every person having the same value and worth, to everyone's right to a free primary school education. The discourse is sprawling. My examination has shown that the Human Rights discourse is part of an integrating discourse, where the goal is to make the Human Rights perspective part of the ordinary municipality work. Both the report from SKL and the official document from the municipality shows that there is a lack of indicators when it comes to evaluating the Human Rights work. In the following chapter I will discuss the effects of these findings.

3. Human Rights as a Non-Performative Discourse

In this chapter I will draw on the mapping above and discuss the effects of Human Rights being seen as a concept that is hard to define and concretize and that makes the Human Rights discourse sprawling. I will discuss the Human Rights discourse in relation to Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and concepts such as "floating signifier" and "discursive struggle", and, by drawing on Ahmed, examine how the Human Rights discourse functions as a discourse that orientates the work in the municipality setting.

Before I did my internship at the SDF, I envisioned the municipality as a slow-moving organization, where the high level of bureaucracy made it hard to make fast decisions. Though, I was proven wrong one afternoon when I happened to be in the office and the SDF decided to open up a temporary home for refugees in some old school facilities in Kortedala, just next to the SDF office (Göteborg Stad, 2015b). All of a sudden I could hear heels clatter out in the halls, and I could feel that a wheel had been set in motion. When I later, during one of our meetings, asked the representatives what sort of arguments that was used in the decision-making for opening up the temporary home, one of them said that the decision was taken by the one who was in charge at the administration at that time and that specific leader saw it as the SDF's responsibility to make these kinds of actions, and to help the people that was knocking on their door. I asked if the concept Human Rights was used in this particular context, since I thought that "the giving of shelter" was clearly connected to the concept, but the representatives said no, "since they do not use the concept 'Human Rights' in the daily talk". That the concept was not used in connection to this intervention, which I picture would have been a given example of a situation where the Human Rights discourse could have been put into practice, made me interested in the concept and its ability to create an orientation in the municipality work. I became interested in what the Human Rights discourse actually did.

During another meeting with the representatives, a wish was expressed, that someone would walk into their office, and tell them that one way of strengthening the human rights could be about improving the pupils' grades, for example. I read this wish as a cry for orientation. In several meetings and conversations with the representatives, and other staff members, it was mentioned that Human Rights was seen as a pretentious concept that was hard to relate to the everyday work. The SKL report shows that practitioners think that the Human Rights work is hard, since a common definition of the concept Human Rights is as lacking, and therefore the work becomes unstructured and deficient when it comes to the

aspects of sustainability and clarity. In the report, it is written that "[most] municipalities, counties and regions, have experience of working with certain aspects of Human Rights in some sectors of its organization" [my translation] (Emerga, 2015: 4), while 10% of the municipalities indicated that there is no Human Rights work carried out in their organization (Ibid: 11). The report from SKL is also full of contradicting opinions from the people working with the concept Human Rights in the municipalities, counties and regions. Some of them want to have more digital educations regarding Human Rights, while others are tired of these frequently recurring internet courses. Some of them express a wish to be told how they can work with Human Rights specifically in their organization, while others wish that SKL could give them a definition that everyone can use. Some of them say that they do not know how to work with Human Rights while others state that everything they do is a matter of Human Rights, and that they follow it because it is in the law. These insecurities, and the fact that not all of the municipalities can state that, or how, they work with Human Rights, shows me that there is an uncertainty when it comes to defining the work with Human Rights. The lack of the concept in the SDN's district specific budget and in their annual report also points to an uncertainty about how they can use the concept. In the SKL report, the practitioners say that they would like to have some kind of tool box containing of practical tools and analysis tools that they can use in order to strengthen the work with Human Rights on a local level (Ibid: 5). Here, the SKL report, the meetings with the representatives, the city-wide budget, together with the documents from the SDN, all tell me the same thing. The Human Rights discourse does not create orientation.

When I asked the representatives if they saw the concept as helpful, one of them said that she saw the concept "as a wet blanket that creates anxiety" ("som en våt filt som skapar ångest"). This tells me that the Human Rights discourse is seen as something that is added to the workload instead of being an orientating discourse that is guiding in the work that the municipality normally does. Human Rights becomes an additional issue, instead of being a discourse that is integrated in the ordinary work, something that was stated as being of importance in the city-wide budget (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 11). Ahmed discusses how certain concepts can be seen as something that gets in the way of what the organization normally does, when it is not in the habit of the organization. Ahmed states that a habit is established when an action is performed repeatedly and becomes second nature (2012: 127). As I concluded in the previous chapter, the goal with the Human Rights discourse is to integrate it into the habits of the organization. Ahmed argues that, when an organization does

not succeed in making a commitment, in this case to integrate the Human Rights discourse, part of the organization habit, these commitments become non-performative. A non-performative commitment is when it does not lead to action and when it fails to orientate the body of the institution in certain ways and towards certain things (Ahmed, 2012: 127). This is the case with the Human Rights discourse in my material. The municipality states that they should work with the concept Human Rights, in other words, they make a commitment to the concept, but it is a commitment that becomes non-performative. The Human Rights discourse does not become a discourse that orientates the work in specific ways. I believe that this has to with the fact that municipalities in general, and the SDF in particular, does not see the Human Rights discourse as a meaningful discourse in relation to their work, they do not know how to use it. As we could see in the previous chapter, the Human Rights discourse is sprawling.

Even though I found some patterns in the discourse, such as the right to an occupation and the right to participate in democratic processes, the practitioners that are put to integrate it into their work still see the discourse as undefined and hard to work with. That the concept does not create any sense of orientation in the municipality work, I believe has to do with the fact that the Human Rights discourse can be envisioned as a discourse empty of meaning, in this context. I draw this conclusion from my material where there is a lack of ideas how to use the concept and how it should be defined. Laclau and Mouffe state that certain signs can be seen as floating signifier. The floating signifiers are signs that are open to different ascriptions of meaning (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 36). The fact that Human Rights is not ascribed with any fixed meaning could make possible a reading of the sign Human Rights as being a floating signifier. Though, I do not see the sign that way. I read Laclau and Mouffe's reasoning as that for something to be seen as a floating signifier, it acquires that it is part of a discursive struggle, a struggle in which the meaning of a sign is to be fixed. I do not see Human Rights as a discourse where there is an ongoing struggle about which meaning to ascribe the sign. Laclau and Mouffe states that a discursive struggle takes place when the discourse is in danger of being undermined by what is located outside of the discourse, when the discourse is in danger of being disrupted by other ways of fixing the sign (Ibid: 27). In the municipality setting I would not say that there are other understandings or meanings of Human Rights that is threatening the discourse. I will propose two explanations for this.

First, one thing that I see as an important aspect of the concept Human Rights is that it is never used without being followed by the additional words "among other things",

"etcetera" or "and so on" (see, for example, Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 11, and Emerga, 2015: 7). This creates the notion of the Human Rights discourse as having no edges, no boundaries. If there are no ends to the concept, there will always be a confusion, or uncertainty, about what it contains. This uncertainty could lead to a notion that it is hard to know what to challenge. A discursive struggle can be seen as hard to win, if the challenger does not know what it is that they oppose. Therefore, the vagueness of the Human Rights discourse, and the lack of orientation, can stand non-challenged. Here, I want to make a clarification that is in line with Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of discourse. Just because it is not clearly defined what a discourse consists of, does not mean that it can contain whatever. The right to, for example, drive around in a new car cannot be said to be part of a Human Rights discourse in this context, just because it is not stated that the discourse does not include this right. Instead, the right to drive a new car is located in the field of discursivity, which is where the possibilities that the discourse excludes are located (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 27). Though, certain utterances can become more or less possible to say as an effect of the patterns that the discourse follow, or consist of, and what gets repeated.

Secondly, I think that the fact that the discourse is not seen as helpful by the practitioners also makes the discourse less likely to become the subject of a discursive struggle. As stated above, Ahmed suggests that when something becomes a habit within an organization, the habit is repeated without the performer having to pay attention to it, or see it as a burden. That leads me to the conclusion that things that have not become a habit in the organization are seen as additional issues that risk making the organization lose its focus. The additional issues can be seen as taking time and resources away from the ordinary work, that is seen as most important. This can be connected to what one of the representatives talked about, that the concept Human Rights is seen as a wet blanket, as an additional issue that weighs on the practitioners' shoulders. I think that the problem is that as long as the discourse is not seen as a discourse that creates orientations, and that is not seen as helpful for the practitioners, Human Rights will continue to be seen as a wet blanket that creates anxiety. If the Human Rights discourse would be seen as helpful, and if the municipality would start to see it as something that was worth some extra time and resources, that it the long run would lead to the discourse becoming part of the habits, that could lead to a discursive struggle.

I believe that a discursive struggle is necessary in the municipality setting. In this struggle, the practitioners could find a meaning of the sign Human Rights that is helpful for them, in the way that it orientates the municipalities' everyday work. This orientation

could lead to the possibility to integrate the Human Rights discourse that then can turn into structures that creates habits and routines, something that the municipality practitioners see as necessary. The cry for the possibility to create structures and routines, by repeating certain discources, was something that was expressed during one of my meetings. During my internship at the SDF I followed my supervisor at the time to different meetings all around Gothenburg. Often, the meetings revolved around planning different interventions in the municipality, and after some time and several meetings, certain key objectives began to take shape in front of me. I started to see that there were some discourses that was repeated and I understood that these where of special importance in the municipality work. One discourse that was repeated in these meetings was to make the city more equal. This equality would be strengthened by decreasing the differences in living conditions between the different areas' inhabitants. During one of these meetings, someone said that the City of Gothenburg had changed the overall objective, for the municipality work, from "An equal Gothenburg" to "A socially sustainable Gothenburg" (or something like that, I am not sure about the exact formulation). This objective had its ground in the report *Rapport 2014: Skillnader i livsvillkor och hälsa i Göteborg* (Göteborgs Stad, 2014b), that is a mapping of the differences and inequality in living conditions, and it contains of several comparisons between the different districts. Based on the reactions from the people present at the meeting, I remember thinking that this was something that probably happened all the time, that formulations changed.

I asked my supervisor about this after the meeting, and she said that these sorts of changes in catchphrases normally have to do with the fact that the politicians have very strong opinions regarding which sort of formulations the city should use in their processes, since these phrases show what sort of priorities the municipality works according to. During one meeting with the representatives, one of them mentioned that there is sometimes confusion in the city, when it is not clear which priorities that are at the top of the list. The representative meant that it can be hard to establish structures in the work when these sort of catchphrases changes. This shows that these catchphrases are not only words, instead, the different administrations, the SDFs, actually have to adapt their work so that it fits with what the politicians find to be most urgent.

This anecdote points to something important. Concepts can be thrown around within the municipality organization. The politicians want to get their interests up on the agenda and sometimes their ideas lead to certain discourses becoming prevalent within the body of the organization. The goal with these discourses should be to make them become part

of the habits of the institution, to make them orientate the work. The discourses can become the structures that the municipality work can be built upon. I would say that this should be the goal with spreading a concept, to repeat the concepts and turn them into orientating discourses that becomes the municipality's structures, which also make the discourses materialize and create social change. The staff at the SDF also wants these concepts to be repeated so that there is enough time for them to transform the discourses into organizational structures that can help them to create routines. Routines, or habits, make the work more focused and causes less stress. In my reading, this is why these constant changes in catchphrases can become frustrating.

There seem to be some aspects of the Human Rights discourse that is seen as more accessible and useful for the practitioners. One of the representative told me that education was a field where she thought that the Human Rights discourse might be more prevalent that in other parts of the organization. Two other examples are the anti-discrimination discourse and the equal treatment discourse that seem to be discourses that the municipality of Gothenburg, the SDF and the municipalities in the SKL report, find to be a big part of the Human Rights discourse. The city-wide budget, for example, starts with a preface where they go straight to listing important aspects to work with, in order to be able to stand up for every human's equal value. In this section they bring up the grounds for discrimination (formulated as "sex, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, disability, skin color, or else" [my translation]) and states that the city shall be open for everyone. They write about how racism limits people's life and the need for working with anti-racism in the municipality in order to stop anti-democratic ideas from settling in Gothenburg (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 1).

In the SKL report, several persons mentioned that they saw equal treatment and anti-discrimination as the basis for Human Rights work (Emerga, 2015: 4). The right to an equal treatment with freedom from discrimination was also something that came up as an important part of the Human Rights work in my meetings with the representatives. One of them described that no matter who you are, you deserve to be met with an open mind, and that this was seen as a ground stone in the Human Rights discourse. The regulation document for the SDFs, which specifies on which grounds the different administrations shall carry out their work, focuses on the inhabitants' different conditions and states that the work needs to focus on breaking the discrimination to be able to ensure Gender Equal and Equivalent service to their inhabitants. Anti-discrimination and equal treatment are discourses that the practitioners

seem to be familiar with and that does not seem to be met with the same anxiety as the Human Rights discourse. That these discourses contain at least a certain amount of orientation, is shown in the city-wide budget where the stated mission in the chapter "Human Rights", is that all of the municipality boards and city owned companies should establish equality plans based on all the grounds for discrimination (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 11).

That the chapter "Human Rights" only had one stated mission is an example of the prevalent gap between the structural, and sometimes complex, analysis on the one hand and the stated missions on the other. These analyses are often left hanging without being broken down into any concrete missions and interventions. In some sections, there are several highly concrete missions, for example in the chapter about schools and education (Ibid: 19). Though, under some headings there are no missions at all, for example in the section that discusses how to create a "Rich spare time for young people" (Ibid: 19). In the chapter named "Gender Equality" there is one mission, namely that all organizations in the municipality shall have statistics disaggregated by sex and do a mapping of how the resources are divided based on sex (Ibid: 15).

I connect this gap between analysis and missions to Ahmed and her discussion about "doing the document" instead of "doing the doing" (2007) in relation to a new law that was founded 2000 in Great Britain, called the Race Relation Amendment Act. In her article, Ahmed sees documents as "'things' that circulate alongside other things within institutions, which in turn shapes the boundaries or edges of organizations" (2007: 591) and states that documents both brings an organization to existence, and circulates within it. Ahmed writes that there are laws that different institutions need to comply with and that this can lead to a tick box approach, but that "going beyond the tick box, becomes a matter of institutional performance" (Ibid: 595). In the case with the city-wide budget, I would argue that the thorough, complex analysis is beyond the minimum requirements, for example in how the problematize the role of the man in a gender equality discourse. In this case, I would therefore argue that they "go beyond the tick box approach", *in the document*, in what they need to bring up in order to comply with the law. Ahmed states is that it is important to analyze what these documents do, instead of seeing the rigid documents as signs of good performance. This complex and vivid description of the society, that the municipality has in their budget, lacks concrete missions in several sections. I read the stated missions as expressions of orientations, and based on my readings I would say that it is not only in relation to the Human Rights discourse that the municipality seem to be able to establish habits based on discourses.

I do not think that it necessarily has to be that difficult to connect the concept Human Rights to specific interventions and to adapt the discourse to a municipality setting. That the concept was described as a pretentious concept in my meetings with the representatives does not have to be static. To be able to point to the fact that setting up a specific intervention is a way of strengthening the inhabitants' Human Rights, could be a useful argument in making others support certain decisions. This could make them see whether or not they are creating possibilities for their inhabitants to access their Human Rights, something that they themselves point out as a ground stone that all the municipality work shall be based on.

Summary

In this chapter I have examined how the Human Rights discourse functions as a discourse for creating orientation, and concluded that the discourse is not helpful for the practitioners and, therefore, the discourse does not create a sense of orientation in the municipality setting. I have discussed the need for the Human Rights discourse to become part of a discursive struggle in order for the practitioners to find meaning and, in the long run, habits, in their Human Rights work, which in the end could lead to better living conditions for the inhabitants. I have concluded that anti-discrimination and equal treatment seem to be two discourses where the municipality organizations find orientation – two discourses that are repeatedly described as part of the Human Rights discourse. I have also discussed the city-wide budget in relation to Ahmed's theory about that organizations sometimes tend to be "doing the document" instead of "doing the doing", and found indicators that this is the case in this municipality as well.

4. The Municipality as a Depoliticized Setting

In this chapter I will analyze the Human Rights discourse, and the whole municipality, in relation to Mouffe's theories about the depoliticization of the political. I will make a discourse analysis where I make a deconstruction of the Human Rights discourse, and other prevalent discourses in the municipality, in order to trace which assumptions these are built upon and which material effects these could have on people's lives.

The SDF's work is based on politics. They are put to administrate the political decisions made in the SDN, where 11 politicians meet once a month. The political parties, and the politicians in the SDN, are elected by the public after a campaign where the parties have made clear to the public what sort of visions they have for Gothenburg and which issues they find important. The board contains of the majority parties and the opposition parties and they vote on different prepositions. Mouffe writes that properly political questions, in her view, "always involve decisions which requires us to make a choice between conflicting alternatives where conflicting decisions are presented" (2005: 10). Therefore, the SDN can be said to be a political setting according to this definition. The SDN votes on questions such as solutions to the issues with too few substitutes in pre-schools, how much to invest in the building of new schools, and how to act in a case where a pupil at one of the district's schools has been the victim of discrimination, which are examples taken from a protocol from a SDN meeting in 2015 (SDN Östra Göteborg, 2015b). These are all issues that fall under the SDN's mission, since they are part of their responsibility connected to local politics.

There are reasons why the different politicians, representing the different parties in the SDN, want to make interventions in specific field and why they see different solutions to the issues in the district. This has to do with fact that the political parties represent different ideologies. Though, the basis for the municipality work is not something that is discussed and debated, such as, for example, the Human Rights discourse. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, there is no discursive struggle in the municipality, no struggles regarding how the meaning of the sign Human Rights is to be fixed. This shows that the Human Rights discourse is not political in this setting, since the politicians do not present conflicting alternatives about what the Human Rights discourse should contain. Mouffe's depoliticization theory is based on her view that there is a pervading anti-political vision which refuses to acknowledge the antagonistic dimension constitutive of "the political" (Mouffe, 2005: 2). She states that in this anti-political vision, political conflicts are seen as belonging to the past and that there is a

belief that consensus always can be obtained through dialogue. The post-political scenery is founded on an optimistic view of globalization and the belief of a consensual form om democracy. In the municipality setting, I would say that the Human Rights discourse is located within a consensus discourse, because of the fact that the previous it is not part of a discursive struggle.

The lack of presented conflicting interpretations makes me read the municipality setting as located within Mouffe's description of how political conflicts are seen as part of the past. If a discursive struggle would take place, a struggle in which the sign Human Rights was to be fixed, this would break with the post-political vision, that was described as present in the SDN, by one of the representatives during one of our meetings. When I mentioned to the representatives that the concept Human Rights is not present in SDN's annual report, one of them said that this could have to do with the fact that Human Rights is seen as a political concept and since there has been a trend of depoliticization regarding the language used in the municipality setting in the last decades, this concept could be interpreted as too politically charged, that the politicians or officials do not have the habit of using those kinds of pointy concepts anymore, that it does not come natural for them. This statement, that it is too political for being used in a depoliticized (which was the word she chosen without me using it first) setting such as the municipality, both clashes and goes in line with the depoliticization discourse. The explanation that the Human Rights discourse is too political stands in contradiction to Mouffe (2005: 84) and Brown's (2006: 2) understanding of Human Rights as an example of a discourse that has lost its political charge as the results of other discourses penetrating the Human Rights discourse, such as a neoliberal discourse and a tolerance discourse (concepts that I will come back to later in this chapter).

The other representative, though, had another take on this, and said that using the concept "rights" could be associated with some issues, since there is no common definition about what a right is, and how these rights could be given to their inhabitants. That the uncertainty regarding the concept made it a concept hard to use in the SDN setting. These two different perspective that was expressed during this meeting show me that the concept Human Rights can be located within different discourses. The first confirms the fact that the municipality setting can be seen as depoliticized and the other explanation, that the concept "rights" is hard to use since there is no agreement, and no discussion either, about how to use the concept or even what it means, goes in line with the findings in the previous chapter, that the lack of a common definition of Human Rights makes it hard to work with. Both of the

statements point towards a prevalent consensus discourse, since the politicians seem to be wanting to avoid a situation where conflicts can take place. If the concept is seen as too political, the politicians do not want to use it because that could lead to an unusual situation that they would not know how to handle. If the term is seen as hard to define, a situation could occur where the politicians would actually have to break down the Human Rights discourse and this process could lead to disagreements becoming visible. Therefore, not using it in the SDN setting could be read as a taking the easy way out. Since the concept Human Rights is also connected to the idea that every person has the same worth and value, something that I would classify as a relatively harmless statements that is probably seen as something that everyone should be able to agree on, at least on a theoretical level, I see the discourse around Human Rights as a "discourse that limits criticism", to speak with Martinsson (2006: 40). It can be seen as comfortable to use the concept, since it is probably not seen as something people will find intimidating, at least not until the discourse is to be put into practice, and that is not something that will happen as long as the discourse is not used to orientate the work.

To quote Mouffe: "envisaging the aim of democratic politics in terms of consensus and reconciliation is not only conceptually mistaken, it is also fraught with political dangers. The aspiration to a world where a we/they discrimination would have been overcome is based on flawed premises and those who share such a vision are bound to miss the real task facing democratic politics" (2005: 2). I read this quote as a warning, that not breaking with the consensus discourse, could make politicians miss different inequalities and wrong doings, and certain oppressive structures could be left invisible. To be brave enough, as a politician, to risk a revealing of a false consensus, could make possible a visualization of certain oppressive structures – structures that are limiting the inhabitants' life. A deconstruction of the Human Rights discourse can be necessary in order to make visible that the discourse rests upon patterns that could function as oppressive of certain groups.

I want to return to the strong discourse that everyone should work and contribute to the society in financial terms (a discourse hereafter referred to as "the work discourse"), a discourse both seen as a part of the Human rights discourse, where, as we have seen above, the idea that everyone should have the right to a job is present, as well as a discourse that is constantly repeated as an important part of the municipalities work. It is also a good example of a discourse that has become so conventionalized as we think of it as natural, to speak with Laclau and Mouffe (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 26). In the preface of

the city-wide budget, it is written that the segregation is a big problem in Gothenburg, that many areas have high socio-economic status while other parts of the struggles with the economical conditions. They write that the solution to this problem is to increase the equality in schools, to build more residences and to cooperate with the business sector in order to create more jobs (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 2). The focus on the economical aspects of the inhabitants' lives is something that, in my reading of it, permeates the city-wide budget. In the section where the social dimension of the municipality's work is presented, the focus is on education and jobs and it is stated that the schools should prepare the pupils for "work throughout life" [my translation] (Ibid: 5). In the presentation of the social dimension, there is also a focus on how to reduce the numbers of households depending on financial support.

During my internship I assisted my supervisor in writing two applications to the Swedish ESF council, a council that decides which organizations that should receive funding from the Social Fund and the Integration Fund (Svenska ESF-rådet, 2016), and both of these projects had the objective to get the participants closer to the labor market, in order to improve their mental health and to get them away from a criminal activity. These projects were also directed towards inhabitants that, in different way, was a big cost, in the form of financial support or institutions placement. A repeated aim in the municipality is to create possibilities for the inhabitants to get an occupation and become self-supported. Within the municipality organization, the omnipresent work discourse is not something that I ever heard being questioned. There can obviously be other positive effects connected to having a job or becoming self-supported, but in the work discourse, the focus is on the economical aspect. This strong discourse is present both to a high degree within the municipality, and also on a national level, where political parties struggles to profile themselves as the party with the best ideas for creating job opportunities (see for example Moderaterna, 2013).

An important aspect of the Human Rights discourse, as stated above, is the more abstract "equal value" that accompanies it. The claim that every person has the same worth and value appears to be a conditional value if I turn to the national media context. In the public discussions about refugees, and who should be welcome to stay in Sweden, which is a topic that I find to be closely related to the concept Human Rights, I find one common argument in these debates to be that people with high-status professions deserve to stay here (see for example Holmberg, 2015, and Berlin, 2015). In the article by Berlin (2015), it is written about a doctor that is about to deported, despite the fact that he is a doctor and Sweden needs doctors. This is to me a clear example of how people's possibility to access their

Human Rights is conditional (even though the profession and the will to learn the Swedish language, which is also pointed out to be of importance, is not always reason enough to get a residence permit). In my readings of the articles, it is clear from the way the articles are written that the reader is supposed to feel more compassion with a person who does not get to stay in Sweden if this person could be seen as a resource for Sweden. This conditional value of a person is to me something that has become neutralized within a refugee discourse, and that also shows how strong the discourse about the necessity work is in the Swedish society. This discourse has created structures that are materialized in the way that people's right to exist depends on it. If a refugee can be used as a resource in an economical perspective, then that refugee could have the right to stay in Sweden and be safe from war.

The work discourse is, in my reading of it, part a neoliberal discourse where the focus on the individual and different market logics have search its way into several other discourses. Gill & Donaghue writes that that the neoliberal discourse is "characterised by increasing individualization, withdrawal of the state and introduction of market logics and rationalities into ever more spheres of life" (2015: 92). That everyone has the right to a residence, the right to a good and equal education that can lead to a job that gives a person the possibility to become self-supporting and, is one example of a discourse that rests on a liberal idea, where the individual should have the possibility to succeed in different ways, for example, by making their own money. A deconstruction of the discourses expressed in my material, shows that what can appear as something that is taken for granted is based on an idea that a person should be able to contribute to the society in economical terms and not be financially dependent – an idea that is far from separated from ideology and politics. Though, this is a discourse that in my encounters with the municipality and national media, seem to be neutralized. Mouffe writes that "what is at a given moment considered as the 'natural' order - jointly with the 'common sense' which accompanies it - is the result of sedimented practices" (2005: 18). She states that there is always power embedded in defining of concepts and concepts that might seem natural to us. That occupation and self-support is the only way forward appears to have become a truth in this context, though, it is not outspokenly expressed why this would lead to a better society.

In the municipality, this work discourse has become a sedimented discourse, to speak with Laclau and Mouffe (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 36). These discourses are now seen as objective. Laclau and Mouffe see objectivity as "sedimented power where the traces of power have become effaced, where it has been forgotten that the world is politically

constructed. Objectivity, then, refers to the world we take for granted, a world which we have 'forgotten' is always constituted by power and politics" (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 36-37). That the job discourse can function as oppressive can be seen both in the refugee discourse above, where human's value can be read as conditional. There are other effects of the job discourse, such as the fact that people who do not have the possibility to work, because of ill-health or other factors, risk not getting enough financial support from the stat, or a pension that is high enough for them, to live a meaningful and worthy life (and I am aware of the fact that these arguments also rest on the idea that money is needed in order to live a good life, which also shows how hard it is to think outside this discourse). As I stated above, the deconstruction of a Human Rights discourse, a discursive struggle where the meaning of Human Rights is discussed, could make visible that the discourse rest upon other taken-for-granted discourses, such as the job discourse, that functions as oppressive for those who do not have the possibility access to "work throughout life". These examples also show how certain discourses become structures that have material effects on people.

Even though the municipality setting is in some ways shaped by a neoliberal discourse, where the focus is on the individualization in the society, there are other discourses expressed as well that does not necessarily challenge the neoliberal discourse, but rather co-exist together with it. Reading the city-wide budget, it is clear that the language used within the municipality it part of discourse that there are structures in the society that limit the inhabitants' lives in different ways. In this discourse, the focus is on the segregation and unequal living conditions between the different districts in the city. In the budget, they do not shy away from writing about how, for example, racial structures exclude people from the labor market (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 10). When it comes to the aspects of gender equality they write that "[structures] need to be made visible for us to be able to analyze gender equality, and to problematize the role of the man" [my translation] (Ibid: 15). During my meetings with the two representatives it became clear that they share this structural analysis and that they also see structures that, in different ways, limit the inhabitants' lives. During these conversations we came to talk about, for example, the individualization of work, and the representatives described this as a catch 22, where it is up to the individual to find an employment, according to a neoliberal discourse, but then there are structures in the society that works to keep some people out. This shows that one prevalent and visible discourse within the municipality is that structures creates condition for the inhabitants. The conditions for the municipality is described through a typically "left" discourse where the focus is on

structures and how they limit people's lives. That the solution to some of these problems, such as the socio-economic differences, is the fact that every individual should have the right to work and reaching self-support, is one example of how the neoliberal discourse and the discourse about limiting structures, that points away from the individual perspective, co-exist in the municipality.

I would say that the municipality sometimes do use a political language in their budgets when they point out different excluding structures, based on racism and sexism, and how these structures need to be teared down. One example of this politically charged language is found in the budget from 2013 (Göteborgs Stad, 2012) where they use the concept "främlingsrädsla" (xenophobia) but three years later they have changed the formulations in similar sections and they are now using the more loaded concept "racism". In one way, they went in the opposite orientation compared to the rest of the society, where, for example, nazi organization and other radical organizations have been described as being "främlingfientliga" in Swedish press (see for example Martikainen, 2014; Björkman, 2015; Flores, 2016). The usage of the word racism points to an awareness that there are different groups in the society, that are seen as having conflicting interests and, therefore, conflicts will appear, to speak with Mouffe (2005: 9) and can therefore be seen as political.

To me, one important aspect in the discussion about whether or not the municipality, and their Human Rights work, can be seen as political, is the aspect of redistribution of power, which I have earlier stated as an integral part of my understanding of what can be read as political. The work with, for example, anti-discrimination and equivalent service, that is seen as important aspects of Human Rights, does not necessarily lead to challenging any power structures, instead it can become a question about tolerating people's differences. Brown discusses how the tolerance discourse has moved "into a generalized language of antiprejudice and now betokened a vision of the good society yet to come" (2006: 5) and that tolerance is now a concept emptied of its earlier embedded political pointiness. Stopping the discrimination against, for example, people born outside of the Nordic countries, does not in itself mean that the power have been redistributed. In my opinion, there is a way of making people able to access some of their Human Rights without redistributing power. People in powerful positions can give people with weaker status access to certain things, but without challenging any structures (for example providing refugees with a place to sleep, safety in the form of not having to return to a war zone). To quote Martinsson: "To fairly organize is not the same thing as being democratic" (2006: 180).

If I compare the Human Rights discourse with, for example, a Diversity Discourse or a Gender Equality discourse, is the fact that the later discourses can be seen as working to improve conditions for certain "groups". In a Diversity discourse, primarily "non-white" people are framed as the ones gaining from a successful implementation of that discourse. In the case of a Gender Equality discourse, the focus is on improving "women's" status. A common strategy when it comes to Gender Equality is to use the 4R method, where one step is to look at how the resources are located between "men" and "women" and the next step is to change the allocation of resources if an inequality has been found (Jämställ.nu, 2016). The concept Human Rights, as I have been discussing above, is not a concept where the relocating aspects is as prevalent. Some aspects of the Human Rights discourse might be easier to connect to a redistribution of power. For example, increasing the inhabitants' participation in democratic processes, where people get a chance to influence which political parties that get to represent them can in the long run contribute to a redistribution of power that they can gain from.

The problems presented above, with the aspect of Human Rights being a concept that is seen as lacking a clear definition, is relevant in this discussion as well, about whether or not the Human Rights discourse is seen as political. Some of the people responsible for the implementation of Human Rights in the different municipalities, asked for SKL to provide them with a clearer definition, or "frame of reference", that could function to orientate them in their Human Rights work (Emerga, 2015: 5). This cry for a clearer way of implementing the rights, the suggestion that for example SKL could offer a common definition of the concept, is interesting to me. The different municipalities are led by different political leadership, that have different ideologies, and different ways of leading their respective institutions. This call for more clearly defined ways of implementing the rights is, in my opinion, one of the strongest proofs that Human Rights are seen as unpolitical. It is seen as a discourse that is unattached from political leadership.

As I have mentioned above, the city-wide budget is written by the majority parties at the time, four parties that are traditionally placed to the left on the political scale. The budget, then, becomes an example of how some concepts have found their way into a left discourse, concepts stemming from a market discourse, and a liberal discourse, and that has searched its way through, into a typically "left" discourse. In the city-wide budget it is, for example, stated that "Gothenburg and the surrounding region has developed strongly in recent years with a high job growth, and is now globally competitive" [my translation] (Göteborgs

Stad, 2014a: 7). In the chapter where the labor market is discussed, it is written that Gothenburg shall make sure that every person's potential is used on the labor market (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 33), and in the chapter about the business sector it is written that Gothenburg shall establish an action plan to stimulate sustainable interventions and creative entrepreneurship (Ibid: 32). These sort of formulations are also part of the neoliberal and market discourse and the language of the market (see for example Hark, 2015, where the author discusses the usage of words such as "entrepreneurship" and "global competitiveness" in this neoliberal era). Martinsson (2006) writes about how the economic aspects are used to motivate diversity work, where the question is not about stopping discrimination because it is wrong, instead stopping the discrimination and including people are used as arguments for making financial gains. I my opinion, the municipality also argues for the view that people's different backgrounds can be seen as "assets" (see for example Lenita Freidenvall's discussion about "the resource argument" regarding arguments used for increasing the number of women in boards, 2008: 159) in their way of arguing for using every inhabitant's potential.

I would say that the municipality uses concepts like, for example, "socio-economical status" in the same way that Martinsson (2006) states that it is used in the Confederations of Swedish Enterprise's discourse around class. Here, class is not seen as a part of a socialistic discourse, and as a ground for political activity against exploitation and subordination. Instead, "class" is seen as something people have, as an effect of the market (Martinsson, 2006: 179). Class differences (and exploitation) is not used as a ground for criticizing the market economical thinking. Instead, class is seen as a part of a diversity vision where there can be economical gains if we can integrate people with "different backgrounds". I find this to be the case in the city-wide budget since the focus in not relocating the power and resources from those with higher socio-economic status, to them with a lower. Instead, the inhabitants with the lower socio-economic are seen as having to catch-up with the others. And this can be done by finding the potential in everyone and see how they can contribute on the labor market (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 33). Martinsson writes that "a consensus is created, with a common 'we' after the battles" [my translation], as if everyone, no matter class belonging or background, all want the same thing in the end, the same society (Martinsson, 2006: 180). As if there is a common orientation in which everyone is needed to contribute to the future society. Here, what everyone is supposed to want, is to have a meaningful job and the possibility to self-support, something I read into statements such as that "everyone should

have the right to self-support" [my translation] (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 33). One alternative could have been to write about ways to de-stigmatize not having the possibility to become self-supported.

I came across one concept that I connect to this neoliberal discourse during one of my meetings with the two representative. We came to talk about the different conditions that the different SDFs face in their work. We talked about the fact that in the SDF Majorna-Linné, for example, there is a strong focus on the Gender Equality part of the Human Rights discourse. In Majorna-Linné, other topics are on the agenda, that has to do with LGBTQ issues and questions regarding, for example, gender pedagogic in pre-schools, and senior homes with LGBTQ seniors as target group. One of the representatives then said that the "demand" from the inhabitants looked different in that district. Supply and demand from the inhabitants now became something to take into account. In Majorna-Linné, the inhabitants are seen as wanting and demanding these kinds of interventions, they demand from their politicians to pay extra attention to LGBTQ and Gender Equality issues. I read this utterance as a way for the representative to say that the demand in Östra Göteborg looked different in comparison, that in this district, the demand for a gender perspective in pre-schools, for example, is not on the top of the agenda, as it is in the more resource strong districts. For me, this was also a way for her to express that a district like Majorna-Linné can afford these sorts of prioritizations, almost that it can be seen as a luxury. In Östra Göteborg on the other hand, there are other, more acute things to take care of.

During this meeting with the representatives, one of them draw a connection to Maslow Need's Staircase. How they, in their district, need to work with "more basic needs" which makes Gender Equality issues located further down on the list, compared to the situation in, for example, Majorna-Linné where they work a lot with Gender Equality and LGBTQ issues. In Östra Göteborg, the demand from the inhabitants looked different. In this district, many people do not have the possibility to reach self-support due to structures that keep them out of the labor market and as we have seen the SDF makes many interventions to get their inhabitants closer to the labor market. This is another example of how the job discourse becomes superior. Many people are seen as being on the lowest steps of the staircase, where the most "basic needs" are a struggle (a permanent residence and the possibility for the inhabitants to provide for their families). One of the representatives mentioned that they needed to prioritize and that the work with, for example, gender pedagogic in pre-schools, is not on top of that priority list. As in the example of the opening

of the temporary home in Kortedala, the SDF's ability to respond and act fast to acute critical situations, is one positive aspect of looking to basic needs. These perceived most basic needs become what orientate the work. The most problematic aspect of this reasoning as seeing self-support as a part of the bottom step but not, for example, a LGBTQ senior home, is the fact that this is not based on the inhabitants' expressed needs. One of the representatives said that they do not want the inhabitants to be passive recipients of interventions, but instead active in designing and establishing them. Though, they both felt that they were lacking the tools to be able to establish functioning dialogues with their inhabitants, something they both saw as important to improve.

I can only speculate about in which degree this list of priorities is affected by the experience the members of the staff have, but there is not a big part of the people working in the SDF office, at least at the development department, that have experiences from fleeing from war, that I can say with some confidence. These leads to the question of representation and the important discussion about the arguments for working with diversity, and why diversity is important. If people with other backgrounds would be able to decide which sort of interventions they see as more acute, the habits of how to work within the organization would maybe be challenged or changed. I know that the SDF work with question around how to get the inhabitants into the organization, or how to create more dialogue with them, but the question of representation is not an easy one. As Martinsson & Reimers state (2007), there is a risk that a position as, for example, a "female", leads to expectations that the woman should act in different ways, and bring in different perspectives, expectations that are built upon stereotypes about what a woman "is". This could be applicable on other subject positions as well. In Martinsson & Reimers' example, the "female" becomes a representative of all females, in the same way that a "refugee" can become seen a representative of a group, and that persons needs and opinions can become seen as representing every "refugees" needs and opinions. How to handle these potential pitfalls is something that need to be discussed every time that a cry for diversity is brought up. A clarification is needed here. This is not to be read as an argument against diversity, but rather, an argument for being cautious, and not see diversity in itself as the objective, but rather, the positive effects of it.

Mouffe states that to acknowledge the plurality of the idea of Human Rights is to bring forward the political character of the concept (2005: 126). This leads me to the conclusion that there is a need of defining Human Rights in order not to reproduce power

structures, or discourses that functions as oppressive and that risk making human value conditional.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the Human Rights discourse, and the municipality organization, in relation to the depoliticization discourse. I have found that the municipality, in different ways, can be seen as a post-political setting where there is a prevalent consensus discourse regarding, for example, Human Rights. I have concluded that there is a will to avoid a situation where the consensus is challenged, since it could lead to a situation that the politicians are not used to. I have also found that the work discourse is a prominent discourse in the municipality – a discourse that risks creating oppressive structures that have material effects on people's lives, both the inhabitants and refugees that wants to stay in Sweden. I have traced a prevalent neoliberal discourse, where the focus is on the individual and different market logics, but I have also seen that this discourse exists side by side with a structure discourse, where the focus is on how different structures limit people's lives. I have found that the SDF's work based on priorities that are not set up in dialogue with the inhabitants, and how this risks obscuring the inhabitants' needs.

5. Human Rights and the Civilized Society

In this chapter I will examine the Human Rights discourse in relation to the current political situation in Sweden, with special focus on the refugee discourse. I will examine how the municipality's inhabitants reacts to interventions connected to the refugee situation. I will examine how the Human Rights and Gender Equality discourse, described as core values belonging to the Swedish national identity, is used to create a distance towards "the Other".

The view on Sweden as a country that stands up for refugee rights and that is open for immigrants, that I would say have been a part of a national collective identity, is now a view that is beginning to fade away. Whether or not Sweden should help people that are fleeing from war and terror has now become a topic for an ongoing debate. How to deal with the current situation with many refugees wanting to settle down in Sweden, have also become a matter that the municipality has to handle in certain ways. Östra Göteborg is a district where a 42 % of the inhabitants are born outside of Sweden (Göteborgs Stad, 2015a) and during our meetings, the representative often described themselves as a district where they have a habit of receiving immigrants and refugees. This is something that they, in my interpretation, are proud of and see as an important part of their work.

When more refugees starting to come to Gothenburg during 2015, the municipality decided that they wanted to "avoid placing [temporary home] modules in the districts that are the biggest receivers of asylum seekers and newly arrived. Therefore, the modules shall exist in different parts of the city" (Göteborgs Stad, 2016c). The most repeated questions about the building and opening of temporary homes, that was collected in a public information document available on the municipalities web page, show that this decision was met by both many people who wanted to help put in different ways, and by skepticism in which a racist discourse could be traced. For example, some of the questions was regarding what to do if there was an increased criminal activity in the area, after the refugees have moved in (Ibid). Another forum, in which openly racist arguments have been expressed, is during the public information meetings that the municipality has arranged in the different structures, on the occasion of the building of these temporary homes. These meetings have been open for the public and the inhabitants have gotten a chance to ask questions to different staff members from the SDFs. In this meetings there are several example of how "the Others", the refugees, are seen as a threat towards the Swedish "equal and secure" society. One woman asks about why the persons working at different temporary homes do not go through the

residents packing to make sure that they do not carry knives, and one mother stands up and says that she is worried for her 15-year-old "blond" daughter and what will happen to her when these people come to the district (Göteborgs Stad, 2016d). All of these examples, that the refugees are more likely to carry out crimes, to carry around weapons, and be a potential threat towards young *blond girls* (where the daughter's hair color becomes important in order to separate her from the non-blond "other"), I read as the result of how a racist discourse have been normalized, and that, in my opinion, it is now more common to hear openly racist arguments when people criticize decisions that are seen as benefitting for refugees (for more examples, see Verdicchio, 2016). The repetition of certain characteristics used to describe "the refugee" creates a discourse about how the refugees are not like "us". I do not think that these utterances were as visible a couple of years ago.

Then, the following question is how this normalization process has come about. One part of the explanation is the entrance of the racist party Sverigedemokraterna (the Swedish Democrats) on the Swedish political arena. I think that the entrance of this political party made new things possible to utter in new contexts (such as information meetings with the SDF). Sverigedemokraterna has created a platform for racist ideas, and certain utterances left the field of discursivity, and entered the political discourse. In my understanding of discourse theory, the more repeated certain patterns in utterances become, the more possible these utterances appear and the discourse becomes stronger. I draw this conclusion from the fact that a hegemony appears when there is a dominance of one particular discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 7). I would say that this dominance that constitutes a hegemony is created by this repetition, that has created a reduction of all other possibilities. That is why I see a connection between the repetition of a discourse and the strengthening of that discourse, when getting into dialogue with discourse theory. Then, when Sverigedemokraterna entered the Swedish parliament it was also proven that it was possible to make utterances according to the racist discourse and still be seen as a legitimate participant on the political arena, since it was a discourse represented in the national parliament. I want to be clear here, that I do not mean that Sverigedemokraterna is a racist party and that the other parties do not take part in racist discourses. I understand that it is not that black or white. Sverigedemokraterna might be the most open and obvious racist party, but we live in a racist society where racist discourses constitute structures that have material effects on the inhabitants' lives, whether Sverigedemokraterna is represented in the Swedish parliament or not. But I would still call this entrance a shift in Swedish national politics.

During 2015, the government adopted a more restrictive refugee politics, where they, for example, proposed temporary residence permits, increased ID controls on public transportation, limitations regarding the right to family immigration and restrictions in the right to financial support, in order to "create a breathing space for the Swedish refugee receiving" as Stefan Löfvén, the Swedish Prime Minister, put it (Holm & Svensson, 2015). The Swedish Deputy Prime Minister, Åsa Romson from Miljöpartiet, cried during the press conference when the restrictions were presented (Liebermann, 2015), and said that she thought that the decisions were terrible. Still, she stood behind them, as a representative of the Swedish government. Romson and Miljöpartiet, that has profiled themselves as one of the most refugee friendly party (Ibid) said that these was something that they had to do, that there were no other options. This was further made clear in her answer to the question of why they did it, when she said that if they would not have made these decisions, "others, even more terrible decisions, would have been made" [my translation] (Ibid).

That there is some kind of perceived notions that there are no other options is something that is made visible here. Sweden has, as a country, made a commitment to make people able to access their Human Rights, and this is a clear example of the Human Rights discourse as a non-performative discourse, that does not create a sense of orientation. The Human Rights discourse seems to be out of reach for the politicians in this case. The possibilities are described as restrictions *or more restrictions*. These are the options that the government has to choose from. The refugee discourse, that is here seen as a discourse connected to the idea of restrictions, is also a good example of how a discourse certainly is a reduction of possibilities, where other possibilities have been excluded (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 27) This is also an example of when a Human Rights discourse is put aside to give room for other discourses.

Mouffe writes that one aspects of many parties moving to the middle, as have been the case in many European countries during the last decade, fascist parties grow stronger. She writes that "[when] political frontiers become blurred, disaffection with political parties set in and one witnesses the growth of other types of collective identities, around nationalist, religious or ethnic forms of identification" (Mouffe, 2005: 30). That Socialdemokraterna and Miljöpartiet, that are traditionally located to the left on the political scale (they are called a Red-Green Government), decided to make these restrictions can be read as both a proof that they are moving to the middle. The government parties, shows

through their actions that they do not see it as a given to welcome refugees, even though they publicly use other discourses than the more open racist ones.

To speak with Mouffe, this sort of politicization of a specific issue, in this case how to handle the receiving and welcoming of refugees, could have a positive effect (even if I do not want to talk about the situation as a positive one) if the politicians make clear what their visions and ideas are for making the situation work. In that case, the public, which are also the voters, can have a clearer image on which options they can sympathize with, since these debates are put on the agenda. I do, though, get a sense of Mouffe's reasoning being built on a notion that if people only had several, and clearer, options to choose from, they would not pick the racist and fascist option.

When I go into dialogue with her, I get a bit skeptical of parts of her reasoning since I read her arguing based on a belief that there is some kind of inner goodness in a person, that if a person would be presented with more human options, they would rather go for that. That the fascist ideas are just something that these people have to turn to, because they do not have any options, but deep inside they do not want to (this is for example proven in how Sverigedemokraterna used to be described as a "missnöjesparti", a party for the dissatisfied, see for example Zachariasson, 2012). Getting into this kind of dialogue with her leads to a discussion about whether or not politics creates ideas, thoughts and opinions, or whether people are waiting for politicians to express, and represent their ideas, thoughts and opinions. In my reading, the fact that voters choose to vote for the fascist alternative when the other parties hide in the middle, shows that the voters have an idea about what they want to vote for, but that their opinions are sometimes not represented anywhere. This stands in one way against discourse theory since in this theory, the repetition of patterns makes certain utterances more possible, and the discourse stronger. Therefore, this repetition could make the racist and fascist parties grow more popular, since they become more and more naturalized.

A current example of the constructions of a national "we" opposed to a "they" is the debate about introductory Gender Equality courses for immigrants. The leader of Moderaterna, Anna Kinberg Batra, has been arguing for a course which all newly arrived have to go through where they can learn about some of the Swedish core values (TT, 2016). By doing this, Moderaterna locate themselves in a Gender Equality discourse that, in theory, is a hegemonic discourse. I read it as a hegemonic discourse since it is repeatedly uttered in different contexts that Sweden is one of the most Gender Equal country in the whole world, that the government describes itself as the first feministic government (Regeringskansliet,

2016). The example with Batra is also an example of how many politicians and inhabitants in Sweden, that has not previously paid that much attention to feministic issues, all of a sudden becomes champions for women's rights – when it can be used as arguments for shutting "the Other" out. This phenomenon, the sudden feministic awakening, is also something that came up to discussion in Swedish daily press (see for example Aagård, 2016: Penny, 2016).

The state law theorist Carl Schmitt argued that states often try to "identify itself with humanity in the same way as one can misuse peace, justice, progress and civilization in order to claim these as one's own and to deny the same to the enemy" (cited in Mouffe, 2005: 78). The fact that Moderaterna want to force people to participating in this course, is, in my opinion, a way of misusing a concept in the way that Schmitt warns of. They use Gender Equality as a way of distancing from "the uncivilized Other", when one could definitely question how feministic their own politics are. This also shows that whether or not a discourse funtions as orientation, whether or not it materializes, is not important. It can still be used as a way of distancing oneself from "the Other". This discussion about Gender Equality can also be linked to the concept Human Rights. Drawing on Schmitt, Mouffe argues that there are always the ones in power that get to define concepts such as "peace" and "security" and that there needs to be an awareness about this so that the spread of the concept Human Rights does not lead to a "globalization from above" (2005: 125).

This leads back to the previous discussion about the depoliticization of the concept Human Rights. Human Rights is often accompanied with the concept "universal", for example in the UN declaration, where it is present in the title, in the SKL report (Emerga, 2015: 8) and in-direct in the city-wide budget since they make references to the UN declaration (Göteborgs Stad, 2014a: 11). The concept universal in itself signals that the ingredients in the Human Rights is something that we can all agree on, or should be able to agree on. Mouffe argues for a problematization of the idea of the universality of Human rights since there can be many ways of defining the dignity of a person (2005: p. 125) and that the idea of the universality needs to be problematized so that it does not become something that "the West" should impose on "the Rest". This problematization of the concept is important on a local level as well. To be able to call something universal, or to use a concept without having to define it, can be seen as being in a power position that does not open up for discussions. I think that there is a risk when the municipality or the SKL describe these rights as universal, because that suggest that there is only one way to understand the rights and this could contribute to a reproduction of this view that Sweden and other countries in the West

have the correct approach and the answer to how the dignity of a person should be described. Also, I understand if the usage of the concept "universal" can lead to some confusion since it might be seen as hard to take a concept that should be possible to apply to the whole universe and put it into a municipal context. During one of my meetings with the representatives, the concept "pretentious" was used in relation to the Human Rights concept, and I think that the usage of the word "universal" can exacerbate that notion.

When faced with a situation where Human Rights should be put into practice, this can be seen as an opportunity to politicize the discussion about Human Rights. It is a commitment that has been made on both a national and local level, and something that Sweden as a nation has promised to follow. This would therefore be the right time for the different parties to formulate in what way a Human Rights discourse actually should be put into practice.

Summary

In this chapter I have made an examination of the political situation in Sweden and showed how a racist discourse is prevalent in the municipality inhabitants' reaction to the opening up of a temporary refugee homes. I have concluded that the entrance of Sverigedemokraterna has helped normalizing a racist discourse and that the government parties do not use the Human Rights discourse as a possible discourse in relation to the refugee situation, but instead argues for the need of restrictions. I have showed how a Human Rights and Gender Equality discourse is used in order to create a distance to "the uncivilized Other", despite the fact that it is not discourses that necessarily are put into practice.

6. Concluding Remarks and Suggestions for Further Research

In this thesis I have examined how the Human Rights discourse functions as a discourse that creates orientation, both in a municipality context, and in a national perspective. The Human Rights discourse is pointed out as being of special importance in the municipality. The concept Human Rights is shown off at the SKL's and the municipality of Gothenburg's web sites, where it is made visible for the visitors and described as being the foundation on which the municipality work should be based upon. My examination of the report from SKL, the official documents from the municipality of Gothenburg, as well as my conversations with different persons working at the municipality, shows that the Human Rights work does not come that naturally. It is a concept that is seen as hard to define, and the Human Rights discourse appeared to be sprawling, in my material. The components stretched from every person having the same value and worth, to everyone's right to a free primary school education, to the possibility to become self-supported, and the right to participate in democratic processes. *Among other things.*

One of the most prevalent discourses, that was found to be a part of the Human Rights discourse, is the talk about integrating a Human Rights perspective. In other words, the municipalities, both those represented in the SKL report, and the municipality of Gothenburg, argues for an integration of something that they do not know what it is. It is framed as a perspective that should be present in everything that the organizations do, but they do not know what the perspective contains of. It is also described as a work that is important to evaluate, but they do not know which indicators to use. In other words, the Human Rights discourse is not seen as a helpful discourse for the practitioners, it does not function to orientate the work. It becomes a non-performative discourses. It is a discourse that creates anxiety, that is described as a wet blanket. I am arguing for the need of making the Human Rights discourse becoming part of a discursive struggle, in order for the practitioners to find a meaning of the concept that they can use in their everyday work, that helps to crystallize the discourse so that it can become part of the habits of the organization, so that it can help the work forward. I am arguing for the practitioners to admit that the Human Rights work is not easy, that it does not come naturally. I am arguing for the politicians to step out of their depoliticized thinking, to get out of their "consensus comfort zone", and start to define what kind of society they want and how a Human Rights discourse can be used in order to get there. They owe it to their inhabitants, in that sense that if it is shown that the politicians did not want the same society as the inhabitants, then the inhabitants can search for better options.

In my material I have also found a prevalent work discourse, where the inhabitants are seen as useful resources if they can contribute to the society in financial terms. It is a discourse that strikes hard towards those who do not have the possibility to work. It also strikes hard towards those who are fleeing for their lives, from war zone, but that do not have a high status profession in their luggage, that could increase your chances or being welcomed, or at least in parts accepted, into the Swedish society. And even if the refugee does not possess a profession that Sweden see as useful, that is no protection against the normalized racist discourses where "those who are not like us" are seen as more likely to commit a crime, carry a knife, or be a possible perpetrator that will try to hurt "our blond daughters". Because here, as opposed to there, we care about Gender Equality. Here, we use a Human Rights and Gender Equality discourse in order to create a distance to "the uncivilized Other", despite the fact that these discourses are not put into practice.

Now is a good time to start defining the Human Rights rights and to give practical examples on how to work according to them. It is time to face the concept Human Rights, and stop just throwing it around, and instead, be a bit careful with it, and start putting it into practice. I see the SDF's work with different sorts of interventions, for example the opening up if the temporary homes, as part of the Human Rights work. I was convinced that they made this connection themselves. But they did not. They do not have the habits of making the connection, which increases the ambiguity concerning the Human Rights perspective and how this could be integrated into the practical, everyday work.

One thing that has been challenging for me during this thesis is the current debate around refugees and asylum seekers. I have felt as if though I am located in a shift between different discourses. Things that I, a year ago, thought would have been impossible to say, has no become part of discourse. If I would have been writing this thesis one year ago, I believe that the thesis would have looked very different. I feel as if I was naïve when I thought that the debate, and the political decisions, made by Sweden as a state, would never become this violent. This also shows that the national identity built upon the notion of Sweden as a country that stands up for Human Rights, was inscribed in me as well. In my view, there has been a relatively fast turn in the public debate, and this happened when it was time to put all the nice talk about Human Rights into practice.

When I set out to write this thesis, I wanted to work closer to the operational level, but since I felt there was a lacking of knowledge on this more overall level, about how the concept is used in guiding documents, I felt that I wanted to start here. It would be

interesting, and rewarding, to make a study of specific operational levels, to interview principals or social workers, since this is where the SDF meet the inhabitants, and examine how the Human Rights discourse is seen from this point of view. Maybe, that would bring in another perspective on the Human Rights work. That would also be a way of spreading good examples on how the work could be conducted. Of course, on other possible research project would be to focus on the inhabitants, and to give them a voice in the discussions about how to approach the Human Rights work. In the end, the whole point of the Human Rights work is to strengthen the inhabitants' possibilities to live a good life.

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