Noisy Management
A History of Danish School Governing from 1970-2010

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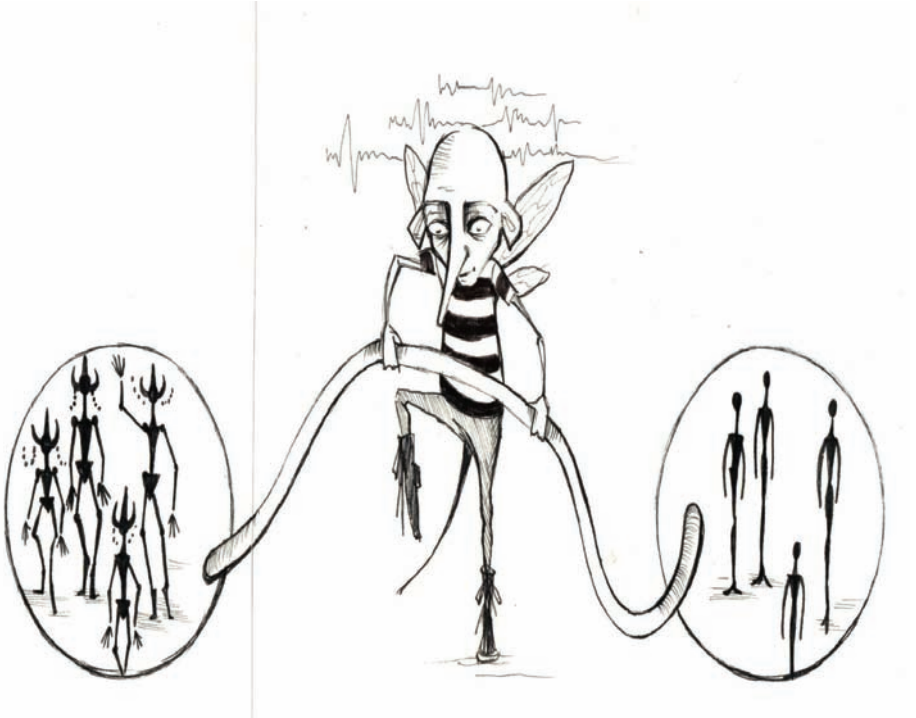
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The Doctoral School of Organisation and Management Studies (OMS) is an interdisciplinary research environment at Copenhagen Business School for PhD students working on theoretical and empirical themes related to the organisation and management of private, public and voluntary organizations.

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Preface

In Denmark, as in many other welfare states, we strongly believe that problems within the public sector can be solved by means of better management. For quite some years it has been assumed that management leads to more control over and better quality of welfare. Politicians and public servants have therefore been concerned with how the individual hospital, nursing home and school can develop its management. This has created a somewhat strange problem: How is it possible from a position at the top of a governing hierarchy to create management capacity from below?

This thesis is about how Danish local government, municipalities, have developed understandings of governing relations between themselves and the public school over the last 40 years. The thesis tracks how municipalities have gradually assigned organizational independence to the individual school and increased their expectations of its self-management.

Political initiatives as well as public debates repeatedly request more and better management of public schools[1] and this is exactly what Danish municipalities over the years have sought to deliver. However, this thesis is not simply a history of a movement towards more management. My point of departure is, quite the contrary, that more management can never be a simple movement. Rather, it is a path full of paradoxes:

First, a concern to create schools as independent units capable of self-governing will always entail the unresolvable paradox of how it is possible within a hierarchy to assign independence to a subordinated institution. How to demand independency? The question is how municipalities can simultaneously communicate to schools to do as they are told *and* to be independent.

Second, a call for more management needs to describe presently unruly elements that need more management in order to be optimized. If no intractability can be pointed

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[1] Just to give a few examples; see Danish Government 2007; 2006; OECD 2004a; Danish Ministry of Education 2007; Danish Evaluation Institute, 2006

to, how can more management be the obvious solution? Increased attention to chaos or disorganization is thus inevitably brought about with calls for more management. A second paradox of wanting more management is therefore that any desire to create more management may also increase exactly what it hopes to decrease. It may be that we are here witnessing a productive tragedy of management. Namely that each initiative to strengthen or improve school management also makes visible new unmanaged spaces and thus new requests for more management.

Thirdly, today, the ambition of Danish municipalities is not only to create self-managing schools, but also to create innovative schools. Schools are requested to create flexible forms of organization for teaching so that children can learn in accordance with their motivation and individual learning styles. An innovative school is understood as a school that acknowledges that the object of management is learning processes that are essentially so unpredictable and elusive that they cannot easily be planned or organized. Indeed, processes of learning are observed not to thrive at all within rigid organizational structures. A third paradox thus emerges of how to request schools to strengthen their self-management without leading them to destroy the unmanageable nature of learning processes.

In this thesis, I aim to explore how municipal school governing has developed from before the ambition of governing schools' independence emerged and until today, where schools are not only governed to manage themselves as efficient organizations, but also to self-manage in such ways that the unmanageable nature of their object, namely learning, is not repressed. I will pursue how the emergence of this paradoxical ambition to govern independency has triggered an avalanche of increasingly advanced reflection upon the problem of how to govern and how this has led municipalities to expand their expectations to themselves. Moreover, I will investigate how efforts to increase management have not resulted in more control, but quite the contrary in an ever-increased attention to ungovernable elements. I aim to show how a number of tragedies of governing are built into the different governing reforms and how these tragedies continuously trigger new governing attempts that again only increase ungovernability.

The empirical case of the thesis is thus the relation between municipality and school. However, it is my belief that this relationship is symptomatic for movements occurring generally in our welfare states. My hope is that the thesis is not only a specific history of school governing, but also a more general account of the genesis of new conditions of welfare production and welfare management. With the case of public schooling, my aim is to contribute with a diagnosis of the emergence of certain forms of welfare governing and management.

And, finally, Krister Moltzen deserves a heartfelt thank for haven taken the entire three year tour –including several detours - of the thesis with me. Thank you, Krister, for taking an interest in every little detail of my work, for reading the entire manuscript at various stages and for always taking good care of me.

The thesis consists of four parts. In the three chapters of the first part, I will develop the research questions of the thesis by elaborating on their empirical foundation, describe the analytical strategies through which I will pursue them and position the thesis in existing literature. The second part is an analysis of how municipalities have problematized school governing from 1970 and until today. The third part is an analysis of how the school has thereby emerged for the municipal gaze from 1970 and until today. And lastly, the fourth part provides final discussions and conclusions. I will elaborate the content of these parts in the end of the first chapter.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION
A history of a tragedy of governing

In Denmark, governing of primary and lower secondary schools is divided between national and municipal government. The legislative framework is formulated by the national government and the Ministry of Education,[2] but municipalities[3] play a very central role as the major local governing actor who controls the schools' budgets, and who are responsible for the quality of education, for supervising of schools' self-management, for initiating school development and for hiring and firing school management. However, municipalities have not always been the important figure they are today.

The story of how municipalities became a central school governing actor begins in 1970, when a major reform changed the structure of Danish local government and municipalities were given an increased responsibility for the area of schooling. The central argument for the reform was that municipalities were too small and the role of the state increasingly too strong for municipalities to perform as efficient local governing actors.[4] A central guiding principle of the formation of new municipalities was therefore to create sustainable municipalities capable of running certain welfare areas such as schooling.[5] After the reform each municipality should be large enough to function efficiently as a school governing actor capable of planning and running its own school system.[6] Moreover, in order to stimulate municipal economic

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[2] Ministry of Education provides legislative framework, educational content in the form of overall curriculum goals, and specific policy initiatives in recent years for instance introduction of national test, attempts to introduce a culture of evaluation in the public school.

[3] Today, an average municipality has 55.000 inhabitants.

[4] Ingvartsen & Mikkelsen 1991: 11; Schou 1994: 34.

[5] Before the reform many rural municipalities were small to run a school and municipal school governing was therefore complicated affair often involving two or more municipalities. One guiding principle of the reform was that a municipality could not be smaller than capable of running at least one school.

[6] With the increased demands for schools from the enactment of 1958 (For instance the number of pupils per year of the 8th and 9th school year could not be below 70 in order for a reasonable number of

responsibility, the former system of reimbursement of municipal expenses from the state was replaced by general grants.[7]

In a language slightly different from the articulations of the time, we might say that with the reform, municipalities were requested to discover and vitalize themselves as efficient governing actors suited to be the administrative centre of school planning and financing. We may also say that with the reform, municipalities were not only to discover themselves but also discover certain welfare areas such as schooling as an object in need of coherent and efficient municipal government and planning. Therefore, this is exactly where this thesis' history of relations of governing between municipalities and schools begins. Throughout the pages of this thesis, I will pursue a history of how, from the 1970s and until today, Danish municipalities have increasingly discovered and developed themselves as governing actors. I will study this as a history of how the very conduct of governing welfare institutions has been problematized over time in different ways. I will pursue how the possibilities of municipalities of having an impact on welfare institutions have become an object of knowledge and how increasingly complex understandings of the problems of governing have lead to augmenting complex developments and innovations of governing.

This ambition of writing a history of how municipalities have discovered and problematized themselves as governing actors and how schools have emerged for a municipal gaze is on a more abstract level also an ambition of following a certain tragedy of governing. In studying how municipalities have discovered and developed themselves as governing actors, I focus on how, over time, municipalities come to increasingly doubt whether governing is possible at all. After decentralization reforms in the late 1980s municipalities, for instance, ask themselves, how one can govern schools without destroying all the initiative and engagement in school

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electives to be possible moreover the number of pupils per school should not be so small that each school year could not have its own class and teaching plan) this meant at least 3-4000 inhabitants (Schou 1994: 36).

[7] A central concern in the reform was to create efficient governing by uniting administration and financing in municipalities (see Ingvartsen & Mikkelsen, 1991: 16-17; Schou, 1994:36)

development going on at the school?[8] I pursue how municipalities have hummed and awed, in order to govern without destroying the initiatives and self-governing capabilities of schools. The thesis aims to throw light on a tragedy of governing of how municipalities continually run into a self-created wall of reflections upon the impossibility of governing and how this has triggered new and innovative governing strategies.

Moreover, the aim of the thesis is to write a history of how, then, municipalities have been able to observe, make sense of and understand welfare institutions in the specific case of schools. I will pursue how the reflections upon problems of school governing produces specific images of what a school is; what a school should become; what its most pressing challenges are; and how certain ungovernable elements of a school can be made governable. The thesis is therefore also a history of how municipal efforts to govern school entail specific forms of creating schools as object of governing and, in the last 20 years, also subjects of self-governing.

The thesis pursues a guiding hypothesis that attempts to increase self-governing capacity of welfare institutions entail a production of ungovernability.[9] More management can only emerge as the obvious solution if a present state of intractability can be displayed. With this thesis, I aim to focus exactly on this intimate connection between ambitions to govern and ungovernability. I will follow how a production of ungovernability is intensified when the governing ambition is not only to govern but also to increase capacity of self-management. For a welfare institution to be created as self-managing it needs to discover itself as relations between managing and managed elements. In the present case, the school thus need to emerge *both* as a self-managing actor *and* as disorder and disorganization in need of management.

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[8] Feature article in Danish Municipalities 16.08.1990, p. 4

[9] This concept is here chosen since it has previously been used to as diagnose an inherent tendency of state power to produce problems for itself. For instance the concept has been used to signify how modern government is caught in a simultaneous overload of expectations (expectations to provide welfare, security, justice, etc.) and a limited steering capacity (Offe 1984: 69). In the following pages I will explicate how I define the concept of ungovernability.

In the thesis, I aim to focus on this feature of attempts to create schools as self-managing: how schools are simultaneously encouraged to manage and organize themselves *and* to produce disorganization. I will pursue how governing communication cannot help spreading fantasies of that what is currently outside the reach of governing and needs either to be included in the space of governing or need to be excluded and dispensed with. The thesis thus also illuminates a tragedy of governing by studying how attempts to make schools self-managing are deemed to always produce as much ungovernability as governing and how this self-produced organizational noise simultaneously triggers and threats further governing.

Let me now proceed to present the historical transformations I aim to study.

Conceptions of schools from elements to learning processes

> These instructions state a method for composing a prognosis of the number of pupil- and year groups, a method for estimating the need for class rooms and examples of how a level of service can be maintained independently of the school structure.[10]

> Learning and inventiveness occur when human beings, children as well as adults, work together. That is why school policy is so much more than talking about hours, economy, a long line of subjects and binding goals for every year group. A conscious focus on the needs for change, processes, flexibility and relations are important, when the tasks of the school are to be solved in optimum manner content wise and economically.[11]

These two quotes, both from the association of Danish Municipalities, Local Government Denmark (LGDK), express the overall transformation that the thesis pursues.

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[10] LGDK in the magazine of Danish teachers, Folkeskolen [the Public School] 25.05.1978, nr. 21, p. 1157.
[11] LGDK in Danish Municipalities 30.01.2003; See also LGDK, 2010a

The initial citation from 1978 is from a description of a method for calculating future need for school facilities.[12] The article carefully describes how a municipality can calculate the most appropriate way of closing down, re-building, merging and building new schools by taking into account the numbers of school-aged children, the square meters needed per. pupil in each classroom, the number of special subject rooms required and public transportation of children from home to school.[13] That methods of planning appears as important communication about school governing, may tell us that governing is understood as coherent and rational planning. To govern seems to be a matter of ensuring that schooling is planned as appropriate as possible so that a municipal school system can be run as cost efficient as possible.

Through such an understanding of school governing, a school emerges as an object in need of rational planning. Or more precisely, the school emerges as a unity of a multiplicity of facts, requirements and activities that need to be calculated in relation to each other and to the physical facilities. Schools are not seen as units capable, for example, of controlling their own budgets. Rather, municipalities observe schools as a calculated match between capacity (numbers of class rooms, subject rooms, square meters, and facilities for physical education) and needs (numbers of school aged children, numbers of hours for each lessons and the needed number of square meters per pupil in class rooms or common areas). The school is thus understood as elements to be coordinated and planned.

The second quote, from 2003, expresses a somewhat different understanding of what a school is. Numbers of hours, the line of subjects and economy are no longer seen as the essence of school policy. Instead the object of governing is articulated as change, processes, flexibility and relations. An economic concern has not disappeared, but economic optimal school governing is not understood as central planning of variables.

Today, municipalities articulate schooling as a matter of creating a space where individual and sometimes unpredictable learning processes thrive. And since it is

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[12] See also Danish Municipalities 11.03.1972; LGDK, 1978; Folkeskolen, [the Public School] 1978: 1157 for similar discussions.
[13] See also Danish Municipalities 17.03.1971, nr. 25, p. 11

believed that each pupil learns in accordance with his or her own individual learning styles, schools need to be flexibly organized. A leading school highlights flexibility when it describes itself on its webpage: "The flexible school becomes the amoeba organization, capable of adjusting to the needs it observes." The school operates with "flexible learning environments" and explains good teaching in the following way:

> It [good teaching] operates with spaces of learning like 'the lecture room', 'the study cell', 'the laboratory', 'the open space room,' etc. Therefore good teaching becomes an amoeba concept, since pupils are different and enjoy and benefit from very different learning environments with regard to content, method, organization and structuring, and since criteria continuously must be changed as new knowledge becomes available.[14]

It is here argued that good teaching cannot be defined in an unambiguous way if the school is to reach out to different children with different learning requirements. Teaching emerges as the essence of transformability, the amoeba, an organism capable of becoming almost anything and thereby of adjusting itself to the needs of different pupils and situations.

Between 1978 and 2003 crucial transformations have occurred. Whereas, in 1978, the school is conceived as elements to be planned, in 2003, the school emerges as processes that are somehow beyond what can be governed by deciding the line of school subjects and numbers of hours. Whereas in 1978, school governing was a matter of central calculation and planning, in 2003, the school is to arrange itself to be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of individual pupils. Therefore decisions cannot be taken before hand, but need to be postponed to the moment of learning so that possibilities are held open of adjusting arrangements to individual learning processes. And finally, whereas in the 1970s it seemed to be taken for granted that teaching and learning would occur within the planned boxes and frames, today, it seems as though schools are encouraged to carefully consider how they can provide optimal conditions for unpredictable learning processes.

These changes represent a radical change in the ways in which the school is expected to relate to itself and to ungovernability. In the 1970s, it seems as though there were

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[14] Due to reasons of anonymity, I do not refer to the specific school.

no expectations to schools to manage themselves. In fact, it seems as though there are no 'school self' at all, since the school emerges as an object of planning as a multiplicity of fact and concerns. Moreover, it is the responsibility of municipalities to govern schools by means of calculation and planning. Today, the school is not just observed as a unity capable of managing itself; it is also expected to self-manage on the conditions that the object of management, learning processes, should be managed without reducing the potentiality that stems from its nature as unmanageable.

The thesis sets out to trace how these radical transformations came about. I will study how municipalities came to observe schools differently when they discovered the advantages of delegating competence to schools and thus sought to make them self-managing. And I will analyze how, over the years, schools have increasingly been expected to become self-managing organizations capable of planning their own activities, formulating their own goals and strategies and assessing their own performance. The thesis explores how the municipal attempts to, from the outside, create a system capable of creating itself from the inside, have created expectations to schools to increasingly relate themselves to unmanageable elements.

In other words, the thesis studies how municipalities have sought to facilitate schools' independence by offering them images of unmanageable elements that the school should become self-managing by relating itself to. Moreover, I pursue how this development is radicalized with today's ideals of innovative schooling where unmanageability is not only something that should be made object of management in order to be brought under control, but also something which should be celebrated and nurtured.

Research questions

Allow me to recapitulate and formulate my research questions.

On an empirical level, the overall ambition of the thesis is to investigate how municipal school governing has developed over the last 40 years and how conditions of self-management of schools have thereby been formed. The overall research

question is: *How have Danish municipalities sought to govern public schools to become independent?*

The thesis studies this development with two different knowledge interests. Firstly, I examine the historical development with an interest in how municipalities have discovered and reflected upon the problem of how to govern independence and how this has led to an expansion of municipalities' expectations to themselves to handle this problem, for instance, with new governing techniques. And secondly, I take another journey through the history of school governing from 1970 and until today to follow how municipal attempts to govern independence have produced a range of different problems for schools' self-management. The ambition is here to pursue how attempts to govern independence have not only helped schools to manage themselves but also produced a suspicious attention to ungovernability. I aim to follow how this problem is radicalized with today's expectations of innovation where schools are not only expected to become independent by seeking to manage these ungovernable elements but also to foster them in order to produce a surplus of possibilities and potentiality.

The overall research question is thus explored through two sub-questions.

How have Danish municipalities sought to govern public schools to become independent?
  1) *How have municipalities engaged with the problem of how to govern independence and how has this led them to expand their expectations of their own ability to handle the problem?*
  2) *How have the attempts to govern independence produced problems for schools' self-management in the form of increased expectations to manage unmanageable elements?*

The chapters of the thesis

Let me briefly describe how the different chapters deals with these questions.

In chapter two, I will present the theoretical framework of the thesis and develop the analytical strategies with which I will approach the research questions. The question is: How do I construct a research design to capture and elucidate the ways in which Danish municipalities have sought to govern schools' independence?

In chapter three, I will qualify the research interest and questions by presenting the literature that this thesis draws on and seeks to contribute to. I will engage in discussions with previous studies of the empirical object of the thesis, namely contemporary school government. Moreover, I will present how the thesis situates itself within an academic field of governance in modern welfare states and paradoxes of welfare governance. And finally, since the thesis shares a problematic with contemporary organization theory and its turn to process philosophy, I will also engage in a dialogue with this field.

In the chapters 4, 5 and 6, I will pursue how municipalities have discovered and dealt with the problem of how to govern independency in three different periods of time. Chapter 4 will explore the years after the municipal reform in 1970 and until the late 1980s. Chapter 5 will investigate the ideals of decentralization emerging from the late 1980s and until the late 1990s. And chapter 6 will analyze the calls for professional organization from the late 1990s and until today. These chapters will seek to answer the question of *how municipalities have engaged with the problem of how to govern independence and how this has led them to expand their expectations to their own ability to handle the problem?*

In the chapters 7, 8 and 9, I will analyse how municipalities have sought to make schools recognize themselves as independent. I take a second journey through the history of school governing sketched out by the previous chapters in order to propose a diagnosis of the conditions on which schools are to manage themselves. I thus analyze the same historical periods, but now with new questions of how schools have been requested to manage themselves by relating to their own ungovernability. These chapters seek to answer the question of *how the attempts to govern independence have produced problems for schools' self-management in the form of increased expectations to manage unmanageable elements?* In chapter 7, I show how

municipalities saw the school as a dispersed set of facts to be planned and that the school was therefore not yet considered a unity capable of any self-management. In chapter 8, I explore how, in the first years after reforms of decentralization, the school was requested to prepare itself to become self-managing by discovering its stakeholders. I analyse how the closed nature of teacher communities emerged as the unmanageable element the school was encouraged to manage. And in chapter 9, I follow how the school from the late 1990s and onwards have been expected to become independent by transforming itself into an organization capable of steering and assessing itself. I analyse how teaching interaction then emerges as the unmanageable element that the school should seek to capture and make object of management.

However, in these years, new expectations to Danish public schools are emerging. Today, schools are not only to create themselves as organizations but also as innovative learning environments. These transformations are the subject of chapter 10. I analyse how learning is today observed as unpredictable processes that cannot and should not be controlled to tightly. I ask: how is the school today requested to manage learning processes without destroying their fundamental nature as unmanageable?

In chapter 11, I will conclude on the findings of the thesis and discuss how these contribute to educational research about government of schools, to studies of welfare governance and to process thinking in organization theory.

Chapter 2

ANALYTICAL STRATEGIES

In the beginning is the cross roads.[15]

[15] Serres, 1995: 57

In the introduction, I have stated that I aim to study how municipalities have struggled with the challenge of how, from the outside, to create a system that can create itself from the inside. However, I have not answered how I approach this question theoretically and analytically. In this chapter, I will present the theoretical framework of the thesis and develop strategies for analyzing the empirical data. The question this chapter will answer is: How do I seek to capture and elucidate the ways in which Danish municipalities have sought to govern schools' independence?

As stated, the central research interest is the problem of how to govern independence. I have, however, not given this problem any theoretical underpinning. The first section of this chapter will be dedicated to this issue.

Moreover, I have stated that I aim to study municipal attempts to govern schools to become independent. An important question is, however, how I make this material an object of study. It makes a difference whether the empirical material is observed as actors, institutions, interests or discourses. In the second section, I will therefore present by help of which concepts I turn the empirical material into object of analysis. This will also partly answer questions about the reach of my findings.

Third, it needs to be specified what I mean by *ungovernability* and how I aim to study such a phenomenon. The next question is therefore how I conceptualize ungovernability so as to have a concrete analytical object to study.

Fourthly, to study ungovernability, the thesis combines a number of theoretical traditions such as systems theory, theories of noise from theoretical biology, cybernetics, philosophy and deconstruction. Questions therefore arise of how the combinations are made, and how the concepts change when they are brought into the context of the thesis.

Finally, I have stated that the empirical data consists of an archive of policy documents, interviews and ethnographic observations conducted in three municipalities. However, a lot of choices and non-choices were made in the processes of collecting this data. These also need a few reflections.

The questions that I will seek to answer are thus the following. First, how is the research question underpinned theoretically? Second, by help of which theoretical concepts is municipal school governing made an object of study? Third, how do I construct analytical strategies to study the emergence and reconfigurations of the municipal ambition of governing independence and to analyze how schools thereby emerge as relations between governable and ungovernable elements? Fourth, how are concepts from different theoretical traditions brought together in this thesis? And finally, how is the empirical data of the thesis collected?

Theoretical point of departure for the research interest

To govern independence is not only a problem in a common sense understanding - it also has a theoretical underpinning. Let me first describe how the research interest is inspired and supported by Niklas Luhmann's concept of autopoiesis.

If we take a point of departure in Luhmann's theoretical universe, the problem of how to, from the outside, create a system that can create itself from the inside is radicalized. A central concept in Luhmann's work is the concept of autopoiesis with which he argues that all elements belonging to a system is created by the system itself. Any autopoietic system is in that sense closed to its environment. In the case of the thesis, this would mean that municipalities can never directly interfere with schools' self-creation, but are always deemed to depend on the ways in which schools let themselves be interfered. Let me explain properly in order to elaborate on how this concept supports the research questions.

Luhmann finds the concept of autopoiesis in the work of biologists Umberto Maturana and Francisco Varela.[16] Simply put, autopoiesis is a name for the self-creational character of systems (hence the signification of the word auto: self and poiesis: creation). The concept stresses that all elements that a system consists of are

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[16] See Maturana & Varela, 1972

produced by the system itself[17]: Self-generated expectations, self-constructed environments, self-described identities and thematically defined boundaries.[18]

By taking a point of departure in the concept of autopoiesis, Luhmann departs from general systems theory, since the focus is no longer relations between parts and whole, but the relation of a system to its environment.[19] For autopoietic systems, a distinction between system and environment is constitutive: systems create and maintain themselves by producing and preserving difference to an environment.[20] Luhmann states "[B]oundary maintenance is system maintenance"[21] Without difference to an environment, a system cannot discover itself as it is the distinction that produces the experience of identity. To experience (some form of) identity therefore always means to experience through the distinction between oneself and environment.

Observations of an environment are, however, internal to a system. The distinction between system and environment by help of which systems create themselves is therefore a distinction, occurring within the system. The system is not capable of escaping itself and crossing to the side of the environment, and an environment is instead constructed within itself in order for it to be able to observe and experience itself. [22] We are here dealing with a figure of a re-entry.[23] By re-entering a distinction between system and environment into itself an internally constructed environment emerges allowing the system to relate itself to its environment and experience itself in relation to specific images of this. The re-entered difference thus plays the role of relating and differentiating the system to and from a self-constructed environment.[24]

The concept of autopoiesis highlights that formation of systems takes place through self-referential processes. Systems operate by self-contact and possess no other

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[17] Luhmann, 2000: 73
[18] See Teubner, 1992: 613
[19] Luhmann 1995a: 6; Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2007: 14
[20] Luhmann, 2000: 52; Luhmann, 2002: 123
[21] Luhmann, 1995a: 17
[22] Luhmann, 2000: 75
[23] Spencer Brown, 1969: 69ff; I will elaborate on this concept in Intermezzo I
[24] Luhmann, 1995a: 28

environmental contact than meetings with self-constructed environments.[25] This means, among other things, that there is no safe common ground among systems.[26] And, moreover, that any idea of unilateral control is abandoned.[27] In autopoiesis there is only self-control.

The problem of governing independence is thus even more paradoxical when observed from the theoretical framework of autopoietic systems. The thesis takes a point of departure in the assumption that as autopoietic systems, municipalities and schools are closed to each other. Municipalities can communicate al sorts of messages to schools, but they will always be deemed to depend upon the ways in which schools make this communication a subject of communication. As stated, control has to be self-control. And contact between a system and its environment can only be self-contact in the sense of contact with the system's self-produced environment.

I draw on the concept of autopoiesis to assume that both schools and municipalities are self-creating and self-referential. The difference between inside and outside is a boundary on the sides of which any meaning-creation may be fundamentally different. The concept of autopoiesis highlights that any endeavour of, from the outside, creating a system that can create itself from the inside is truly difficult and unlikely. With the concept of autopoiesis, I thus get a point of departure for studying ambitions of governing independence that fully appreciates the impossibilities and paradoxes that follow from such an ambition. The research interest in the problem of governing independence is, in other words, studied on the condition that municipal attempts to govern are always occurring in a social space radically outside the schools that are sought governed.

Moreover, the point of departure in the concept of autopoiesis means that I observe any reference to schools in municipal governing communication as a self-produced environment of municipalities. The images of schools produced by the governing communication are analyzed as a feature of the governing communication and not as an expression of the nature of schools. Questions of how true or how precise such

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[25] Luhmann, 1995a: 33; Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009: 48
[26] Luhmann, 1995a: 35
[27] Luhmann, 1995a: 36

images are, are, in other words, outside the reach of the thesis. As I will also elaborate on below, the point of observation of the thesis remains municipal attempts to govern.

School governing as analytical object– the concept of semantics

Now, the second question is how I move on from a research interest in how municipalities have sought to govern independence to an object of analysis. In this section, I will introduce the concept of semantics and present, how I use this concept, to specify how I construct an object of analysis. This will also help me begin to delimit the reach of my conclusions.

As stated, I am interested in capturing how municipalities have discovered and dealt with a problem of how, from the outside, to create a system that can create itself from the inside. The object of study is thus municipal attempts to facilitate self-creation of schools. However, the question is how to conceive of such attempts? I have chosen to conceptualize the municipal governing over time as the formation of certain semantics. More specifically, it is a form of semantics produced to reach out to something, which it is not, but whose self-creation it is designed to facilitate. I am, in other words, studying how concepts are developed with the purpose of supporting self-creation of an independent system.

Both the concepts of autopoiesis and semantics derive from the writing of Niklas Luhmann. There are many entrances to Luhmann's extensive work, and it has been said that depending on the concept from which one enters his network of concepts other concepts slightly change their meaning[28]. The thesis does not have an ambition of discussing Luhmann's work generally. However, to understand the concepts of semantics and autopoiesis, and the way in which I use them, a small excursion to Luhmann's concept of observation is helpful. This foray will make it clear that the foundation of the concepts of semantics and autopoiesis is the concept of distinction

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[28] See Andersen, 1999: 108

and that my object of analysis is ultimately operations of marking distinctions – a dynamic play of differences.[29]

Luhmann defines observation as an operation that draws a distinction.[30] This operation uses a distinction to indicate one side (of the distinction) and not the other.[31] Observations are asymmetric or symmetry breaking operations.[32] One side is privileged as an object of observation in contrast to something, which is not indicated. However, the outer side of a distinction is equally important, since it stabilizes how the observed object emerges for an observer. To observe, in other words, depends on a relation between what is indicated and what is marked as not indicated. When the theoretical horizon begins in Luhmann's concept of observation, boundary drawing is thus where perception begins. Boundary drawing is what makes it possible for something to be indicated and thereby emerge as the object of an observation.[33]

To elaborate the concept of observation and, more importantly, thereby introduce the general figure on which also definitions of semantics and autopoiesis can be built, let me introduce how Luhmann draws on Spencer Brown's concept of form.[34] According to Spencer-Brown a form can be understood as the space cloven by any distinction together with the entire content of the space.[35]

The form is thus the two sides of the distinction and the distinction itself.[36] What is important here is that the form includes the excluded. The form is what makes it possible to indicate something, and any indication therefore depends on exactly what it excludes. This idea also applies to the concept of observation: Formalistically put,

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[29] It could be argued that if there is any ontological final point in Luhmann's constructionist theory it is the concept of difference. Although, Luhmann, in *Social Systems,* begins with the assumption that there are systems (1995a: 14), as I shall show, in Luhmann's argument, systems are exactly difference (Luhmann 1993a).
[30] Luhmann, 1998: 171
[31] Luhmann, 1993b: 485
[32] Luhmann, 1993a: 769
[33] Luhmann, 1998: 169
[34] At least in his later works from the late 1980s and onwards.
[35] Spencer Brown, 1969: 4; Borch, 2000: 109
[36] This cannot, however, be observed in the moment of the operation of drawing the distinction, but only by a second order observation. One sees the ball but not the light that are the precondition to see it (Borch 2000: 117).

observation is the unity of a distinction between indication and difference.[37] Moreover, it applies to the concept of system that I will return to below: A system is exactly the unity of a distinction between system and environment. We are thus in post-structural territory: Any identity depends on exactly what it is not.

We can now describe the concept of semantics. Drawing on Reinhart Koselleck, Luhmann defines semantics as certain structures that "hold ready forms of meaning that communication treats as worth preserving"[38]. To study semantics means to study how a stock of generalised forms are created, and how they form a horizon of meaning that can be used in communication.

Such forms can for instance be concepts. The purpose of Koselleck's *Begriffsgeschichte* is exactly to study how different meaning is condensed into concepts over time.[39] For Koselleck, the aim is to follow how a concept unites a plenitude of meaning and thereby comes to form a particular mediation between spaces of (past) experience and horizons of expectations (future).[40] Similar to the general form of observation we may say that a concept is only a concept due to the way in which it is opposed to counter concepts. In historical inquiries, Koselleck argues, it is necessary to identify the shifts in counter concepts, for instance with a concept as the *state*, in order to trace how different counter concept makes it possible to stabilize a certain meaning within a concept.[41]

I use the concept of semantics to specify the object of my study. Rather than claiming to study municipalities or schools, I study the formation of a semantics of school governing over time. This means that I study how meaning is condensed into different concepts and how this forms a reservoir of meaning constituting a horizon within which school governing can be understood and conducted. I follow how meaning is condensed into concepts such as school, municipality, government and school management and thereby how a semantic reservoir is created and used in the debates of school governing from 1970 to today. We may say that rather than school

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[37] Andersen, 1999: 110
[38] Luhmann, 2000: 331, 205
[39] For a presentation of this historical method see for instance Koselleck, 2004: 75-93
[40] Koselleck, 2004: 85-86; see also Costea et al 2006; 163.
[41] Koselleck, 2004: 88

governing *as such,* the object of study is the semantic traces that efforts to govern from 1970 and until today have left schools and municipalities with.

The general approach of the thesis is thus an analysis of how meaning is condensed into semantic forms. I am, however, also inspired by the analytical approach that Foucault describes in some of his later works and terms a 'history of problematics'.[42] These thoughts are used to add a strategic focus to the semantic analysis. Whereas Koselleck and Luhmann have conducted conceptual histories by observing broad changes in the semantic reservoir of large social fields over hundreds of years and thus aimed at nothing less than diagnosing the cultural context of modernity, the aim of this thesis is of a much smaller scope.[43] By help of the ideas entailed in the concept of a history of problematics, I strategically program my semantic analysis to focus on how municipal school governing has been made an object of reflection and problematization. Let me explain:

In an interview, Foucault describes how the work of a 'history of problematics' entails attempts to "rediscover at the root of these diverse solutions the general form of problematization that has made them possible"[44] The focus is to describe how different experienced difficulties of a practice are transformed into general problems to which solutions are designed.[45] Quoting Foucault:

> This development of a given into a question, this transformation of a group of obstacles and difficulties into problems to which the diverse solutions will attempt to produce a response, this is what constitutes the point of problematization and the specific work of thought.[46]

A history of problematics is particularly sensitive to an empirical domain of thought where efforts are made to "step back from a way of acting and reacting and to present it to oneself as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its conditions

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[42] See for instance Foucault, 1984: 388; Foucault, 1981; Foucault, 2007; 129-143; Gudmand-Høyer, 2009a; 2009b.
[43] For instance, Koselleck is interested in studied those concepts that constitute points of contestation of crucial societal debates and thus tell us something about tensions between 'spaces of experience' and 'spaces of expectations' (Costea et al 2006: 163). See Andersen, 2011a for a discussion of how Koselleck's and Luhmann's historical approaches can also be attuned to studies of a smaller scope.
[44] Foucault, 1984: 389
[45] Foucault, 1984: 389
[46] Foucault, 1984: 389

and its goals."[47] The analysis is attentive to how efforts are made to detach from a practice or conduct in order to establish it as an object, and reflect on it as a certain problem.[48]

In this thesis, the thoughts entailed in Foucault's description of a history of problematics are used to focus the semantic analysis on the general problematizations of governing that a variety of conducts and techniques at certain points in time are developed as a response to. Rather than analyzing a general reservoir of meaning, I analyse how specific patterns of problematizations of governing create conceptual conditions of possibility of school governing. I can then observe certain sources and certain passages in sources as particularly relevant to my analytical endeavour, namely the particular moments where municipalities try to distance themselves from their own governing conducts and begin to reflect upon how these have worked unsatisfying or how they are not adjusted to new aims and scopes.[49]

Moreover, the attention toward processes of problematization helps me mark ruptures and discontinuities in the history of school governing. By drawing upon Foucault's descriptions of a history of problematics, I observe discontinuities in the history of school governing when practices and means of governing that have been taken for granted become uncertain and are made objects of problematization. I claim that a transformation or reconfiguration of school governing has occurred, when a conduct is related to new aims, ambitions and concerns, and when a new formation of dominant ways of problematizing governing thereby emerges.

It is, of course, potentially controversial to argue that there are crucial ruptures and periods that can be clearly distinguished from each other in a history as short as the one I am writing. However, as Koselleck has argued, it is the conduct of framing historical periods that opens up a field to a particular inquiry.[50] To point to

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[47] Foucault, 1984: 388
[48] Foucault, 1984: 388
[49] Foucault describes: "[F]or a domain of action, a behaviour, to enter the field of thought, it is necessary for a certain number of factors to have made it uncertain, to have made it lose its familiarity, or to have provoked a certain number of difficulties around it." (Foucault, 1984: 388)
[50] Costea et al, 2006: 165

discontinuities even in a relatively short span of 40 years, makes me capable of beginning to notice all the minor changes in the concepts under study. By juxtaposing different periods, I can draw attention to developments in concepts that may be taken for granted in the present field of school governing and have therefore not been made object of professional and academic reflection.[51]

My findings should, however, then, also be observed in the light of the choices of periodization I have taken. As Costea et al. have convincingly shown, historical interpretation is an enterprise whose results depend upon the temporal units of analysis.[52] My periodization should be seen as a part of the analytical strategy designed to ask specific questions and promote a particular interpretation of the history of school governing. My claim of discontinuity is restricted to a claim of a reconfiguration of a mode of problematization. I have, as stated, constructed certain periods in the history of school governing based upon identifications of dominating modes of problematization. I will argue that a crucial transformation in the way in which municipalities observed school governing emerged with ambitions in the late 1980s to decentralize competence from municipalities to schools.[53] What have happened since may be smaller changes since it seems as if a general problem of how to govern independence is still constitutive for governing communication. However, reconfigurations can be identified and these lead me to identify another rupture in the late 1990s. I will not further specify the discontinuities and continuities here, since these will be elaborated in the analyses of chapters 4, 5 and 6. Instead, I will proceed to a description of the implications of studying school governing as semantics and problematizations.

Implications of studying semantics
To make school governing an object of investigation by defining it as semantics has the following consequences for how my analysis should be read:

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[51] Rennison, 2003: 18
[52] Costea et al, 2006
[53] A rupture at this point in time has also been described by other semantic histories of the Danish public administration and management such as Andersen, 1995; Rennison 2003.

First, as already indicated above, the object of analysis is the semantic traces of governing ambitions over time, and, as described, this means that the analysis is not an account of what a school or a municipality *was* or *is.* Strictly speaking, the thesis is not a history of schooling, but a history of how different meaning has been condensed into the concepts of a school and school governing. Identities are analyzed as a result of precarious operations of drawing distinctions that, even when most successful, can only be temporarily stabilized. Any construction of identity is an uncertain affair - always contingent upon the play of differences. The thesis can observe the distinctions through which schools and municipal school governing have been given (fluctuating) communicative existence. Schools are in this thesis, in other words, always observed as an open and unpredictable outcome of a play of differences.

Second, the object of study is semantics with a certain relation to system formation. However, this relation is entirely intrinsic to the semantics. (The paradox of governing that I am interested in is exactly how to govern what one cannot reach – the ambition from the outside to govern movements on the inside.) This means that all the vivid descriptions of systems formation that I will analyze - all the colourful images of schools' governable and ungovernable elements - are more like an armchair fantasy than any real adventure.[54] The object of study is thus governing ambitions and not a reality of schooling.

Third, constructing the empirical material as semantics means that I do not seek to make the analyzed statements an expression of interests of people with specific psychological intentions or characteristics. The semantics is not analyzed as the product of specific human beings, and it is not interpreted as a result of specific rationalities or interests of persons.

Fourth, when defined as semantics, the object of analysis is the reservoir of meaning available in the past and present in the field of school governing and schooling. This does not mean that I claim that this semantics is used in so and so many municipalities and schools in Denmark. Nor can I say precisely how it is used. The findings of the thesis teach us something about the concepts that form the horizon of

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[54] This phrase is borrowed from Mihalopoulos-Phillipopoulos 2007: 24

meaning of today's municipal school governing. Whether the semantics I identify in school governing is used in every Danish municipality and every Danish school is not a question the thesis can answer. The conclusions may be characterized as conditions of possibilities for school governing. I present a map of how the horizon of meaning of school governing has been accumulating over time and how certain semantic forms and distinctions seem central today. But most likely, this semantics can and is used in different ways and to different degrees at different localities.

Let me recapitalize. I have explained how the thesis studies municipal school governing as formation of language for self-formation of independent systems. I have described how I define this analytical object by help of the concept of semantics. As with many of Luhmann's concepts, also the concept of semantics can be understood by help of the general figure of the form for which Luhmann draws on Spencer Brown. The object of analysis is thus also to be understood as the dynamic play of distinctions in meaning creation processes. When the object is defined as semantics the analysis becomes a matter of following how certain meaning is condensed into concepts over time and how this forms a horizon of meaning that is available to school governing communication. Moreover, I have presented how I draw on Foucault to supplement the approach of a semantic analysis with a specific interest in problematizations of government.

I have also described how this way of defining the object of analysis means that the thesis studies traces of municipal ambitions of governing schools and that the descriptions of schools that I analyze should be understood as fantasies of the governing ambitions rather than as an account of Danish public schools.

I have thus described how I make the phenomenon of attempts to, from the outside, create a system that can create itself from the inside an object of analysis by help of the concept of semantics. I have, however, not begun to answer a question of how to analytically capture the co-production of unmanageable elements in attempts to produce more management. The next section is dedicated to this issue.

Theories of noise as framework for studying ungovernability

In this section, I will present how I draw on a concept of noise to capture how the municipal attempts to govern schools to become independent entail a production of images of the ungovernable. As I will describe, the aim is not to introduce *one* theory of noise and a theoretical assumption that all systems formation requires noise. Rather, I seek to create a palette of different conceptions of noise in order to have a reservoir for studying how different images of that which is ungovernable, unmanageable or disorganized emerge as part of the municipal attempts to govern schools' independence.

However, before I present the concept of noise, allow me to specify how the concept of autopoiesis also helps me to study ungovernability.

A return to autopoiesis

The question is now how I look more specifically for the ways in which the semantics offers schools help to create themselves. Again, I turn to the concept of autopoiesis defined as continuous markings of distinctions between system and environment or, put differently, between self and other.

In Luhmann's work (as well as in deconstructive thinking), an assumption is that systems feed on the event of marking differences to what they are not. There is thus a form of necessary left-over or excess of the system's autopoietic work in the form of excluded elements. A form of waste from becoming. As Derrida has put it: "the system's vomit".[55] These elements and the system's efforts to exclude them form a combustible of processes of becoming of systems.

Even though such elements are excluded, they still have the ability to disturb the system. As elements they still bear the traces of their previous articulations as moments in the autopoiesis of marking the difference between system and environment.[56] They are not invisible to the organization but highly visible since they

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[55] Derrida in Bennington, 1994: 43
[56] See Stäheli, 1998: 215

point to the limits of the logic on which the system is build. From their indeterminable position - neither inside nor outside the system – the elements draw attention to the conditions of possibility of the system's autopoiesis – the fact that the system relies on what it is not.[57]

I draw on these thoughts to study how school governing entails the production of certain images of elements around the exclusion of which the school's becoming independent can be organized. This does not mean, however, that I study how schools' create themselves. As should be clear by now, I study the semantic traces of municipal ambitions of facilitating schools' self-creation. Rather, the concept of autopoiesis helps me condition what such facilitation may look like. In accordance with this concept, I analyze the facilitation of system creation as a production of generalized differences between system and environment (school-self and school-other). Drawing on the concept of autopoiesis my analytical focus is how schools have been governed by being offered different images of what a school should be and what the schools' relevant environment is. I explore how, over time, schools have been encouraged to identify with different versions of a self/other distinction. I thus use the concept of autopoiesis as a way of zooming into how (as a part of the ways in which they are governed) schools are offered images of what they should become (certain school selves) by engaging in efforts to exclude other images of what they should not be (certain school others).

The concept of autopoiesis thus plays a double role in the thesis. First, it is a theoretical point of departure that highlights that systems are self-referential and that any attempt to govern from the outside will always depend on system-internal operations. And second, the concept inspires how to look for the ways in which municipalities seek to foster schools' self-formation by looking at how schools are offered images of self and images of that which should be excluded in order for schools to become themselves.

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[57] This is, of course, a quite basic post-structural assumption. See for instance Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 111

However, this has only brought us a bit closer to how I study ungovernability. I still need a framework for analyzing more specifically the production of images of what the school should exclude. In the following, I will introduce different theories of noise and describe how they form an analytical reservoir for unfolding how these elements emerge.

Noise in systems theory

Let me first describe why I import a range of different theories of noise into the thesis.

It is a well known systems theoretical supposition that autopoiesis depends on noise. Very generally, noise can be understood as something in the environment of the system that can disturb the system if it is sensitive to this disturbance.[58] However, noise plays a crucial role in autopoiesis. Indeed, a system can only become a system by partially overcoming meaningless noise[59] and thus owes its very existence to noise. Luhmann states: "Ohne noise, kein system"[60].

These thoughts have been developed in cybernetics and are expressed in von Foerster's slogan of *order-from-noise*.[61] The slogan entails the idea that systems construct themselves out of relating themselves to the noise they observe in their environments.[62] The thought is that what constantly drives systems to reconstitute and re-organize themselves are meaningless disorder and noisy events.[63] Only from noise can systems renew themselves through the creation of order from noise.[64] As von Foerster has coined it "self-organizing systems do not only feed upon order, they will also find noise on the menu."[65] Also theoretical biologist, Henri Atlan concurs: "the task of making meaning out of randomness is what self-organization is all

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[58] Luhmann, 2000: 258
[59] Luhmann, 2000: 258; Stäheli 1996: 8
[60] Quoted from Stäheli,2003: 44
[61] von Foerster, 1981: 17
[62] Luhmann, 2000: 258
[63] Brown, 2002
[64] von Foerster, 1984 ; Luhmann 2000: 258
[65] Von Foerster, 1960: 43

about."[66] And finally, we find the same idea in Gregory Bateson's work. In his formulation: "All that is not information, not redundancy, not form and not restraints – is noise, the only possible source of *new* patterns."[67]

In systems theory, the concept of noise adds something to the understanding of autopoiesis as re-entries of the distinction between system and environment into the system, namely that self-referentiality is not pure. When becoming is self-referring, the risk of tautology and of being "lost in vicious circles" is always present.[68] And here noise plays an important part of helping the system to disturb itself. Luhmann writes[69]:

> A preference for meaning over world, for order over perturbation, for information over noise is only a preference. It does not enable one to dispense with the contrary. To this extent the meaning process lives off disturbances, is nourished by disorder, lets itself be carried by noise, and needs an "excluded third" for all technically precise, schematized operations.[70]

Noise is something that allows autopoietic systems to be disturbed in spite of their self-referential character. Noise is capable of contributing to this paradoxical process of adding something external to a self-referential system exactly because it exists somewhat in between system and environment.[71] Noise is not part of the system, since it lies outside of what is observed (and thus produced) by the system as meaningful information. However, neither is noise entirely outside the system since it is perceived by a system.[72]

In Luhmann's work, environmental disturbance or noise is thus given a central place as a source of systemic renewal. In fact, one may say that Luhmann's whole interest in how order is possible stems from a fundamental assumption that order is improbable exactly because the world consists of disorder or noise. However, it seems as though once given such a crucial role, noise is somehow left out of Luhmann's main interest,

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[66] Atlan, 1984: 110
[67] Bateson, 2000: 140
[68] Stäheli, 1996
[69] and explicitly connects himself to the work of Michel Serres that also plays an important role in this thesis.
[70] Luhmann, 1995: 83
[71] See also Serres 2007: 71, 65
[72] Noise is always noise for an observer (Serres, 2007: 66; Wolfe, 2007: xxii).

and a focus on how order is possible in spite of its improbability is prioritized. Luhmann refers to authors such as von Foerster and Atlan for descriptions of this noise[73], and continues to pursue the mysteries of order formation.

We may thus say that systems theory builds on the supposition that all system formation depends upon noise. However, ironically this means that systems theory can leave the interest in noise behind in order to study unlike formations of social order. In this thesis, I aim to zoom into the dynamics of noise in the municipal attempts to govern. The concept of noise is not just a theoretical presupposition, but also an empirical interest. Let me explain. I do not aim to observe how systems depend on noise. Rather, I am interested in unfolding how municipalities as a part of their attempts to govern independence offers schools different images of order and noise through which schools are invited to create themselves. This means that the concept of noise is not introduced as an ontological precondition, but as an analytical device to unfold the different ways in which schools have been expected to create themselves as orderly by excluding or eliminating different forms of organizational noise. To analyse this I do not need one unambiguous definition of order and noise, but a range of different concepts that can help me bring forward how in different periods of time, different features of the school emerge as orderly or noisy.

I may be repeating myself: in this thesis, noise is not just a theoretical assumption (system formation depends on noise). Rather, I want to study the role different images of noise play in municipal attempts to make schools create themselves as independent. Concepts of noise are tools to study specific formations in empirical data. And to this purpose, it seems as though Luhmann's work on noise is insufficient, since noise is 'only' used as a presupposition and does not open up possibilities for empirical analysis.

To study ungovernability, I draw on a range of theoretical definitions of noise imported from discussions in classical information, in theory cybernetics, and in theoretical biology (often from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s) that Luhmann took a point of departure in and either left behind or adapted to his own theoretical

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[73] Luhmann, 1995a: 105

universe. Moreover, the thesis draws on the works of Michel Serres, about whom scholars have said that he is the philosopher of noise *par excellence*.[74] I do this to make it possible to observe and analyse the many different conceptions of how schools can become orderly independent by excluding noisy elements over time. In a later part of this chapter, I will discuss more generally how authors such as Luhmann and Serres can and cannot be brought together. For now, let me describe specifically how noise is defined in the different theories I import into the thesis.

Definitions of noise

As the different theories of noise are used in the different analysis, I will explain them more thoroughly and individually. However, in order for the reader to have some kind of map of the central features of the different theories and how they relate to each other, I will in the following present how classical information theory is a common point of departure, and how Atlan, Serres and Luhmann all depart from information theory by arguing that noise is always already an internal part of any message and that noise is a driver of heterogeneity and renewal.

In classical information theory (such as Shannon and Weaver's work) noise is something that disturbs a message in its journey from sender to receiver so the information value of the received signal decreases. Information theory presupposes a sender and a receiver between whom a signal passes. A quantity of information is to travel from sender to retriever and the more intact the message is when it reaches the receiver, the less loss of information value and a decrease in uncertainty for the receiver. This has two related implications: First, for classical information theory, a sender, receiver and channel exist independently of information and noise. And second, in this understanding, noise is something outside the relationship between sender and receiver. Noise is what comes in the way of transporting as much information from A to B.

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[74] Brown, 2002; 2005; Paulson, 1988

In classical information theory, noise is seen as an external force that imposes itself upon a message and leaves it with a poorer information value. In contrast, in the work of Atlan or Serres noise is noise is always a part of the channel and a necessary condition of possibility of any signal.[75] Let me elaborate.

First, in the theories of noise of Atlan and Serres, noise is always already part of the signal.[76] The argument is that without noise, there would be no relation at all. Noise is here both what disturbs in a relation by interfering with a signal, but this interfering is also exactly what constitutes the relation, because without interfering there would only be immediacy and accessibility and no relation at all. Quoting Serres:

> Systems work because they do not work. Nonfunctioning remains essential for functioning. And that can be formalized. Given, two stations and a channel. They exchange messages. If the relation succeeds, if it is perfect, optimum, and immediate; it disappears as a relation. If it is there, if it exists, that means that it failed. It is only mediation. Relation is nonrelation. ... The channel carries the flow, but it cannot disappear as a channel, and it brakes (breaks) the flow more or less. But perfect, successful, optimum communication no longer includes any mediation. And the canal disappears into immediacy. There would be no spaces of transformation anywhere. There are channels and thus there must be noise. No canal without noise.[77],[78]

The argument is here that if communication could travel freely and undisturbed from sender to receiver, there would be no relation at all. If the relation were pure, the two parts of a relation would be identical. If the transfer of information could be a complete success, it would be immediate and perfectly accessible information, and no channel or relation would be observable. If nothing hinders, disturbs, or interferes there is, in other words, no relation at all.[79] Noise is then a productive component of all information transmission. Without noise, interference, there could be no relations.

Entailed in this definition is also that noise is a driver of variety and heterogeneity in a system. As Atlan has argued the effects of noise on the information content can

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[75] Wolfe, 2007: xiii
[76] See Wolfe, 2007: xiii
[77] Serres, 2007: 79
[78] A description that has certain similarities with Luhmann's concept of communication. Luhmann states: "Understanding is never identical to utterance, or else we would be talking of transmission" (Luhmann 1995a: 140).
[79] Brown, 2002: 7

under certain conditions result in a higher complexity of information at a different level of organization.[80] In his scheme of *complexity-from-noise* loss of information at one level in a hierarchical system is shown to be a gain of information at a higher level.[81] What, at the level where the translation takes place, appears as a loss of information due to noise may have beneficial effects at other levels of the organization in accordance with a complexity-from-noise principle.[82] As Atlan states: "From the point of view of the organ or physiological apparatus [opposed to a cell and its channels between DNA and protein and thus higher in a hierarchy of an organism. JGP], this same noise has the effects of creating variety and heterogeneity among cells which allows them more adaptability."[83] What is noise in a one system may for another system, located higher up in a hierarchy and thus observing the first system as a subsystem, appear as information.

By observing not only transmissions of information from A-B, but also how this transmission is observed from a different hierarchical level in a system, Atlan thus argues that noise is not only something external that imposes itself upon a signal and leaves it with a poorer value. Noise is, instead, a trigger of heterogeneity. For Atlan, even though noise may appear as an unruly disturbance it is in fact a necessary source of renewal and variety.

Third, Atlan, Luhmann and Serres all position noise as the foundation of being or the foundation of systems' emergence. As quoted earlier, Luhmann states: "Ohne noise, kein System"[84] and Serres concurs: "Noise defines the social".[85] Noise is the backdrop on which communication happens. And as backdrop noise plays a crucial role since it is the necessary ground against which the signal stands out as something different.[86] As such noise is foundational to any communication. Quoting Serres:

> Background noise may well be the ground of our being. It may be that our being is not at rest; it may be that it is not in motion, it may be that our

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[80] Atlan, 1974; 1981
[81] Atlan, 1974; 1981
[82] Atlan, 1981: 200
[83] Atlan, 1981: 196
[84] See Luhmann, 2000: 258
[85] Cited from Stäheli, 2003: 244
[86] Serres, 1995: 13; Brown 2002: 7

being is disturbed. The background noise never ceases; it is limitless, continuous, unending, unchanging.[87]

In the works of Serres[88], noise is explored as the precondition of any communication any social arrangement, any relation. Only out of fury and stormy weather can a goddess emerge: "A naked Aphrodite resplendent in her beauty, rising fresh from the troubled water".[89]

The following illustrations picture three versions of noise. First, that of classical information theory where noise is something that imposes itself on a channel. Second, noise is portrayed as residing in the channel between sender and receiver and being a catalyser of heterogeneity, especially in the eyes of someone positioned higher up in a hierarchy. And third, noise as the foundation of all social order.
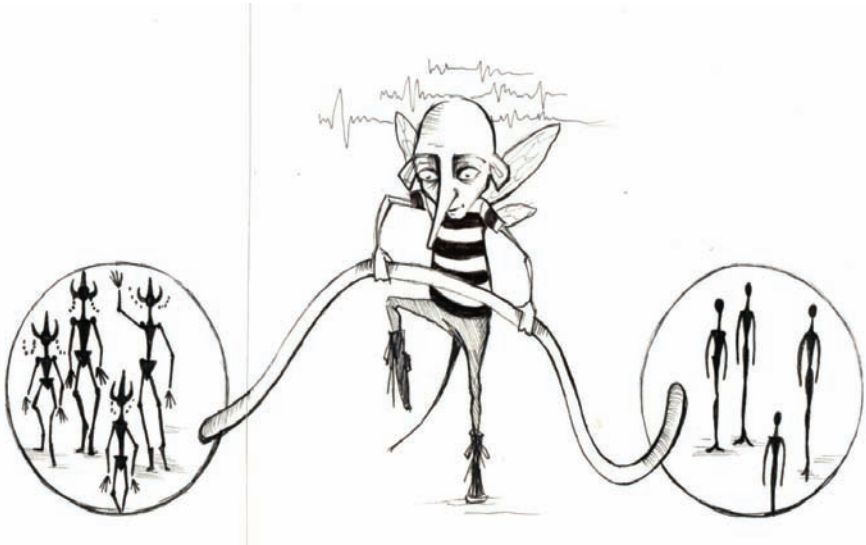
[87] Serres, 1995: 13
[88] Especially Serres, 2007; 1995; 1991
[89] Serres, 1995: 15
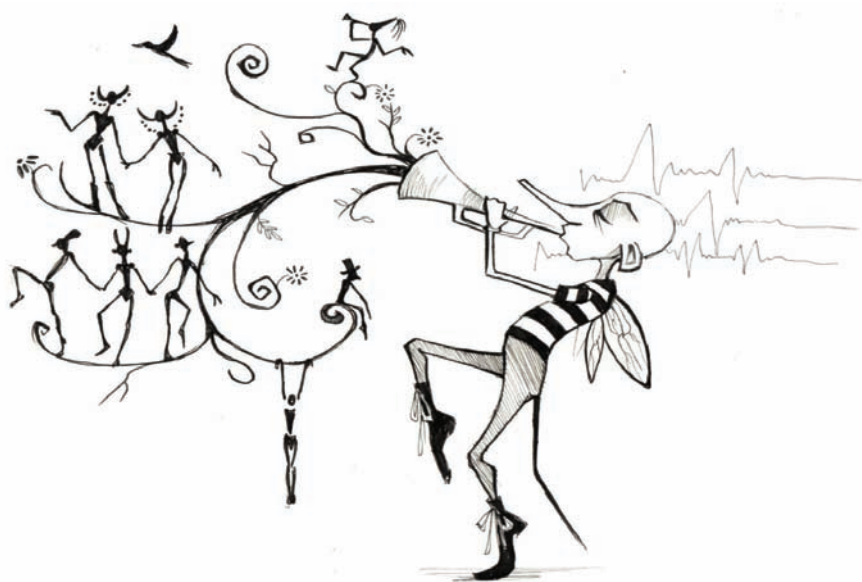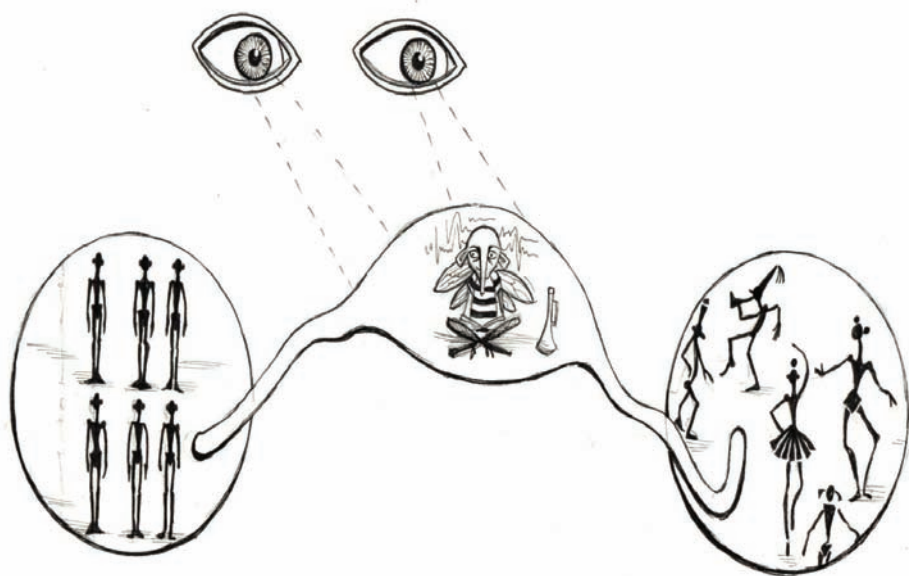
In the different analyses of this thesis, specific elements from these different theories of noise will be introduced in order to unfold specific features of the ways in which municipalities have provided schools with images of noisy elements that schools should make object of management. My approach has been to begin in the empirical material and explore what is put at stake here. I have then introduced the theoretical understandings of noise I thought could unfold the concrete empirical constellations. The theoretical idea that systems emerge by building order out of noise would not be interesting if I could not observe that, for instance, municipalities have sought to govern school to become independent by asking them to build organizational structures by relating to 'disorganized' elements within the school. It is, of course, always a difficult discussion to what degree I force the material into these theoretical conceptions. I will leave it to the analyses to convince the reader that my aim has been to produce empirical diagnoses of what is at stake in terms of production of ungovernability when municipalities have sought to govern independence.

Let me now summarize this section's answer to the question of how to analyze the production of ungovernability in municipal attempts to govern independence and extract a few implications of the approach. As described in the introduction, the second part of the thesis sets out to explore how the attempts of Danish municipalities to govern independence have produced problems for schools' self-management in the form of increased expectations to manage unmanageable elements. I have now described how I aim to study this question by exploring how the municipal attempts to govern independence entails generalized differences between self and others that schools are invited to use in their efforts to create themselves as independent. Drawing on a range of different theories of noise, I analyze how, over time, different features of the school have emerged as that on the exclusion of which the school's identity should be based.

The focus on the noise creation in municipalities' attempts to govern schools' independence is a form of secondary analysis that presupposes the findings of the first analysis. Whereas the semantic analysis draws a map of how municipalities have

described and problematized school governed over time, this second analysis asks questions about the tensions between order and noise that unrests within the different perceptions of school governing. Let me give an example. In the first analytical part, I find that, from the late 1990s, municipalities begin to observe school governing as a matter of making schools transparent and visible to themselves and to municipalities (chapter 6). In the second analytical part, I then ask questions of how a distinction between visible and invisible create a noise of all that which is not or has not been made visible. I analyze how the school is then expected to understand itself as both an orderly visible self, and as an assemblage of invisible noisy elements it needs to relate itself to. I pursue how, as part of the municipal governing, the school is given a dark version of itself in the form of unspoken values and unconscious habits of teacher (chapter 9).

The concept of autopoiesis is, thus not only used as an ontological assumption that underpins an interest in the problem of governed independence: I also use the concept on another level, not as an a priori conjecture, but as a means of conditioning how I observe attempts to facilitate self-creation of schools.

Likewise, several of the theories of noise that I draw on, are general theories claiming for instance that a foundational mode of operations of systems is to become by creating order out of noise. I use them, however, to unfold specific empirical formations of governing.

I thus observe neither autopoiesis nor noise directly. I do not claim to analyze self-formation of schools or the role noise plays herein. As should hopefully be clear by now, I instead analyze how municipalities have sought to govern schools by offering them distinctions between self (order) and other (noise). This creates a certain tension throughout the analyses between general theoretical conceptions of autopoiesis and of noise on the one hand, and the specific findings that I claim are specific to the empirical material and thus to a specific time and place in the history of Danish municipal school governing.

This means that at one point, I draw on information theory to analyze how the school is to decrease its noise in order to bring as much information about itself into written self-assessments. And at another point, I draw on Serres' idea of noise as a parasite to

analyze how moments of management can only emerge when managers can parasite on a distinction between how teachers think they teach and how they actually teach. In both cases the aim of introducing a theory of noise is to elaborate a specific empirical issue rather than introducing a general theory. Briefly put: Although I draw on a repertoire of general theories, I use them eclectically and selectively to unfold specific empirical formations.

Theoretical discussions

In the following I will pick up on a few theoretical discussions that have been lurking in the previous sections, but that I have not yet dealt with. The main contribution of the thesis is its empirical analyses and findings, and I have therefore not set out to make a grand theoretical contribution. There are, however, two discussions that I feel ought to be given some attention. First, the concept of a system has been used throughout this chapter. I draw upon Luhmann's concept of autopoietic systems to argue that it is indeed a problematic endeavour to wish to govern schools' self-creation and to have some analytical tools for studying this ambition. However, I have not taken a more general discussion of how Luhmann's concept in my opinion should be understood. As critique of Luhmann's work often takes a point of departure in this concept, I wish to devote a section to discuss it. Second, in the thesis, I introduce a range of different concepts of noise. Above, I have described how these are related and have, for instance, argued that Luhmann and Serres define noise in similar ways. However, since Luhmann and Serres may seem an odd couple that rarely appear in the same work[90], a few remarks on how the broader works of these authors can be compared seems appropriate. In the following, I will therefore also briefly discuss the possible similarities of these theories.

What is a system?

In this thesis, the concept of system is mainly used to describe how municipalities and schools are closed to each other and that governing schools independence is

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[90] For important exceptions see Stäheli, 1996; Wolfe, 2007; Brown & Stenner, 2009

therefore a difficult concern. I use the concept to highlight that any attempt to govern a different system's independence will be a difficult and highly unlike affair, but then I study semantics and leave out questions of whether and if so how municipalities and schools are systems in a systems theoretical conception of a system. Questions of what a system *is* are thus not directly necessary to understand the thesis. However, I would like to give it a few reflections

Jean Clam has suggested that Luhmann's theorizing after the turn to autopoiesis could be described as a movement of deconstructing all intuitive representations of a border-defined, thing-like system.[91] I will describe how, the point of departure in the concept of autopoiesis affects the way in which the concept of a system can be understood. The question is: If systems are observed as autopoietic, what is then a system?

First, entailed in the concept of autopoiesis is an understanding that systems do not exist per se as entities[92], but emerge (in different versions) as the result of operations of boundary drawing. As quoted earlier:"[*B*]*oundary* maintenance is system maintenance"[93]. Systems and their possible identities do not exist prior to the drawing of a boundary.[94] Systems are thought of through the concept of distinction, and their identity can at best be continuous interruptions by what they are not, namely their environment. Luhmann explains that implied in concept of self-reference is

> that unity can come about only through a relational operation that it must be produced and that it does not exist in advance as an individual, a substance, or an idea of its own operation.[95]

Although a self-referential system may sound quite self-assuring and stable, autopoietic systems are in fact systems that are constantly shaken by the indeterminacy they introduce into themselves. Let me explain. Since the operation of

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[91] Clam, 2000

[92] Secondly, this also means that any elements of a system emerge out of operations of boundary drawing. No element exists a-priory, except for in the moment of marking them as elements belonging to a system and not to an environment. See Luhmann, 1995: 22

[93] Luhmann, 1995a: 17

[94] Luhmann, 1995a: 28

[95] Luhmann, 1995a: 33

the re-entry introduces both self-reference and hetero-reference[96] into the system, images of that what the system differentiates itself from are continuously created within the system. This is in itself, of course, a source of instability and tension. However, uncertainty increases when we look at another function of hetero-references. These play not only the role of bringing about images of what the system is not from which the system can experience its own identity, they are also a way for the system to deal with environmental indeterminacy and as such their very function is to introduce uncertainty into the system.[97] Again, this needs explanation. Since hetero-references are a way for the systems to relate to that which it cannot fully understand by providing spaces for it within itself, autopoiesis is above all "a *production of internal indeterminacy*."[98] Autopoietic systems are, in other words, continuously threatened by their own operations of introducing indeterminacy into themselves.

It is thus important to stress that a form of becoming, resting upon operations of differentiating oneself from an environment and upon efforts to comprehend incomprehensible environments, is a form of becoming where spaces of foreignness and uncertainty are accumulating within the system. We might therefore say that rather than system stabilization, autopoiesis is at best a cultivation of a fragile self-reference. As Phillipopoulos-Mihalopoulos has phrased it: "Every time the system's identity is sought strengthened, there is a much stronger yet more diffused superego that comes between the system and itself in its self-reference, namely its environment."[99] Autopoietic systems may thus incessantly be threatened by the left-over of their own becoming.

Second, a system should not be understood as something with unambiguous borders. The idea that external reference is internal, since external reference is always self-reference[100] constitutes a paradoxical answer to the question of whether systems are open or closed. In Luhmann's systems theory, systems are open because they are

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[96] Simply understood as references to an environment.
[97] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009: 51
[98] Luhmann, 1997a: 67
[99] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009: 51
[100] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2007: 21

closed and closed because they are open. Openness to an environment is openness to a self-constructed environment and in that sense a confirmation of closeness. And, as argued, the closure stemming from self-referential operations is a continuous introduction of environmental uncertainty into the system.

Finally, autopoietic systems are not goal-oriented. Rather, they maintain their autopoietic organization of self-reproduction.[101] As Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos has phrased it, the concept of autopoiesis stresses that there is "no inherent purpose of the system except for its own being. In autopoiesis, being is becoming".[102] With the concept of autopoiesis existence and creation are thus intimately related; being and becoming form an inseparable circularity where the purpose of the system is the system itself. Quoting Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos: "Becoming lends its perpetual motion to being, thereby constituting a volatile identity for the system".[103]

With this discussion of how to understand the concept of an autopoietic system, I wish to highlight that in opposition to general systems theory, the concept of system is here not encouraging a study of predictability, influence and control, but a study of unpredictability, indeterminacy and inaccessibility.[104] School and municipalities are never presupposed as thing-like entities with pre-given boundaries. The point of departure is that system formation is a fragile, volatile, unpredictable and unlikely phenomenon. I seek to take it upon myself to determine how indeterminacy is produced and productive in the emergence of relations between municipality and school.

The theoretical worlds of Luhmann and Serres

I have already described how even though Luhmann and Serres build on very different theoretical traditions, they concur on how one of the main dynamics of social formations is processes of relating to noise and attempts to transform it into information. In the following, I will go beyond the specific concept of noise, and

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[101] Luhmann, 1993a: 771
[102] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2007: 11
[103] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2007: 22
[104] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009: 43

elaborate how, in spite of their obvious differences, the theoretical worlds of Luhmann and Serres, share central dynamics.

On a quite superficial level, we may say that Luhmann and Serres both build somewhat strange, counter-intuitive, and sometimes difficult to read theoretical worlds out of elements eclectically chosen from a range of often surprising scientific sources.[105], [106] However, the ways in which they theorize are very different. Whereas Luhmann is careful to deliver precise definitions of his key-concepts[107], Serres' concepts are metaphorical – as Brown has phrased it, they are metaphors taken to the limits[108] - and they change from page to page as he develops his analysis. Moreover, we find an obvious difference in disciplines between the two. Although they are both highly trans-disciplinary authors[109], Luhmann works to develop a theory of systems by disposing of general systems theory whereas Serres works within literature and philosophy.[110]

And third, whereas Luhmann strives to systematically build a theoretical corpus of concepts all carefully related to each other, Serres fabulates and associates.[111] His work may appear as meditative essays[112] full of homologies, analogies, and unexpected almost fantastical juxtapositions.[113]

Besides these rather obvious and immediately striking differences, I would, however, argue that we can also find a much more complex set of possible relations between the two authors.

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[105] For a discussion of Luhmann's way of theorizing see Borch 2011; for a discussion of Serres' see Paulson 2000; 1997; Brown, 2005
[106] For instance both authors introduce concepts from biology, information theory, thermodynamics, cybernetics etc. into their theoretical world.
[107] Although, as stated, concepts may change slightly depending on from which other concept they are observed (Andersen 1999: 108).
[108] Brown, 2005: 217
[109] For a discussion of Serres's way of combining natural science and the humanities, see Paulson, 1997
[110] In spite of such an obvious difference, we may say that the explicit ambition of both authors is to contribute to the general questions of what social order is and how it is made durable (see Brown 2005, 217)
[111] See Paulson, 2000.
[112] Serres, 1989
[113] Brown, 2005: 216

First: To the similarities of their conception of noise already stated I could add two additional features. For both Luhmann and Serres, noise is always noise for an observer.[114] As described, Luhmann's point of departure is always to ask questions about how an observation became possible (by help of which distinction and with what consequences for what could be observed and how an observed emerged). And Serres is keen to state that a sender and a receiver are hardly ever committed to the same differentiation between signal and noise. Also for Serres, each observation makes the cut (i.e. discerns distributes) between signal and noise in their own fashion.[115] Moreover, for both Serres and Luhmann noise is something that (un)rests somewhere in a strange location both inside and outside the system. As described, for Luhmann, noise is something in the self-produced environment of systems that may disturb the system if it is open to this disturbance. Noise is then both something outside the system and a part of the system since the environment is never just something 'out there' but a system's observation of its environment.

Second: Although, it can be doubted whether Serres operates with systems at all[116], if he does he is certainly operating as Luhmann does with systems of communication emerging because of noise and disturbance.[117] Moreover, Serres and Luhmann would concur that systems owe their emergence to an always persistent threat of disorder.[118] Furthermore, if we assume that Serres' theoretizations entail systems, Serres would advocate a theory of open dissipative systems. This is contrary to Luhmann, who, as argued, ground his idea of autopoietic systems on the self-referential closure of systems. As Stäheli has argued, these differences may, however, be of a terminological nature: When Serres attacks conceptions of closure, which emphasize isolation, equilibrium and simplicity, Luhmann would concur.[119]

Third: Luhmann and Serres seem to share an understanding of what makes the world tick: foundational paradoxes and 'excluded thirds'. They share the point of departure

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[114] Serres, 2007: 66; For a comparison of Luhmann and Serres on this matter see Wolfe, 2007
[115] Brown, 2005: 222; see also Brown, 2002: 7
[116] Serres states: "The system is very badly named. Maybe there is not or never was a system" And he continues "The only instances or systems are black boxes" (2007: 72-73)
[117] Stäheli, 1996: 7
[118] Stäheli, 1996: 8
[119] Stäheli, 1996:12;

that basic mechanisms of sociality only function due to a paradox. As I have described previously, for Serres a relation owes its identity as a relation to its identity as a non-relation. It is exactly disturbance and interferences that makes a relation and thus communication possible at all. Without interfering there would only be immediacy and accessibility and no relation at all. This is why Serres state "Systems work because they do not work."[120] Likewise for Luhmann it is the operation of making something unobservable that makes it possible to observe at all. He states: "The world is observable *because* it is unobservable."[121] The operation of observation depends upon a distinction by help of which something can be distinguished from something else, but this distinction itself remains unobservable. For Luhmann this is the *blind spot* – a distinction to which an observer must remain blind if it is to carry out the operation of observing. The distinction through which an observation is made is simultaneously what makes the observation possible and what must be excluded from the field of sight. Luhmann and Serres thus do not only seem to follow a similar strategy of analysis in terms of seeking to identify and describe how social processes rely on a paradoxical tension. As Serres states: Non-functioning remains essential for functioning.[122] For both Luhmann and Serres, the paradoxical tension is that communication depends upon that what must be excluded – an excluded third. Serres state: "To hold a dialogue is to suppose a third man and seek to exclude him; a successful communication is the exclusion of a third man."[123] And, as already cited, Luhmann writes (and explicitly refers to Serres):

> To this extent the meaning process lives off disturbances, is nourished by disorder, lets itself be carried by noise, and needs an "excluded third" for all technically precise, schematized operations.[124]

For both authors, it is not simply that any identity owes its existence to an Other. Rather, the analytical focus is tuned towards the third thing. For Luhmann this third thing is the distinction itself rather than its two sides and for Serres it is the noise that imposes itself upon a relation.

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[120] Serres, 2007: 79
[121] Luhmann, 1995b: 46
[122] Serres, 2007: 79
[123] Serres, 1982: 66-67
[124] Luhmann, 1995: 83

Maybe it is not only Serres but also Luhmann who is highly occupied with a question of whether a "system is badly named"[125]. Neither Serres nor Luhmann take the existence of a system for granted. Both struggle to open the black box of how social order emerges, as unlikely as it is due to its noisy surroundings. And both seem to find in the black box a frightening and yet life-giving paradox; that the system is in fact only what it is not.

Although we may now move to a very general level, with both Luhmann and Serres we find a theory of difference and of how precarious identities are produced by the (self-) construction and application of differences. [126] Both authors seem to ask: Can we rewrite a system? And both seem to answer: Only as the book of differences, noise and disorder.[127] For Luhmann, the system is only a system insofar as it processes its distinction between system and environment. For Luhmann observing observations means distinguishing distinctions.[128] And for Serres the radical origin of things is likewise the difference. In Brown's phrasing: "The difference is a part of the thing itself, and perhaps it even produces the thing."[129]

I have thus identified a number of possible relations between the work of Luhmann and Serres. The aim of this discussion has been to make it possible in the analysis to be free to introduce concepts from both theoretical works, when they have can unfold empirical findings. I will now proceed by presenting how the empirical data of the thesis was constructed.

Empirical data

As described, the thesis is based on a historical archive of communication about municipal school governing, interviews and observations in three Danish

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[125] Serres, 2007: 72
[126] For a discussion of links between Luhmann and Derrida see Luhmann (1993a). For similarities of Derrida and Serres see Wolfe 2007: xiv.
[127] Serres in Wolfe, 2007: xiv
[128] Luhmann, 1993a
[129] Brown, 2002: 15

municipalities. In the following I will elaborate on methodological issues regarding the production and selection of empirical data.

Historical and present archive of documents

The backbone of the historical archive is communication from the association of Danish municipalities, Local Government Denmark (LGDK). I have collected everything that LGDK has published about schooling and school government since its establishment in 1970 and until today.

The communication from LGDK firstly comprises of annual reports from 1970-1990. These describe the political and administrative activities of LGDK and state the interests and positions of LGDK in the school governing debates at the different times. The reports can partly be characterized as documentation of initiatives and actions of LGDK in the different policy areas and partly as attempts to position LGDK in relation to the national Government and within the area if schooling the Ministry of Education.

Second, over the years, LGDK has also launched a range of discussion papers. These often deal with a specific theme such as governing structure, decentralisation, a culture evaluation, etc. Most often they are written to a broad public of school actors and seek to spread knowledge or initiate debates. In the 1970s, these publications were rare, dealt with rather administrative themes, and were mainly aimed at politicians and public officers. However, from the late 1980s and onwards, they have been launched more often and have been aimed at a broader public of public servants as well as educational practitioners.

Third, I have collected every article about school and school governing matters in the newsmagazine of LGDK, named *Dansk Kommuner* [Danish Municipalities]. This magazine has been published once a week from 1970. From the late 1990s, the magazine have also been lounged on the web, and from 2006, news have continuously been updated on the webpage www.danskekommuner.dk. A newsmagazine is still published in printing and launched once a week. From its outset in 1970, public officers wrote the magazine to other public officers and

communicated legislative news, examples of successful municipal initiatives, small journalistic features from municipal events, readers' letters, biographical notes of promotions, jubilees and birthdays, and listings of vacant positions in municipalities. Later on, the magazine has adapted a more journalistic style and its news and articles nowadays seem less restricted to administrative and municipal issues and interests. In the analysis of the thesis, the articles from Danish Municipalities supplement the official publications from LGDK with smaller stories from specific municipalities, counterarguments and broader debates not always visible in the official LGDK communication.

From the archive of communication of LGDK, I have collected sources from the broader school debates from 1970 to today. I have found sources through a simple method of following references. I have thus constructed a larger archive of articles from pedagogical magazines such as *Folkeskolen* [The Public School], *Unge Pædagoger* [Young Teachers], KvaN – Tidsskrift for læreruddannelse og skole [KvaN journal for teacher education and school]. Moreover, I have collected the books about school management, evaluation, innovation, etc. that have influenced debates about school governing and how relations between municipalities and schools have been understood. Finally, I have collected articles from other news-media and magazines such as for instance the Danish news magazine *Mandag Morgen* [Monday Morning], when these have had themes or special issues on schooling and school governing.

Lastly, national legislation on schooling and school government are also included as background material.

These sources supplement each other in the following way. The annual reports provide a sketch of an overall development of how issues and concerns are introduced and taken up. The discussion papers of specific issues as well as the articles from *Danish Municipalities* add more nuanced debates as well as reports and descriptions from individual municipalities who, at certain points in time and with regard to specific issues, are given status as leading municipalities for instance capable of providing best-practice examples. And finally, the broader archive of news-articles and professional literature provides a context for the municipal debates as

well as insights into the development of knowledge in the field of schooling. My hope is that, when combined, the sources provide a detailed account of debates about school governing from 1970 and until today.

A next question is why I have chosen 1970 as the point of departure for the analysis. Two reasons are central: First, this is due to a practical reason related to the collection of sources and the ability of the analysis to draw general conclusions about a phenomenon (school governing) that may be very different from municipality to municipality. 1970 was the year of a great reform of local government in Denmark, which enhanced the role of municipalities in school governing and constructed a less dispersed map of municipalities. The reform entailed a reduction in the number of municipalities (a so-called division reform), a reform of the legislation for state government of municipalities, and a reform of tasks and burden sharing.[130] [131] The reduction of the number of municipalities was finally implemented in 1973 and led to a decrease in the total number of municipalities from more than 1300 to 275 and of counties from 25 to 14.[132] With this reform the size of an average municipality was thus increased and municipalities were given considerable political and financial autonomy within limits set by the state.[133] Before 1970 it is rather difficult to tell a general history of relations between municipalities and schools, since differences between municipalities were great and, especially in the area of schooling, great differences between towns and rural areas could be found.[134] After 1970, and today, after another great reform in 2007 (diminishing the number of municipalities to 98) municipalities are still very different and have different approaches and traditions of school governing. However, after 1970, I find it more reasonable to construct a national debate of school governing as an object of analysis, among other things because the differences between large and small and between town and rural municipalities have been diminished.

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[130] The reform was prepared in the years from 1958-66 by a commission of municipal legislation who carried through an investigation of how to divide the entire country in new larger municipalities (see Ingvartsen & Mikkelsen, 1991: 20-22 for elaboration of the composition and exact findings of the commission).
[131] See Schou, 1994: 35
[132] Through the 1960s, a number of voluntarily amalgamations of municipalities gradually took place.
[133] See Sørensen, 1999: 127
[134] See Kruchov, 1985; Using Olsen 1982; Markussen 1971

A second reason to begin the analysis in 1970, is that the reform also paved the way for a new joined organization for the Danish municipalities, Local Government Denmark (LGDK) that could represent municipal interest on a national scene as well as develop and support cooperation between municipalities. LGDK appointed a school committee whose task it was to gather information, discuss matters of common interest, and develop inter-municipal cooperation in this area.[135] To start in 1970, has thus also made it easier for me to collect sources, since from then on LGDK has published reports, discussion papers, annual reports, etc. that seek to represent joint municipal viewpoints in relation to schooling and school governing. Before 1970, the town and rural municipalities had different representation organs and the debate was relatively more dispersed. After 1970, I thus find it more reasonable to construct a national debate of school governing as an object of analysis.

And finally, 1970 is chosen as a point of departure because of the ambition of the thesis to follow how school governing became a matter of creating schools as independent. As I will demonstrate in chapter 5, this change in governing emerged with ideals of decentralization in the late 1980s. By beginning my analysis in 1970, I am able to begin by describing governing before this development and thus to construct a 'point zero' from which I can trace the subsequent developments.

Interviews and field observations

As described, the archive of documents is supplemented with interviews and field observations.

I have conducted 8 introductory interviews[136] with municipal school directors and senior directors of children and youth policy in 5 Danish municipalities. These interviews were semi-structured and used to develop the research themes of the thesis.[137] I proceeded with more interviews and field observations[138] in three of these municipalities. These three were chosen partly since they have many school

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[135] Danish Municipalities, 07.07.1971, nr. 7, p. 23
[136] Harrits et al, 2010
[137] Mikkelsen, 1995
[138] Cohen, 1984

development initiatives and very well developed and systematic corporation between schools and municipalities and partly due to reasons of access.

In one of these three municipalities, I followed activities between schools and administration for a little more than a year. I observed activities such as monthly meetings, meetings in different forums of cooperation between municipality and schools, theme meetings with special agendas of discussing for instance systems of evaluation, and mini-conferences for school managers arranged by the municipality where expects were hired to present knowledge and initiate discussion.

I also followed activities related to the extensive evaluation system KIS (In Danish an abbreviation of Quality In Schools), that I will describe in detail in chapter 9 such as annual meetings between administration and local school management teams[139], meetings to evaluate goal attainment of schools, etc. In this municipality, I also conducted interviews with the municipal director of school development, municipal director of children and youth policy and a number of school managers. Besides the formal interviews, I also sought to conduct as many informal interviews[140] as possible in breaks, driving to and from locations, in informal email correspondence, etc, with municipal staff and school managers. I was lucky enough to be considered a form of sparring partners for particularly two municipal directors and two school managers. These relations gave me much detailed insight into the micro dynamics of municipal school governing. Moreover, I presented preliminary findings of the project to the administration and school managers at their yearly two-day seminar and participated in extensive discussions of how my findings related to their experiences of municipal school governing.

In the two other of the three municipalities, I conducted more sporadic observations and interviews in order to supplement the material from the one municipality I followed extensively. In one of these municipalities, I conducted interviews with the municipal director of Children and Youth Policy and a municipal school consultant. Moreover, with an interest in municipal education and supervision of school actors I

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[139] For an analysis and detailed description of these evaluation meetings see Pors 2011a
[140] Kemp & Ellen, 1987

interviewed the manager and deputy manager at a municipal but independent provider of courses, supervision projects, etc. (Centre of Pedagogical Development). In this municipality, I observed three whole day courses for school managers designed by the centre and a yearly gathering for all school teachers and managers. In the third municipality, I interviewed the municipal Director of School Policy and observed two half-day meetings between school managers and the municipal administration.

In a later phase in the project, where I had chosen to focus on semantics of innovation, I sought after municipalities and schools that had started initiatives and projects along the ideas of an innovative school. I visited another municipality who has a long history and tradition for projects to renew pedagogical thinking. I followed an attempt of municipal consultants to develop a framework for evaluating broad personal competences, which they felt were missing in their evaluative technologies. Also, I visited and conducted two interviews at a new school in this municipality that has been build and organized with the aim of making an innovative school based on new pedagogical thinking.

Moreover, I have collected documents from all the municipalities that I have been in contact with. These are municipal policy papers, descriptions of municipal governing such as evaluation and assessment systems and memorandums, the compulsory municipal quality reports, assessment memorandums and reports from individual schools, descriptions of management values, and individual web-pages of schools where descriptions of schools' philosophy, statements of values and concepts of learning etc. can be found.

The four municipalities entailed in the study have not been selected by criteria of representation of different types of municipalities, different geographical locations etc. As I will describe below, the function of this data is to provide me with a catalogue of examples to supplement the archive of documents. I have therefore chosen to study municipalities who had a variety of initiatives, dedicated efforts, and well-developed governing techniques and systems in relation to school governing. These municipalities can thus be characterized as municipalities who are ambitious

with their school governing, and often initiate or participate in national, regional or municipal development project

The collection of data from the specific municipalities was mainly conducted at an early stage of the project and therefore with a broader thematical scope than the final argument of the thesis. To include all the findings from my interviews and observations in the four municipalities in the final line of argumentation of the thesis proved to be too ambitious. Some of the findings have, however, been published elsewhere.[141] The function of this data is firstly to have given me an introduction to the field of municipal school governing, a general knowledge of the everyday life in a municipal school administration and a 'gut feeling' of how school governing is practiced. The findings, thus, serve as background knowledge, without which I could not have made the analyses, or have trusted that the findings of my final analysis will find resonance at least in a number of Danish Municipalities. Second, the data from the municipalities is used to pursue specific parts of general issues in the national discussions. In the analysis, this data often provide concrete examples of how problems of governing of a specific point in time have been sought addressed or of how specific techniques and governing system has been developed.

When quotations from interviews, observations and documents from these municipalities appear in the analyses, they are depersonalized due to reasons of anonymity. Because of agreements with these municipalities I will not state who was interviewed or observed or from which school or municipality a quotation comes. The quotations have also had to be translated from Danish to English. With my translations I have not always managed to capture the specific character of the language in a context of Danish municipal school governing and schooling. I hope the reader will bear with me in my attempts to find a balance between what is actually possible to say in English and the – often inventive – use of language of Danish school practitioners.

Citations from interviews and observations appear alongside citations from the archive of documents from the national debates. My analytical approach is

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[141] Pors, 2011a

characterized by not distinguishing between written documents, taped interview quotations and field observations, but by observing them all as observations (in a Luhmannian sense) and as drawings of distinctions. My aim has therefore not been to describe the specific rationalities of geographical or organizational spaces in which I have collected empirical data. Differences between municipalities and the specific context of my observation are not described. How a quotation relates to the specific situation and history in a municipalities remain invisible and outside the analytical ambition.

The data from the four municipalities should thus not be understood as case studies. I do not treat the data from a municipality separately or in the light of the particular size, traditions or specific challenges of an individual municipality. Instead, this data is analysed alongside the data from the archive of documents in accordance with the overall research problem and structure of the thesis.

Chapter 3

DISCUSSION PARTNERS

> In other words, it is not a question of registering a context but rather of reflecting its outlines, of giving oneself a context and making a mark on it.[142]

To state that the academic context of a thesis is not necessary, but rather a matter of contingent choices is of course a quite non-informative and banal uttering. Non-the-less, I have certainly felt that this thesis opens a range of opportunities for discussions with different academic fields and that I have therefore had to make some cruel choices of which discussions to engage in and which to leave out. Rather, than taking a point of departure in a specific debate in a specific academic field, my approach has been to begin in the empirical descriptions and experiences of school governing and develop analytical questions and themes from this material. This has made the thesis a journey through a number of academic fields such as education studies and educational management; studies of governance in contemporary welfare societies; organization and management studies; theorizing of relations between order and noise within fields of philosophy, theoretical biology and cybernetics; process philosophy; and finally studies of organizational change and innovation. It is, however, too ambitious within the scope of the thesis to interact with all this literature. I have chosen to engage in discussions with three academic fields, namely studies of government of education, studies of welfare governance and organization theory drawing on process philosophy.

The first point of engagement follows from the empirical object of the thesis. I will present how Danish and international educational research have analysed government of education. I have selected studies that specifically analyze political

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[142] Derrida in Derrida & Ferraris, 2001: 15

government of primary and lower secondary public schooling and how schools are affected by this government. I will argue that the thesis can contribute to this field by raising questions about how political governing is not just a restricting force that reduces the school to a mere performance or commodity. Rather than confirm such a finding, the thesis explores how schools are governed through more and more complex conceptions of what a school is.

The second point of engagement follows from the ambition of the thesis to propose a general diagnosis of the ways in which public welfare organizations are governed today. The thesis positions itself within studies of how welfare institutions have gone through a range of reform strategies that have focused on their self- regulation and self-policing.[143] I have selected studies that specifically analyze how contemporary public governing entails a multiplicity of different power rationalities. I will argue that the thesis can contribute to this field by raising questions of decentralization may not just result in a co-existence of different power rationalities, but how an intimate connection between wishes to impact and to set free is *the rationality* of contemporary governing. Moreover, my hope is that the thesis can contribute to this literature by discussing how, today, reforms of self-management does not just aim at creating strategic and reflective welfare organizations, but also at creating welfare organizations that continuously questions and re-invents the organizational self that is to self-manage.

The third and last point of engagement follows from the finding of the thesis that today school governing entails encouragement to schools to understand their welfare contribution as unpredictable learning processes that are essentially so unpredictable and elusive that they cannot easily be planned or organized. The ideal is that in order to provide a flexible setting for unpredictable learning processes the school organization has to be constantly in the making – constantly becoming and emerging. This problematic seems similar to contemporary movements within organization theory to introduce process thinking, and I will therefore open a discussion with this field about what happens when it is not just contemporary theorizing, but also public policy that begins to promote an ontology of process. I will argue that the thesis can

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[143] In a Danish context see Andersen 1995; Andersen 2008; Bang et al 2005; Sørensen 2001: 107

contribute to this field by raising questions about what effects it has for welfare institutions that 'emergence' and 'process' becomes key concepts in public governance.

The following figure shows the points of engagement of the thesis.

Diagnosis:
Welfare governance

Empirical
object: school
government

Problematic:
Process view
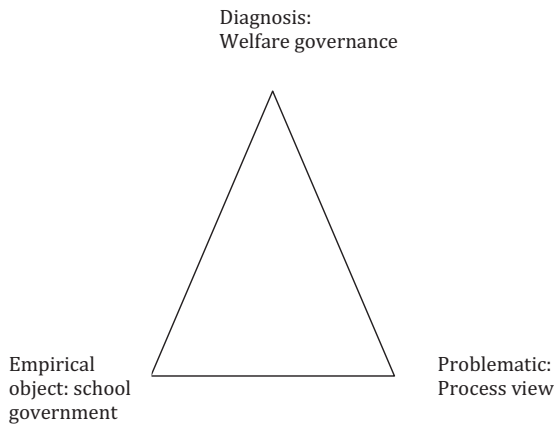
To position the thesis in three different fields may in itself be too ambitious, since I will have to present them somewhat briefly and leave out important nuances in the debates. Hence the citation that introduces this chapter, the following presentation of these fields reveals itself as my attempt to create a context for the thesis on which I can hope to leave a mark in the form of a contribution.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. Firstly, I will describe the work done on school governing in educational research. Secondly, I will explain how the thesis positions itself within an academic field of welfare governance. And thirdly, I will describe how the thesis contributes to the current turn to process philosophy in organization theory.

A pedagogical school subjected to government

Since the existing research about relations of governing between Danish municipalities and public schools has either been historical and focused on the 19th century[144] or the first half of the 20th century[145] or been synchronous case studies of a limited number of municipalities[146] [147], this study is the first to write a coherent history of Danish municipal school governing from 1970 to 2010. However, the general object of the thesis, school governing, has been extensively analysed within the field of educational research. In this section, I will present how school governing is often described as centralization, standardization and externally imposed assessments, and how I aim at supplementing such diagnoses.

Danish educational researchers have described political initiatives of the last decade as a part of a New Public Management regime in which schools have been confronted with goals of an increased specificity, and been subjected to monitoring and control in accordance with specific standards.[148] In their descriptions of political initiatives of evaluation and assessment, Danish authors such as Moos, Krejsler and Holm have argued that politicians and bureaucrats have become more and more interested in the activities in schools that can be measured and documented and less and less interested in those that cannot. The authors have diagnosed the political initiatives as output or performance oriented strategies and described them as attempts to shift the focus of educational governing actors away from local dialogue about the schools' pedagogical tasks to national standardization and international comparison.[149]

Such descriptions can also be found on an international scene. In the last 10-15 years, educational researchers have described school government as an increasing

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[144] See for instance Nørr, 1994; Markussen, 1971
[145] Kolstrup, 1996; Skovgaard-Petersen, 2000; Nørr, 2003
[146] Sørensen 1995a; Hansen & Hansen 2005; Andersen; Sehested 2003. These studies have investigated local settings through classical case-study methods. In Andersen's thesis it is two case studies of two municipalities and four schools and in Sehested's study 8 people from municipal administrations and 22 managers from schools and day-care institutions are interviewed.
[147] There is, of course, also an extensive field of prescriptive literature written to an audience of managers in schools and municipalities by public management consultants. I analyze this literature as a part of the studied fields' knowledge production and dissemination. I will therefore not deal with this literature in this chapter.
[148] Holm, 2007; Krejsler, 2007; Moos, 2007a: 17; 2007b
[149] Moos & Krejsler, 2003: 9; Holm, 2007: 76-77; Krejsler, 2007: 86; Moos et al, 2007: 10; Moos, 2007a: 17; Kamil, 2009: 32-33

proliferation of discourses of evaluation, assessment, standardization and accountability.[150] For instance in a British context, scholars such as Weiner, Williams and Ryan have described political discourses of assessment as centralization, standardization and surveillance.[151] And likewise in an Australian context,[152] McInerney has shown how decision-making has been centralized through means of national curricula, state-wide testing, national standards and performance measurements.[153] Caldwell gives the following description of the main concern of contemporary government. He argues:

> … there is unprecedented concern for outcomes, and governments have worked individually and in concert to introduce systems of testing at various stages of primary and secondary schooling to monitor outcomes and provide a basis for target setting in bringing about improvement.[154]

The general diagnosis seems to be that contemporary school governing is characterized by attempts to standardize and focus narrowly on schools' performance and by a mode of operation of testing, measurement and surveillance.

This also leads to the argument that government produces a growing divide between the rationalities of policy makers and of pedagogical practitioners.[155] This division is for instance analyzed in studies of school management that investigate a (counter-) productive interplay of an educational profession and New Public Management inspired forms of governing and how school managers and administrative staff navigate in this interplay.[156] Leading international scholars such as Portin, MacBeath and Ball have argued that political reforms position school management in a dilemma between external demands for efficient steering and school internal values of a pedagogical profession. Due to new forms of government the school managers are positioned in a double pressure to perform in accordance with the former and still

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[150] Ball, 1990, 2003; Jeffrey & Woods, 1998; Clatter, 2002; Weiner, 2002; McGhee & Nelson, 2005; Wilson et al, 2006; Web et al, 2006
[151] Williams & Ryan, 2000; Weiner, 2002
[152] For a similar critique of the development in New Zealand see Codd & Sullivan, 2005: 194.
[153] McInerney, 2003, p. 58. See also Smyth, 1993; Kenway et al, 1994; Angus, 1994; Blackmore, 1998
[154] Caldwell, 2001: 88
[155] Caldwell, 2001, p. 88; McInerney, 2003, p. 57; Boag-Munroe, 2005
[156] In a Danish context see for instance Ryberg & Sløk, 2010a; Ryberg & Sløk, 2010b; Sehested, 2003

protect the latter.[157] School management is then diagnosed as the art of navigating in the cross-pressure between schools' old values and norms supported by a teacher profession and new expectations of professional management, for instance, created by New Public Management reforms.[158]

Inherent in the diagnosis of cross-pressure is an observation of school governing as something fundamentally different from pedagogical concerns and values. The cross-pressure is a cross-pressure exactly due to the differences of the demands and certain demands are observed to come from government and certain demands to come from the school and its professional values and traditions. The presented descriptions thus entail a distinction between the school as an educational institution pursuing pedagogical aims and working to provide conditions of pedagogical processes on the one hand, and political government imposing school-external rationalities of standardization and surveillance on the other.[159]

The distinction paves the way for an analysis of how educational ideals and language are under pressure from a political rationality of standardization, measurement and control.[160] For instance, it is studied how government interventions have crucial effects on the professional identity of teachers. It is argued that the centralization of decision-making and standardization of curricular goals constrains the freedom of the teacher to decide and design their classroom teaching in accordance with professional aims and values.[161] Harrit has argued:

> [N]ational government by standardization and external control results in a de-professionalization of the work of teachers and the emergence of strategic considerations to teach only in accordance with measureable performances.[162]

And, according to Ball, the current political regime has a potential to colonize the

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[157] Portin, 1998; MacBeath, 1998; Ball, 2003; see also Thrupp & Willcott, 2003; Walsh, 2006; Wilson, Croxson & Atkinson, 2006; Hartley, 1999
[158] Sehested, 2003; Ryberg & Sløk, 2010a; Ryberg & Sløk, 2010b; Hansen & Hansen, 2005; Thomson, 2009; Blackmore, 1998; Gunter, 2005
[159] See Pors, 2009a; 2009b for a longer discussion of this matter
[160] Caldwell, 2001, p. 88; McInerney, 2003, p. 57; Boag-Munroe, 2005
[161] Ball, 2003, p. 39, Moos & Krejsler, 2003, p. 11
[162] Harrit, 1999:118; see also Wilson et al, 2006 for a similar claim.

professional so that educational concerns are displaced by accountability and orientation towards performance indicators.[163] With his concept of the post-professional teacher, he argues that a teacher subjected to political government can hardly qualify as a professional as s/he has given up autonomy and has been conditioned to react mainly as an employee who implements externally imposed measures in order to meet with audit and appraisals that may turn up unexpectedly at any time.[164]

Thereby, school government emerges as a force that increasingly denies the school its pedagogical self. For instance Hermann have described how contemporary Danish government operates with an economic rationality and an orientation towards the market and that the school is thus governed to create itself as a business enterprise. [165] He has argued that political government is driven by concerns for national performance in fierce competition of future global labour markets and that schools are therefore requested to observe pupils as a commodity and teachers as a means to enhance the values of pupils. [166] Studies such as this thus analyze school government as a force that restricts the identity of the school so that whereas previously the school was a nest of concerns for educational standards as well as broader attempts to educate citizens to an enlightened democracy, today, the school is encouraged to focus narrowly on preparing pupils to become assets on a global labour market.

With the distinction between school and government and the analyses of how the former is affected by the latter, certain assumptions about what a school is may be taken for granted. Observed through a distinction between the rationalities of government and pedagogy, the school emerges as something that is always already pedagogical. The school is where teachers strive to educate children not only in accordance with curriculum goals, but also to become responsible human beings capable of performing as democratic subjects.[167] These accounts of governing may thus take for granted that the school *is* always already a container of pedagogical concerns and values.

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[163] Ball, 2003, p. 38
[164] Ball, 2003: see also Moos & Krejsler 2003:11; McInerney, 2003: 57; Thrupp, 2003: 5
[165] Herman, 2007: 127-164. See also Sehested, 2003: 187-188. For international accounts of the same phenomenon see Macbeath, 2008; Gunter, 2003: 96; Riley et al. 1995
[166] Hermann, 2007: 171 see also Grek, 2009: 126; Lawn & Lingard, 2002: 296
[167] See Moos, Krejsler & Kofoed, 2007:18; Moos, 2003; Jespersen, 2005

To be fair to the nuances of descriptions of government within educational research let me give one example of how educational scholars have also sought to emphasize how even the most unambiguous governing regimes are always enacted and negotiated in complex ways in local settings. Stronach et al. have labeled the above described political governance as an 'economy of performance' and shown how a very dystopian image of a punitive, suspicious regime of surveillance might be overdrawn.[168] By stressing the dynamics of micro-politics and local practices Stronach et al argue that we are not simply witnessing an economy of performance coming from the outside and into the school with a force that reduces teachers to petrified selves of audit. Instead, professional identity emerges as a contradictory effect of dilemmas, negotiations and conflicts between different sorts of pressures.[169] With an analytical focus on local dynamics, contradictions and diversity, studies such as Stronach et al, thus, adds nuances to the diagnosis of school government as an unambiguous economy of performance. However, these nuances do not stem from ambivalences within government, but rather from the ways in which the differences between government and educational values are played out at the local sites of schools.

In this section, I have sought to give examples of how educational scholars have analyzed school governing as something that forces an unambiguous focus on performance and results upon the school and thereby restricts the schools' identity as a pedagogical institution striving to achieve professional aims and values. It is my hope that the thesis may form a contribution to such studies by raising the following questions.

First, the ambition of this thesis is, as described in the introduction, to pursue an interest in the paradoxical ambition to govern independence. The aim is not to display contradictions *between* rationalities of government and of pedagogy in the form of a cross-pressure or diverse local enactments and negotiations, but to follow

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[168] Stronach et al. 2002: 129
[169] Stronach et al, 2002: 125

the ambivalences and tensions *within* ambitions of governing. My thesis is that, at least in the Danish context that I study, the policy landscape was marked by an ambition to govern schools to become independent of the late 1980s, and this means that today no wave of centralization, standardization or audit can be implemented without severely being problematized and modified in terms of how it affects schools' capacities to self-manage efficiently. I will ask: *How does Danish school governing problematize itself and means of governing through standardization and externally imposed assessments and how does school governing as a result emerge as oscillations between many different forms of concerns?*

Second, a distinction between school and government may make the school appear as a naturally pedagogical institution. A diagnosis seems to be that schools' 'natural' inclination to pursue aims of 'dannelse[170]' and development of citizenship is restricted by the tendency of contemporary government to only observe schools as a means to strengthen the competitiveness of the nation on global markets. With this thesis, I aim to raise questions of how, over the years, school governing has not observed schools in an increasingly restricted way (as performance or a commodity), but, on the contrary, with increasingly nuanced and varying conceptions of what a school is. The history of Danish municipal school governing may, in other words, not be a history of how the school can be less and less a school, due to external demands and surveillance techniques. Rather, it may be that over years municipal policy-makers discover more and more features about the school and gain a stronger and stronger interest in the pedagogical content of the school. I aim to make what a school is an open question and explore *how* understandings of what a school is, have been created in the context of municipal governing. I will ask: *How is the school governed through more and more complex descriptions of what a school is and how is the school's identity as a pedagogical institution today not something that school governing represses, but nurtures as a central object of governing?*

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[170] There seems to be no precise translation of this word in English. The Danish word 'dannelse' is similar to the German 'Bildung' and means general (cultural) education.

Co-existence of power rationalities and strategic welfare institutions

The thesis positions itself within a vast amount of literature about the tendencies of modern welfare states to govern through self-governing and self-regulation of public administration units and institutions.[171] Since the beginning of the 1990s, it has been analyzed how welfare states question traditional government and its negative effects on the capacity of self-regulation of local actors.[172] Scholars have depicted a state that critically reflects upon the disadvantages of classical forms of governing by legislative intervention and instead seeks to govern by facilitating, stimulating and developing self-governing capabilities of public servants and public organizations.[173] Let me in the following briefly present how two strands of literature have diagnosed this development with concepts such as *network governance* and the *supervision state* respectively and described the consequences for welfare institutions of such new governing strategies.

Much theoretical and empirical work has been done to trace the role of self-regulating networks across different fields of public policy.[174] Governance networks are most often defined as a relatively stable horizontal articulation of interdependent but operationally autonomous actors that come together in processes of negotiation and interaction with the purpose of improving public policy.[175] This literature describes how modern states supplement government through hierarchies and traditional political institutions with strategies of *meta-governance* of independent networks.[176] The concept of meta-governance is defined as "*deliberate attempts to regulate self-regulating governance networks without eliminating their capacity for self-regulation.*"[177] Meta-governance is thus a diagnosis of an ambition to govern independence and this dispersal of power has been argued to enable and empower public servants, but at the same time subject them to other governing strategies of

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[171] Just to mention a few examples from a Danish context: Andersen, 1995; 2008; Bang et al, 2005; Sørensen, 2001: 107; Andersen, 2000
[172] Dean, 1999; 2007; Willke, 1997; Andersen & Sand? 2012
[173] Miller & Rose, 1990; 1992; Rose, 1999; 2003; Donzelot & Estebe, 1994; Villadsen 2008
[174] Kooiman, 1993; 2003; Marsh, 1998; Pierre, 2000; Pierre & Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1994; 1997; 2000
[175] Rhodes, 1997: 53; Sørensen & Torfing, 2005: 197; Torfing, 2007: 2; see also Torfing 2008: 8
[176] Jessop, 2000: 23-24
[177] Torfing, 2007:16; see also Jessop, 1998; Kooiman, 1993; 2003; Sørensen & Torfing, 2008: Part III

surveillance and control.[178] Scholars have argued that network governance does not just replace traditional forms of governing, since many of the old state capacities are still in place.[179] Newman states:

> However, network governance is not the only game in town; hierarchy and markets continue to pervade the governance regimes of modern states, and managers are faced with the task of resolving the tensions and dilemmas that are produced as multiple regimes of power intersect, collide and conflict"[180]

When welfare institutions are also governed through their capacity to self-regulate through participation in networks they thus enter a landscape of many competing governing rationalities. They are simultaneously governed by attempts to facilitate and develop their own strategic competence and by interventions of micromanagement, for instance via different techniques of auditing and surveillance. Welfare institutions are thus positioned in a relationship with the state in which they are both empowered and disciplined[181] and welfare managers are left with the problem of how to navigate in these contradictions. It is thus argued that since old attachments and control systems do not just simply wither away, new strategies of governing independence result in a co-existence of different forms of power.[182]

In the authorship of German sociologist Helmut Willke, we find the concept of the *Supervision State* developed to describe how welfare states seek to deal with the problem of how to govern without reducing self-governing capacity. Willke's point of departure is a functionally differentiated society where differences between advanced expert systems leads political organizations to question their own efficiency in regulating for instance highly specialized, scientific or financial systems. Rather than dictating decisions in de-centered institutions whose forms of knowledge and rationalities are very different from those of political institutions, a supervising form of governing seeks to foster self-regulation. According to Willke, supervision can

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[178] Newman, 2004: 18
[179] Hirst, 1994
[180] Newman, 2004: 20; see also Newman 2001
[181] Newman, 2004: 18; Clarke & Newman 1997: 29
[182] See also Clarke and Newman 1997:62

be seen as attempts to educate the decision-making actors to critically reflect upon their own actions and ways of making decisions.[183] The aim of supervision can thus be to get actors to observe how and according to which kind of knowledge and rationality they make decisions in their everyday working life.[184] Furthermore, for Willke, supervision is a form of governing that encourages actors to make themselves and their institutions sensitive to broader societal problems and take it upon themselves to contribute to solutions.[185]

Within this framework of a supervision state, Andersen has described how welfare institutions have undergone a development from institutions in a hierarchy to independent organizations holding responsibility for reading their environments and strategically adapting themselves in accordance.[186] In this diagnosis, welfare institutions are to become governed independent by developing their capacity to reflect upon their own modes of operation, their own internal organization and their relations to their environment.[187] For Andersen, a strategic organization is a polyphonic organization that differentiates itself internally and strategically considers the interplay between its different rationalities.[188] Welfare institutions are governed by being expected to strategically relate themselves to their professional values, knowledge and routines and reflect upon how these can be repositioned within the new strategic organization and its polyphonic goals.[189] For instance, Pedersen and Sløk have analyzed how welfare institutions are called upon to continuously stage internal reflection upon how the institution can translate its professional values into strategic advantages in an environment of ever-new political reforms.[190]

This literature depicts how one consequence of the supervising forms of governing is that welfare institutions are governed with double binding communication. On the one hand, they are called upon to take responsibility for developing strategic

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[183] Willke, 1997, 1992
[184] Willke, 1993:2
[185] Willke, 1997; 1993; 1992; Andersen, 2004; 2008
[186] Andersen, 2008; 2004; 1995; Andersen & Born, 2001
[187] Andersen, 1995; Rennison, 2003; Pedersen, 2004
[188] Andersen, 2004; 2003;
[189] Andersen, 2008: 45; See also Pors, 2009b: 88-107
[190] Pedersen & Sløk, 2011

management, but simultaneously they are given compulsory language and techniques with which to manage. As Andersen states, welfare institutions are met with the double call: "Be independent! And Obey!"[191] Other studies have supplemented this general paradox of governing with analysis of the specific paradoxes that (un)rest in and between specific social technologies developed to manage welfare institutions, professionals and clients.[192] Thygesen has shown how welfare institutions are expected to become strategic by utilizing management technologies that have contradictory performative effects in terms of how they construct goals, budgets and roles of the institutions.[193] For instance, one technology may aim at standardizing the care that senior citizens can expect from public health nurses, while another, simultaneously in use in the same public organization, aims at making this care as personal and individual as possible. And Karlsen and Villadsen have analyzed how paradoxes of how to simultaneously produce certain subjects and expect these to be authentic is beating within technologies of dialogue between managers and employees or between professionals and clients.[194] As a result of new forms of supervising governing, welfare institutions are thus to self-manage in a foundational paradoxical situation of becoming independent in an obedient way and expected to use management technology with paradoxical effects on the institution.

That welfare institutions are both positioned as subordinate in a hierarchy *and* are called upon to be independent is thus a well-studied phenomenon. Now, let me explain how I seek to contribute to this literature.

First: While I tend to agree with the diagnosis that political attempts to govern without reducing self-regulating capacity lead to a co-existence of different forms of power, I do however, wish to analyze how we may not just be observing a co-existence of separate rationalities, but how connections and combinations between a wish to influence and to set free are an inherent part of the functioning of

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[191] Andersen, 2008: 47
[192] La Cour, forthcoming; La Cour & Højlund 2003; 2008; Andersen & Sand 2011a
[193] Thygesen, 2010; 2007; 2004; Andersen & Thygesen, 2004
[194] Karlsen & Villadsen, 2008

contemporary governing. My guiding hypothesis is that, rather than depicting contemporary governing as a co-existence of rationalities, we may understand a folding of wishes to impact and to set free as *the rationality* of contemporary governing. Moreover, by ending in the diagnosis of co-existence, questions may be overseen of how combinations of contradictory rationalities do not just produce challenges for welfare managers, but are also a powerful machinery for producing new demands for more governing of welfare institutions *and* for more self-management at the institutions. I will ask: *How is a simultaneous ambition to impact and to set free an intrinsic part of the functioning of contemporary governing of welfare institutions, and how is the simultaneity productive in terms of producing conditions of possibilities of governing as well as governed institutions?*

Second: I take a point of departure in studies of how contemporary welfare governing is full of paradoxes. However, whereas studies have focused on identifying overall and foundational paradoxes or depicted paradoxes in concrete management technologies, I aim to push new insights by systematically following how, in a specific welfare area, a foundational paradox has developed over the years; has led to a range of governing inventions; and how these have again triggered new paradoxes. I will ask: *In the specific welfare area of schooling, how does the birth of a paradoxical ambition to govern independence create an avalanche of governing inventions that do not solve the initial paradox, but rather lead to a range of new paradoxes?*

Third: It has been portrayed how welfare institutions are called upon to create themselves as strategic and reflexive organizations. This diagnosis seems to imply that welfare institutions are to put their identities at stake. For instance, they are expected to distance themselves from former identities based upon professions. Moreover, entailed in the diagnosis of the supervision state, is that institutions should distance themselves from their standard modes of operation in order to reflect upon them. With this thesis, I aim to systematically pursue such a connection between facilitating forms of governing and expectations to risk identity. It may be that the literature described above has not yet fully described how expectations to welfare institutions to gain a strong independent identity entail a call to dissolve and risk

identity.[195] I will therefore ask: *How is schools' independence connected to efforts to risk identity and how is this connection radicalized with today's expectations to schools to abandon former structuring of teaching and organize itself flexible enough to nurture unmanageable learning processes?*

Process philosophy and organizational theory

As described in the introduction, today, a body of expectations to schools to innovate themselves are under formation. As the reader may have noticed, these expectations have some similarities to present discussions of process thinking within organization theory. In the following, I will describe how I aim at contributing to this literature. Whereas scholars have followed a research interest in reformulating the ontological foundation of organization theory, the aim of this thesis is to elucidate how ideals of conceiving of organization as processes emerge in an empirical field. The thesis thereby also seeks to provide an account of how such ideals emerge historically in a context of public governing and public welfare.

During the last few decades, a variety of literature has strived to debate the nature of different process views and their implication for organization and management theory.[196] Scholars have sought to bring process philosophical thinkers such as Henri Bergson or Alfred North Whitehead into organizational theory in order to conceive organizations as dynamic and fluid processes rather than entities or substances.[197],[198]

A main contribution of this literature has been to highlight the processual nature of organizing and thereby illuminate how, previously, organization studies may have thought of organization and organizational phenomena primarily as things,

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[195] For exceptions see Andersen forthcoming; Knudsen, 2004a; 2006

[196] e.g. Pettigrew, 1987; Rescher, 1996; Bakken & Hernes, 2006; Langley, 1999; Styhre, 2004; Van de Ven & Poole, 2005; Carlsen, 2006

[197] Hernes, 2008; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Chia, 1999, Linstead, 2005

[198] The concept of organization is used in different ways in the literature that I refer to in this section. Sometimes organization is observed *as* process. Organization is thus seen as a phenomenon that like other phenomena in the world consists of processes (Bakken & Hernes, 2006; Hernes 2008). Elsewhere the term organization is seen as the opposite of process – as the other of change. Organization is then a counter-concept that can open up for observations of how change and stability interact (Chia, 1999: 224; Linstead, 2005: 213).

substances and entities and not paid enough attention to organizing as non-linear developments, dynamic fluctuation and streams of processes. Scholars position themselves against what is observed as mainstream or traditional organization theory and the tendency of such to view organizations as entities and reduce processes to something that occurs within confines of organizational goals and structures.[199] Instead, a process view adheres to an understanding of organization as something that is constituted by ever-changing processes where processes is defined as "movement in the sense of flow"[200] or as "change, transition, movement or motion".[201] The 'being' of organization is thus seen as constituted by unpredictable processes of becoming.[202] As Rescher argues: "becoming and change – the origination, flourishing and passing of the old and the innovating emergence of ever-new existence – constitutes the central themes of process metaphysics".[203] Speaking very generally, process thinking is thus a way of thinking about the world that focus on the inherent gradualness and dynamic and heterogeneous emergence of phenomena under study.

Bergson and organizational change

A main ambition within the turn to process views has been to rethink organizational change. Tsoukas and Chia have argued that previous accounts of organizational change have "not quite captured the distinguishing features of change – its fluidity, pervasiveness, open-endedness and indivisibility".[204] The authors claim a need for organization theory to understand the nature of change on its own terms in the sense of taking into account how change is per se inherently dynamic, complex and indeterminate.[205] Change should, it is argued, be seen as ontologically prior to

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[199] Hernes, 2008: 19; Chia, 1999
[200] Bakken & Hernes, 2006: 1600
[201] Ford & Ford, 1994: 765
[202] Chia, 1999: 218
[203] Rescher, 1996: 28; see also Chia, 1999: 217a
[204] Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 570
[205] Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 569; see also Chia, 1999: 210

organizational structure, and stability and order should be treated as exceptional states.[206]

On this quest of finding new accounts of change, Bergson has been a main inspiration to this literature. From Bergson, a critique of tendencies to reduce conceptions of motion and change into static stages is introduced. Chia cites Bergson:

> We argue about movement as though it were made of immobilities and, when we look at it, it is immobilities that we reconstitute it. Movement for us is a position, then another position, and so on indefinitely. We say, it is true that there must be something else, and that from one position to another there is the *passage* by which the interval is cleared. But as soon as we fix out attention on the passage, we immediately make of it a series of positions, even though we still admit that between the two successive positions one must indeed assume a passage.[207]

Contemporary process thinking seeks to move beyond thinking motion and change as successive stages between which something indefinable has happened and instead focus the attention on the processes of change and transformation themselves by conceiving of organization as fluid, ever-changing processes.[208]

As I will pursue below, the turn to process thinking in organization theory entails a call to organization scholars to adhere to an ontology of change and process. Scholars are encouraged to observe organizations with an ontological assumption that everything is always in the making; that there are no steady states as such, but only processes of organizing; processes of their becoming. [209] Tsoukas and Chia states: "Change is all there is. As Bergson would have put it, the indivisible continuity of change is what constitutes economic reality."[210]

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[206] Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; see also Chia, 1999: 210
[207] Bergson, 1992: 145, here cited in Chia, 1999: 212
[208] See Chia, 1999; Hernes, 2008; Another example of the (re)turn to Bergson is Styhre (2004), who draws on Bergson in a discussion of managerial knowledge to argue for an alternative conception of tacit knowledge as fluid, discontinuous, ever-changing process.
[209] Bakken & Hernes, 2006: 1600-1601; Hernes, 2008: 28
[210] Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 576

Entities as temporary manifestation points

The ontology of process is supported by a distinction between observing organizations as entities or as processes and a claim that any description of the world as entities risks misrepresenting the processual nature of the world.

Although there are different arguments here, a central one seems to be that entities should be understood as constituted by processes and that they are therefore less stable than dynamic and under continuous transformation. Hernes states that organizations are a result of how events have evolved over time, and therefore 'are' the processes that have shaped them.[211] Another example is the following citation from Ford and Ford[212]:

> ... there are no "things" in the world rather than change, movement or process. Things such as people, organizations, and ideas, are all names given to abstractions of what are identifiable and relatively constant patterns of movement extending over the whole universe. ... these identifiable states are termed *material manifestation points ...[213]*

Here, the same view that movement and process is what the world exists of is expressed. Moreover, things are described as abstractions that may be identifiable and relatively constant, but are basically states of transformation or more precisely, temporary manifestations of processes.[214]

From the works of Whitehead, current process thinking finds support for an 'ontology of becoming',[215] but also a distinction between 'concrete experience' and 'abstraction'. The former is described as the "concrete reality of people; the throbbing life of work, relations and emotions" and the latter as rules and formal structures.[216] Abstraction is argued to be powerful since it makes it possible for concrete experience to extend

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[211] Hernes, 2008: 3
[212] As a last example: Chia cites Bergson: "... there are underneath the change no things which change: change has no need of a support. There are movements but there is no enert or invariable object, which moves: movement does not imply a mobile. (Bergson, 1992 in Chia 1999: 218)
It is here argued that change is not something that happens to things. Rather, change is what the world is. The 'being' of entities is their becoming.
[213] Ford and Ford, 1994: 765
[214] See also Rescher, 2003: 53
[215] Hernes, 2008: 23
[216] Hernes, 2008: 53. The distinction seems to be overlapping with a distinction between formal and informal organization: Concrete experience is associated with experiences of people in local settings and abstractions with labels, names, roles and functions (Hernes, 2008: 53)

beyond the here and now. However, this power also makes abstractions fail to connect them back to concrete experience and thereby abstractions are falsely taken as concrete experience. Such conflation of abstractions with real experiences is described as a fallacy of misplaced concreteness.[217] Misplaced concreteness is argued to become a fallacy when abstractions in the form of names and nouns begin to live their own lives, separated and disconnected from the process that created them.[218]

It is thus argued that to observe abstractions *as* the world can be a fallacy of misplaced concreteness. To conceive of organizations as labels, names, roles and functions without connecting these to fluid, local, and unique experiences is argued to produce misrepresentations of what organizations ontologically consist of.

Structure versus process
With a rediscovery of Bergson and Whitehead, contemporary organization theory can argue that process should be taken as a principal category of ontological description:[219] Change is prior to organizational structures and entities are merely temporary manifestation points of the processes. [220] With its ontology of process this literature seeks to expose how previously organization theory has falsely conceived of processes as objects or entities.

For instance, Tsoukas and Chia has criticized work that observes change as stepwise and as output rather than as process.[221] They argue that a model that conceptualizes change as a set of stages is a poor representation of change since it can only make sense of change by denying what change is according to the authors, namely continuous, fluid processes.[222] Elsewhere Chia warns against a dominance of what he terms an "entitative perception".[223] Chia argues that when organization is observed from an "entitative" conception of reality, process is misunderstood as the interaction

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[217] Hernes 2008: 54
[218] Bakken and Hernes 2006: 1601
[219] Rescher, 2003: 51
[220] Tsoukas & Chia 2002: 570
[221] See also Hernes, 2008: 8
[222] Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 570
[223] Chia 1999; Bakken and Hernes, 2006: 1601

between stable entities. In a different article, Chia and Langley distinguishes between a *weak process view* and a *strong process view.* While the former is criticized for objectifying processes, the latter is celebrated for allowing the analysis to see through the façade of organizational stability to the underlying reality of ongoing change.[224] The way organization theory observes its object of study is thus conceived through a distinction between weak and strong process view, where the former is argued to mistake what are, in fact, fluid processes with stable objects and entities. This approach is shown to always risk the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, since it takes abstractions to be reality.

Scholars have thus criticized work that does not adhere to the promoted ontology of process for not capturing that entities are essentially processes and as such under constant reconfiguration. This, however, does not do complete justice to the discussions within this field. Brigham has argued that what is needed is not an unambiguous focus on process but detailed examinations of how disjunctions and connections between being and becoming are constructed and consolidated.[225] Brigham concurs with Hernes that a separation between entity and process upholds a dichotomy rather than contributing towards nuancing.[226] Bakken and Hernes states:

> [r]ather than dictate the pervasiveness of impermanence, process thinking directs attention to the analytical distinctions that we actually draw between continuity and discontinuity, between constancy and change, between entity and flow.[227]

Within a process view, we thus not only find a call to adhere to an ontology of process but also attempts to more, generally direct attention to how studies of organization apply a dichotomy of structure and process. However, it may be that attempts to nuance such a dichotomy are merely a privileging of the process-side, so that even entities or structures are given the name of process. Hernes suggest that attention

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[224] Chia & Langley 2005; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 576; See also Hernes, 2008: 23
[225] Brigham, 2005 240
[226] Hernes, 2008: 30; Brigham, 2005: 240, Bakken & Hernes, 2006: 1600
[227] Bakken & Hernes, 2006: 1600

should be directed to the ways in which entities come into being through process and how they enter into process in turn.[228] Bakken and Hernes argue:

> Entities, or abstraction, emerge *from* processes and enter *into* processes in turn. In other words, abstractions are part and parcel of processes and cannot be detached from them.[229]

Entities and processes are argued to be part of parcel of each other, because also entities are a form of process. The dichotomy between structure and process brought about with an ontology of process is thus sought dissolved with the same ontology: entities are argued to, in fact, also be processual.

In this section, I have described the turn to process philosophy in organization theory. Although the thesis draws mainly on systems theory and thus comes to this assumption from a different theoretical path, the point of departure of the thesis is also that the being of social phenomena such as for instance organizations can be understood as continuous processes of becoming.[230] However, it is my hope that the thesis may also form a contribution to this literature by raising the following questions.

Firstly, in my empirical investigation, I have found striking similarities between current expectations to Danish public schools to innovate themselves and organization theory drawing on process philosophy. However, rather than promoting a call to an ontology of processes to researchers as well as organizational practitioners,[231] I aim to investigate the empirical formation of ideals of observing the world as process in the specific field of school governing. It seems as though the ambition to introduce a new ontology of organization theory makes the above described literature disinterested in observing how the ideals that it promotes are

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[228] Hernes, 2008: 30; see also Bakken & Hernes, 2006
[229] Bakken and Hernes, 2006: 1602
[230] As described in chapter 2, the concept of autopoiesis implies the ontological assumption that being is always a form of becoming, since the being of a system is exactly continuous processes of self-reproduction. Likewise, Chia argues that forms of being are always constituted by processes of becoming. Chia cites Whitehead to state that: "the fundamental assertion that the actual world is a 'process and that that process is the becoming of actual entities´. And that "its 'being' is constituted by its becoming". (Chia 1999: 218)
[231] Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Linstead, 2005: 213

also currently penetrating empirical fields. Questions thus remain of what happens when an ontology of processes is taken up in contemporary attempts to manage. What happens when empirical fields begin to develop management techniques, language and knowledge in order to begin to manage emergent processes? I will ask: W*hat consequences does it have for how a school can create and organize itself that emergence and process becomes key concept in public governing?*

Secondly, the thesis seeks to contribute by directing attention to the historicity of an emergence of ideals of observing organizations as processes. Although, this literature investigates the theoretical history of process philosophy, any empirical history of how organizations may come to adhere to an ontology of process seems neglected. Ironically, this literature is highly occupied with temporal aspects of organizing, but as a consequence of its knowledge interest in ontology, there is little interest in the history of the ideals that are promoted. For instance, a temporal distinction between fluidity and stability is crucial to this literature, but the history of such a distinction is unobserved. With this thesis, I aim to study the historical formation of an ideal of observing organizations as processes in a specific field of organization and management, namely Danish school governing. My guiding hypothesis is that it has consequences for how we can understand ideals of observing organizations as processes that such ideals emerge in a specific history of governing. I will ask: *How does an ontology of process emerge in a specific history of governing and which role does this ontology play in new forms of governing?*

As I have given the research interest and questions empirical and historical grounding (chapter 1); since I have developed the analytical strategies with which I will approach the empirical data (chapter 2); and since the research interest have been positioned in the academic fields with which I wish to discuss, we are now ready to begin the empirical analyses.

ANALYTICAL PART 1

Introducing the chapters 4, 5 and 6

In the following three chapters, I will explore how the ambition of governing schools to govern themselves has emerged and developed in the communication of Danish municipalities. The chapters will map out how municipalities' ambition of creating self-governing schools emerged and how it has been reconfigured over the last 40 years. The chapters identify and follow the transformations of the problems that Danish municipalities have run into in their attempts to, from the outside, create a system that can create itself from the inside.

On a common sense level, the story I am about to present, is a history of how municipalities became the central school governing actor they are today. Over the years, competence to govern, financial responsibility and the employment of school managers and teachers (negotiation of salary and settlement of work hours) have been delegated from the state to municipalities. Other school governing actors such as school commissions and counties have seized to exist. And simultaneously, municipalities have expanded and professionalized their administration.

As should now be clear, the aim of the thesis is, however, not only to write this general history, but also to pursue the specific question of how a governing actor deals with the problem of how to govern independence. I begin in the 1970s, where municipalities were concerned with establishing a clear hierarchy between the municipal board and schools, and I follow the changes until 2010, where municipalities have developed a range of semantics to deal with the problem of how to govern without destroying the self-governing capabilities of schools.

This first analytical part of the thesis contains three chapters and serves three different purposes. Firstly, it sketches out the overall continuities and ruptures in the history of Danish municipal school governing and provides the thesis with the three main periods that also structure the analyses in the second analytical part. Secondly, this part explores how municipalities have understood themselves as school governing actors over time and is thereby able to draw conclusions with regard to

how municipalities have expanded their expectations to their own role in school governing. The aim is to diagnose the conditions on which municipalities can govern school today. And finally, this part tentatively identifies how municipalities have observed schools over time. These findings constitute the point of departure for the second analytical part. The first analytical part thus holds a double function of drawing separate conclusions *and* triggering new questions for the analyses in the next analytical part.

The approach of the three chapters is to pursue how governing has been problematized. My approach has been to follow how certain elements of school governing that has been taken for granted at certain points in time are developed into specific forms of problematizing of what school governing can be and how it can be conducted (see chapter 2). I begin each chapter by identifying and fleshing out the dominant way of problematizing school governing. Thereafter, I analyze how these forms of problematization bi- and trifurcates into sub-problematizations and how different concerns emerge and are related to each other in the different ways in these processes.

Chapter three describes the period from the beginning of the 1970s to the late 1980s. I argue that after the a great municipal reform of 1970 and before reforms of decentralization in the late 1980s, there was a specific way of problematizing school governing related to how schools could be subjected to municipal planning. Chapter four deals with a period from the late 1980s to the late 1990, and argues that a main problem was here how to facilitate that schools were capable of managing the competence they were given with reforms of decentralization. Finally, from the late 1990s, I focus on how it has been problematized how to gain impact on the self-governing of schools. The chapters thus study how municipalities emerge as school governing actors when they are occupied with the governing problems of how to subject schools to municipal planning (chapter 4), how to prepare schools to administer these new conditions of self-governing (chapter 5) and how to gain impact on self-governing schools without reducing their capabilities of self-governing (chapter 6).

The division into the different periods that I have constructed follows from the research question of how the ambition of governing independence has emerged and how it has been reconfigured. The divisions between periods are thus constructed so as to have a point zero before the emergence of the ambition to govern independency, an account of how this ambition emerged and was initially discussed and a description of the more mature and complex forms of problematizations that characterizes municipal school governing today.

Chapter 4

Strengthening municipal government

> Pedagogical decisions do, however, always entail considerations of economy and planning and it is therefore not possible to any significant degree for other governing bodies than the municipal board to decide such questions.[232]

In this chapter we shall follow how Danish municipalities sought to establish themselves as central school governing actors in the years after the municipal reform of 1970. With regard to the overall history of how the municipal ambition of creating independent schools have emerged and developed, what is interesting is that, in the 1970s, municipalities had not yet developed any ambitions of making the school self-governing. Instead, they were primarily concerned with questions of how to establish a clear hierarchy between municipality and school. In this chapter, I will thus begin the story of how the municipal ambition of creating self-governing schools have emerged by describing how municipalities observed school governing *before* the emergence of the ambition of creating schools as independent. We shall follow how municipalities sought to establish themselves as a central school governing actor, but how this took place without any ambitions to create the school as an independent system. Rather than making the school capable of decision making, the governing problem was how to submit the school to the decisions of the municipal board. In the thesis, this chapter thus functions as a point of departure for studying how this rather simple understanding of school governing as a hierarchy transform up through the 1990s and 2000s.

Although I claim that the concern to subject schools to municipal decisions was central until the late 1980s, the chapter primarily focuses on the debates in the years after the reform of the 1970s about the present school governing structures.

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[232] Account of the chief points of view of LGDK in Danish Municipalities 14.02.1973

The chapter proceeds as follows: I will first describe the governing structure of the time and the municipal dissatisfaction with this in order to identify the central governing problem of the period, namely *how to subordinate schools to municipal planning.* I will then, secondly, describe how municipalities sought to establish a clear hierarchy between municipality and school. Thirdly, I will analyze how municipalities differentiated themselves from another central governing actor, namely school commissions.[233] Finally, I will conclude that in the 1970s, municipalities struggled to position themselves as the centre from which schools could be efficiently planned and that governing was therefore solely understood as a matter of subjecting schools to municipal decisions.

Municipal dissatisfaction with the school governing structure of the time
In the beginning of the 1970s, municipalities were not satisfied with the school governing structure that from a municipal point of view consisted of too many different governing bodies who made lines of decision making inefficient. Let me briefly present the school governing structure of the time.

With the municipal reform of 1970, municipalities became bigger and power balances between the actors involved in school government were displaced with new division of competence between municipality, county and school commission. In general, the role of the county was diminished with the reform through the abolishment of the former county school direction and the handover of competence to the municipality. However, the counties was still in charge of governing schools for children with special needs, and, more importantly, counties held the overall inspection of how legislation was followed in the municipal school systems.[234],[235]   This meant that school and curriculum planning, plans for school building or rebuilding, etc., were to

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[233] A local elected governing body responsible for pedagogical supervision of the schools in a municipality. After 1970, a school commission consisted of 6 members chosen by the municipal board, at least three of these members of the municipal board. 5 members chosen among the members of the parentally elected school councils (Ministry of Education Announcement of 16th March 1970).
[234] Olsen, 1982:221
[235] The counties also held the task of upper secondary education (11th to 13th school year), which the municipalities without luck continued to argue should belong to the municipalities in order to construct a coherent school system for primary and secondary education (see for instance LGDK 1972; see also Danish Municipalities 23.06.1971, p.5 and Danish Municipalities 10.06.1970).

be sent to the county for approval[236] and that the county council was therefore entitled to demand all information regarding school planning from the municipal board.[237] The school commission still held pedagogical inspection of the municipal school system together with school councils of each school.[238],[239] The school commission formulated proposals for school and curriculum planning (for which it was obliged to obtain a declaration from the common teacher council).[240] A central part of the organization of school government was thus that the school commission prepared a proposal for school and curriculum planning, which were sent to the municipal boards for amendments. The municipal board then sent the school and curriculum planning to the county council for approval.[241]

Municipalities were dissatisfied with the governing system at the time. Firstly, the system of governing consisting of several actors were criticized for being too complicated and for producing unnecessary bureaucracy.[242] [243] In a discussion paper from 1972, LGDK argued:

> ... the many decision-making bodies involved and the many directions for proceedings in governing of local school systems lead to a heavy and troublesome administrative procedure. Furthermore, we must add that the whole system thereby becomes quite bewildering.[244]

The sending back and forth school and curriculum planning between school commission, municipal board and county council was described as time-consuming

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[236] School Governing Act of 1970 §37 see also Danish Ministry of Education circular letter of 12th of Marts 1970
[237] The School Governing Act of 1970 §34 stk. 2
[238] The School Governing Act of 1970 §8
[239] Besides preparing proposals for school planning this entailed a number of task such as ensuring that all children subject to compulsory school attendance received teaching (§20), recommend hiring and firing of teachers (§23), inspection of privately taught children, deciding on moving children from one school to another etc. etc.
[240] The School Governing Act of 1970 §22
[241] See the School Governing Act of 1970 §37
[242] Danish Municipalities 06.06.1973 nr. 5, p. 21
[243] Municipalities were not alone in observing the role of school commissions as contestable. A critique of the task of school commission and division of competence between municipal board and school commission also came from representatives of school commissions themselves. The legislative ground for school commissions was criticized for leaving so few tasks for commissions that these might as well be conducted by the municipal board and administration (see for instance Danish Municipalities 17.2.1971, p. 10).
[244] LGDK, 1972: 126

control and attacked for its production of "double administration".[245] Especially the procedure of approval in relation to school building and reconstruction was seen as "the filling out of a load of unnecessary schemes"[246] and vilified as "absolutely unnecessary over-administration that without quality reduction of any kind could be dispensed with".[247]

Secondly, in the school governing triangle of county, school commission and municipality, municipalities found themselves positioned somewhat in between the school commission, which as mentioned held the task of formulating school planning, and the county, which held the competence to approve this planning. Municipalities observed this position as undesirable since it left them with the task of "taking a stand in matters suggested by others rather than the municipal board leading the way in a constructive planning of the school system."[248]

At the beginning of the 1970s, a significant municipal preoccupation was thus how, in the governing structure consisting of several actors and the thereby following administrative procedures, to establish municipalities as a central actor. Municipalities therefore sought to convince national legislators to reconsider the extant of the county's inspection of the municipal school systems and reform legislation so that the role of the school commission in school governing would be reduced or even abolished.[249] The dominant governing problem was thus *how to subordinate schools to municipal planning.* And here especially the school commission appeared as a central obstacle.

Whereas municipalities criticized the role of counties in school governing with regard to excessive paperwork and control,[250] the critique of the role of the school commissions was more complicated. In the following two sections, I have therefore chosen to present central features of the way in which municipalities sought to position themselves as a central school governing actor in opposition to school

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[245] Danish Municipalities 06.06.1973, nr. 5, p. 10
[246] Danish Municipalities 01.09.1971, nr. 11
[247] Danish Municipalities 01.09.1971, nr. 11; see also Danish Municipalities 06.11.1973, nr. 5, p. 10
[248] LGDK, 1972: 126
[249] See LGDK's official statement to the Ministry of Education 1973, printed in Danish Municipalities 14.02.1973, nr. 23.
[250] LGDK, 1972: 187

commissions. Firstly, I will describe how a great municipal preoccupation was how to make the position of the school director a part of the municipal administrative hierarchy. And secondly, how municipalities articulated their own capabilities in opposition to school commissions. The aim is to argue that a main concern of municipalities was to ensure clear hierarchical relations between municipality and school. And, moreover to show how municipalities, when differentiating themselves from school commissions came to understand their own role as ensuring economic responsible spending, efficient administration and coordination of school affairs with other welfare areas.

The position of the school director

The struggle to strengthen the role of municipalities in school governing in relation to school commissions was in part played out in relation to the new positions as school directors that had been established with the 1970 school governing act. In municipalities with less than 15,000 inhabitants a managing school principal was appointed to be both the principal of a single school and the director of the entire school system.[251] In municipalities with more than 15,000 inhabitants a full time school director was appointed. This person was of decisive significance since he was to operate in between the rather autonomous everyday activities of schools and the overall planning of school systems. Municipalities were therefore dissatisfied with the legislation stating that it was the school commission that was in charge of appointing these persons. In a formal discussion paper from 1972, LGDK stated:

> As a consequence of these rules the municipal board is left without any direct legislative influence on the appointments to the managing positions within the school system – except for the influence resulting from the fact that the municipal board chooses the majority of the members of the school commission. This is particularly unfortunate in the case of the positions as school director and managing school principal.[252]

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[251] In order to perform both these tasks, the managing school principal was given secretary assistance and a reduction in his teaching load.
[252] LGDK, 1972: 139

However, it was not only appointment, but also a range of other questions that were opened with the establishment of these positions.

First, there was the question of education. LGDK attempted to start a discussion of what formal education a school director should have, and argued that the position could be occupied by an administratively trained person, since the position entailed considerable administrative responsibility.[253] It was, however, relatively unquestioned that the school director should be hired among the school principals in the municipalities and thus have an education from teacher training colleges.[254]

Secondly, there was the issue of physical location. LGDK argued that both school directors and the managing school principals ought to have their offices at the municipal administration. Firstly, because of the need to coordinate, and secondly, an argument was that the legitimacy needed to manage the whole municipal school system would be hard to obtain from the office of a particular school.[255]

Thirdly, and more controversially, was the question of to which authority the school director or managing school principal should answer. National guidelines for concrete tasks ascribed to the position were lacking, and it was therefore rather uncertain whether this position could be understood as an extension of the school commissions or of the municipal administration.[256],[257] One the one hand, legislation said that the school director or managing school principal should help school commissions in the exercise of their inspection of schools.[258] However, the municipal board also had a role in managing the school director or managing school principal since it could direct this person to perform some of the functions of the municipal board in relation to the school system or other forms of education in the municipality.[259] This led LGDK to argue that even though the wording of the

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[253] Danish Municipalities 23.06.1971, p. 39
[254] At the time, there was no or little education or training related to school management.
[255] Danish Municipalities 23.06.1971, p. 40
[256] Ussing Olsen 2007
[257] The management of the school director or managing school principal was mainly done through written instructions formulated by the school commission and through the municipal board presented to the county council for approval (§22 stk. 6 enactment of government of the municipal school systems. See LGDK circular letter of 19.05.1971
[258] School Governing Act of 1970 §58
[259] School Governing Act of 1970 §58

legislation said that the school commission formulated the instructions for the school director or managing school principal[260], the intention with the law had to have been different. [261] Municipalities sought to establish themselves as the authority that school directors should answer to with several arguments.

Firstly, municipalities claimed that the work of the school director was tightly entangled with the municipal organization of school administration and that only municipal boards could decide how the school director or managing school principal should coordinate and divide tasks with the municipal employees. [262] The chairman of the school committee of LGDK argued that the formulation of the instructions for the school director could only be done if one had thorough insight into the ways in which the municipal school administration was organized and functioned.[263] Municipalities thus sought to make the school director a municipal employee by positioning his tasks within the municipal administration and as an object of management for someone with thorough insight into the organization of the municipal administration.

Secondly, municipalities strengthened the coupling of the school directors to the municipal administration by articulating them as positions with managerial responsibility for the school administration.[264] In a discussion paper from 1972, LGDK argued:

> In many of the municipalities where such a position exists, the school directors function as administrative managers for the entire area of education and corresponding functions are in a number of municipalities assigned to the managing school principal. ... In their capacity as administrative managers, the school directors and managing school principals a considerable part of their job is to act on behalf of the municipal board and its committees and generally operate as advisor and administrator for the municipal board. On this background it appears odd

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[260] See the School Governing Act of 1970 §22 stk. 6
[261] LGDK circular letter of 19.05.1971 Printed in Danish Municipalities 23.06.1971, p. 43
[262] LGDK's account to the Ministry of Education, 1973. Here cited from Danish Municipalities 14.02.1973, p.14
[263] Danish Municipalities 07.07.1971, p. 23. See also LGDK's account to the Ministry of Education 1973, printed in Danish Municipalities 14.02.1973, nr. 23,
[264] LGDK, Annual Report 1980/81, p. 149

that the municipal board cannot decide whom it wants appointed to this highly responsible task.[265]

As a manager of municipal staff and as an advisor to the municipal board, LGDK argued, the school directors or managing school principal were positioned within the administrative hierarchy of the municipalities and should refer to the municipal board.[266] Moreover, LGDK argued that the school directors should then be submitted to the general policies for municipal personal.[267] Municipalities thus also sought to make the school directors and managing school principals municipal employees, by giving them management responsibility for municipal administrative staff and thus a part of management hierarchies in the municipality.

To summarize, in the 1970s, municipalities struggled to make the position of school director and managing school principal a part of the administrative hierarchy in a municipality. Municipalities argued that these positions should answer to the municipal board since it had the insight necessary to coordinate the tasks of these positions with the tasks of other municipal staff. Moreover, municipalities argued that the school director and managing school principal functioned as managers of municipal staff and was therefore a part of the municipal organization. These arguments led municipalities to state that a natural solution to the vagueness in legislation regarding the division of competence to manage these positions was "to make the positions as senior managers of the municipal school system purely municipal positions."[268] A main concern of municipalities was thus to ensure that a clear hierarchy between municipalities and schools was established. A hierarchy that was not made uncertain by the interference of the school commission.

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[265] LGDK, 1972: 139
[266] See also official statement from the chair of LGDK's school committee in Danish Municipalities 23.06.1971, p. 40
[267] LGDK, Annual Report 1983/84, p. 111
[268] LGDK, 1972: 140

Subjecting school planning to an economic reality

The next question is how municipalities could understand themselves as school governing actors in their attempt to differentiate themselves from the school commissions. Municipalities sought to strengthen their role by articulating themselves as a governing actor capable of performing a number of tasks that school commissions were not suited to perform. As I will describe in the following three arguments were central: LGDK argued that they were responsible for the spending of schooling, had an efficient administration and were capable of coordinating the area of schooling with other areas.

A feature of the division of competence between school commissions and municipalities was that municipalities held the economic responsibility of schooling. One of the principles in the distribution of expenditure and task of the municipal reform of 1970 had, namely, been that the authority that held the decision-making competence should also hold the financial responsibility.[269],[270] School commissions were therefore obliged to bring all matters involving an increase in expenditures before the municipal board.[271]

The division of decision-making competence between school commissions and municipal boards was thus also a matter of defining the relationship between pedagogical and economic aspects of schooling. LGDK argued that educational policy could not be separated from economic preconditions.[272] In an official statement to the Ministry of Education, LGDK for instance wrote:

> ... discussions in commissions and councils about municipal educational and leisure time policy in which economic preconditions are not taken into account, easily become less than realistic.[273]

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[269] Windinge, 1985: 113

[270] This happened gradually in the different sectors up through the 1970s. The 1st of April 1975 the financing of public schools were finally handed over to municipalities. Reimbursements from the stat were then transformed to a total general grant. From 1970-1975 reimbursements from the state had covered 60% the expenditure of teaching hours (see LGDK 1972: 186)

[271] The school Governing Act of 1970 §1, stk. 2

[272] See for example an account of the chief points of view of LGDK in Danish Municipalities 14.02.1973

[273] LGDK official statement to the Ministry of Education 1973 published in Danish municipalities 14.02.1973, p. 16

By such a statement, LGDK proposed that discussions of educational policy would always be connected to economic conditions, and that the discussions that school commissions could have without considering municipal decision-making would therefore always be unrealistic. In opposition to school commissions, municipalities could thus position themselves as a guarantee for decision-making as "true to reality as possible",[274] where "true to reality" meant in accordance with the municipal economy and financial decisions of the municipal boards. By subjecting pedagogical planning to economic appropriation municipalities could describe the capability of decision-making of school commission as limited and claim that realistic decision-making belonged to municipal boards. Since school commissions could only decide on pedagogical matters, their decisions, LGDK argued, would always be "exposed to overruling by the economically responsible authorities".[275] Municipal boards could thus be articulated as a body capable of overruling the decisions of the school commission, due to its characteristic as an actor that could consider the particular pedagogical matters within a more realistic context of economic opportunities and limitations.

A second characteristic of the division of competence between municipalities and school commissions was that the latter did not have administrative units at their disposal, and depended on administrative staff employed by the municipality to perform the majority of administrative functions in the school system. LGDK could therefore argue that the commission was capable of taking decisions, but incapable of implementing them since it lacked administrative machinery. The chairman of LGDK's school committee stated:

> Members of the school commission ... can of course, if they wish to, conduct the administrative duties themselves, but if they want assistance from the staff employed by the municipality, they have to rely on the good will of municipal board to grant them the time of administrative employees.[276]

[274] Danish Municipalities 14.02.1973, nr. 23, p. 17-20
[275] LGDK official statement to the Ministry of Education 1973 published in Danish municipalities 14.02.1973, p. 16
[276] Danish Municipalities 23.06.1971

School commissions were argued to depend on municipalities, since they do not have administrative staff, but rely on the time and effort of the members of the school commissions themselves. The crucial difference between the commission and the municipality emerged as a difference between a solely political organ and an organ consisting of both a political and an administrative level. Municipalities could thus position themselves in relation to school commissions by pointing to their professional administration.

Finally, the division of decision-making competence between school commissions and municipal boards was also a matter of defining the relations between educational policy and a broader framework of policy for teaching activities outside the public school, leisure time activities, libraries, etc.[277] According to school committee of LGDK there was

> ... a considerable need for coordination of the activities of the public school to the activities of volunteer teaching and the leisure time activities for children and young people.[278]

A central interest of LGDK was thus to be able to prioritize coordination and coherent planning over particular pedagogical concerns.[279] However, a central obstacle was the present divide between the governing of schools and leisure time activities in two different commissions and the mirroring of this divide in two different municipal administrative units. LGDK's school committee argued that the division of areas was irrational since it left poor conditions for efficient coordination. LGDK argued:

> A joint administration of the public school as well as the leisure time activities in the municipalities will result in administrative and economic advantages.[280]

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[277] LGDK, 1972: 141

[278] From a Minute from LGDK's school committee's meeting with representatives from the Ministry of Education, the parental organization School and Society, the Association of County Councils, the National Teacher Union and the Association of Danish Evening and Youth Teaching. Published in Danish Municipalities 26.06.1971, p. 39

[279] This argument was general at the time. Also a national committee of planning of the public sector concluded, in 1971, that since education was such a heavy societal burden in terms of expenses it should be well coordinated with other areas. See the committee's "Perspectives of Planning" from 1971 part 2, p. 8-9

[280] From a Minute from LGDK's school committee's meeting with representatives from the Ministry of Education, the parental organization, School and Society, the Association of County Councils, the

To propose a joint administrative unit was to suggest conflicting structures between governing and administration of the two sectors and thereby potentially undermine the independence of commissions. Moreover, joint administration could suggest that matters of coordination should be prioritized over particular issues of the different areas. However, in LGDK's statements the administrative and financial advantages were given prioritization over consideration to independence of commissions and their particular areas.

By proposing joint administration, LGDK could emphasize the need for coordination between policy areas and position itself as the actor to perform such coordination. The difference between the commissions of each policy area and the municipal administration thus emerged as a difference in the capability of solely taking a particular policy area into consideration or being the coordinating actor. In the struggle over the division of competence with school commission, municipalities sought to position school affairs as one particular policy area within a totality of several areas, and subject it to a need for coordination and joint administration. The municipality thereby emerged as the actor capable of observing the particularity of the area of schooling within a totality of considerations and of producing the needed calculations of how to coordinate areas most efficiently.

To recapitalize, municipalities articulated themselves as more appropriate school governing actors than school commissions by arguing that school governing demanded economic insight, efficient administration and ability to coordinate with other welfare areas. When thinking school governing through a problem of how to subject schools to municipal decisions, municipalities thus came to understand school governing as a matter of ensuring reasonable spending, efficient administration and coordination.

National Teacher Union and the Association of Danish Evening and Youth Teaching. Published in Danish Municipalities 2606.1971, p. 39

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Creating a municipal totality

Let me sum up this chapter. In the beginning of the 1970s, municipalities were dissatisfied with the school governing structure. Municipalities found that the governing system consisting of county council, school commission and municipality was too complicated and produced too much unnecessary bureaucracy. Moreover, municipalities were dissatisfied with their role in this system, where other actors held both the competence to formulate and to approve school planning. From the beginning of the 1970s and onwards, a central school governing problem for municipalities was thus *how to subject schools to municipal planning.*

In the debates in the beginning of the 1970s, a central municipal preoccupation was how to make the newly appointed school directors a part of the municipal school administration. By giving them managerial responsibility for the municipal school administration and positioning them as a part of the municipal staff, municipalities could argue that they should be responsible to the municipal board. In the 1970s, municipalities thus struggle to establish a clear hierarchical line of decision making between the municipal board and the schools. At this point in time, municipalities did not express any ambition that school should be able to take decisions themselves, rather, municipalities strived to ensure that municipalities could plan and administer school activities.

When observing their own role through the problem of how to ensure municipal influence on schools, municipalities articulated themselves in certain ways. In opposition to school commissions, municipalities could present themselves as efficient school governing actors. Municipalities could provide realistic decisions, since they could observe schools within an economic gaze of budgeting and appropriations. Unlike the commissions, municipalities had an administrative corpus. And where commissions observed school as a singular phenomenon in its own right, municipalities could observe how schools were positioned within a totality of municipal welfare areas and how activities and needs of schools should be coordinated with activities and needs of other areas.

This chapter has thus provided a point of departure for observing how a municipal ambition of creating schools as independent institutions emerged. Until the late 1980s, municipalities observed school governing as the rather simple matter of ensuring a direct hierarchy between municipality and school. Municipalities conceived of themselves as school governing actors as the central totality of welfare areas into which schools should be planned. Any advantages of making the school planning its own activities were not yet discovered.

However, before we follow how municipalities rethought their role in school governing, let me briefly go through how the central requests of municipalities in the debates in the 1970s were fulfilled over the following years.

Municipalities had to wait until a new school governing enactment of 1990 to see the decrease in the role of the county in school governing that they had wished for in the beginning of the 1970s. This act cancelled many of the functions of the county in the government of schools. The former procedures of sending plans for school building, curriculum plans, etc. for approval to the county council were cancelled leaving the municipal the competence to decide in some cases or in other cases to report directly to the Ministry of Education.[281] The main task of the county was reduced to the provision of education for children with special needs.[282]

The long awaited abolishment of the School Commission was likewise reached with the act of 1990. With the decentralization of competence to the individual school, many of the coordinating functions of the commission disappeared[283]. The individual school was instead to answer to the municipal board and its school committee.[284]

Finally, in the following years the school director became a municipal director, situated within municipal hierarchies like directors of other welfare areas and answering to the municipal board. In the negotiations of a changed school governing

[281] Moreover, with the 1990 act the county no longer held the authority to settle complaints.
[282] See Sørensen, 1995b: 96
[283] From the late 1980s and the beginning discussions of and experiments with decentralization, LGDK had begun to raise questions about the roles of the different actors in school governing in new ways. The development towards decentralization, LGDK argued, would leave especially the school commission and the teachers' council unnecessary. See LGDK Annual Report 1986/87: 21 see also LGDK, 1988b: 6.
[284] See also LGDK, 1988a: 14

enactment begun in 1985, LGDK managed to get their request through that municipal boards held the competence to occupy positions as school directors and managing school principals.[285],[286] Simultaneously the school directors became more and more oriented towards the municipality. For instance, their representational association agreed upon supplementing their membership of the Danish Teacher Union with a membership of the Association of Municipal Senior Executives.[287]

[285] The School Governing Enactment of 1987 §23; see the argumentation of LGDK in LGDK annual report 1980/81: 149.
[286] Up till then the municipal had been obliged to choose one out of three applicants recommended by the school commission (see LGDK annual report 1986/87: 77).
[287] In conflicts, for instance about teachers' duty hours, the Association of School Directors, formerly loyal to the teacher profession, began to criticize the Danish Teacher Union and question their loyalty towards it. The chairman of the association of school directors stated: "Teachers have been accustomed to us remaining silent to the outside world, but we can no longer accept this." And moved on to state that "... it is of no use that the teacher union feels that they have power over life and death"(Danish Municipalities 29.11.1990, nr. 40, p. 12).

Chapter 5

Governing the school to govern itself

> As more and more competence is decentralized a need will emerge to strengthen the capability of the individual school to administer the competence both with regard to the conditions for managing and the traditions in the teaching staff.[288]

In this chapter, we shall follow how Danish municipalities began to articulate advantages of delegating competence from the municipality to the individual school. The chapter investigates how, from the late 1980s, ideals of decentralization penetrated discussions about school governing and led municipalities to begin to problematize how they could govern schools to become independent. The chapter thus contributes to the overall history of the thesis by focusing on how the ambition of creating a space of independence within hierarchical relations was born.

In the chapter, we shall follow the emergence of the problem of how to make schools capable of managing themselves. I will show, how when municipalities began to want schools to become self-managing, they also discovered the problem that schools were so tightly bound by agreements with the teachers' union negotiated by the national Ministry of Finance that the freedom of scope of the school was limited. If the school management was to have anything to manage, the school had to be released from the regulations enforced upon it by the agreements with the teachers' union. Moreover, I will follow how, when municipalities began to want the school to manage itself, they had to re-invent their own role as governing actors. In order to ensure that schools did not use their new freedom to shut out external influence but instead used it to invite its users (mainly parents) to participate in the school's self-governing, municipalities had to mediate conflicts between the school and its stakeholders.

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[288] LGDK, 1988b: 26

Although I claim that a governing problem of how to prepare schools to manage themselves is constitutive of relations between municipality and schools from the late 1980s to the ate 1990s, I focus my observations on the debates of decentralization occurring before and around the introduction of a new legislation in 1990. In these years, experiments with decentralization were carried out in selected municipalities and eagerly discussed by LGDK and in Danish Municipalities. The empirical material is in these years thus rich with regard to reports from and problematizations of attempts to make schools govern themselves.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. First, I will present the ideals and thoughts of decentralization of the time in order to identify the general governing problem that these ideals initiated, namely *how municipalities could prepare schools to administer the new conditions of self-management*. Secondly, I follow how municipalities discovered that schools could not become its own object of management before it was released from its ties to the teacher profession and union. Thirdly, I analyze how municipalities re-invented themselves as those who should facilitate constructive relations between the school and its environment. Finally, I will show how the articulations of new governing relations between schools and municipalities led the latter to expect of itself to be trustworthy

Ideals of decentralization

If the municipal reform from 1970 can be said to have initiated a first wave of decentralisation where a number of government task was distributed from state to municipalities, a second wave appeared in the late 1980s where tasks and decision-making competence were partly decentralised from municipalities to welfare institutions.[289]

In 1988 Danish Municipalities reported from the yearly LGDK meeting of delegates with the heading: "This is the future. All power to decentralization!"[290] A number of

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[289] See Sørensen, 1999: 127; 1995a; 1995b; Schou, 1994
[290] The rhetoric of decentralization also found its way to the Ministry of Education: The Minister of the time, Bertel Haarder, stated to Danish Municipalities: What we want is a massive clearing up of the

municipalities obtained status as experimental municipalities, which meant that they were granted exceptions from the general legislation of governing structures to perform experiments with decentralization of budgeting and user-influence in the welfare institutions. These municipalities reported with great enthusiasm that "the personnel has become so much more economically conscious and parents as active and engaged as we have ever experienced."[291]

Advocates of decentralization argued that if each school was given more decision-making competence, they could be developed according to local needs and demands and local engagement and interests could be converted to development of the welfare service that schools provided.[292] The hope was that if local actors (be it teachers, parents or school managers) were given degrees of freedom it would lead to inspiration, flexible solutions and development of the welfare services.[293] With the slogan "Renewal from within" schools thus emerged as the main site of development, since it was at the individual school that "initiatives can be lounged and experiments played out".[294]

Under the headline of decentralization municipalities could connect demands such as simplification and modernization of the governing legislation, greater freedom for each municipality to adjust budgets and organization to local conditions, and transfer of the right to negotiate teacher salaries and organization of working hours from the national Ministry of Finance to municipalities. Moreover, municipalities wished to be able to transfer decision-making competence to the individual school and thereby strengthen the position of the school principal as well as increase parental influence.[295] [296] The agenda of decentralization was therefore central to municipal

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amount of legalism and the impassable jungle of arrangements. A self-governing school where one does not have to ask for permission in the Ministry for every little matter. The micro-management of the Ministry has become absurd. We should reach the point where we can just have an automatic answering machine saying: Yes, you can do that!" (Danish Municipalities 15.09.1988)

[291] Danish Municipalities 16.06.1988, p. 29
[292] LGDK, Annual Report 1989/90b
[293] LGDK, 1988b: 21
[294] LGDK, 1988b: 5
[295] Parental influence had been strengthened with the 1970 enactment and its introduction of school councils. However, experienced had been mixed. See Danish Municipalities 19.08.1970, where the chair of the time of the parental organization, School & Society, Eigil Brinch discusses this issue. I will return to this later in the chapter.
[296] See LGDK annual reports 1986/87a: 3; 1986/87b: 76; 1987/88a; 1987/88b; 1988/89a: 9

school governing in the late 1980s, which among other things resulted in a number of discussion papers dealing with the prospects of decentralization for the public school.[297]

Before I proceed to identify the problematization of governing that these ideals led to, allow me to introduce a bit more thoroughly, what was, at the time, meant by decentralization.

In the debates in the late 1980s, decentralization was understood as distribution of decision-making in relation to economy and pedagogy. Economic decentralization was articulated as a matter of the degree to which the resource framework assigned to each school was restricted.[298] A central argument was that resources could be better spent if the individual school were allowed to decide for itself how to allocate them. LGDK argued: "No two schools are identical and tasks are different. The schools must spend resources as their special needs suggests."[299] The degree to which municipalities decentralized economic decision-making varied greatly. A high degree of decentralization meant that schools were given an overall economic frame and the freedom to transfer resources from one account to another (i.e. accounts for maintenance of buildings, heating, personnel, etc.). Moreover, school could be allowed to transfer unused resources from one year to the next and thus plan ahead for larger investments.[300]

Pedagogical decentralization was mainly articulated simply as a matter of the schools' freedom to decide the year plan of teaching hours:

> The teaching plan or the plan for allocation of teaching hours, as it is also called, is a cornerstone in the planning of the activities of the school. It is this plan that indicates the allocation of teaching hours at each year group and subject at the individual school.[301]

For a municipal gaze, pedagogical decentralization was a matter of handling over the tools for planning of the teaching activities of the school year to the school so that

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[297] LGDK, 1986; LGDK 1988a, LGDK, 1988b; LGDK, 1988c
[298] See LGDK, 1988b: 13
[299] LGDK, 1988b: 7; see also LGDK annual report 1989/90b
[300] See LGDK, 1988b: 13
[301] LGDK, 1988b: 9

> ... the school itself can choose to provide more classes in Danish, in music, in environmental studies, etc., and that the school can increase the number of teaching hours in a year group with the help of resources not spend in another year group.[302]

If a municipality had extended pedagogical decentralization this meant that the individual school could freely dispose of teaching hours and allocate them as wished on subjects and year groups as long as they stayed within the minimum demands set out by the national Ministry of Education.

Central to the debates in the late 1980s were also concerns of how to involve the users of the school – mainly parents – in school governing.[303],[304] One purpose of decentralizing decision-making competence to the individual school was to facilitate debates between the stakeholders of the individual school.[305] LGDK argued:

> The public school is one of our most import culture-bearing institutions. It must at the same time mirror the general societal development and lead the way to the future. This will only happen if there is continuous debate of the development of the school. A debate between employees, users and politicians.[306]

Both in order to make schools reflect society and to develop schools, a debate between the different stakeholders of the school was needed. The argument was that if parents were given the possibility to influence their children's school, they would also engage themselves in discussions.[307] Supporting the ideal of user-influence was thus a belief that if users were given influence, it could lead to a strengthening of public debates about welfare service, and, moreover, that such debate would lead to service renewal.[308]

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[302] LGDK, 1988b: 10

[303] See for instance LGDK Annual Report 1989/90b

[304] Parallel to this development ran an increase in the parents' right to choose between schools. This development began in 1986, where the revision of the School Governance Act introduced limited freedom of choice between schools, whereby parents were allowed to choose an alternative public school if it had the capacity and once all the children within the immediate school district had been admitted (see Sørensen, 1999: 130).

[305] LGDK, 1988b: 8

[306] LGDK, 1988b: 4

[307] See for instance LGDK, 1988b: 7

[308] LGDK 1988a: 11; LGDK, 1988b: 7

Another argument for user-participation was that parents would choose private schools, if they were not given more influence. In a discussion paper lounged by LGDK a school director from the frontrunner-municipality of Værløse stated[309]:

> It is my understanding that many parents choose private schools over public schools, because they believe that they will thereby obtain greater influence on the schooling of their children. In Værløse we have taken the consequences of this and through our status of experimental municipalities changed and strengthened the competence of the parental councils.[310]

In the late 1980s, front-runner municipalities like Værløse, Faxe or Rosenholm obtained status as experimental municipalities and carried out experiments of distribution of responsibility for the schools' economy and pedagogical planning to a school board with a majority of elected parents.[311] And in 1990, a strengthening of user-influence was institutionalised in all municipalities with a new school governing enactment, where the school councils established in 1970 were transformed to school boards.[312] The board was given decision-making competence in a number of substantive and financial issues, which was formerly in the hands of the Ministry of Education[313], the School Commission or the Municipal Council.[314],[315]

Steering problems

The ideals of decentralization entailed the belief that development and renewal could not be dictated from the top of a hierarchy. The following statement from a feature article in Danish Municipalities, expresses the reasoning:

> You cannot create dynamism and development with legislation. Development has to come from below. From the municipalities who are

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[309] The Minister of Education at the time, Bertel Haarder, expressed a similar argument in
[310] LGDK, 1986: 22
[311] See, LGDK 1988b
[312] School Governing Act of 1990 §42
[313] At this point in time named Ministry of Education and Science
[314] See Sørensen, 1995b: 96
[315] The formal division of labour between the school board and the school management was (and is) that the board decides upon matters of principle, leaving the school management to decide upon implementation and organization with reference to these principles (for an analysis of the introduction of parental boards see Sørensen, 1999: 129).

> responsible for running the public school, and from the parents, managers and teachers, whose everyday life takes place at the school.[316]

This citation expresses how Danish municipalities sought to position themselves in relation to the state as the central school governing actor. However, the quotation also indicates that development from below does not only mean from municipalities, but also from the individual school. A transformation had thus occurred with regard to former belief in municipalities' ability to govern schools by means of central planning and coordination. And this transformation posed certain problems for municipalities. On the one hand, an unambiguous belief in the efficiency of previous forms of governing by means of calculations and planning was no longer possible. On the other hand, municipalities worried that schools were not yet capable of managing such new responsibilities for their own economy and pedagogical planning. Let me elaborate the latter.

From the municipal point of view, the history and traditions of schools had not prepared them to meet the demands that a decentralization of competence would produce. LGDK stated:

> There is hardly any doubt that the public school in its historical tradition has emphasized individual subjects and the transmission of knowledge to pupils. The need for cooperation – both between teachers and between the school and its environment – has been limited.[317]

The schools' traditional focus on teaching of individual subjects had, according to this statement, not prepared the school to cooperate either internally or externally. As the statement expresses, municipalities questioned whether schools were capable of building up the necessary forms of cooperation between teachers and between school and environment that were necessary, if schools were to manage themselves. Lacking structures for cooperation could, LGDK argued, lead to both conflicts and to exploitation of the new competence was by individuals.[318] Under the heading "Misuse of competence" a discussion paper for instance, described an unnamed school that misused their freedom to allocate teaching hours to give teachers easier working

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[316] Danish Municipalities 16.08.1990, p. 4
[317] LGDK, 1988a: 6
[318] LGDK, 1988b

conditions, instead of improving teaching.[319] LGDK therefore recommended that before distributing competence to schools, municipalities should ask themselves: "Are the school ready to administer the competence?"[320]

The problem from the point of view of municipalities can be described by the following citation:

> You cannot change methods of governing over night, even though municipalities now have the possibility to do so. A process of decentralization requires that the fundamental traditions and patterns of cooperation of the schools are changed and renewed.[321]

Municipalities were thus caught in the dilemma that on the one hand, the belief was that renewal and development could only come from schools themselves, but on the other hand, municipalities did not observe schools as ready to manage such new responsibilities. From the late 1980s, a central municipal concern was to answer questions such as: If the detailed municipal system of appropriations should be removed, how could municipalities ensure that the school was capable of handling its spending and planning responsibly?[322] If school were given competence to plan its own teaching, how could municipalities be sure that the decision-making structures at the schools were prepared to handle such planning? A main question that municipalities sought answers to in the late 1980s was therefore how to govern schools so that they became capable of governing themselves. Municipalities were, in other words, struggling with a problem of governing of *how municipalities could prepare schools to administer these new conditions of self-management.*

In the following pages, I will pursue how this general problem of governing was dealt with in municipal communication. First, I will show how municipalities discovered the schools' bounds to the teachers' union as a first barrier in relation to making schools self-managing. And secondly, I will analyze how ideals of user-influence led municipalities to problematize the closedness of teacher communities and discover a

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[319] LGDK, 1988b: 25
[320] LGDK, 1988b: 27
[321] LGDK, 1988b
[322] See LGDK, 1988b: 8

new role for themselves as those who should facilitate cooperation between parents and schools.

How to set the school free when it is bound by regulation?

When municipalities observed schools with a gaze of whether or not these were ready to administer the new responsibility, they discovered a first problem: Even though municipalities delegated competence to the school, many of the schools' activities would still be governed by regulation of duty hours negotiated between the national Ministry of Finance and the national teacher union.

In the late 1980s, an important municipal concern was that the extent of central regulation and provisions would hinder the renewal of the public school that the processes of decentralization would hopefully bring with them.[323] LGDK argued: "A continued renewal of the public school presupposes a modernization of the extensive system of rules of the public school.[324] In the late 1980s, LGDK was preoccupied with how legislation and regulations could be reformed and simplified.[325]

One legislative change was in particular a high priority on the municipal agenda: a thorough reform of the legislation related to teachers' hiring and schemes of duty hours. This was stated to be "the most important goal in the coming years" for the work of LGDK.[326] Teachers' duty hours was articulated as "unreasonably rigid and complicated."[327] And LGDK stated "the greatest obstacle for development, renewal and decentralization in the public school is the starch and detailed legislation for the organization of teachers' duty hours".[328] This regulation was, however, negotiated

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[323] LGDK annual report 1986/1987: 18
[324] LGDK annual report 1988/89a: 8
[325] Municipalities argued that the legislation formulated up through the 1970s and 1980s did not provide many possibilities for handing over competence to schools. For instance regarding the possibilities for decentralization of economic decision-making to the individual school, LGDK argued that the legislation and provisions were not arranged so that municipalities could let the individual schools administer a total grant for the running of the school (LGDK, annual report 1986/87a: 18).
[326] LGDK Annual Report 1988/89a: 8
[327] LGDK Annual Report 1986/87b: 76
[328] LGDK Annual Report 1986/1987: 18

between the national Danish teacher union and the Ministry of Finance and thus outside the influence of municipalities.

The concern for how to simplify the regulation was not new. Already in 1972, municipalities had observed that "the special rules for the hiring of teachers and norms for duty hours provided by national legislation, leaves municipalities highly restricted in their efforts to organize the education system".[329] The municipal critique of the regulation of teachers' duty hours had, however, previously dealt with how to make the working hours of teachers governable for municipal planning and linked to concerns of whether teachers were actually delivering the hours they were paid for. [330] In the beginning of the 1970s, municipalities had thus worried that schools could only to a limited degree become an object of municipal planning, since national legislation had already set so many restrictions for the organization of schooling, that few decisions were left to municipalities.

In contrast, in the late 1980s, the ways in which municipalities problematized the regulation of duty hours of teachers were entangled to the new ambition to prepare schools to become self-managing. As I will show, the concern was now not that the legislation was an obstacle for making schools an object of municipal governing, but that it constituted a barrier for municipalities' attempts to make schools self-managing.

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[329] LGDK, 1972: 140

[330] In the late 1970s, municipalities therefore encouraged the appointment of a task group, which should discuss a possible renewal of the duty hours of teachers. The task group consisted of representatives from the National Teacher Union, LGDK and the Ministry of Finance. As a result of the work of the task group, the Ministry of Education ordered an investigation of the relations between the number of hours set by the provisions of duty hours and the actual spending of hours of the tasks that teachers conducted (see LGDK Annual Report 1979/1980: 156). In the 1980s, the results of the investigation were lounged without the teachers' unions' accept of the conclusions. The National Teacher Union disagreed in particular with one of the conclusions of the investigation that found that it could not be documented that teachers had a greater working load than what was presupposed in the regulation of duty hours.[330] Municipalities approved of the report and its findings that there was great variation in the number of actually delivered working hours of teachers (LGDK Annual Report 1980/81: 153). When the work of the task group had been presented, LGDK interpreted its conclusions as something that highly questioned the expediency of the present form of the regulations of duty hours and argued that the next step was considerations of how reasonable relations between the hours teachers were paid for and the hours they actually delivered could be found (LGDK Annual Report 1980/81: 153).

From the late 1980, regulation of duty hours was problematized in terms of how they counteracted flexibility to organize schooling in accordance with local wishes and demands.[331] The regulation was argued to "constitute a considerable impediment for development and flexibility in the public school"[332] and articulated as "rigid centralistic rules" that should be "done away with in order to create possibilities for local arrangements"[333] The constraints from the union agreements was thus seen as a barrier to attempts to arrange schools to meet local wishes and demands.

In the descriptions of the advantages of decentralization, municipalities had stated that decentralization would lead to new forms of teaching such as theme weeks, specially arranged teaching projects, etc.[334] However, this development was counteracted by the fact that municipalities could not provide schools with freedom to plan their teaching activities. The central agreement of duty hours provided the school with the rules that teaching hours could only consist of 45 minutes classes and that the work load of the individual teacher should be equally divided over the weeks of the school year. Municipalities therefore problematized how schools could be given the competence to plan their own activities when "[m]ost of the activities of the public school are regulated and limited by the duty hour schemes of teachers."[335] The problem that municipalities were facing was thus that even though municipalities delegated competence to the individual school, the school would not necessarily have an object of self-management in the form of year plans or teaching activities.

From the point of view of municipalities, another problem with the regulations of duty hours was that teachers could not entirely be managed either by the municipality or by the school itself. According to the regulation of duty hours of the time, only 55% of the teachers working hours were teaching hours that could be subjected to planning, since the remaining 45% was the individual teachers own time for preparation. LGDK pinpointed the problem with the following formulation:

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[331] LGDK, Annual Report 1986/87: 76
[332] LGDK, Annual Report 1986/87b: 76; see also LGDK Annual Report 1986/1987a: 18 or Danish Municipalities 22.09.1988, nr. 30, p. 4
[333] LGDK Annual Report 1990/91a: 22; LGDK Annual Reports 1986/87; 1987/88; LGDK Annual Report 1986/87a: 19
[334] LGDK, 1988a p. 12
[335] LGDK annual report 1988/89a: 8-9

In principal, it is left to the individual teacher to make use of this part of his working hours. The school can therefore in principal not conduct any management of the teachers' usage of this time.[336]

When observing schools through a problematic of how to prepare schools to administer the competence to manage themselves, municipalities observed that a central object of management for the school, namely its employees were already determined by detailed regulation and thus not possible to manage. Municipalities were thus facing the problem that even though they sought to make the school self-managing, there would not be efficient management relations between the school and its teachers. How could a distribution of decision-making to schools be efficient, if 45% of working time of the employees was outside the reach of the schools' decision-making?

The emergence of ideals of decentralization also led municipalities to discover the problem that they were not capable of granting schools independence, since the schools was not only governed by municipalities but also by negotiations outside the reach of municipal competence. We may say that a first governing problem related to the ideals of decentralization was that municipalities had not yet become independent enough in its relation to the state for it to be able to be the governing actor that could grant schools new freedom to self-manage. If the municipalities were to make the school self-managing, municipalities were firstly to obtain the right to negotiate employment and duty hours with the teacher union.

Through the 1980s, LGDK struggled intensely to achieve a transfer of the right to negotiate with the teacher union about teachers' duty hours and salaries from the Ministry of Finance to municipalities.[337] Municipalities wanted to be the governing actor responsible for hiring, firing and negotiating salaries and regulation of working hours of teachers. LGDK argued that it was "illogical that municipalities hold the responsibility for governing the public school, but the legislation for teacher salaries

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[336] LGDK Annual Report 1986/87a: 18
[337] LGDK Annual Report 1990/91a: 22; LGDK, 1988a: 12

and duty hours are determined by the Ministry. Instruments of personnel policy are thereby restricted."[338],[339]

When municipalities discussed how to delegate decision making to the individual school, they thus discovered the problem that the freedom of scope of school necessary for them to be able to manage themselves was always already limited by central regulations. LGDK ran into that the objects of schools' self-management such as teachers, year plans, planning of teaching activities, etc., was already decided upon by central regulation. Municipalities could, in other words, not grant schools freedom to manage themselves since an object of management in the form of teachers or teaching activities would remain partially governed by the central negotiations of duty hours. Due to the regulation of duty hours, municipalities could not facilitate that a school developed management relation between itself and its tasks and activities or between itself and its employees.

Before I proceed to the next section, let me sketch the process that led municipalities to obtain the status provider of employment of teacher. The process of transferring negotiation of salary and duty hours with the National Teacher Union from National Ministry of Finance to municipalities began when LGDK after their annual meeting in 1986 initiated negotiations with the Ministry to transfer the competence to negotiate with the teacher union to the municipalities.[340] The 1st of April 1993 the process was completed and the teachers made municipal employees. LGDK called this event a "decisive break through in the possibilities for renewing and developing the public school.[341]

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[338] Danish Municipalities 10.02.1990, Nr. 4, p. 10 see also Danish Municipalities 14.06.1990, p. 10-11
[339] Drawing on the logic of the municipal reform of 1970 where an issue had been to make sure that the authority that held the expenses also held the decision-making competence (see Windinge 1985).
[340] LGDK annual report 1986/1987: 18
[341] LGDK annual report 1991/92a: 28

Making schools cooperate with parents

It was, however, not only the regulations of duty hours that emerged as a barrier when municipalities observed schools with a focus on whether or not they were ready to administer the new responsibilities. The experiments with increased user-influence and the general distribution of competence to school boards in 1990, brought with them questions of how to ensure well-functioning cooperation between users and employees. Municipalities became concerned with how to facilitate constructive cooperation between school and parents.

On the one hand, a concern was that parents would not take a sufficient interest in participating in school governing. The experiences with parental influence through school councils had not been unambiguously satisfactory. For instance, it was noted that seats in the councils had sometimes been hard to fill and contested elections rare.[342] More significantly, though, municipalities began to problematize if teachers were capable of handling these new forms of cooperation with parents (such as a parental boards). Concerns were uttered if teachers would at all open themselves up to external influence and engage in the debates with parents.[343]

A first problem was observed as the lacking tradition of the teacher community to cooperate with its environment.[344] LGDK argued that, with references to the concept of freedom of methods, teachers had been accustomed to work undisturbed behind the closed door of a class room. LGDK stated: "Freedom of method is a basic principle in the public school, but it becomes a problem when freedom of methods is mistaken for the right to isolation."[345] From a municipal perspective, the facilitation of debate between the school and its stakeholders was thus made difficult by some teachers' interpretation of freedom of method as the right to shut external influence out.

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[342] See for instance Preben Espersens book from 1970 *Kommune og demokrati* (municipality and democracy) and the review of this in Danish Municipalities 29.04.1970 p. 9; See also the feature article by national politician, Ejler Koch in which he argues: "Most parents are so completely wean off from taking an interest in the wellbeing of our democracy between election days that they would not dream about participating in the election for parental councils (Danish Municipalities 27.05.1970).
[343] LGDK 1988b
[344] LGDK 1988a: 6
[345] LGDK 1988a

A condition for a constructive outcome of user-participation in school governing was according to LGDK therefore that "[t]eachers need to be interested in changing their role as a teacher and their practice. They need to be motivated to open up the door to their class room."[346] From a municipal perspective, a problem in facilitating constructive debate between teachers and parents was thus the lack of willingness of some teachers to let stakeholders of the school gain knowledge of their day to day practice and the lacking motivation of some teachers to develop their role and practice as a result of the user-influence and increased debates. In Danish Municipalities, a school director described the problem of schools' closedness like this:

> Two to three of our schools have totality changed, but all schools need to move. Here we try to itch and scratch in the pedagogical Berlin Wall and try to bring information to the schools that are not conscious enough about the development that is happening at other schools.[347]

When municipalities were concerned that teachers would not open themselves up to parental influence, they simultaneously provided themselves with a new role as school governing actors, namely as those who should seek to irritate the schools' closeness and thereby seek to facilitate development.

A second and related problem in relation to user-influence was how to avoid conflicts between teachers and parents. LGDK argued: "If the ideas of a school board are to be implemented, it will be of vital importance to create balance between influence of employees and parents".[348] Employees and parents were observed as two parties with each their interest and here the role of municipalities emerged as those who should help to establish the conditions on which these parties could cooperate. LGDK stated:

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[346] Danish Municipalities 01.02.1990; For many years to come, the image of the door to the class room became an often used metaphor the capability or the lacking of the same of teachers to invite managers, parents, experts etc. to observe or engage in their teaching practice.
[347] Danish Municipalities 01.02.1990
[348] LGDK 1988b:8

> Disagreements between teachers on the one side and parents on the other may arise. Therefore it may be useful to agree on a set of ground rules for how such conflicts can be solved.[349]

The task for municipalities thus emerged as to facilitate a stage on which conflicts between teachers and parents could be solved. In the debates of decentralization, municipalities emerged as a third party who should help find balances between the interest of employees and users.[350] Municipalities presented themselves as the meta-figure that could observe the different stakeholders of the school and set up the ground rules within that could assure that the conflicts between the parties did not go too far.

The role of the municipal administration was thus observed to change with decentralization:

> The introduction of school boards has also changed the function of the administration. The administration is less a decision-making authority, since today, fewer cases need a verdict from the municipality. The administration has to a greater extent become a coordinator and consultant for the school management as well as the school board.[351]

LGDK here presented the role of municipalities with a distinction between a decision-making authority and a facilitator and coordinator, where municipalities emerged as the latter rather than the former. Both decision-making and potential conflict (between parties) here seems to belong to the school, whereas municipalities could act as the meta-figure that facilitated, coordinated and balanced interests. Whereas schools should now decide upon specific cases, municipalities emerged as those who should take up discussions of a more principle character.[352]

In a relation between municipality and school, the schools thus emerged as the site of conflicts especially between teachers and parents and the municipalities emerged as

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[349] LGDK 1988b 27

[350] In a description of a vacant position as school director in the municipality of Hørsholm we find the following text: The school director should be able to weigh the needs of the many different stakeholders of the area of schooling and leisure time (Danish Municipalities 19.04.1990, p. 45).

[351] LGDK 1988b p. 23

[352] LGDK 1988a:11 Maybe therefore, LGDK also began to request from itself participation in public debate. In an annual report LGDK wrote that: "The board of LGDK found that the common municipal viewpoints ought to find greater representation in the running debate about public schools. Therefore the secretariat was asked to compose a discussion paper."(LGDK Annual Report 1987/88b)

those who should facilitate principle discussions in which the different interest could find compromises.

Relations of trust

With the initiatives of decentralization the relations between municipality and school was thus transformed. Rather than conducting planning, judgment and decision-making, municipalities should enable that the school became capable of handling these task in cooperation with parents. Rather than municipalities planning ahead and prescribing schools arrangements of teaching, schools themselves should do their own predicting and planning and the role of municipalities became to, in the process or afterwards, to seek to adjust and rectify the strategies schools had chosen. This also meant that government itself was no longer calculable and predictable. Instead, the new municipal governing depended upon good relations to and ongoing dialogue with schools.

In the descriptions of the experiments with school boards and economic and pedagogical decentralization, trust was highlighted as essential for successful processes of decentralization. In order to ensure trust in the processes of decentralization, municipal politicians were encouraged to give certain political guarantees that the decentralized structure would not be exploited for spending cuts.[353] LGDK argued:

> The key word in decentralization is trust. Without trust from the municipal board to the school board and vice versa it is simply not possible. Decentralization cannot be done in the shadow of mistrust, for instance that it will be used to an easy way of spending cuts. If one wants to decentralize, it must be done in an atmosphere of trust.[354]

In order for decentralization to be successful, municipal boards needed to trust schools and their school boards. And, vice versa, schools had to trust the municipal boards not to make cut backs. Municipalities thus reflected upon a new uncertainty entailed in governing: Schools were on the one hand encouraged to perform

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[353] LGDK 1988b: 14
[354] LGDK 1988b: 35

themselves as independent in their relation to municipalities. One the other hand, schools were still to consider municipalities as a governing actor likely to step in if for instance conflicts between teachers and parents were not resolved in a constructive manner. [355] Municipalities considered how schools might observe the new governing relations as risky – for instance that the right to independently allocate resources would only lead to cut backs. And trust, then, emerged as a form of compensation for the fact that governing relations was from then on undefined and incalculable.

Deconflictualized municipalities

Let me recapitalize this chapter. In the debates in the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, municipalities were occupied with concerns of how schools could be prepared to a coming decentralization of competence. Municipalities began to thematize the advantages of letting schools manage their own budgets and pedagogical planning and argued that initiatives, dynamism and local debate could not be dictated from above, but have to come from the schools themselves. However, municipalities also worried that schools would not immediately be ready to manage this new competence to govern themselves. From the late 1980s and onwards, a central school governing problem for municipalities was thus *how municipalities could prepare schools to administer the new conditions of self-governing.*

When seeking to delegate planning of teaching activities to schools, municipalities ran into the problem that a central object of management, namely teachers and their working hours were heavily regulated by rules of duty hours determined in negotiations between the state and the teacher union. When municipalities began to want schools to become independent, they thus discovered the schools' bonds to the teacher profession as an obstacle for any construction of management relations between the school and itself. Before teachers and activities were made manageable the school could not become self-managing. School independence thus became a matter of creating objects of management free from other ties so that a self-management relation between the school and itself could be brought about.

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[355]LGDK, 1988b: 16

A central municipal concern was that teachers would shut out parental influence. Municipalities discovered that they needed to perform in a new role as those who itched and scratched in 'the pedagogical Berlin Wall'. Whereas municipalities at the beginning of the 1970s had emerged through their difference to school commissions, in the late 1980s municipalities emerged in their difference to schools. In opposition to schools that should now decide upon the particular cases, municipalities emerged as those who could raise discussions of more principle characters. Where schools should now decide and implement, municipalities should facilitate and coordinate. Whereas schools emerged as the site of conflict, municipalities emerge as those who could seek to balance interests. In thinking through a steering problem of how to make schools capable of self-management, the new role of municipalities emerged as facilitators and coordinators. Whereas in the 1970s, the task of municipalities had been to create a totality into which the schools activities cold be planned and coordinated, from the late 1980s, the task of municipalities became a matter of helping the school to create their own small totalities consisting of the school and its stakeholders.

The municipal observation that schools might worry that they were given freedom only to be forced to reduce spending led municipalities to describe the governing relation as dependent upon trust. Municipalities reflected upon how the schools' new independence was situated within relations of hierarchy and that it was therefore likely that schools would be concerned about whether the independence could be withdrawn. We may say that municipalities observed that governing initiatives to increase independence in a space of hierarchy could be observed as a double bind by schools. Schools were given competence to manage their own budgets, but would worry if this competence were only given them so as to cut expenditure. This new municipal ambition of making governing trustworthy may be seen as a name for the new and uncertain rules of the game. A need for trust emerged exactly at the point in time where the rules became defined only by their ambiguity. Schools could no longer expect municipalities to unambiguously want to govern the activities of the school. From then on, both schools and municipalities were instead to navigate in oscillations between classical forms of governing and facilitation of self-management.

This chapter has thus continued the history of the thesis by pursuing transformations of governing brought about with the ambition to govern schools' independence. The chapter have shown how the way municipalities conceived of their own role as school governing actors changed with the emergence of the ambition of creating independent schools. Whereas in the 1970s, municipalities thought of themselves as efficient administrations capable of calculating the most rational planning of school affairs, from the late 1980s municipalities thought of themselves as facilitators of the schools relation to its environment. School governing was thus given a new temporality. In the 1970s municipalities should calculate, prescribe and implement the most rational planning. From the late 1980s, it is schools themselves that should do their own planning and implementing and the role of municipalities is instead to seek to adjust and supervise the strategies schools had chosen. This also means that, from the late 1980s, governing would have to be conducted so as to create trust between school and municipality. Articulations of the governing relation transform so that any clear expectation that governing is about rationalizing and ensuring reasonable expenditure disappear. Instead governing is articulated as dialogue, facilitation and ongoing negotiations in which the municipality acknowledge the individual school and its specific situation. Municipalities are from then on bound by their own expectations to appear trustworthy.

Chapter 6

Impacting self-management

In this chapter, we shall follow how the ambition of governing schools to become independent developed through the late 1990s and 2000s. The chapter investigates how new and more complex problematizations of school governing have emerged and how municipalities have developed different strategies to seek to meet the challenge of governing independence. In this chapter, I will continue the history of the thesis by analyzing more mature forms of the problem of how, from the outside, to create a system that can create itself from the inside. Whereas chapter 4 provided a point of departure by presenting how in the 1970s, the main municipal concern was to establish a clear hierarchy, and chapter 5 presented the initial problematizations resulting from the emergence of the ambition to create schools as independent, this chapter studies the complexity of problems and strategies that has emerged over the last 15 years.

I will pursue how, from the late 1990s and until today, municipalities have sought to gain impact on schools, but how such attempts are bound to run into severe and rigorous problematizations of how to gain impact without destroying the self-governing capacities of schools. I will analyze two examples. The first shows how a call for distinct political goals of schooling are translated into a call for *both* distinct goals *and* free scope for schools. The second example demonstrates how political calls for assessments of schools are translated into a demand for self-assessments.

Moreover, I will give an example of a governing invention. As shown, from the late 1980s, the new uncertainty in the relation between school and municipality was to be handled with trust. In recent years municipalities have instead sought to reduce conflict stemming from this uncertainty by facilitating communities of school managers. School managers are requested not to represent the interest of their

individual school, but instead to engage themselves in a partnership between schools from which a totality of concerns of the municipal school system can be considered.

The chapter thus contributes to the history of the thesis by analyzing how the emergence of an ambition to govern independence is far from innocent. The chapter will follow how any call for stronger government be it in form of a demand for clearer political goals or in the form of demands for assessments of school results is bound to be problematized in terms of how it reduces the capacity of schools' to self-manage. However, the chapter will also show how this is exactly the conditions on which municipal administration can gain an identity, since municipalities can emerge as those who in contrast to municipal politicians understands the situation of schools and can make political demands meaningful an acceptable for schools.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. I begin by identifying the general governing problem from the late 1990s and onwards, namely *how municipalities could gain impact on the self-management of schools without reducing their self-managing capacity.* Thereafter, I will describe how this problem has been given three forms of concretizations. The first being a question of how municipalities could provide schools with clear goals *and* free scope, the second being a question of how municipalities could engage schools in efforts to make their performance visible and the third being a question of how to make school managements think of themselves as a part of a municipal school system.

Gaining impact on self-management processes
In April 2005, every member of a municipal board in Denmark received a letter from LGDK with the title: "The public school needs actions from municipal boards".[356] In the letter, LGDK referred to the critique that international and national investigations of municipal government of schools had uttered, namely that municipalities lacked clear and operational goals for schooling, that municipalities did not follow up on goal achievement of schools and that municipalities did not take actions towards poorly

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[356] LGDK, 2005b

performing schools.[357] LGDK therefore announced a need for municipal debate of how municipalities handled their responsibility of school governing and encouraged municipalities to intensify their supervision of schools.[358]

At least three developments had paved the way for this rethinking of municipal school governing. Firstly, from the mid 1990s, a request for strengthening municipal governing of the school's content and quality had emerged.[359] In 1996, LGDK's annual report articulated a difference between a former agenda of decentralization and a new agenda of content and quality:

> In the last 10 years, municipalities have put a lot of energy and effort in both pedagogical and economic decentralization in the school sector. However, in many municipalities efforts to discuss content and quality have been lacking. It is important that we now turn to these matters.[360]

The concerns for quality assurance produced an increased focus on governing by explicit goals and follow up on goal achievements[361], and LGDK launched a range of discussion papers and initiatives in order to strengthen and make visible the quality development in the public school.[362],[363]

Second, from the late 1990s and onwards, concerns for the level of educational standards of the Danish school children entered national school debates. The PISA results of 2000 and 2003, showing that Danish school children did not perform as well as expected when compared to other OECD countries and in comparison with the amount of resources spent in the Danish Education system, became central points of references for a focus in national educational policy on skills of reading, writing, etc. The lack of results and the increased public focus on this matter also lead

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[357] LGDK, 2005b: 1
[358] LGDK, 2005b: 1 see also editorial in Danish Municipalities 06.10.2005
[359] LGDK Annual Report 1995/96b; LGDK Annual Report 1995/96a: 6; LGDK, 1997
[360] LGDK Annual Report 1995/96a: 6
[361] See for instance LGDK Annual Report 1998/99a; Annual Report 1995/96b; See also statement from Chairman of LGDK's Children and Youth Committee in Danish Municipalities 04.08.2005
[362] LGDK Annual report 1998/99a; LGDK 1998a; hence also the projects The Public School in the year 2000, Quality in the public school – a local responsibility
[363] As I will pursue, the calls for quality definitions, development and ensuring also brought with them ideals of transparency both with regard to content of the service delivered by the public sector, the structures of governing and the values and cultures guiding the service production (for a similar development within the welfare area of elderly care see Højlund 2004: 221).

municipalities to question their own role in school governing.[364] In 2005, the chairman of LGDK's Children and Youth Committee stated:

> Especially when it comes to educational standards, municipalities have realized that the public school has a problem, and we are doing something about it. We are tightening up the municipal inspection duty. Municipal boards are encouraged to formulate operational goals for each of their schools regarding the pupils' profit of teaching.[365]

From the late 1990s, municipalities thus became concerned with how to govern schools so as to improve educational standards.[366]

Third, international and national evaluations had delivered explicit critiques of municipal school governing. According to the PISA investigation of 2003 and a report from the Danish Institute of Evaluation in 2006, municipalities did not live up to their responsibility of inspection and leadership of the public school. A main critique was that municipalities did not sufficiently communicate to schools that they were a part of a municipal school system with specific goals and demands for results.[367] As a reaction, LGDK strongly encouraged municipal boards to take a renewed interest in school affairs and argued that it was now necessary that all municipalities assessed their school governing practice in terms of whether it had the desired impact on schools.

From the late 1990s and onwards, demands to municipalities to rethink their school governing with regard to goal setting and follow up on results thus increased.[368] In the debates, the problem emerged that connections between municipal school policy and the everyday practice of schools were not tight enough. In discussion papers, policy proposals and feature articles in Danish Municipalities, LGDK encouraged

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[364] See Minute from the Association of Directors of Children and Youth Policy, 2005: 1
[365] Danish Municipalities 04.08.2005
[366] see LGDK 2002 in which the call for higher educational standard were given support, but also expressed that the purpose of the public school was also development of children's more all-round social competences (LGDK 2002: 1 see also LGDK Annual Report 2001a) Moreover, the cross-municipal initiative *Partnership for the Public School* running from 2007-2009, in which 34 municipalities participated, had as one of its central purposes to increase pupils' profit of teaching (see LGDK 2009a).
[367]The exact wording of the report from the Danish Institute of Evaluation was: "The municipality must send distinct signals to the school that the schools and municipalities form a whole that shares the responsibility of the public school. Thereby it can be ensured that all levels pull in the same direction and work together to realize municipal goals." (Danish Evaluation Institute. 2006: 8)
[368] Chair of LGDK's committee of children and culture in Danish Municipalities 04.08.2005; LGDK Annual Report 1998/99a.

municipalities to confront themselves with questions such as "Does the goal steering of the municipality have the wanted impact on the individual school?"[369] And "do the school's prioritization of resources and the methods of the school management support municipal goals?[370] Municipalities were, in other words, encouraged to ask themselves if the schools' self-governing reflected municipal decision-making.

From the late 1990s, the central governing problem was thus no longer how to prepare schools to manage themselves, but how municipalities could gain impact on the self-management of schools. However, as I will show with two examples, the ambition to govern school to become independent was still present in municipal governing and the calls for stronger government became object of problematization in terms of how initiative to gain impact would reduce the self-managing capacity of schools. As I will elaborate in the following: From the late 1990s, the general governing problem was *how municipalities could gain impact on the self-management of schools without reducing their self-managing capacity.*

How to simultaneously provide free scope and clear goals
As described initially, the calls for more municipal school governing entailed the critique of municipalities that they did not provide clear goals for schools and school development. LGDK therefore encouraged municipalities to take the task of formulating clear goals and systematically follow up on results very seriously. Municipalities were requested to ask themselves "Has the municipal administration made their expectation to the schools clear and visible?"[371] And LGDK emphasized: "It should not be possible for schools to misunderstand the goals and expectations of the municipal board".[372]

Through goal setting, municipalities should seek to strengthen connections between policy decisions of the municipality and everyday activities of schools.[373] In rather optimistic articulations of possibilities to influence schools, the goals were described

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[369] LGDK 2005a
[370] LGDK, 1998a: 51
[371] LGDK, The Ministry of Education & the Danish Teacher Union, 1999
[372] Editorial in Danish Municipalities 06.10.2005
[373] LGDK, 1998a

in the following way: "Goals are an explicitly expressed wish for a future condition. Goals state the result that performance must lead to."[374] The quality of goals was expressed to lie in the fact that they produced explicit statements (and not just implicit common understandings) of the purpose of everyday activities and in their ability to create an image that could guide school practice.

However, the call for clear goals was soon problematized in terms of how goals affected the free scope of schools to manage themselves. A governing problem emerged of how to simultaneously provide liberty of action for schools (in order for them to be able to manage themselves most efficiently) *and* govern school by obliging them on municipal goals. LGDK stated:

> Flexibility and broad frames for possible actions is a must in order to ensure that the public school can handle any situation. However, municipal boards must simultaneously continuously and consistently follow up on the results of the individual school.[375]

The problem of how to have impact on the self-governing of the schools, was thus translated into a problem of how to simultaneously create a free scope of schools[376] *and* ensure municipal impact on schools through assessments of results.

In 2008, LGDK initiated a cross-municipal quality development project in which 13 municipalities participated. One finding of the project was that "it is difficult to formulate political goals that are both distinct and produces freedom for the individual school."[377] And that "politicians in the participating municipalities express that it can be very difficult to define the level at which goals should be formulated."[378] An appropriate balance between distinct goals and liberty of action of schools was sought achieved by help of a distinction between goals and means. Overall goals could be set by municipal policy, but means of implementation should be left to the school

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[374] LGDK 1998: 51-52
[375] LGDK 2005: 1
[376] also in relation to the legislation coming from national authorities
[377] LGDK 2008a: 4
[378] LGDK 2008b: 3

and its management.[379] The advice to municipalities was: "Be clear when you announce goals for the overall direction, but withdraw from setting detailed goals."[380]

However, this advice was soon problematized. As part of the before mentioned project it was stated:

> In concrete decision-making it is difficult to draw a clear line between what falls under the category of visions and goals and what can be considered means to fulfill the goals.[381]

This problem of distinguishing between goals and means was described as expressed in the following:

> If the parties do not agree of the distinction between goals and means, some politicians will experience that the administration and the schools are politicizing and interfering with their tasks. However, administration and schools will experience that politicians are going into too many details, and they mistake goals for means.[382]

It was problematized that the different parties involved in school governing could experience the distinction between overall goals and detailed implementation differently. Two parties emerge: One the one hand, politicians and, on the other, school and administration. The problem was that politicians could observe something as overall goals, but that school and the administration could observe the same thing as details. Politicians would then experience that schools and administration were interfering in what should be the task of politicians. And vice versa, schools and administration would observe, what politicians observed as overall goals as detailed implementation and thus interference in their job.

The governing problem of how to simultaneously provide free scope and clear goals was thus made even more problematic by the fact that a distinction between goals and means could be drawn differently depending on who observed it. The different parties of school governing were even seen to inhabit different lifewords:

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[379] see LGDK 2008b: 3
[380] LGDK 2008a: 4
[381] LGDK 2008b: 3
[382] Press release from LGDK 03.12.08

> Many politicians experience that politicians, managers and teachers live in three different worlds. Politicians experience that municipal policy and goals sometimes have a life of their own and do not really have an impact at the schools.[383]

Managers, teachers and politicians were seen to belong to separate and autonomous contexts and, therefore, communication from politicians would never reach schools. The problem of governing of how to simultaneously provide free scope and clear goals thereby emerged as a problem of communication: "A crucial element in making the organization work is communication".[384] The bridging of the different observations was not seen as an easy task. LGDK argued: "[n]o easy solution exists in relation to this dilemma. It has to be solved through dialogue between the different actors of the individual municipality."[385]

The governing problem was thus translated into a matter of creating dialogue between politicians, school managers and schools. Municipalities were encouraged to develop a "common understandings of reality".[386] And here the municipal administration emerged as the central actor capable of communicating across the boundaries of the different worlds of schools and politicians. From the development project mentioned above, it was reported:

> Several of the participating municipalities accentuate that the administration holds an important task of translating political visions and 'gut feelings' to guiding goals that makes sense at the level of the school.[387]

Before schools could understand the language of politicians and see it as relevant, the municipal administration had a job to do of translating. The schools needed support and sparring in order to work with political goals, it was argued.[388]

Since schools and politicians could not initially understand each others' communication, a close contact between school and administration was needed,

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383 LGDK, 2008b: 4
384 LGDK, 2008b: 4
385 LGDK, 2008b: 4
386 LGDK, 2008b: 4
387 LGDK, 2008b: 3-4
388 LGDK, 2008a: 3

although as it was noted, to be very resource demanding.[389] And in the other direction, from schools to politicians, translation was also needed. The administration should therefore ask itself: "How can the administration facilitate a process of formulating political goals and visions, so that politicians obtain greater ownership and influence?"[390]

Through the problem of how to provide both free scope and clear goals and its sub-problems, municipalities could emerge as "the glue of the school system".[391] The municipal administration could produce the communication that should bind the steering of the public school together.[392]

The call for stronger municipal school government via clear and obliging goals was thus problematized in terms of how such governing could be achieved without reducing the freedom of scope of schools. This led to a chain of sub-problems of how to govern when schools and politicians belong to separate worlds. However, these problematizations also led to the formulation of an important role of the municipal administration of communicating between such unbridgeable worlds.

Making the school visible

> There is plenty of quality in the school. The only problem is that no one can point it out.[393]

As this statement expresses the late 1990s brought with them a concern for how to make the quality of schools visible. Municipalities were encouraged to systematically monitor the results of schools.[394] LGDK stated: "Monitoring result is a part of quality development."[395] And argued that municipal boards could only live up to their responsibility for the public school if they had "thorough insight into the teaching at

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[389] LGDK, 2008a: 6
[390] LGDK 2008b: 5
[391] Chairman of LGDK's Committee of children and Culture (and Mayer in the city of Roskilde) in Danish Municipalities 27.02 2003
[392] LGDK 2008a: 6
[393] Danish Municipalities nr. 24 1997 p. 24
[394] LGDK 1998a; LGDK 2005a; Danish Municipalities 06.10.2005
[395] LGDK Annual Report 1998/99

the school and the profit children gain from this."[396] Municipalities were requested to ask themselves whether they had "knowledge about the quality of the individual school" and ensure that they "followed up on quality and the increased demands for educational standards."[397] From the late 1990s, municipalities were thus called upon to ensure that schools' quality, results and development processes were properly assessed.[398],[399]

However, this call was quickly problematized. Especially visibility in the simple sense of retrieving a set of quantitative information was questioned:

> A simple assessment of whether the activity took place or not, does not necessarily say much about, whether the activity had the wanted effect. Thorough insight into local contexts and dilemmas is needed – and so is thorough consideration.[400]

LGDK thus argued that simply measuring the school from the outside would not produce valuable knowledge. Instead, it was argued necessary to introduce a whole new culture of evaluation into the public school.[401] LGDK stated that since the

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[396] Editorial in Danish Municipalities 06.10.2005

[397] Brief from the Association of Directors of Children and Youth Policy 2005, p.1

[398] The requests for more systematic monitoring of schools co-existed with a national call for a stronger culture of evaluation in the Danish public school. In 2004 an OECD-report of the Danish school system had announced that the Danish public school lacked a culture for evaluation and that such a culture was the "single factor that is most important to achieve if other initiatives shall be implemented and educational standards raised." (OECD 2004b; 129; see Pors 2009a; 2009b for an analysis of how this reports disseminated Danish national educational policy). This report came at a time, where the need for systematic assessment and documentation of activities and results had already been repeatedly articulated as a crucial part of school development. (LGDK annual report 1998/1999:10; LGDK 1998a; LGDK in Danish Municipalities 1997 nr. 25 p.4) However, after the critique stemming from the OECD-report, the national Ministry of Education launched a range of initiatives to strengthen a culture of evaluation in the public school (For an account of these see Pors 2009a; 2009b) and also municipalities sought new ways to create and support methods and systems of evaluation in schools (see for instance the system of assessment KIS (chapter 9); LGDK 2005a; LGDK 2009a)

[399] The calls for a more efficient municipal monitoring of school results as well as the critiques of municipal leadership uttered by PISA 2003 and EVA 2006 became points of reference for new national legislation about the municipal responsibility of schooling. And for instance so-called 'Quality reports' were made compulsory in 2006. The purpose of these were articulated as strengthening the possibilities of the municipal board to attend to their responsibility of schools, promote dialogue between municipality and school and systematize the running cooperation about evaluation and quality development. The result was among other things that it was made mandatory for municipalities to each year publish a report about the quality of their school system. Danish Ministry of education L170 June 2006. Moreover, the initiative was aimed at contributing to openness about the quality of the municipal school systems (L 170 enacted June 06. Here cited from the proposal of 27th of November 2006).

[400] The Danish Union of Teachers, LGDK & Danish Ministry of Education, 1999: 9

[401] LGDK 2005a

purpose of assessments was also quality development, systems of evaluation should entail processes through which the school would gain knowledge of itself and learn from its experiences.[402] However, here the problem emerged that the schools' tradition of oral cultures and tacit knowledge had not prepared them for handling self-evaluation projects. For instance, it was problematized that it would be a great challenge for schools to communicate in a written and formal language.[403] If schools were to be self-evaluating, they needed to be taught how to express their reasons for pedagogical methods and choices in a professional language.[404] The needed culture of evaluation was described as:

> [O]rganizational systems for describing, understanding value and change organizing and practice with the intention of increasing quality. A system that ensures that organizational learning processes become an integrated part of the everyday life of schools.[405]

The initial requests for assessments of school from the outside had thus been translated into a request for internal systems of evaluation and development at the school. However, the next problem was then that the introduction of a stronger culture of evaluation depended upon the willingness of the school and its different actors:

> A culture of evaluation can only become real if all the stakeholders of the schools are willing to change their habits. From managers, to teachers, to parents. The willingness will only emerge if the public school really discovers that this is important.[406]

The initial call for municipal monitoring of schools was thereby translated into a problem of how to engage schools in processes of making themselves visible and transparent. In a report from the previous mentioned cross-municipal project, a school manager was quoted to say:

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[402] LGDK Annual Report 1998/99a
[403] Danish Municipalities 07.10.1993, nr. 30, p.18
[404] LGDK 2005a
[405] LGDK 2005a: 11
[406] LGDK 2005: 9

> As schools we do not like to be met with demands of documentation. It is experienced as control and the suspicion that we are not doing our job well enough.[407]

In the same report, the problem from the municipal perspective was expressed by a school director:

> The model of steering will only work when school managers see the meaning of it all – also the demands for documentation. Documentation has to make sense.[408]

A task thus emerged for the municipal administration to communicate to schools how the demands for transparency and documentation should not only be seen as control, but also as an opportunity for organizational development. The municipal administrations were encouraged to consider:

> What will it take to meet the general skepticism of some school managers and teachers towards the demands for documentation of the work with school development?[409]

The administrations were to seek to "de-dramatize measurements of results, so that managers and teachers with pride can tell about and document what they do." [410]

The task of the municipal administration was to "make visible why documentation is meaningful."[411] This meant that the municipal administration were to explain purposes and reasons for documentation to the school and demonstrate that the information from assessment processes actually led to constructive feedback to the school.[412] LGDK reported from an investigation of school mangers expectations towards the administration that many school managers considered continuous feedback from the administration on the documentation that schools had struggled to produce as highly important.[413] Moreover, administrations should work to ensure

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[407] LGDK 2008b: 19
[408] LGDK 2008b: 20
[409] LGDK 2008b: 20
[410] Danish Municipalities 09.03.2006
[411] LGDK 2008b: 20
[412] LGDK 2008a: 5
[413] LGDK 2008b: 25

that assessment processes led to "concrete acknowledgement of the schools' hard work".[414]

The call for stronger municipal governing in the form of systematic monitoring of schools thus ran into a chain of problematizations of how assessment should be conducted by the schools themselves, if the knowledge produced should be valuable and if the assessments should lead to school development. However, these problematizations also led to a new role for the municipal administration. As those who had the sufficient insight into schools, municipal administrations could transform schools' skepticism towards evaluation to joy and pride of explaining the schools' methods and choices. This could be done if municipal administrations communicated to schools why documentation was meaningful and engaged in continuous dialogues with schools.

In both these examples, a call for stronger municipal impact on schools is translated into questions of how schools can be governed to impact themselves. After these translation processes the problem for municipalities becomes how to make school observe municipal demands as important elements in their self-management and development. In the case of assessments: rather than just measuring schools from the outside a governing ambition emerge of making schools use the new calls for visibility to develop systems of self-observation and organizational learning. A challenge for municipalities then arises of communicating to schools that political demands for visibility and schools' self-development is in fact the same thing. Put differently, the problem of how to govern independence emerges as a challenge of how to make municipal impact and self-management capacity appear as non-contradictory. In the following, I will give an example of a governing invention that has emerged in recent years to address this challenge.

A partnership of school managers

In the previous chapter, I showed how in the experiments with decentralization, trust emerged as a sort of compensation for a new uncertainty in the governing relations

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[414] LGDK 2008b: 26

between school and municipality. Schools were to accept a contradictory expectation of being both independent and dependent as non-contradictory, but were compensated with a guarantee that governing would take place in an atmosphere of trust. From the late 1990s, it seems as though schools are to accept potential conflicts between municipal impact and self-management capacity as non-contradictory. Municipalities thus had to invent governing strategies to make municipal goals and school goals appear as a harmonic combination. Let me present one way municipalities have sought to meet this challenge.

From the late 1990, municipalities have increasingly discussed the role of school managers in the development of the whole municipal school system. Many places networks and cooperation between school managers have emerged with an articulated purpose of sharing knowledge and support a common development of the school system.[415]

In some municipalities a concept of double leadership was developed to express how school managers had a management responsibility for their individual school as well as for the common school system. Monthly meetings and seminars for all school leaders are then arranged by the municipality at which school managers can discuss problems and challenges in the context of the whole municipal school system. In other municipalities group appraisal interviews were carried out with the whole group of school managers together. The aim of these techniques was that school managers should no longer solely be concerned with the problems and development of their own school, but understand the challenges of and work for solutions that were sustainable for the common school system.[416]

With such inventions, school managers are invited to form a partnership through which they can discover how their individual school is part of a larger community of shared challenges. Hierarchical relations between the municipality and a single school are, then, supplemented with a forum where school managers take the initiative to formulate visions and strategies for the whole municipal school system.

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[415] See LGDK 2008a: 6
[416] LGDK 2008b: 27

These initiatives were framed as a matter of creating new bonds of representation. It was problematized that school managers thought of themselves as *school* managers rather than as *municipal* managers. A municipal senior director was for instance stated the following in the weekly news magazine, *Mandag Morgen,* (Monday Morning)*:*

> The managers of the public school must in the future clearly appear as municipal managers like other managers in the municipality. They are responsible for the municipal school policy and their results are to be measured, just like the results of other managers are measured.[417]

School managers were thus requested to supplement their self-description as a school manager with a self-description as a municipal manager. In the article in Monday Morning it was stated:

> For many school managers it is also a challenge to handle a management role of supporting the municipal Children and Youth Policy and communicate the ideas and values that the municipal policy states to all the employees at the school.[418] [419]

Instead of affiliating themselves with the individual school, school managers should affiliate themselves with the municipal school system and its policy aims. Municipalities were encouraged to push such a development by beginning to investigate how and to what degree their "school managers experience themselves as a part of the community of the municipal managers?"[420] School managers were to discover that they were part of a larger community and that the destiny of their individual schools was tied to the well being of the whole municipal school system.

A central concern was that the interests of the individual school and the whole municipal school system should not appear as contradictory:

> How can the municipality focus the school's and the school management's possibilities to pursue their own goals through a common municipal

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[417] Monday Morning 09.11.1998
[418] Monday Morning 09.11.1998
[419] Simultaneously there were fierce debates of whether the association of school managers could and should resign their membership of the National Teacher Union (see Monday Morning 09.11.1998, nr. 39)
[420] LGDK, 2005a: 20

school system in the sense of preventing an experience of clash of interests between the common and the local free scope of the school?[421]

It is here expressed that the school management can pursue their goals *through* the common municipal school system. The common school system should be seen as a means through which schools can develop. The goals of the municipality and the free scope of the individual school should thus not be understood as opposites, but as means to develop each other.

The problem of how to gain impact on self-governing without reducing self-management capacity was thus sought handled by inviting school managers to identify with the municipality and form a partnership with other school managers. Through this partnership school managers were invited to take it upon themselves to handle any conflicts between municipal and school goals. Municipalities thus sought to handle a problem of how to make municipal and school goals appear non-contradictory by asking school managers to take responsibility for synergy between the two.

Self-problematizing municipalities
This chapter has shown how the problem of how to govern schools to become independent has over the last 15 years triggered new problems and governing inventions. The chapter has continued a history of municipal school governing by following the more mature forms that this problem has taken in the last 15 years and showed that, today a main governing problem has been *how to gain impact on self-managing schools without reducing their self-management capability.*

The chapter has given two examples of how this governing problem triggers a chain of translations of calls for stronger government. As shown with the first example, a call for more distinct political goals results in a range of problems of how to provide school with both clear goals *and* free scope, of how to distinguish between overall

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[421] LGDK, 2008b: 30

visions and freedom of methods of implementation and of how to draw a distinction between goals and means. As described, no solutions are found. Rather, the debate ends in the reflection that politicians and schools will always observe such a distinction differently.

In the second example, a political demand for auditing of schools' performance, it is argued that such auditing cannot be made from the outside, but should be made by schools themselves. Again, the debates result in a reflection upon differences between school and politicians who are argued not to be able to understand each other's needs. The governing problem is thus how to engage schools in making themselves visible to themselves and others.

With these two examples, I have sought to show how the emergence of a governing ambition of making schools independent is far from innocent. Rather, it has crucial consequences for how school governing can be understood and conducted today. It seems as though every political initiative to strengthen government is bound to be problematized in terms of how it reduces schools' capacity for self-management and as a result a range of new problematizations are triggered.

This chain of problematization of governing is, however, productive in the sense that it assigns the municipal administration a specific role. The argument that politicians and schools belong to different worlds and cannot understand each other produces a need for the municipal administration to perform as the "glue that ties the school system together". The administration emerges as a figure in-between politicians and schools and as such capable of communicating political demands so that they can become meaningful for schools.

In the chapter, I have also given an example of a governing invention. The problem of how to gain impact on self-governing takes the form of how to make school managers identify with the municipality. School managers are invited to realize that they share a common destiny - the individual school cannot just pursue its own goals since it will always be affected by the general developments in the municipality. A community of school manager is seen as a forum for handling differences between municipality and school, since school managers are hereby offered a platform for observing the

municipal community as a means to reach goals of their individual schools. Potential conflicts between school and municipality is thus sought handled by creating a forum where the individual school managers can see themselves from the perspective of a municipal totality that they themselves participate in creating. With such a governing invention municipalities can withdraw from directly pursuing impact on the individual school and instead invite school managers to engage in reflections upon how they are always already part of a totality of municipal concerns and needs. We may say that school managers are invited to internalize the problem of schools' simultaneous independence from and dependence on municipality.

A history of municipal governing

Concluding on the chapters 4, 5 and 6

In the previous three chapters, I have tried to answer a question of how Danish municipalities have sought to govern public schools to become independent by writing a history of municipal school governing from 1970 and until today. As stated in the introduction, the purpose of the chapters 4, 5 and 6 was to analyze how municipalities have engaged with the problem of how to govern independence and how this had led them to expand their expectations to their own ability to handle the problem. In this conclusion, I will firstly describe how this history of municipal school governing is not only a history of how municipalities have sought to govern schools to become independent, but also a history of a process of becoming independent of municipalities. Secondly, I will specify the semantic terrain that this history has produced and that now constitutes a horizon of meaning available for school governing.

The struggle of municipalities to become independent

On a general level, the three chapters have taken us through a history of how municipalities became the central school governing actors they appear today. This history is thus not only a history of how municipalities have struggled to make schools independent, but also one of how municipalities have used the school as a medium for their own secession from the state as well as their own self-creation.

The municipal reform of 1970 began a development of self-creation of municipalities though which they have gradually become independent and professional governing actors.[422] This is, firstly, a trajectory entailing the abandonment of other school governing actors such as school commissions and county council. As described, this

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[422] Of course municipalities are still highly dependent upon the state both with regard to legislative framework of their obligations and welfare contributions and in terms of the financial frames for performing these tasks.

was a central concern of municipalities in the years after the municipal reform of 1970. However, the abandonment of the school commission did not occur until 1990 with the enactment that also introduced schools' self-management and parental boards.[423] The role of the county council gradually declined. With the school governing act of 1990, former procedures of sending plans for school building, curriculum plans, etc. for approval to the county council were cancelled leaving the municipal the competence to govern in some cases or in other cases to report directly to the Ministry of Education.[424] And with a significant municipal reform of 2007, counties were replaced with so-called regions whose only responsibility of schooling is special education for children with speech or sight disorders.

The process of becoming a central school governing actor is, secondly, a process of gaining independence in the relation to the state. This process was initiated with the reform of 1970 that began a process of substituting reimbursements with general grants. When, in the late 1980s, municipalities began to want schools to become independent, they, however, also discovered their own dependence upon the state in the form of the fact that the state possessed the formal hiring of teachers and thereby also the duty to negotiate with the teacher union. Another step in the process of municipalities of becoming independent school governing actors was thus the transfer of teachers' employment from state to municipality. As described, this process began after LGDK's annual meeting in 1986 where negotiations with the Ministry of Finance began.[425] And the 1st of April 1993, the process was completed and teachers made municipal employees.

And finally, the process of becoming central school governing actors also entailed the gradual 'municipalisation' of positions in the school system. Firstly, municipalities struggled to make school directors (and managing school principals) municipal

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[423] From the late 1980s and the beginning discussions of and experiments with decentralization, LGDK had begun to raise questions about the roles of the different actors in school governing in new ways. The development towards decentralization, LGDK argued, would leave especially the school commission and the teachers' council unnecessary. (LGDK Annual Report 1986/87: 21 see also LGDK, 1988b: 6).
[424] Moreover, with the 1990 act the county no longer held the authority to settle complaints. The main task of the county was reduced to the provision of education for children with special needs (Sørensen 1995b: 96).
[425] LGDK annual report 1986/1987: 18

employees. We may say that this was achieved in 1987, where municipal boards were given the competence to occupy positions as school directors and managing school principals.[426] Simultaneously the school directors became more and more oriented towards the municipality. For instance, their representational association became official members of the Association of Municipal Senior Executives. This process also entails the employment of teachers and school managers obtained in 1993. And finally today, we might say that municipalities are trying to make school managers closer attached to the municipality, by inviting school managers to think of themselves not only as a school manager attending to the needs of an individual school, but also as a municipal manager responsible for the development of the entire school system. Hereby school managers are encouraged to participate in and take responsibility for a creation of a municipal totality of concerns and goals.

The history of school governing is thus a history of how the school has been a medium for self-creation processes of municipalities. By pointing to lacking abilities of schools, municipalities could, firstly, position themselves as a financially responsible and administratively efficient actor. Secondly, municipalities also created themselves as an actor holding the competences to facilitate constructive relations between schools and their stakeholders. By understanding the school as incapable of opening itself up to the influence of stakeholders, municipalities could expand their own organization to also include handling of facilitation of schools' external relations. And finally, today, municipal administrations have created themselves as those who can tie a municipal school system together by arguing that schools are unable to understand politicians.

A history of governing independence
However, in the previous three chapters, I have not only been interested in this history of municipal independence, but also pursued the specific problematic of how the municipal ambition of governing schools to become independent was born and

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[426] School Governing Act of 1987 §23 see also LGDK annual report 1986/87: 77. Up until then the municipal had been obliged to choose one out of three applicants recommended by the school commission

how it has reconfigured until today. For this purpose I have constructed three historic periods. As described, I do not claim that the semantics of one period disappears with the arrival of a next period. Rather, the claim is that over time semantics are adding up, creating a more diffuse horizon of meaning of municipal school governing.

By beginning in the years after the municipal reform of 1970, I provided a point of departure for observing the birth of the ambition to govern independence. In the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, municipalities had no intention of making schools self-managing.

This however, changed with the ideals of decentralization of the late 1980s, where municipalities began to argue that dynamism and development could only come from below. Chapter 5 showed that when the ambition to govern independence first emerged, municipalities were occupied with what we might call the teething troubles of getting the school to release itself from its bonds to its tradition and to the teacher profession so that it could be prepared to handle its new responsibilities.

And in chapter 6, I have tried to show how the emergence of the ambition to govern independence is a radical event. By following how the ambition of governing independence has matured and to new governing innovations, I have sought to show that since the emergence of this ambition, no attempts to govern can be left unproblematized. We might say that governing has lost its innocence or, put differently, has lost its capability to have an unambiguous character. In its more mature form the ambition of governing independence produces a maelstrom of problematizations whenever a political call for stronger government is uttered. Calls for more unambiguous government in the form of clearer goals and more audit of schools' performance are met with a severe problematization of how such initiatives may reduce schools' capacity for self-management. Municipalities can therefore not just govern schools with distinct goals, but need to translate these goals into something that will not be observed by school as interference in their freedom of scope. Neither can they force external measurements upon schools, but need to find ways of engaging schools in observing and assessing themselves.

Whatever attempt municipalities make to find a simple formula for how to govern without reducing the self-managing potential of schools, it seems to collapse and trigger new problematizations. Calls for more distinct municipal government of schools do not trigger more government. Quite the contrary, such calls trigger an avalanche of reflections about how it is at all possible to govern without schools observing this as a severe reduction of their ability to self-govern.

Reconfigurations of governing problems and conducts
In chapter two, I described how my analytical approach is to follow how meaning is condensed into certain semantic figures. In the following, I will specify what has been understood with the conduct of school governing over time and how certain meaning was thereby ascribed to municipalities as governing actors. The aim is to get a precise map of the formation of a horizon of meaning of municipal school governing

As described, in the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, the dominant governing problem of the time was *how to subordinate schools to municipal planning.* Municipalities had no intention of making schools self-managing. Rather, municipalities were highly occupied with the formation of clear hierarchies. What was at the time understood by governing was the conduct of planning schools' activities most rationally. Municipalities saw it as their governing responsibility to juxtapose pedagogical demands and their cost in order to ensure a reasonable spending of public founding. Municipalities thus emerged as a governing actor in virtue of their ability to plan rationally and to be financially responsible. Moreover, municipalities should ensure that rational coordination between the school and other welfare areas were conducted. Municipalities thus also emerged as governing actors due to their ability to observe school activities as elements in a larger context of municipal welfare tasks.

In the late 1980s, municipalities began to argue that schools should be given the possibility to manage its own economy and pedagogical planning. However, municipalities also worried that schools would not immediately be ready to manage

the new competence. The dominant governing problem of the time was *how to prepare schools to administer the new conditions of self-management.*

The problem of how to prepare schools to become self-managing entailed a sub problem of how to create teachers and their working time as objects of management for the school. As shown, one of the first problems that municipalities then ran into was that creating schools as self-managing was not just a matter of delegating competence from municipality to schools, since schools were bound by duty hour regulations determined in negotiations between the national Ministry of Finance and the teacher union. From a municipal point of view the regulation of duty hours constituted a barrier for creating school activities and teachers as object of the school's self-management. Before teachers and activities were made manageable for the school, it could not become self-managing.

Moreover, the problem of how to prepare schools to become self-managing also entailed the sub problem of how to make schools open themselves up to their environment. The municipal task was to try to make teachers deflect from their tendency to close themselves around the values and norms of the teaching profession. Municipalities should seek to make schools discover that teachers were too self-referential and thereby made schools incapable of cooperating with parents. From the late 1980s and onwards, the conduct of school governing meant to facilitate that the school discovered that it did not just consist of teachers. The task of municipalities was to create a context for the school's creating themselves as a local totality of school and stakeholders. A context, where local conflicts could be mediated and where matters of principle could be discussed. Municipalities emerged as governing actors in virtue of their ability to facilitate that the school created its own local totality of school and stakeholders and to foster constructive cooperation between conflicting interests.

In the last decade, municipalities have been requested to provide stronger goal steering and more audit of schools. However, as I have shown, such calls are swirled into a chain of problematizations of how they might reduce the self-managing capability of schools. Today, the dominant governing problem is thus *how to gain*

impact the self-management of schools without reducing their self-managing capacity. This problem results in reflections upon how politicians and schools observe government differently and have great difficulties understanding the communication of each other. The task of the municipal administration therefore becomes to communicate political demands to schools so that they will come to understand them as legitimate and meaningful. For the municipal administration, to govern independence means to engage in close dialogical relations with the school so as to prevent schools' misunderstanding the communication from politicians and to engage schools in efforts to make themselves understandable to politicians.

School governing also means to make school managers think of themselves as a part of a municipal school system. Municipalities should strive to engage school managers in the creation of a municipal whole from which they can observe their school and think of its particular needs in the context of the needs of the whole school system. To govern independence means to facilitate that school managers engage in the creation of a municipal totality that is not yet defined but from which school managers can rediscover their schools in new ways.

Throughout this history of school governing, the different perceptions of how to govern independence has led to different understandings of which totality that should be created by the conduct of governing. In the 1970s, municipalities saw their task as a matter of creating a municipal totality from which the schools could be observed. From the late 1980s, municipalities thought of themselves as those who should help facilitate that schools became their own small totality of the balancing of interests of school and stakeholders. And finally today, school managers are invited to participate in creating a municipal totality, from which they then can observe their individual school. The task of municipalities then becomes to withdraw and facilitate school managers' construction of a totality and to ensure that the partnership actually becomes a space in which conflicts between interests of schools and municipalities can be tamed.

The engagement of municipalities in the different governing problems is also a motor for descriptions of more tasks and functions of the municipal administration. The

contemporary self-understanding of municipal administration has developed over time through the different juxtapositions that different problematizations of governing have brought about. In the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, municipalities understood themselves through a distinction to school commissions and therefore thought of themselves as an efficient administration capable of ensuring reasonable spending and coordination. From the late 1980s, the role of municipalities as a facilitator and mediator emerges. In the debates of decentralization of the time, municipalities emerged in contrast to schools. Municipalities began to understand schools as a unity in themselves, and also began to understand themselves through a difference to schools. Since schools were observed as a nest of conflicts between school and stakeholders, municipalities could understand themselves as those who could mediate interests and facilitate discussions of a principle character. (At this point in time it seems as though a distinction between politics and administration does not hold a crucial function.) And finally, form the late 1990s and onwards, an observed cleft between schools and municipal politicians is what forms conditions of possibilities of the municipal administration. Expectations to the municipal administration are thus formed by a distinction to politicians. Whereas politicians are incapable of understanding and communicating to schools, the municipal administration emerges as those who should translate and mediate between the different languages and values of schools and politicians. The problem that politicians cannot just govern by demanding without then also reducing self-management potential of schools, leads to a role of municipal administration as the "glue" that ties municipal school systems together. A distinction between politicians and administration has thus allowed the latter to understand itself as an actor with a decisive knowledge and understanding of school affairs and school culture. This distinction makes the municipal administration emerge as that what politicians are not from the perspective of the school, namely relatively predictable, willing to understand the specific situations of schools and capable of appreciating schools' efforts.

I have now sought to recapitalize the dominant governing problems in each of the three periods of my history of school governing. Moreover, I have described how the

conduct of governing is understood differently over time. And finally, I have shown the transformations in how municipalities emerge as governing actors over time. I have sought to specify these findings in this figure.

	Governing problem	Governing conduct	Municipality
1970 – mid 1980s	Subordinate schools to municipal planning	Plan Rationalize Ensure reasonable spending	The totality into which the schools activities should be planned Coordinator of schools with other welfare areas
Late 1980s – mid1990s	Prepare schools to administer the new conditions of self-management	Release schools from teacher union. Facilitate schools' relation to environment	Neutral context of local totality conflicts between the distinct interests that schools consist of. Stage of principle discussions
Late 1990s – today	Gain impact the self-management of schools without reducing their self-managing capacity	Translate between politicians and schools Make political demands meaningful for schools	The bridge of an unbridgeable gap between politicians and schools Facilitator of the creation of a municipal totality from which school managers can observe their schools

The chapters 4, 5 and 6 should now be summarized. However, I have not yet fully developed the implications of the findings especially with regard to how the analyzed development has led municipalities to expand their expectations to their own ability to handle the governing problems. In the following intermezzo I will dwell on this issue. Moreover, I will use the findings of chapters 4, 5 and 6 to develop analytical questions to the second half of the thesis.

INTERMEZZO I: An expectation machine

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of the chapters 4, 5 and 6 is, not only to trace how governing has been problematized, but also to analyze how municipalities have expanded their expectations to their own ability to handle the problem of governing independence. In the previous chapters, I have explored how what at first glance may appear as a rather innocent ambition of governing schools to become independent proves to be a powerful engine capable of catalyzing a range of problematizations. In this intermezzo, I will seek to elaborate how the historical development has produced a powerful machinery for a production of expectations of municipal school governing. The aim is to describe the multiplicity of contradictory expectations that Danish municipalities today seem to have to their school governing conducts and thereby diagnose the conditions of possibilities of municipal school governing.

In the following, I will, firstly, show how many distinctions are actually available through which municipalities can understand the conduct of governing. Second, I will discuss how these distinctions form a sort of expectation machine that leaves municipalities with ever more uncontrollable expectations to themselves. And thirdly, I will use these findings to specify research questions for the next analytical part of the thesis that focus on how the semantic field developed in the history of school governing constitutes certain problems for schools' self-management.

Re-entering distinctions
As the previous chapters have hopefully shown, the history of municipal school governing is one of reconfigurations of relations between governing and independence. Ever since the emergence of the ambition to govern schools to govern themselves, governing and independence have been intrinsically entangled. In the following, I will elaborate such an entanglement by introducing the concept of a re-entry.

A re-entered distinction is a distinction that appears within a space created by a previous distinction.[427]
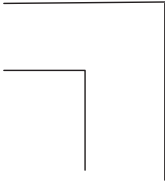
In the case of a distinction between system and environment, this distinction may be re-entered into the system, which serves the purpose of making the system capable of relating to its environment and boundaries between itself and its environment. Spencer Brown argues that a re-entry is a source of *unresolvable indeterminacy*.[428] This indeterminacy stems from the fact that the re-entered distinction is both the same and distinct from the initial distinction. In the case of a distinction between system and environment, this distinction is and is not the same when it is drawn within the system.[429] Likewise the space created by the re-entered difference is both the same and different from the initial space since it is created within the space of the system. The re-entry raises doubt regarding what side of the distinction one is located. Is a space of 'environment' within the space of 'system' the same or not the same as the environment created with the first distinction? The problem with a re-entry is thus the indeterminacy of the question of whether the re-entered distinction is the same or different from the distinction into which it was re-entered. The problem is, in other words, the otherness in the same.

Let me elaborate this unresolveable indeterminacy of a re-entry. A re-entered distinction does not have a determinable value: there is no easy answer to the question of whether the space created by the re-entered distinction is the same or

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[427] Spencer Brown 1969; 69-76; Luhmann 1993b: 484
[428] Spencer Brown, 1969: 57
[429] Which is, as described in chapter two, nothing but the previous distinction between system and environment.

different from the space created with the initial distinction. This is somewhat similar to the liar's paradox: 'This sentence is false.' Regardless of whether we say that this sentence is true or false, we are stuck with the paradox that when true then false and when false then true.[430] A re-entry is a situation that cannot be solved just by choosing either A or B, but a situation in which it is impossible to decide. Re-entries result in eternal oscillation between either/or, since choosing one of the sides will only reboot the self-referential circle.[431]

With the re-entry one is thus trapped in a paradox. This paradox may be resolved by the mere passing of time: over time one can oscillate between the two sides.[432] However, there is also the more problematic issue that the paradoxical nature of the re-entry must be forgotten or hidden for such temporary solutions to be successful.[433] A strategy for such an oblivion or concealment may be the production of new distinctions – a sort of 'compensatory distinctions' with which communication can be continued at least for a while until the paradox is visible once more.[434]

If we draw on the figure of a re-entry to observe the municipal ambition to govern independence, we can say that the emergence of such ambition is a re-entry of a distinction between a governing subject and a governed object into the space of governing. Within a context of governing relations, municipalities begin to want to create a space where schools can be independent. With the re-entry we can expect school governing to be a paradoxical affair full of oscillations between governing and independence. We may also expect that a range of other distinctions emerge to handle the paradox created by the re-entry. A thesis would be that school governing becomes intrinsically ambiguous. Oscillation, tension and ambivalence become a part of - or even the energy of - school governing when the ambition of producing independence is added to the ambition of governing. And, we may look for how new distinctions are produced as attempts to handle the unresolveable indeterminacy of the problem of whether the space of independence is the same or different from the

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[430] Borch, 2000: 113
[431] Teubner, 2006:45
[432] Spencer Brown, 1969: 59-60
[433] Andersen, 2001
[434] Luhmann, 1995b: 42; Andersen, 2001: 83

space of governing into which it was introduced. In the following, I will conceptualize the emergence of the ambition to make schools independent as a re-entry of a distinction between governing and governed into the space of governing. The aim is to analyze how the general problem of how to simultaneously govern and set free is over time sought handled with a machinery of 'compensatory distinctions' and how this machinery produces an intensive space of expectations to municipal school governing. The questions are: How is municipal school governing played out as strategies for concealing or forgetting the foundational paradoxes? And how are municipalities as a consequence of these strategies capable of recognizing successful governing?

At the beginning of the 1970s, the ambition of municipalities was to subject schools to municipal decision-making. Municipalities can be said to operate with a simple distinction between governing subject and governed object. The municipal problem was simply how to create a hierarchical relation between the municipal board and schools that was not interfered neither by other governing actors. There was in other words no entanglement of governing and independence – no re-entry of a distinction between governing and governed. Municipalities simply struggled to make schools governed.

When from the late 1980s, the advantages of self-governing of schools was thematized the game, however, changed dramatically. With the concept of a re-entry, we can now say that when municipalities discover that governing is more appropriately conducted through establishing schools as self-governing institutions, the initial distinction between governing and governed is re-entered into itself.
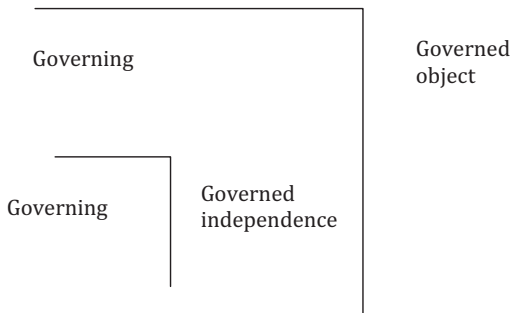
School governing becomes a matter of creating schools as independent. However, as the figure shows, the space of independence is created within a space of governing. This means that the re-entered distinction between governing and governed is and is not the same when it is drawn within the space of governing. The paradox seems obvious – the independence of schools is called forward by an authority and as such the call for independence is always already ambiguous. The municipal interpellation of schools seems to be intrinsically schizophrenic in the sense that an ambition is always accompanied by a counter-ambition. Drawing on a definition of schizophrenia from 1912,[435] school governing can be characterized by *ambitendency* since within every tendency a counter tendency is released. And by *ambivalency* since every inclination entails two contrary feeling tones. With this form of schizophrenic governing schools are set free, but only to be governed more efficiently. This may be expressed in the statement: 'do as we say: be independent'.[436]

The problem for municipalities is then how to communicate to schools so as to get them engaged in creating themselves as independent without being disturbed by uncertainty stemming from the fact that the call for independence is a way of

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[435] Brought to my attention by Marius Gudmand-Høyer. The definition appears in an article in *Nervous and Mental Disease Monograpg Series No. 11* authored by Professor Dr. E. Bleuler and titled *The Theory of Schizophrenic Negativism.* New York: The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company.
[436] See Andersen, 2008

governing. Let me elaborate: Since the new space of independence is separated out within a space of governing it cannot clearly be distinguished from governing. The problem for municipalities then becomes to engage schools in treating their independence as something distinct from governing although it is also the same.[437] The problem may also be formulated as a problem of how to develop a common forgetting between schools and municipalities that the distinction between governing and independence is itself an operation of governing.

So, let me revisit the findings of chapters 5 and 6 to recapitulate the distinctions that the re-entry of a distinction between governing and governed triggers. Firstly, the re-entry gives rise to a distinction between school on the one side and the teacher communities (profession and union) on the other. Before the birth of the ambition to make schools independent, such a distinction was not important in municipal school governing. It was taken for granted that the school had a natural connection to the profession. Only once municipalities begin to want schools to manage themselves, they discover teacher communities as obstacles if there is to be anything for a newly empowered school management to manage.

Drawing on the concept of a re-entry, we may say that a distinction between the school and teacher communities emerges as a way of handling the paradox of simultaneous governing and setting free. With the distinction municipalities can seek to forget the paradox of governed independence by naturalizing that the school needs to be released from its traditional ties to teacher communities.

The distinction also serves as a solution to a problem of how to observe whether a school is governed independent. Municipalities can recognize a school capable of self-management as a school that does not take its relation to a teacher profession for granted, but instead creates a management space free of the traditions and restrictions from a teaching profession and union. If municipalities can observe that schools distance themselves from the profession, then they can observe the school to have an object of management in the form of teachers and thus a relation of

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[437] See Andersen, 2001: 81

management to itself. If municipalities can observe that schools use their independence to abandon ties to the profession, then municipalities have succeeded.

Secondly, the re-entry between governing and governed gives rise to a distinction between a school and its stakeholders. The school is no longer just a school, but the unity of a distinction between school and environment. We can formalize this figure like this:
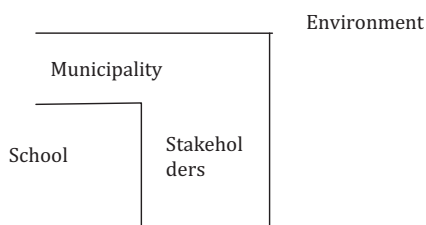
Within a space of a municipality a school can become independent if it displays that it is capable of conceiving of itself as difference between the interests of itself and of its stakeholders. Only by cleaving itself and thus creating its own little environment of stakeholders can the school gain a space of (governed) independence within the municipal totality. Like the distinction between school and teacher communities this distinction indicates that schools can become self-managing by actively relating themselves to certain elements. However, rather than encouraging schools to release itself from this element, this distinction encourages schools to involve its stakeholders.

The ambiguous task of governing independence can find a concrete form of supporting the school's management of stakeholder relations. This distinction can help municipalities and schools to forget the paradoxical nature of the initiatives of decentralization by naturalizing that an independent school is a school that involves parents in its self-management.

Like the previous distinction, this one also serves as a solution to the problem of how to observe a school as governed independent. Municipalities can recognize a school

capable of self-management as a school that invites parents to participate in school governing. If municipalities can observe that schools observe itself as the unity of school and stakeholder, then they can observe the school as successfully governed independent.

The emergence of these two compensatory distinctions results in a process of de-naturalizing the identity of the school. It can no longer be taken for granted that a school has natural relations to the teacher profession nor to the stakeholders. An independent school can be recognized as a school that makes its relations to these elements object of management.

As described, we may not only expect that the paradox of the re-entry leads to the emergence of new distinctions, but also to oscillation and ambiguity. Let us therefore see, how, in the first years after the emergence of the ambition to govern independence, the paradox of ordering someone to become independent is sought handled by continuous oscillations back and forth between governing and setting free.

From the experiments with delegating competence before the enactment of 1990, it was reported that since conflicts between teachers or between teachers and parents were likely to happen, the experiments had run under the precondition that if teachers and parents could not agree on a particular matter, this matter returned to the municipal board, who would then take a decision.[438] At least in the initial experiments with parental boards, municipalities were encouraged to consider reclaiming the competence if the school did not succeed in finding compromises and balances between the different interests of parents and teachers. LGDK reflected:

> In a system without balances between these stakeholders, no responsible municipal board will decentralize competence to the school board.[439]

Municipalities should govern schools' self-management by observing whether teachers and parents were capable of reaching an agreement. LGDK argued:

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[438] LGDK, 1988b: 16
[439] LGDK, 1988b: 8

> A precondition for the schools sovereign administration of the general grants is that the school council [the term for parental board before 1990.JGP], the teacher council and the school management agree on the allocation of the funding. If agreement is not possible, then the competence to decide returns to the municipal Committee of Education and Culture.[440]

In the attempts to prepare schools to manage themselves, a municipal task was thus not only to facilitate constructive relations of cooperation between teachers and parents, but also to be ready to reclaim competence if the school was not yet ready to seek compromises with its stakeholders. The hand-over of competence to the school was thus argued to depend upon the school's ability to administer this new responsibility.

One the one hand, municipalities communicated that schools should be given the opportunity to govern themselves. And on the other hand, municipalities also argued that if schools could not handle this freedom and, for instance, could not produce constructive relations to their stakeholders, municipalities had to withdraw the competence. Governing schools to become independent thus meant to observe schools with a certain scepticism of whether they were ready to obtain independence. Municipalities were to simultaneously create a space in which schools could experiment with self-management and be ready to withdraw the competence if schools are not ready to administer it. Municipalities thus had to handle the oscillating role of both communicating to schools that they should now be free and that they were still governed.

As the findings in chapter 5 shows, municipalities reflect upon the uncertainty that is thereby created for schools when they argue that relations of governing after decentralization depend on trust. Schools could no longer expect municipalities to unambiguously want to govern the activities of the school and to compensate for this lack of calculability and predictability of the conduct of governing, municipalities sought to foster trust in their relations to school. Trust became a name for the uncertainty coming from the unresolveable indeterminacy of governing space created by the re-entry of the distinction between governing and governed.

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[440] LGDK, 1988b: 16

We may also say that trust becomes a way for municipalities to make themselves immune against the critique of governing that may arise when governing becomes incalculable. If schools direct attention to the double binding character of the new forms of governing, municipalities can appeal to trust. Schools can be told to expect contradictory governing and to engage themselves in building and maintaining trust in their relations to municipalities.

Let us now continue to analyze how, from the late 1990s, the re-entry of a distinction between governing subject and governed object develops. From the late 1990s, municipalities increasingly articulate that the schools' self-governing should to a higher degree reflect municipal school policy and municipal decision-making. Schools can become governed independent if they demonstrate that they can create themselves as relations between manager and managed and that they in their self-management are sensitive to municipal needs. We can now formalize this with the following figure.


Governing

Governed object

Governing

Self-managing reflecting its municipal context

Managed objects

Governed independence
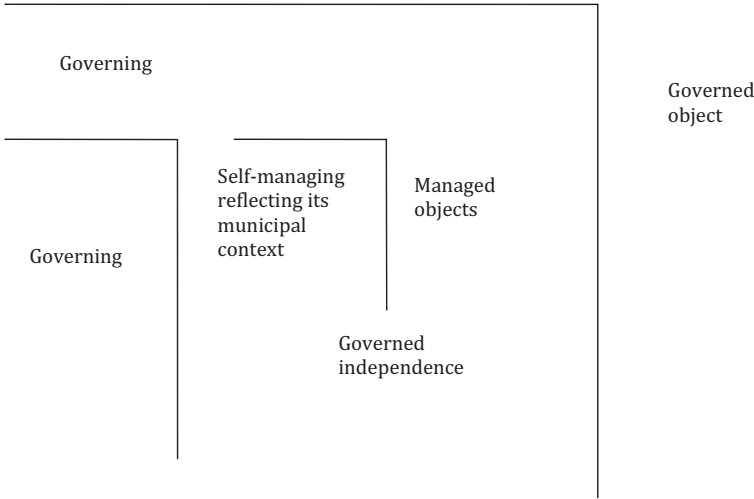
With the problem of how to gain impact on schools' self-management, the space of governed independence is cloven by a distinction between self-managing (sensitive to municipal governing) and managed objects. School governing becomes a matter of creating a space where schools are engaged in making their self-management reflect municipal governing by supporting the school's development of management relations. Again, the paradox seems obvious – the self-management of schools depends on their ability to be sensitive to governing. The self that is called forward is to demonstrate its independence by reflecting municipal attempts to impact it. The paradox intrinsic to municipal governing may then be expressed in the following statement: Be yourself so that we can recognize ourselves in you!

Again, the problem for municipalities is to engage schools in treating their independence as something distinct from governing although it is also the same. However, today the specific form of this problem is how to simultaneously ensure that municipal governing can be recognized in schools' self-management and that schools do not observe this as a reduction of their freedom of scope. The question is how to communicate to schools so as to get them to observe municipal concerns and problems as a relevant context of their self-management. Municipalities need to make schools think of themselves as part of the municipality without observing themselves as restricted by this fact. Governing independence is, in other words, a matter of impacting and simultaneously avoiding that this impact impacts schools' capacity of self-management. Municipalities are then facing the problem of how to create oblivion of the fact that the invitation to schools to observe municipal communication as a welcomed strategic event in its self-management is occurring in a space of governing. We may also express it like this: It needs to be forgotten that the invitation to mutual development is indeed uttered in a space of hierarchy.

As shown, municipalities seek to handle the paradox stemming from this re-entry with distinctions between clear goals and free scope. However, this distinction is difficult to maintain, since municipalities discover that schools and politicians observe it differently. Governing becomes a matter of bringing schools to understand the importance of the goals formulated by politicians so that they take it upon themselves to make their own goals reflect these. Schools are to actively construct

municipal goals as the relevant context of their goal formulation. We can then formalize school governing like this.
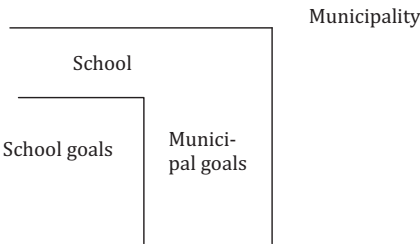
This re-entry thus becomes a way for municipalities to find ways to perform the task of simultaneously impacting and not impacting schools' self-governing. The paradoxical call to schools to be independent in such a way that municipalities can recognize themselves in schools can find a (more) concrete form of encouraging schools to think of municipal goals as a productive event for formulating local goals. The self-management that municipalities should seek to foster is a self-management engaged in using the governing it receives as an input to processes of creating itself as relations between goals and means. Governing schools to become independent thus means to facilitate that schools formulate local and school specific strategies related to overall municipal goals. Schools are encouraged to observe municipal concerns and problems as an invitation to strategic considerations of how the school can address such challenges. This distinction can then help municipalities and schools to forget the paradoxical nature of an ambition to impact without impacting. With the distinction attempts can be made to forget that the invitation to observe municipal goals as strategic events in the self-management of schools is also an impact on their self-management.

Moreover, from the late 1990s, municipalities also seek to govern by help of a distinction between visible and invisible. As described the call for more audit of schools is translated into a problem of how to engage schools in making their activities and results visible. The municipal problem is that self-assessment loses its

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effect, if schools do it for the sake of politicians. To make themselves object of investigation schools are to re-enter a distinction between self and other into themselves so as to observe itself as object of assessment. We can formalize school governing like this.

Other

Self

Self-visibility (observing self as other)

Invisibi-lity
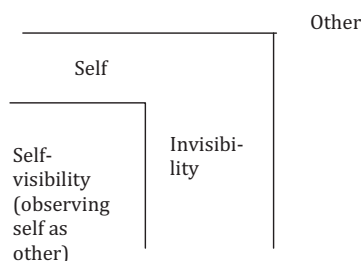
Municipal school governing is to see that the schools cannot see that parts of themselves are invisible. To become governed independent schools must be made aware that spaces within themselves are not visible to themselves and municipalities. Like the previous distinction, this one between visible and invisible also becomes a way for municipalities to find ways to perform the paradoxical task of simultaneously impacting and not impacting. By encouraging schools to engage in efforts to make themselves visible not just for the sake of politicians, but for the sake of their own self-knowledge and development, municipalities can escape the Scylla of forcing external audit upon the school and the Charybdis of schools completely non-transparent to a municipal gaze. With the distinction, governing independence means to facilitate schools' wish to and ability for becoming transparent. The problem of how to treat the space of independence created within governing as if it was different from governing is here a matter of getting schools to understand governing as a help to engage schools in efforts to reflect the governing. With the distinction attempts can be made to forget that encouraging schools to see self-assessment as a necessary and natural part of self-management is also an act of governing – a form of impact.

These two compensatory distinctions make it possible for municipalities to assess when their governing of independence is successful. Municipalities can recognize a self-managing school as a school that works to translate the general and overall municipal goals into conditions of goal formulation at the school. If the school engages in making its activities an answer to municipal challenges, then the school can be observed as independent. Moreover, municipalities can recognize a self-managing school as a school that observes self-assessment as a natural and necessary part of self-management.

As described, from the late 1980s, municipalities seek to make themselves immune against critique of the double binding character of governing. Today, it seems as if the immunisation also takes another form. In recent years, the governing invention of a partnership of school managers has emerged to seek to reduce conflicts between schools and municipality. School managers are asked to identify with municipal aims and needs and find ways of pursuing individual school goals *through* the needs and aims of the common municipal context. Differences between the interests of an individual school and the totality of the municipality are thus sought to be handled by asking the school managers to internalize those differences.

When governing entails the paradox of how to impact without this impact impacting self-management capacity, schools may direct attention to conflicts between the interests of municipality and schools and claim that municipal goals are not a productive context for school goals or that political demands for visibility decrease rather than increase school development. It may be that the governing invention of a partnership of school managers here proves to be an effective device for making municipalities immune to such claims from schools. Municipalities can make themselves immune to conflicts by inviting school managers to internalize eventual conflicts and contradictories between the interests or worldviews of schools and municipalities. With the partnership, school managers are invited to make the unresolveable indeterminacy of municipal school governing a productive force rather than a destructive one.

I have sought to recapitalize these findings in thus figure.

	Problem of forgetting	Compensatory distinctions	Sign of successful governing	Immunisation device
From the late 1980s	That the distinction between governing and independence is an act of governing	School / profession School/stakehol-ders	A school distancing itself from the profession A school that understands itself as a unity of school and stakeholders	Trust
From the late 1990s	That the invitation to mutual co-development is hierarchical	Goals, reflecting municipal problems/ goals Visibility/invisi-bility	A school that sees municipal problems as events for own goal formulation A school that sees self-assessment as a necessary part of self-management	Partnership between school managers

The next question is then how this multiplicity of re-entries and compensatory distinctions produces expectations to municipalities. How can municipalities today expect themselves to govern schools?

A productive expectation machine

It is time to extract some final answers to the question formulated in the introduction of how municipalities today expect themselves to govern schools. As has been indicated in the previous sections, the historical development has produced a range of different and at times contradictory expectations to municipalities. And today, municipalities must seek to navigate on these complex conditions. The questions are: How can municipalities understand themselves given the multiplicity of paradoxes and compensatory distinctions? What problems have municipal ambitions to govern independency left municipalities with?

From the 1970s, municipalities have expected themselves to be the central actor that can provide a totality of municipal welfare from which the schools could be observed and planned. Municipalities observed themselves as the most important school

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governing actor in virtue of their economic responsibility of schooling. Although municipalities from the late 1980s also began to request from themselves that their relation to schools should be characterized by trust and therefore municipalities should ensure schools that municipalities would not use the decentralization of competence to introduce retrenchment, municipalities are still expected to ensure reasonable school spending. Today, municipalities are still expected to take responsibility for the general development of the school system. They are to some degree expected to plan it rationally and ensure that public spending are used reasonable. This more classical form of governing is, for instance, seen whenever municipalities have to close down or merger schools that have become so small that spending per child can no longer be justified. Furthermore, municipalities are still expected to ensure coordination between the school and other welfare areas. Although schools have become partly responsible for coordination with for instance the municipal social service or health departments, municipalities still hold responsible for the overall coordination. Municipalities should for instance make sure that no child is lost between welfare areas and that the different welfare institutions do not just observe a child as a pupil, a certain diagnosis, etc. but all work in accordance with a totality of considerations of what is considered best for the child.

Municipalities are thus still partly expected to create governing relations to schools where the school is a subordinate subject and the municipality a governing subject who can oversee how school activities should be coordinated with other welfare activities and thereby provide schools with a context they cannot themselves observe.

As proposed, from the late 1980s and onwards, municipalities begin to expect of themselves to oscillate between communicating to schools that they are governed and that they are independent. Even worse: municipalities expect of themselves to be able to create a common forgetting among schools and municipalities that the distinction between governing and independence is itself an operation of governing. Municipalities expect themselves to simultaneously enable cooperation between school and stakeholder *and* be sceptical with regard to whether schools are willing to open themselves up to the influence of stakeholders. Municipalities want to encourage cooperation, but assume that schools are too closed to desire it. These

expectations may be difficult to manage since they may entail the tragedy that the municipalities are trapped in their own scepticism, so that they will never be convinced that schools truly desire cooperation. However, we may also expect that this scepticism is productive in the sense of triggering further municipal attempts to open up schools to parental influence.

Since the late 1980s, municipalities have also added an ambition of being trustworthy to their school governing. However, simultaneously, they also expect themselves to be ready to reclaim competence if schools do not successfully cooperate with parents. This expectation may be difficult to manage, since it entails the tragedy that the municipal expectation to themselves to be trustworthy and simultaneously ready to reclaim independence from schools may result in municipalities never being observed as authentically trustworthy by schools. However, we may also anticipate that this tragedy is productive in the sense of producing a range of initiatives to make schools observe municipalities as trustworthy such as dialogues or bottom up processes of formulating municipal ground rules for or codes of conducts in relations between municipality and school.

As proposed, from the late 1990s school governing becomes a matter of handling the paradox of how to impact schools' self-management and simultaneously avoid that this impact impacts schools' capacity of self-management. Municipalities have expected themselves to create governing relations to schools through which the school will not only become an independent subject, but also an independent subject that of its own will strives to reflect municipal governing. We may expect that such ambitions become difficult for the municipalities to manage, since it seems to entail the tragedy that on the one hand, municipal administrations are to strive to bridge gaps between politicians and schools, but on the other hand their self-understanding rest exactly upon the impossibility of ever bridging such gaps. However, we may also expect that this tragedy is productive in the sense of consolidating the importance of municipal administrations. The difficulties of fulfilling the expectations created over time may lead to the need for more and more sophisticated systems for schools (non-impacted) self-management. Moreover, they may result in an acceleration of demands

for translation and communication in the unbridgeable gap between politicians and schools.

More specifically, this means that municipalities call upon themselves to be a medium for attempts of politicians to display stronger governing and simultaneously make schools observe this as a most welcome event for reformulation of their goals. This seems like a difficult expectation to fulfil. How to use the same school policy to simultaneously make politicians appear as actors impacting schools, and make schools think of themselves as self-impacted? Moreover, it means that municipalities call upon themselves to produce schools as transparent to politicians and simultaneously make schools see this intervention as a self-intervention. Municipalities expect themselves to be able to convince schools that self-assessment is a necessary part of self-management. We may expect that also this expectation is difficult to manage. How to convince schools that their time consuming efforts to send information about their results and processes to municipalities are a part of their self-development? In addition, think for instance of the difficulty of developing concrete governing and assessment systems that can both ensure impact and encourage schools to observe themselves as non-impacted.

Furthermore, municipalities expect themselves to invite school managers to create a municipal totality in order to make them internalize conflicts between municipality and school. However, this also seems like a difficult expectation to fulfil. A concrete example could be the purchasing systems that many municipalities have implemented. Schools may then experience that a small and particular purchase at the individual school is much more expensive to make through the compulsory system than it would be otherwise and from this point of view the central purchasing systems seem absurd. However, municipalities are to convince schools that from a perspective of the whole municipality, this system will over time lead to reductions in expenses. Municipalities are to explain how every experienced clash between municipal and school interest is in fact not a clash because schools and municipalities indeed share the same destiny. It does not seems unlikely, that this difficulty, however, is also productive in producing an increasingly important role for municipal administrations of reposition clashes between school and municipality within the

municipal totality so that they can be explained to be nothing but another sign of the need for co-development.

Ever since the birth of the ambition to govern schools to govern themselves, municipalities have thus had to navigate in an increasingly more contradictory multiplicity of expectations to themselves. For instance municipalities expect to themselves to facilitate schools self-governing in an atmosphere of trust *and* to take responsibility of the school's spending. Moreover, municipalities expect themselves to be able to engage school managers in the creation of a municipal totality although, in times of retrenchments, these school managers may be simultaneously experiencing that their school is to be merged or closed down.

I have sought to sum up the complexity of the expectations municipalities can have to their own school governing in the following figure:

	Calls to municipal actors	Tragedy	Productivity of tragedy
From the late 1970s	Ensure reasonability of spending Coordinate schools with other welfare areas	-	-
From the late 1980s	Encourage cooperation with parents but expect the school to be too closed to desire cooperation Be trustworthy and ready to reclaim independence	Municipalities are trapped in their own scepticism, and will never be convinced that schools truly desire cooperation Municipalities will never be observed as authentically trustworthy by schools	Scepticism is what keeps municipalities trying to open up schools Impossibility of being observed as a trustworthy produces ever more initiatives to improve relations to schools
From the late 1990s	Be a medium for attempts of politicians to display stronger governing and make schools observe this as an invitation to mutual development Produce schools as transparent to politicians and make schools see this intervention as a self-intervention Invite school managers to create a municipal totality in order to make them internalize conflicts between municipality and school	Municipal administrations are to strive to bridge gaps between politicians and schools, but their self-understanding rest exactly upon the impossibility of ever bridging such gaps Impossibility of developing governing and assessment systems that can both ensure impact and encourage schools to observe themselves as non-impacted	An acceleration of demands for translation in the unbridgeable gap between politicians and schools An increasingly important role for municipal administrations of transforming clashes between school and municipality into signs of the necessity of mutual development Impossibility leads to the need for more and more sophisticated systems for schools (non-impacted) self-management

How can schools become schools?

The paradoxical machinery of governing raises questions from the perspective of welfare institutions. In the previous sections, I have studied how paradoxes of governing as a machinery for producing expectations to municipalities. However, questions remain of how this machinery produces complex conditions on which schools can create themselves. The aim of the following chapters (7, 8, and 9) is to explore how the conditions on which schools are expected to create themselves have transformed through the different encouragements to both think themselves as independent from and dependent upon municipalities. On an overall level, the question is how schools can become schools when they are always already governed in their attempts to become independent. How can schools become schools when they are always already schizophrenic in the sense that their independence has always been called forward by the governing actor? How can the school discover the self that is always already distorted by the governing actor?

However, before we can let chapter 7, 8 and 9 begin their analyses of these question, I will elaborate how I draw on the findings of the previous section to develop research questions to these chapters.

The semantics that I have analyzed in the previous chapters do not only produce expectations to municipalities and their many different roles in school governing. In their attempts to govern the schools to become independent, municipalities also produce images of schools that are offered to schools for them to use in their processes for self-creation. In each of the periods that I have described, municipalities are able to imagine what a school is in certain ways. And from the late 1980s and onwards municipalities strive to produce descriptions of schools in order to foster processes of self-creation at the schools. In the following chapters, I will re-visit the history of municipal school governing in order to focus on how schools are offered images of what a school is and what it should and should not strive to become.

Now, let me elaborate how schools emerge for a municipal gaze in the history that I have described. Thereby, I will have a point of departure for the following chapters.

The attempts of municipalities to establish themselves as school governing actors in the 1970 entailed certain assumptions about schools. As a mere medium for municipalities' attempts to become independent from counties and school commission, schools were not observed as a unity, but rather as a diverse set of facts and concerns. As described, LGDK sought to establish that pedagogical planning was always dependent on economic appropriations. It was thus by subjecting pedagogy to economy that municipalities could describe the capability of decision-making of school commission as limited and claim that realistic decision-making belonged to municipal boards. Moreover, LGDK had to establish that school activities, like activities of other areas, had to be coordinated within a municipal totality of activities and needs. Only by observing pedagogical concerns as particular elements to be coordinated could schools become an object of government for the municipal boards and administrations. As I will pursue in chapter 7: By thinking of schools through a steering problem of how to subject school to the decision making of municipalities, schools emerged for the municipal gaze as economic expenses and elements to be administered and coordinated. In chapter 7 I will ask: How did schools emerge as an object of municipal governing, when municipalities expected themselves to conduct planning and coordination of schools?

Likewise, from the late 1980s, the new role of municipalities was established at the cost of some assumptions about the school or more precisely the teacher community. To establish themselves as those who sought balances between teachers and parents, municipalities depended on an observation of teachers as being closed around themselves and as being a community incapable of decision-making. As shown: Schools were given the possibility to manage themselves in cooperation with stakeholders and with some scepticisms of whether they were ready. From a municipal point of view, schools emerged as independent institutions whose problem was that they had not yet recognized themselves as independent. As described, the schizophrenia in the call to schools can be expressed by the following statement: 'Do as we say: Become independent!' The next question is what school-self was to be created to meet this schizophrenic call. In chapter 8, I will pursue how schools were given the possibility to manage themselves on the conditions that the school was

represented as a unity of differences between school and environment. I will ask: how was the school expected to create a self-managing self capable of handling differences between school and an environment of stakeholders?

And finally, also the school governing from the late 1990s and onwards produced certain assumptions about what a school is. As described, schools were given the possibility of making themselves visible with some scepticisms of whether they would find this important. By thinking of schools through a steering problem of how to communicate to schools that documentation was meaningful, schools emerged for the municipal gaze as institutions with a lacking written language and little ability to express everyday practice in a professional language. As proposed, the schizophrenic calls to schools can be expressed by the following statement: 'Be independent in such a way that we can recognize our governing in you.' The next question is what school-self is to be created to meet this ambiguous call.

Municipalities worried that schools did not have sufficient techniques for making themselves visible for themselves as well as for politicians. Schools were appealed to produce self-assessment and therefore begin to observe themselves through distinctions of practices that were written, given language and reflected upon and practices that were not. From a municipal point of view the problem was that the school had not been occupied with itself as a professional organization. As I will pursue in chapter 9, schools were requested to begin to develop organizational structures for decision making so that politicians could observe how the schools worked to achieve municipal goals. In chapter 9, I will ask: how was the school expected to create a self-managing self capable of formalizing itself through self-observation and detachments from oral and informal interaction.

ANALYTICAL PART 2
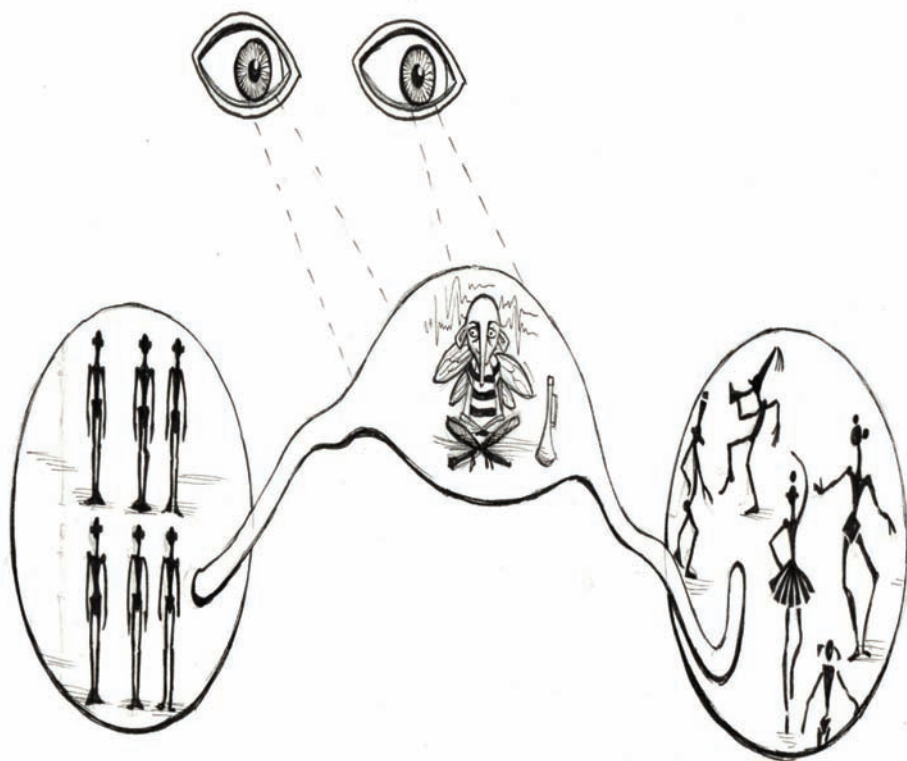
Introducing the chapters 7, 8 and 9

In this second analytical part, I will explore how the history of governing written in the previous part has consequences for how Danish public school can manage themselves. The question is: *How have the attempts to govern independence produced problems for schools' self-management in the form of increased expectations to manage unmanageable elements?*

In the following, I will therefore displace the analytical gaze to the demands and expectations to schools that are produced out of the machine of governing that previous chapters have described.

In the following chapters, I will once again take the reader from the municipal reform of 1970 and to today in order to trace formations of expectations to schools. I will pursue how schools have been encouraged to create themselves as governed independent in each of the periods also analyzed in the previous part. The focus is how schools' becoming independent has been related to increased expectations to manage unmanageable elements. The question, I will pursue is how, to become independent, schools are encouraged to produce parts of themselves as unmanageable and thus in need of management.

The analytical approach is, as described in chapter 2, developed by help of the concept of autopoiesis and the rather basic systems theoretical insight that a difference between system and environment is constitutive for a system's identity and that systems constitute and maintain themselves by producing and preserving a difference to an environment.[441] My analytical focus is how schools have been governed by being offered different images of what a school should be and what the school's relevant environment is.

Let me elaborate. Drawing on the concept of autopoiesis I explore how schools over time have been encouraged to identify with different versions of a self/other distinction. The overall guiding question that I pose to each of the periods is: *how is*

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[441] Luhmann 2000: 52, 75; Luhmann, 2002: 123

the school expected to create itself out of what forms of relating and distancing from which environment?

This quite compact question entails several sub-questions: Firstly, in each period, I seek to identify the prime self/other distinction that schools are expected to identify with. I then ask questions of 1) how the inside and outside of such a distinction emerge, 2) how schools are expected to become the self, implied by the specific distinction of each period, and 3) how the school is expected to relate to and differentiate itself from (exclude) the specific environment implied by the specific distinction of each period.

At the heart of autopoiesis there is an absence of certainty. For instance, in the space created by re-entered distinctions there is a fundamental uncertainty and continuous oscillation between inside/outside, self/hetero reference and system/environment.[442] I take this as a point of departure for studying how schools have been expected to become out of utilizing these oscillations as drivers for self-creation. By taking a point of departure in the concept of autopoiesis I thus focus on how schools have been encouraged to gain identity by relating to self-constructed foreign elements. I explore how efforts to create and catch sight of elements not belonging have been a combustible of processes of becoming of schools. However, when becoming depends upon production of strange elements, this may also mean that becoming is a risky game, since these elements may sometimes be constructed so lively that they come to threaten the schools experience of identity. An analytical focus is therefore also how the self-imposed indeterminacy may be overwhelming and potentially represent a threat to schools' self-creation.

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[442] See Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007: 24

Chapter 7

A school without a self

As I described in chapter 4, from the 1970s municipalities problematized how to subject schools to the decision-making of municipalities. The question is now how municipalities were capable of observing schools, when they were concerned with how to subject the school to municipal decision-making. I have preliminarily identified how schools emerged for the municipal gaze as elements to be administered and coordinated and economic expenses and it is this finding that I will pursue in this chapter.

In a history of how schools have been expected to self-manage, this chapter stands out as a bit odd, since at this point in time municipalities had not yet discovered potential advantages of letting schools manage themselves. The function of the chapter is, not unlike chapter 4, to provide a point of departure for studying the development towards more and more expectations of self-management, by describing how the school emerged to a municipal gaze before it was considered capable of planning itself.

The school as elements to be planned

After the municipal reform of 1970, the new and bigger municipalities began to consider how they could re-organize the school structure (number and sizes of schools) within the new borders of the municipality so that the expected advantages of the reform could be actualized. Municipalities began to discuss how schools could be merged, closed down or rebuilt in order to plan the municipal school system more appropriately. LGDK composed instructions for school planning entailing methods for calculating prognoses for numbers of pupils and classes and thereby estimating future need for school facilities.[443] And research was conducted to display

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[443] LGDK, 1978; see also Folkeskolen (the Public School) 1978: 1157

possibilities of creating more effective municipal school system by reducing the existing number of schools[444].

The Danish architect, A. O. Danneskjold-Samsøe from the Ministry of Education was "known to municipal people as a very experienced school planner."[445] In an issue of Danish Municipalities from 1971, he presented a method for school planning in which he examined:

> [H]ow to calculate the most appropriate ways for an amalgamated municipality to close down, rebuild or build new schools by calculating how the population will develop and how schools can be merged.[446]

The following figure is from Danneskjold-Samsøe's method of school planning.

Fig. 6

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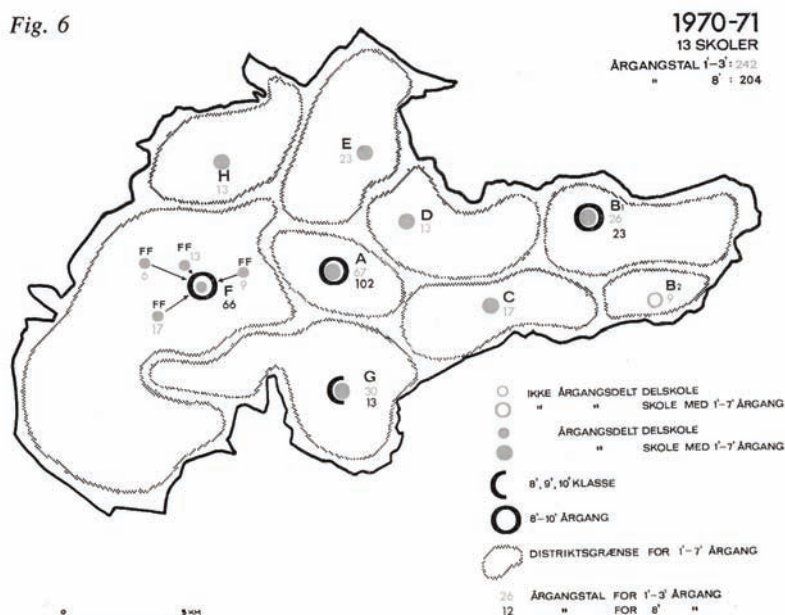
[444] See Danish Municipalities 18.06.1975, p. 16-17; Danish Municipalities 28.01.1976
[445] Danish Municipalities 17.03.1971, p. 11
[446] Danish Municipalities 17.05.1971, p. 11

Fig. 11

FORSLAG

- SKOLE UDEN OVERBYGNING
- SKOLE MED OVERBYGNING
- SKOLE SOM FORESLÅS BIBEHOLDT INDTIL VIDERE
- SKOLE SOM FORESLÅS NEDLAGT

DISTRIKTSGRÆNSE FOR 1–6 ÅRGANG

DISTRIKTSGRÆNSE FOR 7–10 ÅRGANG
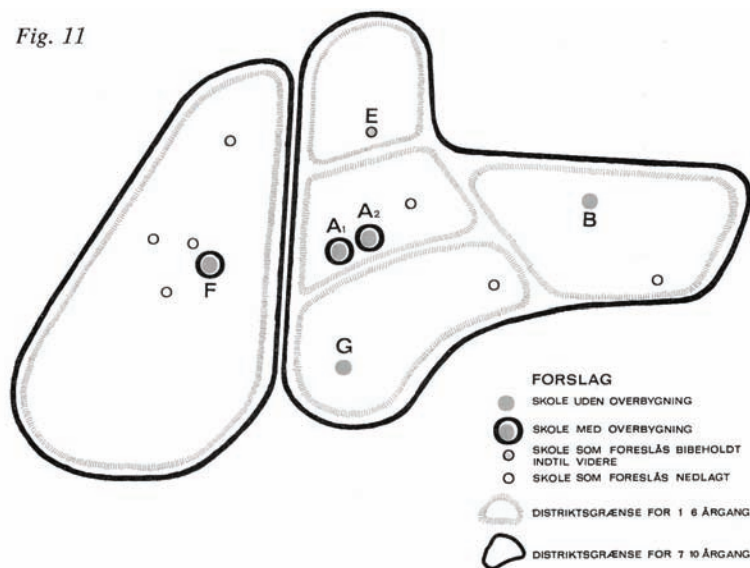
The figures show the transformation of a school system in a newly merged municipality. Danneskjold-Samsøe's figure 6 displayed the existing school structure with small school districts and schools of varying sizes. Some of these schools were so only three of these schools had year groups for the 8th, 9th and 10th school year and one of them was so small that it could not even form a class out of each year group. By calculating variables of population growth and decline, pedagogical prescriptions for school and class room sizes, needs for transportation of school children, etc. the most appropriate process of mergers could be identified. Danneskjold-Samsøe's figure 11, a new school structure was proposed with larger school districts and a reduction in the number of schools from 13 to 6.

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Schools then emerged as object of planning that should be subjected to prognoses of demographic development (birth rates and the surplus or deficit of migration) and merged in accordance. LGDK stated:

> Today almost 50% of all municipalities – 112 – have more schools than what is needed according to calculations of the number of classes in 1985. It is within this group that we find the greatest need for centralization, and it is also in these municipalities that we will face the greatest reductions in number of schools.[447]

Schools were observed as a capacity which should match the present and future number of school-aged children in the most cost-efficient way. Besides planning the structure of school systems, municipalities searched for ways of increasing the coefficient of utilization of the facilities of a school.[448] In Danish Municipalities, the Municipality of Århus presented their program for school building and argued:

> ... if only the common rooms are fully utilized, if the subjects of needlecraft, art and carpentry are placed in one room – in a workshop - and if one imagines a common utilization of areas for canteen and staff room, then possibilities are opened up for greater utilization of the consumption of square meters.[449]

By intensifying the utilization of facilities, the Municipality of Århus claimed to have cut the amount of square meters of a school (of a size of three forms per year group) from 12,000 to 9,000 and thus cutting the total expenses of municipal school building with 7,5-10 million Danish Kroner.[450]

When municipalities observed their school systems at the beginning of the 1970s, it was thus through methods of planning and with the intention of calculating the most appropriate sizes and number of schools within each of the new municipalities.[451] Schools emerged for the municipal gaze as a multiplicity of facts that should be combined so as to design the most cost-efficient school system. Schools were facilities that should be adjusted to prognoses of numbers of school aged children and whose number of square meters should be utilized most effectively.

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[447] Danish Municipalities 31.03.1971, p. 6
[448] Danish Municipalities 28.01.1976, p. 11-13
[449] Danish Municipalities 28.01.1976, p. 11-12
[450] Danish Municipalities 28.01.1976, p.11-13
[451] Danish Municipalities 21.05.1975

Before the emergence of a municipal ambition to create schools as independent, the individual school was not observed as a unit in itself. Rather, it appeared as a dispersed multiplicity of facts. The individual school was not a totality in itself, but was observed as an element in a municipal totality in accordance to the needs of which it should be merged with other schools, rebuild or closed down. The school's own capability to plan itself or utilize its facilities appropriately was not discovered as a resource for school governing.

The school as expenses

From the beginning of the 1970s, the public school was facing retrenchments. One wave of retrenchment, initiated directly by the Danish state,[452] took place in the beginning of the 1970s, and a second took place in the beginning of 1980s where the result of budgetary cooperation between state and municipalities was a reduction in municipal expenditure, for the school sector legislated in the circular letters of retrenchments.[453] To cut the spending of schooling were thus high on the municipal agenda.

This meant that schools were observed as spending and in relation to the spending of other welfare areas. Compared to other areas such as health care, social welfare, road service, etc., schools were argued to be one of the most cost-intensive tasks in the municipal portfolio, since it occupied 28,2 % of the total municipal budget.[454] The chair of LGDK of the time, Thorkild Simonsen, argued that since schooling was an area in decline (due to a fall in the number of school-aged children), resources from schools should be moved to areas in growth.[455] LGDK strongly encouraged municipalities to watch expenditures of schools closely and continuously consider whether resources could be made better use of by other areas.[456] The school thus emerged for the municipal gaze as a sum of different expenditures for instance visualized in this figure.

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[452] In 1973 the state had acted directly upon the determination of expenses of teaching hours in order to cut 93 million Danish kroner in 1973/74 and 277 in 1974/75 (Windinge 1985: 114-115).
[453] The Danish Ministry of Education 1980; 1981; 1982
[454] LGDK, 1986: 6
[455] Danish Municipalities 24.03.1982: see also LGDK, 1986: 3; Danish Municipalities 24.03.1982
[456] LGDK, 1986: 7

The municipal observation of schools as expenses can for instance be seen in the following figure.[457]

Distribution of expenses in a typical municipality. Gross operational expenditure per pupil, budget 1985

- Teacher salaries
- Cleaning
- Administration
- Educational material
- Buidings
- Transport of pupils
- Other expenses
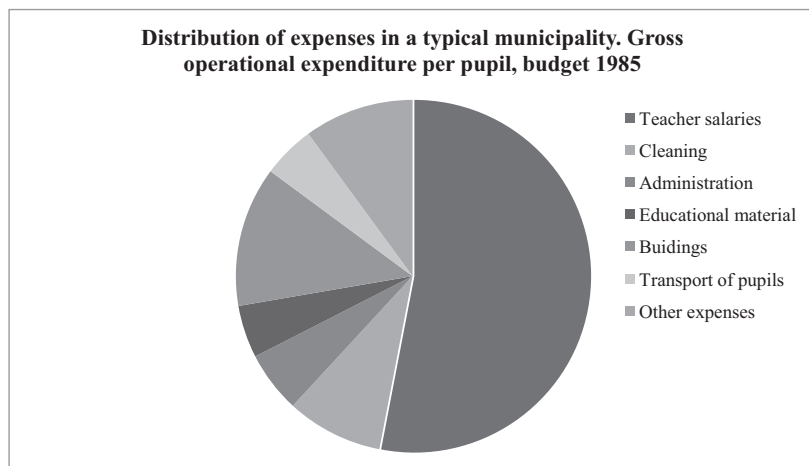
As the figure shows, teacher salaries jutted out as the greatest expense of schooling. Moreover, teacher salaries were interesting to municipalities because it was the spending that was potentially easiest to influence with short-term planning.[458] When observed as expenses schools thus emerged as teacher salaries to be watched carefully and preferably reduced.

This meant that schools emerged for the municipal gaze as relations between the spending of hours of teaching and the number of school-aged children. From the late 1970s, a central municipal concern was to adjust expenditures of the public school to a decrease of the time in present and future number of school aged-children.[459] In 1982, the present chair of LGDK, Thorkild Simonsen, argued:

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[457] From LGDK, 1986: 7

[458] Expenses for heating, cleaning, etc. could not be influenced without re-structuring the existing sizes and numbers of schools within a municipality

[459] LGDK Annual reports 1979/1980; 1981/82: 118; 1982/83; 1983/84: 109; 1986/87. And LGDK called for and conducted analyses of how the spending of hours of teachers could be decreased to meet a decrease in the number of school-aged children. See Annual report 1986/87b

> If municipalities are not very attentive to possibilities of adjusting the activities in schools to the decrease in numbers of children, we will see an unintended automatic growth in the level of service measured as spending of hours of teachers per pupil.[460]

Municipalities were to take responsibility for the spending of schooling and keep the level of service stabile by ensuring that the number of teaching hours was reduced in accordance with the fall in school- aged children. The relation between consumption of teaching hours and numbers of pupils were in other words an object of municipal governing rather than of management of schools themselves.

Finally, schools were also observed as relations between pedagogical requests and their expenditure. The school enactment of 1958 had set standards for numbers of children per class and year.[461] Moreover, based on the state of the art in educational knowledge, the Ministry of Education had published guidelines for school building entailing norms for number of square meters in class rooms, special subject rooms, common rooms, facilities for physical education as well as numbers of toilets per pupil, etc.[462] Municipalities were thus to meet these requirements in their planning of efficient school systems.

However, with reference to the general retrenchment, municipalities requested that school building should be subjected to thorough economic consideration.[463] LGDK argued that it was: "... not economically realistic to apply the guiding program of the Ministry as norms for school building."[464] Instead, LGDK called for considerations of relations between pedagogical concerns and expenses. The chair of LDGK stated:

> [I]t must be considered immensely important that the considerations of the determinations of norms for building of schools entail careful considerations of the relationship between economic consequences of the

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[460] Danish Municipalities 24.05.1982
[461] These were for instance the number of pupils per year of the 8th and 9th school year could not be below 70 if the number of electives possible to offer should be reasonable, that the number of pupils per school should not be so small that each school year could not have its own class and teaching plan. They were partly only possible to implement after the municipal reform of 1970. See Danish Municipalities 17.05 1971, p. 17; Danish Municipalities 31.03.1971; Danish Municipalities 27.09.1972, p. 11
[462] See Danish Municipalities 24.03.1976, p. 12
[463] Danish Municipalities 28.01.1976, p.11-13
[464] Danish Municipalities 28.01.1976, p. 11-13

fulfilling of these norms and the pedagogical advantages in relation to this.[465]

LGDK therefore called for the production of more knowledge of correlations between pedagogical ambitions and economic costs:

> A range of different school structure can be found – large schools, small schools, etc. Normally we use some rules of thumps that a certain area has certain needs for such and such kinds of teaching of such and such a character among the school- aged children. But what will it actually cost to increase or decrease the level of ambitions in the individual areas of schooling within the norms that are compulsory? We know very little of this matter.[466]

Schools emerged as relations between pedagogical demands or ambitions and their cost they led to, and it was the responsibility of municipalities to consider how reasonable balances between the two could be found.

When municipalities observed their school systems at the beginning of the 1970s, it was thus through concerns of how to ensure that the consumption of financial resources was reasonable for instance in relation to the spending of other welfare areas. Schools emerged for the municipal gaze as relations between spending of teaching hours and pupils and as relations between pedagogical requirements and their spending. Before the emergence of a municipal ambition to create schools as independent, the individual school was not observed as capable of taking responsibility for its own spending. Schools were neither observed as able to adjust the spending of teaching hours to a fall in the number of school-aged children nor for a reasonable relation between pedagogical and financial concerns.

A school without unity or management capacity
Let me summarize. When observed through a problem of steering of, how to subject schools to municipal planning, schools emerged for the municipal gaze as expenses to be calculated and adjusted to wider municipal considerations and facts. Schools were observed as a number of variables such as present and future numbers of inhabitants,

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[465] Danish Municipalities 27.09.1972, p. 10
[466] Danish Municipalities 18.06.1975

the capacity and conditions of school buildings, facilities for physical education, numbers of required teaching hours, etc. that should all be combined in order to calculate a resource efficient municipal school system. And schools were seen as one amongst other municipal tasks that should each be prioritized on the basis of efficient planning and evaluation of reasonability.

In the 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s, the school does not emerge as a unity but as a dispersed set of variable. It is not the task of the school, but of the municipality to calculate and plan appropriate relations between these variables. Neither do schools emerge as a totality in themselves. A school is an element in a municipal totality in which it should be merged, closed down or rebuild in accordance with municipal needs. Moreover, the school's capacity for planning and managing itself are not yet discovered as a resource in school governing. It is the responsibility of municipalities - not of schools - to adjust spending to changes in the number of pupils. And it is municipalities who should find reasonable relations between pedagogical ambitions and the expenses these lead to. The school was thus not observed as capable of managing relations between different variables, concerns and rationalities.

Chapter 8

Becoming in disturbance

Since the late 1980, schools have been governed with a call to become independent so as to become obedient. The question is: What school-self is to be created to manage this ambiguous call. As I concluded in chapter 5, from the late 1980s and onwards schools were given the possibility to manage themselves in cooperation with stakeholders with some scepticisms of whether they were ready. By thinking of schools through a steering problem of how to prepare schools to manage themselves, schools emerged for the municipal gaze as something that should create itself in recognizing that its unity was a plurality of interest. The questions of this chapter are: *how are schools encouraged to create itself out of what forms of relating and distancing from which environment of stakeholders?*

Doing away with the monopoly of teachers
If schools should be made capable of managing themselves in cooperation with stakeholders, the school needed to recognize that its purpose, tasks and identity could be observed differently by different stakeholders. In a discussion paper, a school director from the municipality of Århus reported that the school administration had developed a course program for all the schools in the municipality in order to teach the schools to communicate with their users. She explained; "the course is a good point of departure for beginning to see the school from the point of view of the parents/users."[467]

It was largely the school manager who was articulated as the one who should be able to see the school as a plurality of interests. School management could no longer be tightly connected to teachers, but had to be the guarantee for multiple perspectives:

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[467] LGDK, 1986: 23

The school manager must make sure that all problems in their understanding and solution are seen from all perspectives: Parents, teachers, nursery teachers and pupils. It must be accepted that these groups can have different needs.[468]

When dealing with the governing problem of how schools could be made capable of managing themselves, municipalities thus observed a need for school managers to be able to produce observations from the point of views of the different stakeholders. The school manager needed to understand the school as a unity of different perspectives, operate with the understanding that teachers were one stakeholder among others, and make sure that the teachers' view on problems and solutions were not dominating the school. Letting the school manage itself was a process where the school should no longer identify with the teaching profession. To become a self-managing school, the school should do away with teachers' monopoly of the school.

Discussions of the lacking ability of teachers to represent the total interests of schooling had a history going back to the early 1970s and debates of whether teachers could become members of school commissions and thus take part in school governing.[469] Municipal actors had argued that teachers and school principals should not be electable for school commissions due to their specific personal interests in improving their own working conditions.[470] It had been problematized whether teachers (or school principals) were capable of putting their identities as employees aside and understand the totality of concerns to be included in school planning. In the debates of decentralization, the general problem of whether teachers could set aside their particular interest was likewise taken up. However, now the concern was not

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[468] Høyrup og Kruchov 1990: 16

[469] In a letter to the editor in Danish Municipalities, the municipal director from the Municipality of Odense, Hugo Mayntzhusen had questioned if teachers should be allowed to run for election to school commissions. From a municipal perspective, the procedure of the time where the school director (or managing school principal) and the chair of the common teacher council participated in the meetings of the school commission without permission to vote, was acceptable. However, the Ministry of Education had in an explanatory remark to the proposal for the school governing enactment of 1970 stated that nothing could hinder school principals as well as teachers from being elected as members to the commissions just like other members according to the prevailing rules for election. Maynthusen argued that this was contrary to the municipal governing enactment and its §29 stating: "no person employed in the service of the municipality can be a member of any committee where questions regarding his contract of service belong." Danish Municipalities 13.05.1971, p. 10-11

[470] Danish Municipalities 13.05.1971, p. 10-11

whether teachers should take part in governing of the municipal school system, but in school management at the individual school.[471]

Municipalities thought teachers unprepared to handle the new independence since they were driven by individual aims rather than by concerns for the common good of the school. Municipalities argued that teachers could not handle the decentralized planning of the yearly teaching plan since they would not be able to agree upon how to divide tasks and teaching hours between them. Municipalities observed that teachers would let their own interests come before the general concerns for well functioning organization of teaching, and argued that "conflicts between particular interests in the teacher council will be intensified, when decision-making competence is handed over to schools".[472] From one of the early experiments of decentralization a school director reported:

> I am sure that in the years to come we will decentralize more that we have done already. For the time being we hold our horses a bit because we fear the conflicts that can arise…. Conflicts between teachers and as result complaints from parents.[473]

Municipalities feared that individuals seeking to obtain personal benefits such as reductions in teaching hours would exploit the new competence.[474] LGDK proposed that the formal competence of the teacher council should be disposed with, and suggested instead that the teacher council could be a strictly pedagogical forum that served a purpose of advising the school principal.[475],[476] LGDK argued:

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[471] For the municipal gaze, there were several reasons why teachers could not represent the unity of the school. Firstly, LGDK stated: Teachers are facing increasing difficulties of employment that makes it difficult for them to participate in general developments of the public school (LGDK, 1986:3). LGDK thus insinuated that teachers would be too occupied with their own situation of employment, to be able to discuss the general development and renewal of the public school. Secondly, LGDK argued that new groups of personnel (such as nursery assistants, administrative personnel etc.) were increasingly entering the school and that it was therefore "no longer appropriate that the teacher council holds formal decision-making competence". Moreover, municipalities proposed a flexible policy of hiring so that the "teacher monopoly of the public school could be abandoned" (Danish Municipalities 29.05.1990, p. 17-18)

[472] LGDK, 1988b

[473] LGDK, 1988b

[474] LGDK, 1988b

[475] LGDK, Annual Report 1988/89a: 9

[476] A request that was, as described, fulfilled with the school governing act of 1990.

> At some schools, the teacher council functions efficiently, but it is a far too fortuitous system. In far too many schools the teacher council behaves like a polish parliament.[477]

The teacher council was here described as a form of organization of decision-making that was too coincidental. The council emerged as a gathering of individuals who did not know how to avoid quarrels and behave in such a way so that reasonable decisions could be taken. In order for the school to be prepared to manage itself, the school had to recognize that teachers could not participate in the management of the school since it was difficult for them to set aside their personal interest. In its becoming the school should observe teachers as incapable of representing the identity of the school and acknowledge that teachers could only represent their own working conditions and profession.

The school should tune in its attention to how teachers could be a destructive force in school development. LGDK stated:

> The individual teacher has traditionally held the responsibility for development. Some teachers have understood this as 'the right to isolation'. A constructive debate can be experienced as disloyal critique. This attitude is a limitation for a more systematic debate about pedagogical development.[478]

Teachers and their belief that they could close themselves off to influence of stakeholders thus emerged as a barrier in the school's attempt to become self-managing. The school was encouraged to observe how teachers could destroy development processes by their inclination to mistake debate for critique. It was argued that the problem was that teachers were not interested in developing their roles as teachers and their practices, neither were they motivated to open the door to their class rooms.[479] The lacking willingness of teachers to develop themselves and their tendency to hide behind closed doors thus emerged as a destructive clatter. To become independent, the school needed to begin to be irritated by a clamour of the closure of teachers.

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[477] LGDK, 1988b: 8
[478] LGDK, 1988a: 9
[479] Danish Municipalities 01.02.1990, nr. 4, p. 24-25

Becoming by internalizing differences

As also mentioned in chapter 5, one of the central arguments for school boards with parental majority was the belief that debate between the school and its users would lead to debate:

> An increased competence to the individual school regarding the yearly teaching plan can be a means to strengthen the local debate about the public school. And greater debate provides the preconditions for further development.[480]

As described, the line of thought was that decentralization of competence would lead to local public debate that again would lead to school development. To self-govern meant to demonstrate that schools were capable of creating a local stage for debate between different stakeholders and transform the difference of opinions into development initiatives. Schools should create a space within themselves where the stakeholders of the school could be represented and seek to create itself out of the dynamic of encounters between different opinions. LGDK argued:

> A stronger debate between the employees and between parents and employees will naturally lead to differences in opinions. In the long run this will only be beneficial for the public school.[481]

Schools were encouraged to observe differences of opinions as a resource for renewal and development. The becoming of schools from the late 1980s was thus linked to conflict. It was through differences of opinions that schools should create themselves as schools. Schools were encouraged to create a space within themselves where natural self-understandings could be questioned and disturbed. The becoming of schools emerged as a denaturalizing of classical identities of schools and installing in their place the dynamic of differences of opinions. Self-management meant to create an internal alertness of what the school was not (environment). The conditions of becoming were thus linked to an allocation of space for indeterminacy within the school. This meant that identity of the school could not be assumed beforehand, but had to be developed out of debates between different interests.

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[480] LGDK, 1988a: 10-11
[481] LGDK, 1988a: 11

Out of a new self-understanding as a school as the unity of system and environment, schools were encouraged to re-invent themselves. It was argued that the development of decentralization would lead towards a situation where the individual schools generated individual pedagogical profiles.[482] [483] Out of discussions with the different stakeholders, the school should generate new ideas that could serve as the foundations of this particular school.[484] The internalization of disturbance should lead to a situation where schools experienced and formulated new and stronger profiles. A school director stated:

> Each school should have an identity that is recognizable for employees, pupils, parents and local surroundings. It is necessary, that one has a clear idea of what one wants to do with one's school. An idea both parents, teachers and pupils can agree upon.[485]

By asking schools to re-enter the distinction between themselves and their environment, municipal school governing could simultaneous make schools reflect upon differences to their environment and finding new and stronger identity for themselves. Schools were encouraged to discover themselves as independent institutions by producing observations of their environment and finding themselves in the differences of opinions. Exactly by observing by help of difference between itself and environment, the schools should constitute itself with a stronger identity.

Becoming in disturbance
Let us take a closer look at the mechanisms through which schools were given to themselves from the late 1980s. Here, I draw on the systems theoretical point of departure that a difference between system and environment is constitutive for a system's identity and that systems constitute and maintain themselves by producing

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[482] LGDK, 1986: 39
[483] The request for stronger profiling of schools was also addressed by the present Minister of Education and Research, Bertel Haarder: "The individual school must create a stronger profile that the management is given competence to maintain and enforce." (Cited in LGDK, 1988b: 30)
[484] LGDK 1988b: 21
[485] LGDK 1988b: 21

and preserving a difference to an environment.[486] To become a system means to observe by help of a difference between self and other.[487]

According to systems theory, this happens through two different operations: First, an experience that there is something out there which the system is not, and second, a re-entry of the distinction between system and environment within the system.[488] The image offered by Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos of breathing and being aware of breathing[489] demonstrates the difference between the two operations wonderfully. What is at stake in the second case is that in order to get the full identification profit from the difference to its environment, the system re-enters it into itself. Or more precisely, since it is exactly the marking of a difference between system and environment that entails the energy for further experience of oneself, the system constructs the difference between itself and the environment within itself. By re-entering the distinction between system and environment into itself an internal self-constructed environment is constructed that allows the system to experience its own identity in relation to specific images of its environment.

Municipal governing of schools in the late 1980s and onwards can be said to be a governing of the schools' ability to re-enter distinctions between itself and its environment into itself. Through constructing its environment as users capable of taking part in the management of schools, schools should prove themselves capable of self-managing. The setting up of parental boards as part of the schools self-governing can thus be seen as a way of giving differences between school and environment representation within the school. From the late 1980s, schools were encouraged to become self-governing schools by referring both to school and environment and thus to identify with the difference between the school and its environment. Schools should become bi-stable and bring themselves to fluctuate between self and other.[490]

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[486] Luhmann 2000: 52; Luhmann 2002: 123
[487] Luhmann 2000: 75
[488] Luhmann 2000: 75
[489] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009:22
[490] Luhmann, 1997b: 58

Schools' becoming was thus entangled to disturbance. Schools should seek to benefit from the frictions between schools and their environments (constructed primarily as users). We may come closer to this form of becoming by considering this quotation from Philipopoulos-Mihalopoulos:

> It produces the difference between the illusion of identification and the abyss of loss of identity. It also produces the difference between the system's continuous attempt to describe itself and a continuous interruption by its environmental exteriority, which establishes a permanent dysfunction in the system. This dysfunction not only interrupts the system but itself accounts for the desire of the system, which draws its elan from this very disadjointment or disjunction. The system inclines to its form with its environment, clings onto it with a longing whose object is precisely the maintenance of this difference and renders this disjunction (that follows the severance of the form) its beloved symptom.[491]

In becoming schools should identify with the unity of the distinction between school and environment. Becoming was a matter of oscillating between finding a strong identity and risking it in the encounters with the different perspectives of external stakeholders. In becoming a dysfunction of pending between identity and loss of identity served the purpose of catalyzing new and stronger feelings of identity. Within the attempts of municipalities to prepare schools to govern themselves we thus find a paradoxical wish to maintain the impossibility of the school of finally becoming a self-governing school.

To sum up, from the late 1980s, a re-entry of the environment into the schools served the purpose of denaturalizing an identity of schools referring to teachers and paving the way for a new form of becoming evolving out of dynamic of differences - the knowledge that the identity of the school is bi-stable. Identities of schools could no longer be necessary and naturally tied to teacher collectives, and the closure of teachers thereby emerged as a destructive noise. Teachers emerged as individuals who could not set aside their personal interest and take the perspective of a generally appropriate organization of teaching. To become independent, the school needed to

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[491] Philipopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2009: 44; see also Derrida & Ferraris, 2001: 4

be irritated by a noise of teachers' refusal to give up a misunderstood right to isolation.

The ideal of user-influence can be seen as an encouragement to schools to let the environment into the school in order for the school to find itself. The school had to be reflective about its double reference to school and environment and develop an identity that was not necessary and stable but evolving out of the dynamic of encounters of different interests. Stakeholders were to be used as a productive disturbance - as an opening that enriched the school's otherwise self-referential circle.[492] Expectations to schools were thus that they should become self-conscious by not taking their own identity for granted. The schools should not know themselves on before-hand but experience themselves through the staging of differences.

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[492] See Stäheli, 1998: 37

Chapter 9

Organizing the school

As I have described in chapter 6, municipalities from the late 1990s related themselves to schools through a problem of steering of how to gain impact on the self-management of schools. I explored how municipalities have expected schools to create themselves as independent in such a manner so that municipalities can recognize their school policy, development projects, support and supervision, etc. in the activities and self-descriptions of schools. The schizophrenia of the municipal interpellation of schools is then reconfigured into what can be expressed in the following statement: *become independent in such ways that we can recognize ourselves in you.* The next question is what 'school-self' is to be created to meet this ambiguous call?

In his book about education, Luhmann describes education as a strange co-existence of interaction and organization systems. In Luhmann´s theoretical world these are two different forms of social systems that are closed to each other and each have their own evolutionary history. Whereas an organization creates itself as networks of decisions, teaching interaction depends upon co-presence in a teaching setting. According to Luhmann, if interaction systems were left with their own atmosphere and momentary moods, and were only dependent upon their own historically formed presence, education would fluctuate too strongly. Teaching interaction thus depends upon decisions that it cannot provide itself. The societal differentiation of an education system should therefore, according to Luhmann be understood both as the formation of pedagogical interaction systems and organizations.[493] Luhmann describes how the autonomy of education has been a matter of thematically leaning against a scientific pedagogical system and organizationally against the political system and its state apparatus and counterbalance the thereby created tensions within the school.[494]

In the case of Danish public primary and upper secondary schooling, we can say that up until the reforms of decentralisation in the late 1980s, organizational decisions were provided by the state and municipalities. The school could be an institution in the sense of a unit that was given organizational identity, formal procedures, etc., by

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[493] Luhmann, 2006: 145
[494] Luhmann, 2006: 138

the state and the municipalities. As shown throughout this thesis, from the late 1980s, schools are increasingly expected to become independent. However, with the first reforms of decentralization the calls to schools to create itself as independent focus on schools' abilities to internalize differences between the interests of teachers and of other stakeholders. The school is to create an independent identity by letting itself be disturbed by its environment. The demand for schools to create organizational structures is thus still limited to structures for collaboration between school and stakeholders (for example school boards) and structures for the relation between school manager and teachers, so that a responsibility for observing the latter as one stakeholder among others can be addressed to the former.

The thesis that I will pursue in this chapter is, that the municipal problematization of how to gain impact on the self-management of schools leads to a call for schools to organise themselves. With the expectation to become independent in such a way that municipalities can recognize their governing in the activities of the schools, school can no longer lean against municipal organization, but must exactly to be governed by municipal policy demonstrate that it has its own governing techniques. For municipalities to recognize their governing in the activities of the school, the school needs to demonstrate that they have organizational arrangements that can transform school policy to school goals and assess whether the everyday teaching practice actually work in accordance with these goals. To become independent in a governed way, schools need to demonstrate that they have organizational arrangements that can assure that teaching interaction is properly managed.

Whereas from the late 1980s, the object of municipal governing was the school's ability to manage a relation between school and environment, from the late 1990s it becomes the school's ability to relate to itself by creating organizational structures from which interaction can be managed. As I will suggest, schools shall now become independent by relating themselves very actively to the parts of themselves that is (by municipalities) observed as outside steering such as interaction between teachers or between teachers and pupils not entailed in goal formulation and planning and not captured by evaluation and assessments. Becoming independent is in other words

entangled to how schools manage a difference between organization and teaching interaction.

The thesis that, from the late 1990s, schools' independence is a matter of becoming organized, has two theoretical implications.

First, the difference between system and environment by help of which the school had been encouraged to create itself from the late 1980s, have since the late 1990s been supplemented with a difference between organization and interaction. I will explore how the school is encouraged to discover itself as a specific system, namely an organization and moreover, to recognize its environment as a specific form of environment, namely interaction. It is thus no longer solely the stakeholders of schools that emerge as the environment of schools. Instead, schools are now encouraged to discover an internal environment of invisible, tacit and unconnected values, culture and interaction. I will pursue how autopoiesis becomes a matter of how schools create themselves as organizations consisting of formal decisions and relate themselves to all the informal interaction going on within the walls of the school. As we are here discussing conditions of autopoiesis, the difference between organization and interaction serves just like the difference between system and environment the purpose of distinguishing the school from something else and thus giving it an experience of identity. As in the previous section, the differences drawn between system and environment serve both the function of distancing and relating the school from an environment. The questions in the following section are thus: *how are schools encouraged to create itself out of what forms of relating and distancing from which environment of interaction?*

Second, with the calls to schools to organize themselves, the role of noise in schools' becoming is transformed. From the late 1980s, when schools were to build identity by experiencing differences between stakeholders for instance between those of teachers and those of parents, the role of noise in becoming was as a disturbance that should ensure that the school's self-referentiality was not too pure. In this chapter, I use the concept of noise to analyse how the school to become organised is expected to begin to observe teaching interaction as a noisy stranger to the organization. I also,

use concepts of noise from information theory and conceptual developments by Atlan and Serres to explore how in the school's becoming organized, noise also plays the role as something from which an autonomous organizational order can be build. Moreover, I explore how such a becoming is also risky, since when interaction emerge as noisy, it also becomes a threat to organizational order. Finally, I draw on Serres' concept of the parasite to analyze how noise becomes something that creates possibilities for management to parasite on the employees' relations to themselves.[495]

In the following I will first present how schools are expected to organise and formalize themselves. Secondly, by drawing on systems theoretical conceptions of organization and decision, I will analyse how becoming organized entails activities of making events visible and ensuring connections between decisions. Thirdly, I will describe how schools have been expected to create themselves as organizations through producing order out of noise. Fourthly, I will analyse how schools have then had to signal how certain elements do no longer belong to the school. Fifthly, I will follow how these elements are, however not so easy to get rid of. And finally, I will discuss how the possibilities for management may be exactly depending upon the continuous production of and distancing oneself from noise.

Organizing school activities

From the late 1990s concerns have been articulated of how to ensure the quality of municipal school systems, of how to improve educational standards and of how to implement a culture of evaluation. Entailed in such concerns is the observation that schools lack systematics and coherence in their forms of organizing and conducting teaching activities. In 2005, LGDK published a discussion paper titled, *A Culture of*

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[495] As I have discussed in chapter 2, the concepts of noise in systems theory and in the work of Serres are both overlapping and different. In this chapter, I both analyse how noise emerge as a feature of the self-produced environment of the school and how noise is something in a channel between sender and receiver. I thus highlight two different aspects of a concept of noise to bring forward different aspects of how the school is expected to become organised. However, the two conceptions are in my analysis not as different as they may seem. When I use concepts from information theory, the point of departure remains that a channel and a sender are not external to a system, but an intrinsic part of how the system observes and constructs its environment. By channel we can thus understand the ways in which systems make it possible for themselves to observe through using certain differences. And by sender I understand the systems' self-constructed observation of an object from which it seeks information.

Evaluation – a New Danish School Tradition. The paper refers to the OECD-report from 2004 and its conclusion that the Danish schools lacked a culture of evaluation. The discussion paper read:

> To establish a culture of evaluation will first and foremost require a persistent interest at the schools and in the municipalities to work systematically with results, assessment, reflection and follow-up. An agreement, that there is too much that "we think[496]" in the school and that there is a reel need to preserve memory and exchange knowledge about professional matters, is necessary if we want a systematic work with evaluation. A good culture of evaluation entails that the results of evaluation are collected and made available in written form partly for the school, partly for the municipality as a unity. And finally, if the processes of evaluation shall be reliable, it needs to be followed up.[497]

Here, a number of the concerns are raised that are central to the ways in which schools have since the late 1990s been expected to create itself as a school. Firstly, the idea that schools shall work systematically with assessing and reflecting upon their activities. Secondly, that school actors shall *know* rather than *think.* And thirdly, that schools shall communicate in written forms. Since the late 1990s it has increasingly been thematized how the mode of operation of schools has been too coincidental (in opposition to systematic), has been based on private assumptions (rather than scientific knowledge) and is relying on an oral culture (rather than a written).[498]

Regarding the schools' lack of systematic assessment, the chairman of LGDK's school committee stated in 2004:

> One time after another we are surprised to find that our pupils are not doing better in international surveys. Why are we surprised? The simple answer must be that we do not know the level of skills of our pupils and we do not know the level of skills of the pupils they are compared to. We have traditionally neglected to gain knowledge about these matters. Maybe it is because we have been so busy stimulating children and young people socially and emotionally – yes, we may have let ourselves be lulled

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[496] In Danish "synes"
[497] LGDK 2005a: 3
[498] see LGDK 2005a; 1999; Nygaard & Petersen 2009

by the idea that it is very difficult to measure results in a systematic way?[499]

The LGDK chairman here problematizes that the school world is continuously surprised by the findings of international investigations. Schools emerge as something that lack knowledge and assessment of the effects of teaching and as an institution that has traditionally not made an effort to gather knowledge of its own performance. A school that surprises itself and its surroundings with lacking results and a school diffused by the traditional understanding that results were difficult to measure, emerges as problems to be overcome. Schools are expected to no longer think that school activities are too complex to be measured and begin to observe itself systematically so that results does not appear random and unexpected.

Moreover, a need for more pedagogical knowledge about what forms of teaching lead to which results has since the late 1990s increasingly been articulated. LGDK has argued that more professional knowledge and research into processes of learning and teaching shall be brought into the school.[500] It has been argued that schools do not have sufficient knowledge of what forms of teaching lead to which results for instance with regard to different types of pupils. LGDK stated in 2005: "Do we know enough about what works best in relation to different groups of students? Sadly, the answer is no.[501]" Becoming organised it thus also a matter of bringing knowledge into the school and arranging teaching in accordance.

Finally, schools are expected to formalize its relations by introducing more written documents. Relations between pupil and teachers have been given a formalized and written format through the compulsory pupils (assessment and goal setting) plans introduced by national legislation in 2006. As described in chapter 4, the relation between school and municipality has been formalized by the introduction of compulsory annual Quality Reports. And the cooperation between teachers has been organized in self-managing teams.[502] LGDK defines a team as:

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[499] Danish Municipalities 27.05.2004
[500] LGDK in Danish Municipalities 18.08.2005
[501] LGDK in Danish Municipalities 18.08.2005; This citation also expresses the coming of the pedagogical ideology of 'individual styles of learning', which I will describe in chapter 6.
[502] Jordansen and Petersen 2008; Introduced in legislation in 1994

> … a group of teachers that have a binding cooperation of planning, implementation and assessment of the social and professional matters in relation to teaching of a group of children. Team cooperation can be a method for evaluation of the work in the class room.[503]

Organizing teachers in teams is a way of formalizing the cooperation between teachers and seeking to ensure that their efforts of teaching are related to each other and to the network of goals and (self-) evaluations. The team is also a part of how the relation between teachers and school manager (or management team) is formalized, for instance since the team is addressable for the management as an organizational unit. LGDK argues that regular conversations between management and the individual team "should oblige the team and ensure that assessments of planning, implementation and evaluation of teaching are conducted."[504] Through addressing the team, the school management can seek to expose whether there is coherence between the overall goals of the school and the content of teaching.

To sum up, schools are expected to become organised by observing themselves systematically, by bringing knowledge into the schools and by formalizing key-relations for instance by giving them a written format. The establishment of a culture of evaluation emerges as a way for the school to transform itself from coincidental to systematic. The school is to make sure that it observes itself systematically and that activities and results are followed up. Corporation between pupils and teacher, teacher and manager or between teachers are to be organised, for instance, by the introduction of teacher teams, and given a formal written format. Relations are thus to be transformed from informal and oral agreements to organizational event that can be observed and addressed by the school management.

The systematic self-observation by help of evaluation and assessments and the transformation of informal teacher corporation to formal teams may be seen as a way for the school to strengthen its own organization. The school is expected to demonstrate that it does not just rely on municipal organization, but can indeed ensure that it has internal organizational procedures guiding and written documents representing key-relations. Moreover, the school is expected to demonstrate that it

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[503] LGDK 1998b: 10
[504] LGDK, 1998b: 12

can assess how goals are put into planning and action and that it conducts systematic observations of whether goals are achieved. A difference between organization and teaching interaction are handled by a strengthening of the former. What goes on in teaching has to be guided by formal goals, observed by systematic systems of evaluation and given written documents to ensure addressability.

Both with regard to systematic self-observation and knowledge an important mechanism seems to be to establish connections between efforts and results. By drawing on systems theoretical conceptions of organization and decisions, I will in the following take a closer look at the role that this encouragement to connect plays in schools becoming organised.

Becoming as connecting

Organization and decision

According to systems theory the experience of organizations of identity is related to the operation of decision-making. Organizations emerge as networks of decisions linking to previous decision-making. The idea is that organizations consist solely of decisions.[505] An important dynamic of organizing is thus the connecting of decisions. Or put differently, what characterizes organizations is their longing for connecting decisions to decisions.[506] Only by recursively connecting decisions to former decisions does the organization emerge.

Connections are vital because decisions that are not connected to by other decisions wither away, are forgotten and disappear. Since decisions are a form of communication and operate by drawing distinctions, they are fragile and temporary and need continuous recursively connections from other decisions in order not to be forgotten.[507] An internal unrest of foreseeing or realizing its own perishableness is thus characteristic for decisions and this leads to a permanent need to produce new decisions to re-vitalize former decisions. As organizations consist of continuously

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[505] Baecker 2003: 28; Andersen 2011b
[506] for systems generally see Luhmann 1995a: 36
[507] Luhmann, 2002:123, Stäheli, 1998: 59, Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009: 22

perishable decisions, this means that the identity of an organization is fragile. It must communicatively from moment to moment create itself as an organization by help of connections to previous decisions and by reaching out to coming decisions.[508] As Baecker has coined it: "At any given moment, the organization is communicatively risking itself."[509]

Decisions can be described as a form entailing the distinction between fixed and open contingency. Before a decision is made many possibilities are open, but some possibilities are chosen and thus fixed by a decision. However, this is not as simple and complexity reducing a game as it sounds. A decision is exactly the unity of the distinction between open and fixed contingency. Both sides of the distinction are necessary for there to be a decision. As a form, the decision cannot avoid to draw attention to both of its sides.[510] Contingency is therefore not solely diminished as a consequence of a decision. Rather, contingency is just given a different form as the conception that the decision could have been made differently.[511]

To fix contingency is always also to produce it, since the assumption follows that other fixations of contingency (other options) could have been decided upon. To draw the distinction between fixed contingency and open contingency can be a delicate and risky affair, since the possibility of fixation is inherently impossible, because it is always done in a certain relation to open contingency. The form is always two sided. The decision is not only deemed to fail, since it can never succeed in capturing all contingency. It is also deemed to fail, since it, in itself, exactly by being a decision (in the sense of the unity of the distinction between fixed and open contingency) produces its own destiny of failing, or at least of being insufficient. However, this may be a successful failure, since it is exactly the spill over of contingency that brings about the need for more and more decisions and thus the emergence of an organization.

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[508] Baecker, 2003: 29
[509] Baecker, 2003: 30, my translation
[510] Knudsen, 2004b: 34
[511] Andersen 2011b

From a systems theoretical perspective, decision-making is a form of communication that holds a certain relation to interaction. Decisions assess interaction in the environment of the system. As Andersen puts it:

> "A multitude of different expectations continually circulates within interactions around the organization. These interactional expectations are not the organization itself but part of its environment. The organization emerges as a system that makes decisions about these interactional expectations.[512]

The organization creates itself as a network of decisions by relating itself to an environment of interaction and either create decisions out of this observed interaction or reject it as irrelevant for organizational decision-making. An internal logic in the becoming of organizations is thus the continuous assessments of whether observed interaction should be decided about and thus come to belong to the organization or rejected as irrelevant for decision-making. In Baecker's words: "The organization can be unsure of what belongs to itself and what belongs to its environment."[513]

From these theoretical insights we can raise more precise questions to how schools are to become organizations. We may expect that becoming organised is related to a desire for connections and for fixations of contingency. In the following, I will therefore pursue how, when schools are expected to create themselves as organizations, they are 1) expected to engage in operations of connecting decisions to former decisions, 2) expected to engage in activities of fixating contingency and 3) expected to assess their interactional environment with a scepticism of how it is relevant for organizational decisions.

Becoming visible
In chapter 4, I analysed how when the overall problem of steering (the problem of impact on self-steering) is given the concrete form of how to make schools make themselves visible, schools emerge for the municipal gaze as institutions lacking

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[512] Andersen, 2011b: 2
[513] Baecker 2003: 28

written language and having little ability to express everyday practice in a professional language. Municipalities begin to observe schools with a difference between what is visible and thus possible to assess with regard to how it is connected to municipal school policy and what is outside the reach of assessments. Let us now see, how schools are expected to work to produce connections and visibility.

In a journal for educational practitioners, titled *Unge Pædagoger* [Young Teachers] a theme issue from 1996 is dedicated to discussions of how to transform schools from "institutions to organizations". The articles in the issue all take a point of departure in a transformation from a time where the school was a municipally controlled institution that could rely on municipal decisions, to a time where the school is partly set free to become an organization. The articles criticizes that "the ways of the public school to make decisions has not changed since the time where the municipality made decisions for it"[514] and address how the school needs to build organizational capacity and thus capability of taking the decisions that it can no longer rely on municipalities to make.[515]

Under the headline "The school is an organization, but is it also coherent?", one article argues:

> It is obvious that the individual public school is not at all geared to act as an independent organization. The gear wheels do not match at all. … organizational competences are new for teachers and managers and from where should they have such competences? They think the school as administration and teaching."[516]

The article continues:

> My claim is that the majority of public schools are not at all coherent schools that can make decisions and act as one organization.[517]

The public school is here observed as incapable of acting as an organization due to a lack of coherence and organizational competences. The school is criticized for "living

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[514] Windinge, 1996: 33
[515] Windinge & Witt, 1996
[516] Windinge, 1996: 32
[517] Windinge, 1996: 32

off incoherent ad hoc decisions"[518] and being "so loosely coupled that decision-making does not occur or are not carried out."[519] To become organised the school is to abandon ad hoc decision-making and to transform itself from dispersed set of activities to a coherent network.

Moreover, schools are expected to learn to use different methods of organizational steering and development such as goal steering, benchmarking, user-satisfaction assessment and project management. With the purpose of disseminating methods, LGDK have, since the late 1990s, lounged a number of publications.[520] In these publications, articulations of a lack of connections between goals, planning and results seem to be a general theme. In a discussion paper titled *Metodekommode* [a chest of methods], LGDK defines school efficiency as "a question of the connection between the goals, one has, and the actual result, one achieves."[521] The discussion paper utters worries whether the lacking systematic of schools leads to lacking connections between overall goals and values, the concrete planning and the assessments of results. Becoming organised thus emerges as a matter of working to connect the phases in a goal steering circle from goals over planning and action to evaluation and formulation of new goals.

The connectedness of decisions to former decisions and to future actions is, as also indicated above, likewise addressed in the article in *Unge Pædagoger*. The article criticizes the present decision-making in schools: "All decisions are made … without considerations to previous decisions"[522] and continues "… apparently there is a complete indifference to whether decisions are carried through or not."[523] The school is to emerge as an organization by making decisions connect recursively to previous decisions. When decisions fail to connect to previous decisions, the school fall into decay and risks being merely a dispersed range of activities. Decisions must thus be made in such a way that connections for instance to former phases in a goal circle are

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[518] Windinge, 1996: 33
[519] Windinge, 1996: 33
[520] see for instance LGDK 1998a, 2005
[521] LGDK, 1998a: 52
[522] Windinge, 1996: 33
[523] Windinge, 1996: 33

displayed. And decisions must be made in anticipation of how future decisions can connect to them. For instance goals must be formulated so that they can guide planning and action and so that it is possible for assessment to judge whether goals were achieved.

The school is thus to strengthen its organization by connecting decisions. A distinction then emerges between activities that are connected to the network of former organizational decisions and activities that are not. In a feature article in Danish Municipalities, LGDK calls for more systematic assessment and argues:

> Activities of schools may then to a greater extent be connected to the schools´ philosophy and its overall objectives instead of the many spontaneous quick-fix activities that are taking place today.[524]

What is not connected emerges as spontaneous quick fixes. When becoming organised emerges as a matter of connection between decisions, the non-connected is observed as impulsive quick fixes. The school is thus not only to thematize connection between decisions at an organizational level, but also to address connections between organizational communication for instance in the forms of goals, purposes or evaluations and the range of daily activities of a school. The discussion paper *Metodekommode* asks: "Does everyday teaching actually support goals?" and "Do our assessments actually capture what went on in the teaching situations?"[525] Observed from a concern for connections a worry emerges of how the everyday teaching activities actually link to organizational decision-making. The question is how to make teaching interaction organizational events rather than spontaneous quick fix activities.

A first problem is that teaching activities are not necessarily visible for those who were not present when they occurred. In the discussion paper about a culture of evaluation presented above, LGDK proposes that the school asks itself:

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[524] Danish Municipalities 1997 nr. 24
[525] LGDK, 1998a: 2

> How is it possible to see – for instance on the walls of the class room – what themes have been taught and how teaching has been organized? Are port folios, log books or the like visible in the class?[526]

Teaching is here conceived as something that can only be brought to be observable through efforts of giving it representation in log books, port folios, etc. Teachers are expected to give the content and organization of teaching an organizational life by producing representations.

The calls for documentation described in chapter 6, can also be seen in this light. Everyday activities need to be made visible in order to become possible to connect to a network of former decisions. LGDK argues:

> If quality shall be real, it must be documented and points of departure for further efforts.[527]

The citation expresses the idea that quality can only emerge if an activity is given representation in documentation and if future efforts refer to this particular activity. For activities to be possible to connect to for future activities and thus being part of a network of connections, the activities need to be expressed and communicated. LGDK states: "The individual school shall put the collected efforts, goals and result into words."[528]

Becoming an organization is entangled to processes of articulating activities so that they become visible for the organization and possible to include in a network of decisions. Schools are expected to make their work and activities visible for instance by producing assessments of teaching courses, publishing visions, values and concepts of learning on their web pages and documenting results and special efforts. An organized school is thus a school concerned with constantly articulating, naming and relating itself to its activities, efforts, goals and result.[529]

Schools are thus encouraged to observe activities of the school as in need of exposure. Teaching emerges as something that is not immediately visible, but need

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[526] LGDK 2005a: 14
[527] LGDK 1998a: 4
[528] LGDK in feature article in Danish Municipalities nr. 25 1997 p.4
[529] See LGDK in Danish Municipalities nr. 25 1997 p.4

representation in order to be observable and thus be organizational events that decisions can connect to. However, teaching activity is also encouraged to recognize itself as decision-making. In an article about assessment systems, a municipal school consultant and a school manager argues that the school is facing an increased pressure to give grounds for its practice. The authors write:

> The new time and the new scene is …. characterized by contingency. The basic idea of the theory of contingency is that there is no best way of organizing and that all ways are not equally efficient. That we can continuously see how things are done elsewhere is a part of how more contingency is created. Contingency increases when one is constantly mirroring oneself in the known alternatives. If you are hit by contingency, you have to realize your practice as variable and you have to give grounds for why one practice for the time being is chosen instead of all the other forms of practices that were also possible. In this way contingency create an increased pressure to explain – and this pressure has hit the school with a violent force.[530]

Here, it is described how schools are confronted with contingency in the sense of knowledge of alternative ways of doing things. The argument is that exactly because the world becomes more complex, school actors should explicate why and with what grounding the do as they do. A situation with more contingency produces a necessity for school actors to fixate contingency. In becoming an organization, schools shall firstly recognise contingency in the sense of acknowledging that the school's ways of doing things are not necessary, but could be different, and can be questioned for instance when alternatives from other countries become available, and, secondly, seek to fixate contingency in the sense of explaining why it does as it does. As it is written in the theoretical foundation for a school in the municipality of Odense, school actors shall acknowledge that "contingency is a basic condition" and therefore must learn to provide the reasons for why one action is better than another.

By being asked to acknowledge that it is hit by contingency, teaching practice is requested to observe itself as decision-making. It has to realize that a multiplicity of possibilities is available and that teaching in one way rather than another is, whether or not a teacher is aware of it, a decision of choosing one options over others. Teaching activity is expected to observe itself as an operation of decision-making

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[530] Nygaard & Petersen, 2009: 83

where open contingency is fixated. To request for teaching practice to recognize contingency as a basic condition is thus an encouragement for teaching practice to realise that it is decision-making and should communicate itself as such.

That teaching practice should provide reason and grounding for its choices is also supported by ideals of *evidence based practice* by which municipalities have argued that school actors should always be able to "explain and give grounds for" their actions and choices.[531] Teaching activities are thus expected to make an effort of connecting themselves to established theories and knowledge. Teaching activities are to reach out to organizational communication both by explicitly formulating how an action or choice is connected to the framework of goals, purposes and values of the school, by communicating itself as a decision, and by connecting itself to established knowledge and theory.

To sum up, schools are today criticized for not being organizations since their decision-making is not coherent and systematic. Schools are encouraged to become organizations by ensuring that decisions link to former decisions and are possible for future decisions to link to. This also means that the non-connected emerges as impulsive and makeshift solutions. Observed through concerns of connections, teaching activities are neither understood as something that is immediately visible nor automatically a part of the organizational self of the school. To become an organized school is therefore entangled to processes of naming, articulating and making visible. Moreover, with understandings of contingency as a basic conditions and ideals of evidence-based practice, teaching activities are requested to be communicated in the form of a decision. Thereby interaction can be made more appropriate to belong to the organization.

A difference between organization and teaching interaction is sought handled by attempts to involve interaction in the organization. By explicating links between activities and goals or between activities and assessments, connections are sought

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[531] Danish Municipalities 06.1997 p. 4; see also LGDK, 1998a: 10

established between decisions and teaching activities. Likewise by making teaching activities visible and communicated as decision-making they can be enrolled in the network of decisions. To become organised the school is to display connections between decisions and understand teaching as something that is outside, but should be made a part of a network of decisions. The organised school thus emerges as a unity of the difference between formal decisions and teaching interaction where becoming independent is a matter of displaying couplings and connections between the two.

However, to connect teaching activities to organizational decisions entail observations of differences between the two. As we have seen, teaching activities needs to be observed as outside visibility before attempts to make visible are meaningful. The concern to connect is thus also an operation of doubling the school in organization and interaction where the latter needs efforts of articulation and documentation in order to belong.

In the attempts to decentralize in the late 1980s the school was requested to engage in activities of self-description in order to communicate with an environment of users. The school were to discover itself anew from the point of view of parents and other stakeholders. Schools should, as I have shown, realize that the school appeared differently depending on whether it was observed by teachers or by parents and other stakeholder. The school could become independent by handling a difference between system and environment in the sense of operating with a double reality of the school: one observed from the inside and another from the outside.

From the late 1990s, the doubling that schools are expected to manage is one between decisions and teaching interactions for instance between goals and activities. When the organized school observes itself as connections, it also observes the unconnected, and need to observe it as something that does not belong at least not before it has been confronted with efforts of exposure, articulation and connection. The school is expected to strengthen its organization by realizing that a

school is a unity of a difference between formal decisions and teaching interaction and that the former be able to guide the latter.

Pursuing the overall problem of how schools can create themselves as independent in such a way that municipalities can recognize themselves in the activities of the school, I will in the following explore how independence becomes a matter of splitting the school into something that can steer and something that can be steered. For the school to become something which municipalities can recognize themselves in, the school needs structures that demonstrate that schools are working professionally with municipal school policy. The question is how the school can become organised by relating to teaching interaction and how this entails efforts to maintain distance between spaces of reflection and spaces of practice.

Order from noise

Drawing on cybernetics and information theory we can observe the difference between organization and interaction as a difference between order and noise. According to the definition of order proposed by Atlan, a system appears to be *ordered* to a given observer if the latter can see some internal articulation and can understand or guess the code that governs the arrangements of elements.[532] In our example to produce organizational order is then to ensure that there are organizational logics as for instance that of goal steering that govern everyday activities. Atlan defines noise as that which appears to an observer as random perturbations with no logical articulations relative to the organization of the system.[533] Teaching activities may emerge as noise when they are observed from concerns to organise, since they are not connected to the organizational communication (not governed by organizational codes), and seem random for instance as 'spontaneous quick fix-activities'.

The ambition of getting schools to articulate and document their practice may be understood as a mode of becoming similar to the cybernetic slogan of order-from-

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[532] Atlan, 1981: 188
[533] Atlan, 1981: 200

noise (von Foerster) or in the version of Atlan, order-from-complexity. These slogans entail the idea that systems construct themselves out of relating themselves to the noise they observe in their environments.[534] As cited in chapter 2, von Foerster states "self-organizing systems do not only feed upon order, they will also find noise on the menu."[535] Or in the formulation of Atlan: "the task of making meaning out of randomness is what self-organization is all about."[536] In spite of the differences between von Foerster's and Atlan's work, the common idea is that systems increase their variety and heterogeneity by relating to noise. In the following, I will analyse a specific system of evaluation from the Municipality of Odense in order to explore how schools are expected to become organised by involving school actors in processes of relating to undescribed teaching practice and using this as points of departure for creation of organizational order.

A self-observation system called KIS

In 2008, a large Danish municipality launched a coherent system of evaluation for all the schools in the municipality, named KIS (In Danish an abbreviation of Quality in School). The triple purpose of KIS is firstly, to ensure that the municipality collects all the information that has been made compulsory with the legislative initiative of the Quality Report, secondly, to enable the schools' management to "more offensively document and display the quality of teaching and of the pedagogical practice" and thirdly, to develop the quality of schools by facilitating reflection and learning.[537] The KIS system consist on the one hand of a quantitative part where a range of information regarding test scores of pupils, numbers of teaching hours carried through, absence of teachers due to illness, etc. is put into a software system, and on the other hand of set of conversations in a chain ranging from conversations between teachers and pupils and all the way to conversations between the school management

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[534] Luhmann 2000: 258
[535] von Foerster, 1960
[536] Atlan, 1984
[537] I am here quoting a Guide to the KIS system written by directors and consultants of the municipality. Unless stated differently, the citations on the following pages are from this guide. Due to reasons of anonymity, I cannot refer properly to this guide.

and the municipality. The following figure is the chain of evaluation conversations in KIS as pictured by the municipality.
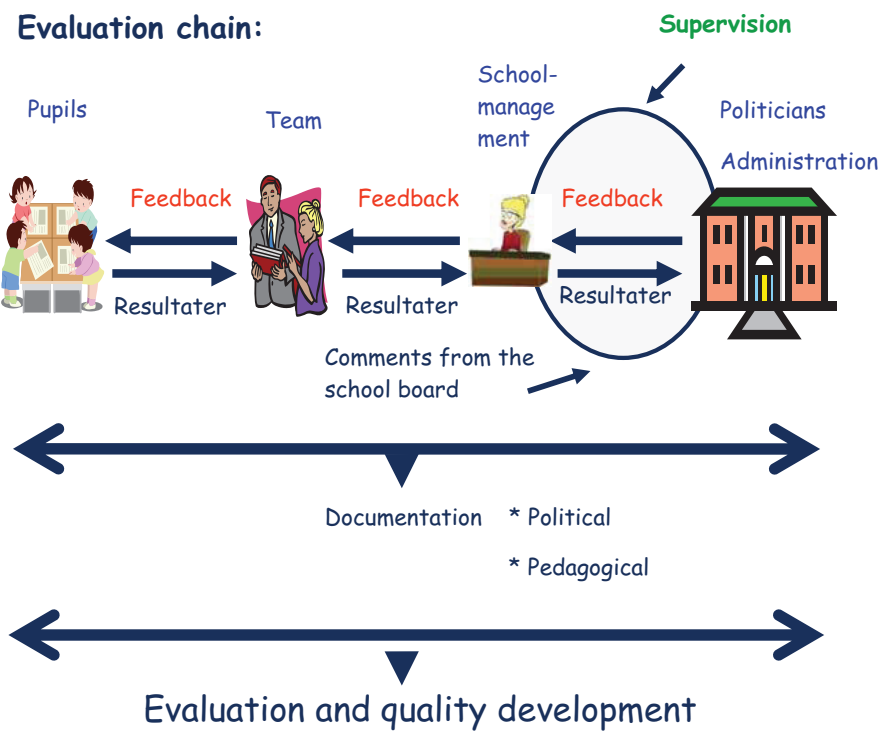
KIS can be seen as a system that seeks to create schools as organizations by transforming practice at every level of the school into formal descriptions that can then be connected to each other and to former decisions.

Firstly, KIS collects quantitative data of the school that is then used to create an image of the individual school that can be applied in negotiations of development contracts between municipality and school and thus contribute to a formalization of the relation between school and municipality. This data is argued to increase the possibilities of municipalities to observe schools and thus attend to their

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responsibility of inspection. Moreover, this data is transformed into an image of the entire municipal school system represented in the annual Quality Reports and applied by municipalities to assess the overall development in the school sector.

Secondly, on each level the conversation takes a point of departure in written documents, the so-called evaluation memorandum prepared by the part being evaluated, so that it becomes a self-evaluation memorandum. The chain of evaluation thereby produces a chain of documents. On each level, the school can relate itself to activities and seek to make them visible, articulate them, give them written representation and thereby produce self-descriptions capable of entering into an organizational network.

For instance at each school, selected teacher teams fill out a scheme with extensive qualitative descriptions of the overall goals for a teaching project as well as how these goals were explained to pupils as more specific learning aims, descriptions of the processes of the project, descriptions of the signs teachers observed in order to assess goal achievement, their methods for assessing the project, descriptions of results, reflections of what went well and less well, self-assessments and reflections of what teachers learnt from the project and finally suggestions for discussion themes in the conversation between team and school management.

Out of their conversations with teachers and observation of teaching practice, the school management is then to fill out a document entailing the following textboxes: Listing of the school criteria for good teaching, description of the methods by help of which they have gained knowledge of teaching practice, descriptions of teaching projects selected for observation, descriptions of the learning pupils obtained from the projects, descriptions of the conditions of the teaching project, examples of good stories from the projects, the management's assessments of the projects, suggestions for themes to be brought up in the conversation with the municipal school administration and finally suggestions for future focus areas. This document, which often fills up more than 50 pages, is then the point of departure for the conversation between school management and municipal school administration. After the event of

the conversation the school administration supplements this document with their assessment of the school management's assessments.

Classically, information theory distinguishes between a sender and a receiver between whom a signal passes. A quantity of information is to travel from sender to retriever and the more intact the message is when it reaches the receiver the less loss of information value and a decrease in uncertainty for the receiver. The KIS system can be seen as a set of relations between a sender of teaching interaction and a receiver of organizational communication in the form of the written document. By asking teachers and managers to describe teaching interaction in all of the above described text boxes the KIS system works to send images of interaction to the document that is observed as a part of the organization. The many and specific text boxes seem to indicate that the organizational communication wants to receive as precise information of the teaching interaction as possible. By asking teaching practice to answer many questions about itself, the organization can seek to decrease the information that is lost due to noise in the channel, where the channel can be the selections of what is to be written down or the lack of success in representing what went on in the class room in written language.

In this understanding noise is something outside the relationship between teaching interaction and document. Noise is what comes in the way of transporting as much information of teacher interaction to the document. Noise is a necessary consequence of a transmission in the form of the trace of itself that the media of transmission leaves on the message.[538] Noise is what imposes itself upon the processes of documenting interaction and interferes so that the full information of what went on in teaching interaction does not reach the document. We could say that KIS seeks to reduce this noise so that the quantity of information is intact. When for instance teaching interaction is encouraged not only to provide objective descriptions of the project, but also to tell a 'good story' it may be seen as a way of reducing the noise of a transformation from real-time experience to written document. By asking for 'good stories', emotional or atmospheric information likely to decline due to the noise of the

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[538] Crocker, 2007

process of writing down, can be sought transmitted as intact as possible to the document. Likewise, KIS encourages that descriptions are supplemented with photos or examples from pupil's work (drawings, log books, etc.) so that the document also represents how pupils engaged themselves in the teaching project and for instance how the teaching projects succeeded in creating atmospheres of concentration and absorption.

For KIS to retrieve information from teaching interaction, a message has to be transmitted through a process of selection of what specificities of the teaching interaction are to be written down. This is a process where some information are bound to disappear since not every little event of teaching interaction is given written representation and emotional and atmospheric information may be difficult to represent by completing schemes. In this model, the process is a kind of noise in the channel, since KIS by help of the many and different questions seem interested in retrieving as exact an image of the teaching interaction as possible. Observed by help of classical information theory, the KIS system thus works to give the organization as much knowledge of the interaction going on in the class rooms as possible. And noise, then, has a destructive role as a cause of decline in information value.

However, it may also be that this process of transformation of the message from interaction to writing is crucial for system formation. Maybe only due to this noise, is it possible for an organised school to retrieve a message capable of entering the organizational communication. Let us now, therefore, instead see how noise has a productive role in the construction of a school organization. It may be functional for the attempts to organise the school that the information that reaches the documents is not as identical as possible to teaching interaction.

Forcing interaction into an organizational form
As I showed in the previous section, in the process of becoming organization, the school is expected to observe teaching interaction as something that does not belong and therefore needs articulation, exposure and connections. The school is expected to observe teaching interaction as something that does not obey organizational logics,

but need explication of connections. For the school to relate to itself to interaction it may then be dependent on the process of translating it into organizational communication.

According to Luhmann one of the performance tasks of communication is to make the system sensible to coincidences, to disturbances and to noise of any sort. By help of communication it becomes possible for the system to make the unexpected, the uninvited or the disappointing understandable.[539] Likewise in KIS we could expect that forcing interaction into the form of organizational communication is the only way the organization can begin to understand and make sense of teaching interaction. With the KIS system and its systematic transformation of interaction into documents, its loss of information and thus decrease in likeness between interaction and written representation, the organization may seek to understand and capture what to an organizational gaze has come to appear as disorderly and disappointing interaction.

Let us see how the documents ensure that teaching activities can be made sense of as organizational events. Firstly, the written documents are an occasion for displaying how teaching activities are connected to municipal school policy. In an example from a KIS team memorandum from an individual school it is explicated how a teaching project addresses the municipal children and youth policy:[540]

Children and youth policy

- Activities in teaching and after school care are arranged in accordance with the preconditions of the individual child.
- The individual skills and efforts of the individual pupil are recognized and appreciated.
- The pupils develop courage and wishes of evolving skills and competences.
- The pupils develop their skills for creating and participating in communities.

Moreover, by describing teaching activities in terms of goals, action and results they become easier to connect to for organizational communication. Here, the same teacher team memorandum describes the specific goals of a teaching project:

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[539] Luhmann 2000: 215
[540] Due to reasons of anonymity I cannot make a precise reference to the school at which this team memorandum is produced.

It is here explicated how a teaching project of getting to know domestic animals entails both overall goals and specific subject goals. Interaction can be forced into a calculus of goals, actions and evaluation and thus understood, not just as teaching interaction, but as an organizational event, that is connected to other organizational events. For instance, it can be assessed whether the goals were achieved and suitable organizational follow up can be ensured.

In order to understand that which has become incomprehensible, the organization depends upon a bit of noise in the channel, so that the interaction can be made sense of in its own horizon of meaning. The function of the KIS system is then not just to ensure that as much information about interaction reaches the organization. Rather, the system of translations ensures that interaction is produced as something that is familiar to the organization – as something that can be understood in terms of the organizational scheme of the goal steering circle and the organizational logic of connecting.

By being given representation in a written document, interactional experiences can be forced into the form of organizational communication and thus be made understandable for the organization. By asking teachers to communicate teaching interaction in written communication it becomes possible for the organized school to be sensible to the coincidences, experiences and disturbances of teaching interaction. For instance, in the textbox of results of the teaching project of domestic animals it reads that "pupils were actually quite motivated" and how well it worked that "the project entailed real animals". As a final result this may be disappointing or unexpected, but none the less it can be made organizational sense of, since it is expressed as a part of a goal steering circle and can lead to organizational decisions of repeating or not repeating this teaching project, providing or not providing teachers a course in didactics of biology, etc.

By giving teaching practice representation in a written form it thus becomes possible for the school to force teaching practice into a meaningful form and thereby further process it. By help of the chain of documents and evaluation conversation, the unrepresented activities can be given meaning and by applied by the organization as orderly information, images of best (or worst) practice or as the result of an assessment. What is important in the processes of becoming made possible by the KIS system is then not that as much knowledge about interaction reaches the organization, but that each translation is actually a transformation from what is from the point of view of the organization incomprehensible and unfamiliar to organizational comprehensible and understandable.

Noise is then an opportunity for the school to become an organization out of exercises of translating teaching practice into order by articulating, writing down, giving representation, etc. Paraphrasing Serres; noise may find its first structures with a rhythm of contingent repetitions.[541] The evaluation system of KIS may be seen as a repetitive rhythm of documents and conversations – every year evaluation conversations are to echo through the school and slowly an organization of orderly self-descriptions can emerge.

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[541] Serres, 1995; see also Stäheli, 2003: 245

Complexity-from-noise

Another functionality of loss of information between interaction and document may be elaborated by help of Atlan and his findings that loss of information at one level in a hierarchical system may be a gain of information at a higher level.[542]

As Atlan has argued the effects of noise on the information content can under certain conditions result in a higher complexity of information at a different level of organization. What, at the level where the translation takes place, appears as a loss of information due to noise may have beneficial effects at other levels of the organization in accordance with a complexity-from-noise principle.[543] What is noise in one system may by another system, located higher up in a hierarchy and thus observing the first system as a subsystem, appear as information. Quoting Atlan:

> … what appears to the observer as an organizational noise acting in the channels connecting different hierarchical levels is, in fact, for the system itself the meaning of the information transmitted in these channels (Atlan 1981: 200)

Returning to KIS and its hierarchical chain of translations from interaction to documents, we can then propose that an information loss at one level represents possibilities for system formation for another level in the hierarchy. What may appear as noise in the channel between interaction and document, leaving the information value received by the document decreased, may in fact be what KIS is all about.

More specifically, the idea of the complexity-from-noise principle is that an observer observing a subsystem where a transmission of information takes place from A to B can retrieve not only the message retrieved at B, but also the ambiguity. With ambiguity is meant the fact that B is now not merely a copy of A, but an autonomous element. According to the complexity-from-noise principle this ambiguity represents an information gain when observed from a higher level in a hierarchy.

In KIS, noise in the channel at the level of a self-assessment of a teacher team can then become information for an observer from a higher level in a hierarchical system for

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[542] Atlan, 1974; 1981
[543] Atlan, 1981: 200

instance in the self-assessment of the school management. The assessment document of the management can observe both the information received by the team assessment document plus the ambiguity. The modification of the message from interaction to document implies that the document is no longer a representation of the interaction, but contains information independent of this.

Atlan calls the two effects of ambiguity "destructive ambiguity" (in our case that the document is poorer in information than the interaction) and "autonomy-ambiguity" (that the document is now more than a mere copy of the interaction but something autonomous).[544] The autonomy-ambiguity may in KIS be utilized to increase the autonomy of the organizational communication from interaction. Since documents are not just mere representations of interaction, they are, as already shown, made understandable to the organization. However, in accordance with the complexity-from-noise we may also argue that the difference between interaction and organization makes it possible for the organization to gain autonomy from interaction. Noise in the channel (creating lack of likeness between interaction and document) then plays the function of increasing the value of the document from a representation of interaction to an autonomous organizational element. A thesis could be that since schools are to become independent in demonstrating that they have organizational structures capable of managing teaching interaction, the organizational communication must be as autonomous from interaction as possible for the organization to manage interaction and not the other way around. The more different the document is in relation to interaction, the more the school can seek to reverse the power relation between interaction and organization, so that it can be demonstrated that the organization manages interaction and not the other way around. The partial destruction of the transmitted message at one level of a hierarchy then lead to an increase in the value of the message that this level in turn transmits to another part of the system, since it increases the power of the school's organization. The complexity surplus is that the organization gains the independence from interaction that is necessary if the school is to display to the municipality that it can manage its interaction in accordance with municipal school policy. Serres describes:

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[544] Atlan 1974: 295; see also Paulson 1988: 74

"[T]he next level functions as a rectifier, in particular, as a rectifier of noise. What was once an obstacle to all messages is reversed and added to the information.[545]

Noise then gives rise to a new, more autonomous system. Each level can observe the loss of information transmitted from interaction to organization at a lower level as a contribution to the autonomy of the school's organizational structures from interaction. Each level of the hierarchical chain of documents in KIS can intercept and rectify the noise of a lower level and apply it to enhance the organizations independence from interaction. The evaluation of teaching interaction performed by KIS is thus not only a matter of looking at the teaching interaction that has already taken place. Rather, KIS functions as a machinery for releasing organizational communication from interaction. To become independent in creating organizational structures capable of controlling teaching interaction, the school needs to ensure that organizational communication is as free from interaction as possible.

Ironically, when becoming is described as a matter of connecting interaction to decisions, this becoming does not only entail a shadow of images of the unconnected, it also entails that the organization shall become autonomous from the interaction. If the organization is mere representation of interaction, the organization cannot demonstrate that it successfully manages interaction.

To become an organised school is then a strange double movement of on the one hand to demonstrate that interaction is connected to organizational decisions, but for this to seem plausible the school, on the other hand, needs to construct itself as an organization by ensuring that on each level in a self-observation system, the organization is working to gain autonomy from interaction. To become organised is thus to demonstrate both connections and distance between organization and teaching interaction.

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[545] Serres in Brown & Stenner, 2009: 51

A system of distances

The school can create itself as organized by constructing a hierarchical system of relations between interaction and organizational communication where each relation must ensure that there is both connection and distance. The interference that takes place between teaching interaction and written document then somehow precedes the system. Only by taking advantage of disturbance in the channels between interaction and documents can the school become organised.

We may here again draw on Serres and his descriptions of how noise is intrinsic to relations and that noise is even what ensures the relation as a relation. Allow me to repeat this quote from Serres:

> Systems work because they do not work. Nonfunctioning remains essential for functioning. And that can be formalized. Given, two stations and a channel. They exchange messages. If the relation succeeds, if it is perfect, optimum, and immediate; it disappears as a relation. If it is there, if it exists, that means that it failed. It is only mediation. Relation is nonrelation. ... The channel carries the flow, but it cannot disappear as a channel, and it brakes (breaks) the flow more or less. But perfect, successful, optimum communication no longer includes any mediation. And the canal disappears into immediacy. There would be no spaces of transformation anywhere. There are channels and thus there must be noise. No canal without noise.[546]

If communication could travel freely and undisturbed from sender to receiver, there would be no relation at all. If the relation were pure, the two parts of a relation would be identical. If nothing hinders, disturbs or interferes there is no relation at all.[547]

As described, the attempts to organise the school entails a range of self-observation techniques and events. School actors are repeatedly encouraged to relate themselves to their own practices, actions and attitudes.[548] Schools and school actors are expected to become 'researchers of their own practice'.[549] A part of schools' becoming organization is to conduct investigation of oneself and thus become both researcher and object of research. However, drawing on Serres we could say that to establish a

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[546] Serres, 2007: 79
[547] Brown, 2002: 7
[548] See for instance LGDK, 1998a; 2005; Jordansen and Petersen 2008
[549] LGDK 1998a

relation between a school actor and his or her teaching practice, there needs to be noise in the channel, so that actor and practice are not one and the same, but an observer and something observed.

To become through KIS, the school depends on establishing relations between interaction and organization both in the form of relations between interaction and document and relation between interaction and evaluation conversation. With evaluation systems such as KIS, schools are offered a form of becoming through relations where each relation plays the function of translating or transforming practice into organizational moments. For the ideal of relating oneself to one's own practice to work, a relation in the sense of a distance must be established. For a school actor to have a relation to his or her own practice a distance between the two is needed. The orchestrating a system of relations is then a form of becoming organised through a process of ensuring differences between observer and observed.

In an interview, a school manager explains how, when involved in the evaluation activities of KIS, it is important that "one does not fool around and think things, one needs to know"[550]. The school can in other words not just communicate how it experiences its own everyday activities but need to investigate these properly. In the KIS assessment of the school the techniques applied to ensure 'knowing' rather than 'thinking' are listed:

- interviews of team and pupils
- observations of teaching
- study of video footage
- attendance when pupils present final products
- attendance when pupils present port folio and other products
- reading of teaching projects
- reading of self-evaluating team memorandum
- reading of the self-evaluation of a class through questionnaires seen in relation to the goals for educational standards and skills for the project[551]

Such methods of observation ensure that schools seek to distance themselves from practice, and then from this distant position translate practice in to images of quality.

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[550] Taped interview conducted October 2008
[551] Brief from a KIS report of an individual school.

By lining the channel between interaction and organization with methods, the channels status as a channel can be increased. And as a result a different order is created. Becoming relies on distance-producing methods because to become an organization the school needs the loss of information to increase the autonomy of the organization from interaction. The relations in which observations and descriptions of practice can be made is what make the system in the sense that the relations ensure that the school's self-description does not just mirror perfectly – is not identical to all the practice taking place within the walls of the school building. The becoming of schools thus relies upon distance to teaching practice. In the following, I will pursue how an ideal of reflection helps ensuring that such distance is sought created and stabilized.

Creating difference between practice and reflection

Implicit in the demands for documentation and for a culture of evaluation has been an assumption that the act of describing also lead to learning and reflection. As I have analysed in previous works,[552] the political call for a culture of evaluation in the public school, was largely reconfigured into an ideal of reflection and the ability of 'a reflective practitioner' to develop his or her teaching. As described in chapter 6, a general municipal view point has been that evaluation conducted as self-evaluation can serve the double purpose of on the one hand describing practice (and thus producing documentation) and on the other hand creating a stage for reflection and learning.[553]

The KIS system is an example of a system of evaluation in which an ambition of getting schools to make themselves visible is entangled to an ambition of catalyzing reflection. The activity of observing and describing is believed to also lead to reflection. The hope is that in each conversation in the chain of evaluation, the descriptions of the practice of the persons involved will lead to reflection upon this practice. What characterizes KIS is, moreover, the ambition of creating a system that

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[552] Pors 2009a; 2009b; 2010; 2011
[553] LGDK 2005a; 1998a; Nygaard & Petersen 2009

can engage a whole school in the activity of describing and reflecting. KIS invites (almost) every pupil, every teacher, the school management team and the municipal administration to participate in dialogues about their own practice.

That a main concern of KIS is to create reflection is expressed when, in the guide to KIS, the concept of evaluation is defined as activities "that can help an individual or an organization to systematically reflect upon its own practice". In each conversation in the chain the purpose is to create a space of reflection from which practice can be observed and discussed. For instance, the aim of the conversation between a teacher team and the school management team is described as "supporting the collective dialogue and reflection in the team about the quality and challenges of teaching and the pedagogical practice."

One of the mechanisms of KIS is thus to create occasions or spaces of dialogues from which practice can be observed and in which reflection can flourish. The KIS system works by dividing the life of the school up in a space of practice and a space of reflection. By creating islands of reflection outside the everyday practices of the school, opportunities for relating to practice can be created.

The creation and maintenance of boundaries between practice and reflection is also an important part of a method, named *Walk Through* presented in the LGDK discussion paper mentioned above, *A Culture of Evaluation – a New Danish School tradition*. The method is explained to be possible to apply both in the arena of teacher to teacher, teacher to pupil, teacher to parent, etc. In the descriptions of the paper of the use of the method in the relation between school manager and teachers it reads:

> The Walk-Through visit to the class room is brief – only two to three minutes in each class room. It is like filming a short footage of the moment. It is no judging of the teacher. It is about collecting information about curriculum and teaching practice and the decisions that the teacher makes. It is said that a teacher makes more than a 1000 decisions a day. In the two-three minutes the manager is in the class room the teacher may make five to ten decisions. It is these decisions that the manager should focus on with the purpose of a later reflective dialogue with the teacher.[554]

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[554] LGDK 2005a: 14

With the encouragement to apply this method of Walk Through, school managers are encouraged to produce images of the teaching going on in class rooms. The practice of teachers is described as an overwhelming amount of decisions. The purpose of the visit of the manager is to capture small bits of this overwhelming amount of practice in order to later give the images she has collected back to the teacher. Practice emerges as a mode in which there is not always time to think, neither to connect to former decisions of the organization. Spaces of reflection then become a necessary part of creating order out of noise since these are places where school actors can force different events from practice into moments that can be made visible and meaningful for the organization. In reflective spaces school actors can become capable of relating themselves to their own practice that outside the reflective space can be overwhelming and take the form of decision-making without time to reflect.

However, maintaining the separation between spaces of practice and spaces of reflection does not seem like an easy task. The space of practice is namely observed as capable of threatening the spaces of reflection. In a discussion between school managers at a theme meeting, in the municipality of Odense, a school manager states the following:

> How can we ensure that we move and develop ourselves? We had the vision that we should meet, but the everyday absorbs us.[555]

Likewise in an interview with a municipal senior civil servant it is expressed how school managers should become much better at creating spaces of reflection outside that of practice. The senior civil servant says:

> They can have the intention that they want to be a manager, but then they are hit by the everyday. Just a simple thing as closing the door….. but they think they should be available to every everyday practical matter.[556]

In the difference between practice and reflection the latter seems like the fragile part. In order to create and sustain spaces of reflection, work has to be done to make sure that practice does not destroy the possibilities of reflection. It seems like the everyday

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[555] Taped recording from field observation, May 2009
[556] Taped interview conducted October 2008

practice is intrusive - it somehow assails the subjects,[557] who therefore need to maintain boundaries to this noise by closing their doors and arranging to meet in spaces of reflections outside everyday practice.

To become an organized school is thus also to continuously divide practice and reflection and work to create and maintain distance to an everyday practice that seems capable of all the time threatening the fragile distance. If boundaries around reflective islands are not continuously defended the practice becomes overwhelming and threatens to take over the very possibility for schools to become organizations by transforming noise into order.

Goal steering and becoming through connections does then not work exactly as it describes itself. Its functionality is not only to make connections between goals, implementation, results and evaluation, but also to cleave the school in reflection and practice. Goal steering is not only a matter of creating connections between goals and activities[558] but also a matter of producing and maintaining clefts between these elements so that organizational structures can differentiate themselves from practice.

Allow me to recapitulate. From the late 1990s, autopoiesis of school can be seen as processes of creating order or complexity out of noise. To become an organization, the school is to continuously seek out inner noise, distance itself from it and thus create an organizational order autonomous from interaction.

The school can emerge as an organization by help of a cascade of relations. By making sure that the schools activities of describing and articulating take places in relations, it can be ensured that the efforts of separating organization from practice are done properly and that the organization is not just identical to practice, but is interfered, translated into orderly self-descriptions. To become through a scheme of complexity from noise is only possible if distance between modes or spaces of practice and modes or spaces of reflection is produced and maintained. Distance and difference

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[557] See Stäheli's description of noise 2003: 249
[558] Thygesen, 2004; 2002

between reflection and practice is what ensures that the school can manage noise, apply it in its becoming and not be overwhelmed by its speed or absorbed by it demands of attention.

To become organised the school is thus somehow to become a stranger to teaching interaction. The stranger it can become, the more the organization can appear a system capable of managing interaction.

In this light, the quite extensive focus on reflection in school development[559] may be seen as an answer to the problem that the school is expected to distinguish between self (organization) and other (practice). Reflection is an answer to lack of difference between the school as interaction and as organization. For the organized school to represent itself in itself it needs to make sure that reflection and practice do not collapse into each other. Practice then becomes the organized school's way of making itself an organization by creating an internal imagination. Practice is constructed within the school in order to be outside the school and the role of the ideal of reflection is to avoid the collapse of the two.

A dynamic in the school's becoming organised is thus to continuously produce occasions for separating practice and reflection. We may expect that the school becomes a machine that constantly catches sight of more bits and pieces that can be observed as outside the organised self and as objects in need of reflection, articulation, etc. I have already indicated that the not-belonging emerges as spontaneous quick fixes, but in the next section, I will explore in more details how this production of an inner environment of not-belonging teaching interaction takes place.

An environment of noisy interaction

The activities of the school of observing its own activities through evaluation and assessment can be analysed as opportunities for the school to draw boundaries between what belongs to the organization and what does not. In this light to work to

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[559] Pors, 2009a; 2010

introduce a culture of evaluation in the Danish public school is also to enforce occasions for the school to judge what parts of daily activities actually belongs to the school and what does not. The organised school is thus expected to create an inner environment of teaching activities that shall be seen as different from an organizational self of the school. The school is to represent itself in itself in order for it to become as efforts of connecting for instance goals and activities. In the following I will take a closer look at the boundary drawing that triggers the continuing self-creation of a school that is expected to create itself as an organization. I will explore, how schools are encouraged to let their self-creation feed on the marking of differences to specific images of environments.

In the attempts to decentralize, the school's experience of identity was a matter of finding themselves in the differences of opinions of the stakeholder. The central difference from which schools were encouraged to gain identity was between school and stakeholders. In the imagination of municipal school governing, schools should catch sight of themselves in differences between the interests of the school, and those of parents, the local sports clubs, etc.

When schools are to become organised they are not only expected to gain a feeling of identity by help of their ability to produce observations of stakeholders, but by help of self-investigation and markings of differences between connected and visible events on the one hand and spontaneous and undescribed events on the other. The school cannot be itself in being convinced that activities belong to the organization, just because they occur in a class room. Quite the contrary, an organized school is a school with a sneaky feeling that much too much is going on within the walls of a school that has nothing to do with the purposes or goals of the organization. The question is what kind of noisy environment emerges as that which the organization is not, but which must continuously be implied by the organization in order for it to become itself?

As also demonstrated above, a first distinction between what can belong to an organized school and what cannot is a difference between visible and invisible activities or, put differently, a difference between activities that have been given some

kind of visual representation and activities not given representation. In its becoming organization, the school can apply activities made visible, whereas invisible activities emerge as something that cannot be connected to by the organization.

A second distinction is one between written and verbal communication. The Danish noun of 'skriftlighed' [to express oneself in written language] is often repeated in discussion papers and formal assessments as well as in the interviews and observations I have conducted.   Writing is thus marked on the inside of system/environments distinctions leaving verbal communication on the outside. It is today argued that the school and the teacher profession have traditionally depended on a verbal culture, but shall now "learn to define, argue and conclude in written forms".[560] Written argumentation, assessments and documentation emerge as parts of the organized school whereas spoken statements are articulated as something that can no longer count as premises for decision-making. It seems as though written forms of communication emerge as that which can be observed as decisions and connected to the organized network of decisions and for instance become a part of the schools self-description whereas verbal statement and the 'verbality' of a teacher culture seems to emerge as a interactional environment.

Thirdly, the school is to organize itself by distinguishing between that which is tacit and that which is articulated. In *Danish Municipalities,* a school director proudly reports a development in his municipality, where school principals and teachers have gone through processes of making the tacit spoken: "Most of us are walking around with a tacit knowledge of how to improve things. That knowledge is now brought to the surface."[561] A distinction between knowledge "brought to the surface" and tacit knowledge here serves as a distinction between what can be used by the organization and what is lying outside its reach. Schools need, LGDK argues, to take themselves through a "cognitive revolution" in the sense of transforming tacit experiences, knowledge or expectations into spoken statements.[562] Tacit knowledge emerges as a form of potentiality that can be brought to benefit the organization if efforts are done

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[560] Danish Municipalities 07.10.1993, nr. 30, p. 18
[561] Danish Municipalities, 07.10,1993, nr. 30, p. 18
[562] Danish Municipalities 07.10.1993, nr. 30. p. 18

to take the school and its actors through a 'cognitive revolution'. However, tacit forms of knowledge are also articulated as something the organization shall worry about. LGDK argues:

> Silent habits shall therefore be put into words. It is strictly necessary linguistically to relate oneself to new ideas – for instance the notion of evaluation – and to be conscious of one's choices, when habits or behaviour are to be changed.[563]

Silent habits come somewhat in the way of a change of behaviour. When the school is expected to create itself as an organization by articulating, expressing and displaying, an interactional environment of that which is silent, but still seems to affect the school, is simultaneously created. Habits may emerge as strange since they are described as silent and thus difficult to connect to for an organization whose becoming consists of efforts to articulate. Moreover, to a mode of becoming that seeks to commit its members to always explain and give ground for their actions and opinions, habits may even become an obstruction of processes of organizing.

And lastly, (as is also indicated in the previous citation), the school shall become through the construction of a difference between conscious and unconscious. LGDK argues:

> Habits are patterns of action that are meaningful for an actor. However, this meaningfulness is often unconscious. There is a lot of 'usuality' and 'silence' in habits. Habits create stability and continuity. Habits do not in themselves entail the seeds for their own renewal, but stagnates within certain traditionally delimited frames. To changes habits, it is necessary that the individual human being makes an effort to become conscious of its own habits.[564]

Here, habits emerge as unconscious and as problematic due to the way in which they are obstacles for change. In its becoming organization, the school shall therefore seek to commit its members to become conscious of their habits or opinions. The unconscious emerge as outside when the school is encouraged to build itself out of explicit connections between the formal communication of goals and visions and

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[563] LGDK, 2005a: 4
[564] LGDK 2005a: 4

everyday activities, since that what is unconscious is insensitive to such formal communication – has its own repetitive life outside the formal communication.

By articulating connections between events and thus marking the self-reference of the organization, the organization can become familiar to itself and minimize for instance its ability to surprise itself (for instance with poor results in international surveys).[565] However, as seen, processing of self-reference means a simultaneous processing of hetero-reference. The production of familiarity relies on the non-familiar – those characteristics that the organization does not like to consider a part of itself. The autopoiesis of the organized school may be described as producing familiarity through the distinction between familiar and unfamiliar. The organization needs to mark what belongs and what falls outside the boundary of the self / other distinction. Verbal, tacit and unconscious elements have to be given signification as external to the organized school and its purposes. Quoting Luhmann: "Exclusion emerge as a side effect of an operation of self-description" ... "any fixation of identity omits something that does not belong."[566] But the side effect is vital to the autopoiesis of the system, since it experiences its identity through the marking of difference. "Is it not always an element excluded from the system that assures the space of possibility of the system?" as Derrida asks.[567]

The silent and unconscious elements must become a strange, unnameable experience that provokes new markings of self and other. Teaching activities are thus not necessarily observed as part of the school. In becoming an organization, the school develops an ability to be unable to understand the psychic and interactional systems that surrounds it. Whatever goes on in the classroom that has not yet been made visible or not yet been connected to former decisions can only be graspable as irritating noise. A whole range of activities and forms of interaction then falls on the outer side of the distinction between school and environment. Teaching that has not been given visual representation or which connections to former decisions have not

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[565] Danish Municipalities 27.05.2004
[566] Luhmann, 2002: 135
[567] Derrida in Bennington, 1994: 43

been displayed, emerge as a form of noise to a school creating itself as an organization. The more strange interactional elements can become to the school, the stronger it can feel its identity as organised. The formal organization thus depends on its own ability to catch sight of those elements that should be recognized as external and unfamiliar. To catch sight of elements not belonging is the combustible of the processes of becoming of the system. An element in the autopoiesis of schools is thus to continuously catch sight of the strangeness within.

Returning to the concept of noise, we could say that the school relies on the production of teacher interaction as environmental noise in order to experience itself as organised. Drawing on Serres, Crocker argues:

> Noise, ... is to communication what a virus is to an organism, or a scapegoat is to a community. It is not simply an obstacle, but rather a productive force around which the exclusion of which the system is organized.[568]

The invisible, silent and unconscious are produced as noise in order for the school to become in efforts of excluding such elements. As noise, the elements are a productive force in the sense of opportunities for the school to experience identity out of becoming aware of what it is not. However, as I will elaborate below, the elements also constitute a risk for the organization that it will not succeed in controlling or excluding such elements.

Since becoming is based on noise production and since the organised school is highly sensitive to noise because it represents occasions of experiencing identity, it may risk that the noise becomes too loud. Entailed in the autopoiesis of an organised school is that the noisier interactional elements can emerge, the more they can irritate the organizational communication and become new opportunities for experience of identity. We may therefore expect that the organised school also risks that the noise becomes overwhelming and begins to obstruct attempts of organizing.

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[568] Crocker, 2007: 5

How noise come to obstruct attempts to organize

When the school experiences itself through marking of differences it may become a machinery constantly letting itself be irritated by more bits and pieces that should become opportunities of marking self- from other. Every occurrence can be turned into an object of self-investigation and into a space in which differences between organized communication and informal interaction can be drawn. The autopoiesis brought along with the schizophrenic call for becoming independent by continuously distinguishing decision from interaction may then be precarious since the school may become hyper-sensitive to its self-produced noise.

The noisy waste of becoming may come to occupy a peculiar position both inside and outside the self-understanding of the school. Noise is that what can be experienced by the system, but cannot fully be specified.[569] Let me elaborate. To borrow a distinction from the theoretical framework of Laclau, the verbal, tacit and unconscious are no longer moments of the system, but elements, which have been loosened by the system's attempt to become itself by excluding them. Quoting Laclau and Mouffe: "The status of the 'elements' is that of floating signifiers, incapable of being wholly articulated in a discursive chain."[570] When marked as outside the self-understanding of the school, the tacit, verbal and unconscious are no longer moments in the sense of differential positions articulated within the system,[571] but free floating elements, whose meaning has been suspended.[572] As outcasts, the elements can no longer be determined by their position within the spatial order of connections of the system and their signification becomes uncertain. The system is bound to leave the excluded elements outside significatory reach, since they must be made exterior to the system for the system to become itself. But as a result, the excluded tacit, verbal and unconscious elements are beyond the significatory control of the organizational order. To put it differently; on the one hand the school describes the tacit, silent and unconscious when it marks it as something not belonging, but it simultaneously needs to withdraw from fully determining the excluded elements – or else it will be

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[569] Stäheli, 1998: 36
[570] Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 113
[571] Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 105
[572] Laclau, 2005: 131

exposed that they are internal to the self-creation of the school and not as external as the school needs them to be. The school thus has to partly let go of its power to signify the noisy elements - if not it risks exposing its connections to them and thereby risking the boundary between organization and interaction.[573]

The next question then is: How do the elements come to disturb the school in its self-creation, when they are located in this peculiar space, at the same time, internal and external to the system. In the following I will go further into how the elements come to nag the school. Could it be that the excluded elements are not behaving passively as opportunities for experience of identity?

In the publication "From institution to organization" it is described how the public school is "ruled by a complete indifference to whether decisions are carried through or not."[574] The attempts to organise the school through activities of connecting is thus threatened by an indifference of teaching interaction to formal decision-making. In the publication, it is argued that certain areas of the school have become "non-decision areas" where no one makes any decisions nor relates to goals or to the direction the organization has set out for itself.[575] In becoming organised the school depends on separating decisions areas from images of noisy practice, but the spheres of practice also becomes obstacles to attempt to organise since they threaten connections between decisions and become areas that cannot be reached with organizational logics.

In a publication about school management, LGDK proposes that the school manager takes the initiative to expose and name the implicit values and culture of schools in order for the school to be able to relate to them[576]:

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[573] Another more strictly systems theoretical way of posing it would be that the system cannot keep signifying the elements marked as environment, since future communication links to self-references and not to the hetero-references. The ability to connect belongs to the inside of distinctions between system and environment. The system creates itself exactly by making sure that communication refers to itself / belongs to itself and not anything else (Luhmann 1995a: 36-37).
[574] Windinge, 1996: 33
[575] Windinge, 1996: 34
[576] LGDK, 1998b: 65

> ... or if the school principal can see that the existing culture entails certain barriers for a necessary development, it may be a good idea to start by analyzing and describing: ...

> Which hidden values, attitudes and social conventions control the activities of the school?[577]

Here, un-described and unquestioned values and culture of schools emerge as obstacles for the organization, since they block what is called a necessary development. The citation may tell that as excluded elements "hidden values, attitudes and unquestioned values" are outside the control of the organization, but ironically the organization can observe that the excluded elements may persist to have an influence on the organization. The citation expresses a feeling that the excluded elements, from their position as hidden or "below the surface", control the organization and prevent it from becoming itself through going through "necessary developments".

In the written theoretical foundation from a KIS participating school we find the statement that action without theory is blind and: "Blind action in education is called practisism ... Blind action is completely controlled by practical circumstances."

Here, blind action is action that is not connected to the decisions of the organization to base its work in certain didactical theories. Such action is out of the reach of the logic of connecting expressed in ideals of doing what has been planned or teaching to support goals, but is instead controlled by the practical circumstances of a particular here and now. Since the action is blind it cannot become a part of the attempts of the organization to enlighten and make transparent. The organization is depending upon the ability to make the invisible elements visible and thus possible to connect to, but action that is unable to (or refuses to) see, poses a threat, since the organization finds it hard to connect to it. In remaining blind, such action can only be controlled by accidental circumstances and remain out of reach for the chains of goal setting, planning, implementation and assessments of the organization.

In a workshop in the same municipality, a school manager articulated the inaccessibility of the environment of unconscious attitudes in the following way:

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[577] LGDK, 1998b: 65

For instance regarding the example of port folios – I can really recognize that – because - will there be loyalty towards the decisions made in the organizational collective? Or will one just make a private interpretation and find a good reason – freedom of methods or whatever – that this decision is good, but it does not apply to me in this particular situation. As a principal I don't know how to relate to that. Because that is not a deliberately subversive operation against the collectively decided.[578]

A school principal here observes the independence of the unconscious and the impossibility for organizational decisions to reach and capture "private interpretations". The dangerousness of private interpretations comes exactly from their status as not being deliberate. If the private interpretations were deliberate the organization could address the resistance against its decisions. But because the organization has marked a frontier between deliberate action (organization) and not deliberate action (environment) the possibility of the organization to reach the private interpretations is limited. Outside the reach of the organization the unconscious, private interpretations can continue to trouble the organization.

The potential of the noisy elements to disturb the organized school comes from their at the same time being outside the reach of the organized school, but simultaneously having a power over the individuals of the school. In the same workshop mentioned above, a school manager expresses: "It is this repetition of some unchangeable pre-understandings and some rituals [that poses an obstacle for change.]. Immediately, another school manager supplements: "It is true. 80% of humans are afraid of change."[579]

Like the silent habits described previously, it is here the unconscious, but repetitive character of the noisy elements that position them outside the organized school but simultaneously gives them suggestive powers. This leads the school to become somewhat paranoid with regard to the susceptibility of individuals to management communication and attempts to organize and observe that 80% of humans seek to avoid change and interruption of their unconscious, repetitive actions.

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[578] Taped conversation at field observation conducted February 2009
[579] Taped conversation at field observation conducted February 2009

The production of noisy elements of hidden values, blind action and private interpretations are a left-over of a becoming relying on marking self and other of the organised school. The school needs the elements to be noisy in order for them to provoke markings and become the force around which the exclusion of which the system is organized. However, this mode of becoming may also leave the school hyper-sensitive to its self-produced noise. The noisy elements are not invisible to the organization. Rather, they are highly visible, since they point to the limits of the logic of connecting on which it is build.

Exactly because their construction was not arbitrary, but integrated within the modes and programs of inclusion of an organised school, the noisy elements can emerge as a threat. The elements need to be produced as unreachable for the calculus of the system, but from that position they also gain the ability to disturb and threat the system. Blind practice cannot engage in activities of making visible, and unconscious habits and fear of change obstruct attempts of disciplining everyday activities in accordance with goals. The elements still bear the traces of their previous articulations as moments in autopoiesis of separating self and other, but thereby they also become that which can never be controlled by the mechanisms through which an organised school gains control over itself.

The invisible, tacit and unconscious may pose a threat because they escape the organization's taste for clear markings. Their disturbing potential may come from the fact that they do not just affirm or reject expectations. The private interpretations in the citation above are disturbing for the organization because they do not clearly either obey or disobey the decisions of the organization. In its becoming organised the school becomes highly sensitive to the way in which teachers are resistant to attempts to discipline everyday actions in accordance with formal communication. The school becomes equally attentive to the necessity of connecting and exposing as to how unconscious habits and fear of change pose a threat to these necessities.

To sum up, when the school is to become organized in connecting decisions to decisions, and making interaction events possible to involve in the network of

decisions, this is a form of autopoiesis entailing continuous markings of differences between what belongs to the organization and what does not. The school can experience itself as organized by marking silent, tacit and unconscious elements as noise. Autopoiesis thus entails noise production, but noise does not only behave nicely as opportunities for repeating what the organization is and is not.

Noise, then, plays a double role. One the one hand, noise seems like an opportunity for the school to become itself by distinguishing organized self from noisy other. Moreover, it seems like a potentiality that has not yet become part of the organization, but only needs a few activities of being articulated, written down, given representation, etc. to belong to the network of decisions of the organization. However, as I have sought to show, from their location, as silent, implicit and unconscious, noise also seems capable of coming back to haunt the organized school by undermining its logics of making visible, articulating and connecting.

The school risks its identity to gain identity in the sense that it cannot create itself as organization without creating a companion or an accompaniment of silence habits, blind practicism and unconscious choices. The irony of the formal organization seems to be that it risks itself in its attempts to consolidate itself. Quoting Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos: "Marking is the actualization of contingency in its traumatic presence."[580] The constant drawings of a distinction between system and environment does not only produce the familiar feeling that the organization is really what it says it is (coherent, transparent etc.), but also reminds the organization of the trauma that even the request for necessity of the organization (such as the ideal of evidence based practice – the idea that a certain kind of teaching is known to lead to learning) could have been different and is only a result of the regulatory of the systems internal ordering. The irony continues when we look at how elements are excluded from the organization because of their lacking ability to serve as moments to be connected (hidden values, attitudes and social conventions), but that their connectivity then comes to be a problem, since they are then observed as something which controls the activities of the organization. The school produces noise to

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[580] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2009: 22

become, but needs to forget that the noise is self-produced in order to maintain its self-understanding as orderly and organized. And when the links between noise and organization are solemnly forgotten the organization begins to fear how noise interrupts its becoming. The organization develops a paranoia towards noisy elements for instance when it is said that "80% of all teachers are afraid of change".[581]

To become organized it seems as though schools are to constantly chase the tail or the left-over of their own becoming. It seems as though an implication of the municipal call for schools to become organised is paranoia for all that which is not wanted as part of the organization. At first sight it seems as though the organized school is convinced that the problem is that interaction is not properly organized. However, what may threaten the autopoiesis of an organized school is that there is no limit to what can be understood as something that needs to become object of self-investigation and boundary drawing. Every little event can be thematized as in need of exposure, articulation, written representation, etc. With the call for organization the school becomes hyper-attentive to the interaction and psychic systems in its environment and how these threaten its becoming.

Management from noise

> A parasite who has the last word, who produces disorder and who generates a different order[582]

Could it be that not only the possibility for becoming an organization but also the possibility for management rests on noise production? Within the calls for schools to organize themselves we find a persistent call for more, stronger and distinct school

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[581] Taped conversation at field observation conducted February 2009.
[582] Serres, 2007: 3

management.[583] However, if, as I have shown, the organization emerges in its distance from noise, can managers then afford to be loud?

The opening scene of Serres' book, *The Parasite,* takes place in the house of a tax farmer, where a city rat has invited a country rat to join a feast involving plenty of bacon, cheese, ham and butter (the fable by La Fontaine). The tax farmer has these products available through profiting on the production of others. The city rat in other words, parasite a parasite. As Serres write: "The parasited one parasites the parasite".[584] The chain of parasitic relations only goes in one direction. It is like the line of flight of an arrow, irreversible. "The flow goes one way, never the other."[585]

Serres' definition of the parasite draws on the threefold meaning in French, namely an abusive guest, an unavoidable animal and a break in a message.[586] The concept of the parasite is created by drawing attention to how each of these three things has the same function within their system.

A parasite is thus a phenomenon that utilizes its host, benefits from the processes of the being it occupies and creates noise in a communication channel. According to Serres to parasite is to have a relation only with the relation itself. A parasite is something "that has relations and makes a system of them."[587] One can only become a parasite by positioning oneself on or next to a relation. Serres argues that cascades of parasitic relations are exactly what orders knowledge.

Returning to the KIS system, a chain of relations runs from the relation of pupil and teacher all the way up to the management of the individual school as well as further up to the management relation between school and municipality. The KIS chain thus resembles a formal hierarchy if it were not, however, for the double arrows, indicating that the knowledge/information/reflection produced in each link of the chain is beneficial for both parties in the relation. The figure of the chain of evaluation

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[583] See for instance LGDK 1998a; 2005; OECD 2004a; Danish Ministry of Education2007; Danish Evaluation Institute, 2006.
[584] Serres, 2007: 13
[585] Serres 2007: 5
[586] Serres, 2007: 8
[587] Serres 2007: 38

conversations of KIS presented above is not difficult to observe like a cascade of parasitic relations (again, if it were not for the double arrows that I will return to below). The question is then, of course, who parasites on who in each relation off the chain. Serres writes:

> The observer is perhaps the inobservable. He must, at least, be last on the chain of observables. He must, at least, be last on the chain of observables. ... Thus he is in a position of a parasite. Not only because he takes the observation that he does not return, but also because he plays the last position.[588]

Accordingly, that what observes, that what is last in a chain of observation is able to parasite what is observed and that what is before him in the chain. In the case of the KIS system, we might find that the municipal school administration parasites the school management team, that parasites the teacher teams etc. A thesis could be that what are gained from these activities of parasiting through observing are opportunities for management relations and management subjects to emerge. What the one in the position of the parasite may gain is an opportunity to position herself as a manager in relation to someone else.

In the cascade of parasitic relations in Serres' story, the rats parasite the tax farmer. However, they are interrupted by a noise supposedly made by the tax farmer, who might have been woken up by the noise of the rats.[589] Who parasites who is not simply established once and for all and parasitic activity may be interrupted by the victim (or host) of the parasite. Disturbance is a part of the game and the division of roles may easily change.

Likewise, it may be that the formal hierarchy that is and is not imaged in the figure of the KIS evaluation chain above, is not quite a stable and certain of itself. It may be that the possibilities for parasitic relations must continuously be established, negotiated and stabilized. For Serres, to succeed in being a parasite one must make less noise than the host one is exploiting. Serres writes:

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[588] Serres, 2007: 237
[589] Serres 2007: 3-4

> The observer always makes less noise than the observed. He is thus unobservable by the observed. That is why he troubles and is never troubled, that is why he is an asymmetric operator….. he is in the position of the subject.[590]

Likewise, in KIS, the stabilization of who can parasite on who, may depend on who makes more noise. It may be that as long as the practice of the one can be described as noisier than the other, asymmetrical relations can be maintained. A thesis would then be that management subjects can only emerge, if other subjects emerge as noisy and thus further down in a parasitic chain. Teachers in relation to pupils, team leaders in relation to team, school managers in relations to teams, municipal school administration in relation to school managers may only be able emerge as management subjects if they can be observed to make less noise than the other part in the relations. I will explore this thesis in the following.

Management relations and mirrors

Within the islands of reflection for instance sought constructed in the evaluation conversations of KIS, activities of self-investigation are expected to take place. In the annual report of 1999, LGDK states:

> Quality in schools can be developed by efforts of schools to get to know themselves better and learn from their experiences.[591]

As also described previously, schools and school actors are expected to become 'researchers of their own practice.'[592] A part of schools' becoming organization is to conduct investigation of oneself and thus become both researcher and object of research.

In the reflective spaces the school is expected to produce a certain relation between two parties, where the one confronts the other with images of his or her practice that can then be made and object of investigation. For instance, in the method of *Walk Through* school managers are encouraged to seek out teaching practice by visiting

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[590] Serres, 2007: 238
[591] LGDK Annual Report 1998/1999: 10
[592] LGDK 1998a

class rooms and transform the overwhelming amount of decisions into a few decisions, that can be brought to a space of reflection and there be given back to the teacher.

In the method of *Walk Through,* management emerges as the activities of seeking out overwhelming noise, reducing it and confronting the managed with it in reflective spaces. The managed persons then emerge as some ones who let themselves be confronted with their own noisy practice and seek to transform themselves as a result of this experience. For instance, the purpose of the *Walk Through* method is described as the transformation of teachers into *reflective thinkers*, who are again described as someone who are responsible for further self-development and someone who continuously observe and analyse their practice.[593] A managed subject then emerges as someone who faces the images of his own practice brought to him in a reflective dialogue by a managing subject and uses it to become self-analyzing. Asymmetry in the relations and the roles of manager and managed can emerge if it can be established who is to confront who with the noise of his practice and who is to seek to transform by being confronted with his own practice.

The method of *Walk Through* as well as each relation in KIS may then be described as machineries for producing possibilities for management. Through the establishment of difference between roles of confronting and being confronted with own practice, the possibility for asymmetry in relations emerges. In the guide to KIS it is argued that KIS "supports the school manager in his attempts to live up to his management responsibility." KIS may do this, not only by producing documentation of quality, but also by bringing about the very possibility for management to emerge. If a teacher can be observed to make noise, it can be observed that the teacher has a need for management, in the sense of a need of a reflective conversation and a meeting with own noisy practice.

A central tool in relations in reflective spaces then becomes a metaphor of a *mirror.* The metaphor shows up for instance in techniques of supervision:

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[593] LGDK 2005a: 15

.... to be present in the class room with the purpose of subsequently giving advice in those areas who have been decided upon as goals for the observation, can be a great mirror in which one's own appearance as a teacher can be observed.[594]

The image of a mirror also turn up at a theme meeting for all the school management teams of a municipality, where team members are asked to discuss in groups whether it is a problem if each teacher has his own perception of what good learning is. A school manager states:

> But in reality I think that the greatest pitfall is when one are not critically relating oneself to one's own practice. Where one does not turn the question in one's own direction. I think that what happens a lot, when one is to share one's own values, is that one talks about the wanted situation: I would wish it to be like that. And therefore we are often – or often – sometimes in the situation that we – or I am sometimes in the situation that when I are to tell – or when I am in dialogue with the individual employee, then I have to hold up the mirror. If I related to what he says, then we would not talk about the right thing. We have to talk about what he *does* and what comes out of it. And then he has to talk – actually to himself. And I think that is a great challenge. I can feel that that is a great challenge for the individual teacher. To relate to one's own practice.[595]

The school manager here expresses that in her view one of the greatest dangers is, if a person is not relating himself critically to himself. It is described how a function of the manager is to *hold up the mirror* so that the managed cannot keep talking about what he wished was the case, but which is not, according to the manager, the real situation. A management relation can thus emerge through the observation that there is a need for an interference with the signals coming from the managed. The *mirror* seems like an important management tool in the sense that if it can be established who is to hold up the mirror for whom or who has a need to be confronted with the truth of his own practice, roles of manager and managed can be divided and possibilities for management to emerge are created.

The mirror thus establishes asymmetry in the relation between manager and employee, since one can observe that another needs to be confronted with his noisy practice. However, the relation between the school manager and an employee does

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[594] LGDK 1998: 69
[595] Taped conversation from field observation conducted, February 2009

not seem like the most important relation in the citation. The work of the manager seem to be to bring about a relation between the managed in the sense of his uttered self-descriptions and what seems as a more 'true' self in the form of his actions.

As described, to parasite is to position oneself on or next to a relation.[596] By staging a relation between an employee and his true self, the manager can position herself as a parasite on this relation. In this light, the mirror performs as something that can bring about a management relation because it can split the managed in two and thus enable a relation (and not just identity) between the managed and himself. The mirror brings about management because it twists the conversation from wished for to actual conditions by not listening to spoken words, but instead reflecting actions and consequences. It is because the mirror does not just show the self-description of the managed, but interferes with the image that a relation between the managed and a different version of the managed can emerge and that a position of parasiting the relation is made possible. The mirror, then, emerges as a management tool, because, by help of the mirror, the relation between manager and employee can fade to the backdrop and the relation between the managed and himself can be brought forward.

In this light, the system of KIS produces opportunities for management by ensuring occasions for staging situations where employees by help of metaphysical mirrors can meet an image of themselves different from their self-description and thus form a relation to themselves on which someone can parasite and gain managerial subjectivity.

Above I quoted Serres for stating that the parasite makes an observation that he does not return. This seems not to be the case here. What brings asymmetry to the relation seems to be exactly that someone gives an observation back to the observed as for instance in the method of *Walk Through*. Someone can become a management subject by arranging that someone else becomes an observer of his own practice. The asymmetry is brought about when the managed is made both object and subject.[597] The parasite is not in the position of the subject as described in another citation

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[596] Serres, 2007: 38

[597] Karlsen & Villadsen, 2008

above,[598] but more precisely in the position of a subject supervising, facilitating, making possible a relation between a subject and a true image of his actions. To manage is then to fade into the background and facilitate a meeting between an employee and himself.

This may be what the double arrows in the KIS chain signify: A situation of management can only emerge if the arrows go both ways, if a manager gains knowledge *and* if the managed agrees to be confronted with the knowledge. That the managed expresses that he too gains something from the relation. Only then can the parasite, ironically, parasite in the sense of gaining a management position.

To produce observations of the noise of others is thus vital for the creation of possibilities of management and management relations to emerge. Serres reminds us that noise is also the trace of the observer.[599] If a school manager does not have techniques like the mirror in which noisy practice emerges so that a difference can be established between the self-description and the real actions of an employee, no relation between the employee and himself, and no position for parasiting and emerging as a management subject. The noisy practice that appears in mirrors may be a trace of attempts to establish asymmetry and management opportunities. When the condition of being an observer is precisely to make less noise than the noise transmitted by the object observed,[600] the game of becoming a manager is a game of reducing one's own noise and enhancing the noise of others.

In Serres' description of noise and parasites there are always unresolved tension and instability. To base ones possibilities of management on noise is a risky game. When management depends on the creation of differences between more and less noisy, managers need to be very silent. When for instance the system of KIS was introduced, a municipal concern was how the school managers would observe the system. In an interview a municipal consultant tells about the time. She says: "We could feel the

[598] Serres, 2007: 238
[599] Serres, 1995: 61
[600] Serres, 2007: 237

resistance coming…. Such a total system of evaluation for the whole school area – that is not easy to digest."[601]

She explains why the implementation of KIS went relatively easy, but that the legitimacy of the system is still fragile:

> Even though we now have them on board, there is still resistance. You have to be very gentle. You have to mind the words you use. If there is only the slightest experience that they are being talked down to…. It is this humility and reverence towards the work that is so hard out there that we need to signal.

To succeed in managing the schools to take it upon themselves to implement KIS one need to be gentle and mind ones words. If the attempts to manage make more noise than the practice of the managed, the possibilities of management disappear. Whatever noise the attempts to management make, simply diminishes the knowledge that can be gained from KIS, as well as the management that may come out of it.[602] If the system itself, if the intention to observe is too noisy becomes centre of attention, management cannot be brought about.

From Serres we can thus provide the following advice for wanna-be managers:

> In the realm of the visible, of sight, and of evidence, either he is invisible, like Gyges or like a subject among objects, or he is the least visible. Don't let yourself be noticed; keep under the wind, for the realm of odors. Thus the parasite is the most silent of beings, and that is the paradox, since *parasite* also means noise. Small, protozoan, insect, it is invisible; it cannot be felt; it copies so as to disappear; it puts on a spotless white shirt; it keeps quite; it listens. It observes.[603]

To become less noisy, silent, in the positioned of the listener is a matter of presenting another to his own noisy practice. To be the parasite – to manage to manage – is a matter of ensuring the relation, the situation, as one in which one listens, observes how another relates to himself.

In the case of KIS, the municipal senior civil servants in charge of implementing the system, developed a method of appearing very quiet by appointing some schools to

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[601] Taped interview conducted November 2008
[602] See Serres 1995: 61
[603] Serres 2007: 237

act as mentor schools in other schools' processes of introducing KIS. The municipality can thus seek to down play its role and stage that schools where the introduction of KIS have not been observed as too noisy by school actors can become role models for other schools. A senior civil servant described:

> One of our strategies are …. I am discovering something... We want to make some of the school pilot schools – mentor schools. Give the baton to some schools. And then they shall reach high, and then pass on the baton. Become mentors for each other, as a new municipal development strategy.[604]

When the municipality is observed as making a lot of noise with their attempts to make schools engage in KIS, the objective of KIS, to make the school relate to itself disappears into the background. By making the introduction of KIS very noisy, school teachers and managers can undermine a management relation between the municipality and the school, but by a strategy of appointing mentor schools, the municipality can seek to become more quiet and let the schools relation to its own noisy practice come front stage.

To sum up, the role of noise may also be to produce opportunities for management relations and thus management subjects. By positioning oneself as one who stages encounters between another and the true noise of his or her practice, asymmetric relations can be brought about. To manage is to be the one who observes that someone else needs a meeting with his noisy practice. KIS is then a machinery for producing stronger management, since it creates events of reflective conversations, where managers can emerge as those who helps others relate to themselves. A metaphor of a mirror is then a convenient management tool. Not only because it helps establish who is the management subject by making visible who holds the mirror for who, but also since it brings about a relation between an employee and himself by showing an image different from the self-description of the employee, and thus ensures a possibility for someone to parasite on the relation between the self and true self of the employee.

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[604] Taped interview conducted November 2008.

Noise is then attractive because by seeking out noise, bringing oneself in contact with the noise (of others) one can become a management subject. Noise becomes attractive - draws subjects close - because noise is a managerial order to come. Noise regulation and production are then not mutually exclusive, but intrinsically linked.[605] Both are about bringing about asymmetry in relations and establishing occasions for management.

Conclusion: A hyper-attentive school

> Noise gives rise to a new system, an order that is more complex than the simple chain. This parasite interrupts at first glance, consolidates when you look again…... The town makes noise, but the noise makes the town.[606]

In the first years after the reforms of decentralization of the late 1980s, the self-managing capacity of the school was mainly thematized as a matter of ensuring structures for cooperation between school and parents and between manager and teacher. However, from the late 1990s it is increasingly problematized that municipal decision-making is not visible in the everyday activities of the school and schools are increasingly expected to produce organizational structures that can ensure that and expose how the schools work systematically with municipal school policy. To become governed in an independent way, schools are to demonstrate that they can build an organization capable of managing all the teaching interaction and everyday activities going on at the school.

Whereas from the late 1980s schools were to double themselves in inside and outside perspectives on issues, problems and solutions, from the late 1990s schools are to double itself in organization and interaction. The school can experience itself as organised when it creates images of noisy interaction. Precisely because the *mode* of becoming of the school is all about efforts to write down, articulate, make visible and

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[605] See Stäheli 2003: 247-248
[606] Serres, 2007: 14

connect to a network of formal decisions, silence, unconscious opinions, habits and an oral culture simultaneously emerges as a noisy environment. An organised school cannot assume that everything going on within the walls of the school belongs to the organization. Rather, teaching activities, choices and interaction must be observed with the intuition that they might fall on the wrong side of distinctions between organization and environment. In becoming organized, schools develop an ability to experience everything that goes on outside the medium of decision-making as strange and ungraspable noise.

On the one hand, the school is expected to manage a difference between organization and interaction by initiating processes through which orderly self-descriptions can be retrieved from noisy interaction. However, the school is not only to explicate connections between organization and interaction, but also to work to separate. The ideal of reflection and of a reflexive practitioner here serves as a cleaving device, establishing islands of reflections defined as areas where the mess and noise of the everyday can be held out. To manage itself and not just be itself, the school needs to produce and maintain firm boundaries between islands of reflection and decision and spheres of messy and noisy everyday interaction.

The school is thus to create itself as a decision-making machine that on the one hand seeks to tighten recursive links between events in the school, but simultaneously ensures distance between organizational and interactional events. A school can present itself as organized if it displays connections between teaching interaction and organizational goals, however, this self-presentation is only possible if the school simultaneously displays how its islands of reflection is safely disconnected from noisy practice. An organized school is, in other words, a school that simultaneously desires that interaction connects itself to the organization *and* desperately works to avoid that interaction will ever succeed with this endeavor. Being a decision-making machine whose success is measured in connections thus entails the tragedy that the machinery depends just as much on continuous separations than on establishing connections.

Noisy practice may be both a nuisance and a seduction.[607] A nuisance, because it interrupts and obstructs the processes of organizing the school. The school observes with anxiety how hidden attitudes compete with the formal communication in controlling activities or how the attempts to connect decisions are interrupted by private interpretations. And a seduction, not only because it provides self-assuredness, but also because it creates possibility for management relations to emerge. By seeking out noise and by bringing oneself in contact with the noise (of others) one can become a management subject. Noise becomes attractive - draws subjects close - because noise is the possibility for a managerial order to emerge. Management subjects can emerge by being a parasite on relations between someone and the truth of their noisy practice.

However, the game of who can parasite on who depends on who can be most silent. The calls for a stronger, clearer management and maybe even louder management that is also a part of the attempts to organize schools, are maybe then not that easy to achieve. To manage loudly may prove difficult in a world where the parasite has the last word in the sense of staging the relation where someone becomes in need for a meeting with one noise, disorder is produced in the sense that noise production is the result of both attempts to organized and of attempts to produce management. In a world, where it is the noise *of others* that consolidates, in the sense of generating an orderly organization and producing possibilities for a managerial order of asymmetrical relations, managers may have to operate silently or at least more silent than the managed.

One implication of the municipal call for school to become organised seem to be that the school is expected to become hyper-self-observant and hyper-attentive to all that falls outside the logics of organising. To become organized is to become suspicious. The school should meet its own practice with certain scepticism of whether this practice is thoroughly grounded in pedagogical theory and firmly connected to the goals of the school or whether it is just blind practice or unconscious repetitions controlled by silent habits. As Hahn has noted, "suspicion is a mode of making

607 Stäheli, 2003

meaning that increases complexity instead of reducing it and like most parasites do it even picks up on what others consider to be garbage, i.e. "undesired uncertainty" (weaver) or increased amounts of information."[608]

It seems as though the organized school is convinced that the problem is that interaction is not properly organized. But maybe what threatens the autopoiesis of an organized school is that everything is observed as potential organization. To become organised, the school not only produces the very noise that threatens it, it also becomes highly sensitive to this noise. Every little event can be thematized as in need of exposure, articulation, written representation, etc. The organized school seems to have no criteria for assessing where the boundaries between relevant or irrelevant for organizational attention are.

The tragedy of becoming organised may be that even though the calls to become organised cries for reduction of contingency the mode of becoming cannot help producing contingency and even noise, since it is hyper-attentive to all that what is outside the logics of connections, visibility and written formal communication. Even though the organised school repeatedly positions all the uncertainty of teacher's blind practice, spontaneous quick fixes in the class room and unconscious habits as a strange otherness, it cannot help remaining highly interested and occupied with this uncertainty. Not only since this noise is the productive force on the exclusion of which the school's identity as an organization is based, but also because this noise is exactly what brings about possibility of asymmetric relations and thus opportunities for management subject to emerge.

The school is thus to create itself as a decision-making machine that on the one hand seeks to reduce contingency, but simultaneously cannot help seeking it out. An organized school is, in other words, a school that simultaneously presents itself as a contingency reducing machine *and* is so suspicious and hyper-sensitive to lacking fixation of contingency that it cannot help but expose its own fortuitousness. Being a decision-making machine whose success is measured in reduction of contingency

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[608] Hahn, 2003: 306

thus entails the tragedy that it has become so obsessed with this goal that it continuously makes it impossible to achieve.

INTERMEZZO II: Noise and change
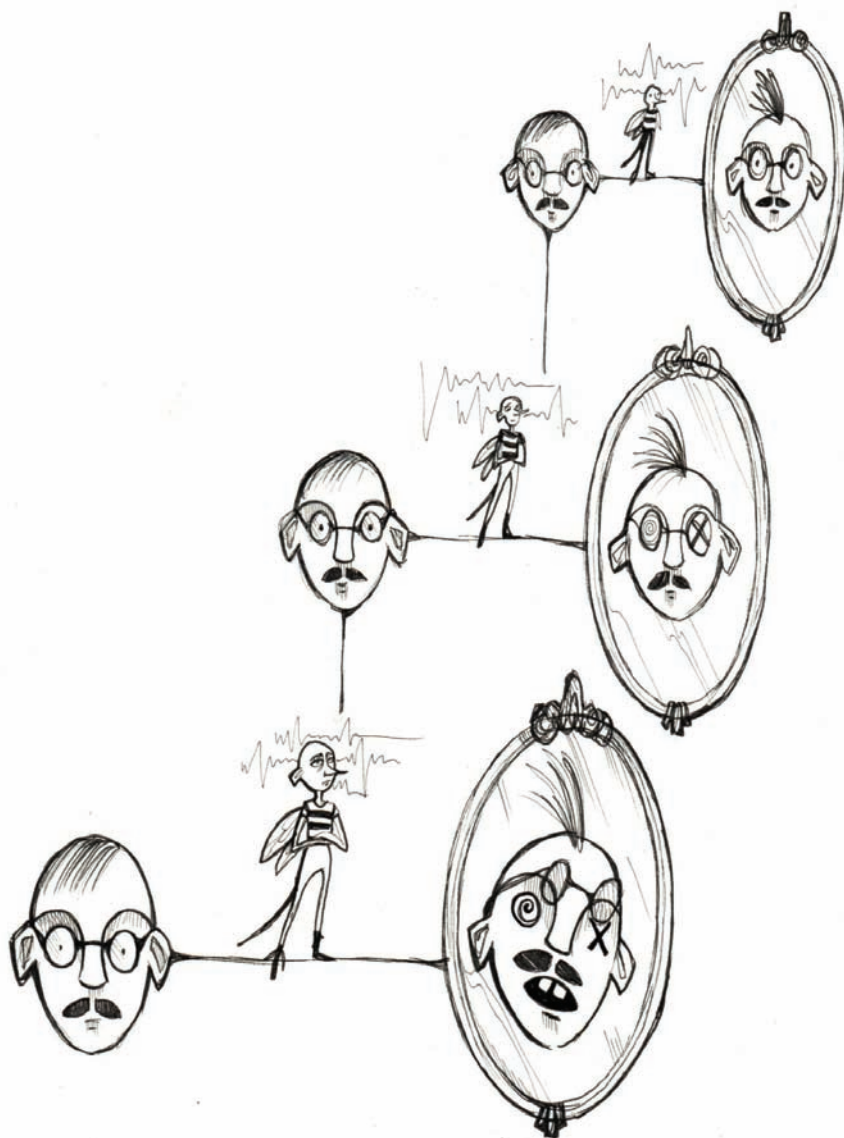
In the following, I will discuss which understandings of development and change the evolution sketched out in the previous chapters has left the school with. Moreover, I will describe how the school has been expected to manage its relation to pedagogy since 1970 until today. The discussion is meant as an outset for formulating new question of how the described understandings of change are reconfigured with the increasing expectation to schools to become innovative that will be the subject of the final part of the thesis.

Both when schools are to manage the freedom they are given with decentralization and when they are to spilt themselves in managing organization and managed interaction, change and development comes from forms of relating oneself to noise.

With the attempts to decentralise competence to the school from the late 1980s, the schizophrenic call of the school governing of being ordered to become independent was translated into a call for the school to become independent by demonstrating how it managed relations to stakeholders. The school is invited to become independent by engaging in efforts to open up the school and especially the teacher collective to disturbance of the environment.

Stäheli has defined disturbance as an unnameable experience that disrupts the system's closure and is named by the system.[609] In becoming independent, the school is to relate to the at first unnameable experience of parents' wishes to gain influence on school affairs, give it the name of user-influence and managing it as stakeholder relations for instance through the by then newly established school boards. To change and develop is then a matter of observing the disturbance of the environment as a productive force. To meet the schizophrenic call of becoming independent in a governed way schools are to make interests of parents in school matters a productive disturbance of its own operations, for instance, by utilizing frictions between the ways in which teachers and parents observe school matters differently to foster local debate. Schools are expected to identify with the unity of the distinction between school and environment and becoming is thus a matter of oscillating between risking identity in the encounters with the different perspectives of the school of external

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[609] Stäheli 1998: 36

stakeholders and finding a stronger identity. In becoming, the school is to use a pending between identity and loss of identity to catalyze new and stronger feelings of identity.

In such a form of becoming a less productive disturbance, however, also emerge, namely the noise of the closure of teacher collectives. When the school is to identify with the difference between school and an environment of stakeholders, the self-refentiality of teachers begin to irritate the ear of the school. In the eyes of municipalities the school has a tradition of being self-centred and especially teachers are observed as a community that is closed around itself. The past that schools are expected to steer themselves away from is the teacher's dominance of the identity of the school and change and development is therefore a matter of disturbing the self-referentiality of schools. To become self-governing the school need to become sensitive to how teachers may not be able to set aside their personal interest in improving own working conditions and take the perspective of a generally appropriate organization of teaching. To become the school should relate to the noise of teachers by realizing that they are incapable of representing the identity of the school. Becoming a school capable of managing itself is thus a school that relates itself to the noise of the closure of the teacher collective by reducing teachers to a particular interest rather than the representation of the unity of the school.

To change and develop is then a matter of using disturbance as an opening that 'enriches' the self-referential circle of the system[610] by making sure that the self-referentiality of the school is not too pure. Every break in this self-referentiality that the participation of stakeholders in school activities may lead to are seen as productive and as something that will let the school formulate the new and stronger identity needed in times where parents are given some degree of free choice of schools. Every impulse, every accident, every error in the school's self-referentiality is seen as a productive force leading to change and development.

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[610] Stäheli, 1998: 37

As described, the noise of the closure of teachers is, from the late 1990s, reconfigured into a noise of teaching interaction. The schools should not only become sensitive to the noise of the closure of teachers, but more broadly to the noise of all interaction going on within the walls of the school that have not been made visible and connected to formal decisions.

When schools are to meet the schizophrenic call of becoming independent in such a way that municipalities can recognize their own initiatives and policies in the activities of the school, interaction between teachers or between teachers and pupils are no longer observed as that which constitutes a school. The school shall become organised by creating organizational arrangements that in order to be able to manage everyday activities have to be very different from them. The ear of the school is to hear interaction as a noisy obstacle to attempts of organising. As shown, the noise production is internal to the system. The more noisy practice can emerge, the more different it is from organised communication and the more the organization can appear a system capable of managing interaction. To become managing, the school need to produce unmanageability.

Change is then seen as something that comes from self-observation and self–assessment. The past that the school is to steer itself away from is one where the school's results and processes where coincidental due to lack of self-assessment technologies. By systematically observing itself the school can become a school liable to its own goals and therefore able to explicate on beforehand how activities are connected to goals. Renewal comes from meetings between a person and the true noise of his practice. To develop the school needs to stage that persons can cleave themselves in an observing, reflective self and a noisy practice. Change is thus to irritate habits and usual actions by making it object of investigation. In a dialogue at a theme meeting for all the school managers in a municipality, a school manager states:

> But to make those disturbances, I also think that is very difficult, because there are actually many teachers who would rather not be disturbed. They want the understandings of teaching and learning that they have always had and learning for them is the way they have done it for 100 years. If you come in and mess with it, then all the guards comes up, because they

> don't think they want to develop themselves, they don't want anything – what they do is good enough.[611]

Here, to manage is to seek to disrupt old and usual thinking and understandings of learning. An obstacle to change is teacher's inclination to think and act as they have always done. That which has not yet been put into words, which is only oral agreements, which is intuitively and not reflexive and which has not yet been made conscious is thematized as obstacles to change.[612]

Since change for an organised school stems from making incidents and teacher's attitudes object of investigation, the school becomes a master of self-obsession. With such hyper-attention to noisy elements, one should think that every phenomenon of the school has been thematized and made object of investigation and reflection. However, classical categories of the school such as a class, a class room, a subject, a teacher, etc. have been left unobserved by a school that has been busy establishing organizational arrangement and relating to the noise of habits, practices and unconscious attitudes. With today's calls for an innovative school, that will be the subject of the following chapter, the school is expected to turn its attention to these categories and, as I will show, change becomes a matter of abandoning them.

As shown, an organised school changes and develops in efforts to manage the risk of the unpredicted and a surplus of contingency. As I have shown, to make sure that teaching interaction obeys the decisions of the organised school, interaction is asked to recognize the existence of a surplus of contingency and reduce it so as to communicate itself as a decision. However, with the calls for an innovative school the role of the unpredictable and contingency are reconfigured. Another question that I will pursue in the following chapter is therefore how the school is expected to relate itself to teaching interaction in new ways and begin to observe unpredictability and surpluses of contingency are to be managed as important resources.

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[611] Taped conversation from field observation conducted February 2009.
[612] see also Pors 2009a; 2009b

In the history of relations of governing between municipalities and schools written in the previous chapters, the schools relation to pedagogy has been one of doing away with an observed dominance of pedagogical concerns. Let me briefly sketch out how schools have been expected to relate itself to pedagogy from 1970.

As shown in previous chapters, municipalities in the 1970s observed school as an object of planning. Prescriptions provided by a pedagogical knowledge system such as square meters per room, special subject rooms, etc. were continuously juxtaposed to the expenses they would lead to. The school's relationship to a pedagogical knowledge system was thus seen as a relation between pedagogical prescriptions and efficient planning and thematized with questions of reasonability and efficiency. Since schools were not subjects, but rather objects of planning, it was relatively unproblematized how the school itself should manage the relation between pedagogy and planning. The school was assumed to have particular pedagogical interest and municipalities could due to their ability to consider a totality of concerns handle the overall school planning and budgeting. Municipalities argued that the necessity of pedagogical prescriptions should be replaced with necessities of efficient planning and reasonable spending of resources. The school should understand that pedagogical prescriptions were not unquestionable imperatives, but something that should be observed in relation to their economic consequences and weighted in relation to these.

From the late 1980s, municipalities primarily observe the relation between the school and a pedagogical knowledge system as a relation between a self-governing school and the teacher profession. A taken for granted relation between a school and the teacher profession is problematized, since a self-managing school is described as the unity of a range of different stakeholders among who teachers are only one stakeholder with a particular interest that may collide with the interest of for instance parents. Teachers should no longer represent the unity of the school and the schools should no longer think of itself as a community of teachers, but identify with a difference between school and environment. The school shall then manage its relation to pedagogy by actively dissolving teachers' representation of the identity of schools and observing them as one stakeholder. The school should continuously let

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its relation to pedagogy be disturbed and not take decisions with references to a multiplicity of ways of modes of observing problems and solutions.

From the late 1990s, when schools are expected to become organized, a pedagogical knowledge system emerges, firstly, as a resource of evidence that can be applied to reduce contingency in the classroom. Pedagogical knowledge is seen as an external reference that teaching practice should connect itself to so as to explicate why a certain action of method is applied. Classroom activities can communicate itself as a decision by using evidence to chose one action over a range of possible and thus reduce contingency. The school shall manage its relation to a pedagogical knowledge system by making sure teachers use it as external reference in contingency reduction. Secondly, pedagogy emerges as activities in classrooms that do not necessarily belong to the self of an organized school. Pedagogical practice emerges as something in need of description and reflection, and the possibility of describing and reflecting belongs to the organization not to pedagogy. The relation between school and pedagogy thus emerges as a relation of management. Pedagogical activities should be managed by being observed from a distance and actively connected to or excluded from the organizational order.

What I have sketched out in previous chapters might be called a history of how the school has been expected to abandon a taken for granted of a pedagogical identity and a natural relation to a pedagogical knowledge system and profession. However, this also means that pedagogy has always been on the outside of municipalities' observation of schools. Pedagogy has been something that should be subjected to planning, as something that could no longer provide universal identity of schools, and as something that should obey organizational communication.

In recent years, it seems, however, as if municipalities take an increasing interest in pedagogical ideals, concerns and experiments. With the calls for an innovative school it seems as though municipalities make the school's relation to pedagogy a central object of governing. With the calls for an innovative school, pedagogical knowledge is, not only an external reference that can reduce contingency, but also something the school should make a self-reference. The school should engage in pedagogical

developments and experiments at the school and thereby contribute actively to pedagogical knowledge.

As I will explore, with the emergence of a semantics of an innovative school, managing a relation to pedagogy is no longer a manner of subjecting pedagogy to other concerns, but a matter of rediscovering it and making the concept of learning a dominant reference of decision-making. The school is then not only to de-naturalize its relation to pedagogy by subjecting it to other concerns, but also by seeking to transgress pedagogical state of the art.

My thesis in the following chapter is that with the semantics of innovation, the school can only become independent by relating itself very actively to pedagogical developments. The schizophrenia within governing, the being ordered to become independent, seems today to mean that schools can be recognized as independent if it engages in pedagogical experiments. The school is to make sure it does not stagnate in thinking pedagogy through curriculum, timetables and predefined roles of a teacher and a pupil, but continuously provide a flexible setting where the possibilities of learning of the individual pupil are improved. The questions are how schools can become, when becoming independent is a matter of being on the boundary of the pedagogical constitutive categories. How can the school become a school in continuous experiments with roles, forms of organizing etc?

Chapter 10

INNOVATIVE NOISE

In this chapter, I will explore how new expectations of innovation reconfigure and challenge the development I have analyzed in the previous chapters. The overall transformation that I will pursue is how the school is today expected to problematize the organised self it has developed up through the late 1990s and 2000s with a suspicion that learning processes may not thrive within its rigid structures.

As described, with the expectations to organise, the school is encouraged to work to separate organizational and reflexive spaces from spaces of interactional practice so the former can discipline the latter. The contingency of teaching practice thereby emerges as a risk that the school should attempt to reduce and fixate. Moreover, since change for an organized school is a matter of relating to noise via self-observation, the school is expected to become hyper-attentive and problematize everything from teachers' habits over unconscious assumptions to things that are not said out loud. In this chapter, I will pursue how the calls for innovation challenges and radicalizes these expectations. Even though an organized school is a school that makes every little incident an object of self-investigation, classical categories of the school such as class, class room, subject, teacher, etc. have been left unproblematized. I will explore how schools are today expected to turn their self-problematizing gaze towards these categories and become in constant efforts to abandon them and the structures they are seen to force upon the school. Moreover, a main theme in this chapter will be how the school is expected to reverse its observation of contingency so as to observe it as a valuable resource that should be preserved. As I will show, with the expectations to innovate, the school is to suspend a desire to recursively connect to previous decisions.

The thesis that I will pursue in this chapter is, more generally, that a semantics of innovation produces an expectation to schools to cleave their organized self with a distinction between organizational process and organizational structures. As in the previous section, such a distinction serves both the function of distancing and relating the school from an environment. The question in the following section is thus: *how are schools encouraged to create itself out of what forms of relating and distancing from which environment of constitutive categories of the past?*

The semantics of an innovative school is still quite new and it is still to soon to evaluate how great their impact will be on policy as well as practice. A small number of Danish public schools have tried and succeeded in restructuring their organization of teaching in accordance with these ideals, and a large number of schools are currently working to implement parts of the ideals. However, in comparison to the semantics of an organized school, the dissemination of this semantics is still less extensive. In this thesis, the analysis of the semantics of an innovative school therefore occupies a special status. Firstly, it is a slightly more anticipatory than the previous chapters, since it is still rather uncertain how exactly these ideals will be taken up by individual municipalities. And secondly, the chapter does not have a parallel chapter in the first analytical part, as do chapters 7, 8 and 9. This is due to the fact that the ideals are still so new, that systematic attempts to govern in accordance with the ideals have not yet been developed. It proved too difficult to describe how municipalities emerge as a governing actor in the light of these ideals.

In the following, let me begin with a brief introduction to the semantics of an innovative school, and thereafter specify the research questions of this chapter.

An innovative school

In 2010, LGDK published a discussion paper entitled *Nysyn for folkeskolen* [New vision for the public school] in which it is expressed how the Danish economy is facing recession and the Danish welfare state is under pressure from increased globalization. The development calls for reforms and change - also in the public school, it is stated. According to LGDK "innovation, research and rethinking shall therefore be in the centre of attention when the future of the public school is to be created."[613]   The discussion paper reads:

> We need to break free from our customary conceptions and actions. The learning of children shall be the dominant motive power in the school. That is why we need a new perspective on educational goals, organization, tests, timetables, classes, place, time and space. Everything should be put at

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[613] LGDK, 2010a: 2

stake. All school actors, from managers to pupils, must in their everyday life enter into new spaces of learning. [614]

This statement raises at least two issues central to my argument in this chapter. Firstly, the school is encouraged to free itself from customary understandings and question and rethink categories such as educational goals, organization, tests, timetables, classes and even place, time and space. And secondly, the school is expected to make learning a dominant reference in decision-making.

The citation expresses an alteration in the way the school is expected to relate organization and teaching/learning, which is the subject of this chapter. Whereas from the late 1990s, the school has been encouraged to strengthen goals and organization, these are here articulated as something that should be put at stake. And whereas from the late 1990s the school has been expected to force teaching interaction into the form of organization, this citation argues that learning should be acknowledged in its own right.

In the following pages, I will pursue how these new expectations to rethink organizing categories and make learning a dominant motive power entail a call to schools to risk their organized self and reach out to learning processes outside itself. First, I will map out more thoroughly how the school is encouraged to question organizational categories and how it is encouraged to understand its main object and objective as learning processes. I will then ask how the school is expected to design organization that is flexible enough to facilitate illusive learning processes. A next question then emerges of what form of decision-making system an innovative school when in order to provide flexibility decisions are only allowed to postpone the moment of deciding. And finally I will explore how a becoming by abandoning structures may create its own structures. How are structures co-created in the attempts to organize the school as processes?

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[614] LGDK, 2010a: 5

Questioning structures

The call to question and rethink existing organizational categories often evoke a distinction between a school of a past industrial society and a schools of a current and future knowledge society. In an editorial in 2002, LGDK articulates this distinction and simultaneously introduce a concept of 'the tyranny of the number 1'. LGDK states:

> The public school needs to be liberated. The organization of work in the public school looks like that of the industrial society. But we are living in a knowledge society with entirely different conditions. Can the expenses of schools be scaled down and schools simultaneously be arranged for and aimed at a modern knowledge society? It can indeed if we abolish the tyranny of the number 1: 1 teacher = 1 class = 1 classroom, etc. is an outdated and expensive organization of teaching.[615]

LGDK here distinguishes sharply between an industrial society and a knowledge society and regrets that the organization of the public school stems from the former rather than the latter. What emerges as the past is a school organizing itself in accordance with a formula of one teacher, one class, one subject, etc. And a future school that has liberated itself from such organization entails the double advantage of being suited for a knowledge society and being cost efficient.

As opposed to the school of the industrial society that organized through its concepts of class, lesson, etc. the school of the knowledge society has a project organization. LGDK argues:

> We will abolish "the tyranny of the number 1" – in the sense of one class, one teacher, one hour. Instead we replace tests, time tables and classes with a new form of teaching organized through lectures, workshops, courses and projects. [616]

With the expression of the tyranny of the number, the school is encouraged to begin to observe its organizing categories as belong to the past. In a discussion paper, LGDK cites Danish educational researcher, Niels Egelund, for stating: "In ten years we will go to the museum and be amused that once upon a time in the year of 2000 there was something called a time table and fixed sizes of classes."[617] With such descriptions, the

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[615] Danish Municipalities 24.01.2002
[616] Chair of LGDK, Jan Trøjborg in official press release. 21.05.10
[617] LGDK, 2000: 25

school is encouraged to observe its categories as having a "historic back-log."[618] The school is encouraged to relate to itself with a suspicion that it has structural left-over from an industrial society. In a newsletter from the board of LGDK, schools and municipal boards are encouraged to "critically scrutinize old routines, tasks and forms of organizing ".[619] And in a discussion paper, LGDK adds:

> The message is re-organization and dismantling. To make room for all the new we need to systematically discuss dismantling of the "old" and focus on the necessary. The timetable of pupils with the lesson-divided teaching does no longer suffice.[620]

Here, again, the historical left-over is articulated as timetables and divisions of teaching. LGDK argues that the school is facing a task of dismantling such organizational structures of the past in order to be able to adjust to the new. With the concept of the tyranny of the number 1, it is suggested that the school is burdened by their legacy of constitutive categories and the organization and structure these have left the school with.[621] A school of the industrial society is a school that let itself be limited and restricted by traditional ways of thinking.[622]

LGDK often refers to a book published in 2009 by Danish management researcher and opinion-maker Steen Hildebrandt and educational researcher Per Fibæk Laursen. The book is titled: *Når klokken ringer ud. Opgør med industrisamfundets skole* [When the bell rings. Doing away with the school of the industrial society]. According to the authors a "narrow minded thinking in boxes and silos" is a remainder of an industrial society and not a part of efforts to create an educational setting in which pupils can obtain the competences they need in order to perform well in a knowledge or network society.[623] The authors provide the following image of how the school has mirrored an industrial society and thus an image of the burden that the school needs to liberate itself from:

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[618] Hildebrandt & Laursen, 2009: 20
[619] News from the Board of LGDK: special issue January 2010: 1. www.kl.dk/folkeskolen
[620] LGDK, 2000: 3
[621] LGDK, 2000: 18
[622] See Hildebrandt & Laursen, 2009
[623] Hildebrandt & Laursen, 2009: 8

> The school of the industrial society actually looked like a factory…. But even more than the buildings, the inner structures and norms of the school mirrored the life of the factory: Order, system, standardization and predictability was the central values. The entire everyday life was regulated by the timetable that for both teachers and pupils determined who should be where, when and do what. Everything was arranged after a certain pattern: one teacher, in one class, in one classroom, teaching one subject, for one hour. Between the lessons were breaks, and the school bell, like the siren of the factory, controlled the division of breaks and working hours.[624]

A school organized in rigid structures of lessons, subjects, etc. is a school of the past – a school that belongs to a society that is no longer present. Concepts such as order, system and determined durations of lessons emerge as that which reveals that the school is still mirroring a factory and that which constitutes a barrier for the emergence of a school adequate to the demands from present and future societies. The organizational phenomena that is criticized for not creating a space in which human beings can learn is a pattern of one teacher in one class, etc. and the interruptions of the school bell that divides time up in equal entities.

The experience of an innovative identity of a school is thus related to efforts to mark the *tyranny of the number 1* as a past, which the school should actively seek to abandon. By thinking of timetables as equivalent to the bell of a factory and of the class as something that belongs in a museum the school can experience itself as a school of the present and future society. The school is encouraged to discover itself as marked by a historic left-over of structures and to create new opportunities by realising itself from its past.

A school of learning

As indicated, the semantics of an innovative school also entails a call to schools the rediscover their relationship to pedagogy - especially in terms of how they understand the nature of learning.

Firstly, the school is encouraged to understand learning as something that happens across boundaries such as school and home, lesson and break, school and after school

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[624] Hildebrandt & Laursen, 2009: 14

care, etc.[625] LGDK argues: "Children learn in social contexts, in communities, in conversations and in cooperation with other children and adults."[626] A small number of schools are often referred to as leading innovative schools since they succeed in taking an unambiguous point of departure in learning processes. One of these schools defines learning as something that happens 24 hours a day, 7 days of the week.[627] Learning is to be understood as something that can potentially occur in all social settings and at all times and thus as something that transgresses the boundaries of lessons and of the school itself.

Secondly, the school is expected to understand learning by help of the concept of individual learning styles which, up through the 2000s, have disseminated in municipal school policy.[628] According to one of the central references for this concept, namely Dunn & Dunn[629] a style of learning is the distinctive way in which a person begins to concentrate, process, absorb and remember new and difficult subject material. The idea is that every person has a unique combination of ways of relating to subject material and thereby a preferred learning style.[630],[631] In a discussion paper LGDK states:

> Children learn in very different ways – through the ear, the eye, the hand or through combinations of several senses. Some children learn fast, others more slowly, maybe because they learn by applying several techniques. Today, we know more about how children learn, and we have to take the

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[625] LGDK, 2009b: 80

[626] LGDK, 2000: 9

[627] Taped interview with school manager conducted November 2010. The expression is also to be found in the school's value statement.

[628] This can be seen as an enforcement of the concept of differentiated teacher, which was already in 1993, introduced in national legislation. Through the late 2000s, the concept of individual learning styles disseminated the Danish school public among other ways through a very popular TV documentary about a school committing itself to the pedagogy of individual learning styles and thereby improving results of children immensely.

[629] See Dunn & Dunn, 1993; 1995; 1999

[630] The concept of learning styles is based on the idea that there are 21 different elements that have an effect on learning. These are divided into 5 areas, namely environment (sounds, light, architecture, furniture and design), emotions (motivation, responsibility, adaption and need for structure), social preferences (learning alone, together with others, controlled by self or others) physical factors (perception, time, needs of moving around), and psychical factors (analytical, holistic, impulsive, reflective, left or right half of the brain). It is thus argued that each child learns best in an individual combination of these factors (Dunn and Dunn 1993; 1999)

[631] The concept of *individual learning style* is related to a concept of many intelligences brought forward especially by Howard Gardner. A learning style may be said to be an expression of how a person's (combinations of different) intelligence is best applied.

point of departure, that learning is a very compound process. Therefore, teaching should be arranged more much differentiated.[632]

With the concept of individual learning styles, schools are thus encouraged to organize teaching so that the needs of the individual child are taken into account. Each child is observed as a unique combination of learning styles and thus with special requirements for instance, of practical or theoretical teaching. LGDK argues that each child should be "given better possibilities for making use of and developing their talents." And that "It is important that schools create a varied school process for each individual child."[633] Teaching should thus not address all the children in a class alike, but be differentiated so that the specific learning styles of each child are accommodated.

It is, however, not only learning styles but also motivational patterns that are unique for each child. LGDK argues "curiosity and interest is the foundation."[634] And in the value statement of a leading school, it reads: "Motivation is a key word – curiosity is the driving force and it is the task of the pedagogical staff to arrange teaching to fit the pupils' competences."[635] Schools are encouraged to rethink how children learn as a matter of motivation and take responsibility for arranging teaching with a point of departure in the curiosity of each child. LGDK argues "the interest in learning is not equal for all 7 year olds, 9 year olds or 14 year olds" … and that therefore "teaching must be differentiated and the forms of teaching varied much more."[636] The school is thus encouraged to arrange teaching so that the motivational patterns of each pupil are accommodated.

Thirdly, the school is encouraged to observe learning processes as difficult to influence and thus to plan. In a statement of the theoretical grounding of pedagogy practice, a leading school explains with reference to Niklas Luhmann that learning cannot be planned or controlled because children are a form of closed systems that are self-creational, self-referential and selective. Since "children are completely left

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[632] LGDK, 2000: 24
[633] LGDK, 2000: 24
[634] LGDK 2010a: 8
[635] For reasons of anonymity, I do not refer this or following quotations to specific schools.
[636] Chair of LGDK, Jan Trøjborg in official press release. 21.05.10

with their own constructions" the task of the school is to create the conditions on which others can learn. This means that even though learning can potentially flourish at all time, as an object of organization and management, it is difficult to plan and control. An often cited book on school management states:

> Learning cannot be designed or planned. This view on learning is a great challenge for the deliberate strategies and for instance the evaluation of goal achievement that is only interested in how the exogenous goals are doing without concern for the learning process.[637]

Learning is here understood as something that cannot easily be planned and managed. When organizing the schools' activities, the school is encouraged to take into account that learning processes is a phenomenon that does not emerge on demand and may escape means of planning and goal setting.

Finally, schools are encouraged to observe learning as a self-organizing and emerging phenomenon. Today, innovative teaching is increasingly observed as a matter setting a stage that allows the motivation of children to flourish by involving the capability of children to take responsibility for their own learning and utilizing the resources of skills and knowledge present within a group. One example is a teaching project titled *Teacher Leave Them Kids Alone*[638] that asks pupils to produce, edit and analyze a five-minute movie in one week. The project is based on what is called peer-to-peer teaching and learning – a form of teaching that recognizes that some children are IT experts and can educate their peers as well as teachers if teaching is designed to utilize their skills. One of the teachers behind this project explains to a local newspaper how the key to make pupils "super motivated" is to give them responsibility and show them trust. He states:

> In the project it is not we the teachers, who have control. We create the frames that the pupils can work within and then we fully trust them to get the most out of that freedom. They feel a great ownership when they are given more freedom.[639]

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[637] Thomsen & Krøll-Schwartz, 2009:118. The authors are here drawing on the concept of learning in practice communities proposed by Etienne Wenger.
[638] Designed by two Danish teachers, who received quite extensive media coverage when they won *The Microsoft Worldwide International Educator Award 2010*, in the category of *Innovation in Collaboration.*
[639] Local newspaper *Villabyerne*, 22.11.2010

Schools are thus not only to observe learning as processes that are unique in accordance with individual learning styles and motivation, but also to understand learning as a self-organizing phenomenon. By providing frames and then withdraw to roles of facilitators, teachers can create conditions on which pupils will contribute with their particular competence and knowledge and learning processes for whole groups can thereby emerge.

Let me recapitalize. With today's semantics of an innovative school, the school is encouraged to understand the phenomenon to which it is encouraged to devote its full attention, namely learning, as something that can happen 24 hours a day 7 days a week and thus transgresses boundaries between school and home and lessons and breaks. The school is encouraged to recognize that all pupils learn in different ways and thus acknowledge learning processes as unique and in need of variation of different conditions. Moreover, learning is observed as illusive, partly unpredictable and self-organizing processes that can difficultly be plan and managed.

To become innovative means to re-think the content of the school as learning understood as processes that can potentially happen everywhere and at all times, but does not necessarily obey attempts to design or plan it. The next questions then concern how the school is encouraged to organize itself in order to become a place where learning can thrive. What school-self is to be created to meet these expectations to organize learning processes without destroying their nature as transgressing and self-organizing?

Observed as an emergent and self-organizing phenomenon that is in principle closed to external influence, learning emerge as something outside the reach of the organized self of the school. A first question is thus how the school can arrange itself so as to reach out to what it is not? Moreover, since learning is observed as unique for each pupil, the school cannot solely relate itself to an undifferentiated mass of pupils in a class or a year group. A second question is then how the school is to re-arrange itself as a variety of learning opportunities in order to be able to

accommodate and connect itself to a multiplicity of different learning processes. How is the school to handle one-multiple relationships to unique learning processes?

Blank organization

In discussion papers from 2010, LGDK argues that if teaching is to be differentiated and varied, then flexible forms of organizing are needed.[640] In an interview, the school manager of a leading school states: "The activities decide the time table; it is not the time table that decides the activities."[641] This form of flexible organization may be elaborated by drawing on Serres' concept of a blank domino. Serres takes a point of departure in how the blank domino, like the joker it is, is capable of relating itself to all other domino pieces. According to Serres:

> This white object, like a white domino, has no value so as to have every value. It has no identity, but its identity, its unique character, its difference, as they say, is to be, indifferently, this or that unit of a given set.[642]

Since the white domino does not have a specific value it can have the unique identity of every value. Its specificity is to be unspecific and thus indifferent with regard to what it can connect to. The idea is that the blanker a phenomenon is the more possibilities of linking to other phenomena.[643] One of Serres' many examples is a key. An elaborately cut key only fits the original lock it was made to have a relation to. Its specificity is what reduces its potential couplings to other locks. However, if the specificity is diminished:

> Rub the crenellations of the key, the crenellations of the symbol and their stereospecificity is obliterated; the key fits into an increasing number of locks, the symbol adapts to an increasing number of fragments. Made smooth, the key becomes a passkey. The one-multiple relationship gets easier and easier the more indeterminate the one is.[644]

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[640] LGDK, 2010a: 3; 2010b: 10
[641] Taped interview conducted November 2010
[642] Serres, 2007: 160
[643] For a more thorough discussion of this phenomenon of 'blankness', see Serres, 1991: 93ff; see also Hetherington & Lee, 2000
[644] Serres, 1995: 29

In the following, I will elaborate how the expectations to the school to create itself as flexible organization may be understood by help of the concept of the blank domino. It may be that school organization has to rub its crennelations so as to be able to have multiple relationships to unique learning processes.

One-multiple relations between organization and learning processes

To arrange teaching in accordance with how each pupil learns and in that pace that gives him or her optimal learning, LGDK suggests that each child could have its own goals and timetable.[645] Especially older pupils (7th, 8th, 9th and 10th school year) are argued to benefit from being able to formulate and focus on each their own goals and arrange each their own school day.[646] The question is how school organization can emerge if it has to accommodate a different arrangement for each child. Inspired by Serres' we may find that to handle one-multiple relationships the school need more indeterminate and unspecific organization. For instance, the concept of classroom teaching may be too specific to connect differently to pupils. LGDK argues:

> Our holding on to the class as the predominant form of organizing of teaching reduce children's possibilities for benefitting. Put differently: the school is too one-sided in its form of teaching. Children are different and have different ways of learning. Class room teaching cannot to a sufficient degree take that into account.[647]

Classroom teaching is here criticized for not being able to handle different relations to different children. LGDK argues that classroom and a point of departure in learning do not match:

> … it has consequences for [classroom. JGP] teaching that the learning of pupils is, unambiguously, the main focus. The point of departure is the individual pupil and his or her individual learning goals and learning strategies.[648]

Different forms of organization of teaching are thus requested and LGDK proposes flexible learning communities: "We need to promote more flexible communities for

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[645] LGDK, 2010a: 9-10
[646] LGDK, 2010a: 8
[647] LGDK, 2002: 7
[648] LGDK, 2010a: 8

children. The class is not the only way to organize teaching."[649] Instead of dividing children into classes, schools are encouraged to take a point of departure in larger groups so that flexible learning communities can be formed on a day to day basis and in accordance for instance with the themes, pupils are currently working with, their current needs for working individually or in smaller groups, etc.[650] Rather than taking a point of departure in a specific and fixed number of pupils, the school is expected to operate with an unspecific category of flexible learning communities. This category is argued to be capable of relating to many different needs by in its outset being indifferent to whether teaching will occur as individual learning, learning in small groups or large group lectures.

For the school to smoothly relate to unique learning processes there may be too much specificity of directions, roles and actions attached to the concept of classroom teaching: Pupils are supposed to sit in rows, on chairs, facing in one (and the same) direction and listening. Teachers are called upon to stand in front of the black board and seek to explain the curriculum of the day to pupils. Serres suggests:

> If it is determined, it excludes too much, it denies, the symbol fits no one, the key is almost of no use. Multiply the notches, and the key becomes autistic, solipsistic. If the one is not determinate, of it is close to nothing or in the neighbourhood of no one, it fits in multiple ways.[651]

When the school is expected to handle one-multiple relations to learning processes, organization of teaching via classrooms denies too many connections. Classrooms become almost of no use since addressing all pupils alike is seen as fitting to none of them. Flexible learning communities, on the other hand may be appealing, since, as a form of organization, it can work like a blank domino; unspecific enough to potentially meet many different needs.

The school may then experience itself as innovative when it engages in efforts to make organization as indeterminate and unspecific as possible. Organizational categories of goals, timetables and class are to be understood in such ways so that they in their outset are indifferent towards concrete content. By, for instance, substituting

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[649] LGDK, 2000: 9
[650] Danish Municipalities 27.02.2003, nr. 8, p. 10
[651] Serres, 1995: 29

classroom teaching with flexible learning communities, the school can rub away specific instructions entailed in the category and become capable of connecting to diverse and unique learning processes.

Blank and trifurcating architecture

To handle one-multiple relationships between school and a diversity of learning processes, the school is also expected to re-asses its physical surroundings in terms of variation. In 2009, LGDK published a catalogue presenting a range of successful building and rebuilding projects. The catalogue reports how processes of rebuilding schools had aimed at "getting the teaching out the class rooms of the school"[652] and into flexible and different learning environment "so the children can go to the places where they learn best."[653] From a leading school it is reported:

> The common rooms were arranged so that they today support the vision of the school of differentiated teaching. The common rooms all have informal work spaces in the form of sofas, sack chairs, hammocks and carpets etc. that encourages both individual work and group work in smaller or larger groups.[654]

From a leading school we find a similar description reported in *Danish Municipalities*:

> The challenge has been to rethink how one learns. Children are different and they learn at different times. ... It may be that one pupil benefits more from lying on a mattress than sitting in a very stiff style. So there need to be possibilities for doing that. Or maybe someone needs to move around every now and then and they need to do that without disturbing the other pupils.[655]

To organise itself so as to handle multiple relations to learning processes, the school is thus encouraged to make its architecture varied so that this does not determine how and in what bodily positions pupils shall learn.

However, the architecture is not only expected to offer variation. Each space should also offer transformability. In the inspirational catalogue mentioned above, many of

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[652] LGDK, 2009b: 100
[653] LGDK, 2009b: 102
[654] LGDK, 2009b: 94
[655] Danish Municipalities 09.08.2001

the presented schools have "moveable furniture and equipment, [to] ensure flexibility."[656] From one school it is reported:

> All furniture and equipment in the houses can be moved around. Tables, chairs, book shelves and dividing walls have wheels and they are often moved around to facilitate group formation across classes. [657]

Blank organization is thus also a matter of blank architecture, unspecific enough to connect to the needs of different situations and occasions. With wheels on dividing walls, sizes of rooms can change.[658] And with hoisting shutters between class rooms and common areas, separated class rooms and hallways can become coherent learning environments when needed.[659] Wheels may become a crucial part of school architecture, since they provide transformability. Serres writes: "It [the blank domino.JGP] permits it to bifurcate, to take another appearance, another direction, a new order."[660] We may say that technical arrangements of wheels transform furniture to blank dominos. With wheels attached, lockers can trifurcate into storage of pupils' school bags, temporary walls that enclose spaces and devices improving acoustic conditions.[661] With hoisting shutters a class room and a hall way can take the appearance of a coherent learning environment. And designed unspecific and blank staircases can host anything from "a pupil needing a moment alone, small groups of concentrated pupils or the audience for the yearly school theatrical performance."[662]

Joker-like school architecture may help the school manage one-multiple relations between organization and unique learning processes by making physical spaces appear differently depending on the opportunities for learning it is seeking to facilitate. As Serres' phrases it, it is bi-, tri-, or poly-valent, according to the complexity of the connection.[663] Furniture or equipment that is too specific is criticized for leading to "a strict division in function".[664] Designed too specific architecture is seen to determine activities and divide them into functions. For an innovative school too many

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[656] LGDK, 2009b: 102
[657] LGDK, 2009b: 55
[658] LGDK, 2009b: 106
[659] LGDK, 2009b: 111
[660] Serres, 2007: 160
[661] LGDK, 2009b: 106
[662] LGDK, 2009b: 104
[663] Serres, 2007: 162
[664] LGDK 2009b: 110

opportunities are thereby closed and potential to transform and become something else degrade.

Potentiality

As partly implied above, school organization/architecture that is blank is also organization/architecture that seeks to maintain and foster potential. According to Serres, the blank domino is where opportunities are still open and where possibilities of couplings are limitless: "This smooth face is the capacity of the multiple that can be called the possible."[665]

A leading school seems to express such an ideal when it describes itself as an amoeba school: "The flexible school becomes the amoeba organization, capable of adjusting to the needs that it observes." The school defines good teaching as "an amoeba that operates with varied and flexible "learning environments" ". The school explains on its website:

> It [good teaching] operates with spaces of learning like "the lecture room", the study cell", "the laboratory", "the open space room," etc. On the basis of the above, good teaching becomes an amoeba concept, since pupils are different and enjoy and benefit from very different learning environments with regard to content, method, organization and structuring, and since criteria continuously must be changed as new knowledge becomes available.

Rather than thinking in subjects, classes and curriculum it is here described how this school thinks in different learning spaces. It is argued that good teaching cannot be defined once and for all or in an unambiguous way if the school is to reach out to different children and different learning processes. Teaching is then described as the essence of transformability, the amoeba, an organism capable of becoming almost anything and thereby of adjusting itself to the needs of different pupils and situations.

What seems to be implicated with the calls for flexible organization is that an ability to *potentially* become a plethora of different teaching situations and couplings to learning processes is maintained. 'Amoeba' organization seems to mean organization designed

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[665] Serres, 1995: 29

to maintain criteria for organization fluid and ever-changing and where potential to become almost anything is continuously nurtured. To manage one-multiple relations between organization and learning processes, the school is then to balance on a boundary between actual and potential. If teaching is too planned on beforehand, opportunities to re-arrange in accordance with the observed need of learning processes are lost. Too actualized, the school is caught in a single identity where opportunities to facilitate a variation of learning processes disappear.

We may now better understand why an innovative school is a school that feels discomfort with the tyranny of the number one. For instance, the concept of a subject is seen as on beforehand so defined that it may reduce possibilities of learning of other skills. LGDK argues:

> The division of the present subjects limits the understanding of wholeness and coherence and is moreover too tied up in traditions. A new division of the subjects and a greater focus on for instance social, communicative and it-based skills must be prioritized.[666]

By abandoning rigid distinctions between subjects, the school can open and utilize possibilities of cross-disciplinary teaching and create learning and understanding across what is seen as artificial boundaries cleaving what is in fact coherent knowledge. The rigid distinctions feel unsettling to an innovative school because they reduce potential opportunities. The already actualized definition of for instance the subject of mathematics hinders an innovative school in its search for new possibilities. The school is to re-potentialize the notion of subjects by abandoning stiff divisions and search for immanent possibilities in the in-between.

Likewise, the concept of a class is criticized for determining the boundaries of a group:

> The class is often argued to provide safety for children. A known community. However, it is not like that for all pupils. For some pupils the class feels like a prison. In some cases it can nurture a perspective of 'us in 4th b and then the others.' A perspective that is completely contrary to what we understand by tolerance – and more profoundly understanding other cultures.[667]

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[666] LGDK, 2000: 8
[667] LGDK, 2000: 26

Here, it is argued that the concept of a class forces artificial boundaries upon a naturally coherent community of pupils. By defining beforehand who belongs and who does not, the concept of a class is argued to hinder pupils' ability to create relations and form learning communities across classes and year groups.

To recapitalize, an innovative school is a school that cherishes potentiality rather than actualized events and identities. The ideal is expressed in the metaphor of an amoeba applied as a self-description of a leading school. The school is expected to create itself as a creature pregnant with potential to become almost anything. To specifically defined boundaries between subjects or groups of pupils are seen as limiting for a school than can find immanent potential in between such boundaries. An innovative school is thus a school that feels a discomfort when potential possibilities are closed and therefore strives to reformulate its key-concepts so that they contain potentiality rather than fixed definitions.

Postponing decisions

When the school is encouraged to reformulate its organizing categories so that they become blank and pregnant with potentiality, we see the emergence of a school of continuous postponements of the moment of decision. Whereas an organized school emerged as a school the created itself as a coherent network of decisions where each decision held the function of fixating contingency, it seems as though an innovative school is a school that creates itself as a decision-making system where each decision holds the function of not reducing contingency but instead postponing the moment of decision.

Let me give a few examples of how an innovative school seeks to postpone decisions and thus maintain contingency. Today, the school is encouraged to understand knowledge as a constantly changing phenomenon. In a special issue of the Danish news Magazine, *Mandag Morgen*, (Monday Morning), it reads:

> ... scholarly skills do not have the same lasting value as before. They need to be re-created constantly in new processes, because no value will be created by existing facts.[668]

The citation problematizes a thinking of scholarly skills as something that are stable and lasting. The school is encouraged not to understand knowledge in terms of the known at a given point in time but, but in terms of a future yet-unknown knowledge emerging out of processes of engaging with the known. To refer to existing facts is, according to the quote, no longer something that can create value. What pupils are to be taught can thus not be decided in yearly curriculum planning, but is continually postponed.

Moreover, teachers are encouraged to postpone a decision of how to perform as a teacher. Today, teachers are requested not to think of themselves in a common sense understanding of a teacher. One of the ambitions with the founding of one of the leading innovative schools was to "create a school ... where teachers can become supervisors or coaches rather than teachers."[669] And in the special issue mentioned above it is stated that "the teacher need to take up the role of a coach, away from the black board and out amongst the pupils"[670] However, this is not only a transformation from one role to another. With pedagogical concepts such as peer-to-peer learning or cooperative learning, teachers are encouraged to continuously search for opportunities to make pupils teach other pupils and then adjust their own role in accordance. LGDK reports from a leading school: "The school sees it as an outdated thought that the teacher knows everything and is keen to involve the pupils' competences and it-skills."[671] Rather than deciding his own role on beforehand the teacher is encouraged to demonstrate presence in relations with pupils[672] and have a running dialogue with pupils[673], so as to be able to readjust his role and become a lecturer, a coach, a facilitator, etc. depending upon the different situations. An innovative teacher emerges as a teacher who postpones the moment of deciding how

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[668] Monday Morning, October 2009:14. Special issue titled, *Examining the Public School.*
[669] Danish Municipalities 09.08.2001
[670] Monday Morning, October 2009b: 19. Special issue titled, *Examining the Public School.*
[671] LGDK, 2009b: 89
[672] LGDK, 2010a: 20
[673] LGDK, 2010a: 14

he is to perform to specific teaching interaction and thereby maintains possibilities of becoming a range of different roles.

Finally, an innovative school is a school that hesitates before deciding the duration of teaching activities. The category of lesson is criticized for disrupting learning processes with its narrow time frame of 45 minutes. LGDK argues that the concept of lesson force schools and teachers to interrupt pupils that have just found the information they have searched for on the internet or are completely absorbed in a fruitful group discussion.[674] Rather using schedules to plan before hand, the school is encouraged to postpone the decisions of durations of teaching to the specific moments of interaction so that such decisions can be taken in accordance with the needs of learning processes.

An innovative school thus emerges as a network of postponements. An innovative school is a school that postpone fixation of contingency, and who emerges more like a program of undecidability[675] than as a decision-making system in the sense of a sequence of fixations of contingency. The school is encouraged to create itself out of moments of reluctance to decide. For an innovative school, a decision is always a not-yet-decision.

Celebrating noise
It seems as though disorder or noise then becomes productive for the school. To begin to unfold this matter, let us revisit information theory. In Shannon's classical information theory, disorder (or entropy) is a measure of the average information content one is missing when one does not know the value of a random variable.[676] The disorder of a message is the uncertainty in which the receiver of the message is maintained as long as he has not yet received the message. As Paulson has phrased it:

> It [disorder.JGP] is the fact that the specific outcome or symbol he is about to receive is for the moment lost for the observer among a more or less

[674] LGDK ,2010a
[675] Andersen 2011b
[676] Shannon, 1948

large number of possible outcomes or symbols he could be about to receive.[677]

A high level of disorder means that the receiver is in a state where uncertainty is still intact and we might therefore say that disorder is also a measure of a surplus of possibilities.

Returning to the case of an innovative school, we find that a receiver (in the form of moments of teaching) should hesitate before listening to the message of previous decisions and thus remain for a moment in the state where the message is not fully received and uncertainty is intact. As I have shown, to become innovative is a matter of making sure that the burden of the complete message sent to the pedagogical practice from the past (of former decisions) in the form of categories of class, teacher, etc. does not arrive in its full perfect state in the present. We may say that it is a form of self-imposed entropy or disorder. [678] The critique of the categories of class, subject, classroom, etc. is exactly that their message to learning processes goes through too well. The categories leave the learning processes with too little uncertainty (possibilities) as to how to conduct teaching and thus incline unambiguous roles, and direct all children to sit in equal ways in stiff chairs facing the black board. To gain a surplus of possibilities in the learning situation the school therefore needs to prolong the moment where the message from the categories are lost and where the level of disorder rises.

We may also draw on Stäheli to elaborate how an innovative school is a school that celebrates noise. Stäheli takes a part in Luhmann's description of communication[679] as a recursive phenomenon whose existence depends upon how it is linked to by

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[677] Paulson, 1988: 56

[678] Bear in mind Luhmann's definition of entropy as a situation where any possible connection between elements is equally likely (2000: 334).

[679] Stäheli, 2003: 246. He operates with Luhmann's definition of communication as a synthesis of three selections, namely information, utterance and understanding (Luhmann, 1995a: 140) to extract a concept of noise as something that is produced in the gap between utterance and understanding (Stäheli 2003; see also Knudsen, 2006) Entailed in the luhmannian concept of communication is that not until all three processes of selection of information, utterance and understanding have happened it is possible to find out what communicative event has emerged. The occurrence of communication depends upon recursivity: that understanding refers to an utterance. As Luhmann writes: "Communication emerges only to the extent that this suggestion is picked up that its stimulation is processed" (1995a: 139). Here I have simplified the matter and I just describe noise as the lack of recursivity between decisions.

other communicative events, to define noise as something that lurks in the gap between decisions and from this position threatens the very possibility of systems since it threatens the possibilities of connections between events. Noise is then the lurking possibility that the gap between organizational events cannot be bridged – that the moment of connection may never arise.[680]

The semantics of an organized school entails a concern to continuously work to ensure that the gap between communicative events is bridged as fast and tightly as possible. For instance, the expectation that teachers should ground their actions in established knowledge or refer to organizational goals functioned to ensure firm connections between events of goal formulation and pedagogical practice in the classroom. However, with the calls for an innovative school the gap between events does not appear so dangerous   – in fact it seems as though an innovative school is a school that hesitates before connecting, so that a space of opportunities is opened up. The school is thus encouraged to nurture noise in order to hesitate with recursive references to a heritage of previous decisions. Rather than letting the way in which content and directions for actions has formerly been incorporated in the category of a class form a point of departure for pedagogical practice, the school is encouraged to mark a discontinuity and thereby open up new possibilities.

An innovative school is thus not a school that relates itself to noise by excluding it or transforming it into order. Rather, an innovative school seeks to produce conditions of possibilities of noise, by stretching out a gap between events. By hesitating to recursively connect to former decisions, pedagogical practice can be given a range of possibilities of arranging teaching without the restraints of, for instance, the directions for actions entailed in the category of a class. Noise, in the sense of more possibilities, can be produced by a refusal of events to let themselves be disciplined by former events. Even though the category of subject entails distinctions between Danish and history, the pedagogical practice shall not let itself be disciplined to obey such distinctions.

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[680] Stäheli, 2003: 246

That the school is expected to nurture and celebrate noise is indeed a radical development that puts the school's identity severely at stake. Let me explain through an example of how decisions of the school's boundaries should not be taken beforehand.

As indicated previously, the divisions of the school day into lessons are criticized for decreasing possibilities of accommodating needs for different learning styles. For instance, a distinction between the school and after school care is suggested dissolved in order to open up opportunities for learning. From a leading school it is reported:

> The premises are arranged to fit both school and after school care… that creates a natural coherence between activities in the pedagogical work in teaching situations and leisure time. It is exactly in the interplay between play and learning that new opportunities emerge for developing spaces of learning and development in both leisure time and in teaching.[681]

By abandoning thinking as well as architecture that separate school and after school care potentiality can be sought for in the spaces between play and learning. Again, rather than deciding beforehand where the boundary between teaching and play runs, the school is encouraged to arrange itself so that such decision can be postponed and possibilities of learning can emerge.

When the school is encouraged to postpone the drawing of a boundary between teaching and play, it seems as though the school is also to postpone any clear marking of its own boundaries. The quotation above expresses this in a rather institutional sense as a matter of hesitating before observing something as school and something as leisure time in after-school care. However, it seems as though an innovative school is generally a school that hesitates before it judges self from other. Let me explain.

An innovative school is a school that observes learning as a phenomenon outside itself to which it wishes to reach out. However, an innovative school is also a school that knows that its own tendencies to force stiff categories and rigid planning upon learning may prevent the emergence of learning. An innovative school is a school that knows itself to be too keen to judge and distinguish. It is thus a school that does not

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[681] LGDK, 2009b: 80. Generally, after school care has been coupled more closely to schools. Most school management teams today include the manager of the after school care institution attached to school.

only postpone decisions about how to arrange teaching, but also a school that seeks to postpone the moment of judging whether an observed activity is play with a surplus of learning or just play. We may say that with the encouragement to search for potential learning in spaces in-between teaching and play, the school is encouraged to reach out to the learning processes it knows to be outside its reach by hesitating with judgments of whether this is a relevant outside (learning) or an irrelevant outside (just leisure time). In order to be able to discover as many possibilities of learning as possible, the school needs to postpone the moment of judging a relevant possibility from an irrelevant possibility.

To recapitalize, an innovative school is a school that becomes in continuous postponements. By postponing the moment of decisions, the school can maintain contingency and thus provide moments of teaching with a surplus of possibilities. This can for instance be seen in the way in which knowledge is not to be understood as the known, but as future, potential knowledge, and in how the moment of deciding *what* to teach is therefore to be postponed. Moreover, teachers are expected to delay decisions about what roles to perform. And finally, the school is encouraged to postpone the moment of deciding the duration of teaching activities so as to be able not to interrupt learning processes. An innovative school is thus a school that postpone fixation of contingency, and who emerges more like a program of undecidability that as a decision-making system.

The school is then encouraged to celebrate noise in the sense of gaps between decisions. Noise comes to play a function of establishing a hesitation of connections, so that the moment where meaning is not yet accomplished is stretched out and where other possibilities are still intact.[682] Noise helps the school escape its organized self whose motor of becoming was an ongoing hunt for left-over of contingency and, instead, emerge as an innovative school that observes contingency as an important resource in the ongoing production of potentiality.

[682] Andersen 2009: 17-19

This also means that an innovative school emerges as a school that postpones judgments of self and other. Quite concretely, the school is encouraged to hesitate before distinguishing between itself and day care or after-school care institutions and before judging play as part of the school's attempt to foster learning or as outside these attempts. It thus seems as though the semantics of innovation is a quite radical call to put the school's identities at stake. Not only are any actualized definitions reformulated into blank categories pregnant with a range of potential outcomes. And not only is any definition of self in the sense of an actualized identity postponed. More radically, an innovative school is so keen to discover new possibilities outside itself that it denies itself the possibility of judging something as outside – as irrelevant. With the semantics of innovation the school is called upon to suspend the very distinction between self and other through which it can experience identity.

The next questions are then: If the moment of the decision is continuously postponed what forms of redundancy may emerge? Also drawing on the findings on previous sections: Could it be that the attempts to abandon structures produce their own structures? How do attempts to become a process organization create structures in the form of need of redundancy?

Uncertainty and redundancy

Until now, I have analyzed how the school is encouraged to abandon structures from what is seen as a past industrial society and to become a blank organization where decisions are continuously postponed. We may say that I have thereby focused on what seems as first sight to be the message to schools of how to become innovative. However, the message may be more ambiguous than that. It could be that not unlike the ways in which production of images of noisy teaching interaction is intrinsic to the efforts to become organized, so could structure creation be intrinsic to a form of becoming by abandoning structure. Maybe the efforts to design a blank organization make the school rely upon new forms of structures? In the following I will discuss these questions by taking a point of departure in a definition of structure as

"temporary redundancy tendencies of operations with enslaving effects upon certain operative sequences"[683].

Let me first elaborate how we may suspect an innovative school to produce structures. Intuitively, it seems as though to become a school in continuous abandonment of the structural left-over of former decisions entails efforts to make this left-over visible and present. As we have seen above, the calls for schools to become innovative are full of vivid descriptions of the school of the past and its tendency to rigid thinking and divisions. A somewhat trivial insight seems to be that to abandon is a twofold operation of making certain images present in order to be able to suspend them. Even though the empirical examples presented above encourage the school not to be too recursive in its operations, we may object that the citations do not appear non-recursive at all. Quite the contrary, concepts such as the tyranny of the number 1 and a difference between an industrial society and a knowledge society are again and again returned to.

Moreover, I have argued that schools are encouraged to create organization that fosters a surplus of potentiality and create moments of disorder. How then, one could ask, would such a system be capable of emerging at all? From the point of view of systems theory: without links between decisions we would find no organization at all. We might suspect that to become by abandoning structures entails some other form of connectivity. In the following, I will explore these matters by exploring a thesis proposed by information theory; that when the level of entropy is high, a system come to depend upon shared codes.

From classical information theory we know that redundancy in the form of shared codes between a sender and receiver may compensate for a high level of entropy (parts of the message lost due to noise in the channel) in a message. Redundancy is a ratio denoting the portion of a message given over to the repetition of what is already found elsewhere in the message.[684] Redundancy, we might say, are the useless portions of a message in the sense of those parts that could be eliminated without any

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[683] Clam, 2000: 73; see also Luhmann, 2000: 216; 334
[684] Paulson, 1988: 58

loss of information.[685] This implies, of course, only in the cases where a message reaches its destination safely. If not, redundancy may serve the function of making the receiver capable of deducting the content of the message all though its information value degraded on its way. Put differently, if a word is lost we may be able to guess what it was from the bits of the message that was not lost. If a few letters are lost from this message 'ABCDABCDABCDABCDABCDABCDABCD' these can be guessed from the rest of the message since the level of redundancy is high. Another example may teach us a bit more about redundancy: If two words are lost from this sentence: 'the school should abandon the ways of thinking of the industrial society and adjust itself to the … ', we may guess that the missing words are 'knowledge' and 'society'. The example indicates that redundancy is also a matter of common understandings, knowledge or codes between sender and receiver.[686] Common understandings of the present challenges of the school will make a receiver capable of guessing that 'knowledge society' is an adequate opposite of industrial society. If an innovative school is a school where decisions should not refer to the full specific content of previous decisions, an innovative school may thus also be a school that depends upon shared codes.

In an interview, the school manager of a leading school explains how the school depends on children that are capable of handling the responsibility they are given. He describes that each child knows what to do every morning because they have each their own formulated goals for specific periods and that each child knows his or her own specific learning styles and how to arrange their everyday activities accordingly. He says:

> Our foundation is very much the pupils' responsibility for the everyday life here. That they have a reasonable behaviour in relation to each other and to teachers. They really know how to take this co-responsibility upon themselves. The problem is when some pupils have not been here from the outset of their schooling and have not from the beginning learnt this way of being together. We can actually also see that in test scores. Our test scores are all right. But if we only measure those who have been here from the beginning, then their test scores are really high. It takes some time to get

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[685] Landau, 1969: 347
[686] Paulson, 1988: 60

accustomed to this way of working because it demands that the pupils' take responsibility for the learning situation.[687]

The school manager here describes how newcomers to the school may constitute a problem since they are not accustomed to the flexibility of the school day. For the flexible arrangement of learning to function, pupil and school need to share the belief that each person is responsible for his or her own learning. The relation between school and pupils seems to depend upon pupils who understand and act in accordance with school philosophy and methods. Put differently, for communication to be successful at an innovative school, school and pupil need to share codes of how things are done. This also means that, in the case of pupils that have not been at this particular school from the outset of their schooling, the school depends on time and habituation before pupils can perform well. Even though an innovative school is portrayed as a school where potential to transform and change is nurtured, it seems as though this is also a school that depends upon slow adaption processes.

Regarding relations between teachers and school, it seems as though an agreement upon the school's philosophy and methods is also crucial. The school manager from before explains:

> It is a certain type of teacher that can work in an environment as ours. We are careful to explain how we work, when we hire people. … We have a core staff of teachers that have really got this way of working under their skin – as their "second nature". They, of course, spread this in their teams so that when we have new teachers, they can get direct collegial help to get into the ways of thinking. … Last year we had one that did not fit in. We simply hired one that did not fit in.[688]

The school manager here describes how, for a core staff of teachers, the school's philosophy and ways of arranging teaching flexible are a natural part of their ways of being teachers. In opposition to these, one teacher was hired that did not fit in, and therefore left the school. For communication to be successful at a school where few instructions of how to teach are decided on beforehand by organizational arrangements, teachers need to have the ways of working of the school as a natural part of the way they act. There is thus also a transaction cost of hiring new teachers in

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[687] Taped interview conducted November 2010.
[688] Taped interview conducted November 2010

the form of risking that they do not fit in or in the form of making sure that they also get the values of the school as their "second nature". The school manager continues:

> It is all about … a thing like beginning a school year, yes all right, you can make a year plan, but it is much more important how the teams attune their attitudes and values in relation to the ways in which one works with children.

It is here expresses how an important preparation of a school year is that teacher teams commit to processes of attuning values and attitudes. Management may then emerge as a matter of facilitating redundancy in the sense of teachers and children's ability to make the mode of operating of the school a natural part of their own actions. The manager explains:

> This is where we go in and facilitates shared values. And then we have a follow up that we are very proud of. Every team has a meeting once a week. At every team meeting there is time for dialogue with the management. One of us [persons of management team] is always present. We have a few things for the team, but they also have some things for us. This way we ensure that we actually talk about things – not just write about it, but talk. It is time demanding, but it gives us a nice nearness that the staffs really appreciate.

Shared values emerge as an important object of management and the effect is described as a dependence on time and nearness. The management expects itself to be present at every teacher team meeting so as to provide a presence and make oral communication and nearness possible.

To sum up, the hazardous risking identity of an innovative school seems to lean safely on the stability of shared values. An innovative school obtains complexity in the sense of multiple forms of teaching and learning at the cost of a dependence upon shared values and codes. On the one hand, the school is expected to engage in efforts to free learning processes from decisions of the past condensed into the categories of class, class room, subject, teacher, etc., but this also means that the school may come to depend upon shared values in order to make relations between school, pupils and teachers function. Even though a part of the description of an innovative school is its ability to quickly rethink the organization of learning in accordance with the motivation of the individual pupil, an innovative school is also a school that depends

upon the slow process of pupils and teachers getting accustomed to the codes of the school. On the one hand, the school is expected to abandon structures, but on the other hand, new organizational structure in the form of management presence evolves without which the school cannot attune values.

Conclusion: A school with no outside

This chapter has sought to map out recent expectations to Danish schools to foster innovative learning. The chapter continues a history of formations of conditions of possibilities of schools by showing how the formalized self that schools since the late 1990s has been expected to create is today problematized. This is not to be understood as a complete transformation of municipal school governing in which the expectations to organize disappears. Rather, the expectations to innovate supplement such expectations and create a rather complex and contradictory landscape of expectations in which schools must seek to navigate.

Today, Danish municipal school governing entails a call to schools to question existing structures, categories and thinking. The school is encouraged to discover itself as marked by a left-over of the past and to seek to create new opportunities by realising itself from such structures. The school is thereby facing a challenge of how to organize in continuous interruptions and abandonments of previous organizing. Moreover, schools are encouraged to recognize learning of individual children as their main welfare service. Since learning is observed as an unpredictable and self-organizing phenomenon, a challenge emerges of how to organize so as to provide conditions on which unpredictable learning processes can thrive.

To handle this challenge schools are encouraged to create themselves as what I have called *blank organization.* This is a form of organizing where any category is not determined, but can become something different to meet the different needs of individual pupils. Categories such as educational goals and classes are made flexible so that they entail more possibilities for arranging teaching in accordance with the uniqueness of different situations and moments. School organization becomes a matter of organizing so as to maintain the capability of change. Even school architecture

cannot solely have a single identity as for instance a class room or a locker, but should be able to have several potential identities. As described, with wheels attached, lockers can trifurcate into storage of pupils' school bags, temporary walls that enclose spaces and devices improving acoustic conditions.

The school is then expected to problematize the organized self it has been encouraged to become since the late 1990s. The school can no longer solely think of itself as connections between decisions whose function it is to reduce complexity and contingency. The school is also to problematize such a self in terms of how it consists of structures within which learning processes cannot thrive. Rather than capturing and describing, an innovative school postpone the moment of decision so that a variation of possibilities is held open. With the semantics of an innovative school, contingency emerges as a value in itself. The school is encouraged to nurture thinking and planning that allows for elements and categories to always be able to be different. An innovative school is a school that avoids full actualization of identities. This is expressed in the image of the amoeba: An animal always pregnant with a horizon of possibilities.

An innovative school celebrates disorder in the form of uncertainty – or a surplus of possibilities - of how teaching should be arranged in specific situations and moments. As I have also shown, this makes the school dependent upon another form of structure, namely redundancy of codes and values of teachers, pupils and school. The school is expected to create itself as a machine of decision making that runs on shared values and embodiment of norms. The coherence that structures are no longer allowed to deliver is ensured by the redundancy of codes. The inherent tragedy of the attempts to innovate the school may then be that the flexibility and speed that was supposed to be achieved by continuous efforts to abandon organizational structures is challenged by a dependence upon a precise match of values between school and teacher/pupil that may take years to obtain.

Like an organized school, an innovative school observes learning as something outside itself. However, whereas an organized school observed teaching activities as strange in order to experience itself as orderly, conceiving learning as outside itself leads an innovative school to feels discomfort with its own organizing nature. Whereas an

organized school uses the observation of learning as outside as a trigger of attempts to make teaching activities visible and connected to the organization, an innovative school is very careful to reach out to learning processes in such ways that their boundary transgressing and self-organizing nature is not destroyed.

The semantics of innovation is thus quite radical in terms of how it encourages schools to become by risking any identity. Not only are any actualized definitions reformulated into blank categories pregnant with a range potentiality. And not only is any definition of self in the sense of an actualized definition postponed. More radically, an innovative school is so keen to discover new possibilities outside itself that it denies itself the possibility of judging something as outside – as irrelevant. With the calls to innovation the school is called upon to suspend the very distinction between self and other through which it can experience identity. An innovative school is thus exactly the rhythm of repeated postponements of judgments of self and other.

Chapter 11

CONCLUSION

When independence means to risk oneself

In this thesis, I have pursued the phenomenon of governed independence. A phenomenon that, on the one hand, is so prevalent and well-known among public welfare institutions that it appears as the only natural form of contemporary governing, and, on the other hand, is so full of paradoxes and oscillations that it is hard to understand how public servants manage to navigate at all.

I have explored the phenomenon of governed independence through a study of the historical development of municipal school governing from 1970 to 2010 with a specific interest in how municipalities have developed an increased sensitivity to the problem of how to govern independence and how this has led to an expansion of municipalities' expectations to themselves. I have also taken a second journey through the history of school governing to explore how schools' independence has been related to a production of organizational noise.

In this final chapter of the thesis, I aim to develop and discuss my findings by bringing them into conversation with the academic fields presented in chapter 3. Thereafter, I will conclude by specifying the overall diagnosis of the thesis: that governed independence has from the outset and is especially today a matter of schools' engagement in risking themselves.

Contribution to studies of educational governing
As I presented in chapter three, critical policy studies within educational research often portray recent years' development as a move towards a more and more unambiguous focus on performance and as an increased use of tests, measurements

and surveillance.[689] School governing is observed to be a form of rationality very different from pedagogy. It is argued that whereas governing is concerned with results and performance, schools are concerned with processes. And whereas governing struggles to implement managerial techniques and discourses, schools struggle to defend professional values.[690] My hope is that the findings of this thesis can contribute to such diagnoses by bringing attention to ambivalences and tensions *within* governing rather than criticizing governing for producing tensions between governing and pedagogy.

Whereas the mentioned educational scholars argue that governing is an increasingly strong pressure upon the public school to deliver explicitly stated results, I have shown how, governing emerges as problematizations of how such pressures may reduce advantages of self-management of schools. I have argued that, at least in the Danish context, the policy landscape was severely marked by an ambition to create schools as independent. This has meant that, today, no wave of centralization, standardization or audit can be implemented without being rigorously problematized and modified in terms of how it affects the schools' capacity to self-manage. Even though new calls for stronger government emerge, for instance, in the form of obliging goals or extended assessment, they are deemed to be met with a maelstrom of problematizations. I would thus claim that before calls for stronger government can be implemented, they enter a chain of translation processes where ambitions to impact schools are transformed into ambitions to get schools to impact themselves. Whereas educational scholars such as MacBeath or Ball worry that governing works too well in the sense of de-professionalizing teachers and making them teach only in accordance with what is tested, I argue that such concerns are also found within governing itself. At least in the Danish case, school governing is highly occupied with how not to disempower schools, and, for instance, not introduce goals so detailed that they will reduce the school's capability of independent decision-making.

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[689] In a Danish context see Moos 2007a, 17; Holm 2007; Krejsler 2007. And in an international context see McInerney, 2003, p. 58; Williams & Ryan, 2000; Weiner, 2002; Caldwell 2001; Smyth, 1993; Kenway et al, 1994; Angus, 1994; Blackmore, 1998
[690] MacBeath 1998, Ball in Moos & Krejsler 2003

I would thus propose that governing emerges as power, not by denying schools their pedagogical identity, but by continuously re-inventing itself as a result of concerns of how not to repress the school unduly. Rather than displaying governing and pedagogy as two distinct rationalities, I would diagnose school governing as something that is penetrated by pedagogical concerns. Its mode of operation is exactly to seek to teach schools to manage themselves, to foster willingness to certain forms of self-development, and to encourage schools to develop systems of self-reflection. This means that governing works as a form of power not by being different from professional pedagogical values, but by oscillating between concerns of how to gain impact and how to pedagogically encourage schools to impact themselves.

Moreover, I would disagree with educational scholars that the school is governed by an increasingly narrow economic rationality. Danish authors such as Stefan Herman and Ove K. Pedersen have argued that the public school has been subjected to an economic rationality and been reduced to a tool for national economic competitiveness.[691] Pedersen argues that whereas previously the school was seen as an institution that held responsibility for the wellbeing of democracy and should therefore encourage pupils to participate in the shaping of society, today, the school is to teach skills that can create material value possible to aggregate so as to produce wealth for the nation.[692] He states: "What the education system for more than a hundred years was given the task to develop, is now conceived as a tool for participation of the [national.jgp] economy in a global order."[693]

The diagnosis that I have presented entails the almost opposite narrative that schools are governed by increasingly complex visions of what a school is.[694] In the case of municipal governing, I have proposed that whereas, in the 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s, schools were governed as mere expenses and through rational planning aimed at obtaining cost-efficient school systems, today, municipalities operate with

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[691] Hermann 2007: 171; Pedersen 2011: 188
[692] Pedersen 2011: 196-198; see also Korsgaard, 2010.
[693] Pedersen 2011: 203
[694] I should here state that whereas I study municipalities and rather detailed debates, attempts to implement, attempts to develop concrete governing systems etc. Herman and Pedersen study transformation in national legislation and mainly very overall changes of values in the preambles of school enactment. The different diagnoses may therefore also be caused by different empirical outset.

very complex understandings of what a school is and what it should be. Rather than proposing that, today, the school's pedagogy is reduced to an economic tool and pupils therefore emerge as a commodity, my claim is that, today, municipalities govern schools with a greater variety of complex pedagogical concepts, ideals and ambitions than ever before.

The two diagnoses may be more compatible than they seem. I would not disagree that, in the present, we find new articulations of relations between pedagogy and demands of future labour markets. I would thus not rule out that the focus on pedagogy in today's governing is linked to a political belief that education is a crucial variable for national wealth. As should hopefully be clear, neither would I argue that the fact that pedagogy has become a central object of governing means that the school is unambiguously set free to pursue its 'true' or 'natural' pedagogical aims. In fact, the aim of the thesis has been to trace the consequences of such a development for how a school can become a school.

However, the following differences remain between my argument and the argument of authors such as Herman and Pedersen. First: These authors seem to imply that a consequence of the emergence of the 'competitive state' is that governing simplifies its vision of a school: For instance, *from* complex educational tasks *to* teaching skills usable in labour markets, and *from* complex perceptions of the pupil as a person *to* understandings of a pupil as a container of competences.[695] In contrast, I argue that recent years' developments lead to radically complex conceptions of what a school is. When pedagogy becomes a central focus in governing, it leads to an explosion of what a teacher, a pupil or a class room can be. And, bear in mind, that we are here not only taking about complexity in term of multiple identities, but also in terms of continuously postponed identities.

And second: Whereas these authors argue that governing becomes more and more indifferent to what a school is (see it less and less as the institution of 'dannelse'/'bildung' that it is/has been/should be), I argue that governing is increasingly preoccupied with and sensitive towards a school as complex pedagogical

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[695] Pedersen, 2011: 192

processes. Even though, it may be true that, today, the school is thematized in a language of national competitiveness, this does not mean that pedagogy emerges as a standardized commodity, rather, as a part of today's governing the school is governed to be extremely sensitive to a diversity of pedagogical opportunities.

Co-existence of power rationalities or oscillation as the rationality of power
Now, let me revisit how the fact that modern welfare states supplement traditional means of government with strategies of self-governing and self-regulating has been diagnosed with concepts of *network governance* and a *supervision state*. These diagnoses may not be all that different from the findings of this thesis. Nevertheless, let me try to depict how my findings may contribute to debates within these academic fields.

Within studies of network governance, scholars have claimed that network-based forms of coordination are displacing hierarchy and markets as the dominant mode of interaction in public policy.[696] Others have modified this diagnosis and argued that neither hierarchical government nor managerial market-based governance just disappears and that, today, governing can be understood as an

> … uncomfortable mix of these different governance regimes, each with its distinctive assumption about the nature of power and authority and about the relationship between government and governed, state and public sector.[697]

In the thesis, I have proposed that we conceive of the emergence of the ambition to govern independence in the late 1980s, as a re-entry of a distinction between governing subject and governed object. Thereby, I have conceptualized contemporary governing, not as co-existence of separate power rationalities, but as a folding of the hierarchical distinction between governing and governed: Within the space of governing, an ambition emerges to create a space of independence and the two ambitions are thus intimately connected. I have thereby made my analyses focus on the internal paradoxes within contemporary governing rather than analyzed

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[696] Kooiman, 1993; Pierre, 2000; Pierre & Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1997
[697] Newman, 2002: 719; 2005; 2001; Hirst, 1994; Sørensen & Torfing, 2005

pressures stemming from contradictions between distinct power rationalities, which are each in their outset non-contradictory.

The difference between these two forms of conceptualizations of contemporary governing may indeed be minor, and more an expression of internal academic polemic than of substantially different truth claims. At the end of the day, I agree with scholars such as Newman, that we are witnessing uncomfortable combinations of rationalities that constitute welfare institutions as "empowered, but at the same time also subjected to new strategies of control."[698] However, the little difference in conceptualization seems to mean that whereas the scholars of network governance conclude that the co-existence of power is mainly dysfunctional in terms of positioning welfare mangers under pressure, I suggest that the re-entry is a highly productive machinery for self-creation of governing actors (municipalities) as well as for welfare institutions. We may say that Newman has a similar ambition when she argues that it is necessary to study how governance regimes are enacted locally and, for instance, how they produce different subject positions.[699] However, the difference remains that my aim has not only been to follow how pressures stemming from co-existence of rationalities are played out in the micro-politics of policy delivery, but also how the re-entry, since the late 1980s, has been a central dynamic within governing – has been a trigger of ever-new governing inventions.

I have analyzed how the re-entry creates a horizon of problems for municipalities: How to engage schools in treating their independence as something distinct from governing although it is also the same? How to create a common forgetting among schools and municipality that the (re-entered) distinction between governing and independence is itself an operation of governing? And I have concluded that the inherent tendency of governing to always wish for both and (*both* independent *and* governed schools), is exactly, what has allowed municipalities to increase their own independence from the state and to develop and professionalize themselves by expanding their expectations to their own internal differentiation and to the variety of professional competences within the municipal administration.

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[698] Newman, 2002: 718
[699] Newman, 2002; 2005

As also described in chapter three, within a framework of a *Supervision State,* scholars have depicted how welfare institutions are to become independent by creating themselves as strategic and reflective.[700] It is argued that, today, welfare institutions are governed by being expected to strategically relate to their professional values, knowledge and routines and reflect upon how these can be repositioned within the new strategic organization and its polyphonic goals.[701] Whereas this diagnose seems to coincide with what I have called expectations to organize, I have also sought to highlight how schools' becoming independent has from the outset and is, today more than ever, linked to efforts to risk identity. The self that is to self-manage is thus not only to be created as reflective and strategic, but also as dissatisfied with previous identities, and as willing to continually risk itself. Whereas with the calls for organization, the ideal of reflection plays the important role of separating an organization from noisy practice, with the calls for innovation, the school is expected to risk such an organized self and identify with uncertain outcomes of teaching interaction. The self-managing selves of welfare institutions are thus not only, as proposed with the diagnosis of a supervision state, expected to enter never-ending circles of reflection.[702] They are also expected to be sceptical of the way in which reflection is a mode of becoming based upon efforts to capture and name events of the past, and become independent by breaking away from limitations of identifying only with what has been made visible and find a new self better suited at searching for potentiality in not-yet actualized identities.

Governing through an ontology of process

Finally, in my investigations, I have found striking similarities between today's expectations to Danish public school to innovate themselves and organization theory drawing on process philosophy. However, rather than promoting a call to an ontology of process to researchers as well as organizational practitioners,[703] I have investigated the empirical formation of ideals of observing the world as process in the

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[700] Andersen, 2008: 45
[701] Pedersen & Sløk, 2011; see also Pors, 2009b: 88-107
[702] Willke, 1993: 2; Pors, 2009b
[703] As do Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Linstead, 2005: 213

specific field of school governing. As argued, it seems as though the ambition to introduce a new ontology to organization theory makes scholars, such as for instance Chia or Hernes, less inclined to observe how the ontology they promote are also currently penetrating empirical fields. My hope is that I can here contribute by providing an analysis of how and with which consequences such an ontology emerges in public policy as a form of governing.

Although these have already been somewhat implied, let me first shortly explicate resemblances between calls to schools to observe their object as non-linear and emergent processes and the turn to process philosophy in organization theory. For example, in the literature as well as in my empirical data there is a call to observe organization as consisting of processes that ought not and cannot be managed if it is conceived of as structure. Another example is how, both in the literature and in school governing, one finds a call to be sensitive to the heterogeneity and uniqueness of processes. In school governing, we find that with the concept of *individual learning styles*, school are encouraged to be sensitive to how each learning process is unique and demand unique conditions. And Chia seems to express the same attitude:

> Insistence on the reality of heterogeneous becomings, rather than a linear, progressive and homogeneous unfolding is an attempt to recover the uniqueness of each expression of change, renewal and transformation.[704]

And, as a final example of resemblance, today's school governing and a process view share the idea that categories cannot capture the fluid and ever-changing reality of processes. Today, the Danish Public school is criticized for being ruled by a "tyranny of the number 1" by which is meant an organization that takes a point of departure in categories that force rigid divisions upon learning processes that should instead be thought of as processes. And in Tsoukas and Chia it is stated:

> The trouble with concepts ... is that they are discontinuous and fixed and as such unable to capture the continuously mutating character of life.[705]

An ontology of process is thus not only a theoretical or academic concern. The next question is: What is, then, at stake when, today, governing actors encourage schools

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[704] Chia 1999: 219
[705] Tsoukas & Chia (drawing on James, 1996): 570

to observe themselves through a distinction between process and structure and beware of how their structures restrict the unfolding of learning processes?

One consequence for schools is the problem that attempts to arrange the school in accordance with a process view create their own structures. The distinction between process and structure, so important in both organization theory[706] and contemporary Danish school governing, then seems to collapse. As described in chapter three, organizational theory is already sensitive to this problem. Scholars such as Hernes, Bakken or Brigham have argued that such a dichotomy fails to capture how entities come into being through processes and how they enter into processes in turn.[707] However, the dichotomy may then not be dissolved. Rather, the process-side of the distinction is privileged, so that even entities or structures are given the name of process[708] and understood as fluid and temporary (although they are not seen as fluid and temporary as processes).

One could also reverse this relation between process and structure and argue that *only* structure can change, since processes have no time to change as they disappear as soon as they appear.[709] We may say that processes are inherently unchangeable, because they are irreversible. With such an assumption, a school designed to be processual would not be as easy to change as the semantics of innovation promises. My analysis seems to imply exactly that: When the school designs itself in accordance with an ontology of process, it is facing a problem of slow and difficult change since it comes to rely on shared values and codes that take time to integrate in pupils' and teachers attitudes, behaviour and bodies. To create a flexible school thus means to produce a great amount of structure, for instance, in the form of organization of the presence of the management team at teacher team meetings in order to make attunements of values possible.

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[706] Van de Ven & Poole, 2005, claim that this distinction is indeed the most fundamental distinction in the study of organization.
[707] See Hernes 2008: 30; Brigham 2005, 240; Bakken & Hernes 2006
[708] For instance the term manifestation points entail that entities are only temporarily stabilized. See Ford and ford 1994: 765.
[709] Luhmann, 1993a: 771

I would thus argue that it is not sufficient to try to dissolve a dichotomy between process and structure by insisting on the ontology of process and claiming that also structure is processual. Rather, the interplay between process and structure is a bit more complicated. Not only because organizing so as to accommodate processes may produce structure. But also because processual organizing may not be as easy to change as the literature suggest.

Moreover, as also argued in chapter three, it may be that the focus on promoting an ontology of processes leaves process scholars blind to the historicity of their ideals. By following how concepts of emergence and process appear in a history of government, my analysis opens a discussion of how an ontology of process is an element in contemporary governing. This seems to be a blind spot in the literature. In, for instance the work of Chia, a process view is linked to a reduction of control. He states that a "management of change" will entail a

> "*relaxing* of the artificially-imposed structures of relations; the *loosening up* of organization. Such a relaxing strategy will allow the intrinsic change forces, always kept in check by the restrictive bonds of organization to express themselves naturally and creatively.[710]

Here, it is argued that to introduce an ontology of process into an organization equals a withdrawal of power and control so that change is set free to emerge in its natural and creative form. However, when an ontology of process is observed in a history of governing, we can begin to discuss how concepts of emergence and process rather than expressing an absence of power, play a crucial role in governing.

The semantics of innovation may be seen as an exceeding of previous limits of governing. With the attempts to organize, the school is governed by being encouraged to recognize teaching interaction as external to itself and the school as an object of governing is thereby restricted to organizational features – to that which has been made visible as part of the organization. However, with the attempts to govern by help of an ontology of process, the school can be made object of governing in new and more intense ways. Now, all that is not visible, not utilized, not discovered as a resource, is relevant to a municipal gaze as well. The school can no longer claim that

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[710] Chia, 1999: 211; see also Tsoukas & Chia, 2002: 579

pedagogical processes should be outside a municipal interest as long as the school delivers the organizational goals it was asked to. As an object of governing the school is instead virtualized so that it is not only responsible for what has been actualized. The school can no longer argue that its resources are definite. Instead, it is made responsible for finding new potential resources in in-between spaces or immanent in its human resources.[711]

Moreover, to observe the ontology of process in a history of governing also makes it possible to discuss how the emergence of such ideals at a specific point in time means that welfare institutions are put in a range of dilemmas and double binds. As shown, the concern that schools are not fluid and flexible enough emerges after years of worrying that schools did not have enough solid organizational structures. As I will elaborate on below, the ontology of process emerges in the tail of demands for organization and this means that schools are facing two different valuations of unpredictability. They are simultaneously expected to reduce unpredictability by reaching the goals they have promised *and* to venture into experiments valued exactly by the unpredictability of their outcomes. An ethical question arise: is it fair to ask the public school to simultaneously display responsibility by delivering what it had promised *and* enter risky experiments?

I will pursue more ethical questions below. First, let me use the final pages, to specify the diagnosis of the thesis and its implications for municipalities and schools.

Independence as risking oneself

The overall claim of the thesis is that we can understand governed independence as a relation between self-managing selves and self-produced noise. At first glance, this may seem like a common sense statement. For an institution to be recognized as self-managing, managers need to manage something and thus: relations between managing (subjects, systems etc.) and managed (subjects, objects etc.) have to be displayed. However, as I have hopefully succeeded in demonstrating, this relation is

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[711] See Juelskjær et al 2011; Pors, 2011a;

as far from straightforward as one can get. It is, in fact, a relation that to a more and more radical degree is capable of putting at stake how a school can understand itself.

The history of public schools' independence is a history of repeated deconstructions of any taken for granted identity. From the outset in the late 1980s, municipalities have interpreted schools' independence as the intensity to which schools have dismantled taken for granted identities and engaged in processes of risking themselves. When the school was initially requested to become independent, it was to abandon any experience of identity based on relations to a teaching profession. Independence meant to begin to hear the closedness of teacher communities as an irritating and destructive noise. Moreover, at this point in time, the school was also requested to risk itself by staging encounters between the different interests of itself and its stakeholders. Independence meant to establish a new form of becoming evolving out of dynamics of difference - the knowledge that the identity of the school was at best bi-stable in the sense of based on both a reference to a self and to an environment.

From the emergence of the ambition to make schools independent, a central dynamics in governing has thus been that the school should never be too sure who it is. An independent school is a school that does not rest in self-assurance, but rather experiences itself through staging of differences – a school that draws its elan from disadjointments and disjunctions.[712] Ever since, the school has been expected to become independent by installing internal irritation of taken for granted identities and establish a permanent unrest of never reaching a certain identity.

Finding a strong independent identity was thus already from the late 1980s, a matter of risking identity. However, this form of risking appears rather innocent compared to today's school governing.

With the calls for organization from the late 1990s and onwards, the school is to deconstruct any taken for granted identity related to teaching interaction. Independence is linked to the school's ability to experience everything that goes on outside the medium of decision-making as a strange and ungraspable noise. The

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[712] I am here paraphrasing Derrida & Ferraris, 2001: 4

school's independence equals efforts to risk itself by producing and encountering what it fervently hopes that it is not. And this means that an awful lot of noise has to be produced. Only by staging difference between an orderly organization and noisy, irrational and unconscious routines and habits can the school experience itself as successfully governed independent. Independence is then self-risking in the sense of balancing exactly on the boundary between producing order by overcoming meaningless noise and being overwhelmed by this noise.

As hazardous as it may seem, this form of self-risking is, however, staged to solidify that the school-self can be trusted to be organized. The painstaking encounters between the school and its own dark and noisy sides all serve the purpose of stabilizing an organized self, for instance, by bringing about possibilities of management subjects.

However, with the calls for innovation, independence is no longer solely a matter of risking oneself to gain a new identity, but of remaining in the moment of risking oneself. The school is to deconstruct any taken for granted identity as the sum of class-rooms, subjects, forms, curriculum goals, teachers, etc. - not to become something distinct, but to become a rhythm of continuous postponements of the moment of actualizing any solid identity.

With the calls for innovation, the school's production of noise is intensified. Noise is now not just produced to be excluded, but instead celebrated as that which ensures that the moment of decision is not reached too quickly, so that possibilities are held open for the school to become whatever frame, learning processes are seen to demand in specific moments. As a school obsessed with an economy of potentiality, an innovative school feels discomfort by deciding on beforehand how boundaries between lesson and break; between play and teaching; and even between the school itself and other institutions, should be drawn. When the school is to become independent by chasing potentiality, the school is to be an uncertainty of whether something may count as learning; a mere inclination to wait and see; an experiment with an uncertain outcome.

This means that the school can never rest in an – if only temporary – assurance that the distinction between a school-self and a school-other is solid. A school can no longer rely on bi-stable identities of school and environment or of organization and interaction. Rather, the school is called upon to be exactly the reluctance to draw distinctions between self and other. What a school is simply explodes: A school may be the neighbouring day-care institution, a school may be the breaks between lessons and a school may be what goes on around the dinner table at nights in family homes.[713] With today's call for innovation, governed independence is thus a matter of the school's willingness to radically risk itself by postponing what a school is into a yet-unknown future. The school can be recognized as independent if it displays itself as a horizon of potential, but never actualized selves.

Over the years, the avalanche initiated with the first experiments with decentralization, has thus made school governing an ever more radical encouragement to schools to risk themselves. With the initial calls for independence, the possibility of the school to rest in a self-assured identity was lost. And with the calls for organization, the self-risking is intensified, since schools are now not only encouraged to abandon a specific identity (the school as a teacher community), but to continuously confront any activity, conversation, or event with the suspicion that it does not belong to an organized school. The calls for innovation are, however, much more radical. Now, the school is to be nothing but a fear of a fully actualized identity. Independence has become an active dissolution of any solid identity and the creation of a school-self that is nothing but a surplus of possibilities.

Final questions
We have reached the final section of the thesis. Let me finish by extracting a few implications and ethical question from my findings.

The thesis has shown that a transfer of decision-making competence from municipality to school is anything but a zero-sum game, where municipalities can

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[713] See Knudsen, 2010

stop worrying about an issue because the competence to decide about it has been delegated to schools. Rather, the thesis argues that decentralization leads to an acceleration of expectations to municipalities to facilitate schools' self-management; to translate political demands into support of schools' self-development; and to handle the challenge of making conflicts between municipality and school appear as a shared destiny.

The thesis thus suggests that policy-makers should not naively observe decentralization as a way of delegating power, tasks and responsibility from one place to another. Rather than paving the way for a reduction of municipal responsibility, the development towards self-managing schools has been a powerful motor for expansion of municipal capacity. To put it simply: More management *at* the school leads to more municipal management *of* the school.

Moreover, the thesis has shown how any idea of distinct, visible and non-mistakable municipal school governing is forever lost in an avalanche of problematizations of how to govern without unduly reducing self-management capacity. This idea of distinct governing is often brought to life when news media, for instance, reveal how a school has failed to discover child neglect and seek to hold municipal authorities unambiguously responsible. Moreover, this idea lives in OECD-reviews demanding stronger and more distinct municipal goals for schooling.[714] However widespread such an idea of distinct and un-mistakable governing is, the thesis shows that welfare governing is a much more complicated affair.

As shown, municipalities can assess their success as school governing actors in terms of how schools can be observed as affected by municipal governing, but affected in such a way that schools' capacity for self-management is non-affected. Municipalities can then experience themselves as governing in the moments where it becomes apparent that the school is self-managing, but of its own will work to reflect municipal concerns and aims. To emerge as a school governing actor, municipalities

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[714] OECD, 2006

are forever deemed to depend entirely upon the ways in which schools emerge as self-managing.[715]

When OECD-reports criticize municipalities for not governing unambiguously enough, national and municipal policy-makers should therefore remember that any possibility of unambiguous positioning has been lost a long time ago. Today, municipalities cannot escape the trembling and on-going oscillation of attempts to create a common forgetting between schools and municipalities that the space of independence is created within a space of governing. Thus, it seems unlikely that stronger and more distinct governing would lead to efficient governing relations between municipality and school. Rather, the historical development has taught municipalities to remember to feel a strong discomfort with unambiguous governing.

Turning the gaze towards schools, questions arise of whether contemporary school governing asks schools to do the impossible. Let me draw attention to two concerns in relation to the semantics of innovation and one in relation to the combination of expectations to organize and to innovate. I will begin with the latter.

The thesis proposes that, today, schools are expected to navigate in double expectations to organize and to innovate. My findings, moreover, suggest that this is not an easy task: To become organized, the school is expected to recursively capture and name interaction. And to become innovative, the school is expected to reach out to the not-yet occurred and emerge as dreams of virtual possibilities.

The school is thus to manage two different valuations of contingency. As described, for an organised school, changes and development equals efforts to manage the risk of the unpredicted by fixating and reducing any surplus of contingency. In contrast, an innovative school accepts contingency as the ground condition of its operations. The school is to cherish learning processes as ontologically unpredictable and impossible to plan. Whereas an organized school is suspicious that an excess of contingency is haunting its organized self, an innovative school observes the not-yet discovered and the not-yet defined as potential value.

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[715] See also Pors, 2011a

A question then arises of whether it is fair of politicians, municipal directors, pedagogical experts, etc. to expect the school to initiate risky experiments *and* demonstrate how it reduces risks. More importantly: To what degree are school governing actors such as politicians, municipal directors and school boards willing to share this risk of a double valuation of risk with the school's professionals and its management? And how are parents and a broader society willing to accept and acknowledge that the school cannot always both deliver a risk-free and an innovative school?

Another concern arises with today's semantics of an innovative school and its belief that more resources can always be found immanent in humans, in new forms of organizing or in multiple identities. This semantics may be likely to disseminate the idea that if only schools and school actors are innovative enough, then any question of material resources are of minor importance. With this semantics a terrain has been constructed in which a school that complains about limited resources risks to be accused of not being innovative enough. Politicians and municipal directors can disregard reasonable applications for more resources with the argument that if schools were not so tied up in concepts and conceptions of the industrial society, then they would not need more resources from the outside, since these could be found in more flexible arrangements and better utilization of space, breaks between lessons, play time, family evenings, etc. A central question seems to be: In times of general retrenchments in the public sector, will a semantics of innovation legitimize unreasonable spending cuts with its unrealistic conception of immanent potential?

Finally, my analysis of the semantics of innovation points to a third concern. An innovative school emerges as an anticipation of virtual possibilities that never reach their final implementation. For an innovative school, it is not so much the actual event of three pupils working together, but the idea that they could also have worked alone or in a large group. The staircases are not so interesting due to the fact that, today, they are used for a lecture. Rather, the stairs are interesting because of their possibilities of being used differently. The semantics of innovation may thereby carry a risk of differentiation between an innovative semantic and the everyday running of a school. To govern a school to become innovative may be more of an interest in

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producing opportunities than actually actualizing them. It may be a form of governing whose object is the school's ability – not to actualize and implement – but to keep producing and maintaining potentiality. Central questions are: Does such governing entail a silent interpellation to schools to split themselves into ideals about innovation on the one hand, and the everyday operations where schools remain dependent upon structures and decisions on the other? By applying the semantics of innovation, do governing actors ask the school not to change, but to talk about the necessity of change?

When more management is evoked as the solution to challenges in the public sector, it is thus crucial to bear in mind that attempts to strengthen management capacity and enforce independence of welfare institutions have powerful side-effects. Not only do the attempts to utilize local management capacity lead to a maelstrom of problematization from which no governing initiative can escape. And not only does more decentralized management lead to much higher expectations to central management. Attempts to, from the outside, create a system that can create itself from the inside, also foster an increasingly strong obsession with all that which can never be brought under control. Attempts to govern independence do, in other words, not only produce orderly and efficient welfare institutions; they also create an ever more importunate fantasy of all the unmanageable noise that threatens to collapse any idea of efficient management.

Dansk Resume

Vi sætter i Danmark større og større lid til, at problemer i den offentlige sektor og i velfærdsstaten mere generelt kan løses gennem mere ledelse. Det har været en bevægelse, der har stået på gennem længere tid. Dogmet synes at være, at ledelse producerer mere styring og kvalitet. Særligt har der de sidste år været fokus på, hvordan de enkelte velfærdsinstitutioner såsom hospitaler, plejehjem og skoler kunne opbygge ledelseskapacitet. Det har sat en særegen problematik: hvordan kan man oppefra skabe ledelseskapacitet nedefra?

Denne afhandling handler om, hvordan danske kommuner igennem de sidste 40 år har udviklet nye forestillinger om forholdet mellem kommune og skole og langsomt tildelt den enkelte skole organisatorisk selvstændighed og opbygget forventninger til dens selvledelse. Mit fokus i afhandlingen er således forholdet kommune/skole, men jeg ser samtidigt dette forhold som symptomatisk på en bevægelse, der gør sig gældende flere steder i vores velfærdsstat. I den forstand handler afhandlingen ikke blot om skolen, men mere generelt om tilblivelse af nye betingelser for velfærdsledelse. Det er mit ærinde med folkeskolen som eksemplarisk felt at bidrage til en samtidsdiagnose om opkomsten af velfærdsledelse.

I den offentlige debat efterspørges konstant mere ledelse i folkeskolerne, og det er også hvad kommunerne har bestræbt sig på at levere igennem en del år. Alligevel handler denne afhandling ikke simpelt om en bevægelse hen imod mere ledelse. Mere ledelse er ikke en simpel problematik: For det første involverer kommunernes satsning på, at skolen skal blive en selvstændig enhed, der leder sig selv et uløseligt paradoks: Hvordan kan man i et hierarki tildele en underordnet institution selvstændighed? Hvordan kan man på én gang kommunikere "gør som jeg siger *og* vær selvstændig"? For det andet er det vanskeligt at påpege et behov for mere ledelse uden samtidig at beskrive ustyrlige elementer, der har brug for mere ledelse for at blive optimeret. Hvis man ikke kan pege på ustyrlighed, hvordan kan mere ledelse så være den oplagte løsning? Hyper-sensitivitet overfor kaos og disorganisering vil dermed altid være en del af det at pege på mere ledelse. For det tredje er ambitionen i dag ikke blot at skabe den selvledende skole, men også den innovative skole. Skoler anråbes til at skabe sig selv som fleksible organisationer, så elever kan iagttages som individuelle og med individuelle læringsstile. Skolen skal skabe rammen for uforudsigelige, unikke og selv-

organiserende læreprocesser. Et tredje paradoks dukker dermed op. Hvordan kan man styre skolen til at lede sig selv mere uden at styre den til at ødelægge ikke led-bare læreprocesser?

Med denne afhandling undersøger jeg, hvordan der siden 1970 er skabt betingelser for kommunal ledelse af skoleledelse, og hvordan disse betingelser samtidighed skaber en masse nye paradokser og modsætninger, der tilsammen bevirker, at det ikke nødvendigvis er sådan, at satsning på ledelse indebærer, at der faktisk er mere styr på skolen. Jeg vil tværtimod vise, hvordan der er forskellige styringstragikker bygget ind i de forskellige ledelsesformer, og hvordan disse tragikker hele skubber på nye ledelsesreformer, der blot forøger ustyrligheden.

Afhandlingen opstiller og anvender en palet af forskellige teorier om støj fra teorier så forskellige som informations teori, teoretisk biologi, kybernetik, system teori, litteraturstudier og filosofi. Jeg undersøger, hvordan skoler over tid har været anråbt til at blive selvledende ved at betragte sig selv med hjælp af en forskel mellem orden og støj. Netop ved at blive til både noget ordnet og noget støjende kan skolen opdage sig selv som relationer mellem ledende og ledet. For at blive selvledende, må skolen altså producere støj og uorden. Afhandlingen følger, hvordan det over tid og særligt i dag har skabt helt særlige problemer for skolernes selvledelse.

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