

Inclusion as Assimilation: Sports and Civil Society as a Venue for Welfare Provision

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Some people say that life is a game, well if this is so
I'd like to know the rules on which this game of life is based
The Kinks, *Cricket*

Same predetermined
Pattern, game, rules
Uniformity, conformity
Napalm Death, *Pseudo youth*

Introduction

At the forefront of the ongoing political debate are the challenges created due to an increase in segregation. Inequality, alienation and exclusion are some of the concepts used to describe the tensions and conflicts arising and, in turn, threatening community and social cohesion. This debate highlights the role of the welfare state and social work when it comes to dealing with and taking action regarding conflict and social problems – *the problematic of solidarity*.

In recent decades, there has seen a broad repertoire of innovative strategies and activities emerging to combat these problems. In line with the on-going reformation of the welfare state, social work has adapted its strategic objectives and forms of activity. In this context, social work is not an isolated sphere of activity. Rather, social work is part of close collaborations where the ways of dealing with various social problems are renegotiated. The importance of collaboration between public, private and civil society actors has in the last decades been particularly emphasised when it comes to meeting challenges following in the wake of an increase in segregation (cf. Hertting, 2003; Dahlstedt & Hertzberg, 2011). For example, civil society has been highlighted as an arena with great potential to create integration (Kings, 2011; Bengtsson & Hertting, 2015). One specific example of the mobilisation of civil society which has been paid ever increasing attention in recent years is the mobilisation of sport, as a meeting place, as an arena, to meet all sorts of social challenges and social problem (Ekholm, 2016). In the following, we will focus on the uses of sport as a means to meet social problem.

These new strategies to meet emerging social policy challenges addresses a classical question when it comes to the theory and practice of the welfare state and social work, concerning the relationship between conflict and cohesion: how can conflicts be counteracted and social solidarity created? In turn, the question follows on from the *pedagogic rationality* of social work (cf. Philp, 1979; Villadsen, 2004), i.e. how the creation of solidarity is based on the notion of inclusion into the societal community, and the creation of citizens who can be included. In this contribution, we focus on social solidarity and integration as contemporary challenges and how sport, specifically football, has been highlighted as a way of creating social solidarity, through a pedagogic rationality – football as a means of fostering citizens according to specific ideals of solidarity and inclusion.

To be more specific, in the following contribution, we will look more closely at a sports-based social intervention in the form of an activity, *Football for Integration* (the Activity) which is run in two areas (the Area), which can be described as particularly socially “vulnerable”, in an average-sized Swedish city (the City). Within the framework of this sports-based activity, the participation in football will be further analysed, and more specifically the learning facilitated by the participation –

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and the way in which participation is emphasized as a means of creating solidarity and thus dealing with the problematic of solidarity. “Sport is a tool, after all,” ascertains the Initiator of the activity which is in focus to deal with the frictions and problems he describes in terms of “rowdiness”.

Sport... if you begin with football, we will end up talking about football, but there are other sports as well. It is much easier for you to have equality from the start, and this can create a coactivity, the feeling of being buddies, which develops much more easily in this environment because... well, I don't want to comment on what the situation is in the classrooms at school, but I think it can be very rowdy in some classes [excerpt 1].

We are approaching *Football for Integration* as a response to contemporary problems of exclusion and segregation. The approach is not theoretically driven in the first instance, but primarily empirically, grounded on the explicit objective of the Activity to use football as a means to create integration. The aim of the paper, based on a specific sports-based social intervention, is to analyse (1) how the problems against which the intervention is intended to take action are created, (2) how social solidarity is created as a solution to these problems, and (3) how and with which ideals the targeted individuals and families are made includable, i.e. how they are fostered according to certain norms of social inclusion and participation. Thus, the analysis focus on specific ways of conceptualising problems and possible solutions offered by *Football for Integration*.

A wide range of activities are currently organised in Sweden, on the basis of collaboration between public and civil society actors, where sport is used as a means of dealing with social problems or to achieve various social aims. These kind of activities is becoming increasingly common in the social policy landscape of today (cf. Ekholm, 2016; Linde, 2013; Stenling, 2015). The particular activity focused in this paper is part of this development. *Football for Integration* was started in 2014 by two of the City's more established football associations, with the objective of “using organised football to improve young people's social and language skills and work towards integration in Swedish society”. The aim of the Activity is also to “get children and young people to get active during their leisure time”, to create “an understanding of rules and types of work” and to “stimulate friendship between young people from different cultures”. The sports activities, consisting of organised football, are aimed at children from forms 2 to 5 at some of the schools in the two areas. The Activity is run in two of the City's most socially and economically vulnerable areas – the areas which also have a high share of inhabitants with a foreign background. Collaboration between different actors constitutes a central organisational element of *Football for Integration*. It is run in collaboration with schools and after-school centres. It is, further, financed with the support of the municipality, the District Sports Federation and the District Football Association, as well as sponsorship from local companies and contributions from charities. In this respect, the Activity is an example of a social intervention based on public-private partnerships involving civil society actors.

The outline of the paper is as follows: It firstly outlines the analytical perspective on which the analysis is based, followed by an account of the methodological considerations made and the empirical material analysed. It then presents the research context to which the chapter relates, focusing on sport as a means of fostering and social intervention. This is followed by a presentation of our analysis of *Football for Integration*, starting with the main discourses on problems identified, followed by the various solutions facilitated by these discourses. To conclude, the main arguments of the analysis are summarised and discussed in relation to current challenges of solidarity, social interventions and welfare policy.

Analytical perspective

In order to understand how the Activity emerges as part of the welfare state's ambitions to reduce tensions and conflicts in society, to create solidarity between people and to equip individuals with the skills needed in order to be able to actively participate in society, we are inspired by a perspective on the relation between problem and solution developed mainly by Michel Foucault (2004) and Carol Bacchi (1999, 2009, 2012), and by Jacques Donzelot's (1979, 1988, 1991) way of approaching

this specific relation between problem and solution, with a focus on the welfare state as a means of creating social solidarity.

On the basis of this perspective, we are interested in the representations of social problems – problematisations – which become applicable as knowledge (Bacchi, 2009, 2012; Foucault, 2004). The concept of problematisation is used to show how descriptions of social problems are about the representation of social problems, against which interventions can be made. In that respect, statements on both problems and solutions could be seen as productive in the sense that they create different ways of understanding how problems in society can be interpreted and which solutions are possible. These ways of understanding reality then facilitate action with regard to solutions to the problems in question. Representations of social *problems* are thus interwoven with *solutions* in that the solutions can be seen as actions against the problems, but also in that the way in which solutions are presented and carried out is crucial to the way in which the problems can be interpreted. Problems and solutions are inextricably interwoven with one another. The solutions are part of governing where action is taken regarding the conditions that are being problematised. Governing is thereby a problematising activity, and the portraying of problems in a specific way facilitates a certain kind of governing (Bacchi, 2009) and the mobilisation of various *technologies of governing* tensions and problems of different kinds (Miller & Rose, 1990).

In this paper, it is the problematisations concerning tensions and conflicts in society which are highlighted. These tensions and conflicts are made visible in the statements analysed and are thus made governable in certain ways. This means that we may analyse the tensions and conflicts that are highlighted, the boundaries and lines of conflict that are created through a specific social policy intervention – in this case football as a means of integration. It is this particular interweaving of problem and solution that Donzelot (1988, 1991) takes as his starting point in trying to understand the evolution and tasks of the welfare state and social work, where focus is put on technologies of solidarity.

With the development of industrial capitalism in the late 1800s, and with it an evermore specialised division of labour, Donzelot (1988) argue that a number of social problems appeared, which needed action – among these poverty or economic vulnerability, risk and uncertainty concerning earning a living and health among vulnerable groups of the population. Capitalism also led to an ever increasingly tangible social fragmentation with antagonisms and conflicts between different groups and lack of social solidarity as a result. The prevailing liberal and philanthropic system of help and support was seen as increasingly inadequate when it came to responding to new social problems.

In this context, Donzelot (1988, 1991) identifies the emergence of the welfare state in the early 1900s. According to Donzelot (1991), it is through the creation of solidarity that the social fragmentation, and the tensions and conflicts it brings about, can be dealt with. Inspired by Durkheim's (1893) sociology about different forms of solidarity and cohesion, Donzelot points to the way in which the role of politics and the provision of welfare aim to produce solidarity between individuals and classes and to reduce the risk of tensions and conflict. In that respect, the welfare state could constitute an alternative to the social imaginations that were dominant in the late 1800s – liberalism (competition between free individuals) and Marxism (class struggle). With Durkheim's conception, the State assumes as its task to regulate the conditions for the division of labour (*organic solidarity*) and by a range of interventions to reproduce the norms and social order (*mechanic solidarity*). Accordingly, in Donzelot's (1991:174) words, the ambition of the State is "breaking down antagonistic attitudes, it aims at the gradual realisation of a consensus society". In this context, it is important to note that the lines of tension and conflict seen as threatening are drawn primarily on the basis of social and economic conditions (i.e. market competition and class struggle).

By scientifically and rationally examining and measuring the population and the various social problems arising in society (using sociological and statistical knowledge), it was also possible for the State to take on the role of planning and governing the population and society so that problems, tensions and conflicts could be avoided in the long term. The welfare state could do so by using mainly two types of *technologies of solidarity*. To begin with, the welfare state had at its disposal

technologies guaranteeing social rights (*technologies of rights*) where interventions were made in people's everyday lives in the form of protective legislation, for instance concerning children and women, school and education, healthcare, medical treatment and social work. These interventions aimed at compensating for the social and economic inequalities produced by the capitalist economy. These technologies are in various respects normalising, aiming at the fostering of individuals and establishing certain norms among the population. They draw boundaries between the normal and the deviant, with the aim of targeting and changing the deviants. In this way, the social state – the welfare state operating through social work, *the social* – can intervene into the lives of families and individuals (cf. Donzelot, 1979).

Secondly, the welfare state had at its disposal technologies guaranteeing individuals *insurance* and protection against risks (*technologies of insurance*). By the use of collective insurances to share and spread risks, for instance in terms of illness and unemployment, throughout the population, a feeling of social solidarity may be developed among the population. Both of these forms technologies of solidarity aim at protecting the most vulnerable people in society, which is particularly important as vulnerability and exclusion create fragmentation and thereby conflicts – in this way social solidarity can be created. Together, these technologies and normalising practices give a particular meaning to “the social”, as the collective form of solidarity and the platform on which welfare can be provided – through State interventions in the lives of its citizens and civil society. Within the framework of such solidarity, which has overcome social and economic conflicts and tensions, people can – ideally – find themselves actively participating in the societal community.

Donzelot's historical analysis, specifically related to a French context, is interesting in that he develops a theoretical understanding of the kinds of *problems* to which the welfare state appears as a *solution*, i.e. his perspective offers an abstract understanding of how the welfare state and social work may be analysed with regard to the relation between problem and solution, conflict and solidarity. The problems in the social policy landscape of today in a way illustrate the problematic of solidarity described by Donzelot. Tensions and conflicts are at the very centre of attention in the mainstream of today's political debate and the lack of solidarity is increasingly emphasized as one of the main challenges for the welfare state and social work. Today, there are individuals and groups whose opportunities to social participation are limited, due to a range of socio-economic, geographical, and ethno-cultural conditions. At the same time, some groups find themselves particularly vulnerable to risks, while the collective forms of protection and intervention appear less and less comprehensive. The welfare state and social work are currently transformed and so are the technologies used to create solidarity. So, the question is – still – how the welfare state can manage to create solidarity and how the fostering of the population according to certain norms can be arranged. By specifically drawing attention to social work interventions as technology of solidarity and as a solution to this particular problematisation, it is possible to examine in more detail the creation of solidarity, the establishment of norms and the fostering of individuals who are includable and participating in the societal community.

Method and material

The analysis is based on interviews with representatives and leaders of *Football for Integration*. In all, seven interviews were conducted. The different respondents are described in the text based on their respective role in the Activity.

The Initiator represents the boards of the participating associations. He has a substantial network of contacts in the municipality, among politicians and officials, but also in trade and industry. The Initiator is also the chairperson and is active in a local charitable foundation. The *Organiser* is an educated sports teacher with broad experience of management assignments within the sports movement. He is responsible for working out an activity plan. The *Sports leader* has many years of experience of the sports movement and is also a trained pre-school teacher. He leads the activities with the children within *Football for Integration*. The *Sports coach 1* describes herself as a “girl and immigrant who plays football and is studying to be a teacher”. She helps to lead the children's sports activities. The *Sports coach 2* is the youngest of the representatives. He also helps to lead the

sports activities. The *Headmaster* leads the activity at one of the participating schools. He is responsible for the contact between the school and the sporting Activity. The *Municipal representative* is an official in the municipal administration who is responsible for the projects initiated in collaboration between municipality and civil society as well as specific interventions in different areas of the City. In that capacity, she is responsible for, among other things, contacts between municipality and the sports activity.

The interviews were based on the respondents' own descriptions of *Football for Integration*, its activities and its strategic objectives. The interviews were led with the support of a thematic interview guide which ensured that topics concerning the Activity's *objective*, its *approach*, football as a *means* of change and the respective respondents' *own role*, were dealt with. Interviews with the organiser, the leader and the coaches were conducted on the sport site just before or after the activities. The other interviews (with the headmaster, the municipal representative and the initiator) were carried out during the same period as the above mentioned interviews, but not at the sport site. The interviewers were careful regarding the impact on the respondents' statements and the aim was to minimise the interviewers' impact on what was said during the interviews (cf. Cruickshank, 2012). The interviews were transcribed verbatim and then analysed as text.

In the analysis, the empirical material was interpreted within the framework of the theoretical perspective on problem-solution (cf. Bacchi, 2009) and conflict-solidarity (cf. Donzelot, 1988, 1991) described previously. This means that we have interpreted the respondents' statements on *Football for Integration* and on the potential of football when it comes to promote integration as problematisations and constructions of solutions – particularly with regard to how the problems are described in terms of tensions and conflicts and how the solution proposed are aimed at integration and solidarity. In this respect, the focus of the analysis has been put on technologies of solidarity and fostering of the targeted children in order to equip them with the skills deemed necessary for social inclusion. In the process of interpretation, the respondents' statements were divided into the topics of *problematisations* and *solutions*. Focusing on the way in which these are interwoven, we were then able to further analyse the basic notions and understandings of conflict and solidarity, outside and inside, chaos and order, structuring the discourses about the Area, the families and individuals living there, and about sport, particularly football, and its potential for social change.

Research context

In disadvantaged areas throughout Sweden, the interrelated effects of spatial separation, marginalisation in the labour market and territorial stigmatization produce social, economic as well as educational inequalities, affecting particularly children and youth (Bunar & Sernhede, 2013; Salonen, 2014). Here, sport has been politically assessed as means of social inclusion (e.g. Government Offices 2015). In Sweden, expectations on sport practices to contribute to social objectives are made more explicit recently (Norberg, 2011; Fahlén & Stenling, 2015). This is, by all means, not a new idea: as early as the start of the 1900s the sports movement was mobilised in order, with the ideal of diligence and participation, to get children and young people active (Norberg, 2010). This is where the labour movement in particular played an important role, highlighting sport as a means of developing democratic ideals and creating solidarity by overcoming class conflicts (Norberg, 2004). A point of departure of the paper is an emerging literature on the importance of sport as a vehicle of responding to social problems and providing welfare (cf. Houlihan et al., 2009). Research on sport for social objectives have noted that such practices could contribute to individual resources such as enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence (e.g. Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Lawson, 2005) and also to community development and social relations (Coalter 2007; Lawson, 2005). Among other things, this has been described as children and young people acquiring “life skills” and learning to “play the game of life” (Danish, 2002; Williams et al., 2002). According to this notion, which is not unusual in the research, the skills acquired through participation in sport are thought of as transferrable to other contexts, being highly valued also in contexts outside of sport (Ekholm, 2013).

At the same time, other research indicates that sport only can constitute a limited social policy action as regards taking action against or changing the fundamental conditions which create segregation, tensions, conflicts and problems in society (cf. Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2015; Ekholm, 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). With specific reference to sport as a means of integration, research has highlighted three problematic aspects regarding the potential of sport to create integration.

To begin with, it is particularly important to highlight the risk of integration in a sport context being seen as synonymous with adaptation (assimilation) to specific norms and pre-defined ideals of the majority (cf. Forde et al., 2015). Studies have shown that it is not rare for targeted interventions to risk pointing out certain groups as deviant, with regard to ethnicity/race/culture (Hylton, 2011). Interventions aimed at specific groups thus risk creating stereotypes of these groups, based on euro-centric ideas which counteract diversity and pluralism and instead contribute assimilation (e.g. Hylton, 2011). It has also been shown that there are pedagogic ideals and practices in sporting contexts which tend to maintain hierarchical patterns and exclude among others racialized groups (Long et al., 2014; Spaaij et al., 2016). From a social policy perspective, it can be highly problematic if interventions promoting integration in practice involve strategies for assimilation where the inclusion and participation of one group is based on the adaptation to the other group, on the other group's terms. Another aspect of the concept of integration noticed in research is the importance of differentiating between different types of integration: integration can involve both strengthening of bonds within delimited groups, and thereby stronger delimitation against other groups (*exclusive bonding*), and the creation of more inclusion and bridging contacts *between* different groups (*inclusive bridging*) (Coakley, 2011). The explicit goal of integration is usually the latter, i.e. to establish contacts *between* different groups. At the same time, experiences indicate that, practically, integration is often a matter of creating cohesion *within* specific groups (Coakley 2011; Fundberg, 1996).

In addition, there is often a strong belief that, by participating in sports, children and young people can acquire skills which can lead to social mobility, i.e. that the children and young people are given resources to change their situation in life themselves (Coakley, 2002, 2011). However, such hopes have often proven to be significantly exaggerated (Spaaij, 2009; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). Using sport to create conditions for social mobility is instead described by Coakley (2002) and Riess (1980) as a quite naive dream – which not only conceals the complex causes of the problems and the social and economic inequalities in society which create vulnerability, but can also legitimise the use of sport as a way of governing and normalising children and young people in vulnerable positions in society (cf. Spaaij, 2009; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). The research has also emphasised the fact that organisations which are successful primarily when it comes to being in charge of sport rarely manage to prioritise social objectives over competition (Coalter, 2007). Not only that, some researchers have even maintained that sport can help to create different types of social problem such as violence, abuse and bullying (Anderson, 2010).

In Sweden, the multi-ethnic suburbs are an important arena where the tension between conflict and solidarity is played out. Research has shown that for several decades, the public debate on multi-ethnic suburbs has revolved around the so-called Million Programme (Ericsson et al., 2002; Nord & Nygren, 2002; Dahlstedt, 2005). Since the 1970s, the Million Programme has been described on the basis of its “otherness”, with a continuous focus on the conflicts, deviations and problems which the areas create in the form of culture clashes, gang rivalry, drugs, poor school performance and vandalism (Ristilammi, 1993; Ålund, 1997; Pripp, 2002). In the 1970s, the Million Programme was described as different first and foremost in a social respect – the areas were seen as different because those who lived there were socially different – they were working class, had a lower level of education and in some cases were abusers. The discourse gradually changed, portraying the Million Programme as different primarily on the basis of ethno-cultural otherness (Ristilammi, 1993).

In the new Millennium, the Million Programme is no longer described as “immigrant areas”, but rather as “areas of exclusion” (*utanförskapsområden*) (Dahlstedt, 2015). However, these areas are still described as different, not just due to the residents being socially or ethno-culturally different,

but due to the areas evoking particular values and cultural expressions characterised by dependency on welfare, alienation, suspicion and political passivity (Davidson, 2010). This “culture of exclusion” is assumed to have a self-generating logic which, once it has gained a foothold, has a life of its own. These areas thereby appear like a sort of antithesis to the normality – in the form of capacity to adapt, involvement, capacity to take initiative and employability. The particular attention of this discourse on exclusion ends up being on the suburb’s young people, who are portrayed as having a split personality (Ericsson, 2007). On the one hand, their passivity constitutes a particularly alarming threat. On the other hand, they show signs of activity, but of the wrong kind – such as vigorous religious introspection, work within the informal economy, recurring protests in the form of riots and burning cars (Schierup et al., 2014; Léon Rosales & Ålund, 2016). Even, in relation to sport participation the divide between passivity and channelling the forces (and threats of) bad activity have been concerned (Ekholm, in press). In this context, the young people of the suburb are seen as both the source of conflict and the possible solution to create solidarity: if they are formed or fostered in the right way, there is the opportunity of creating social solidarity – otherwise, the risk is that the destructive spiral of exclusion may deepen (Dahlstedt & Hertzberg, 2011).

Analysis

A consistent pattern in the material analysed constitutes descriptions revolving around the lack of social solidarity. This lack of social solidarity is expressed particularly in the form of conflicts and tensions around society, but primarily in the Area. In turn, these conflicts and tensions expose people to different types of risk, something which constitutes a serious challenge for society as a whole. In today’s society, a number of strategies are being initiated to meet such challenges. Based on Donzelot’s thoughts on how the welfare state governs society and individuals by creating solidarity, it is possible to see sport as one of the means which may be initiated with the objective of taking action regarding the conflicts and tensions described in the material analysed.

The following analysis begins with a presentation of the way in which the various *problems* created due to these tensions and conflicts are described by those who are involved in the Activity. The Area and its inhabitants are primarily described on the basis of three recurrent discourses: weakness, conflict and otherness. The *solutions* initiated as a response to these problems are then presented, with particular focus on football and its potential for social change. The football activity functions as a way of reaching out to the Area and its inhabitants. The analysis shows how the Activity is organised in collaboration between various actors, as an association-like arena where people can meet and where a set of norms and ideals can be fostered among the participating children. With the help of the children’s participation in football, the hope is – overall – to create social solidarity and that the residents of the Area will be included in a broader Swedish societal community.

Problems

The problem area

The City is described by all respondents as divided. In the description of the divided city, an urban landscape emerges as divided into diametrically different areas – areas inside and outside, areas characterised by order or chaos, normality or otherness, strength or weakness (cf. Dahlstedt & Lozic, 2017). In this divided urban landscape, the Area is consistently described as a “weak” place, a place inhabited by immigrants and the unemployed. In turn, the Area’s “weakness” is described in the interviews as a hotbed for the occurrence of all sorts of social problems and escalating conflicts. The Area is also described in terms of otherness. An image of the Area as being “weak” emerges for the Initiator of *Football for Integration*. When he describes the aim of the activity, he proceeds, on the basis of a classic philanthropic rationality, by saying that the strong are responsible for looking after the weak in society.

In the Area, one of the *weak* areas of the City, the intention is to *take care of* children from the first, second and third generation of immigrants, along with children who have parents who do not have an

immigrant background, and thus find a better way of creating friendship, mates, understanding of different cultures [...] You have most of the immigrants in this area. The average income is significantly lower than in the other areas... Unemployment is much more common in these areas. [...] The *strong* areas are the areas with single-family houses. [...] There, the average income is 20 per cent higher than the average in the City. There, you have children with parents who can help them in school [excerpt 2].

In the quote, there is a clear line drawn between the strong and the weak areas in the City. The Area is described as weak because the people who live there are immigrants, unemployed, have low incomes and a low level of education. The Initiator's account creates a hierarchical relation between the strong and weak in the City where the strong are in a privileged position but, for that very reason, do have a responsibility to "take care of" the weak.

However, the Area is not just referred to in terms of weakness and exclusion. The situation in the Area is also described as chaotic. The situation in the Area runs the risk – unless something is done about it – of deteriorating and thereby also constituting a threat to solidarity and cohesion in the City as a whole. Among the descriptions, there is a strong undercurrent of *risk*. On repeated occasions, the Area's otherness, weakness and exclusion are compared with what is described as similar areas in Stockholm. In these comparisons, the Big City – specifically Stockholm – appears as an antithesis to the desirable – the cohesion, community and harmony of the smaller city. According to the Initiator, failure to take powerful action will eventually lead to a situation as chaotic as the one he describes as already existing in Stockholm:

We're en route towards a catastrophe in Sweden... [...] You can see this in Botkyrka, Fittja and Tensta. With a completely different tendency towards violence, with a completely different criminality, with a completely different formation of gangs – which means, and I mean this in all seriousness, that people look to join gangs. And the gang is more important than surviving. You can murder people who are in opposition, who come from other gangs. This is what we think we must try to avoid. And there, the aim is to start right from the first class so that the children will not end up in these criminal gangs, but in the world of sports instead, or preferably within the social world, where people integrate with those who come from other areas. [...] We do not need to assume the worst, but we see that the City has a great deal of... a strong formation of gangs with very violent activities [excerpt 3].

In the description, the emergence of gang formations, violence and criminality constitutes an alarming symptom of a society in chaos and almost societal collapse, where the conflicts arising in the city's peripheral areas start tearing the social body apart and disrupting its internal forms of solidarity. The description of the breakdown of the big city has a clear risk scenario: similar developments may also occur in the smaller cities throughout Sweden. In the quote, the Initiator tells us that there are already signs that such a development is on the way. The account facilitates – and actively proposes – various interventions in order to counteract and, preferably, prevent such a development and future. In the account, the Area is referred to as characterized by chaos, exclusion, otherness and weakness. The Area is exposed to serious risks and dangers. The threats portrayed in the scenario are very concrete and particularly destructive: criminality and – finally – death. Football, and civil society at large, is presented as an alternative to such a destructive scenario. The Initiator's hope is that, by participating in the activity, children of the Area will start taking part "in the world of sports... or preferably within the social world", as it gives the opportunity to "integrate with those who come from other areas". In this way, we can see that describing the challenges in the Area and in the City at large facilitate and reinforce the solutions proposed.

Family problems

In the stories about the Area's weakness, the weakness is repeatedly related to the families and particularly the parents. In these stories, children, families and parents of the Area emerge as bearers of weakness in the sense that they are described as lacking some of the resources, abilities and skills

necessary to be able to function in society. In turn, this means that the families and the adolescents run the risk of ending up “excluded”, as described by the Headmaster.

It is not the case that these pupils lack knowledge, but they perhaps lack a way of expressing their knowledge, i.e. the Swedish language. And that is the main thing we try and teach them from the start. [...] It is easier to counteract segregation or exclusion if you go about doing so earlier on, of course. The older you are, the tougher it is, partly because of the language to some extent, but also maybe just to keep up in Swedish schools and get the grades required to continue on to higher education and so on. School has already gone by for their parents and it is clear that it will be difficult for them [...] It is one thing that leads to alienation, of course [excerpt 4].

In the quote above, the Headmaster describes the parents as being in a position where they find it hard giving the children the support they need to “keep up” at school, for example, and “get the grades required to continue on to higher education”. The Swedish language is described as an obstacle for both children and parents, but particularly for those who have come to Sweden at an older age, including the parents – for whom “school has already gone by”. On the basis of such a problematisation, there is a hope that the Activity can compensate for the parents’ difficulties, particularly by functioning as a place where children can learn Swedish, which they are described as having difficult to do in their home environment.

One argument recurring in the interviews is that the parents’ lack of resources and skills also constitutes a problem for Swedish civil society, and for sport associations in particular – especially when it comes to their opportunities to meet the children in the Area and to get them to participate. The Organiser thinks that, in turn, this problem has resulted in several of the associations which have been active in the Area have been forced to close down parts of their previous activities:

It is quite difficult to work in an area where there are many immigrants, partly because there is fairly poor patronage among parents and it is difficult to get leaders to join in. They also have financial difficulties so they might not always do the right thing [*göra rätt för sig*]. [...] This is not good but they do not manage to get hold of money from parents who do not once pay membership fee. And you have to do that [excerpt 5].

According to this argument, the parents do not get involved in civil society, at least not by involving themselves as leaders. In turn, it is said that this lack of involvement makes it difficult to establish the kind of civil society activities described by those interviewed as an important means of creating integration. The parents are also described as particularly economically vulnerable, which makes it even more difficult for them to “do the right thing”, as the Organiser puts it. In the quote, we see how economic vulnerability is described in moral terms. In one respect it is about *poor* patronage and in another respect it is about them getting things *wrong* (or in any case not doing “the right thing”).

Individuals of exclusion

In the interviews, there is a recurrent discourse describing the people living in the Area as actively part of the problem of exclusion by differentiating themselves from the “Swedes”. The Organiser is one of those who differentiate “immigrants” from “Swedes”, arguing that the former spontaneously distance themselves from the “Swedes”.

I think that racism, which they talk about so much, I think that the biggest racists are actually the immigrants themselves a lot of the time. Against... well... different peoples [*folkslag*]. Imagine that it is Swed... Swedes are against the immigrants, but... I can say that it... they are much tougher against one another than we are in that direction. Yes, in common parlance and short temper and heat of the moment... where here and there [excerpt 6].

Here, the category of “immigrants” is described as consisting of different groups or, as the saying goes, “peoples”. Although these groups differ from one another, altogether, the “immigrants” differentiate themselves from the “Swedes”, particularly in the respect that they are tougher and

have hotter temperaments than “Swedes” do. Such a characterisation echoes popular stereotypes of “immigrants” and “Swedes” identified in previous research (cf. Fundberg, 1996; Brune, 2004). In the interviews, the differentiation between “immigrants” and “Swedes” is expressed particularly in relation to civil society and the way in which different groups participate in organisations of civil society. One recurrent line of argument is that “immigrants”, mainly by organising themselves into their “own” associations and socialising with those who are more “like” their own “people”, are differentiating themselves from “Swedes” and the “Swedish”. According to this line of argument, “immigrants” are described as establishing associations which strengthen the bonds within the own ethno-cultural community, while excluding them from the rest of society. According to the Municipality representative, the majority of those from the Area who come to the municipality to start an association have their “fellow countrymen” as target group, which the municipality does not view in a completely positive way:

Among those who approach us and want to form an association, and they might want to do so with their fellow countrymen... it feels like a certain security to do so. If you want to put together your football team and you want it to be your people [*folkslag*] only, we try to get people to cooperate. Sometimes it is possible, but often they want their own because there is a certain amount of security in that [excerpt 7].

In contrast to a previous quote (excerpt 5), where the parents were described as lacking in terms of involvement when it comes to supporting their children’s participation in civil society and football, there is here a specific form of involvement and participation emerging – aimed at one’s “own” group. Such involvement is certainly understandable – “there is a certain amount of security in that” – but it is still portrayed as somehow problematic. A desirable involvement is conceptualised as based on “cooperation”, another recurrent topic that we will focus on in the following, in relation to possible and desirable interventions. In both cases (excerpts 5 and 7), then, involvement is described in terms of problems: involvement is understood as constituting a problem in the Area in the form of *lack* of as well as the *occurrence* thereof.

In the quote above (excerpt 7), the different groups living in the Area is once again referred to in terms of specific “people”. In the quote, there is a particular form of solidarity emerging, which differs from the inclusive kind of solidarity that is seen as desirable – including different groups, transcending the borders between inside and outside (roughly corresponding to what has been referred to as *inclusive bridging*, cf. Coakley, 2011). The form of solidarity taking shape among the groups living in the Area, however, is based on the principle of sameness and community – a sense of belonging “with your compatriots” within the exclusive “people”. Here, the bonds are strengthened primarily within the group (roughly corresponding to what has been referred to as *exclusive bonding*, cf. Coakley, 2011). Such inward-looking community-formation is described as further deepening the dynamics of exclusion which threatens societal solidarity, not just in the City but also in society as a whole. The Initiator is one of those highlighting the dangers of such inward-looking community-formation in the Area.

The young people in that association have a very narrow background. They come from an area in South America [and are part of the Chilean association]. They generally speak Spanish during their training sessions and so on. Or if you take Syrians or... Balkans. This is a big problem in [the City] but also throughout Sweden [excerpt 8].

According to this description, it appears as though the processes generating and deepening the state of exclusion in the Area and the City as a whole are driven by a kind of seemingly natural, inherent logic. One main problem here is that those living in the Area enclose themselves in “their” own associations. As a consequence, they are step by step from disconnected from the surrounding society. In the quote above (excerpt 8), the language emerges as an important symbol for the rationality of exclusion. With the young people in the Area organising themselves into separate associations where they can – or actually should – speak languages other than Swedish, the

boundaries between the inside and the outside are recreated and even strengthened. In this description, the line between the inside and the outside are primarily drawn on ethno-cultural grounds – between Swedish-ness and otherness.

At the same time, there are descriptions where the focus is not on ethno-cultural differences as the most serious problems in the Area. In the interviews, the Headmaster most clearly makes such a description: “I do not believe in cultural differences”. He certainly emphasises that such differences do exist and that they do create some problems, but first and foremost because they create different conditions for and capacities to navigate in Swedish society. “So, such differences clearly do exist, but at the same time I don’t think it’s that aspect – it’s the fact that people have social conditions that matters”. In this description, the cultural dimension is not differentiated from the social – rather, they are understood as intimately dependent on one another. In the headmaster’s description, the focus is on different social conditions rather than on a disconnected ethno-cultural belonging. On the other hand, he emphasises that ethno-cultural belonging is of crucial importance when it comes to the opportunities of individuals to be included in society.

The Headmaster first and foremost highlights the importance of work and participation in working life when it comes to creating solidarity in society. In order to gain access to working life and social life at large, he describes access to networks as absolutely necessary: “The Employment Office is all very well, but maybe people get hold of work through contacts, and other advantages or benefits in society. If you do not have the social network, it doesn’t matter what sort of education you have”. And, he argues, in this particular respect, migration creates different conditions. “If I travel to another country and have no contacts, it’s so much tougher! [...] It’s not always easy to navigate around our systems, as it were”. Here, again, a distinction is made between the inside and the outside. This time not specifically based on ethno-cultural belonging, but with the apparently banal word “our”, which indicates that the systems which those seeking employment need to navigate in are already existing, pre-determined and, to be more precise, “ours”, i.e. “the Swedes”. The distinction between “Swedes” and “immigrants” recurs in a sequence where the Sports leader recounts an event which was recently played out in the Activity. As a recurring pedagogic feature during the week, the children had been given the task of thinking about the differences between men and women in football.

At the time it was a boy from Iran and he said, like, that women were not even allowed to go and watch football there. Then I was like: Yes, but it must have been around the 1800s you were thinking that way, but no, that is the way of thinking right now. And I do not really understand it. He probably didn’t either. So, we live under such different conditions. I’m learning an awful lot. It’s fantastic to be able to get a different view of your own life, what your circumstances are. We’re quite well off, I’d say [excerpt 9].

The account draws a line between the normal and the foreign. The line is drawn on the basis of time and space. In the quote, there is a *temporal metaphor* used, where the exotic category of the Others appears as We did way back in time – in the 1800s. In his account of this episode, the Sports leader describes the meeting with the boy from Iran as a learning opportunity, an opportunity not just to gain knowledge about Them but particularly about oneself: “one gets a different view of one’s own life”. The meeting with the Other thereby becomes an opportunity to gain a perspective on who We are (i.e. a modern people) and society We live in (a modern society).

The description does explicitly *not* value: We *are* not better than Them. However, with the fairly modest statement “We’re quite well off, I’d say”, one valuation appears and becomes evident: We are better *off* than Them. In the account, the boy emerges as a representative of not only the Area as Other, but also the Other culture. This imagined Other is placed outside, but at the same time inside the midst of a contemporary Sweden. The Other is referred to as outside both in *time* (in pre-modern time) and in *space* (in Iran). In this way, the foreign and problematic Area is animated in the guise of the boy, portrayed as being outside the normal.

If, before going on to further analyse the specific solutions highlighted in the interviews, we are to quickly summarise the main discourses on the Area and its problems, we may observe the following: The prevalent discourse surrounding problems highlights a number of inadequacies, located in the Area, the individuals (the children) and families (the children and their parents). These inadequacies are described as a hotbed for the development of a number of tensions, conflicts and social problems, including crime, formation of gangs, which in different respects deviate from the solidarity of the surrounding society. The inadequacies – singly and jointly – pose a threat to solidarity in the City as well as in society as a whole. In the discourse on the problems of the Area and its inhabitants (the children and their families), the Area is described as an area of exclusion where the boundaries are drawn between inside and outside, normality and otherness, strong and weak, order and chaos. According to such a discourse, the problems are located in the area of exclusion, where individuals as well as families living in the area emerge as carriers of problems, the locus of conflicts – and in need of interventions which may create inclusion and solidarity. Conversely, in relation to this area, the surrounding Swedish society appears as a kind of presumed and pre-defined normality.

Solutions

Within the frames of this particular problematisation, *some* solutions are made possible and reasonable, while *others* are put into the background, appear unreasonable or even impossible. On the basis of such discourse, football emerges as a solution to the identified problem of exclusion. As the problems in question are principally located in the Area, which is portrayed as weak, chaotic and foreign, the solutions are formulated from a specific position, from the position of the strong and the normal – i.e. from the position of the inside. According to a recurring argument it is the responsibility of the strong to help the weak by getting them to develop the resources and skills required to become a part of the ordered and normal society – to come inside (see excerpt 2) and hence form a social kind of solidarity.

The solutions initiated through the children of the Area being able to play football are based on three main technologies: *collaboration*, *association-likeness* and *fostering*. These technologies are put to use as a means to cross the boundaries described as problematic, in order to overcome the tensions and conflicts identified. In the following, these technologies are presented separately. However, this does not mean that they are isolated. Quite the contrary, they are intimately related to one another. In all, the three technologies form specific subjects as well as arenas where such subjects may be formed. Together they are initiated as a means of creating solidarity between people and actors throughout society and more specifically to enable the children and their families inside inclusion.

Collaboration

Let us start with the first technology: collaboration. As described earlier, *Football for Integration*, like many other contemporary social policy interventions, is based on collaboration – *partnership* – between public, private and civil society actors (cf. Dahlstedt, 2009a; Ekholm, 2016). The Activity was initiated by two sports associations, but is currently arranged in close collaboration with school and after-school centres, with the support of the municipality, the District Sports Federation, the District Football Association, local companies and charities. Such collaboration gives various actors the opportunity – in this case the school in collaboration with civil society and private actors – to meet, identify and initiate joint projects which bring together diverse resources, skills and desires. The aim of the collaboration is to create solidarity between the cooperating actors as well as between people in society. With this collaboration there is an arena established, for talking, sharing experiences and coordinating information and resources. On this arena, *the partnership*, boundaries between different sectors and interests are crossed in the search for solidarity between the partners cooperating in the sense of developing joint, sustainable strategies (Lozic & Grassgård, 2017).

The different actors involved in collaboration all highlight the value of collaboration for the individual actors and for the Activity as a whole. For example, the Headmaster describes the Activity as having a great potential for the school.

I imagine that what we've initiated together with the people behind the project is positive. We've succeeded in creating this organisation with a mix of theory and practice working with values [*värderingsövningar*] and suchlike, which is very good. Here in school, football is played at every break and *Football for Integration* can be involved in developing these children on a more organised level – how to behave on a football pitch, for example. And, in the long term, I think it is guaranteed to *reduce a lot of conflicts* arising [excerpt 10].

From the Headmaster's point of view, collaboration under the auspices of the Activity creates added value for the school, particularly by opening up an arena for fostering where the children can develop the social and cultural skills and acquire the norms and values create solidarity between individuals. The Headmaster hopes that the interventions made under the auspices of the Activity, "working with values and suchlike" can "develop these children on a more organised level", which is "guaranteed to reduce a lot of conflicts" in the long term, in school and in society at large. We will return to the question of fostering and the specific social and cultural skills, norms and values the children are expected to acquire by participating in *Football for Integration* further on.

Let us first focus on the Headmaster's approach to collaboration and its potential. While collaboration is based on the crossing of boundaries between different areas of interest and activities and the searching for common solutions, there is also a certain preservation of boundaries between different areas of interest and activities. Although the Headmaster sees a great value and potential in the fostering elements in the Activity, he is quite sceptic about the plans about developing methods to provide with homework in collaboration between the Activity and the school.

When I spoke to [the Initiator], he was interested in developing some kind of collaboration concerning help with homework and suchlike. I somehow think that the school should be responsible for the pedagogic matters, and it might sound as though I do not want anyone going into my domains, as it were, but I do not want to build a society where we [the school] make ourselves dependent on others, for a task that the school should deal with. It's our responsibility to see to pupils' knowledge and knowledge progression [excerpt 11].

The quote illustrates the negotiations regarding boundaries between different areas of interest and ways of understanding welfare arising when between different actors are engaged in collaboration, including the school and associations in civil society. In the Headmaster's description of collaboration, there is an explicit tension. On the one hand, there is an ambition within the Activity to provide with voluntary support to children who find it difficult to keep up at school and who lack the right support from home for this. In that respect, *Football for Integration* emerges as a selective and philanthropic initiative aimed at the "weak" and "vulnerable" in society. On the other hand, the Headmaster is careful to maintain a (universal welfare state) ambition whereby the school is a "public good" (cf. Englund, 1993), with the overall responsibility for children's learning, which does not allow the children to be dependent on either their parents' level of education, support or charitable initiatives from civil society. Following such a line of argument, the Headmaster strongly highlights the pupils' learning as a responsibility for the public, not for the voluntary sector.

Association-likeness

The Activity is, as shown above, based on collaboration. It takes the form of a meeting place for different actors, but it also takes the form of a place where people and different groups in society can meet. This particular meeting place is not an association and is not organised like a football association in the strict sense of the word. It rather takes the form of an association-like place, a place where children and parents can be introduced to the associational life of civil society. In the following way, Sports coach 2 with insight describes his feelings of exhilaration of how some of the participating children see *Football for Integration* as "their football team".

There are many who do not play in a football club... there was someone who said: "Oh, I play for *Football for Integration*!" Oh, that's great to hear. They see this as their football team [excerpt 12].

Participating in football and being introduced to civil society at this association-like place means that the children can be fostered in a desirable way. In the interviews, participation in civil society and in the particular form of sports associations is described as a crucial part of the participation in Swedish society as a whole. It is thereby seen as particularly important that children from families who are less used to participate in such associations to be introduced to sport and civil society more broadly. The hope – the Sports leader emphasises – is to create among the children a desire and an interest in playing, continuing to play – and to gradually work their way up to a “real” association.

It is hoped that these children think it is fun to come here, that they learn something, obviously, when it comes to football. They might fancy continuing to play and have made a few new friends from other schools, when we then later on have several schools together. That’s what I’m hoping for. And then obviously, in the end, we want them to want! That we can create an interest in continuing to play football in an association when they leave *Football for Integration*, become too old or might fancy starting in an association and that we can help them get in, depending on where they live. We might be able to talk to a nearby club and tell them they can ring here and, hey, we can help them get in there if that’s what they want... so that they continue to have an interest and guide them into activity and life in associations, which I think is good. I do like civil society associations... I myself have gained so much from civil society activity all my life... [excerpt 13].

Here, *Football for Integration* is portrayed as a bridge between the outside, life in the Area, and the inside, represented by the Swedish civil society. The primary aim of the children’s participation in the Activity is not simply for the children to develop their sporting skills. Rather, the primary aim is for the children to be in an environment where they can meet children from other parts of the city and – in particular – committed adults who can “help” and “guide” the children, from the outside, to the inside and into the surrounding Swedish society. This association-like place is conceptualized as an arena for cultural meetings, where the boundary between inside and outside can be crossed and a new, more integrated and respectful solidarity can be achieved. In these terms, the Sports leader describes the playing of football as a way of “getting to know one another”.

I really believe in civil society and sport as a means to integrate with each other, to get to know one another and learn to understand and respect one another. That’s where we meet and if we meet many times, although we’re from different cultures, I also believe people will respect one another and start to understand one another. It may well often be so that if something’s not very familiar, it’s difficult to socialise together and understand why some people think in that way. It’s completely stupid to believe that my way of thinking is the only one that’s right [excerpt 14].

On the basis of how the Sports leader (excerpts 9 and 14) talks about how people with different background can have difficulties understanding one another, the Activity as well as the civil society at large appear as a meeting place where people can get to know one another – and themselves – just by meeting across the boundaries. The Sports leader clarifies his reasoning by drawing the following historical parallel:

People used to say that there should be an association in every village, that there should be an association close to everyone to act as a gathering point [*uppsamlingsplats*] where people can come to play sport, whatever sports it may be. [...] People say that the biggest and best recreation centre [*fritidsgård*] is the sports complex. People meet there. There are rules to follow there. You have to learn the rules. It’s good to be busy. If you have recreation centres where you are close to one another, where people can meet... otherwise you might do other things that are not as good [excerpt 15].

The sports complex is described here as a “gathering point”, a place where everyone can meet and where solidarity can be formed – “people meet there”. The recreation centre metaphor is telling. This place is seen as a pedagogic arena. “There are rules to follow there. You have to learn the rules”. Those who participate on this arena will be fostered in specific ways, according to specific norms. At this arena or meeting place, the boundaries and tensions in society can be overcome by fostering and diversion. By participating on this arena, attention is drawn at good things, while

things “that are not as good” may be diverted. In a similar way, the Headmaster describes civil society as an arena of opportunities and learning, with a range of positive effects way beyond the realms of civil society.

I think integration work spans more than the six hours you are at school. You must look at the total amount of time children and people have. There, voluntary organisations, civil society activities (whether they be football, scouts or whatever you can think of) are a way into a larger interface for people. It creates nothing but positive effects. That you become someone in a context. [...] not just that you get to keep yourself busy doing something you enjoy, football or being out in the forest and scouting or whatever you do, but you also gain contacts which are beneficial to you in other instances which are not specifically football or scouts. [...] Linguistically definitive as well. You will probably come into contact with people whom you would not otherwise have done. So, both linguistically and socially [excerpt 16].

How, then, is the activity initiated as such an arena of opportunities? When it comes to creating this arena and the learning processes leading the children to inclusion in society having the right leaders with the right leadership is described as crucial. With regard to leadership, there is a specific type of leadership emerging in the interviews. According to the Initiator, the explicit aim of *Football for Integration* is to develop activities based on “modern pedagogics”, with a coaching staff consisting of educated “recreational workers and people who have worked with football activities as well as having training within the field”. At the same time, *other* recurring abilities among the leaders are emphasised with regard to how the children can be shaped in a desirable direction. Here, it is primarily the leader’s capacity as “role model” which are highlighted. For example, Sports coach 1 describes her role as leader as follows.

My role is to teach football, to be a role model. [...] I believe that my main role is... well, they, the girls, look up to me a bit. I’m a girl and play football, and... they think I’m clever and all that so they just want someone to look up to so they also know they can manage it. Increase their self-confidence, show that a girl can play football. It’s not only for boys. And allow them a bit of space. Be there and push them. [...] Many immigrants have prejudices against girls playing sport in general. And helping them, well, if they wanted me to I’d be very happy to help them. If I need to speak to their parents, I can do that. In principle I could do anything to help them, if they wanted to play football or something else [excerpt 17].

For her, leadership is about being a good “role model” in her conduct in front of and together with the children, someone who the children can identify with and whose good example they can imitate in their own behaviour and in their own life. Here, the specific personality and experience of each “role model” constitute a great trust-forming capital, which obviously can be different and used differently by each and everyone (cf. Ekholm, 2016). In her particular case, being a “role model” means being a “girl” and an “immigrant”. She sees her role as “role model” as particularly important with regard to the prejudices among “immigrants” about how it is to be a girl in sport, which in itself can contribute to or even deepen existing exclusion. She describes her leadership in terms of pushing, helping and giving self-confidence primarily to “them”, i.e. girls with “immigrant” background – as she. In this context her own experiences can be very useful: “My parents moved here and they have integrated, so I know how it happens, and it’s not as easy as everyone thinks and all that”. In relation to her role as “role model”, with emphasis on her specific personal experiences, the fact that, while she is involved in *Football for Integration*, she is also studying at the university to be a teacher is not mentioned. This experience and possible competence is not portrayed as equally prominent and valuable in her leadership.

The Sports leader, with many years of experience as a pre-school teacher, also describes his leadership primarily in terms of being a “role model”, where it is a matter of giving a good example in different ways.

I try to be a role model, to see everyone. [...] That is where I believe civil society... we can’t do everything, but I think it plays a really big role in fostering our children and young people. Being a

decent fellow human being, irrespective of where we come from. This is where I think sport – irrespective of which one – has quite a lot of power, positive power, to be able to influence [excerpt 18].

When describing in more detail the effect of being a “role model”, he also talks on the basis of his own biography and a specific person who was a “role model” for him when he was young:

I may not always have listened to what my mother said, nor to my teacher, but I listened to what my trainer said when I played as a youngster. [...] We have a big influence and then it’s important for us to be a positive role model. And I think we’d be influencing in the other direction if we weren’t. [...] I do of course think it’s really great to foster an Elite football player, but it’s also great to have had girls and boys who, when they’re 30-35, appear in town and say “Damn, what fun we had when we were at *Football for Integration*”. The fact that you will meet them even in a dark alley late at night without being in any danger, that’s what I see as my goal as leader [excerpt 19].

In spite of different backgrounds, experiences and personalities, when meeting the children, the leader personifies and in a way defines what is normal and desirable, according to which the children are expected to be fostered by participating in football (Ekholm, 2016). So, what is it – then – that the children are to be fostered towards, by participating in football?

Fostering

First and foremost, there are three objectives of fostering recurring in the interviews: fostering for friendship, diligence and adaptation. In all, there is a specific citizen-subject appearing in the stories, a subject which is both adapted and adaptable in relation to a particular normality. The different fostering technologies initiated under the auspices of football are facilitated by the specific discourse on problems outlined above, according to which the Area, its children and families are described as both carriers of and causes of conflicts and social problems. It is on the basis of this particular discourse that the children are constructed as in need of fostering to become part of the societal community by embracing its rules and norms.

Although *Football for Integration* is not an association in the strict sense of the term but rather association-like in terms of activity, there is a strong sports metaphor framing the way to talk about fostering. Here, the metaphor of the game functions as a way of understanding how society and life in general work, and thereby also the way in which fostering ought to take place. The game of football metaphorically portrays the game of life (cf. Ekholm, 2013). In this game, the children are said to acquire skills valued in society as a whole and which thereby become important as regards inclusion. In the interviews, there is a strong focus on the importance of fostering children to become team players, where the children will get to see themselves and others as part of the team. As the Organiser points out, this is why friendship and capacity to cooperate are emphasized as important guiding principles in the Activity.

It is arranged in a slightly different way from the traditional association sport... the guiding principles are ball games, football games and enjoyment of exercise. Maybe some technique. It must be *friendship and collaboration* which drive everything [excerpt 20].

According to this team-game metaphor, the individual is not seen as isolated – the individual always needs to conform to the team, learn to interact with the team mates. In order to become a good team mate, the children also need to conform to the rules of the game. Here, the norm of friendship is strongly related to another norm, that of diligence, to behave. Football offers a clear pedagogic rationale: Football is a game which is played on a playing field with a set of rules. The game lasts for a specific time, but it can also be called off. Sports coach 1 describes how calling it off may function as a crucial technique of fostering the children in how to behave.

Sometimes a palaver has arisen, full on. That is when we have stopped the game and made everyone go and sit down. Then we have sat and talked – about how to behave, about how you should behave towards others and stuff like that. You either *behave* or have to sit and talk [laughs]. We’ve stopped a

fair few times and just sat and talked about *how to behave*, what to do, what it is to be part of a team and stuff like that [excerpt 21].

The game has clear rules. There is no space for compromise. There are no grey areas, only right and wrong, allowed and not allowed. The rules are there to be followed. According to this principle, the children are fostered towards diligence by participation in football. Social abilities are an important part of the game's rules, i.e. the capacity to be part of a broader social context, to cooperate with others and – not least – others who are different. Football offers no free choices. The children either play the game or they do not. If they take part, they also follow the rules of the game. According to the rules of the game – as the Sports leader summarises it – the participants are forced to cooperate and “form a mixture”.

Rules and types of work... it's very good for there are certain rules you have to abide by. [...] The aim is to develop their social and linguistic skills... We assess swearing and things like that by stopping the game and discussing with them. The social aspect is important. They're forced to cooperate with one another and form a mixture [excerpt 22].

Mixing is the key as the fostering on and outside the football pitch aims at breaking the introspection among the children and parents of the Area and replacing it with extrospection, towards the surrounding society, its expectations, norms and values. Here, the norm of diligence relates to another norm, that of adaptation. The Initiator explicitly talks in terms of adaptation when he describes his main hopes regarding the prospects of the Activity.

If you do not take them in hand in the world of football, gangs will form. [...] The idea is to find a social way of trying to prevent that. If you lower the ages you deal with, the idea is to see whether you can avoid problems in this area, everything from graffiti to destruction and the theft of bicycles. [...] It would be wonderful if it were also possible to get them to better *adapt to Swedish society* and have more success at school [excerpt 23].

Again, football is described as a means of “taking care of” an unspecified “them” (see also excerpt 2). In this connection, the aim is to prevent a destructive development in the form of gang formation, graffiti and thefts. Success here requires early interventions and this is exactly why participation in football can be seen as a potential means of progress. Under the auspices of football, opportunities are offered to foster the children towards adaptation – to Swedish society, its rules and values. In the interviews, the question of the rules of the game is regularly related to specific values, defined in terms of Swedish-ness. The Organiser gives one example of how this particular relation is made.

So, this activity is a method of integrating and functioning in a good way. There are some *Swedish traditions* when it comes to organisation and rules, yes... how you behave [excerpt 24].

Here, fostering towards diligence – “how you behave” – is synonymous with “Swedish traditions” and fostering thereby becomes adaptation to Swedish-ness. At the same time, it is important to emphasise that the form of fostering initiated under the auspices of football is not a one-dimensional disciplinary process, in relation to certain pre-determined rules and values. On the contrary, there is a strong emphasis among those interviewed that the integration facilitated by football should be understood as a multi-dimensional process where those targeted by the fostering interventions – first and foremost the children – themselves need to be actively participating. Here, an important pedagogic challenge is among the children develop a desire to integrate, a will to move themselves from the exclusion – the outside – and adapt to the order of the inside. In other words, for the coaches working with the children, it is a question of, as Sports coach 1 puts it, finding the “best way of helping them to integrate”.

However, these fostering interventions are not just targeting the children – the interventions are, in the long run, targeting *the whole family* (cf. Donzelot, 1977; Dahlstedt, 2009b). With the

initiatives taken by the and initiated within the Activity, the parents can also be reached, which would otherwise be quite difficult. The Initiator emphasize that he at least hopes that the children's participation in football, in the long term, can make their parents become more involved with their children.

In the long run, I hope that parents will also become involved with their children in a better way. It has been shown that there are a number of parents who come down to look. Some of them may not be working at that moment and come down to look and see how it works [excerpt 25].

Using sport as a means, based on the metaphor of the game, a range of technologies of fostering and solidarity are initiated, making the Area, its children and parents, reachable and includable. These technologies are facilitated by collaboration between a number of actors, collaborations itself based on community and solidarity; by the creation of an association-like arena where an appropriate and normal way of living can be fostered and take shape. In the Activity, these technologies of fostering towards solidarity and integration – in relation to the boundaries, tensions and potential conflicts threatening solidarity – may be arranged and put into use.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have analysed how social solidarity is created and how children are fostered into socially included or includable citizens – within the framework of a specific, sports-based social intervention. The analysis has shown how the Activity is based on a number of *technologies of solidarity*, initiated as a means to foster children into participation and inclusion. According to the analytical approach developed in the paper, the welfare state has as its task to overcome tensions and social conflicts in society by creating solidarity and maintaining order. With the emergence of the welfare state and the specific challenges it dealt with, the main line of conflict in society was drawn along socio-economic divisions. With the point of departure in the sports-based intervention analysed in this paper, we would here like to conclude by discussing the main lines of conflict to be overcome in the social policy landscape of today at least to some extent can be understood in quite different ways.

The problems identified among the representatives actively involved in the Activity consist of frictions and conflicts created by segregation in the cities as well as in society at large, and boundaries between those who are on the inside and those who are on the outside. The problems are also defined in terms of an increasingly threatening future, where there is a risk of tensions and conflicts escalating unless powerful measures are made towards solidarity and integration. In this respect, meeting the problems of solidarity is an urgent political challenge. In the interviews analysed, football as a social policy tool to deal with such problems highlights a number of ways in which solidarity can be created and the boundaries between people and groups can be challenged. Here, football is presented not simply as an alternative to chaos and exclusion, but also as a productive means to produce integration and solidarity. As we have shown in the analysis, there is a specific problematisation recurring in the interviews. Here, three domains for the social problems and conflicts emerge: the Area, the family and the individual. In the interviews, boundaries are drawn between inside and outside, normal and foreign, strong and weak, order and chaos. The problems and conflicts in the City are essentially located in the Area and it is the individuals and families living in the Area who are portrayed as carriers of problems and causes of conflicts.

However, the different technologies targeting the children, their skills and behaviour, also reach out to the parents, involving and stimulating them to want to become a part of society as insiders – or in any case to see “how it functions” in society. The intervention is initiated through technologies of collaboration, association-likeness and fostering. The collaboration is built on coordinated involvement where different actors, ranging from school and municipality to civil society and sports associations, are mobilised in joining their common forces in order to meet the problems and conflicts which are identified. *Football for Integration* is an association-like organisation, orchestrating the associational life of civil society without being an association, initiating an arena for

learning and fostering children towards participation in civil society and society at large. By the creation of an inclusive arena where something referred to as specifically Swedish is arranged, the Swedish civil society, people who are excluded can have the opportunity to learn and adapt to the values and abilities described as crucial in order to be a part of the wider Swedish society.

There are primarily two kinds of values which stand out as particularly important in terms of fostering: *friendship* and *diligence*. These values appear as the ones making it possible to become part of the societal collective, facilitating adaptation and enabling the excluded children to become part of a life within the ordered “inside”. In this respect, friendship and diligence stand out as illustrations of ways to behave in a Swedish societal community. Thus, *Football for Integration* appear as a way in which the welfare state and social work may reach out to the Area, the families and the individuals. In the Activity, there is also an explicit ambition to reach and incorporate those on the “outside” into the “inside” by changing their skills and behaviour.

This particular change is crucial in order to understanding the form of solidarity created, which are different compared with the form of solidarity outlined previously in the paper, with regard to the early welfare state and its technologies of solidarity. In line with the way in which Donzelot (1988, 1991) describes the normalising interventions of the welfare state and of social work, the social work outlined in this paper in several respects resembles such a normalising intervention into the sphere of the deviating families and individuals in the Area. At the same time, this form of social work differs from the normalising interventions described by Donzelot as regards the lines of conflict which are to be overcome and the form of solidarity which is to be created.

The historical line of conflict highlighted by Donzelot, to which solidarity was a solution, was that of socio-economic divisions or inequality – *the class struggle*. The objective of the form of solidarity conjured up by the class struggle was to even out unequal living conditions, to compensate for these through social interventions – to *dissolve* the *socio-economic* divisions between the classes and stifle the class conflict by creating a cohesive social collective and a sense of solidarity. If we take a look at the descriptions analysed in this paper, there is a different line of conflict appearing, a different kind of division made as well as a different way of dealing with this division. Firstly, the lines of conflict and the division between inside and outside are interpreted primarily along *socio-cultural* lines. Those who are described as being excluded – the foreign, weak and disordered – are described as ethno-culturally different from Swedish society. Here, the division are drawn between the inside and the outside, where those on the outside are defined in terms of ethno-cultural otherness. Secondly, the technologies of solidarity facilitated under the auspices of football are primarily based on *maintaining* the division between inside and outside. The aim of *Football for Integration* is not to dissolve the division between inside and outside. The division is recognised, but the ambition is to equip the individuals and families respectively on the outside to cross the border and enter the inside. For the individual and the family who pick up the “right” values and adapt to the dominant conceptions of what it means to *be* on the inside, the path to inclusion appears as a journey in an already given, pre-determined landscape. Instead of the division, and the potential line of conflict between inside and outside, being dissolved, it is maintained, but at the same time overcome by individuals and families in the Area adapting to the cultural normality of the inside (Swedish-ness).

The formation of solidarity appears a one-directional process. It is not a mutual process whereby an integrated social collective is created, but rather a process whereby those who are described as being affected by exclusion are given the opportunity to individually adapt to a set of Swedish norms and virtues, linguistic and cultural skills, as a means of reaching the “inside”. This particular “inside” is defined by those who position themselves as already being “inside”. It is, as it were, the stronger party, given this positioning, which defines the terms for inclusion, participation and solidarity (cf. Dahlstedt, 2015). Here, adaptation or assimilation to the norms, ideals and behaviours of the “inside” emerge as a dominant technology of solidarity. Integration appear as possible as long as the “excluded” adapt to the “inside”, which is made possible by the sports-based pedagogy of the Activity reaching into the Area, fostering the families towards Swedish-ness. The line of conflict has thereby shifted, from the socio-economic to the socio-cultural. The divisions in

the social body are not to be dissolved – but rather maintained, yet at the same time overcome by adaptation.

Based on the comprehensive aims of the welfare state to use social interventions as a means to create solidarity, we may identify the following, in the cases analysed in this paper: An approach which sets out to deal with tensions and conflicts without comprehensive reform or the questioning of boundaries. It is not the boundaries and tensions which are problematized. Rather, it is the Area, the families and the individuals who, as it were, end up on the wrong side of the boundaries (and who thereby represent the lack and problematic of solidarity) who are attributed to the position as “excluded” and who are problematised.

We can further see that social policy here is given a specific spatial location – in the “area of exclusion”. The other areas in the City appear as “normal” and thus not the target for selective social policy interventions. The social problems, the conflicts and tensions in the societal body are spatially located in the Area, which indicates that the intervention, and the social policy of which it is part, maintain rather than reform the social order creating these very tensions and conflicts. Such an approach to tensions and conflicts (and to the establishment of order rather than reform) further illustrates, so it seems to us, an on-going shift of focus for the rationality of solidarity of the welfare state. So, on the basis of the intervention we have focused on in this paper, it is possible to observe the contours of a greater reconstitution: of the way in which the welfare state and social work deals with social problems, in Sweden as well as in a number of other countries, i.e. by maintaining boundaries and order in combination with pedagogics for adaptation and cultural normalisation.

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