



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

Controversy over Västlänken – a case of facility siting

Author: Samuel Gök

Supervisor: Åsa Boholm

Master Thesis of Global Studies, 30 hec

School of Global Studies

Spring, 2019

Word Count: 19290

Email: samuelgoek90@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank all the interviewees who participated in this study, without you it would not have been possible. Your perspectives and inputs have been essential for this thesis, and I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to take learning from your experiences. Secondly, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Åsa Boholm for her comments and guidance. Her experiences and knowledge in this topic have been of the utmost value, and it has given me the context I would not be able to acquire on my own in this relatively short amount of time.

Abstract

This study explores the negative citizenry response to the infrastructure project known as Västlänken, a railway tunnel in central Gothenburg. The project has turned into a controversial conflict with political and public ramifications. The study's research questions are focused on understanding the assessments of organised opponents to Västlänken to provide a deeper understanding of why it has developed into a conflict. It is thus of qualitative nature with methods including semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis. The study is approached from a lens of Facility Siting, a multidisciplinary-research field with focus on land-use conflicts.

Conceptualisations were based on three previous studies that share similar traits to Västlänken. Authors are Marcia Grimes (2005), Annelie-Sjölander Lindqvist (2004) and Bent Flyvbjerg (1998). Their cases contribute with theoretical input stemming from notions of procedural fairness, sense of place, and the relationship between rationality and power.

The analysis concluded that decision-makers have progressively over time constructed a modern vision of 'what ought to be' Gothenburg's next railway development, which has manifested with Västlänken. This vision has been given precedence over public and political concerns, including national legislation which has been bent in favour of bypassing Västlänken. The study resembles thus most similarities with Bent Flyvbjerg's case of Aalborg, where stakeholders secured an objective despite no support from any proper documentation. It was done through means of power, which ultimately gave them the ability to define what counts as rationality and thus reality.

Key words: infrastructure, facility siting, sense of place, power, rationality, democracy

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	6
<i>AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>DELIMITATIONS.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>RELEVANCE TO GLOBAL STUDIES</i>	<i>9</i>
PREVIOUS RESEARCH	10
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>FACILITY SITING.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Place attachment and identity.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Procedural processes.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Procedural fairness, the case of the Swedish West Coast Line</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Visualizing Place and Belonging, the case of the Hallandsås ridge</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Rationality and power, the Aalborg case.....</i>	<i>18</i>
KEY CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	22
<i>CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Social movement.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Populism.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Summary of the two concepts</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Effective influence and Public justification</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Sense of place.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Power and rationality.....</i>	<i>26</i>
METHOD	28
<i>QUALITATIVE DESIGN AND CREDIBILITY.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>RESEARCH ETHICS APPROACH AND CONSIDERATIONS</i>	<i>32</i>
RESULTS	33
<i>INTRODUCTION TO RESULTS.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>VÄSTLÄNKEN CONTRADICTS ITS OWN PURPOSE.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Longer distance and increased travel times</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Not sustainable, a disaster for the climate</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Inefficient land-use.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>A vision of a tunnel as a solution – socially construed by politicians.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Disproportionate negative outcomes for the citizens of Gothenburg for no benefits.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Politicians unable to justify Västlänken</i>	<i>39</i>

<i>Mixed and minimal opportunities to influence</i>	40
<i>Risks</i>	41
<i>SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND THE FIRST RESEARCH QUESTION</i>	42
ANALYSIS	44
<i>INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS</i>	44
<i>THE NECESSITY OF A TUNNEL – A VISION PRODUCED THROUGH MEANS OF POWER, NOT</i>	
<i>RATIONALITY</i>	44
<i>Power has the freedom to decide what counts as rationality, and thus reality</i>	44
<i>The veils of illusion maintained despite contradicting knowledge</i>	45
<i>Power is free from the obligation to produce evidence</i>	45
<i>MINIMAL FORMAL INFLUENCE OPPORTUNITIES GENERATE INFORMAL OPPORTUNITIES</i>	47
<i>Ineffective formal opportunities</i>	47
<i>Ineffective due to a predetermined vision</i>	48
<i>Producing new opportunities when the former proves ineffective</i>	49
<i>LOW DEGREE OF PUBLIC JUSTIFICATION</i>	50
<i>Advocators are not well-grounded on Västlänken</i>	50
<i>No justification amongst the advocates themselves</i>	51
<i>SENSE OF PLACE – VARIATING RESPONSES</i>	51
<i>Haga denotes a Sense of Place</i>	52
<i>Parallels to Hallandsåsen</i>	52
<i>Västlänken risk altering value which is embedded in the past, present and future</i>	53
DISCUSSION	54
CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH	56
APPENDIX 1	63
APPENDIX 2	64

Introduction

As of recently, modern governments, like Sweden, aim to make a transition from a transportation system that is fossil fuel-based to one based on renewable energy (Naturskyddsföreningen, no date). This requires establishing new projects, while simultaneously adapting to the needs of the global market. Therefore, the number of land-use decisions are bound to increase exponentially. Examples of this are mega infrastructure projects like regional and transnational railways. These bridge regions together, regions that seek to enhance economic growth (Scholte, 2005, pp. 103-104) whilst simultaneously attempting to set trends for sustainable development in a time of rapid urbanization (Abrahamsson, 2011, p. 15). While it can be argued that they bring benefits like increased movement for goods and people, they are not free from challenges and negative ramifications. Some of these include risks in terms of geological problems and social and economic implications. These may consequently lead to organised citizenry response with campaigns that dispute the fairness of responsible authorities' procedural management (Boholm and Löfstedt, 2004; Grimes, 2005; Martinez-Alier *et al.*, 2016).

Furthermore, land-use changes are complicated for a wide range of reasons. In many cases, they do not only result in temporarily but permanent adjustments of people's surroundings. Therefore, it is common that projects that result in disproportionate burdens for a selected community, also develop a need, or an expectation for an equally proportionate representation (Grimes, 2005, p. 40). In addition, unique physical aspects of lands do sometimes invoke emotional and social responses. It can be due to lands' visual impact- or innate qualities that create grounds for activities which one may associate with one's identity (Simmons and Walker, 2004, pp. 91–92; Grimes, 2005, p. 40). As a result of this, decision-makers are faced with challenges in terms of accommodating to the will of their citizens, whilst having to follow their own political objectives.

Thus, illuminating the root cause of land-use conflicts are essential for acquiring insight on how to inaugurate projects smoothly and minimize consequences like delays, budget exceedance, and political distrust. Following that, it is why this thesis will study such a land-use decision, namely to gain an insight into why such projects spark conflicts with public and political ramifications. This will produce knowledge for civil society which may better

prepare decision-makers, - as new projects will continue to emerge with purposes to soothe the various needs of contemporary globalization.

In Gothenburg, Sweden, such a case as described above emerged with a project called *Västlänken*. Initiated in 2018, *Västlänken* is an ongoing railway tunnel set to be completed in 2026. The objective is to increase the commuter and regional traffic in and out of the city (Trafikverket, 2017a). The municipality of Gothenburg justify the *Västlänken* project as a requisite for region enhancement, solving the congestion at the Central Station, reducing traveling times, and vital for a sustainable Gothenburg (Göteborgs Stad, 2018). Two similar infrastructure projects recently finished in Sweden are the *Citybanan* in Stockholm (2017)- and *Citytunneln* in Malmö (2010), and both of these railway tunnels encountered low turbulence in terms of political and public conflict.

However, with *Västlänken* the case has been the opposite. *Västlänken* is partially financed through a congestion tax. It was installed after the politicians held a public referendum in 2014. Despite the results ending in the majority opposing the tax, politicians implemented it anyway with the argument that the referendum was only of consultative nature (Trafikverket, 2014). This has only fuelled the conflict further. An escalation was seen in the recent election, September 9, 2018, through the rise in a new resistance party against *Västlänken*. *Demokraterna* was elected into the Gothenburg's city council with the total of 17,2 % of the votes, making them the second largest party (Yousuf, 2018a).

Apart from *Demokraterna*, citizenry response is recurrent with mobilized campaigns organised by social movements in the grass-roots. Some of these include *Stoppa Västlänken Nu* and *Västsvenska Folkinitiativet* who point at the neglect of public opinion and democracy (Stoppa Västlänken NU, 2016; Västsvenska Folkinitiativet, 2017). *Trädplan Göteborg* emphasises the gruesome encroachment on green areas and places of historical and cultural value (Nätverket Trädplan Göteborg, 2019). *Gårdalänken*, a network consisting of professionals with a background in architecture, science engineering and entrepreneurship has drafted their own alternative to *Västlänken* which they believe to be more optimal for Gothenburg's development (Gårdalänken, no date).

While a majority of the pre-established parties are positive to *Västlänken*, the public support may not be reflected adequately by party votes only. Polls from 2016 indicated that 78 % of

all the 8000 interviewees were not positive to Västlänken, as opposed to the 2011 polls which had 51 % of those interviewed being positive to it (Perlenberg, 2017). Demokraterna, together with several other organised opponents, reiterated the same idea, that there is currently a need to reinforce democracy in the city (Demokraterna, no date b). Social scientists and political opponents have argued that Demokraterna's success is based on populism (Yousuf, 2018b). Thus, a proliferation of resistance from a top-down, and from a bottom-up organisation makes Västlänken an interesting case to study.

Aim and research questions

The aim of this essay is to gain insight on why Västlänken as a major land-use project has emerged as a political and public conflict in Gothenburg by analysing the perspectives of organised opponents. Their assessment can provide new explanatory value in how governmental management over major land-use projects is perceived with respect to their legal obligations. The findings may contribute with a new insight into how infrastructure projects in city-planning can stir up controversy, and what it is that the decision-makers need to consider if they wish to avoid conflict. To help me achieve this aim, I ask the following research questions:

- * How does organised opponents in Gothenburg respond to Västlänken?
- * What themes of previous land-use conflicts are reflected in their assessment of Västlänken?

Delimitations

With regards to time, Västlänken has been a topic of discussion with drafts and ideas stretching all the way back to the 1980s (Trafikverket, 2017b). However, the data collection for this thesis is limited to Västlänken's opposition forces. This will undoubtedly give the thesis a subjective interpretation of Västlänken, one that lacks the perspectives from important actors like the Transport Administration, and political parties in the municipality who favour Västlänken. With that said, emphasising the assessments of affected subjects will say something about decision-makers ability to convey information. Thus, I argue that this approach is valuable from a civil society's perspective. It gives an insight on how citizens assess authorities, and authorities' ability to comply with their responsibilities.

They have been selected based on their size, activity and media coverage. They include the recently elected political party Demokraterna, and grass-roots actors like Stoppa Västlänken Nu, Trädplan Göteborg, Västsvenska Folkinitiativet, and Gårdalänken. Official documents and webpages from the municipality and the Transport Administration will be used to shed light on important facts that may be necessary for understanding certain contexts.

Relevance to Global Studies

Land-use projects will continue to emerge on various scales and will remain on the decision-makers agenda in local and regional geographies. They play a vital role in the global market's development in creating nodes of production, to enhance competitiveness and economic growth. Furthermore, they are essential in integrating supraterritorial regions (Abrahamsson, 2008, 2013; Ström and Wahlqvist, 2010). Understanding the negative reception of these projects from the view of the public is of value to smoothen the inauguration process, which can save decision-makers: time, money and a bad reputation. It also presents an opportunity to understand the social impacts on the citizens and what it is that triggers their response in relation to subjects like rights, identity, and security which is of concern to Global Studies. Thus, the thesis ties together patterns of global development, and public response through an explanatory case study on a local scale that has global relevance (Bryman, 2016, pp. 66-67). Furthermore, academically it will be applicable in a broader context and other cases, and thus have relevance in developing the research field (Gerring, 2004, p. 342).

Previous research

Introduction

This chapter is intended to provide an in-depth overview of the research approach which this thesis will apply. It will introduce *Facility Siting*, a multidisciplinary research field that tackles issues associated with land-use decisions. The chapter will illuminate several dimensions and different conclusions that various scholars in the field have concluded at. The reader should be able to understand how such a case can look and function in order to relate to the case of the study.

At first, an overview of the research field as a whole will be provided to give the reader the necessary background. For example, what it is that constitutes a facility siting, the underlying root issues, central themes, and public responses. Thereafter, an illustration to the research field will be provided in a section consisting of three previous studies; Procedural Fairness (Grimes, 2005); Visualizing Place and Belonging (Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004); and Rationality and Power (Flyvbjerg, 1998). Finally, the three different cases are conceptualized into a framework to be used in the analysis. It is through these different concepts that the study will draw parallels, similarities and differences from.

Facility Siting

Facility Siting is a multidisciplinary research field which in its overarching view deals with projects concerning land-use themes in local and regional geographies that encompasses uneven benefits and consequences for communities. These may entail new risks and can put to question the trust and legitimacy of the involved authorities. It unravels the strengths, and weaknesses of the responsible authorities in charge of the siting (the project). It is the public's perceived view which conclusively puts to question notions of rights such as public interaction, inclusion, fairness, and risks (Boholm and Löfstedt, 2004, p. xiv). A distinguishing trait for a facility siting lies in that it may entail disproportionate effects to those residing near the facility, motivated that it will result in proportionate benefits for society as a whole. Subsequently, primarily near-residing citizens can develop a need for disproportionate representation, or an expectation of it (Grimes, 2005, p. 26). Examples of that can take shape in the form of local referendums (Ibid, p. 79).

Environmental hazards

Rich research has dealt with environmental hazards stemming from technologies that have clear disproportionate negative impacts on residents near the facility. Examples are cases dealing with factories storing chemical substances, like nuclear waste, or waste incinerators, energy production and infrastructure projects (Khan, 2004, p. 57). An effect which is not unusual for cases dealing with environmental hazards is the development of *environmental stigma*. Environmental stigma is the state of a community which has been affected by an environmental hazard, for example, a waste spill, degradation of a property's physical qualities, or pollution. The identities of affected communities are reduced by outsiders to a "*contaminated community*", which may have social consequences. This, in turn, causes affected individuals to feel marginalized. Adding to this state of marginalization is the bad publicity associated with legal procedures such as compensation and restitution of the tragedy. This can rub outsiders the wrong way in a sense that they feel unjustly treated, or that their concerns are not equally addressed (Boholm and Löfstedt, 2004, pp. xix-xx).

Place attachment and identity

Another common feature revolves around the altering of landscapes in terms of impacts from noise, odours, or intrusion from infrastructure. This may not only visually and physically alter the aesthetics of a landscape but can also create a sense of encroachment on social identities which are highly associated with the characteristics that denote a particular landscape (Simmons and Walker, 2004, p. 99; Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004, p. 124). Moreover, people's attachment to a specific place may be context dependent, where time plays an essential factor if the place bears historical significance. Certain places are known for specific traditions that require qualities that are innate within a particular place. For example, traditional farming is dependent on stable water-tables, and an erosion of these due to industrial development may disrupt the very function that people associate with that particular place (Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004, p. 125). As a result, disappearance of water-tables can enact a sense of threat or increased awareness to one's identity as a traditional farmer (Ibid).

Procedural processes

In addition, recurrent in cases of facility sitings are discussions with diverging claims concerning notions of procedural justice and risks. The public's assessment over the decision-

makers' management over the project is what essentially deems it as a conflict between them and the decision-makers (Boholm and Löfstedt, 2004, p. xv; Grimes, 2005, pp. 42-43). A frequent issue in a siting is the disagreement amongst various stakeholders. It can be diverging claims from experts, state officials and citizens concerning the supposed benefits, risks and consequences of the siting in question. Furthermore, contrarious opinions on whether those accountable for managing the siting has acted accordingly with the ruling superior laws and values is a frequent issue (Boholm and Löfstedt, 2004, p. xxi; Flyvbjerg, 1998).

Three previous studies of facility sitings

Presented below are three previous studies which the analysis will draw parallels to. Each represents different dimensions and issues in facility siting controversies that delve deep into some of the themes presented above. Since the field is indeed multidisciplinary, the research is extensive. Therefore, I have selected three facility siting cases which share similar characteristics with Västlänken. Two of them deal with railway sitings just like Västlänken, and one about restructures of a city centre, like that of Gothenburg. Hence, these can provide valuable context. Presented first will be 'Procedural Fairness', the case of the Swedish West Coast Line by Marcia Grimes (2005). Second, 'Visualizing Place and Belonging' in the Hallandsås ridge by Annelie Sjölander-Lindqvist (2004). And finally, 'Rationality and Power' in Aalborg by Bent Flyvbjerg (1998).

Procedural fairness, the case of the Swedish West Coast Line

The controversy of the West Coast Line is grounded in the government's justification of upgrading the railway line as a necessity to increase the connectivity between Gothenburg and Malmö. This was believed to increase the attractiveness of the region and to provide a gateway to the inner continent of Europe through at that time's recently finished Öresundsbridge between Sweden and Denmark. Economic growth was one argument as the region would become more attractive and integrated with transnational markets (Grimes, 2005 p. 7). As localization of the railway route was being decided upon, issues started to arise with varying responses from the affected communities (Ibid, p. 10).

Marcia Grimes (2005) investigated 7 out of 13 communities along the route of a railway line and collected data through two parallel e-mail surveys with affected citizens and interviews

with the Railway Administration (RA) (Grimes, 2005, pp. 92 & 97). Her objective was to get a picture of how citizens, through their own assessments, perceive procedural fairness in each community, and how their assessments may impact political trust (Ibid, p. 105). Procedural fairness in the sense that individuals perceive that they have had the ability to exert influence in the decision-making process and that authorities have rightfully justified their actions in a transparent way that includes an interaction of everyone's opinions (Ibid, pp. 42-43). She argues that this is a prerequisite for fostering consent. She concludes after analysing and quantifying the surveys in a panel-data that authorities have the ability to construct decision-making procedures in a way which citizens can consider fair in terms of procedural fairness (Ibid, p. 169). The result amongst the communities did however vary.

The West Coast line involved upgrading existing tracks and adding new tracks alongside current ones, as well as relocating routes and stations. Organised opponents expressed criticism over risks in terms of physical altercations on sensitive landscapes, increased noise, traffic safety, barrier effects, unjust procedural methods, business obstacles, lack of benefits like no commuter station for locals despite heavy usage of their lands, and lack of a child's perspective (Grimes, 2005, chapter 3). Organised opponents took shape in the form of pressure groups and political parties, in some cases calling for public referendums (Ibid). However, with one of the communities, namely, Båstad, Grimes delimited the analysis to the decision process after the disastrous tragedy that occurred in the Hallandsås ridge, 1997. Massive flows of water leaked into the tunnel excavations and chemical substances that were used in the tunnel contaminated the water. It spread and caused the degradation of biodiversity and livestock (Grimes, 2005, p. 64; Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004, p. 108). With that said, I will present the Hallandsås ridge as a separate previous study from the perspective of Annelie Sjölander-Lindquist's (2004) research further below in this essay.

Procedural fairness means: *“that the legitimacy of a decision outcome depends on how well the process leading up to the decision conforms to criteria of fairness”* (Grimes, 2005, p. 18). Procedural fairness implies that citizens will give consent to an authority to carry out its plan to establish a siting if they conclude that the means by which the authority arrives at its decision is fair (Ibid, s. 31). Procedural fairness can be split into two entities: *effective influence* and *public justification*. Effective influence refers to individuals perceived ability to exert influence in the decision-making process, representing: *“the difference between a person's perceived level of influence, and his or hers desired level of influence”* (Ibid, p. 18).

The influence here is regarded as the ability to “*securing a specific outcome in a decision-making process*” (Ibid, s. 42). Public justification deals with the transparency of the decision-making process which entails the duties of the decision-makers. Duties such as engaging in public discussions, and to provide information on all accounts of the project (Ibid, p. 43). However, Grimes emphasises that it is citizens own assessment that determines if they perceive effective influence and public justification rightfully carried out, regardless of whether the authorities can present evidence or not (Ibid, p. 45).

In addition, *consent* is defined as “*a willing acquiescence to the power of an authority that derives from favourable assessments of the principles, practices or effect of that authority*” (Ibid, p. 50). To put it bluntly, consent is the result of choice, but Grimes underline that it can vary. Consequently, she has employed two indicators for consent: *political trust* and *compliance*. (Ibid). Political trust involves conceding to a degree of vulnerability by one’s own free will. It involves a dimension of uncertainty because one is relying on the outcome of one’s future in the hands of others. Trust increases if those responsible are more present and can give assurances that are reliable. If the opposite is the case, a need for monitoring the behaviour of the authorities increases together with collaborative efforts, like organised social movements (Ibid, p. 51). However, other aspects to consider is subjectivity. Individuals tend to sympathise and have more trust for those they helped vote into office and vice versa (Ibid, p. 52).

Compliance in this context means *inaction*, which is not limited to just accepting decisions and obeying the law but refers to abstaining from the option of contesting a decision (Ibid, p. 56). Conclusively, compliance means adhering to the rules and “*accepting rulings put forth by political authority*” (Ibid, p. 56). This includes accepting the distribution of goods, services, and the unwanted burdens from a siting (Ibid). Social aspects such as habit, ideological orientation, identity, self-interest (opportunism), and personal assessments of political institutions can be reasons for individuals abstaining contestation and need to be considered (Ibid, p. 57). Following that, trust, and ultimately consent to a political institution is something that will be determined by how the institution wields its authority (Ibid, p. 90).

RA has in-built formal methods to operate from, which includes information exchange through e-mails, postage, and brochures, but it does occasionally experiment and go out on the field to inform citizens face-to-face (informally) (Ibid, p. 26). Grimes empirical analysis

concludes that there exists a causality in how authorities communicate information to citizens and how this can enable political trust which is an indicator of procedural fairness. How authorities justify their decisions, are open for public opinion and interaction through face-to-face settings can be a starting point for fostering consent according to previous research (Ibid, pp. 66, & 111).

After measuring different indicators from the survey, it was concluded that face-to-face encounters as a method from the RA only had little effect for the relationship between procedural fairness and political trust (Ibid, p. 120). However, when measuring the relationship between perceived procedural fairness and decision acceptance, the effects of face-to-face interaction were existent to some degree (Ibid). In spite of this, respondents who felt that they had fair opportunities to influence the decision-making process, were mainly in those communities where the project was yet to start, irrespective of face-to-face contact (Ibid, pp. 117 & 120). A clear empirical finding was that active interaction from the authorities' own initiative increases consent amongst citizens and can thus be a requisite for decision acceptance (Ibid, p. 169). However, an even stronger indicator for decision acceptance was measured in individuals who perceived that they had been given the opportunity to influence the decision-making process (Ibid).

The community that received by far the highest value of procedural fairness in Grimes quantification analysis was Båstad. Båstad was also the place with the most forms of active interaction between RA and the public (Ibid, p. 153). This might, however, be due to the extra vigilance and effort that was produced after the disastrous tragedy in the Hallandsås ridge. Information and dialogue were extensive in various forms. Indirectly when the information was updated and could be attained through citizens' own efforts. Directly when RA actively dispatched information and encouraged dialogue with citizens through public consultation meetings, exhibitions, and an open office information centre. Båstad was the community where the RA accommodated to the public's demands the most, and where respondents felt that they had been given a chance to exert influence in the decision-making process more so than in other communities (Ibid, pp. 153 & 154-155). It was however in Lund where citizens expressed the highest satisfaction with their perceived ability to exert influence (Ibid, p. 162). Public justification was higher amongst those who had direct contact with the RA, by for example e-mail dispatch. A noteworthy detail concerning the respondents that were strongly critical of RA is that they received their information from pressure groups (Ibid, p. 162).

As such, active citizen interaction can indeed be a requisite for fostering procedural fairness and consent but does not necessarily have to be so. Grimes study illustrates that sitings involving technological developments, can despite their increased burdens on certain communities be inaugurated relatively smooth. It depends on how the responsible authorities operate and convey information, and to what extent residents are included. Techniques combining both active and passive information and dialogue worked efficiently in Båstad, even though it happened in the aftermath of the disastrous Hallandsås tragedy, which the next research case will present from a different perspective.

Visualizing Place and Belonging, the case of the Hallandsås ridge

Annelie Sjölander-Lindqvist's (2004) case study covers the environmental crisis that erupted in the Hallandsås ridge in 1997. Walls for a tunnel construction were breached by water and the surrounding area was contaminated with toxic chemicals. A change in groundwater caused wells to dry up, cutting away the water supply to communities residing on top of the ridge. Livestock had to be slaughtered and biodiversity suffered in the form of dead fish (Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004, p. 107). With that said, impacts on the landscape as a whole on the Hallandsås became a worrisome issue for the affected communities (Ibid, p. 108). They became more self-aware of their identities as objects and places that were associated with memories for them were suddenly under threat (Ibid, p. 124).

Farming has been a tradition in many households for generations. Groundwater is considered a prerequisite for traditional farming. Thus, it was no surprise that radical changes made the locals worrisome because it risked altering qualities to the landscape which their identities as farmers partially hinged upon (Ibid, p. 108). Sjölander-Lindqvist collected her data through semi-structured interviews and photographs taken by the respondents (Ibid, p. 109).

Photographs symbolized history, generations of farming, bonds between neighbours united in bringing life to the landscape through cattle and agriculture. Furthermore, depicted in the photographs was the beauty of the picturesque landscape, symbolizing the untouched nature and rich wildlife within it. And lastly, the damages caused by the tunnel construction, symbolizing loss and worries for the uncertain future (Ibid).

Farmers experienced their livelihoods to be invaluable in multiple ways. Apart from their income, they were keeping alive a long tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, while simultaneously preserving others' work before them. Secondly, they considered it be a contribution to the future in maintaining the landscape (Ibid, p. 111). But perhaps the most recurrent theme in the photos was the untouched and wild nature of the Hallandsås landscape. The Hallandsås is rich with wetlands, moors and wildlife. Furthermore, a train station built with red-brick in the 19th century is considered of high cultural value and symbolises an important landmark. A new station was additionally planned to be built several kilometres away. According to interviewees, this takes away an essential aspect connected to passing through the 19th century station, namely the memories associated with it (Ibid, p. 114).

Another dimension to this siting was the clash of untouched nature being disrupted by heavy industrial technology. Respondents emphasised water tanks, and drilling machinery as a vivid contrast, which also disrupted functions of the landscape. They referred to the groundwater in the soil which dried up and had to be replaced with something man-made as opposed to nature's own functions (Ibid, p. 115). Respondents also mentioned that this sense of threat from industrial encroachment made them value the landmarks and the nature of the landscape even more (Ibid, p. 116).

A central theme in discussing all categories was the uncertainty for the landscape's continuity. Uncertainties concerning the unique locality that individuals associate with memories, like the open landscape, the cattle, objects of high cultural value like the station. Respondents expressed worries that future generations may not witness the same landscape that previous generations have worked hard for in making it what it is, that their hardships might go unnoticed if the effects of the project become too detrimental (Ibid, p. 122). A sense of collective inheritance to the environment with ones' neighbours was also emphasised. Examples were seasonal activities like mushroom picking, skiing and ice-skating. The landscape provided annual activities which people would participate in collectively, deepening their relationships and sense of neighbourhood even more (Ibid, pp. 118-119). Apart from the idyllic scenery and rich biodiversity, respondents emphasised that having good neighbours amplifies the landscape as unique and irreplaceable (Ibid, p. 122).

Sjölander-Lindqvist draws the conclusion that the landscape contributes value to the triangulation between the "*individual, the social group and the place*" (Sjölander-Lindquist,

2004, p. 122). The landscape contains values which may satisfy all of these dimensions, but they're also bound together. Connected through time in the sense that individuals emphasise their passion by drawing on history and the hardships of past generations. While each person may have suffered individually, there is a sense of threat concerning the collective continuity, that they have to depend on external help (water trucks) to be able to continue their life's work as opposed to each other and the innate qualities of the landscape (Ibid, p. 124).

Rationality and power, the Aalborg case

Bent Flyvbjerg's case study covers 'The Aalborg project', of the Danish city, Aalborg. The project had four goals; aimed at decreasing car traffic in the central city and to invest on: (1) public transportation, (2) urban renewal, (3) environmentally friendly planning, and (4) efficient land-use (1998, p. 46). The project deteriorated and did not result in what the initial vision of the project was all about, which was to implement everything simultaneously. Instead, it was divided into over 40 sub-projects with several stages and adjustments. It resulted in budget exceedance and time delay (Ibid, p. 48). The controversy of this siting revolves around organisational management. With that said, I will mainly illuminate issues concerning the new bus terminal, and the issue of transport, even though the Aalborg project include additional ones.

The Aalborg project is centred around two themes: rationality and power. Flyvbjerg emphasises that rationality is context dependent, and that power "*blurs the dividing line between rationality and rationalization*" (1998, p. 2). Context-dependent in the sense that power has the means to define what rationality is. Rationality is used as a strategy, like a discourse that can be enhanced and alleviated (Ibid, p. 2 & 227). In relation to instances where a power asymmetry exists, the superior power can rationalize its endeavours without actually 'rationalize' because it is backed up by power, -hence doesn't have to provide conclusive rational evidence to support its claims (Ibid). A recurrent phrase from Flyvbjerg: "*the possession of power spoils reason...the greater the power, the less rationality*" (Ibid, p. 2 & 227). This quote is a part of Flyvbjerg's critique to modernity, which he argues has become normative in city-planning, and that modernity is dominated by a belief of '*what should be done*' rather than what actually is rationally possible and necessary within specific frames (Ibid).

In the preliminary stages of the project, the Aalborg bus company, being one of the stakeholders, expressed a strong desire for the new bus terminal to be placed in Nytorv's square due to its location with many intersecting pedestrian streets (Ibid, pp. 14-15). Eight different suggestions were presented, but it became evident that the presentation of those suggestions had many deficits. The report emphasised their disadvantages, but not their advantages. However, with Nytorv, only advantages were underlined. The report was unbalanced and lacked proper documentation of all options, intensively denoting an idea of 'what should be done', rather than what rationally was going to be the most optimal location for the bus terminal. This, according to Flyvbjerg, demonstrated an unequal power asymmetry influenced by diverging interests. Such interests were dominated by the will of the bus company which had several strong municipal actors on its side, including the Technical department and the city mayor (Ibid, p. 20-21).

As such, the Aalborg Task Force implemented the Nytorv option despite the lack of technical evaluations. Here rationality was neglected for what 'what ought to be' and received precedence over what was already known, which was that there existed no technical circumstances for that option (Ibid, p. 21). Nevertheless, later a final report was drafted to evaluate Nytorv. The report left out the city architect's critique on aesthetics, environmental impacts, and functionality (Ibid). Subsequently, powerful offices tried their best to accommodate to the wishes of the bus company and their preferences concerning the size and centrality of the terminal. This too was done without any proper technical and economic documentation (ibid, p. 22). Through interviews, it was discovered that there existed a rationality-power relation. Interviewees believed that arriving at the decision to choose Nytorv was already pre-established, because Nytorv reflected modernity with its central location— hence based on something that was socially constructed of 'what ought to be' (Ibid, p. 27). One interviewee even took the city architect's critique as something that just was a formal procedure and something that should not be regarded in seriousness (Ibid, p. 26).

Shortly prior to the proceedings to embark on the construction of the terminal, tensions grew with other political stakeholders wishing to decrease the size of the terminal, arguing that it would ruin the landscape of Nytorv (Ibid, p. 28). The initial sketch had space for 20 busses to park, which was essential for a transportation system which was referred to as 'the correspondence model'. This model was favoured by the bus company and was argued to enable effective transits as all bus lines would be gathered within close walking distance.

Delays would recover in the terminal so that passengers would not have to wait for a new bus. But decreasing the size would mean making sacrifices on this model (Ibid).

A different model called the ‘frequency model’ sought to reduce the space and number of busses to occupy Nytorv at the same time, but with an instead higher frequency of arrivals and departures (Ibid, p. 30). Another illustration of the power-asymmetry took shape as the bus company concluded that the frequency model was the worst option. However, never was evidence for this claim provided with any proper documentation, nor any demands of it. After a year of discussion, a majority for the bus company’s preference was reached, hence the initial plan remained unaltered because the bus company had dominance and political ties with influencers of the city offices (Ibid). Here, Flyvbjerg argues that the power illustrates that you are free of demands to produce evidence and to be rational (Ibid).

If a thorough investigation had been done on both models initially, it would have been possible to come to terms with which model was functionally going to be the most optimal. In spite of this, a study was conducted two years later on the chosen correspondence model which showed that the buses that suffered delays during heavy traffic hours had a 30 % lower correspondence than estimated. And as it turns out, the frequency model was adopted from time to time during certain days, making the terminal occupying an unnecessary amount of space – contradicting the goal of efficient land-use. It later turns out that 4 out of 8 options that were drafted for the terminal were discarded solely based on the fact that they could not provide 20 parking lanes but would have been more than capable of handling the frequency model (Ibid, p. 32).

Flyvbjerg makes a parallel to Nietzsche’s doctrine of Hamlet: “*Knowledge kills the action; action requires the veils of illusion*” (Ibid, p. 34). Here, ‘illusion’ is produced by the bus company in how they manipulate evaluations to soothe their needs for the terminal in its size and location. But actual produced knowledge, through proper documentation, shatters the illusion (Ibid). Power is something that is used in this context to define a certain reality, though with little attention to what reality actually is. One of Flyvbjerg’s conclusion of this stage in the project is that power has the means to define rationality, and rationality defines reality. A consequence for this is that documented knowledge is perceived as an obstacle and something that can be shoved away with an excessive amount of power, as power produces the freedom to define reality (Ibid, pp. 36-37). Actual rationality which is based upon

evidential documentation is “*few forms of power that those without influence still possess: rationality is part of the power of the weak*” (Ibid, p. 37).

Another drawback in the Aalborg project was that it did not initially include exhibitions which are used for the purpose of public-participation, for the public to have a chance to influence. It was decided as part of the project to incorporate this feature in the last second, but because of this, the project got delayed for one year (Ibid, p. 55). The public received the Aalborg project with dissatisfaction, especially from the retailing businesses located near the new bus lanes and bus stops. They claimed that reduced car accessibility would ruin their businesses and make downtown Aalborg less accessible (Ibid, pp. 57-58). Car restriction became a heated topic. Removing this aspect from the project became a topic of discussion, which contradicted the entire concept of the Aalborg Project (Ibid, p. 65).

The Chamber’s City Committee, The Technical Department and several other departments’ aim to appear united in the eyes of the public was shattered, with blame and accusations thrown at every corner as the project became further delayed (Ibid). A counter-proposal was brought to the table and contained an alleviation on the car restriction and the car zones, with the argumentation that a full restriction would severely harm the retailing industry (Ibid, p. 71). However, the numbers to justify this supposed loss in revenue was derived from a questionnaire survey with a very low response rate: 17 %, which is not considered reliable. These numbers were subsequently hidden from any report. Here is another dimension to the power and rationality relationship, where reality was constructed through the power to define a reality that was lacking evidence (Ibid).

New negotiations included removing certain car-free zones and restrictions on various areas. This created consequences for initial plans of bicycle-only streets that were going to occupy the car-free roads. The bus terminal’s size was also reduced. Slowly but steadily, the project which once was internationally praised disintegrated into something different from its original state (Ibid, pp. 82-83). To conclude, even though the Aalborg project was ongoing for 15 years, a recurrent theme amongst various sub-projects and stages was the power and rationality relation. Flyvbjerg underlines that knowledge is not static, but rather power defines knowledge and dictates which interpretation “*attains authority*” (Ibid, p. 226). To put it bluntly, rationality is something that can be suppressed if it does not adhere to what power deems to be rationality (Ibid).

Key concepts and Theoretical Framework

Conceptual clarifications

Here two concepts will be clarified to provide the reader with the context of their purpose and usage. The terms *social movement* and *populism* have already been phrased and will continue to be used throughout the thesis. Thus, this section aims to give a conclusive definition to the concepts, and to avoid confusion, given that they share similar attributes. I believe clarifying the concepts is important, especially populism since it is loaded with sensitive political meaning that can appear negative. As such, it is not my intent to use it in a way that may affect any party in such a way, hence the reason for my clarification.

Social movement

According to Charles Tilly, a *social movement* constitutes a: “sustained, organised public effort making collective claims on target authorities; let us call it a *campaign*” (Tilly, 2005, p. 308). A campaign is not limited to one form of action (e.g. demonstrations, petitions, mass meetings etc) or centred on one specific event. It is centred on the claim of the collective and its unity in collectively using various disruptive techniques to receive a reaction from the established decision makers. Furthermore, they are distinguished by their belief that their cause is just and worthy, which also is justified in their numbers (Tilly, 2005 pp. 308-309; Kriesi, 2009, p. 345). This reference to social movements was first sighted in North-western Europe in the 18th-century and has continued onward in various historical contexts (Tilly, 2005, p. 316).

Populism

Populism is a contested subject (Mudde and C. R. Kaltwasser, 2013a; Della Porta, Diani and Roberts, 2015; Laclau, 1977). Looking at it through a lens of Ernesto Laclau it can be described as a progressive movement, a political project seeking to rectify grievances in a given population with the will to enforce social and political change through mobilizing of the collective (Aslanidis, 2017, pp. 2–3). This is done by discursively portraying the collective as the victims of an unjust elite. Populism is, according to Laclau, defined by its form, rather than being a specific ideology. It divides the population into two blocks, mobilizes people and actors of different ideological positions who share the same antagonism against those in power (Laclau, 1977, p. 177; Mouffe, 2016). Mudde and Kaltwasser refer to populism though

as a '*thin-centred ideology*' in contrast to 'thick-centred' or 'full ideologies' like liberalism, socialism, fascism etc (2013b, pp. 6-7). However, while it remains contested and used in different contexts for different purposes, Mudde and Kaltwasser claim that they all share two features: the pure and general will of the people versus the corrupt elite (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013b, p. 6; 2013a, p. 2).

Summary of the two concepts

As such, social movements and populism interrelate in how both emphasise the collective as a response to misrepresentation from the elite (Della Porta, Diani and Roberts, 2015, pp. 1-2). Cases from contemporary Latin-America have demonstrated how both can be connected, e.g. in how targeted mass protests by social movements set the stage for populist opportunities, e.g. political parties acquiring power that managed to reshape the political landscape (Ibid). However, they differ in how social movements emerge from autonomous and unitary collectives that are self-constituted (Tilly, 2006, p. 308), whereas populism does not require organisation of collectives in mass constituencies, but rather an appropriation of a popular subjectivity (a grievance) (Della Porta, Diani and Roberts, 2015, p. 2).

As such, like Della Porta, Diani and Roberts argue, (2015, p. 2) both can emerge subsequently after another, social movements from a bottom-up and populist actors from a top-down position. The former can provide the stage for the second to appropriate a popular subjectivity which can set the stage for a populist opportunity. A popular subjectivity in the sense of a 'grievance' (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012, p. 168).

Theoretical Framework

Here, a selection of central themes is presented from the three previous cases. These are the ones that will make up the theoretical framework which is going to be implemented in the analysis. I motivate their relevance for my case, as well as their limitations, as some of them are adjusted for Västlänken's context.

Effective influence and Public justification

Grimes motivate effective influence as an essential dimension to land-use conflicts because it gives an insight into how citizens perceive citizenry. Public justification is important for political trust which requires decision-makers to convince citizens that decisions are just and

that they are following their obligations as public servants. In addition, public justification is vital because it can foster consent. Consent, in this case, meaning in the sense that citizens are more likely to approve of decisions that have disproportionate effects in their lives if they feel that their rights have been upheld and that they have had a chance to influence the outcome (Grimes, 2005 p. 47). Both concepts imply that conveyed information may in one way affect citizens in their assessment (Ibid, p. 48). Public justification is important because if the public perceives the motivations and justifications of the authorities to be fully just and transparent, they are then likely to perceive the decision-makers as their equals who act in mutual interest. It also conveys an understanding that the power of decision-makers is not infinite but limited to certain fields and might, therefore, benefit from public interaction (Ibid, p. 47).

Effective influence is relevant to get an understanding of whether organised opponents have a perception of there ever existing an opportunity to directly influence and have a say in the outcome. I argue that effective influence is important for Västlänken's context. For instance, land-use decisions differ immensely from decisions of an indivisible character, because lands denote physical quality which has subjective value to individuals (Ibid, p. 40). Thus, Västlänken is not an ordinary decision of just abstract quality, but one with permanent physical aspects which would according to previous researchers require an approach of participatory character with affected citizens in order to attain decision-acceptance (Ibid).

Public justification underlines politicians, and the official's ability to convince the public of Västlänken's necessity. Convincing them despite radical ramifications in terms of physicality, but also in terms of the proportionate resources which Västlänken will require. Emphasis is placed on the demeanour of authorities, like their presence and absence. Additionally, how transparent and willing they are to share information, but also absorbing the concerns from the public with concrete answers that are convincing (Ibid, p. 45). Furthermore, public justification, as proved in Grimes research implies an openness from authorities that invites scrutiny from the public (Ibid, p. 174). Authorities who are willing to be monitored and challenged may convey an understanding between them and the public that they are equals, which can squash assumptions of there being a hidden agenda which can be damaging for the entire political system (Ibid). Thus, public justification underlines political trust and works in symbiosis with effective influence, emphasising people's assessment over Västlänken's management in terms of procedural fairness.

One may argue that both concepts are limited for not including perspectives from the authorities in charge of Västlänken, like the Transport Administration and the municipality. However, both concepts emphasise individuals own assessment of authorities. Thus, it is irrelevant if whether authorities can provide evidence of having operated in a way which they would consider justified and with enough openness to allow citizens a fair opportunity to influence the outcome.

Sense of place

As illustrated in Sjölander-Lindqvist's case study, the experience of the communities residing on top of the Hallandsås Ridge can be equivalent with the term *sense of place*, which is based on the social connection to the landscape which is essential to their identities. Moreover, Simmons and Walker (2004, p. 91) argue that a sense of place can be an explanatory factor for why industrial encroachment on people's lives enhances feelings of risk and uncertainty. Subsequently, like Sjölander-Lindqvist (2004, p. 124) concluded, it jeopardizes values that people may take for granted.

Sense of place is a term that has vastly been used in the field of geography to emphasise that places are significant, not just for their innate qualities, but because of the social and personal values embedded in them by individuals and collectives. The meaning of the place is something that is socially constructed by people, and the context which these people are in (Simmons and Walker, 2004, p. 91). The term has been used to refer to "*the positive and sometimes very intense feelings about a place that people can have, feelings that may be strong enough to be, in part, constitutive of personal or group identity*" (Ibid, p. 91). As such, it was established that individuals have personal feelings and values attached to the landscape of Hallandsåsen, but that this connection is also context dependent. It goes beyond just personal experience and includes a sense of unity through the community in their shared passion for farming. Including their shared history and visions for the future. The different landmarks and the annual activities provided by the landscape amplifies individuals sense of place, as it evokes memories and things taken for granted (Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004, pp. 118-119 & 124).

A sense of place is also something constructed in relation to other places, hence major contrasts serve as demarcations and can be the thing that enacts one's sense of place

(Simmons and Walker, 2004, p. 92). In the case of Hallandsåsen it would be the tunnel construction, and objects associated with it like heavy machinery and water trucks. These aspects become vivid contrasts, reminding people that their landscape indeed is different. Following that, one's sense of place is something which is reinforced whilst exposed to objects one believes do not belong in that particular place (Ibid). Although a sense of place is widely used to describe a collective's constructed experiences, one cannot presume that these are homogenous (Ibid). It proved to be the case with Simmons and Walker's own case study in Sellafield, UK, where a nuclear reprocessing plant did indeed bring out mixed reactions, including positive ones (Ibid).

I argue that sense of place is relevant to my case, as Västlänken has many dimensions to it. It passes through various sections of the city, with fluctuating landscapes. It includes a new underground transit station in the downtown industrial area of the current terminus station, the innovative event centre of Korsvägen, and the historical area of Haga. Haga appears repeatedly in municipal documents, underlined that the area must be handled with extra caution to not damage landmarks and greenery which is of cultural and historical value to the city. It was also one of the government's criteria's in accepting the railway plan, that extraordinary measures be set in place to protect objects of national interest. Haga falls under this category of national interest due to its historical and cultural value (Regeringen, 2014, p. 2: Samrådsredogörelse station Haga, 2016, pp. 4-5). Therefore, a sense of place is relevant as an analytical lens for this case, as issues might only be with parts of the siting.

Power and rationality

A central theme from Flyvbjerg's study on the Aalborg project concerns power. *Power* is something that can be used abusively by superior actors to attain their goals. Through power, one has the ability to dictate what counts as rationality, and thus reality (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 2 & 227). *Rationality* here defines claims that are based on evaluations and documentation that indicate a certain probability (Ibid, p. 37). However, as Flyvbjerg has illustrated, what's considered rational is a privilege for power to decide.

Flyvbjerg's rationality and power relation are one dimension I argue is relevant for Västlänken. It adds a new perspective that complements public justification in how the focus is directed to what counts as knowledge, and how that knowledge is produced. It can provide

new context, just like in the Aalborg case in the sense that it illuminates preliminary circumstances. For example, if the preliminary investigations on Västlänken were based on proper documentation and careful evaluations in contrast to other alternatives. In addition, it would highlight the perceived view of Västlänken's organisational management, if it is believed that they came to their conclusions based on a belief of what 'ought to be' and allowed this to attain authority through means of power or not. Means of power by deciding what counts as rationality and not. I want to underline 'perceived view' in the sense that unlike Flyvbjerg, I am not looking into double checking if the information provided by respondents can be backed up with documentation or not, or what Flyvbjerg would call rationality (1998, p. 37). The objective is to analyse the respondents' own assessments of reality, and what it is that has led them to take the current position they are in.

Method

This chapter describes the method used to answer the study's research questions. The chapter begins with introducing the research design, my motivation for choosing it and its credibility in relation to other research. This is followed up with a presentation on the chosen method, the selection processes and how it was implemented. Subsequently, the chapter illuminates how the data was stored, analysed, and is concluded with a discussion on what ethical considerations had to be taken.

Qualitative design and credibility

The design is based on an explorative case study that seeks to provide increased insight into the underlying phenomenon (Bryman, 2012, pp. 66–67). The underlying phenomenon is the reasons behind the resistance towards Västlänken. By targeting relevant actors, knowledge is gained about what has happened and why. It gives an illustrative view of how particular siting projects attracts resistance and what it is that triggers them. As such, Västlänken can highlight assessments of procedural processes in city-planning and illuminate the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the liable authorities. Thus, the purpose of the study is to make it applicable in a broader context. In addition, a common goal with case studies is to be able to generalize for theory development. Comparing the empirical findings with previous studies can thus develop the theories in the sense that they are put in a broader perspective which contributes to the literature of facility sitings (Gerring, 2004, p. 342).

Semi-structured interviews

To answer the research questions, the data collection is based on semi-structured interviews (Esaiasson et al., 2017, pp. 235-237) which align with the purpose of wanting to understand why the organised opponents have landed on the stance that they currently have against Västlänken. A qualitative method emphasises the understanding of social aspects such as experiences and seeing the world through the eyes of the involved participants (Bryman, 2012, p. 408). Thus, the method may contribute to gaining insights through the concepts in the theoretical framework which seeks to explain human social behaviour. The interviews have been semi-structured in the sense that predetermined questions in the form of an interview guide were drafted with an openness to deviate from the given template. In this sense, the interview process was flexible (Bryman, 2012, pp. 470-472).

Selection and implementation

A total of seven interviews were carried out with a total number of eight respondents from five different resistor groups to Västlänken. They were chosen on the basis of media coverage and the number of supporters. The largest one coming from a top-down position:

Demokraterna. Due to the sheer size of the party and their relatively new establishment, three interviews were conducted with them. The interview with Gårdalänken was with two respondents simultaneously, and one each for the remaining bottom-up social movements. A short overview of the chosen organised opponents is presented in *table 1* below.

Presentation of the organised opponents

Demokraterna	Established in May 2017 and elected into Gothenburg's city council on September 8 th , 2018. They are the second biggest party in Gothenburg. Apart from stopping Västlänken, their objective is to radically change the way Gothenburg is governed through a restructure of the city's committees' and municipal corporations (Demokraterna, no date a).
Stoppa Västlänken Nu	A non-profit and unbounded political network. Through investigating and monitoring, they aim to influence public opinion and stop the plans to build Västlänken. The network has almost 8000 members on their Facebook page and discusses, apart from Västlänken, other issues related to city-planning in Gothenburg (Stoppa Västlänken Nu, no date).
Trädplan Göteborg	A non-profit and unbounded political network that works to preserve old trees in the city, as well as greenbelts and areas of historical value that they believe is under threat from irresponsible city-planning. The network organises demonstrations and works through judicial methods to stop Västlänken (Nätverket Trädplan Göteborg, 2019).

Gårdalänken.	A non-profit and unbounded political network of professionals with experience in city-planning and matters that concerns railway development and public transportation. They have drafted their own alternative to Västlänken that goes under the name “Gårdalänken” which they argue would be a more sustainable solution. Their objective is contributing to the development of the city’s public transportation (Gårdalänken, no date)
Västsvenska Folkinitiativet	A non-profit and unbounded political network that organises target campaigns and demonstrations. Their purpose is to hold politicians and institutions accountable. They want the congestion tax revoked, and for decision-makers to take into considerations people’s point of views on Västlänken (Västsvenska Folkinitiativet, no date).

Table 1 – Presentation of the organised opponents

Determination of time and place for the interviews were decided both through e-mail and telephone. In one occasion, one respondent put me in contact with another, resembling a ‘snowball’ method to a degree that I was able to tap into the first respondent’s network and establish further contact (Bryman, 2012, p. 202). All respondents are anonymous. *Table 2* summarizes whom they represent, the date, and duration of each interview session. An interview guide was sent to each respondent upon deciding the date and place for the interview. The interview guide was created with a partially structured layout in order to adhere to the purpose of the thesis and to cover the themes of the theoretical framework. Since respondents represented different opponents to Västlänken, the interview guide had minor adjustments for each opponent. The interview guide was followed to a large extent. Occasionally respondents would cover multiple questions simultaneously, and in cases where clarity was needed, follow up questions were asked.

Respondents

Respondent	Date	Duration
------------	------	----------

Respondent 1 - Demokraterna	2019-03-26	62 minutes
Respondent 2 - Demokraterna	2019-03-27	31 minutes
Respondent 3 - Demokraterna	2019-03-27	50 minutes
Respondent 4 - Stoppa Västlänken Nu	2019-04-01	125 minutes
Respondent 5 - Trädplan Göteborg	2019-04-08	89 minutes
Respondent 6 and 7 - Gårdalänken	2019-04-10	71 minutes
Respondent 8 - Västsvenska Folkinitiativet	2019-04-16	75 minutes

Table 2 - Respondent information

Analysis of the material

All material was stored with help from a sound-recorder which each respondent consented to be used. Subsequently, all interviews were transcribed in separate documents to ease the analysis. The analysis was of a character equivalent to a ‘thematic analysis’ in the sense that I was intent on identifying recurrent patterns of themes. Themes that stood out in each transcript, but also themes that could be linked together by similar themes on other transcripts (Bryman, 2012, pp. 13 & 580). These themes were also given labels, for example, labels that symbolized certain knowledge claims as an environmental hazard. In addition, analogies and metaphors that were used to describe respondents’ thoughts were given labels. These were used accordingly to compare similar labels in other transcripts to find connections for the theoretical framework to be implemented in. Thus, labelling themes in the transcripts helped

answer the first research question, and applying the theoretical framework to those labels helped answer the second research question.

Research ethics approach and considerations

In accordance with the CODEX of the Swedish Research Council, the study complied with principles of research ethics in order to ensure that the integrity and dignity of the chosen participants were handled with the utmost confidentiality. The rule of “*informed consent*” (Swedish Research Council, 2018a) was fulfilled in two stages. Prior to the interviews, an information sheet was sent to the respondents. The information sheet elucidated the purpose of the study, their role and voluntary participation, and the promise of anonymity. At the second stage, prior to starting the interview, consent for recording the interview was asked. Thus, the consent requirement was fulfilled by the respondents giving their approval for an interview, for a sound-recorder, and the option to withdraw their participation at any moment.

In addition, the rule for “*handling personal information*” (Swedish Research Council, 2018b) was fulfilled in several regards. In order to ensure anonymity, any information that can be used to trace back to the person is concealed. The collected data has been treated confidentially and without transparency for unauthorized persons. The interview material has only been used for research purposes. Furthermore, respondents have been offered the option to comment on the author’s interpretation of the collected data to ensure that no information has been taken out of context. Thus, the study has met with both the rules for informed consent and the handling of personal information.

Results

Introduction to results

In this chapter, the results will be presented and the first research question will be answered: “*How do organised opponents in Gothenburg respond to Västlänken?* “. The results reflect the arguments from organised opponents to Västlänken and have been structured into central themes set under subheadings. Subsequently, they will be advanced and analysed with help from the theoretical framework which will answer the second research question in the analysis. Thus, the answer to the first research question will serve as a groundwork for answering the second, which will draw connections to themes in previous studies and put the case in a broader perspective. The derived knowledge will be compared with previous studies of facility sitings and provide further knowledge of how conflicts surrounding land-use issues can be problematized. As such, this will lead to fulfilling the purpose of the study.

Västlänken contradicts its own purpose

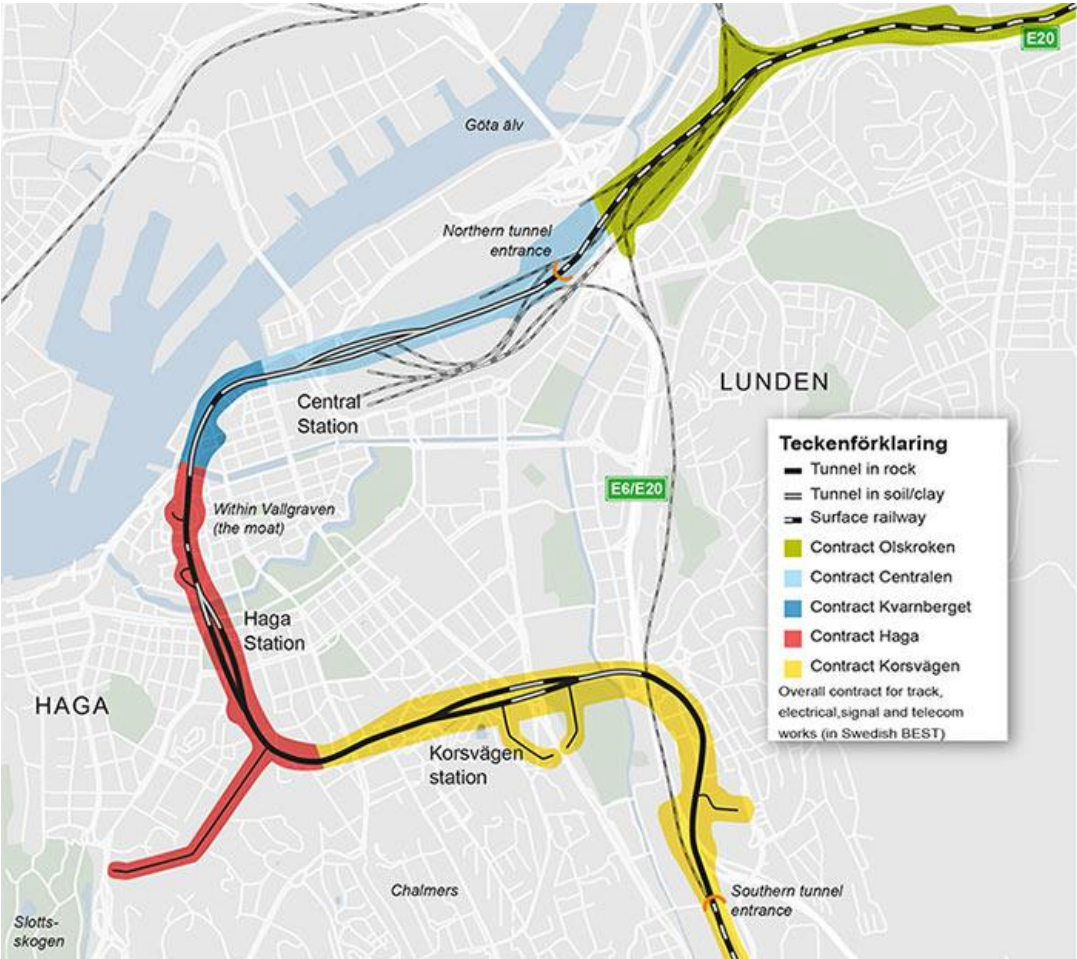
This part is intended to highlight the interviewees’ main responses to Västlänken, and thus answer the first research question. As the above subheading indicates, the most overlapping responses can be summarized in a recurrent theme that has been existent throughout all of the interviews. All interviewees have emphasised that Västlänken contradicts the very purpose that decision-makers claim it’s intended for. They have underlined various issues, and the most repetitive and prominent ones have been selected and are presented under separate subheadings below.

Longer distance and increased travel times

All interviewees have touched upon the topic concerning travelling times. The municipality and the Transport Administration argue that Västlänken is to reduce the travelling time for commuters (Göteborgs Stad, 2018; Trafikverket, 2018). Respondents emphasise that this an oversimplified statement, and misleading, on several accounts. Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 bring up a concrete example, the commuters from the southern-west municipality of Kungsbacka. They claim that these commuters, who stand for a proportionate size of the daily commuters to Gothenburg will receive longer travelling times due to the tunnel’s extension. The extension is designed for commuters who travel inwards to Gothenburg from a southern direction to first stop is in the new transit station Korsvägen. This extension is followed by

taking “a detour” (Respondent 1-8), as all have emphasised, through the transit station of Haga before arriving at the new transit station in the Central Station area. *Appendix 1* below gives a clear description and overview of the railway network.

Study Area – Context for the case



Appendix 1

Source: <https://www.tunneltalk.com/Sweden-June2018-Final-Gothenburg-West-Link-rail-contract-awarded.php>

Respondents pinpoint that a majority of the Kungälv commuters’ end destination is within closer proximity to the current terminus station. Thus, these commuters will get longer travelling times with Västlänken compared to the old railway extension as indicated in Appendix 1. In addition, all travellers, including those that come with trains from northern directions and transit in the new station in the central area, which will be 400 meters away from the current terminus station, will receive additional time due to longer walking distance (Respondent 2, 3, 4 and 8).

One of the several repetitive issues and responses to Västlänken from all interviewees is their unity in failing to see how the new transit station in Haga would be of any value. Above ground, close to where the new transit station will be located, a current tram station exists. All respondents emphasise that the tram-station is not heavily trafficked and does not have the requisites for becoming a new centre point in the city, which the municipality claims that it will become (Göteborg Stad, no date). In addition, they highlight that Haga is sparse with residents, businesses and other visiting destinations. The station brings thus minimal, or no benefits at all. This, on the expense of digging up proportionate areas of inner the city to construct the extension, will cause congestion (Respondent 1-8). Four respondents believe that the transit station in Haga is also the main aspect that has the public questioning the whole project; that no one with a clear mind could see how the costs justify minimal, or no benefits (Respondent 2, 3, 4 and 5). Moreover, the extension increases the travelling times for a proportionate number of the commuters (Ibid). Respondent 3 and 8 brought up the railway investigation that was made in 2006, which covered a limited number of selected alternatives of different extension routes. They emphasise that despite the investigation concluding that the current chosen extension would be the alternative with the worst net value, it was still chosen over other alternatives.

Not sustainable, a disaster for the climate

Another issue that was intensively underlined by all respondents is the negative effects on health and climate. Again, the municipality and the Transportation Administration argue that the tunnel is a necessity for a sustainable Gothenburg. One of their arguments being that Västlänken will reduce the number of motorists in favour of an increased number of railway commuters, which will have positive effects (Banverket, 2006; Göteborg Stad, 2018). The respondents argue that this is a false claim, and on the contrary, that Västlänken is a disaster for the climate and will radically worsen the health conditions in the city. Two interviewees mentioned that people will die prematurely as a result (Respondent 5 and 8). All respondents claim that because more than one million trucks will be driving in and out of the city to transport earth masses and deliver equipment during the construction time, this will thus result in the emission levels rising (Respondent 1-8). One respondent furthermore raised the issue that the trucks will also transport the masses at an average distance of over 50 kilometres, and that the emissions from these trips are not included in the calculations (Respondent 8). Respondent 4 pinpoints that one of the criteria in getting authority clearance from the

government to the railway plan is to ensure that the project will not worsen the air qualities during the construction phase, which is something that Västlänken cannot attain. Respondent 3 refers to the municipality's environment agency, which claims that the potential profits in reduced emissions after Västlänken are so low that they are not even measurable. In addition, the same respondent highlights the national Environmental Protection Agency's (Naturvårdsverket) criticism that the documents used for basis of decisions and the ones placed on exhibition are not identical and that this pattern of double signals has occurred throughout the entire process.

Respondent 3 and 5 emphasise the removal of over 1000 trees, but respondent 5 goes further and argues that trees are essential for binding particles and improving the air quality. Thus, removing over 1000 trees will additionally worsen the air quality (Ibid). Furthermore, all respondents claim that the calculations provided by the Transport Administration are misguided and based on outdated documentation. They argue that the Transport Administration is not taking into consideration in their calculations that the transportation sector is undergoing a huge transition. A transition from a fossil fuel-based system to one based on renewable energy, such as electronically driven vehicles. Subsequently, this means that the time frame for when Västlänken will become climate neutral is in the far future. Moreover, some respondents believe it cannot be climate neutral even in 100 years from now (Respondent 3, 5, 6 and 7, and 8). Respondent 5 believes that the removal of green areas will also have a huge psychological impact on people, as the respondent claim that people are happier when surrounded by greenery, which Haga has an abundance of.

Several respondents claim that Västlänken would never have passed the judicial instances in the court if the proper procedures had been followed. They argue that documents were misleading and that the railway plan had a flawed Environmental Impact Assessment document (Respondent 3, 5 and 8). But the court ignored this, essentially neglecting to actually investigate all presented documents and claims provided by several social movements because the government had already given its approval (Respondent 3, 4, 5 and 8). Respondent 6 and 7 also believe that once a project has been given approval by the government, that there is not much that can stop it. This was, according to several respondents, a show of power; that power can be used to manipulate the law and bypass regulations set out to protect the nation's own citizens, essentially eroding democratic virtues (Respondent 3, 4 and 5).

Inefficient land-use

Another argument made by the respondents is that decision-makers are not using the city's land and resources in an efficient way, that Västlänken is a poor example of efficient land-use. Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 underline that there already exists a station with close proximity from Korsvägen, namely 'Liseberg's station'. Instead of constructing a new station, one could instead improve the current one for a much cheaper price. Furthermore, the two respondents who represent Gårdalänken argue that their railway plan would also be a better example of an efficient use of land. They highlight that their alternative solution would acquire less claim on the land and has lower risks in terms of withstanding increasing sea levels (Respondent 6 and 7). Their example would entail relocating the current terminus station to the Gårda mountain, also enabling ongoing trains just like Västlänken, although with more time profits in their perspective (Ibid). Additionally, they claim that Västlänken will not be able to operate future high-speed trains, but Gårdalänken would. Even though the two respondents emphasise that their proposal is not equally studied as Västlänken, they underline that it is one alternative that should be thoroughly investigated by authorities (Ibid).

Some respondents argue that the new transit station in the Central Station area will take more land in the claim than authorities allude to even though it is located underground, since the roof cannot support constructions higher than a three-storey building. Moreover, they reference that the municipality chose Västlänken over other alternatives for the reason that it would make more land available, which they mean is contradicting. They exemplify with the Reinforcement Alternative (Förstärkningsalternativet) – one of the deselected alternatives, which the municipality discarded because it lacked a tunnel. The Reinforcement Alternative sought to upgrade the terminus station with additional tracks and upgrading the efficiency in the pre-existing Gårda tunnel (Respondent 3, 4, 6 and 7, and 8). However, since the new transit tunnel will be fairly low underground and will not be able to withstand heavy constructions above over a long extension, it is insufficient land-use (Respondent 3, 4 and 8).

A vision of a tunnel as a solution – socially construed by politicians

A subject that is categorised as the primary root issue according to respondents, and thus the cause to other problematic aspects with Västlänken, is the procedural processes in choosing the existing alternative. Respondents are unanimous that Västlänken was constructed from an

idea by politicians that the city must have a tunnel because Stockholm and Malmö received financing to build their respective tunnels (Citybanan and Citytunneln). Respondent 6 and 7 notes that 50 years ago politicians in Gothenburg aspired to build a metro network, but soon realized that the endeavour would cost too much, hence Västlänken became a replacement alternative. An alternative to a metro network, which does not serve the function of one. One respondent believes Västlänken is the result of envy of Stockholm and Malmö having received endorsement for their respective tunnels, and hence the power holders in Gothenburg were going to fight mercilessly for something similar without regards to the fact that Gothenburg has different preconditions for building tunnels (Respondent 8).

Several respondents brought up a Göran Johansson, a diseased former committee chairman of Gothenburg. They claimed that he managed to negotiate Västlänken with the government of his time, in exchange that the city would share the expenses of financing the project via a congestion tax (Respondent 1, 4, 6 and 7, and 8). The same congestion tax which was up for a public referendum and was implemented despite the majority voting against it. He was able to attain this because he managed to rally other decision-makers beside him, strengthening his power over organised opponents. Thus, the tunnel was turned into a national interest by attaining finance and approval from the government (Ibid).

Involving the government, however, is bending the law according to the same respondents. A railway problem concerning local and regional commuter service is not of national interest by law, hence does not require a government's approval but should go through consultative bodies like the Land & Environmental Court. But by bringing the government in, the city's authorities have loosened their responsibility because they knew they could never have received approval and complete funding alone (Ibid). Another example of this was made by respondent 5 who claims that The County Board for Västra Götaland manipulated the law. The County Board acknowledged that Gothenburg's inner-city centre is regarded as a national interest of cultural environment. However, they deemed that Västlänken, which was given national interest under the category for communication through the government approval of the railway plan, that it should get precedence over the national interest of cultural environment. The respondent emphasised that this was another instant where the law was bypassed and bent in the favour for Västlänken. Respondent 4 and 8 bring another example; that Annelie Hultén – the replacement of Göran Johansson, lied in a management group meeting, telling the group and the participating institutions that the executive board of the

municipality had already decided upon a tunnel alternative (the current one), and would never accept the Reinforcement Alternative as a solution. Both respondents emphasised that a protocol over a meeting with such a statement does not exist. Thus, Hultén lied and was using the power of the politicians to overpower any voices that considered the Reinforcement Alternative (Respondent 4 and 8).

Nearly all respondents share the conviction that Västlänken does not solve the commuter issue in Gothenburg, because Västlänken is not addressing the real issue. They argue that politicians and the Transport Administration have constructed a false discourse that the terminus station has reached its full capacity and can no longer accommodate more trains and have done this as an excuse to enforce Västlänken. However, respondents argue that this is a misguided reality and not where the real issue lies. The issue lies in the connecting railway network around Gothenburg, that it is there which the capacity has been reached and not the terminus station. Thus, respondents emphasise that Västlänken cannot increase the train capacity until the surrounding railway network has been upgraded (Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5). This claim is simultaneously addressing the issue that the whole idea of Västlänken is based on a vision which is disconnected from reality, that a tunnel is not necessarily needed, but is something that has been imposed.

Disproportionate negative outcomes for the citizens of Gothenburg for no benefits

All respondents agree that Västlänken is a socioeconomic unprofitable project. They claim that this can be verified in the Transport Administrations own documents. Respondent 3 mentions the Swedish National Audit Office that made the same assessment. To put it bluntly, a recurrent argument amongst all respondents is that the tiny profit that can be measured is too small to justify the costs and negative consequences (Respondent 1-8). In addition, several highlight how the citizens of Gothenburg are the ones most exposed to environmental threats and paying the costs. The costs through shared finance with the congestion tax, while feeling the benefits the least since it is mainly commuters from the neighbouring municipalities who will have usage of Västlänken (Respondent 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7).

Politicians unable to justify Västlänken

Respondents are unanimous that politicians have not been able to justify Västlänken in a convincing way. Arguments, made by the politicians, as to why Västlänken would be a good

solution are misguided or non-existent. Several respondents bring up examples of politicians who have admitted to having done a terrible job of justifying Västlänken, like Ann-Sofie Hermansson, another former committee chairman (Respondent 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7). Respondent 3 and 4 argue that this is because there is nothing good justify with Västlänken. Furthermore, respondent 3 mentions one of the extension alternatives that was initially discarded, with only an underground transit station in Korsvägen and at the Central Station area. Without endorsing it, the respondent argues that this alternative could at least have been rationally motivated with true facts and convincing benefits. Some of these included reduced travelling times and less finances and would have taken less time to construct without digging up vast areas of the city. Furthermore, the respondent emphasises that politicians would still have received a tunnel option which they have been arguing for so promptly (Respondent 3). Respondent 4 referred to the inauguration ceremony, pinpointing that it had a very low attendance of high-profile politicians, with barely any representatives from the government. This is another sign that not even politicians are confident to put their name in association with Västlänken because it is unjustifiable (Respondent 4).

Mixed and minimal opportunities to influence

In terms of influence opportunities, respondents have mixed inputs on the subject. While they agree that all procedures that normally are integrated with a project like this have existed on paper, it has not in reality. One highlight that the public has reacted too late due to laziness (Respondent 1), two others claim it is because the media started investigating Västlänken too late (Respondent 2 and 3). Based on the experiences of respondent 5, any attempt to influence the matter has been met with steady resistance, and that the municipality has even invested resources to try to silence people who oppose Västlänken. A concrete example was given in how this respondent was not permitted to speak or ask questions during a consultation meeting. The same respondent witnessed that during such a consultation meeting, people were forced to register their names and show ID, which this person underlined is illegal because they are meant to be open for everyone (Respondent 5). The same respondent highlights that there exist too many barriers between the decision-makers and citizens. An example is that decision-makers tend to send officials to talk with the public instead of appearing themselves, separating themselves from citizens further. With that said, both respondent 5 and 8 underline that organising mass demonstrations and handing out information sheets have been effective in spreading awareness.

Respondent 6 and 7 emphasise that in infrastructure projects the size of Västlänken, the few that actually has the means to make a real difference are other institutional actors. Respondent 3 and 4 imply that the possibility to choose or influence a different extension alternative than the current one was never an option because politicians had already decided it before it even became a question. Both respondents refer to a document from 1999, which they highlight already had a land-use reservation marked out for a tunnel construction with the current extension. This was before a concept study was made in 2001, and a feasibility study in 2002, and the final decision to choose the current extension in 2007. With that said, all respondents, however, highlight that influence have been exerted in the sense that the public has kept the question alive and has subsequently reshaped the political landscape by electing in Demokraterna.

Risks

Apart from environmental hazards, all respondents underlined that the budget and the time frame of Västlänken will not sustain throughout the project. Some made references to similar infrastructure projects, pinpointing that they were struck with immense budget exceedance, delays and environmental catastrophes (Respondent 1, 2, 3 and 4). Some of these references concerned similar tunnel constructions outside of Gothenburg, and Sweden (Respondent 1, 5 and 8). Respondent 4 exemplified with the fortification project in the Göta tunnel which was made in the autumn of 2018. The purpose was to fortify the roof in preparation for Västlänken, which never was completed and is delayed until further due (Respondent 4). Furthermore, all the interviewees emphasised Gothenburg's sensitive geological conditions, like the fact that the city is built upon immense masses of clay which are sensitive to heavy vibrations.

All respondents draw attention to the inevitable damages in the Haga neighbourhood due to its sensitive geological conditions. Subsequently, they underline that the new transit station will put the neighbourhoods historical, cultural and green environment under heavy encroachment. However, respondents emphasise different aspects of this subject. While respondent 1, 2, 3 and 4 firmly highlight that the extension through Haga is a detour, and a detour with immense risks apart from heavy costs, respondent 5 and 8 emphasise the cultural and greenery aspect. The value of the old trees that were planted by order of the King in the

early 1800s, the old traditional stone and wooden houses which have been conserved, would now be under risk due to the possible change in ground-water tables. They confirm that a proportionate number of buildings within proximity to the construction site are resting on wooden poles. Thus, a change in ground-water would cause these to rot and create massive sinking damages on the buildings (Respondent 5 and 8). Once again, reference was made to the Göta tunnel, pinpointing that despite its instalment in 2006 and location only some hundred yards away, it is still until this day causing sinking damages to surround buildings.

Moreover, several respondents made references to the choice of entrepreneurs in charge of constructing parts of the tunnel. They expressed concerns that some of these entrepreneurs were chosen due to their cheaper price in relation to other entrepreneurs, and that some of these had been tackled with issues while constructing other projects. Issues like not being able to deliver on time or maintain the budget, and of being under threat of bankruptcy further worsen the trust in the Transport Administration and decision-makers (Respondent 1, 4, 6 and 7).

Finally, one risk factor that all respondents mention is that a continuation of politicians not taking citizen's concerns with Västlänken seriously will have political consequences. Concrete examples were given in how Demokraterna's massive support indicates a mistrust for the pre-established parties and have reshaped the political landscape (Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8). Moreover, they believe this risk leading to political distrust and disdain, which will be bad for democracy (Respondent 1, 4 and 5). Respondent 2 exemplifies with the next election; that Västlänken might still be a burning question and can in symbolic terms be seen as a referendum of Västlänken.

Summary of results and the first research question

To summarize the answer to the first research question, this essay has shown that the organised opponents against Västlänken responds to it with numerous claims. They agree on several ideas, although some focus more on certain themes than others. In broad terms, they agree that Västlänken contradicts the very purpose as to why it is needed as claimed by the decision-makers. All have mentioned increased travelling times and distances, and some have touched upon inefficient land-use. All share an equal concern over environmental hazards, although Trädplan emphasises the industrial encroachment on places of historical, cultural

and green areas more than other participants. However, they all agree on the argument that the Transport Administration has given a misguided conception over the environmental hazards. Consequently, they all emphasise unlawful procedural instances in several consultative bodies, including the courts and by the government. Moreover, in-built procedural opportunities to influence have been flawed, and to a certain extent, preventative of any influence. And while risks are numerous, these could have been avoided if other railway alternatives had been equally studied without a misconception of their true necessities and a socially constructed vision of a tunnel as the only solution.

Analysis

Introduction to analysis

This section follows up on the presented results and answers the second research question: “*What themes of previous land-use conflicts are reflected in their assessment of Västlänken?*” The case is analysed and put in a broader perspective by applying the theoretical framework. Comparing the findings to previous studies gives the case an in-depth dimension with a broader understanding of social and human behaviour. By examining the case in relation to themes in previous studies one can acquire insight to the themes which can help develop the existing literature.

The necessity of a tunnel – a vision produced through means of power, not rationality

It appears by the collective inputs from all interviewees that the source of the entire conflict is centred around the vision of a tunnel, a vision set out decades ago by previous politicians who later passed on the torch. Influenced by what was going on in other cities, a modern vision of ‘*what ought to be*’ has resulted in a preconceived notion that Gothenburg needs a tunnel, and only a tunnel. Flyvbjerg’s (1998, p. 2 & 227) critique to modern city-planning in lacking an intersectional approach, and something that is characterized by power being able to blur the dividing line between rationality and rationalization (Ibid, p. 2), is something I argue to be relevant for Västlänken. It is relevant based on the assessments from the participating interviewees. With that said, Aalborg and Gothenburg do share striking similarities, but also important differences, which the proceeding paragraphs in this section will elaborate on.

Power has the freedom to decide what counts as rationality, and thus reality

Västlänken shares several similarities with the selection process of Aalborg’s bus terminal, but also a major contrast. Amongst Gothenburg’s decision-makers there appears to have existed a notion of ‘*what ought to be*’, both in terms of what type of alternative the decision-makers aspired and which particular tunnel extension. Flyvbjerg underlined how the bus terminal was characterized by a non-nuanced selection process, one that seeks to elevate the Nytorv option while simultaneously belittle the other alternatives with disadvantages, and thus providing a misguided reality (Ibid, p. 20-21). Västlänken differs. It differs in several

aspects in the fact the competing alternatives to Västlänken were emphasised by several institutions to have a higher net value, and Västlänken the lowest (Respondent 3 and 8). With Västlänken, it is the politicians, whom despite being presented with fair evaluations and documentation of which option that rationally was going to have the highest socioeconomic impact, still decided to neglect this knowledge through means of power. Thus, Nytorv and Västlänken share a similarity that both have been chosen on the basis that power, through actors that possess significant amounts of power, has had the freedom to decide what counts as rationality and thus reality (Flyvbjerg, 1998, pp. 36-37).

The veils of illusion maintained despite contradicting knowledge

Västlänken has yet to finish its completion and go through assessments on whether technical aspects are fulfilled or simply have been exaggerated; like the correspondence model proved to be in Aalborg (Ibid, p. 32). Unlike Aalborg, documentations already exist that do not favour Västlänken over other alternatives. To refer back to Nietzsche's doctrine of Hamlet: "*Knowledge kills the action; action requires the veils of illusion*" (Ibid, p. 34), that in order to stop the action, an investigation with proper documentation and evaluation can shatter a construed illusion as it did with the frequency model. This reference is made by the fact that the frequency model was adapted after the correspondence model proved to have several defaults (Ibid). On the contrary to Västlänken, respondents pinpoint that an illusion has been construed over time that Gothenburg's terminus station is the problem and thus requires a panacea in the form of a tunnel (Respondent 3 and 4). Despite this illusion being unveiled by knowledge from institutional bodies and the concluding railway plan (Respondent 3), knowledge has not managed kill the action. The action of carrying out Västlänken with the claim (the veils of illusion) that the terminus station is a problem and in need of a tunnel. Flyvbjerg (1998, pp. 36-37) concludes that power has the means to define rationality, and rationality what counts as reality. Actual produced knowledge through the railway plan has been deemed as non-rational, and thus non-realistic with the visions that the politicians in Gothenburg have strived for.

Power is free from the obligation to produce evidence

Advocators for Västlänken have according to respondents managed to solidify their power and maintained the veils of illusion, and thus won over knowledge on several occasions. First, through one the of former committee chairmen of Gothenburg: Annelie Hultén, who said that

the Reinforcement Alternative had already been discarded for the sole reason that it was not mainly a tunnel solution (Respondent 4 and 8). To rewind back to Aalborg, the bus company, with support from the city's mayor and Technical Department, were strong actors with high authority and did not have to produce evidence in their claim that the frequency model would be a worse option. Hence, their stance went unchallenged (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 30). In a similar way, one could argue that Annelie Hultén used her authority, with the support of her fellow comrades, to produce a claim that did not have any evidence in order to influence The Railway Administration (which later together with the Road Administration became the Transport Administration). Similar to Aalborg, how other alternatives to the bus terminal were discarded based on the criterion that they lacked space for 20 buses to park (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 32), I argue that the Reinforcement Alternative was rejected in a similar fashion. Rejected despite being fully capable according to respondent 4, to generate more capacity and bring robustness to the surrounding railway network, and with a higher net value. The Reinforcement Alternative, however, based on the conclusion I make from all respondents' collective assessment, never stood a chance because it was not mainly a tunnel solution. Thus, it did not adhere to the modern vision of what politicians thought '*ought to be*'.

Second, in receiving approval from the government, despite Västlänken technically not being a question of national interest (Respondent 1, 4, 6 and 7, and 8). By attaining approval from the highest authority in 2014 (Regeringen, 2014), power was able to declare Västlänken an object of rationality, and thus reality, and thereby bypass earlier conclusions that it was not. Third, this was again solidified by the County Board giving the communication category of national interest precedence over the one of cultural environment (Respondent 5). And finally, in the judicial process through the Land and Environmental Court. In giving the railway plan its approval to start constructing Västlänken in 2018, the court solidified where authority exists, and where it does not (SVEA HOVRÄTT, 2018; Respondent 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, and 8). The court's motivation being that the highest authority, the government, giving their seal of approval is evidence enough and thus fully complementary to the laws that pertain.

Although Flyvbjerg argues that rationality "*is part of the power of the weak*" (Ibid, p. 37), in this case, it appears to not have had any significant force, and the power-asymmetry have taken over. I claim, however, that this phenomenon fits more together with a different quote: "*the possession of power spoils reason...the greater the power, the less rationality*" (Ibid, p. 37). It emphasises that power is free of any demands to produce evidence, just like the Land

and Environmental Court did not respond to the evidence emphasising the environmental hazards (Respondent 1-8), the defective Environmental Impact Assessment document (Respondent 3, 5 and 8), and the needs expressed by the Environmental & Protection Agency (Respondent 3).

Minimal formal influence opportunities generate informal opportunities

Grimes' (2005) study has shown that despite facility sitings often entailing disproportionate negative outcomes for the near residing communities, the outcome can still turn out successful depending on the management's interaction with concerned citizens. Ways to react and have opportunities to influence exists as Grimes demonstrated in the case of the West Coast line in various in-built formal procedures that can help empower citizens (Grimes, 2005, p. 39). However, it all hinges upon how far institutions are ready to go and accommodate to the will of the people. -Like that of the Railway Administration, the municipality and the Transport Administration have according to respondents hosted the classical in-built procedures such as information meetings, consultation meetings and exhibitions (Respondent, 5, 6 and 7). With that said, the assessments of most respondents have been that these instances have not served their true purpose, and on the contrary, have exposed that politicians have decided prematurely that Västlänken as we know it will continue and that there's no stopping it (Respondent 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, and 8).

Ineffective formal opportunities

Respondent 5 underlined that most people do accept that not all projects can have a positive net value, and entail advantages for everyone, but that sometimes negatives must be accepted for the greater good. However, the same respondent was clear to emphasise that Västlänken is not one of them (Respondent 5) and every opportunity to voice any opposition has been met with steady resistance instead of openness. Respondent 3 also highlighted that it is written in the Swedish Environmental Charter that one must always choose the alternative with the least encroachment and the highest serviceability (Respondent 3). By looking at Västlänken through a lens of *effective influence*, the collective thoughts of the respondents are that the influence opportunities that are integrated into Västlänken's formal procedures have served no purpose. In hindsight, they believe it was never an option that citizens could possibly exert influence in a way that would change the course of the project. This was demonstrated in the courts according to several respondents (Respondent 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, and 8).

Respondent 5 also emphasised that it would have been easier to accept the outcome if the impression was that decision-makers had at least listened to the people and come to their conclusions together with the people. As an example, respondent 5 brought up a tunnel project in Amsterdam which was halted but later continued, and with enough interaction and listening to the citizens, it was easier to move on and accept the agreed-upon outcome (Respondent 5). This indicates that if the municipality of Gothenburg had been willing to accommodate to demands that had public sway, for example the outcome of the congestion tax, Västlänken may not have been equally controversial. While speculating may seem pointless, I believe drawing parallels to the West Coast Line can provide some perspective, considering that it was in the community where citizens felt that authorities had accommodated most to the citizen's demands was where procedural fairness had the highest value (Grimes, 2005, p. 153). Furthermore, for communities to develop a need for increased representation in cases with unwanted sitings in their surroundings (Ibid, p. 40), influence opportunities are essential for reaching a state of decision acceptance. With that said, respondents' experiences of authorities refusing to even meet them halfway (Respondent 3, 4 and 5) has rendered decision acceptance difficult.

Ineffective due to a predetermined vision

Grimes underline that it is subject's own assessment that determines if whether they believe that they have managed to secure a specific outcome in the decision-making process (Grimes 2005, p. 42) and that the actual outcome is irrelevant. Several respondents emphasise that decision acceptance would have been possible if the procedural processes leading up the decision had been conducted through fair means. To put it bluntly, according to respondents, a fair process has been impossible due to a predetermined vision. Thus, any procedural event that could stop that vision was never going to be fair. Like two respondents demonstrated by reference to a land-use document from 1999, with the current tunnel extension already having the land reserved, exerting any influence with a palpable outcome has been unfeasible (Respondent 3 and 4). As such, to the interviewees, it came as no surprise that despite a majority of the voters in the congestion tax referendum rejecting it, politicians went ahead and initiated it anyway (Respondent 3 and 4).

While hosting a referendum on a congestion tax can be seen as an attempt to accommodate to the needs of Gothenburg's residents, it is more than what the residents in Falkenberg, who also pleaded for a referendum with the West Coast Line, got (Grimes, 2005, p. 79).

Respondent 3 and 4 argue however that the politicians only gave it a consultative character because they were so sure the citizens would agree with the politicians and vote yes and were caught off guard when presented with a different reality. This was, according to the same respondents, an additional testament to how vehemently politicians believe in Västlänken. As such, Västlänken gives new insights on referendums: that they can be disguised as an influence opportunity when in reality they are not.

Producing new opportunities when the former proves ineffective

Despite politicians not respecting the outcome of the congestion tax, it was brought up as one of several formal opportunities where one could to exert influence. More important, however, was that it fuelled civil society and created new opportunities. Voting Demokraterna into the city's town board and organising mass demonstrations as well as writing debate articles have been, in several respondent's belief, a very successful way to exert influence by spreading awareness. They underline that it has kept the question of Västlänken alive, and the reason for why it became one of the primary questions in the election (Respondent 1-8). Respondent 1, 2 and 3 also believe that it will continue to be a primary issue in the next election when the effects from Västlänken becomes more visible.

One can thus argue that Västlänken adversaries have in some sense managed to secure a specific outcome. Representatives from Demokraterna argue that this reflects how citizens in Gothenburg perceive citizenry, that Västlänken is the jewel of the crown in several decades of mismanagement (Respondent 1, 2 and 3). Furthermore, just like Flyvbjerg (1998), they highlight that democracy in modern societies is not solely practised through the rationality of institutional executives, but through power, and that one way to counter this is by confronting power mechanisms. Confrontation leads to attaining power and evening out the power-asymmetry (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 237). Thus, effective influence appears to have been non-existent in Västlänken's formal procedures, but new influence opportunities have presented themselves both in the shape of other formal and informal shape. Formal through the election and the voting booth, and informal via the social movement's own activism in various platforms. While despite not necessarily resulting in securing the most preferred outcome, an outcome has nonetheless been achieved. Achieved in the sense that just like Grimes (2005, p. 40) emphasise that residents in unwanted sitings can develop a need for a disproportionate representation due to disproportionate consequences, this is something I argue is reflected in Gothenburg's new political landscape.

Low degree of public justification

Effective influence and public justification are interlinked in the sense that both can convey new information that can play an essential role in individuals making their final assessment on a decision (Grimes, 2005, p. 48). Based on the result, public justification appears to have had little to no presence at all in the processes according to respondents (Respondent 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, and 8), at least not in swaying people into decision acceptance.

Advocators are not well-grounded on Västlänken

Respondent 6 and 7 emphasise that there is an endless ocean of documents by the Transport Administration and that some of it must rely on hard-headed facts. Following that, they suggest that the ability and option to publicly justify some facets would be possible.

Although, when it comes to full transparency in engaging with citizens and cite information that can back up arguments like public justification demands (Grimes, 2005, pp. 43 & 98), it gets tricky for politicians. Common expressions are that Västlänken will be good for public transportation, but respondents underline that there is an absence of concrete information that can support that statement. In addition, vague statements like better public transportation lack context, as it does not say anything about what “better” means. Does it mean lower travelling times, or a decrease in the amount of CO₂ emissions? The context is not clear and does not denote confidence (Respondent 6, and 7). Respondents have also emphasised that the transit station in Haga is the questions that politicians struggle with justifying the most, because there is nothing to necessitate a “*detour*” through a sparse, sensitive and historical area (Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8).

Respondent 5 believes there are too many barriers between politicians and citizens. Examples were pointed out in how politicians are rarely present in consultation meetings, and hence unable to answer questions. They instead pass these onto officials. In addition, too many questions are rejected with the excuse of documents being classified (Ibid). Without any presence, moments of public justification as to why Västlänken would be a good alternative diminishes. Several respondents brought up examples of when politicians have attempted to justify it with concrete arguments, but that in most cases these were wrong, and based on inaccurate information (Respondent 1, 3, and 4). Political trust increases when politicians can justify their use of power (Grimes, 2005, p. 48). However, when the opposite is the case, trust diminishes and attracts scrutiny (Ibid). All respondents emphasise a continued growth in

disdain for politicians for as long as Västlänken continues to be neglected, and that Demokraterna's success is a testament to this (Respondent 1-8).

No justification amongst the advocates themselves

Respondent 3 believes politicians are unable to justify Västlänken because there is nothing to justify and that their silence and absence is another testament to this (Respondent 3).

Moreover, the absence of government ministers, who have been present on smaller projects can also be taken as a sign of bad confidence and trust in Västlänken from the power holders (Respondent 4). Although, respondent 4 does mention that as a politician within a party that has endorsed Västlänken all those many years ago, one is put in a very delicate position. To invest one's time as a politician to argue against the decision of one's predecessors, most of which are no longer politicians, can create tension and conflict within the party and may thus discourage politicians from truly speaking their mind (Respondent 3). Respondent 1 and 2 alludes to the same argument, emphasising that their own party has an abundance of deserters from other political parties, which they left because they were unable to successfully oppose Västlänken within those settings. Attempts to create internal discussions would be silenced (Respondent 1 and 2).

As such, while there appears to have been much absence of public justification, the same might be the case amongst the advocates. Grimes argues that there are many aspects at play as to why people choose to abstain their ability to contest a decision, such as ideological orientation, and self-interest (2005, p. 57). And just like voters have their various reasons, there may be equally many reasons as to why politicians abstain the ability to voice their true opinions on Västlänken. For example, doing so would be bad for their self-interest within their respective parties. Thus, I argue based on the input provided, that this is a dimension that should not be ruled out.

Sense of Place – varying responses

Respondents have given mixed inputs and emphasis on various risk factors, some of which puts more focus on risks that may affect aspects associated with people's identity. While risks have been a great many as presented in the results, it is the environmental hazards that been the most repetitive. With that said, in parallel with environmental hazards, Haga appears as an essential risk factor due to what some argue will be inevitable damages to a historic, cultural and green neighbourhood (Respondent 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7, and 8). However, some respondents

argue these issues with Haga are secondary, and that the primary reasons are that placing a station there contradicts the very purpose of the tunnel (Respondent 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7). With that said, two respondents alluded that their own resistance might not have been equally fierce if Haga did not have all those historic, cultural and green aspects that they consider invaluable (Respondent 5 and 8).

Haga denotes a Sense of Place

As such, I argue that Haga does to some extent resemble an object of people's *sense of place*, although with more emphasis amongst some than others. One respondent believed people are worried because Haga is a sparse neighbourhood, and that by making it dense, and thus add purpose to it, the old buildings would need to be replaced (Respondent 4). Respondent 5 confirmed these worries, emphasising how Haga is a preserved neighbourhood with buildings and trees dating back to the early 1800s, and is something that has been maintained for so long that its benefits cannot be measured in money. Moreover, the same respondent argues that large extensive green areas intertwined with beautiful old aesthetics that have been preserved are interests which other cities would pay great amounts of money to have and should thus not be taken for granted.

Parallels to Hallandsåsen

In the case of the Hallandsåsen ridge (Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004), communities expressed immeasurable values attached to the landscape in several aspects, parallels to that can be made with Haga. Apart from Respondent 5, several others have brought up the aspect of time with regards to the neighbourhood, emphasising its historical context (Respondent 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7, and 8). Respondent 5 and 8 were the ones that by far out of all interviewees underlined the loss it would entail not just if, but when irrecoverable damage is done during construction, and that this would amount to erasing parts of Gothenburg's unique history. Respondent 5 exemplified how the city is uniquely built with special stone-craft, and that Västlänken will ruin extensive areas of the little that is preserved. Communities in Hallandsåsen referred to former generations and their hardships in maintaining the land for future generations, and that this might go unnoticed if the landscape alters too much (Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2004, p. 122). The same parallel can be found in Västlänken with the destruction of Haga's history by removing over 1000 trees, and many of which are over 200 years old and planted by the order of the king (Respondent 3, 5 and 8), and with the change of ground-water levels doing permanent damage to the houses of the 19th century era (Respondent 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 and 8). In

addition, respondent 4 mentioned that Haga is a symbolic issue from a resistance perspective and one that has the public thoroughly concerned.

Västlänken risk altering value which is embedded in the past, present and future

Following that, Västlänken brings uncertainty for the future. Like Simmons and Walker (2004, p. 91) claim that the meaning of ‘place’ is socially constructed in relation to a particular context, and that one’s sense of place something that is invoked when “*feelings that may be strong enough to be, in part, constitutive of personal or group identity*” (2004, p. 91) is under threat. The emphasis placed on Haga’s unique qualities in relation to risk factors and the time aspect, creates a triangulation of past, present and future. These are united with the notion that there is something to lose out on, something that is innate with that particular landscape, and Västlänken becomes the catalyst that triggers it all. Haga brings out people’s awareness over the neighbourhood’s qualities and aesthetics, which have a context related to its time, which is reflected in the buildings and the trees (Respondent 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7, and 8).

Consequently, like industrial encroachment in the form of heavy machinery altered the innate qualities and damaged and dried up a lake in Hallandsåsen (Ibid, p. 124), changes in groundwater risks altering Haga’s aesthetic landscape, and thus removing an essential piece of time reflected in palpable buildings, and trees which have royalty history related to them. While the emphasis from social movements has been in different areas of focus, in some facets the Haga legacy is part of their and the public’s interest to the point where it in various degrees constitutes either a personal or a group identity (Simmons and Walker, 2004, p. 91). Moreover, the issues with Haga correlates with the argument made by previous researchers, that land-use decisions should be approached with a more participatory manner, since the physical aspects of land invoke subjective value and are different from decisions of indivisible character (Grimes, 2005, p. 40).

Discussion

With a starting point in the concepts that have been applied in this thesis, Västlänken has many traits that can place it in parallel with other sitings. According to the claims made by the interviewees, Västlänken will result in disproportionate negative outcomes. It will also bring with too few, or no benefits at all for the near residing citizens. Their organised resistance can thus reflect what Marcia Grimes claims to be common in facility sitings with disproportionate burdens, be an attempt to gain equal disproportionate representation (Grimes, 2005, p. 26). Like interviewees have highlighted, this can be demonstrated with the success of Demokraterna's election into the city's town board. One could argue that 17,2 % (Yousuf, 2018a) of the city votes do not necessarily reflect a bad attitude towards Västlänken. However, just like public justification emphasise that peoples' habits, like ideological-orientation and self-interest (Grimes, 2005, p. 57) may play a factor, it could say something about the election result. Although, it is important to remember the 2016 polls which measured Västlänken as a separate question, boundless from other aspects like public justification pinpoints, had a negative value of 78 % (Perlenberg, 2017).

In this study, I have shown that various organised opponents, both from a bottom-up position, and from a top-down, find the organisational management behind Västlänken to be illegitimate. This because of various risks, which they claim to have the evidence to back up. But regardless of such evidence, my focus has been on their own personal assessment. If their opinion is based on misinformation from their part, it would say something about the unsuccessful method from the municipality and the Transport Administration to convey information. Nonetheless, based on the collective beliefs from all respondents, environmental hazards have been emphasised as the most worrisome risk factor. In retrospect, while Västlänken is only in its initial starting phase, it may develop into a siting issue equivalent of *environmental stigma* (Boholm and Löfstedt, 2004, p. xix) should the outcomes as emphasised by the interviewees as inevitable come to pass.

While effective influence has been minimal in terms of securing an outcome in the decision-making process, like referenced in cases of Marcia Grimes' study with the Swedish West Coast Line (2005), an outcome has nonetheless been secured due to the relentless and strategic organisation of the social movements. Just like Charles Tilly points out, social movements are not just connected to a single event, but rather a cause which is ongoing over a

longer period (Tilly, 2005, p. 308). Each movement has used various disruptive techniques over several years to create a reaction from the decision-makers. A reaction may not necessarily have come from the established parties, whose stance on Västlänken remains the same. It has nonetheless attracted enough reactionary responses from citizens which have contributed to Demokraterna's success.

Ultimately, the previous study and siting theme that I believe has the most relevance to Västlänken is that of Aalborg. Bent Flyvbjerg's argument on how modern city-planning is practised with a belief of "*what ought to be*" (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 21), has striking parallels with Västlänken. Based on the collective inputs from the interviewees, a vision over '*what ought to be*' the next advancement in Gothenburg's railway development has been characterized by a dominant discourse, from powerful decision-makers with a background in the city's committee decades ago. Just like Nytorv's square in Aalborg became the endeavour object for the city's new bus terminal because it pleased a modern vision of what ought to be, in a similar way Gothenburg's railway project has been characterized with a vision of a tunnel with a certain route as a solution. However, a dividing line between the two cities is that in Gothenburg, extensive documentation and evaluations have been carried out, pointing out the negative aspects with the current extension in a fair light. In spite of this, decision-makers have just like in Aalborg, managed to use power as a means to define what counts as rationality, and thus reality (Ibid, p. 2 & 227), and carried on with their vision.

As such, any risks associated with environmental hazards, and with people's *sense of place* in relation to Haga, are of a secondary character. I claim this with the argument that these risk factors are mere consequences from the primary action of construing a vision. They are consequences of not rationally exploring the other alternatives with a tailor-made approach for what was going to suit Gothenburg best, and not just follow other city's formulas. Thus, all the mentioned risk factors are inevitable consequences due to an agenda that was set in motion by former politicians. Moreover, a pre-established vision, the legacy of former politicians and not mainly current ones, might have limited politicians' willingness to participate in public settings where opportunities to justify Västlänken have been many.

In other words, the main theme of the study resembles a facility siting mostly associated with the abuse of power, where politicians have dictated what counts as rationality and not, and thus defined reality, for the purpose of realizing a vision of a tunnel. Politicians have

succeeded in giving Västlänken a priority of national interest, even though Västlänken technically does not fall under one, and thus is not legal under the law. It can be compared to Aalborg in how documents and evaluations, like those concerning the environmental and health aspects, were distorted in order to bypass court procedures, hence constructing a reality that is not true, through means of power. Therefore, I argue based on the empirical material that Västlänken is a significant testament to Flyvbjerg's (1998, p. 236) claim that democracy is not in practice only upheld through institutional bodies that solely adhere to democratic virtues, but also through power.

With a broader basis of facility sitings within a Swedish context, this study can further incite interest and incentives for research that problematize major infrastructure projects in relation to legislation and citizenry concern. It can raise questions about whether it is inherent discourses within powerful entities, like political parties, that manage to set a certain tone and direction in city-planning. Thus, this study can help open up possibilities for measures to be implemented which can then be used in future projects that will demand the support of the public. It would be wise for decision-makers to learn from sitings like Västlänken and Aalborg if consequences that can have major repercussions for the political landscape is to be avoided. In retrospect, like Della Porta, Diani and Roberts claim (2015, p. 2), without support from the public, social movements can set out the circumstances for a populist opportunity to emerge and, like Laclau, seize the opportunity to rectify a grievance and attempt to bring social and political change through mobilizing the collective (Aslanidis, 2017, pp. 2–3). Accordingly, this I claim has been the case with Demokraterna's success, just like respondents have highlighted that intense political distrust and disdain exists and will increase if Västlänken is allowed to continue.

Conclusion and Future Research

In this study, I have demonstrated that opposition forces to Västlänken respond to it on several grounds. The findings have illuminated not just dissatisfaction with the tunnel's supposed impacts, but also the responsible authorities' management over it. The perceived lack of interaction and none-participatory approach has led citizens to feel a sense of the shortage of democratic virtues, and that sufficient possession of power can trump rationality.

The case correlates with previous studies in facility sitings on several dimensions. Västlänken has proven that minimal opportunities for citizens to exert influence, combined with an absence of politicians to justify the decision do not create requisites for decision-acceptance and political trust. It has also proven that a lack of these can create a chain reaction, were citizens engage actively in an attempt to change the decision-outcome, using both formal and informal methods. The study has also demonstrated that decisions of land-use character may indeed prove complicated to manage because they concern permanent ramifications that can trigger reactions rooted in both individual and group identity.

This siting demonstrates strong associations with the Aalborg project, suggesting that power defines rationality and thus has the means to rule over reality. The analysis indicates a perception of decision-makers being ruled by a modern belief of 'what ought to be', which has taken shape in the form of Västlänken. This vision has been maintained and defended fiercely by powerful decision-makers throughout, ultimately giving it precedence over national legislation. In accordance with Aalborg and Flyvbjerg, Västlänken is proof that democracy is not necessarily only upheld through institutional means, but also through means of power. This case is thus the result of decision-makers trying to adhere to a vision of what they believe is what 'ought to be' Gothenburg's most optimal railway development.

For future research on this subject, I recommend a longitudinal study. Västlänken will be ongoing for at least two more elections, thus the concepts used may be further tested and developed. Furthermore, a longitudinal study may verify, or falsify the arguments made in this study. In addition, it's an opportunity to approach it in a way this thesis did not, like including the inputs and assessments of responsible authorities which can provide new important context. And to conclude, observing the change in the political landscape would be an opportunity to study the long-term effects that land-use decisions can entail both in terms of physical and political impact.

References

- Abrahamsson, H. (2008) 'Understanding World Order, Continuity and Change - Security, Development and Justice in the Global Era.', (April), pp. 1–40.
- Abrahamsson, H. (2011) 'Städer som noder för global samhällsstyrning eller som slagfält för sociala konflikter?', pp. 1–22.
- Abrahamsson, H. (2013) 'The great Transformation of our time - Towards just and socially sustainable Scandinavian cities', *Peace and Development Research seminar*, pp. 1–23.
- Aslanidis, P. (2017) 'Populism and Social Movements', 1(September 2018), pp. 1–24. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198803560.013.23.
- Banverket (2006) *Järnvägsutredning inklusive miljökonsekvensbeskrivning (MKB)*. Available at: https://www.trafikverket.se/contentassets/6af3819de30a46dab699d53ac17b76d3/aktuell01/jarnvagsutredning_inkl_mkb_kap1-4.pdf (Accessed: 15 April 2019).
- Boholm, Å. and Löfstedt, R. E. (2004) *Facility Siting: Risk, Power and Identity in Land Use Planning*. Edited by Å. Boholm and R. E. Löfstedt. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.,
- Bryman, A. (2012) *Social research methods*. 4th editio. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Demokraterna (no date a) *Demokraterna - Göteborgs nya parti*. Available at: <https://demokraterna.se/> (Accessed: 2 May 2018).
- Demokraterna (no date b) *Demokraterna stödjer demonstrationen mot Västlänken 9/9 - Demokraterna*. Available at: <https://demokraterna.se/demonstration20170909/> (Accessed: 31 October 2018).
- Esaiasson, P., Gilljam, M., Oscarsson, H., Towns, A., & Wängnerud, L. (2017). *Metodpraktikan : Konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad* (Femte upplagan ed.).
- Flyvbjerg, B. (1998). *Rationality and power : democracy in practice*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press
- Gårdalänken (no date) *Om oss – Gårdalänken*. Available at: <http://gardalanken.se/om-oss/>

(Accessed: 29 March 2019).

Gerring, J. (2004) 'What is a Case Study and What is it Good for: American Political Science Review', 98(2), pp. 341–354.

Göteborg Stad (2018) *Västlänken*. Available at:

<https://stadsutveckling.goteborg.se/sv/projekt/vastlanken/> (Accessed: 8 October 2018).

Göteborg Stad (no date) *Västlänken - station Haga - Plan- och byggprojekt - Göteborgs Stad*.

Available at: [https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/byggande--lantmaterioch-](https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/byggande--lantmaterioch-planarbete/kommunens-planarbete/plan--och-byggprojekt!/ut/p/z1/hY9Ba4NAFIR_Sw9e973VZd-mt7WQUFeSlAaiewkm3RiT6MpqK_TX1x4LLZ3bMN_ADFgowHbVR1NXY-O76j770srDlmcvKuUaN6vFEp93Zrtcm3yDRsD-P8DOMf4hjVDOft)

[planarbete/kommunens-planarbete/plan--och-](https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/byggande--lantmaterioch-planarbete/kommunens-planarbete/plan--och-byggprojekt!/ut/p/z1/hY9Ba4NAFIR_Sw9e973VZd-mt7WQUFeSlAaiewkm3RiT6MpqK_TX1x4LLZ3bMN_ADFgowHbVR1NXY-O76j770srDlmcvKuUaN6vFEp93Zrtcm3yDRsD-P8DOMf4hjVDOft)

[byggprojekt!/ut/p/z1/hY9Ba4NAFIR_Sw9e973VZd-](https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/byggande--lantmaterioch-planarbete/kommunens-planarbete/plan--och-byggprojekt!/ut/p/z1/hY9Ba4NAFIR_Sw9e973VZd-mt7WQUFeSlAaiewkm3RiT6MpqK_TX1x4LLZ3bMN_ADFgowHbVR1NXY-O76j770srDlmcvKuUaN6vFEp93Zrtcm3yDRsD-P8DOMf4hjVDOft)

[mt7WQUFeSlAaiewkm3RiT6MpqK_TX1x4LLZ3bMN_ADFgowHbVR1NXY-](https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/byggande--lantmaterioch-planarbete/kommunens-planarbete/plan--och-byggprojekt!/ut/p/z1/hY9Ba4NAFIR_Sw9e973VZd-mt7WQUFeSlAaiewkm3RiT6MpqK_TX1x4LLZ3bMN_ADFgowHbVR1NXY-O76j770srDlmcvKuUaN6vFEp93Zrtcm3yDRsD-P8DOMf4hjVDOft)

[O76j770srDlmcvKuUaN6vFEp93Zrtcm3yDRsD-P8DOMf4hjVDOft](https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/byggande--lantmaterioch-planarbete/kommunens-planarbete/plan--och-byggprojekt!/ut/p/z1/hY9Ba4NAFIR_Sw9e973VZd-mt7WQUFeSlAaiewkm3RiT6MpqK_TX1x4LLZ3bMN_ADFgowHbVR1NXY-O76j770srDlmcvKuUaN6vFEp93Zrtcm3yDRsD-P8DOMf4hjVDOft) (Accessed: 15 April

2019).

Göteborgs Stad (2018) *Västlänken*. Available at:

<https://stadsutveckling.goteborg.se/projekt/vastlanken/> (Accessed: 2 May 2018).

Grimes, M. (2005) *Democracy's infrastructure: The role of procedural fairness in fostering consent*.

Khan, J. (2004) 'Siting Conflicts in Renewable Energy Projects: A Biogas Case Study', in

Boholm, Å. and Ragnar E, L. (eds) *Facility Siting: Risk, Power and Identity in Land Use*

Planning. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, pp. 56–72.

Kriesi, H. (2009) 'Charles tilly: Contentious performances, campaigns and social

movements', *Swiss Political Science Review*, 15(2), pp. 341–349. doi: 10.1002/j.1662-

6370.2009.tb00134.x.

Laclau, E. (1977) 'Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory. Capitalism, Fascism, Populism',

p. 208. doi: 10.2307/1954758.

Martinez-Alier, J. *et al.* (2016) 'Is there a global environmental justice movement?', *Journal*

of Peasant Studies, 43(3), pp. 731–755. doi: 10.1080/03066150.2016.1141198.

Mouffe, C. (2016) *The populist challenge | openDemocracy*. Available at:

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/democraciaabierta/chantal-mouffe/populist-challenge>

(Accessed: 10 October 2018).

- Mudde, C. and Kaltwasser, C. R. (2013a) 'Populism', 1(October 2018), pp. 1–23. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199585977.013.0026.
- Mudde, C. and Kaltwasser, R. (2013b) 'Populism and Political Leadership', (October 2018), pp. 1–15. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199653881.013.016.
- Mudde, C. and Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2012) 'Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America', *Government and Opposition*, 48(2), pp. 147–174. doi: 10.1017/gov.2012.11.
- Naturskyddsföreningen (no date) *2030 - Hela Sverige drivs på förnybar energi | Naturskyddsföreningen*. Available at: <https://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/vad-du-kan-gora/som-foretag/bli-stodforetag/fornybar-energi> (Accessed: 2 May 2019).
- Nätverket Trädplan Göteborg (2019) *Överklagan Detaljplan Station Haga, 8 mars 2019 | Nätverket Trädplan Göteborg*. Available at: <http://www.tradplangoteborg.se/mall-overklagan-detaljplan-station-haga-senast-8-mars-2019/> (Accessed: 15 March 2019).
- Perlenberg, C. (2017) 'Västlänken fortsatte att engagera i Göteborg | Csaba Perlenberg | Expressen'. Available at: <https://www.expressen.se/gt/ledare/csaba-perlenberg/vilket-parti-tvarvander-forst-om-vastlanken/> (Accessed: 2 May 2018).
- Della Porta, D., Diani, M. and Roberts, K. M. (2015) 'Populism, Social Movements, and Popular Subjectivity', *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*, (September 2018), pp. 1–18. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199678402.013.27.
- Regeringen (2014) *Regeringens Tillåtlighetsbeslut - Västlänken*. Available at: https://www.trafikverket.se/contentassets/beb81b457e5c402eb6a2ea44ff0d4cfa/aktuella/regeringsbeslut_tillatlighet_vastlanken_140626.pdf (Accessed: 21 April 2019).
- Rohrkemper, M. and Corno, L. (2017) 'The University of Chicago Press', 88(3), pp. 296–312. doi: 10.1086/521238.
- Scholte, J. A. (2005) 'Globalization: A Critical Introduction, Second Edition', p. xi-492.
- Simmons, P. and Walker, G. (2004) 'Living with Technological Risk: Industrial Encroachment on Sense of Place', in Boholm, Å. and Löfstedt, R. E. (eds) *Facility Siting: Risk, Power and Identity in Land Use Planning*. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, pp. 90–106.

Sjölander-Lindqvist, A. (2004) 'Visualizing Place and Belonging: Landscape Redefined in a Swedish Farming Community', in Boholm, Å. and Löfstedt, E. R. (eds) *Facility Siting: Risk, Power and Identity in Land Use Planning*. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, pp. 107–126.

Stoppa Västlänken Nu (no date) *Stoppa Västlänken Nu - Utveckla Göteborg*. Available at: <http://stoppavastlanken.nu/> (Accessed: 2 May 2018).

Stoppa Västlänken NU (2016) *Västlänken och det demokratiska underskottet*. Available at: <http://stoppavastlanken.nu/vastlanken-och-det-demokratiska-underskottet/> (Accessed: 8 October 2018).

Ström, P. and Wahlqvist, E. (2010) 'Regional and firm competitiveness in the service-based economy: Combining economic geography and international business theory', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 101(3), pp. 287–304. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9663.2009.00586.x.

SVEA HOVRÄTT (2018) *Järnvägsprojektet Västlänken i Göteborg får påbörjas - Mark- och miljööverdomstolen*. Available at: <http://www.markochmiljooverdomstolen.se/Nyheter--pressmeddelanden/Jarnvagsprojektet-Vastlanken-i-Goteborg-far-paborjas/> (Accessed: 21 April, 2019)

Swedish Research Council (2018a) *CODEX - rules and guidelines for research. Handling personal information*. Available at: <http://www.codex.vr.se/en/manniska3.shtml> (Accessed: 16 March 2019).

Swedish Research Council (2018b) *CODEX - rules and guidelines for research. Informed consent*. Available at: <http://www.codex.vr.se/en/manniska2.shtml> (Accessed: 16 March 2019).

Tilly, C. (2005) 'Introduction to Part II: Invention, Diffusion, and Transformation of the Social Movement Repertoire', *European Review of History: Revue europeenne d'histoire*, 12(2), pp. 307–320. doi: 10.1080/13507480500269134.

Trafikverket (2014) *Trängselskatt i Göteborg - Västsvenska paketet - Trafikverket*. Available at: <https://www.trafikverket.se/nara-dig/Vastra-gotaland/Vastsvenska-paketet/Trangselskatt-i-Goteborg---Vastsvenska-paketet/> (Accessed: 13 April 2019).

Trafikverket (2017a) *Om Västlänken - Trafikverket*. Available at:

<https://www.trafikverket.se/nara-dig/Vastra-gotaland/projekt-i-vastra-gotalands-lan/Vastlanken---smidigare-pendling-och-effektivare-trafik/Om-Vastlanken/> (Accessed: 2 May 2018).

Trafikverket (2017b) *Tidsbubblan - Trafikverket*. Available at: <https://www.trafikverket.se/nara-dig/Vastra-gotaland/projekt-i-vastra-gotalands-lan/Vastlanken---smidigare-pendling-och-effektivare-trafik/Nyheter/2017/tidsbubblan/> (Accessed: 29 March 2019).

Trafikverket (2018) *Om Västlänken - Trafikverket*. Available at: <https://www.trafikverket.se/nara-dig/Vastra-gotaland/projekt-i-vastra-gotalands-lan/Vastlanken---smidigare-pendling-och-effektivare-trafik/Om-Vastlanken/> (Accessed: 8 October 2018).

Västsvenska Folkinitiativet (2017) *Martin Wannholt (DEM) - Politiker mot Västlänken*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4ez12PJZUk&t>.

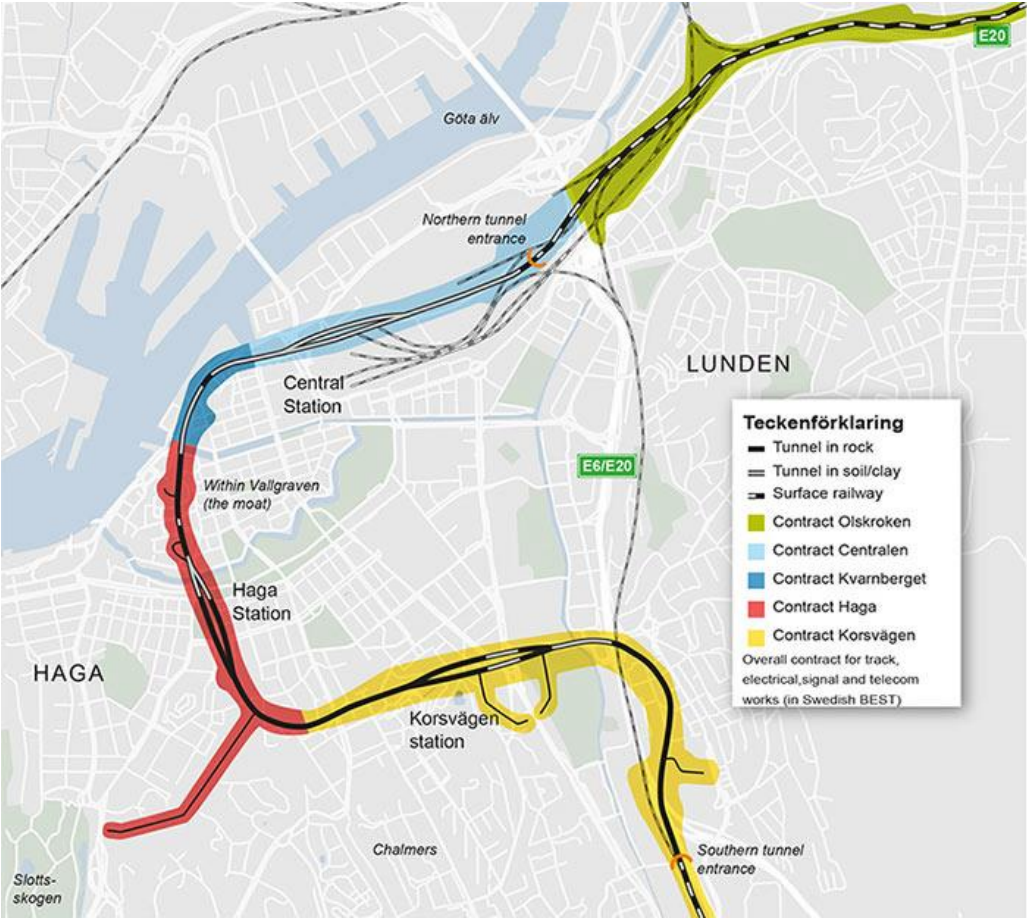
Västsvenska Folkinitiativet (no date) *Om oss / Västsvenska Folkinitiativet*. Available at: <https://folkinitiativet.se/om-oss/> (Accessed: 13 April 2019).

Yin, R. K. (2014) *Case study research: design and methods*. 5th edn. London: SAGE.

Yousuf, E. (2018a) 'Kataströfsiffror för S i Göteborg', 17 April. Available at: <http://www.gp.se/nyheter/goteborg/kataströfsiffror-för-s-i-göteborg-1.5632267> (Accessed: 2 May 2018).

Yousuf, E. (2018b) 'Så vill Demokraterna rita om Göteborg', *Göteborgs Posten*. Available at: <http://www.gp.se/nyheter/goteborg/så-vill-demokraterna-rita-om-göteborg-1.6056105>.

Appendix 1



Source: <https://www.tunneltalk.com/Sweden-June2018-Final-Gothenburg-West-Link-rail-contract-awarded.php>

Appendix 2

Interview questions

1. Berätta om dig själv och din bakgrund, hur kommer det sig att du hamnade här?

- Tell me more about your background, and how come you ended up here?

2. Varför behövs er rörelse?

- Why is your movement needed?

3. Vad är det ni vill åstadkomma i Göteborg?

- What is it that you want to accomplish in Gothenburg?

4. Vad är det som är fel med Västlänken och varför då?

- What is it with Västlänken that you consider being bad and why?

5. Hur ser du på planeringsprocessen för Västlänken? Skulle man ha gjort på något annat sätt? I så fall hur? Vad skulle man ha gjort?

- How do you view the planning process for Västlänken? Should it have been done in a different way? If so, then how? What should have been done?

6. Har den varit transparent? Har det skett enligt din mening en öppen redovisning av beslutsunderlag, beslutsunderlag om hur man kommit till sina slutsatser?

- Has it been transparent? Has there in your opinion been an open account of documents for decision-basis, decision-basis documents on how conclusions were based?

7. Har man fattat besluten på ett rättvist sätt?

- Have decisions been decided in a fair way?

8. Har allmänheten kunnat påverka?

- Has the public had any ability to influence?

9. Tycker du att det finns risker med Västlänken, och i så fall vilka är dem största riskerna? Varför tycker du att just dessa är det?

- Do you believe there are risks with Västlänken, and if so, which ones are the biggest? Why these in particular?

10. Kan dessa risker hanteras? I så fall hur?

- Can these risks be managed? If so, then how?

11. Hur tror du Västlänken kommer påverka Göteborg i framtiden? Varför tror du det?

- How do you believe Västlänken will affect Gothenburg in the future? Why do believe so?

12. Finns det något som är bra med Västlänken? Har den någon nytta? I så fall vad?

- Is there anything positive with Västlänken? Does it bring any benefit? If so, then what?

13. Anser du att man har gjort en riktig avvägning mellan risk och nytta?

- Do you believe that decision-makers have made a fair balance between risks and benefits?