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Exploring the Role of Responsibility in a Local Community of Students, through the Lens of Systems Thinking.

Master Thesis
in Organizational Innovation & Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

As the quest for new forms of living is ever present and has become a concern for social entrepreneurs we take a closer look at the notion of community. In particular the existence and maintenance of a 'sense of community' among people who live together. We find that it is inseparable from the question of responsibility, which we define in terms of an attitude. We argue that community and responsibility as investigated through the lens of systems thinking gain new dimensions of insight, contributing to the conceptual understanding and the practical effort of 'building community' in an entrepreneurial as well as in a broader societal setting. Practically the focus of this study lies on how such a *responsible attitude* is adopted and cultivated in the day-today practice of a collegium.

The practical starting point for our research has a double bind. One the one hand, it is driven by the challenge faced by the Copenhagen-based company CPH:Containers whose founders are currently developing a student housing concept. One of their core issues is how to plant the seeds for a sense of community to take hold among the residents. We help them approach this challenge, particularly through shedding light on the role of responsibility. To this end we focus our field work on what could be a desired reality for the future or CPH:Containers: One of the most reputable local student residences (Studentergården), for its degree of self-governance and the social experience it offers.

Within systems thinking little attention has been given to the notion and practice of community, whereas it lends itself to the investigation of complex social scenarios, which communities often represent for the researcher. The theoretical foundations for this study provide us with an interdisciplinary lens which includes organizational as well as sociological perspectives. This helps us analyse the structure and interconnections of various elements of a collegium, while continuously keeping us accountable to a holistic perspective. It further sharpens our understanding of the intricacies of social systems and their design and provides a unique scientific and philosophical stance for the investigation and reflections on the topic of responsibility. In the analysis of the case of Studentergården we support our theoretical findings by applying them to empirical data in a complementary qualitative methodology. Finally, we discuss the challenges both in the immediate case of Studentergården and the future scenario of for the founders of CPH:Containers.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> "Not knowing, having neither a sufficient knowledge or consciousness of what being responsible means, is itself a lack of responsibility."
>
> Jacque Derrida,
> *The Gift of Death*, 1996

1.1 Topical Background and Research Problem

As social beings we have throughout time organized ourselves into living communities, characterized by strong social and emotional ties, a combination of private and communal spaces and a commitment to shared rules and responsibility. With the rise of big cities these communities seem to have more or less vanished and were replaced by the anonymity, and functionality, of residential buildings. Although the quest for community is nothing new (Menahem & Spiro, 1989), we are recently witnessing a trend towards more communal forms of living, especially in debates on urban challenges and the future of urban life (Borch, 2015). In this regard the quest for changing the way people live has also become a matter for (social) entrepreneurs.

A case in point is the company CPH:containers whose founders are on a quest to solve the pressing need for student housing in Copenhagen and have developed a new form of housing from upcycled materials. They now face the issue of figuring out how to create the soil for the first cohort of students to move in and create a

living community. They moreover have the desire to see broader social change in terms of the way people live in cities: a 'shift' in thinking about everyday living, not as an individual but a collective matter. In relation to their project, this means fostering a sense of shared responsibility among the residents, both on the practical and the social level. Beyond that the people are meant to organize the place and their lives in it with as little external management as possible.

Hence, we set out on a journey to figure out where such a type of community could be found locally, to see if we could learn a thing or two about how they organize themselves, and to find out what kind of possible challenges CPH:village could encounter. Our technique for allocating such a place was the simple but effective 'word-of-mouth', which led us to discover Studentergården, one of the oldest dormitories in Copenhagen. Studentergården is a very popular self-governed collegium known to be especially well-functioning and for having a unique social environment.

In the scholarly treatment of social ventures (such as CPH:village) we have found a heavy tendency to focus on the entrepreneurial or management aspects in social entrepreneurship literature and less on the 'social'. (Barinaga, 2015). The predominant perspective in the field is the organisational and managerial one. There are a myriad of social entrepreneurial initiatives with diverse purposes, but they all share an aim to achieve social change. This renders the 'social' element of 'social entrepreneurship' especially relevant: "The way in which one solves the tension between the managerialist and the social shapes one's view of social entrepreneurship as well as one's actions as a social entrepreneur" (Barinaga, 2015). This requires a way of thinking differently, of trying to see the world through multiple lenses at the same time.

The way to 'think differently' deployed in this study is what is referred to as systems thinking. As a detailed review of the concepts that make up this way of thinking is provided in the second chapter of this thesis we keep it short for now and refer to a simple, yet to the point, explanation of systems thinker and management consultant Peter Senge:

> *"Whenever I'm trying to help people understand what this word 'system' means, I usually start by asking: 'Are you a part of a family?' Everybody is a part of a family. 'Have you ever seen in a family, people producing consequences in the family, how people act, how people feel, that aren't what anybody intends?' Yes. 'How does that happen?' Well, then people tell their stories and think about it. But that then grounds*

> *people in not the jargon of 'system' or 'systems thinking' but the reality – that we live in webs of interdependence." (N.A. , What Is Systems Thinking?, 2012)*

In the world of social ventures systems thinking and its dedication to scientific holism[1] has been proposed as a method to overcome the mere mechanical understanding of problems and their potential solutions when it comes to social contexts (Trivedi & Misra, 2015; Kirsch, Bildner & Walker, 2016). Despite this awareness systems thinking approaches have been deployed mainly to address contemporary challenges in the management of organizations, sustainability and health. With regards to studying communities as a system the systems literature seems to offer merely a few attempts (see Section 2). There seems to be a general trend, however, for bigger picture thinking given the complex challenges we face in today's world. In the academic realm the answer seems to be an increasing interest in interdisciplinary approaches and an awareness of how all fields are connected. These developments indicate a need and trend for thinking differently about what we study, how we do so and what kind of results we expect.

1.2 Aim of Research and Research Questions

Given their situation and challenge, the entrepreneurs of CPH:containers fancy a practical approach to community building. However, there seems to be a difficulty with simplifying and and 'managing away' the 'social' in social entrepreneurship (Barinaga, 2015). System thinking offers tools for practical study and allows us to include both the organizational and the sociological perspective in our theoretical consideration of a social reality. Hence, what this research does is look at a collegium (Studentergården), or community of students through the lens of systems thinking, in order to explore the residents understanding of responsibility and at how that relates to a 'sense of community'. To this end the research question we formulated is the following:

How is a responsible attitude adopted and cultivated in the day-to-day practice of a collegium (social system) and how can potential challenges be resolved?

Since the aim of this study is not to solve a problem within the context of observation, but rather to map and analyse a social system in order to learn from

[1] Scientific Holism is an approach to research that focuses on complexity different from (but not opposed to) the analytic tradition of reductionism.

it, this paper first and foremost looks at the theory that helps explain features and principles of 'healthy' or 'good' systems[2], and highlighting how this corresponds - or not - to the activities and practices within Studentergården. Further, the topics addressed in the problem formulation above relate to an unusual amount of academic disciplines from which we had to chose priorities to work with. We focus our efforts on the systems approach in general and incorporate more theory where necessary. We are not looking at a case of entrepreneurship per se but the case of CPH:containers forms a part of the problem we address in conducting this research. Therefore we do not regard any further literature on entrepreneurship but consider it important to point to its relevance in this introduction.

1.3 Presentation of CPH:village

CPH:village is a project initiated by the social venture and startup CPH:containers. The company was founded in 2014 by two danish entrepreneurs who had the idea of creating transportable and environmentally friendly houses by reusing containers. Their core design dogmas are upcycling, flexibility and mobility as well as simplification. That is, the houses are designed with a minimum of 50 % recycled items, the houses as well as a great part of its components are mobile, and the internal design focuses on multifunctional items which allows for an effective use of space. The specific project CPH:village was created out of a wish to solve the problem of urbanization and housing shortage in Copenhagen. The project presents itself as a "new way of living"[3] and especially targets values such as community, sharing economy and what the company terms a 'maker' culture. The company further presents CPH:village as a platform and space for social activity and flexible living, with village services such as cafeterias and pop up events. The houses are designed in a way to minimize expenses, and hence allows for an affordable rent. The housing project is located at Refshaleøen, a post-industrial area at the edges of Copenhagen, and the aim is to build homes that can house up to 10.000 students.[4]

[2]How we define a 'healthy system' is further detailed under sample selection in Chapter 3

[3]http://www.cphvillage.com/

[4]For more information about CPH:containers, see http://www.cphcontainers.dk/ and http://www.cphshelter.dk/cphshelter/.

1.4 Presentation of Studentergården

Studentergården is one of the oldest student residences in Copenhagen, located at Nørrebro. It was built in 1922-23 and on the 1. of september 1923 the first residents could call the place their home. As for today, Studentergården houses 130 students divided into 11 different hallways, all with their own peculiar name. Studentergården is a collegium for students who are studying for a masters degree, either at The University of Copenhagen or a similar institution, such as the Technical University of Denmark. Studentergården officially proclaims that the social environment is of great importance, and the residents are expected to participate in the different cultural and social activities at the place. Studentergården is especially known for its many traditions and the unique social experience it offers its residents, and is one of the most attracted collegiums in Copenhagen, receiving over 200 applications every half year.

As one of the few collegiums in Copenhagen, Studentergården is a privately owned and self-governed institution supervised by The University of Copenhagen. Contrary to most other collegiums in Copenhagen it therefore runs and governs itself, and is not bound to follow many of the laws and procedures found at other collegiums. This means, for one, that the application process is not handled by the Copenhagen Municipality, but rather by the residents and the place itself.[5]

[5]For more information about Studentergården, see http://www.studentergaarden.dk/

Chapter 2

Review of Systems Perspectives

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify the main concepts in the research questions presented above, while both positioning ourselves in terms of the theoretical perspectives taken into account for this paper.

Systems thinking is an amalgam of various ideas and there are many different bids on how to think about systems thinking. Sometimes it is referred to as one specific science or theory, such as systems dynamics or systems science, others see it as an 'umbrella' term that embraces the vast ocean of systems theories and methodologies (Jackson, 2003) and for yet others it is an emerging field that still needs to be developed into one firm theory (Cabrera, 2008). Some of the authors in the field associate systems thinking with a cognitive 'breakthrough', that is a completely *new way of thinking* (Senge, 1997) and for some scholars it is a less spectacular act of thinking about systems as such (Meadows, 2008). These more than slight differences about what constitutes systems thinking have made our journey into this field quite a challenge. In some ways we find relief in the organizational theorist Gerald Midgley's account, when he writes:

> *"I do not believe that it is possible to present a 'neutral' account of either systems thinking or its history. Indeed, I would go further and assert that neutrality in any account of history is impossible: interpretation is inevitable, and what appears central or peripheral depends on the purposes and assumptions of the persons or people constructing the historical narrative (...). Now, as I see it, to accept the inevitable non-neutrality of histories of systems thinking should not lead us to abandon reflection on either our past or what it is we do".* (Midgley, 2003, p. xix)

According to Midgley (2003), an author working within the field of systems thinking has a particular responsibility, which is "(...) for the author to declare that his or her interpretation is not necessarily the only one, or even the only legitimate one" (p. xix). Therefore we state that our presentation, or view of systems thinking, is but one out of a many.

In this particular paper we consider systems thinking to be a conceptual framework rather than one specific theory or methodology. This framework allows one to sort of 'pick' the ideas and methods that one feel is best suited for the issue one is investigating into. (Cabrera 2006, Jackson, 2003) In line with this we have further adopted the view that sees systems thinking as transdisciplinary, in that it allows one to draw on ideas and concepts from a variety of different disciplines (Jackson, 2003)

Since our choice of literature is of a rather eclectic nature it seems appropriate to briefly touch upon our choice of literature. Firstly, we traced literature reviews and summaries where 'systems thinking' appeared as the title of the book or the article, in order to get an overview of the different definitions of the field. Other, similar titles only carrying the word 'system(s)' were excluded. As systems thinking covers a broad fields of theories aimed at a multitude of topics, we furthermore directed our attention towards the theories and methodologies that, in particular, are concerned with the study and/or design of social systems.

A second strategy for including literature was to 'map' and 'leapfrog' the different citations from related publications, in order to see if there was a pattern of connections among the authors or particular works that seem most frequently cited, which - in turn - also enabled us to see 'loops' between linkages, and, hence, which writers that seem to be most cited.

Third, a strategy aiming at an intersection of the two areas 'systems thinking' and 'community' was initiated, which - however - turned out to be less fruitful[1]. From what we could tell the fields that has been combined with systems thinking, although there indeed are many, seem to predominantly be related to topics such as health and sustainability.

What follows is a presentation of our investigation into the field, which furthermore presents the ideas, concepts and thoughts found in the systems literature, which we consider most suitable for our case of study. Next we move into a reflec-

[1]Deployed search terms: community and systems thinking, system theory and community, community as a system, communities. / This goes for all findings except one chapter in a management book at CBS library called 'Community Operational Research' in Systems Methodology for the Management Sciences, by Michael C. Jackson, (1991).

tion upon the aspect of responsibility, community and social capital.

2.1 System - a word with a thousand faces

It is not only systems thinking as a field of inquiry where one finds various epistemological convictions. Even on a more basic level, the word *system* in its contemporary usage points to many possible meanings. For many the word 'system' brings forth associations of computer systems or, perhaps, management control systems, which, in turn, carries connotations of domination and control. The word system can further be part of politically charged discussions on the power structures in society or a given governing elite.

In this aspect, the word system points at something 'outside' of oneself, something that is not rooted in reality, and that does not necessarily have anything to do with 'everyday life' as such. This aspect is problematic, as the word system - in the context of systems thinking - is generally understood in quite a different manner. Although there are slightly different takes on the word system even within the systems movement, one common aspect seems to be that a system is made up of *interconnections*, or, alternatively, *webs of interdependence* (Senge 1997; Meadows 2008; Ackoff 1981; Checkland 1985). This web further consists of different elements that are all interrelated and affecting one and another. The definition of what constitutes a system that we, throughout our research, have found most valuable, is:

> *"(. . .) a set of things - people, cells, molecules or whatever – interconnected in such a way that they produce their own pattern of behavior over time. The system may be buffeted, constricted, triggered, or driven by outside forces. But the system's response to these forces is characteristic of itself, and that response is seldom simple in the real world."* (Meadows, 2008, p.2)

In our own process of learning about systems, we created a simple model about our case as researchers to help us get into the habit of systemizing. The illustration below (Figure 2.1) is a good reminder of how research and writing go hand in hand and of how all endeavors in the completion of a research paper are ultimately connected and happening at the same time in one's brain. It shows us how modeling is a helpful tool to mirror and understand the interaction of processes of thought and action without putting it into a linear format as in writing or speaking. Moreover, these illustrations are meant to help guide readers like the founders

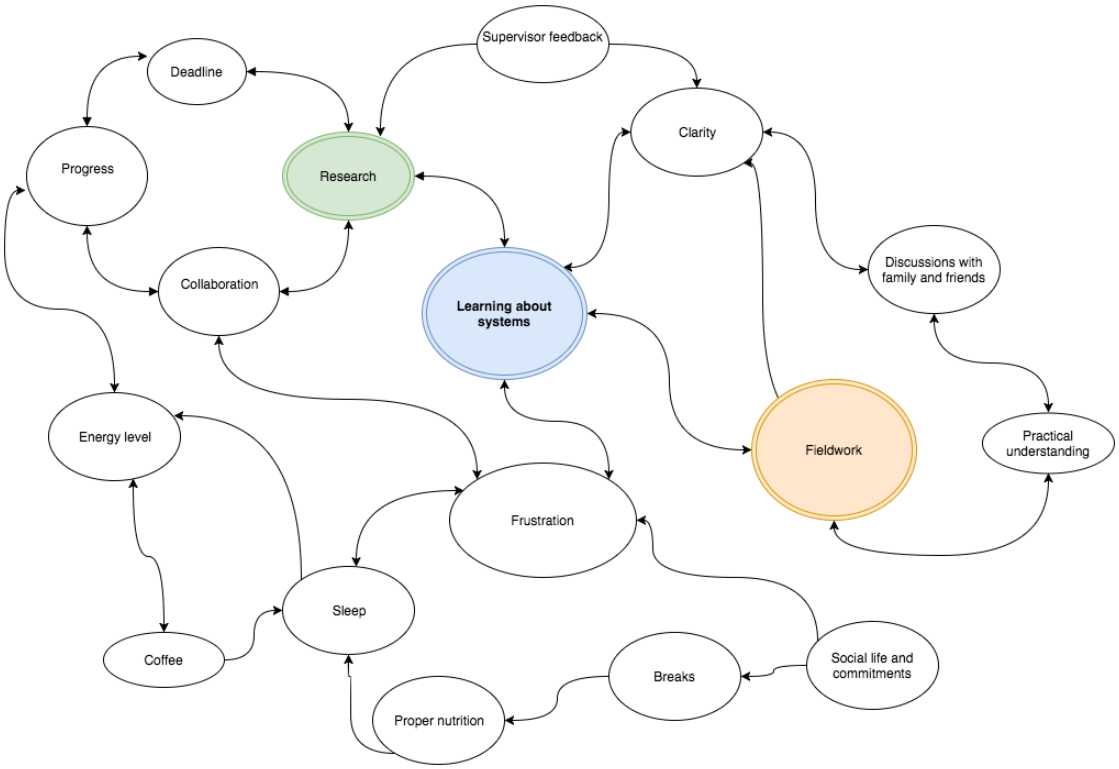

Figure 2.1: Simple systems thinking (authors' creation)

of CPH:Containers who are presented with the challenge of designing a social system. Figure 2.1 below serves as a 'primer' for how to 'think in systems' applied to the research context before moving on to the more complex perspectives.

2.2 Idea of the System

The idea of a system is, as such, nothing new, it can be traced back to around 2.600 years ago when the Chinese philosopher and writer Lao Tsu, in the *Tao Te Ching*, described the forces of Yin and Yang. (Capra, 1975; Cabrera, 2008) The Tao Te Ching is considered to be a cornerstone of Chinese philosophy concerned with nature and universe, in the tradition of Taoism - a worldview that describes the 'wholeness' of the universe: how all things are interrelated in a constant oscillation between the mentioned poles Yin and Yang. That is to say, for instance, that instead of perceiving two 'categories' - such as love and hate, pleasure and pain, life and death, as antithetical, they are understood as related, where one is not 'whole' without the other, they are *coexisting* in unity (Capra, 1975, p. 114-118).

In his essay *The History and Status of General System Theory* (1972) the

german biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901-1972) illustrates the long history of the idea of systems, but uses examples found in the Western World. According to Bertalanffy the idea of systems can be traced back to the time of the early Greeks, when philosophy and science for the first time tried to find an 'order' or logical understanding of the *kosmos* — the system — in what was perceived to be a chaotic world. Bertalanffy puts special emphasis on the Aristotelian worldview, which is characterized by its holistic and teleological notions. The holistic notion, often summarized as: 'The whole is more than the sum of its parts', refers to how all the properties of a whole cannot be understood by looking at the components piecemeal. It is the whole that is of significance for understanding the behavior of the single properties (Bertalanffy 1972, p. 407). The teleological notion, telos meaning 'goal', is a worldview that tries to explain things in terms of their apparent purpose, principle or goal.[2]

When Bertalanffy investigates into the history of the idea of systems, he lists numerous thinkers, from Medieval to modern times, who can be said to have contributed to the contemporary idea of systems. The examples range from the German philosopher and theologian Nicholas of Cusa, whose writings date back to the 15th century, and who introduced the notion of *coincidentia oppositorum* (the struggle among parts within a whole which, yet, form a unity) - to the Hegelian system of dialectics, that claims that the whole, or the 'higher truth', can only be understood in the tension (synthesis) between a thesis and an antithesis (pp. 407-408).

These few examples on the ideas of the system not necessarily give a comprehensive account of the thoughts that have influenced the systems movement, but they make a point of how the systems world doesn't see itself as something 'new', but rather as another way of talking about something that has been discussed throughout history, although in different 'languages', a point the american environmentalist Donella H. Meadows makes, when expressing how systems can be said to have some inherent, timeless 'truth': "Modern systems theory (...) hides that fact that it traffics in truths known at some level by everyone. It is often possible, therefore, to make a direct translation from systems jargon to traditional wisdom" (Meadows, 2008, p. 3). Meadows expresses how the contemporary systems' language is a way of talking, thinking, being - a way that has been a part of human beings throughout the years - what she refers to as traditional wisdom.

Further, the systems movement embraces the idea of change and dynamics: the world is always changing, from one state to the other, and in order to achieve

[2]https://global.britannica.com/topic/teleology

balance one must always include the opposite, seeing it as a necessary part for grasping the 'whole' picture. The systems movement has been inspired by a vast ocean of 'ideas of the system', and systems theories and methodologies are found in the physical, natural and the social sciences. (Cabrera, 2008) In our journey towards an understanding of the field of systems thinking we, though, have to start somewhere, and on the basis of what we've found in different literature reviews, the *general systems theory* appears to be most frequently be the starting point for any account of systems Thinking. What follows is an account of the main strands of ideas within systems theory. After this we'll take a more selective approach, and present the theories and concepts we have found to be most useful for our particular study.

2.3 A Holistic and Cross-disciplinary Approach

The foundation for systems theory, which is often identified as the main precursor to the systems movement (Cabrera 2006; Midgley 2003; Checkland 1990; Capra 1996) is widely regarded to be the work of Bertalanffy, even though, as he states himself, the ideas developed in the theory was a result of the "(. . .) simultaneous appearance of similar ideas independently and on different continents" (Bertalanffy 1968, p. 12).

Bertalanffy was a critical student of the positivist paradigm[3]. In the realm of biology, he suggested a turn away from the reductionist way of perceiving an organism as a system with clear boundaries where you can 'understand' the organism by looking at the different parts in isolation. Instead of perceiving living organisms as 'closed systems', Bertalanffy consequently introduced the notion of 'open systems', claiming that organisms are complex wholes that interact with the environment. They can therefore not be the 'sum of their parts' (the reductionistic view) but rather they sustain themselves in an ongoing transaction with the environment. In other words, Bertalanffy adopted the Aristotelian holistic viewpoint. An example of one of these interactive processes is the process called homeostatic[4], which

[3]Positivism describes the paradigm that developed during the Scientific era, in which René Descartes is one of the most influential figures. (Waage 2008, p. 217) Descartes claimed that only through observation and scientific methods can 'factual' and true knowledge be obtained. Complex phenomena studied had to be reduced to its elementary parts and processes — one must understand the parts and then work from there to understand the whole. (Descartes, 1637, p. 9)

[4]Homeostasis is a term coined by biologist Walter Bradford Cannon (1926)

explains how a living organism, despite changes in the environment, maintains its steady state, for example in relation to keeping a constant body temperature.

In one of his major works, *General Systems Theory* (1968), Bertalanffy reviews, what then constituted the history and foundations for the systems approach, the developments within the field and the different applications. The work uses a language with concepts deriving from multiple disciplines, and the arguments are illustrated with examples from numerous fields, such as psychology, physics, the social science etc. One can claim that Bertalanffy, in his work, is describing as well as performing what he believes to be the cornerstone of the General Systems Theory: a multitude of scientific voices, working together to synthesize various scientific approaches, working towards a theory of 'wholeness', a universal way of understanding the world, the *kosmos* (p. 96). That is, the basic scientific outlook is moving away from perceiving the world as 'chaos', to perceiving it in terms of 'wholes' that has an inherent logic.

The *general systems theory* was soon seized and adopted by different disciplines, and grew further branches of theories and methodologies, such as *'classical' systems theory*, which applies classical mathematics, computerization and simulation, *compartment theory*, which uses net and graph theory and *decision theory*, which applies mathematics. Common for these methodologies are an embeddedness in quantitative methods, and an extensive use of computerization to solve problems (Bertalanffy, 1968, p.101).

Hence, what general systems theory does is to model complex entities, created by the interaction of components, through an abstraction from certain details of structure and components, and concentrating on the *dynamics* that define the characteristic functions, properties, and relationships that are internal or external to the system (Laszlo & Knipper, 1998). It entails identifying the components that make up a system, understanding relations between them, and how these components impact the larger system, external systems, and supra-systems, and vice versa.

The idea of a general systems science is based on the assumption that we can derive a general set of principles and components regardless of the type of system. This universal approach, it has been argued, runs into difficulties when we enter the realm of human activity systems, because these cannot easily be identified by 'general' principles, as human beings are autonomous and can act in ways that doesn't necessarily follow any 'laws' as such. (Checkland, 1985, p. 293) In his essay *Human Systems are Different* (1983) the british lawyer Geoffrey Vickers claimed that especially human criteria for success differs from criterias found in the

biological or technological world. Although this world is also complex and more conflicting than it might, at first sight, look, the human world - where personal and cultural criteria enters the picture - is a world of it's own, even more complex since it consist of "judgment made by the human minds by reference to human criteria" (Vickers, 1983, p.213) In other words: an evaluative act enters the picture, where conflicting norms and values determine what is relevant or not (Vickers, 1983). We will elaborate on and discuss this viewpoint in the following paragraph, as we direct our focus towards social systems.

2.4 Focus on People

After having taken a look at some of the ideas of a system, which can be summarized briefly as the idea of an *open* system that constantly interacts with it's environment, of a focus on the *dynamics* within systems, as well as the idea of working transdisciplinary, the following is an attempt to map out the main strands within this movement that are concerned with a holistic approach to studying and improving *human activity systems*, particularly organizations. Our point of departure is naturally the study of *social systems* so as to gain an understanding of how to look at our case in question, a community of students. We are interested in how individuals and groups imagine, construct and organize structures, processes and practices and how these, in turn, shape social relations or – even – create social realities.

Whether some of the writers have put forth full-fledged theories or system models, or are mainly concerned with the interventions or the practical design of social systems, all have something to say about the epistemological considerations behind their approach which is interesting for our analysis. That is, the question of, how do we gain knowledge about a social system? This review is meant to narrow down our perspective to be able to *look at community through the lens of systems thinking and consequently explain the role of responsibility.* We therefore approach the field in a different manner than, let's say, a biologist, who might study ecosystems, or a software engineer, who might study the quality of a specific software. As the field of system is a vast ocean of theories and concepts, we have to do our work from scratch, rather than taking one idea as our guiding star. That being said, this is but a humble attempt to present the theories and concepts we have found most useful for the object of study and research question for our personal case as students in the fields of sociology, organization theory and innovation.

Human activity systems

Throughout the second half of the 20th century the countless examples within the systems movement have been distinguished with the help of three categories: *hard systems* approaches, *soft systems* approaches and mixed system approaches (a combination of the first two). Hard systems are commonly the subject of the natural sciences or engineering, studying for example a power plant or aerodynamics. These systems are relatively easy to define as they have obvious boundaries and clear purposes. This, of course, does not imply simplicity in design or maintenance. Soft systems on the other hand are more difficult to comprehend through observation as their main components are humans. (Jackson, 2003)

What is interesting among the systems thinkers concerned with social systems presented here, is that most of them have a strong standing not only in academia but also in the industry, who have applied their knowledge or still do, as consultants or managers. American organizational theorist and operational research scholar Russel L. Ackoff (1919), is regarded to be one of the firsts to explore the question of how systems thinking relates to human behavior, arguing mainly for a more participatory approach to management (Kirby and Rosenhead, 2005). He suggests that purposes of human systems are threefold and often contradictory: The purpose of the individual making up the organization, the purpose of the organization as such and the purpose of the system that the organization is a part of. (p. 23) Hence, the lines between the components of a human system, or between the systems themselves, increasingly blur as we move from studying natural or engineered systems to human or conceptual social systems.

A self-declared disciple of Ackoff, the american organizational theorist Jamshid Gharajedaghi (1940), adopted this idea of human systems as having *multiple* purposes. Gharajedaghi (1999) suggests an iterative approach when analysing and designing social systems. He further bases his approach on Singerian experimentalism, which claims that no fundamental truths exist. Rather, realities must first be *assumed* in order to be learned. In other words: learning is desirable, but it can never be complete (p. 5). Gharajedaghi's approach is useful when one wants to synthesize findings in order to get a 'bigger picture' of the multiple purposes, functions and processes within a social system. For Gharajedaghi, the most important factor for learning is a shift of paradigm, and for him the systems approach is a shift from analytical thinking (independent variables) to holistic thinking (interdependent variables) (p. 8).

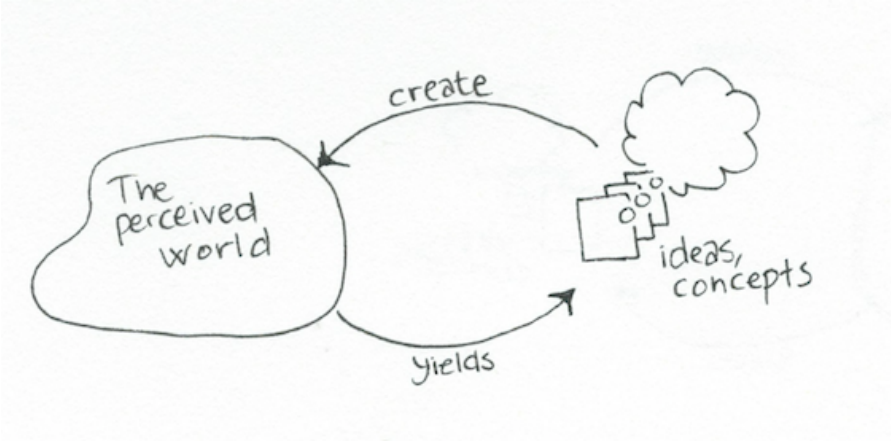

Figure 2.2: Based on an illustration by Checkland (1990)

Another category Gharajedaghi touches upon is a shift that concerns a change in how we see 'reality' (1999, p. 8). This category is especially relevant in the work of the chemist and systems scientist Peter Checkland (1930), who furthermore proposed and gave name to the distinction between *hard* and *soft* systems theories. This was made in order to draw attention to the problem of what he describes as the 'hard systems" reductionist nature (such as applying mathematical equations and generalized models in order to understand human systems). He contends that these types of systems theories are an inappropriate approach to studying human social systems because they cannot account for the inherent conflict within social systems (Checkland, 1985, p. 292-293).

From a soft systems perspective, a social system[5] is seen as constructed by individuals and therefore it seeks to understand the *perspectives of those in the system* (rather than studying it from an outsider's point of view.) In that sense, it shifts from perceiving systems as something 'out there', in the world, towards looking at how systems are 'in here', in our individual mental models. According to Checkland (1981) we see the world through the filter of internally constructed ideas that are, yet, rooted in the external 'outside' world at the same time. Our internal constructed ideas, in turn, shape the perceived world, as illustrated in Figure 2.2

By being aware of our own process of creating ideas *about*the world, we can — according to Checkland — consciously deploy methods for investigating into our

[5]Checkland uses the word 'holon' instead of system in order to avoid some of the connotations attached to the word system. However, for the sake of clarity and coherence the word 'system' or 'social system' is deployed in this paper.

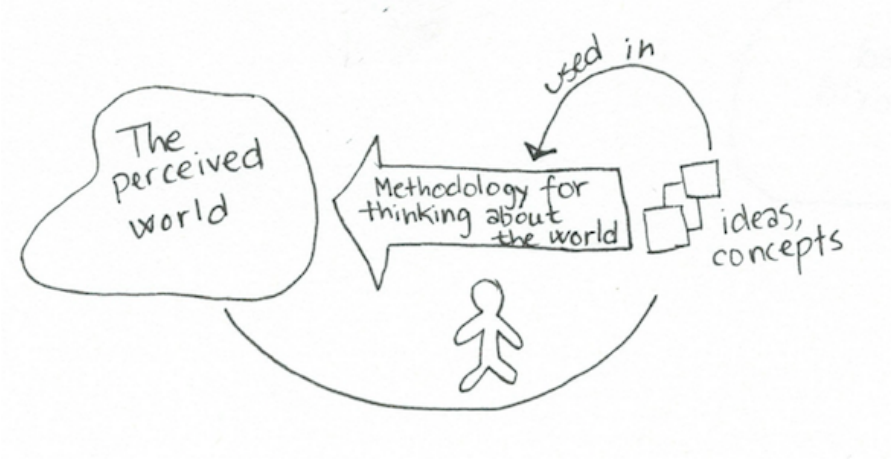

Figure 2.3: Based on an illustration by Checkland (1990)

own 'thinking' about the world (Checkland, 1990, p. 21).

In line with Gharajedaghi, Checkland sees an investigation into the world of humans as a never-ending learning process where human activity systems are explored by the use of system models (p. 20-21). While the methods found within the hard systems approach mainly use mathematical equations and generalized models in order to understand a system, Checkland's soft approach uses simple, hand-drawn models such as rich illustrations. This simplicity, however, is built upon a rich carpet of concepts.

One of Checkland's major concepts, hinted at in the above paragraph and Figure 2.3, is the *Weltanschauung*, where the closest English translation would be *worldview*. It is a concept that explains how different and perhaps contradictory perceptions of the world exists among the numerous actors in the system. The importance of this concept, of seeing that actors have different worldviews, is that it is only in relation to a specific worldview that an objective or goal can be meaningful. This, in turn, explains Checkland's view towards human behavior as not necessarily 'goal-seeking', understood as working towards a specific purpose as such, but rather he sees the human system as working towards *maintaining ongoing relationships* in the context of these worldviews.

Checkland therefore offers a break with the goal-seeking tradition which one often finds in management science (and in hard systems thinking) (Mingers 1980, p. 7). A 'management' intervention into a social system for Checkland is not synonymous with focussing on explicit goals and attempting to change them, but rather a continuous investigation into the level of relationships and values in a given context. This does not deny, however, that humans act *purposefully*, but rather,

the purpose of the action depends upon individuals' perceptions or judgments about what is 'good' and what is not (Checkland 1985, p. 293).

How then is one to investigate a social system? Checkland's description of the human activity system is characterized by ideas concerning emerging properties, hierarchy, communication and control. Emergence in a system is defined as "the principle that entities exhibit properties, which are meaningful only when attributed to the whole, not to its parts" (Checkland, 1999, p. 314). In a social system, emergent behavior can be seen as the result of the interactions between the system's elements, the *interactions and activities among people*, rather than the behavior of an individual. The system behavior moreover emerges from a combination of interactions with the system's structure and can be influenced by stimuli from the circumstances the system is embedded in.

These emergent properties, in turn, imply that views of reality exist in layers of hierarchy (which worldview is judged to be 'the best'?). Further, in order to survive in a changing and unpredictable environment, the system must have processes of *communication and control* that enable it to adapt and recover in response to "shocks from the environment" (Checkland 1990, p. 19). Communication is seen as the transfer, or flow of information within a system, and control as the the system's ability to retain its identity under changing circumstances (Checkland 1999, p. 314). Together, the above concepts generate an image of an adaptive whole equipped to survive in a changing environment, and - according to Checkland: "to make mental use of that image is to do systems thinking" (Checkland, 1990, p. 19). These are some of the main principles we as well will base our investigation on, although we chose to use our own words or a mix of concepts to describe these in the analysis.

Checkland's description of the 'adaptive whole' echoes the thoughts found in the work of the American environmentalist and systems thinker Donella Meadows' (2008) idea of a system's *resilience*. Her work does not specifically concern human systems only, yet her views offer plenty of ideas that help understand them. Meadows (2008) defines resilience as: "the ability of a system to recover from perturbation; the ability to restore or repair or bounce back after a change due to an outside force" (p. 188). In the world of human affairs, a resilient system is a system that can regulate itself and, amongst other capacities, easily recover spirit, strength and good humor. However, the survival of a system does not only rest in it's ability to adapt: On a second level, the system is also seen to be able to restore or rebuild itself and at an even higher level, systems can evolve (p. 76). This means, they have the inherent ability to design even more complex or intelli-

gent structures for themselves. When a system has the ability to learn and evolve, it has - according to Meadows - the capacity to *self-organize*. In other words it possesses an ability to structure and restructure itself (p. 188).

Within the realm of organization, this capacity is similar to what the American systems scientist Peter Senge describes as a *learning organization.* According to Senge (1990), a learning organization is first and foremost a human system that is able to create new patterns of thinking which accelerate new structures. Similar to Checkland (1985, 1990, 1999) in his insistence on changing our view from what is 'out there' to what's 'in here', Senge argues that one of the most important ways we can create these new patterns is by being aware of our 'mental models', that is, our "deeply, ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (Senge, 1990, p. 8). Further, a learning organization must learn how to think in systems, that is, how to focus on the interconnections that make up the 'whole', instead of putting too much effort into zooming in on the parts. In a social system that means identifying and maintaining or nurturing the 'glue' that holds the system together. This is not to say that systems, that is, the people that constitute it, always make a conscious effort to enhance relationships, in well functioning systems, we would argue this can happen relatively naturally as the reader will discover in chapter 5.

A key concept for understanding systems is *feedback loops.* Understanding this concept is, according to a great number of thinkers within the systems world, essential.[6] The underlying logic within a system, which can be found by studying the interconnections and the relations among the various parts, is based on the theoretical foundation of these feedback processes. If we may redirect the reader to the illustration in the first part of this chapter (Figure 2.1), the lines — or loops — between the different elements demonstrate the different feedback loops, that mutually affect one and another, in both positive and negative ways. Most of these loops had arrows in both ends, signifying that they were *causally interrelated.* (e. g. Research leads to learning about systems, learning about systems aggregates more research) In other words: A leads to B and B leads to A. When loops interact with one another in a cumulative way, they are called *reinforcing feedback loops* (Meadows 2007, Senge 1990). They are, as the term indicates, loops that add fuel to the fire.

[6]The concept of feedback loops are, amongst others, found in the domain of systems dynamics and soft operations research (Forrester, 1992) and the theory of organizational cybernetics (Morgan, 2006)

In an everyday life setting this is easy to imagine: 'the more you exercise, the fitter you get'. But, also - 'the more you smoke, the more addicted you get'. These loops can be, as Meadows puts it, both "vicious cycles and virtuous cycles". (Meadows, 2008, p.186) If you exercise too much it can lead to injuries or exhaustion. If you smoke too much you can get lung cancer. If a reinforcing system does not consist of a *balancing feedback loop* it will — over time — lead to a collapse of the system. Balancing loops generate resistance, which often strives towards limiting growth in a particular direction (Senge 1994, p. 117). In the case of smoking, a balancing feedback loop could simply be a warning from one of the people you care about, evoking bad conscience and affecting your motivation towards quitting or cutting down. In the case of exercise, a balancing loop could be a warning from the body, perhaps that you get sick and have to stay in bed - or it could be a number of other things. The latter description of feedback processes is made as simple as possible because we believe examples are of great value for students for an intuitive, not only cognitive understanding of these concepts.

Both Senge and Meadows work within the field of 'systems dynamics', an approach and methodology which is based on many of the theoretical ideas found in the theory called 'cybernetics': the study of methods of feedback control (Jackson, 1991, p. 93-94). This theory further has some interesting thoughts regarding a system's ability to perform self-regulating behaviour, earlier referred to as a system's resilience. According to cybernetics, this behavior depends on a process of information exchange where the concept of negative feedback is crucial. What an idea of organizational cybernetics (Jackson, 1991, Ch. 6) proposes then, is that the actions we perform depend on a process of error elimination — *doing things not with the aim of 'doing it right', but with the aim of avoiding doing what is 'wrong' or unproductive.*

This is an interesting view, because it asks one to look at what actors are to *avoid* when performing an activity. Organizational cybernetics also deals with the idea of the 'learning organizations' (Morgan, 2006, p. 88), and focuses on how a system, by itself, is able to 'question' its activities, what is called a 'double-loop' learning process. Contrary to the single loop, which describes a system's ability to identify errors for then to correct them according to the 'operating norms', a double-loop learning takes a 'double look' and criticizes the question by questioning if the norms one operate by is in fact desirable. This, connects to Checkland's idea of how models and concepts create the world and vice versa. The system simply looks at the models - or operating norms - it uses to describe the world in a critical way, and re-evaluates if these models, in fact, are suitable for solving or

understanding the issue at hand.

According to cybernetics, a self-organizing system requires a sense of visions, values and norms - so-called 'reference points' as well as a capacity to question it's own models, the ability to perform a 'double-loop' (Morgan, 2006). If these are in place, a system can run itself on the basis of *limits* instead of goals which, ideally and somewhat paradoxically, broadens the perspective on what is possible. In this respect, self-organization is not understood as something evolving out of 'nothing', but something evolving out of a few set of principles. This thought resembles what Meadows (2008) describes as the *organizing principle*. Meadows adds, however, that science itself is a self-organizing system, and while it likes to think "that all the complexity of the world must arise, ultimately, from simple rules (...), whether that actually happens is something that science does not yet know" (p.81). In Other words, complex forms might arise from more or less simple organizing rules, or it might not. However, in the investigation and management of social systems it has proven insightful to look for - and try to understand how basic principles (of conduct etc.) relate to the complex whole (Senge, 1997; Morgan, 2006; Meadows, 2008).

Cybernetics can be identified as belonging to what was referred to as the 'hard systems' approach, (e.g: a system has more or less set boundaries and goals and can be analysed by the use of mathematical equations). These methods are partly conducive - but often too generalizing - to understand the complexity of social systems (Checkland, 1981). The above mentioned authors within the cybernetics movement, however, embrace the use of intuition and critical common sense, of inviting several viewpoints in the process of understanding an issue, and further encourage the use of alternative methods, such as drawing simple models as well as encouraging the analyst to critically expose one's assumptions (Senge, 1994; Meadows, 2008). Organizational cybernetics is thus a field where ideas and concepts found within the world of 'hard systems' approaches are deployed in a way that avoids too much of a generalization. Understanding the interrelationships of a social system the concept of feedback processes can give great insight into *why* the system behaves as it does (Jackson, 2003, Ch. 6). Checkland (1981), reminds us, however, that we must be armed with a critical awareness of the fact that the model one makes is always constructed, it is an interpretation made by the researcher and mirrors the 'reality' or 'truth' only approximately.

Checkland's categorization remains a useful way to point to the degree of knowledge about a system one gains through a given approach, and about the system's aims or purposes as outlined in the theories of either 'hard' or 'soft' systems the-

ories.

The two developments in thinking about social systems differ in their explanation of what a social system is. It remains a matter of interpretation how useful each is, but one can choose to see this distinction as an illustrative aid and consider hard and soft systems as two ends on a wide spectrum of systems theories concerned with human activity.

Despite the move towards soft systems approaches, addressing the limitations of hard systems thinking, soft systems thinking itself met with criticism. Jackson (2003) explains that because soft systems methods are typically used at an ideological rather than practical level, they lack the understanding of social constraints. For instance the unwillingness of those in power to fully participate in the required dialogue among stakeholders can make meaningful change of a system difficult. In addition, he explained how the overemphasis on 'subjectivity" of soft systems approaches constrains soft systems practitioners' ability to intervene in situations of conflict or unequal power (Jackson 2003).

Critical theory is mostly concerned with ensuring fairness in a situation where multiple actors are working together in the process of designing a system. In other words, it is an approach that is practically oriented towards ensuring that planning and decision-making always include a critical dimension (Jackson, p. 213). It asks: 'whose interests is this system serving?' and therefore marks a turn from focusing on the 'how' towards making use of practical reason, as in 'what we ought to do' (Jackson p. 214). The critical lens reminds one that one, when studying or designing a social system, should include critical social theory to account for moral and ethical issues.

Further, this type of systems thinking equips us with a critical look on how the researcher constructs boundaries by making *boundary judgments* (Ulrich, 1987). That is, "whenever we apply systems concepts to some section of the real world, we must make very strong *a priori* assumptions about what is to belong to the system in question and what is to belong to its environment" (p. 16) That is, we make judgments concerning what it is that belongs to the system and, hence, what to direct one's focus towards and what not. According to Ulrich (1987), models are often presented as if the boundaries of the systems were an objective given. For a model to be adequate, though, the research has to make explicit the 'why' behind his or her generalization, and in the case of the designer, he or she must aim "not at an objective but a *critical solution to the problem of boundary judgments*" (p. 17, original emphasis). That is: the designer has to transparently present the underlying assumptions for her choice of boundaries and, further, allow

those affected or involved in the process to reflect upon which consequences these judgments might have (p. 17).

Critical systems thinking offers a valuable critical approach reflecting upon the normative role of both researcher and designer when constructing boundaries, and stresses the importance of ensuring fairness for all actors involved when trying to intervene in a system. While our attempt in this research does not involve intervention, critical systems thinking makes us alert to the fact that our field work reality is unusually well-defined. Most often the societal embeddedness makes for more influences as well as a greater number of stakeholders affecting a system. In the case of the residence we are investigating the social 'micro-system' and its subsystems which it constitutes so as to gain practical insights.

We have, in the above part, described different theoretical and methodological views within the systems world. Instead of going into a fierce discussion about how the thinkers presented above differ we have taken an alternative path and tried to trace some patterns among both ideas and concepts, that we, in turn, find to be useful for analyzing our object of study: Studentergården. Further, they provides us with some thinking tools which enables us to give advise to CPH:village about their own design process. In line with the transdisciplinary approach found within systems thinking, and in order to shed light on the notion of responsibility, what follows is a discussion of the aspect of responsibility, community and social capital.

Chapter 3

Understanding 'Responsibility' and 'Community'

Responsibility

In order to be able to fulfill our quest of understanding responsibility as an attitude in the context of Studentergården, the term has to be clarified and to an extent defined. In general, individuals and groups are perceived as responsible or not based on our evaluation of how seriously they take their responsibilities. Most of the time we do this informally, through moral judgment. Other times it is done more formally, for example in legal judgment.[1] In this paper responsibility is reflected upon within the context of moral responsibility, that is, the concern of what is right and what is wrong. The following is a short review of the concept of *moral responsibility* and the conditions that are necessary for a moral agent to be considered responsible. This in turn clarifies what it means to have a *responsible attitude*.

In the Western philosophical tradition the origins of the concept of moral responsibility can be traced back to ancient Greece, where Aristotle is seen as the first to put forth a theory of moral responsibility (Eshleman, 2001). He connects the concept to praise and blame; that it is occasionally appropriate to respond either with praise or blame towards an agent on the ground of his actions and/or traits of character. Further he states that only a specific type of agent can be qualified as a moral agent, that is, one who has the capacity for making a voluntary decision. This voluntary action has two features, 1) a control condition: the action or trait must originate from the agent (he or she must be 'in control' of whether or not to perform the action), and 2) the agent has to be aware of his action. There

[1] http://www.iep.utm.edu/responsi/ — Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

is voluntary aspect in the notion of moral responsibility, moreover associated with the *free will*, that has been heavily discussed and paved its way into the worlds of science and philosophy around the 18th century with the idea of *causal determinism,* proposing that every event is determined by some natural laws or prior events. This raised the question of whether responsibility is even possible if all events (including human actions) were determined by universal 'laws', antecedent events. (Eshleman, 2001)

In his essay *Freedom and Resentment* (1962) the English philosopher P. F. Strawson rejects the theoretical idea of human action as being 'determined'. Strawson claims that the assumption of seeing someone as responsible by way of theoretical judgment is a distortion of the concept of moral responsibility. Instead, he argues, *the attitudes expressed in holding others morally responsible stem from our participation in personal relationships*. These attitudes, in turn, are expressed in a wide variety of feelings: indignation, resentment, hurt, gratitude, forgiveness, reciprocal love, etc. Strawson emphasizes the importance we give to the attitudes of others towards us and how our "personal feelings and reactions depend upon, or involve, our beliefs about these attitudes and intentions" (Strawson, 1962, p. 2).

Strawson claims that, for instance, human self-respect is dependent upon the recognition of an individual's dignity. Accordingly, the attributes connected to responsibility function to show "(. . .) how much we actually mind, how much it matters to us, whether the actions of other people - and particularly of some other people - reflect attitudes towards us of goodwill, affection or esteem on the one hand and contempt, indifference, or malevolence on the other" (Strawson, 1962, p. 6) Strawson defined these attitudes as *reactive attitudes*, as natural reactions to how we perceive other's good will (or indifference), expressed from the view of someone who is engaged in interpersonal relationships and who sees the candidate who is being held responsible as an equal participant in such a relationship.

Regarding someone as responsible consequently becomes an act of acknowledging the other as an 'equal' in a non-objective sense, as someone who is important for one's own self-respect and -image, because our personal feelings depend upon our beliefs about the other's intentions.

In order to be an 'equal' candidate one must further have the capacity to enter into a specific kind of relationship, a *genuine* exchange. In *Responsibility and the Moral Sentiments*, R. Jay Wallace (1994) explains that this capacity rests upon a presupposition of the other having the capability of reflective self-control. That is, we assume that the other has cognitive abilities - he or she must know how to apply

moral reason - and we assume that the person we are entering into this relationship with has the ability to control or regulate his or her behaviour according to such reason. (Wallace, 1994, p.135)

In other words, in expressing reactive attitudes, we automatically assume that our opposite is both cognitively and morally on the same level as we are.

This raises a problematic question about the kind of *conditions* which must be in place for it to be fair to presuppose such capabilities. According to Wallace (1994), one must not only be able to understand the various concepts deployed in the moral principle in question but also to appreciate the justification for the principle. One must first understand what the principle stands for and what a 'breaking' of the principle would mean, and further one must appreciate the considerations of what makes the breaking of the principle wrong. (Wallace 1994, p.140) In other words, if a principle is, say, being open-minded, one must be able to figure out what it means *not* to be open-minded, and what kind of behaviour that would count as that.

In the light of these considerations, one might claim that the attitudes and intentions directed towards us by our fellow human beings play a great role in determining our own self-image and well-being. We try to see ourselves through the eyes of *the other* as the other sees him or herself through the eyes of us. In order for this to happen, though, we both need to accept each other as worthy of being 'judged' by the other, of being an equal in the eyes of the other. We further must accept the moral principle underlying the judgment. From this angle, a responsible attitude can therefore be seen as contextual: it is situated in a context of interpersonal relationships and is based on mutual respect and recognition. It's not necessarily something one 'has', but something expressed in relations with other beings that we respect (understood as recognition) and care about. For the purpose of this thesis we understand this respect to to emanate from an identification with the other, or, in an group (organizational) context, with the whole (made up of many other individuals). The alternative would be to presume a universal set of principles of responsibility which defeats the aim of this research to explore the unique understanding and consequent practice of responsibility at Studentergården and its relationship with a sense of community.

Community

A group of people who have (developed) a common sense of responsibility can arguably be called a community. We first met with this concept when talking to

the entrepreneurs at CPH:Containers who simply accepted it as a way to describe an aspect of their housing project. Only later did we go down the blurry path of figuring out what that actually means, both in general, as well as personally for the founders of the social venture, community is, if not a loved child with many names, a loved child with many connotations. In today's discourse, at least that of the Western hemisphere, the term community is deployed to describe countless groups of people sharing anything from sexuality, hobbies, business or political goals, ethnic backgrounds or simply a neighborhood. A simple dictionary search of the word brings up a myriad of definitions of which all ring true in one way or another.

Beyond the mere 'having in common' of "certain attitudes or interests"[2] community often connotes the support or care among members for each other which points to the potential value of such a community. This value aspect seemed to be what interests the founders in terms of their vision for a student housing project which offers value beyond its functional aspect of providing a place to live. CPH:Village is meant to be a place where residents share a way of life and through that potentially create relationships which exceed mere neighborhood. (F) While we refrain from putting forth a very specific definition, a brief discussion of the meaning and use of 'community' allows us to understand and embrace the elusive nature of it.

A glimpse into the etymological background of the term *community* illustrates the different definitions tied to the word. Community has been in the French language since the 14th century, from *comuneté* (old French) meaning "community of relations or feelings", whereas in English the term was established in a range of senses: from the 14th to the 18th century as the "common" people and "a state or organised society", and later in 18th century as "the quality of holding something in common, as in community of interest, community of goods". From the 19th century onwards, in the context of the industrial societies, the sense of immediacy or locality became the main understanding of the word, and while it had been synonymous with 'society' earlier, it gained contrasting meanings to that particular society. 'Society' became a word perceived as formal, abstract and more instrumental, while community related to more direct relationships of higher significance. (Bianchini, Torrigiani, p. 18-19) This distinction — or opposition — has been made even clearer by the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies, as he in the late 19th century coined the terms *Gemeinschaft (community)* and *Gesellschaft*

[2]http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/community — The Definition of Community in English

(society). The former was seen as life based on "bonds of kinship, geographical bonds and the sentiment of belonging to a group (blood, place, mind)" versus "the modern phenomenon where all these links had been broken" in what he termed 'society'. (Harris, 2001:xvii) Community, in this sense, could be defined as "a territorial group of people with a common mode of living striving for common objectives". (p xvii)

Coincidentally enough, the distinction developed in the wake of industrialization, and as the idea of 'society' became increasingly distinguished from the notion of community, the latter became elevated to an almost sacred status - praised by intellectuals across political and philosophical boundaries. Community could unite because what the word stood for was so 'moldable', and - in an inviting sense - formless (Bell, Newby, p. xiv), or as Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2001) put it "words have meanings: some words, however, also have a 'feel'. The word 'community' is one of them. It feels good - whatever the word 'community' may mean, it is good 'to have a community, 'to be in a community'" (Bauman, 2001, p.1). This points to the human need for belonging which is fulfilled by a community - whatever its form might be.

The field of sociology has seen a great interest in community studies. Communities are even seen to be 'the very stuff of sociology' (Bell, Newby, 1974, p. xiv), and - as such - it's not difficult to understand why the study of communities seems so appealing. As the historian Alan MacFarlane (1977) points out: "the concept of 'community' is to sociology what 'culture' is to anthropology'." (p. 2). Despite the (or perhaps because of the) numerous research and publications dealing with the concept, sociology has not yet been able to define a 'theory of community' or even a proper definition of what a community is. (p. 5)

MacFarlane (1977) even goes so far as to describe the concept as a myth: "If it were true that the concept of 'community' reflected some reality in the observed, external world, then it might be possible to use it to help explain why human beings thought and acted in the way they did. If communities were systems of some kind, in which the various parts influenced each other, one could use the concept to help explain and predict" (p. 4) One way of avoiding the trap of seeing the myth as real, would then be to look at the notion of community as a constructed phenomenon, to be aware of how any study of a what one intuitively would regard as a community sets up mental images of a place and its people - both in the mind of the researcher *as well as* in the mind of readers (Payne, 1996, p. 19).

Looking at community as a myth or a constructed element, also means to

acknowledge that boundaries and conceptual models do not mirror the 'truth' but are constructed by the analyst(s). This highlights the relative nature of the term community and, perhaps, concepts in general. It is likely that interpretations and value judgments of the latter will differ and depend on one's experience of a given context. That is not to say that there is no use in naming a thing and describing it *as if* it was, for instance, a community, because it allows us to trace out the elements that pertain to a sense of community in a given context.

Generally speaking, names are symbols which carry an ascribed and shared set of meanings that people take more or less for granted in order to communicate. The most powerful and convincing ones become widely used and an integral part of our language. Sometimes, however, especially in times of change and challenge, it is useful to look beyond dominant symbols and definitions and try to establish a fresh perspective. Symbols and especially metaphors are powerful tools for communication with - and the organization of - the world around us. Facing an inevitably changing world can only render it worthwhile reconsidering our 'name-giving' and 'meaning-making' every once in awhile.

Even though we actively make use of the words community and organization throughout the analysis, we refrain from conceptualizing our object of study as either. This allows us to gain the benefits, as well as to avoid shortcomings of both terms, while finding out how each can serve a nuanced analysis of Studentergården. Following this rationale, the language of *systems thinking* helps us accomplish this as it offers a third, if you will, meta-level of analysis where the object of study is simply a social system. In that sense both community and organization are 'tools' or names we borrow, when exploring Studentergården, both *as if* it was a community and an organization at the same time.

This approach further allows us to draw attention to the implications of conceptualization for the researcher, the reader and most of all, the constituents of a given organization or community and *their understanding of responsibility*. Douglas Griffin (2002) argues that the dominant voice in Organizational and Management literature has forgotten the 'as if' aspect (i. e. the constructed aspect) in speaking about a group of people as they form an organization. In his book *The Emergence of Leadership: Linking Self-organization and Ethics*, he discusses how this has implications for how an individual relates to the 'perceived whole' (the organization) and how this in turn affects her understanding of responsibility. (Griffin, 2002)

Similarly, looking at responsibility as an attitude, as we do, points to the question of how an individual *understands her role in a community, an organization*,

or 'the whole', as well as on her *conviction of what this 'whole' is*. This understanding is crucial, for it assembles the consequent meaning of what is considered 'my responsibility'. It follows, that one's understanding of 'the whole' and that of responsibility are inseparably linked and that their individual combinations result in different personal attitudes. In other words, a particular understanding of responsibility is based on how someone relates to a given organizational context. It is the understanding of 'my role' — social and professional — which determine my actions and convictions in that context. (Griffin, 2002) The argument that follows is that there is a difference in an individual's understanding of his or her responsibility depending on whether he or she is aware of the constructed nature of be it 'community', 'organization' or any other name as opposed to taking these notions for granted.

An brief example that can elucidate this point of 'taking organization for granted' is our common use of language when speaking about 'market organization' or the 'corporation' and their legal definition, according to which, it seems, a corporation is an agent with moral capacity: The Oxford English Dictionary defines the corporation as a "body corporate legally authorized to act as a single individual; an artificial person created by (...) act of legislature" (OED; Simpson & Weiner, 1989). The 'legal person' created at the establishment of a company, consequently enjoys the same rights as an individual. In the corporate case, however, *individual rights* do not imply corresponding *individual responsibilities*, because in reality, there is no single individual to be held accountable. An investigation will likely find last discernable trace of unethical action, but that ignores the systemic roots of what led to unethical behavior in the first place. We speak about an organization 'as if' having intentions, thus a capacity for responsibility, but are ignorant to the hypothetical or symbolic nature of this language. Then we go on to say that all individuals are autonomous and the company's 'biggest asset', and ignore the inherent paradox of these statements: How can we possibly be responsible as individuals if we also take it literally that the organization is responsible?

To continue this discussion is clearly for another paper, but it illustrates well, the potential problems that come with taking concepts for granted and the implications for responsibility as an individual attitude. In the quest to work from this level of awareness, systems thinking, its concepts and methods (as explained above) seem to be a valid approach, for it avoids naming the object of analysis definitely.

Community, responsibility and social capital

If we take an individual's responsibility to be an interpersonal matter, a prerequisite for meaningful relationships, underpinned by an understanding of 'the whole', then the social well-being of all members in a community (or organization) depends on the individual having a responsible attitude and being able to regard all other members as equals. As touched upon earlier, this poses the question of who then is considered 'equal', hence a part of a given organization or community. This question leads us to notions of *social capital* which have been widely discussed in sociology, and more recently in business and entrepreneurship literature. We briefly take this concept into account in this review as it is relevant for the later discussion of findings.

In general, social capital, as the term indicates, consists of two levels 1) *social*, referring to networks and relationships and 2) *capital*, referring to an ability to generate further capital. According to the British sociologist David Gauntlet the writers in the field of social capital are often "concerned with social relationships based on cooperation, reciprocity, goodwill, and trust, oriented towards a society that's nice for everybody to live in" (Gauntlet, 2011, p. 130) The coin of social capital has two sides, however, meaning that in relation to communities, social capital can be both excluding and including, have ethical goals or functions, as well as what one might consider the opposite (p. 131). The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in turn, connected social capital to status and domination: strong social capital equals a strong network - a collectively owned capital which can entitle one group or class to 'dominate' over other classes with less capital. In this sense the term social capital becomes a way to 'uncover' social inequalities. According to Bourdieu, social capital is often found within institutionalized relationships, approved and protected by a common name, as well as institutionalized acts which both shape and inform the actors involved. In other words, the relationships are put into play and, by that, social capital is "maintained and reinforced, in exchanges" (Bourdieu 1986, p.88) This means, social capital is an ongoing, emerging process, dependent on social interactions which has both a balancing and a reinforcing function.

While Bourdieu presents social capital in a rather negative light, the American sociologist Robert Putnam, known to be the first who popularized the term into other spheres than the academic, has a more positive view on the function of social capital (Gauntlet, 2011, p.134). Putnam particularly saw the value in social capital as it, at that time, unfolded in associations, unions and communities across

America. In his famous work *Bowling Alone* (1995) he stated how Americans were, to a greater extent than before, gathering and meeting within and across social groups, in a friendly and non-competitive way. According to Putnam these social gatherings function as as a social 'glue' by creating and nurturing relationships of trust and reciprocity (Putnam, 1995). Hence, Putnam defines social capital as: "connections among individuals - social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (p.19) In this sense, he argues, social capital is close to what one would call 'civic virtue'.

However, he also has some more critical views on social capital, showing in his distinction between the two concepts of *bridging* and *bonding* (i. e.: inclusive versus exclusive). While Putnam regards the former as a sort of 'sociological superglue' — a type of capital that invites people in and embraces diversity — the latter is dangerous, as it tends to "reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups" (p. 23). 'Bonding' is good for bolstering specific reciprocity and mobilize solidarity, which can create a sense of safety and belonging to vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities, but it can also have the effect that Bourdieu worried about: the creation a social cliché or elite that first and foremost protects their own interests and furthermore has the function of "bolstering our narrower selves" (p. 23).

Finally, even though these two terms are presented in an 'either-or' way, Putnam (1995) argues that groups and communities can, to a degree, have both kinds of social capital. What this distinction aims at illustrating is that social capital, although it might have — in the same way as community — that warm and good 'feel' to it, it also involves aspects of exclusion. As this discussion is taken up in a more practical light under the 'discussion of findings' and is not our main concern it suffices to have outlined these notions.

Chapter 4

Methods

Just like the overall rationale of this study is based on the systems approach, our decisions on research design are informed by the methodological implications of systems thinking.

This chapter serves to explain our rationale behind the data collection and the analytical process. We first outline the implications of the systems lens for our research paradigm, then present our methodology and analytical strategy. Lastly, the reader is given an overview of data collection methods, followed by a short paragraph on trustworthiness.

Just as we followed a complementary approach in the choice of theory, the design of this study is based on complementarism of methodology, that is the "use of different sub-methodologies for the attainment of particular tasks". (Laszlo & Krippner, 1998, p. 17) We therefore complement the general *qualitative approach* with a) the *general method proposed by systems thinking* as outlined in *Systems Theories: Their Origins, Foundations, and development* by Lazslo & Knipper (1998) and with methods inspired by *interpretivist organizational ethnography* as proposed by Ybema (2009) in *Organizational Ethnography: Studying the Complexities of Everyday Life.*

4.1 Design of the Study

This research is an inductive analysis and therefore qualitative. Our main objectives for exploration relate to the meaning people give to concepts and experiences (Merriam, 2009, p. 266). The qualitative approach overlaps with the general method described in systems theories in several aspects. First, the methodology of the systems approach involves an intuitive element in applying systems ideas,

going beyond the methodology of the analytical procedures in the classical sciences (Laszlo, 2009, p. 13). Laszlo (2009) explains this aptly in his review of the classical analytical strategy which he states is a three step process that involves the a) deconstruction of the object of analysis, b) the explanation of separate properties and c) the synthesis of the latter. He goes on to argue that a four step approach is needed for the consideration of complex entities such as individuals and societies. This fourth step, he continues, is included in the general systems theoretical approach, because its starting point as well as its final considerations are concerned with, respectively, taking into account and revisiting the environment in which a system and its subsystems exist (pp.13-14). While the first steps taken in a systems analysis resemble much of what is laid out by the classical analytical procedure mentioned above,

> *"(t)he fourth and final step refocuses on the embedding context, integrating the perspective obtained at each of the preceding steps in an understanding of the overall phenomenon, including its internal and external context. Key to this understanding is the emphasis on function as well as structure, on relationships and bonds in addition to the elements and components to which they pertain, so that the resulting understanding of the entity or process under consideration is expressed in terms of its roles and functions within the embedding whole."*(p.14)

By adding this fourth dimension in the analysis, the general systems method directs our focus towards the roles, functions and context at Studentergården which leads us to a better understanding of how responsibility plays a role in relation to these.

This is the underlying philosophy of this study and mirrors some of the main assumptions of the most dominant paradigm in qualitative research: social constructivism. Particularly the soft systems methodology proposed by Peter Checkland (1981) which is one of our main sources for analytical tools. Checkland's understanding of human systems (i.e. 'soft systems') takes into account cultural and psychological aspects of human activity *as well as* the objective, 'hard systems' approach (as discussed in chapter 1). In this view, social systems are perceived as constructed by individuals, while setting out to comprehend and appreciate individuals' perspectives rather than examining the system from an outsider's perspective (Checkland, 1981).

A slight difference to social constructivism in soft systems methodology and language, is that it allows the researcher to place more focus on the interplay

of certain elements that are socially constructed. This relates to the qualitative assumption of the researcher being the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 2009), where in this case the observer is "engaged in systems research will give an account of the world, or part of it, in systems terms; his purpose in so doing; his definition of his system or systems; the principle which makes them coherent entities; the means and mechanisms by which they tend to maintain their integrity; their boundaries, inputs, outputs, and components; their structure." (Checkland, 1981, p. 102.). It is important to note here, that the soft systems methodology includes classical, that is, 'hard-systems' approaches rather than rejecting them, which is what we set out to do as well.

These elements combined with a constant reflection and comparison proposed by qualitative research makes for a critical awareness throughout the process of data gathering and analysis. This 'zooming in and zooming out' (Ybema, 2009, Ch. 6) in an iterative manner is closely connected to the final complement of the methodological approach in this study, that of the interpretivist ethnographic researcher. In the interpretivist perspective, social realities are, again, constructed and the ethnographer is part of the constructivist processes and the ongoing interplay between individual and structure. That being said, interpretivist reflections are part of our analytical process but not part of the explicit written result. It is a holistic, analytical approach that is conducted so as to yield the most authentic portrait possible of the group under study.

Ethnography is suitable for exploring how a cultural group works and shed light on their beliefs, language and behaviours. In ethnography the group that is studied is one "whose members have been together for an extended period of time, so that their shared language, patterns of behaviour and attitudes have merged into discernible patterns" (Creswell, 2012, p. 94). Therefore ethnography can help us uncover, highlight and confront notions that are taken for granted through gaining a deeper insight into a group's knowledge and social culture. It proposes a deep human understanding of the perspectives of those being studied. An interpretivist approach highlights the researcher's own role in producing insights (Ybema, 2009). In our case this meant that, occasionally, a joint analysis of a topic took place in the conversation with a resident. While our approach is partly ethnographic it is important to mention that we have not intended to produce a full-fledged 'ethnography' where observation takes centre stage and the researcher usually spends considerably more time — or even lives — with the group to be studied.

While there are many advantages, ethnography faces the following challenges:

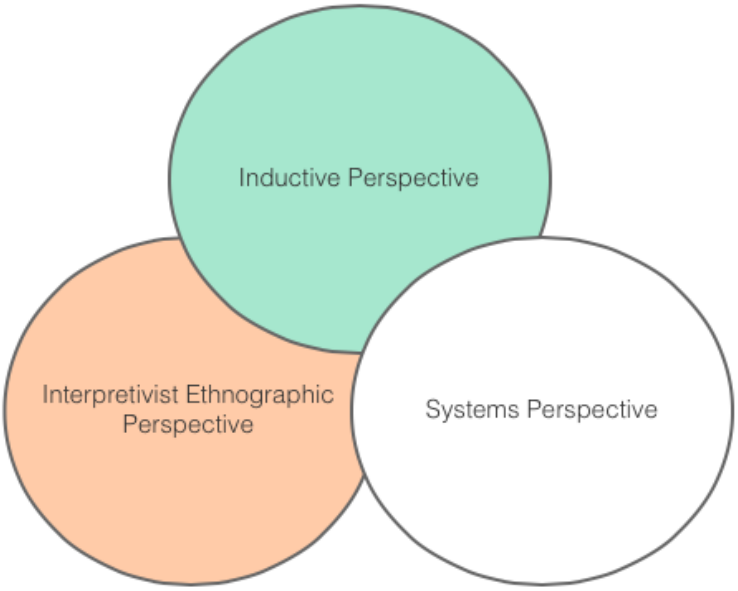

Figure 4.1: Complementarism. (authors' creation)

It is a descriptive approach which means relying heavily on storytelling and the presentation of critical incidents, which is inevitably selective. This leads to an issue of contemporary organizational ethnography with grasping the entire "Gestalt" of an organization or social system (Ybema, 2009 p. 5). What we propose the system method adds here, is an increased awareness of the systemic nature of social environments and a constant reminder to relate findings back to the bigger picture. A picture that includes mechanisms and processes beyond the individuals. The systems approach thus supports the ethnographer in his "recursive movement of zooming in and out" (p. 120). In general, the outlined methodological combination runs danger of sounding more complicated than it actually is, as much of their content, we contend, greatly overlaps. Our approach detailed above can be summed up as illustrated by Figure 4.1.

4.2 Sample Selection

Choice of Case(s)

Our familiarization with the project CPH:Village happened through a relatively coincidental private encounter with one of the founders of CPH:Containers. From

the start we knew that it would be an exciting project to work with, as they are entrepreneurs concerned with solving a real problem through social innovation. The project, however, had not advanced to a stage where we could see an interesting possibility for research that involved empirical field work. We could have chosen to survey the entrepreneurs themselves, witnessing the process of establishing a company, and, for instance, investigate the intense lobbying work and other practical efforts required on their behalf.

This idea quickly vanished during our conversations with the founder (F) where the need for know-how around what he called 'community-building' emerged. As this seemed like a more interesting topic we decided to take it on and navigate our way through a double bind, where the research problem and research case are found in two different contexts. In this regard it is important to note that, although CPH: Shelter constitutes a starting point and guiding entity in terms of selection criteria for our empirical context, this study was conducted independently from any predefined area of results. The research design and focus around the question of responsibility was solely the researchers' concern. Therefore it is apt to frame the role of CPH:Container as a purely inspirational, where we as researchers contribute insights around a problem that will most likely serve the entrepreneurs' purposes, but are not driven solely by their needs.

The foremost aim of this research is to deliver a rounded analysis of Studentergården as an exemplary case of a healthy student community. This brings up the question of how we define a 'healthy student community'. 'Healthy' is a word, unmistakably, inspired by the analogy between a healthy human body and that of a functioning organization, or system. 'Healthy', rather than 'successful' or 'prosperous' points to a state of above average functioning, a relatively long history of being in this state and an ability to best serve all system members without the need to exponentially enhance this state. This perspective is clearly unique to our case, as most business organizations, for instance, are driven by a need to increase output and operate under a very different set of pressures.

Coming from an academic background and a body of literature where the majority is concerned with market organizations, one might wonder about the purpose of such a case (Studentergården). One answer is, that this design is uniquely fitted to the purpose of our research: on the one hand, our work is inspired by a need in a market-driven organization, yet we are looking at a non-market organization to find answers. Throughout our studies we have learned that an experimental approach to problem solving often yields useful insights, as new aspects of an issue emerge that have not been considered or understood before. In

this sense, looking at a community context from a background of organizational or management perspectives potentially reveals new insights for that very field one is coming from. If we were to look at a company in order to get insights about community values and the meaning responsibility, we would likely find interesting results but it is not the best place to learn about these themes, as opposed to a place that was entirely founded on values of community and is not 'distracted' by other purposes.

This mixing of theoretical and empirical perspectives allows us to identify benefits and potentially overlooked downfalls of using either a purely sociological or purely organizational/management lens for investigation. This approach is kept in check by the framework of systems thinking which provides a balancing meta perspective on both literature and cases through a third level of abstraction. An example for this is the non-conceptualization of Studentergården as neither community nor organization, while still making use of these two concepts for explanatory purposes, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of both.

In our selection of a case for our field study we set out to find a place where students not only share a place to live, but where people share and enrich each other's lives and show a great deal of enthusiasm about doing so. We initially followed Studentergården's reputation as one of the oldest and most prestigious student residences in Copenhagen. In making a choice we frankly did not lose much time discussing the different options. Studentergården was the first place that, through prior knowledge and experience (we had been there a couple of times), entered our minds and we instantly agreed that this particular collegium presents a great learning opportunity, given its long history and - for all we knew - very happy residents.

After deciding that this was a suitable case we discussed possibilities of examining other residences like Regensen, Tietgen or Egmont. These were all problematic either in size, administrative dependence on universities, organization of daily life, degree of anonymity among students. In short we sought the generally most popular residents among copenhagen students and the most suitable residence for our purposes. Incidentally, these criteria coincided in the case of Studentergården. The question of popularity is of course a subjective one and depends on the opinions we ourselves have been exposed to throughout the past years. However, in the light of the founder's endeavor and through their consultation our intuition was confirmed and we were confident in our choice.

One might suggest the investigation of two cases in order to have more diverse and therefore eye opening results. Given the uniqueness of Studentergården and

our relatively strict selection criteria we decided to go for one case, namely the one who promised the most rewarding findings. This choice of course also had practical implications, as it allowed us to delve deeper into the workings of one place within the given time frame instead of gaining the access and trust of two places at the same time. Another important reason is related to our systems theoretical approach, where we as researchers indeed focus on specific research questions but examine Studentergården from a systemic perspective, that is taking into account different factors and levels of analysis. This is different from a study that looks at one specific aspect of the residents' life (e. g. the role of collective recreational activities) in two cases, as this approach inevitably looks at an element in relative isolation. The compromise for taking a relatively holistic approach is that all time and resources have to go into one case. Finding about culture from an ethnographic perspective take a degree of immersion which we could not have reached with several field studies.

Choice of Interviewees

The interviewees were chosen on the basis of relatively standard criteria such as to represent a wide and balanced range of age (roughly between 24 and 75) and gender (2 female residents, 2 male residents and 2 male senior members of the organization). Another criterion was the length of their association with Studentergården. We interviewed three categories of people: residents, board members and the patron ('Efor') of the collegium. In three cases individuals fit within two of the categories (E, O, B). Retrospectively, this resulted in a variety of perspectives which had an interesting effect on our findings, especially with respect to the themes of belonging and diversity as well as to participants' definitional efforts around Studentergården.

Looking back, the balancing of participants' age range likely contributed to a more nuanced picture in our analysis. We were presented with various narrative perspectives on the same topics which can be seen in a spectrum ranging between an 'insider's' and an 'outsider's' perspective on Studentergården. Some of the participants frequently switched from one to the other, but most showed an inclination towards, either speaking about their first hand experience, or taking a more reflective and analytical perspective. This is likely due to their personal circumstance, as we found that as years at Studentergården increase, members take on a progressively distanced perspective. On the one hand this is helpful, as the participants share their personal interpretation of events etc., on the other hand

it results in a less spontaneous account which decreases the chance of unfiltered feelings to surface in the interviews.

Participation and Observations

The occasions for observation field work were chosen based on events members of Studentergården invited us to participate in and whenever it was suitable for them that we join any day-to-day routines. From the start observations took a secondary place in the order of importance, our main empirical focus being the interviews. The choice therefore was a practically limited and based on 'what we could get' without being too intrusive. As we knew people from different floors we asked them to join a dinner and for different people to show us around. We moreover got invited to two events (see Chapter 5.)

Documents

The documents were chosen chiefly for the purpose of gaining historical insights, obtaining graphical material such as organizational charts and hear voices of people we cannot speak to personally anymore. To that end, we consulted the Efor (B) who suggest a pre-selection of the most relevant books and documents for our purposes. Another fairly intuitive strategy was to be alert about any mentions of documents as we were conducting interviews and then asking for them later on.

4.3 Data Collection

Interviews

The *primary* method of data collection in this research were interviews. This is because interviews allow the researcher to gain a great degree of inside perspective compared to other methods. Interviews were chosen for the richness and vivid nature of the information they produce, as they give an insight into the participant's perceptions of the world through their own thoughts, experiences and way of describing these. Further, the interviews equip the researcher with first hand information to interpret the meaning of the influence a given environment has on the interviewee. Reflection happens on the side of the interviewed and the interviewer, so that the resulting knowledge is constructed through the interaction of both (Kvale, 2007).

We conducted in-depth individual interviews with seven people (including founder of CPH: Village). All of them were semi-structured, meaning that we did agree on some possible questions beforehand (B 4.1.), some which could be asked in all of the interviews and some we thought were interesting for a particular conversation. During the time of data collection we were free of any third party accounts of responsibility and community except the awareness of common dictionary definitions (as cited in Chapter 2). We kept an open mind about the two notions, while following our intuition (shared through discussion) and thereby knowing what we were not looking for: a one-sided, elusive or scattered understanding of responsibility. The difference between intuition and hypothesis, however, is that assumptions aren't articulated in a definite manner but rather in terms of a direction to take. This keeps the researcher open to findings that she could not have imagined beforehand.

We always had a list of questions within reach but in most cases we let the conversations develop naturally. We found that informal interaction, which is less focussed on 'getting the information' helped revealed many pieces of information in a spontaneous manner for example when 'drifting off' into the discussion of personal background of the researcher and the researched. We never explicitly framed Studentergården as a community or made any suggestions about the role of responsibility in our conversations in order to keep the influence of our research direction at bay. However, when these or related concepts such as 'common good' were mentioned by the interviewee themselves we directed the conversation so that they would elaborate on these points. The questions that were asked were formulated partly on the basis of prior theoretical knowledge (uncover mechanisms, such as information flows etc.) and for the later interviews, on the basis of experiences from prior interviews.

NB: All interviewees have been anonymized and are marked with letters (B stands for the Efor; O for the senior board member; E for the student board lead; G, M and S are regular residents and F represents the founder of CPH:Containers)

Observations and Documents

We conducted three sessions of main (participatory) observations at 1) a regular dinner (including a tour of the entire residence), 2) Kastaniefest (yearly event) and 3) a graduation ceremony. Apart from that all except one interview took place at Studentergården and gave us the chance to 'hang-out' and observe before and after these took place. The access to all these instances was gained fairly

easily, as we had friends and acquaintances living at Studentergården prior to this research. This type of participant observation meant the immersion into the social context of the place, both at special events and more mundane situations. This involved small-talk, as well as more in-depth discussions with residents from which we could derive insight about their attitudes and current concerns. Moreover, it meant taking part in rituals and traditional ceremonies where it was within our ability, such as participating in singing the traditional songs of Studentergården, or taking part in 'vanding' (a watering ritual).

One of our main reasons to complement the data collection with participant observation as a collection method is that it reduces "reactivity during ethnographic fieldwork, to the extent that is possible" (Van Maanen as quoted in Ybema, 2009, p. 35). In the case of the dinner and the events we tried to fully immerse in the activity, only reflecting silently and sporadically, while putting our observations into written format only after the event had ended. In one instance, we stayed longer and wrote our notes right at the residence while in the other notes were taken once arrived at home or the next day.

Organizational documentation derived from Studentergården consisted of internal documentation given to us by the interviewees (B.2.). These items were supplemented with information available publicly: the residence's webpage, public articles, and books, such as *Studentergården 75 år (1998), Gaardbroderen: 1923-73 (1973)* and *Studentergården 1923-2013: turen går til Gården (2013),* found at Copenhagen's inner city library. The books found in the library contain the historical documentation and offered visual and narrative insights into the personalities of the founders of Studentergården, the core beliefs behind its establishment as well as an overview of the many rituals and traditions that have been created as well as removed over the years.

4.4 Data Analysis

This section outlines the process of how we put the previously described resolutions into practice and how exactly we came up with the categories and connections that make up the main results of this study. Our data set consists of mainly transcribed interviews complemented by field notes from observation and (historical) documents. The qualitative data analysis was conducted partly during data collection and partly after. We started producing drawings and models early in the process and started initial coding of the interviews shortly after they were held.

Overall the analysis strategy was the same for the three types of data, with

slight differences owed to the nature of a material. The participant observation is distinct in the sense that our starting point are notes and themes that we recorded right after the data collection, as opposed to working with the plain statements of the subjects in the cases of interviews and documents. The difference between the documents and interviews in turn, lies chiefly in their level of spontaneity. In interviews participants have less time to reflect and formulate carefully whereas the documents constitute a more structured and deliberate source. In our analysis process we felt naturally compelled to go back and forth between writing and drawing and collecting data adopting an overall inductive and iterative analysis strategy (B.3.).

We separated analysis and discussion in a way where authors and approaches mentioned in the theory chapter are only brought back in the discussion to generate further interpretations of our findings (as opposed to knitting them into the analysis). What this implies for the analysis is that we present and drew some general major insights, themes and patterns from the data and let these findings speak for themselves.

All the interviews except the one with the founder of CPH:Containers (due to technical issues) were audio-recorded and transcribed. Initially we read all transcripts rather quickly, browsing through and highlighting what seemed important or surprising. Then we read each transcript very carefully noting down relevant pieces such as rationalizations or expression of feelings in our initial codings (B 4. 4.). In the further coding process we were specifically looking for repetitions, patterns, statements and topics that surprised us as well as treating with special care sections wherever the interviewee explicitly stated that something was important. Furthermore, we naturally picked up on concepts, activities and reflections upon these, which seemed particularly related to 'responsibility' and their notion of 'community'. These included, the latter words themselves (where articulated), and for example: openness, common good, solidarity, fairness, trust, democracy, honesty and others.

Throughout the writing of the analysis we tried to make sense of the participant's different perceptions or constructions of Studentergården and that of their role in it, while comparing for patterns. The analysis of some particular circumstances is presented in a 'thicker' narrative so as to illustrate a specific event or pattern while giving ourselves a chance of 're-immersion' into the past situation where the story was told and offers the reader a more vivid description of the latter (Merriam, 2009. p. 259).

After the initial reading and coding we aimed for a conceptualization of under-

lying patterns. In this effort we spent a considerable amount of time (compared to other sense-making activities) to generate plenty of codes which we then rated on their relevance and then picked a number of them to guide our analysis (B 4.5.).

Through clustering, drawing and other sense-making strategies such as *the five why's* (as outlined in Senge, 1994) we created categories and labeled these by themes while continuously discussing the connections between them. In this respect it is invaluable to work as a team. The second order categories we made are reflected in the headings of the analysis sections.

Generally, we took a creative and experimental approach to analyzing data, heavily reliant on visualization. From a systems perspective, language is a problematic tool, as it only allows us to discuss the system in a linear way - step by step - while systems happen simultaneously. Especially systems thinkers within the soft systems methodology tend to emphasize the use of illustrations, as Checkland argues: "human affairs reveal a rich moving pageant of relationships, and pictures are a better means for recording relationships and connections than is linear prose" (Checkland, 1990, p. 45). What we do in the analysis is therefore to construct a model, an abstract whole, based on the perceived real world in order to learn something about it (Checkland 1990, p. 25). We see an aptness in illustrations or human made models for studying human systems and the drawings used here are based on our own analytical skills in 'reading' the data, while being inspired by models used by the reviewed systems thinkers

4.5 Trustworthiness

Variety in Methods

As noted earlier the systems framework proposes a complementary approach to methods. In the realm of qualitative research, using more than two methods of data collection is usually referred to as *triangulation* (Merriam, 2009). We conducted interviews, observations and gathered documents in order to be able to compare the data found across these three categories. There are various other sources for triangulation such as data source, number of investigators or perspectives (Flick, 2007). We did seek a variety of interviewee perspectives and sources of data, but would not go as far as call this triangulation as the distinctions do not seem clear enough and the boundaries between perspectives, for instance, are hard to define in advance. However, this still contributed to a wider understanding or the object of analysis, particularly with respect to the impact the variety of ages and 'positions'

of the interviewees had on our analysis.

Validity

To ensure validity and credibility of findings the researcher has to deploy certain strategies that make sure that the findings and interpretations authentically reflect the stories told by the participants (Merriam, 2009; Whittemore, Chase, Mandle, 2001). Simply put: how do we assess whether our findings match with Studentergården's reality? 'Reality' being defined as *what is not questioned at the moment* (Merriam, 2009, p. 213).

To further ensure validity we conducted respondent validation of all interviews and initial codings with each interviewee and asked them to go through and give us feedback on whether the transcription and initial analytical generalizations were accurate. This ensures that the participants recognize their own experience in what the researcher has produced (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). In our case this corresponds to accurate transcription and authentic initial codes. The responses varied in their attention to detail, some participants went through all of the interviews and commented where necessary and others seemed to rather respond based on trust. What we can gain from the latter is questionable, but it shows at least that all conversations were conducted on a good basis of trust towards us as researchers and in our ability to process their personal statements without major distortions.

Another aspect of validity is the *transferability* of findings. The question as such has no definite answer but the researcher can take measures to increase the potential for the generalization of her conclusions. Part of the difficulty of this is that generalizability tends to be understood as in other research scenarios, where investigators use experimental (as in scientific experiments) or correlational designs (Merriam, 2009, p. 224). While generalizability in the quantitative sense cannot apply to a qualitative setting, it is not to say that we cannot learn something from it. We can learn from qualitative studies in the same way we learn from life (p. 224). In a way, it is a transfered experience which 'spares' the reader making the experience herself. Hence, the strategy applied here to increase transferability stems from the field of ethnography: *thick description,* which presents is a "highly descriptive and detailed" (p. 227) account of the findings and gives the reader the opportunity to dive into the 'feel' of the residence to the extent that is possible.

Moreover, the question of transferability in this research is one to which the reader finds answers in several sections of this paper, for instance, in the argument on the choice of cases earlier in this chapter. Due to the double bind of research

problem and case described above, this research is inherently concerned with the question of generalizability and this point is explained in detail in the discussion of findings. The fact that we took into account the needs of CPH:Container in setting out to find an appropriate case to study ensures a high degree of transferability, albeit, limited to this company. Our choices here reflect a motivation to rather help solve a practical issue than aim for transferability in general.

Criticality

A main feature of the interpretivist approach is criticality. It is important for the person conducting research to be aware of her own inferences as well as cultivate an openness to alternative interpretations. This criticality serves to avoid any bias that might result from hypothesis and the consequent exclusion of potentially relevant data (Whittemore, Chase, Mandle, 2001). The interpretive perspective holds that no researcher ever starts out with a blank slate and that he is part of the constructing process of a social reality (Ybema, 2009, p. 7). This led us to actively acknowledge the potential limitations that come with our postulating that there is a significant relationship between responsibility and community. We tried at all times to stay open about various manifestations of this relationship and close to the data. What we knew, was that there was something unique about the Studentergården member's understanding and take on responsibility and we followed that impulse without configuring too many preconceptions. This is especially relevant for our case and research questions since we are looking for the intersection of *the participants' understanding* of responsibility and the role we can infer it plays in relation to the 'sense of community' at the residence.

In some observed instances, we had the impression that many of the people we spoke with aimed at *giving a good impression.* In general people were eager to show us around and tell us about all of the aspects of the place. It could seem like the 'show' wasn't only for residents within Studentergården per se, but also a way of making an impression on the people from the outside. As a counterweight to these occasional impressions and doubts we felt that people opened up in the private interviews, were honest and shared a great deal of personal experiences and reflections that were also critical about Studentergården. While we clearly have to acknowledge subjectivity and adopt a critical self-awareness we consider our personal backgrounds relevant and conducive to the judgment of these uncertain situations and the overall quality of this research. As researchers we chose a case that is 'close-to-home' in a demographic sense. This promises not only better access

to field work opportunities but guarantees that we share an essential cultural and generational understanding with the residents at Studentegården and paves the way for valuable insights.

Chapter 5

Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to present empirical data through a culture focused systems lens and forge a set of analytical generalizations and specific insights gained from the in-depth examination of the social system that is Studentergården. In line with Meadows (2008), we consider it essential to take into account a system's historical dimension in order to understand its present version which is why a brief overview of Studentergården's establishment will serve as a starting point of the chapter. Further we will provide an explanation of other basic elements which need to be highlighted before going on to describe the three different categories which emerged out of the empirical data. These are *Maintaining Control*, where we will explain the fundamental elements related to the stability of system structure and the management of everyday life; in *Nurturing Initiative* the reader is presented with the mechanisms that spurr spontaneity, motivation and proactive behavior among the residents; in *Maintaining Relationships* we take a close look at individual's feelings of belonging and reciprocity and at how these shape the overall social fabric at Studentergården. What follows thereafter is a short paragraph on what we discovered as the systems *Organizing Principle*.

5.1 System Basics

The Beginnings of Studentergaarden

Even though Studentergården was first established in 1923, the idea for the collegium appeared six years earlier when the danish doctor Carl Julius Salomonsen held a lecture at one of the Student Union's meetings. As there was an increasing need for more student housing in the aftermath of the first world war, Salomonsen

suggested that Denmark ought to establish a Collegium based on fees, contrary to the only other student free collegium existing at that time, Regensen, who only held 30 students. (Gaardbroderen, 1973)

Thorkild Rovsing, a renowned Danish surgeon and at that time principle of Copenhagen University, decided to take the task upon him. Getting economical support from the state for the funding proved to be difficult, and Thorkild therefore decided to write to wealthy citizens of Copenhagen, asking them to donate a room each, that then would be named after the specific funder. His first supporter was the King. In a confidential letter from 1920 Rovsing justifies the project in line with Salomonsen: on the grounds of urgent need for student housing that appeared in the wake of the first World War, which further was reinforced by the re-annexation of Southern Jutland. The reunification with Denmark caused a storm of young people seeking to live and study in Copenhagen, which at that time was the only place with a University in Denmark. Another of Rovsing arguments for whom this place would serve had a more specific pathos: "Especially for the students from Southern Jutland, who could easily feel lonely and abandoned if forced to find a place to live alone, co-living with other students will be of vital importance" (authors' translation) (Gaardbroderen, 1973, p. 5).

Rovsing, together with other renowned 'intellectuals' in Copenhagen, managed to get the necessary financial support for the construction of Studentergården, and in 1923 a grand celebration, with the King himself as the guest of honour, took place at Tagensvej 15, Copenhagen. During the ceremony the attendees could admire the decorated cornerstone that had the following inscription:

> *"Be (a) home for the danish spirit!*
> *Treasure its memories!*
> *Be its new vital voices!"* (authors' translation, 1973 p. 7)

In most of the documents Rovsing tends to be described as the founding father of Studentergården. Descriptions of Rovsing himself as a student, portrays him as an eager participant in the social and cultural aspects of study life, amongst others as an actor and singer[1], which could explain why he stressed the importance of nurturing the social aspect within Studentergården. An effort to secure the blossoming of a social environment can be seen in the decision to have ten students from the oldest dormitory in Copenhagen, Regensen, move into Studentergården as some of its first inhabitants. One of them remembers,

[1]Biography of Thorkild Rovsing found at: www.denstoredanske.dk/Dansk_Biografisk_Leksikon/Sundhed/Kirurg/Thorkild_Rovsing

> *"we, the first residents (by later generations named the 'Ancient Oxes') were given the important task to form, almost out of thin air, certain traditions that would make Studentergården similar to Regensen, however, without creating any suspicion that we, as such, were a copy of this old honoured institution (. . .) Some of the traditions that grew out of this task more or less happened by themselves. Others we owe thanks to some specific brothers. I remember a lot of names, but 'no names mentioned, no names forgotten'"* (authors' translation, p. 78).

In the above quote we can see how the student calls his fellow students "brothers", a nickname that — according to Studentergården's history books — developed after the first grand party that was held at the dormitory. (p. 78)

Shortly after the establishment of Studentergården in 1923, the students were summoned to the Grand Hall to a meeting regarding the students' 'self-government' (p. 34). During this meeting it was decided that the kitchens choose one representative each, so that together they could take on the task to form the Gårdlov (Law of Studentergården, A.1.). Accordingly, at the first democracy day or 'Gårddag' a board was chosen, consisting of five (outside) representatives from Copenhagen University and four 'masters of the yard' - students - whose primary task was to speak for the interests of the rest of the residents. (p. 34)

Studentergården has a rich history comprising a multitude of events, from internal revolutions, conflicts between different groups of interest, attacks during World War II, the impressive sculptural and artistic decoration of the place and the decision to grant access to female students in 1971 to the consistent emergence of new traditions, followed by decisions about the elimination of retrospectively termed inappropriate or 'extreme' traditions — all of which are important in relation to how the community of students behaves today. (Gaardbroderen, 1973) However, going into depth about all the important historical events would require more space than this paper allows.

However, the core concepts discerned as guiding its establishment, are self-government (selvstyre) as reflected in the organizational structure (A.1), ideas relating to cooperation and brotherhood and the idea of a place which not only fulfills a practical function, but constitutes a social 'safe haven' underpinned by focus on traditions as a tribute to the 'Danish spirit'. (Gaardboderen, 1973) In this way Studentergården grew out of a private initiative rooted in post war sentiments and a high degree of personal effort, where a handful of individuals led by Rovsing defined its blueprint. What these historical accounts tell us is that the organiza-

tional elements, in particular regarding the formal structure, but also in regards to the social norms, were quickly initiated and the students were encouraged to, albeit under supervision, govern the place themselves.

Studentergården today

As aspiring systems thinkers we practice a constant awareness of not only different aspects of a system and how these relate to each other to make up the whole, but also of the environmental factors which can have great impact on system behavior. As we discussed earlier in chapter one, a major challenge in the analysis of social systems is the definition of boundaries. Boundaries in the human context, if clearly discernable are subject to change and otherwise constructed by the researcher. Practically, this also means that we make choices about what to look at with respect to our case in question. In this analysis we limit ourselves based on the understanding we gained from field work and prior research on Studentergården. This means that although there are several groups of people, institutions and intangible influences, like for instance, Danish culture or specific generational values, we do not, in particular, consider them. These intangible factors could well be described as parts of the Studentergården system but would expand the study beyond the scope of this thesis.

As for the tangible ones, such as for instance the University of Copenhagen or Copenhagen Municipality we learned that neither continue to exert immediate influence on Studentergården, even though they appear on as the highest authority in the 'Fundats' (constitution) (A.2.). Another chart, one that appears in a (frequently updated) booklet given to every member upon arrival, neither the municipality nor the university appear (A.3.). The latter image is how we, too, set the boundaries for analysis. While official documents state that Copenhagen University holds the responsibility for appointing board members and contributes financially in the form of the janitor's salary, it has no effective influence on rule-making, applications or, from what we understood, even on the selection of board members. This is an example of how boundaries can narrow down, expand or blur over time.

First, we can try to map the overall organization from a systems perspective, which allows us to see how a system is not made up of "one" unifying unit, but rather consists of several subunits that *together* make up the whole. The open systems approach can, in a very simplified way, be illustrated by Figure 5.1.

One of the things this illustration aims to show, is that every system consists

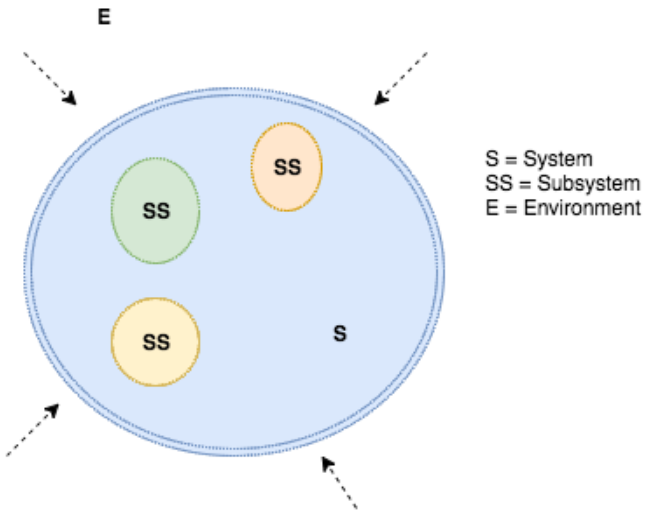

Figure 5.1: A simplified illustration, inspired by Checkland (2006)

of subsystems. Looking at Studentergården, the *kitchens* constitute the main subsystems. Studentergården consists of eleven 'kitchens' or 'hallways'. Each of these house from 11-13 people, and each kitchen has their own, original name. (Figure 5.2 In the same way that they have particular names, they also have their own set of rules and norms, which - taken together - make up for a unique atmosphere. The kitchens are where most members form close friendships and where decisions about the organization of daily life or that of e. g. a spontaneous event from a kitchen for the entire residence are made. Most of the rules, rituals and practices are similar across the kitchens but decentralized in the sense that every kitchen decides how to organize themselves, how they name and distribute roles etc. Some ways of doing things have, however, stood the test of time and consequently spread, in such a dense social network.

At Studentergården there are more subsystems with less defined borders, such as clubs where members join and leave more frequently than the kitchens and where people from the whole community come together. The place is different from most objects of systems analysis, however, in the sense that people live there and that it is confined to a physical location. Our perspective partly determined by choice, but mostly through practical insights, is a relative close-up with respect to the number of potential subsystems to be found. Having said that, we recognize that individuals have different worldviews and social systems seldomly consist of clear subsystems that one, as an observer, can correctly define. A system, according to Checkland, is best illustrated by Figure 5.3.

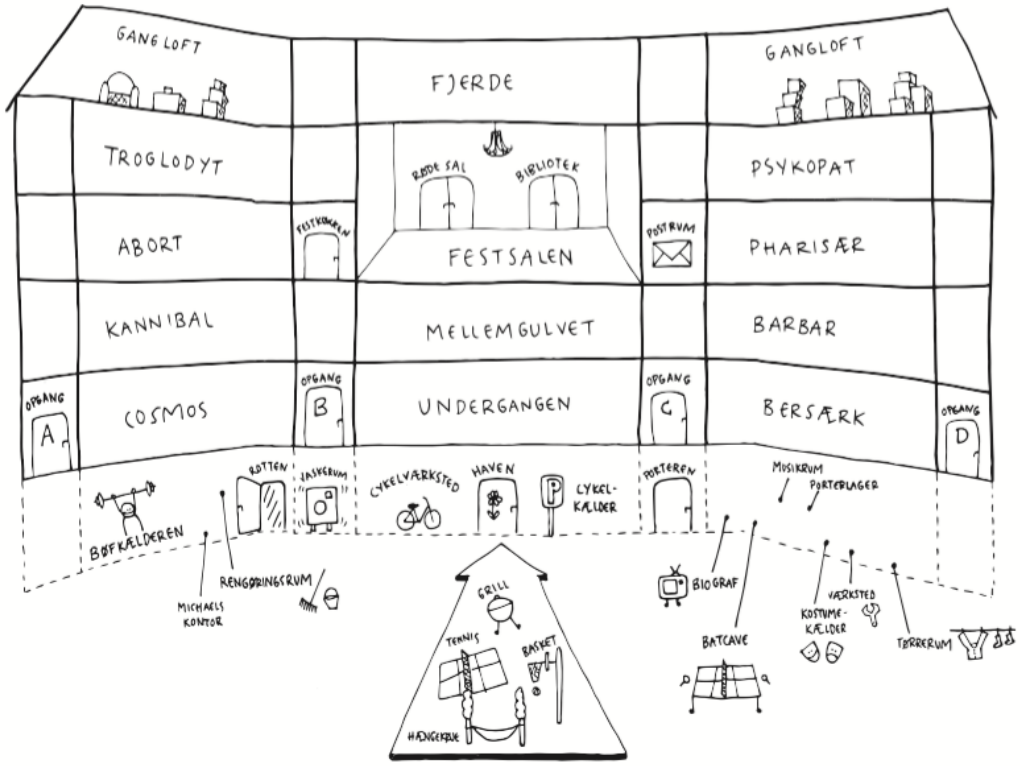

Figure 5.2: Hallway names. Indflytterpjece (Info Booklet / B.2.) (2016)

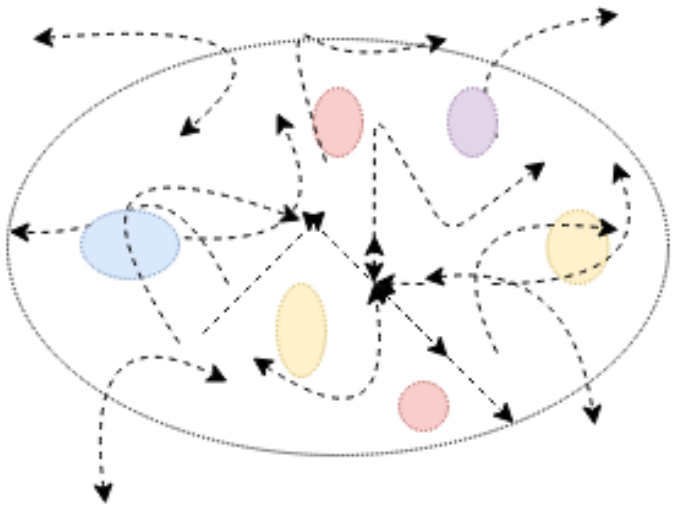

Figure 5.3: Messy system. Illustration inspired by Checkland (2006)

What this illustration aims to shed light on is the overwhelming complexity and mysterious nature that characterizes a social system. It's a system that is continually being created and recreated with, amongst others, the flow of people entering, leaving and/or simply affecting the system, all with their own specific 'take' or view on things. The system is what Checkland would define as 'messy'. (Checkland, 2006, pp. 21-22) A natural question which follows is: how can we then understand this? How can we understand this messy, complex myriad of interconnections? As an illustrative example of the many things that make up Studentergården in a mere physical or atmospheric sense, consider this list of common areas and clubs within Studentergården:

> *Tennis court, reading room, billiard room, table-tennis room, Ball Hall, Party Kitchen, a bar, shop and board game-room called "the Rat", the Red Hall (reading and study area), bicycle workshop and -basement, beer brewing room, carpenter workshop, the gardening club, the choir, the costume basement, a fitness room called "The Beef"...*

The same sheer number of elements applies to categories like traditions and rituals, roles, personal and study background and an almost 100 year old history. How can we 'systematize' our way through this complexity? One way of trying to cope with the problem is to try to spot some sort of patterns out of what *seems* to be 'chaotic'. The next question then becomes: Where to start? The following section traces one of the main boundaries of the system, the mechanism that decides who is to be a part of Studentergården.

Application and Selection

A defining dimension of Studentergården as a system is the selection of members. Initially, admission was granted based on grades (i. e.: the students with the best grades were allowed in). Another 'natural' selection was the fact that students living at Studentergården had to pay for their stay and be able to afford the rent, compared to other residence which were sponsored by universities for those with the highest grades. Nowadays, emphasis has shifted to the personal motivation and potential contribution to Studentergården. The board of Studentergården receives applications twice a year, every six months. They are then reviewed by the five students in the Gårdstyret (committee) and a decision is made. In one meeting this decision is then reviewed by the senior members of the board and approved or rejected. If there are questions regarding individual applicants or the reasons for

specific choices these are discussed in the same meeting and usually a consensus is reached.One of the formal requirements is that the student has to prove a record of 60 ECTS, the equivalent to one year of undergraduate studies, or be enrolled in a master or postgraduate program (PhD). Further one has to be a student at the University of Copenhagen or a similar institution.

There are three ways students can enter Studentergården, one is through a word-of-mouth leading to a sublease for the period another resident is abroad (G), another, yet marginal way (two rooms), is through the random selection of the International Office at Copenhagen University (first come first serve) and lastly the most common way the normal application where applicants are expected to fill out an application form and send a motivational letter. The latter is unlikely to be successful for internationals, as selection only takes place twice a year, residency in Denmark is required and estimated waiting time is three to eight months. As they state on their website: "It is not easy to get a room at Studentergården, as we receive more applications than there are rooms available. Rooms are normally available only for students staying in Denmark for a longer period, and we do not have rooms available for a few days or a couple of weeks." (Studentergården, 2016) Further, the application form is in Danish only but people are encouraged to fill it out in English. These formal regulations are picked up below, where system challenges are discussed.

For now, let us take a look at Figure 5.4, a simple illustration of Studentergården's inflow and outflow dynamics in terms of students and the regulating forces of the system. There is one reinforcing and one balancing feedback loop controlling the stock of students living at the residence. The reinforcing loop is constrained by the sheer number of rooms available in general (130 rooms) and at any given moment. Studentergården prevents potential irregularities such as unoccupied rooms, through receiving applications twice a year regardless of the number of rooms available. This ensures freedom of choice in applicants.

The relevance of this particular selection process for Studentegården is illustrated by insights from our interview with the lead of the senior board members. When describing the practicalities of the selection process and its guiding rules, he recalls that two major changes were made during his time in the board. The first one (early 2000s) was the move from requiring three years of bachelor studies to only one, and the second is allowing PhD students to live at Studentergården. Judging from the case O described, one would assume that Studentergården would see either a drop or surge in the average age of residents after the first round with new selection criteria ended. This could have had significant implications for the

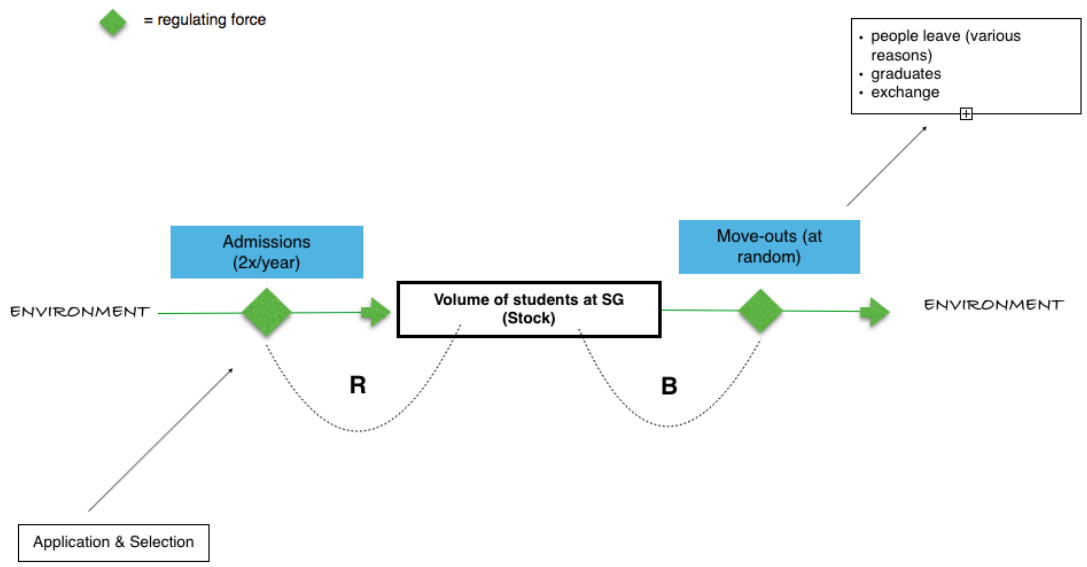

Figure 5.4: Simple system stock flow. Inspired by Meadows (2008)

atmosphere and social dynamics at the residence, due to a relative lack or excess 'maturity' of people. As we discussed this age-stretch with O, it surfaced, that although the change of rules seems quite significant on paper it turned out to "happen kind of gradually". (O) This can be explained by the setup of the system itself as shown in Figure 5.4 as well as by yet more flexible factors in the selection behavior of the board. These are the background of the applicant, age, plans of long-term residence in Copenhagen and more depending on the situation like for instance if students "graduate with their Masters in a year from now, they would never get access". (O) Lastly, there are factors influencing selection which are out of their control and part of the environmental factors, for instance, as Olaf suggests, that people are more likely to write a good application if they are further ahead in their study or that people are starting University earlier as well as finish sooner. The list of potential factors to be taken into account could go on, but the point here is only to offer an initial understanding of our Studentegården works and how we can use system language to explain them.

Resilience

As we have mentioned earlier, one of the most important requisites for a system to survive in a changing and turbulent world is its *resilience,* a way of being able to bounce back into position after being stretched or exposed to an external shock,

in much the same way our body recovers from sickness. Before starting to search for answers to how Studentergården's is able to 'bounce back into position' it is useful to look at the other side of the coin and ask: what kind of virus(es) can affect Studentergården and stir its balance?

From a systems perspective there are several traps a system can fall into including aspects such as (information) delays (for example getting second-hand news), lack of boundaries (not knowing who is in or who is out), ignoring unpleasant or underlying problems, rule beating and/or seeking the wrong goals (inaccurately defined or not-shared goals) (Meadows, 2008). Next to these traps there are threats which are less predictable and affect a system from the outside similar to what goes under the heading 'force majeure' in legal and business settings.

In order to recover from sickness whether caught from the outside or developed on the inside, one has to have a good 'immune defence'. In the following sections in this analysis we present a picture of this immune defence which in the case of Studentergården, could be called 'social strength', or a 'resilient culture'. A short anecdote will serve to capture several aspects of this culture's workings and constitute a starting point from which we develop a more detailed account of how Studentegården maintains its resilience on a day-to-day basis. This is the reconstruction of a story knitted together from residents' experiences found in three of the interviews (G, M, E).

A couple of years back Studentergården had applied to a fund for the renovation of its roof. They secured the money and contracted someone to start building. A fair way into the renovation, however, Copenhagen was hit by a storm which took Studentergården' roof by surprise. The upper floor ended up being flooded and the ten 'displaced' students had to move in with other residents for the indefinite meantime. The mess was prolonged as there appeared to be a mistake in the reconstruction, making for some extra waiting time until people could move back to their floor:

> *"Everything went wrong and we have the 4th floor, the top floor, and it got completely useless. So for one year nobody could live there. And then like a whole floor - it was just over!"* (G)

The residents had to make some quick decisions about who would move where and with whom, but overall they handled the situation so that no further damage or conflict resulted from it:

> *"And then we were like 'okay we have that ten people up there and they have to move somewhere'. So for example, my floor, we got three*

> *persons from the top floor and some of us even moved together, temporarily... So it went really smooth. We were like 'we have to help those people'!"* (G)

The reorganization really only began once the roof was fixed, because at that point new friendships and habits had developed and people didn't want to move back to the - once old, now new - fourth floor. At Gårddag (democracy day) everybody came together and they hypothesized about scenarios for the future of this floor, whether there should be a 'moving in' floor filled up with new people only who could then move on after a year or so, as well as questions like, "how are we going to keep going with the traditions?" (G). After a lot of back and forth, the idea of starting a new floor became a little more attractive. Some who had lived there before and some from a completely different 'end' of Studentergården volunteered to move in with the newcomers that were selected and they "managed to make a mix... which worked out really, really well. And it was really funny, when we had one of these parties and all these new guys just moved into that floor... everybody wanted to take care of them... we really try to support all those new people" (G). One of these new people was Maya, she had been living in another floor for only one month and then moved up together with mostly students who had just come to Studentergården and some 'oldies'. She described the transition as follows,

> *"At first I was like 'oh, I'm not sure if this is a good idea' but as soon as I got used to the thought I was getting more and more happy about, that we actually were ten new people here and that we were gonna start our own culture and rules about this place and, and stuff like that. And that thought is still with me, and it's really nice, because all of us is very open-minded and very, we were all looking forward to live here and to get to know each other, it was a bit... like, starting at a folk-high-school, højskole."* (M)

Most people can relate to a roof, flooding or leakage incident in a family home context, but in a residence with 130 people, with no explicit leader this requires some flexibility at member level. The ability to maintain control and harmony is what is interesting here.

The next section explains the details of Studentergården's resilience and some of its challenges.

5.2 Understanding the System

Much of what we have described in the earlier paragraphs consists of the different elements of a system, that is - the physical and visible things, such as the people, the building, the common areas, the kitchens with all its equipment and some of the basic mechanisms and rules like the application and selection process and historical foundations. This list of elements and features could go on forever, what is essential when studying a system, however, is to look at the interconnections within a system. (Meadows, p. 13, Senge, p. 88) That is, the way these different elements relate to each other and, most importantly for our considerations, the overall cultural system these dynamics produce. We have inductively sorted our data into three broad categories (B.5.), which are maintaining control, nurturing initiatives, managing relationships. We give an in depth account of these three themes in order to develop a well-founded account of responsibility in the context of Studentergården. In the following sections the reader finds a detailed analysis of the most important rules, roles, mechanisms and habits of interaction related to each theme. We understand the sections to be intrinsically interlinked but divided and categorized for ease of understanding.

5.2.1 Maintaining Control

Roles

A key practice we inferred from the data, was the practice of assigning different 'roles' to the individuals for the accomplishment of both day-to-day tasks and a range of events, whether spontaneous or planned. A role is defined as a social position that is recognized and approved by the other actors in the system. These roles can be both formally or institutionally defined, or they can develop informally. The role a person inhabits is further characterized by what kind of behavior he or she is expected to perform. Lastly, this performance will be judged in accordance with local standards, as in values. All of these elements, roles, norms and values, mutually define one and another. (Checkland 1990, p. 33) The following explains the distribution of roles, the norms following these roles, and their underlying values in the context of Studentergården.

The most obvious example of the more formal roles are the ones found in the Student Board. In order to get a seat in the board, people voluntarily sign up for five different posts: 'Older' (Head of the Board), 'Økonomigårdmesteren' (Economy), 'Ordensgårdmesteren' (Orderliness), 'Netgårdmesteren' (Internet) and

'Fundraisinggårdmesteren' (Fundraising).

During the Democracy day, which takes place twice a year, all of the residents vote for the candidates that have signed up for the roles. Every half year Studentergården elects new people to join the board, but only half, so that the remaining ones can integrate the others for a while and knowledge on what each position entails is passed on.

Officially, the procedure states that the candidates themselves sign up for the different roles. There seems to be a tendency, however, towards convincing people to sign up for specific posts, as in the case with Emilie, the current head of the board:

> *"One of my kitchen mates, she told me that there was no-one running for as, like head of the resident body, and then one hour before I guess she kind of convinced me she might as well put me up for it".* (E)

This further confirms a general impression we had, which is that the formal setup of the board and it's 'on paper' function is less relevant to the actual workings of Studentergården than what one might presume from reading and hearing about the formal structure. At least from Emilie's point of view her job does not require much work and as for the voting it is nowhere near a ferocious competing for roles.

That being said, the board members do have have more influence on particular decisions concerning for instance, the selection of applicants and financial support for projects. The idea, however seems to be that, while naturally all are eligible to these posts, the majority would moreover be deemed fit for the job by the majority. This illustrates a rather general impression of how the residents seem to trust each other with the completion of important tasks.

Besides the posts for the board, there are numerous other (more nonformal) roles - such as being 'flagmand' (the flagman), 'symaskineansvarlig' (responsible for the sewing machine) or 'rottemand' (the rat-man) are also delegated. Although most of the roles hint at a specific practice or behaviour, such as making sure that the flag is raised as well as taken down at specific, ceremonial days, other roles do not necessarily involve a practice, as expressed by S:

> *"There's a lot of titles that are being voted for in the half-annual democracy day that does not actually hold any work, the microscope man or woman is the person who has the microscope in his room or her room and it's... it's never used..."* (S)

This hints at how the practice of assigning roles isn't necessarily only to signalize a practice and authority within a certain area, but it can also be a seen as the symbolic act of being *given a title*.

Even though the residents clearly state that each kitchen is autonomous, in the sense that each unit makes their own rules and norms, there seems to be a lot of 'symmetry' between the different kitchens in the way they assign roles. Several of the interviewees describes how the assigning of roles within the kitchens takes place at a monthly meeting, where the roles are given to one by the other members of the kitchen:

> *"... so we have a lot of posts responsibilities. We have just a dinner for this, to decide on 'ok, we're 13 people, who's gonna do what during the year?' And then we have to vote (informally). And then, it works in a way that people have to shout names, like "I think that person would be perfect". And then, there is a facilitator of this evening. Then, we agree on 3 persons, and then each of these 3 persons has to tell a speech that 'I think I'm the best person because... 'You can't say that you're not."* (G)

What G described is that a role is thrown into the room and by spontaneous association people express who they think would fill it best. The role is then assigned in a collective manner, while the individual gets to present her motivation for any given role. The roles are given rather than assumed. This has the effect that even before an individual starts with the assigned job, she feels that other people deem her appropriate for it. Having said that, the whole procedure as G described it seemed like a rather fun event that must not be overrated in terms of the residents personal identification with a role:

> *"Yeah, you have to (do it) anyways, ... 'I am the best person for watering the plants because I grew up in a farm and watering plants was always my thing, and I love it!' And even if this is not the post which is close to your heart you yeah.. and that was also difficult for me in the beginning, but it worked."* (G)

Whether a task is trivial or not, this initial open question of who is apt for which task sparks an interesting discussion and an exchange of images or feelings the residents have about each other.

Further, there is one person who has the specific role of addressing when someone is not living up to the expectations of a post:

> *"... we also have one that has the responsibility to say to the others 'hey this is not good enough, you're not keeping your post, you're not doing the job good enough'.*
> *Interviewer: How is that? Who wants to have that role?*
> *(laughter) I was given the role so..."* (M)

G has more or less the same role with a different name: 'Sheriff'. As 'funny' as this might sound to the outsider, it is one of the most important and conflict avoiding roles in the hallways:

> *"... we agreed, actually back in the days, way before me, I don't know when, that instead of everyone writing in the 'Kitchen-book', because we have a kitchen book where 'I'm angry, you should bla bla' Instead, there is this one person, who has the authority to say that 'I think this is not cool guys' 'I think you're a bad person now, 'I think you should do it like this'. And then you made the mess, you know that that guy (Sheriff) has to do this, that's his job".* (G)

What is interesting here, is that not only does G explain the 'how' of the role, but he also explains the rationale — the why — behind the role, which shows he does not take it for granted but understands why it is important. The way he tells it, it seems that earlier residents had tried other ways of confronting issues that did not work so well. Then they decided to anonymize this confrontation by discussing it in general terms based on what the Sheriff points out, or alternatively have the Sheriff confront the individual in a private setting.

In this way the 'Sheriff' role has a double function, for one, making sure that people act on their practical duties, and second as a 'buffer', a way of proactively *avoiding* social conflicts, unproductive blaming or 'unspoken' tension that could arise as a result of somebody feeling that others were not performing their duties.

This also points towards how many of the roles are not solely practical, but that they are also directly aimed towards making sure that the social atmosphere is balanced. Another interesting finding was how roles also seemed to be directly assigned towards handling the well-being of the fellow residents (quite humorously):

> *"We even have a person ... if a girl is sick on the floor, then there is a boy who is taking care of that girl."* (G)

In the same way as the practice of assigning roles seems to compare across hallways, the data moreover suggests that roles themselves are relatively consistent in

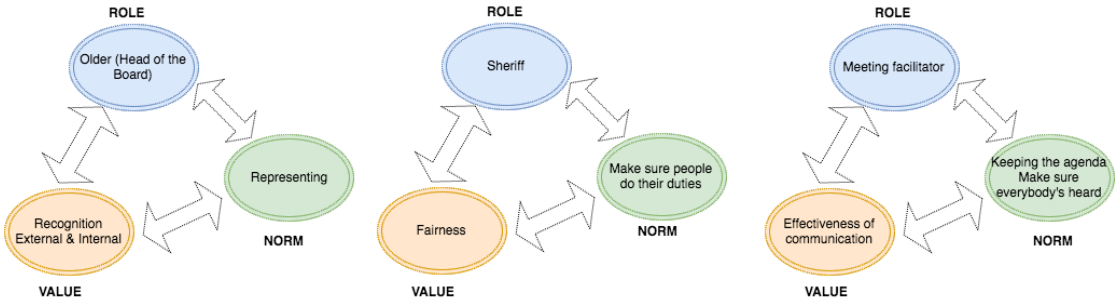

Figure 5.5: Roles, norms, models. Inspired by Checkland (1990), further developed by the authors.

this way. While the assigning of fixed roles or 'responsibilities' during the democracy day follows a more or less fixed procedure, the assigning of less formal roles is also characterized by having a relatively specific habitual procedure. The latter might not be carved in stone, and appear 'natural' or 'spontaneous' at first glance, but the frequency and thoughtfulness of assigning and adopting even seemingly trivial roles point to their significance for the overall stability of Studnetergården.

The role-assigning and role-adopting practice is ongoing and manifests in a myriad of ways of which we have only accessed a few. We find however, that some of the motives for assigning and acting upon roles are social stability (well-being), practical functioning and passing on practices (sharing of knowledge). While the details of information sharing are outlined in the next section, the following Figure 5.5. gives the reader an idea of how roles, norms and values are mutually interrelated and how they are both facilitating information flows and are embedded in them. The arrows signify the information flows. The illustration takes up the example of some of the roles discussed above.

Information and Memory

The accessibility of information and memory in a social system is crucial for its functioning, particularly for individuals to be able to act on the basis of correct and the most relevant information. This goes for any given situation but is most essential when the need for information is connected to a specific role or job that contributes to the overall resilience of the system. An information flow can be defined as "signals that go to decision points or action points within a system" (Meadows, p. 14). By asking questions regarding the accessibility and distribution of information we gain an understanding of the level of communication and sharing that Studentergården displays in this regard: Is it first or second-hand information?

Are there any lacks or interruptions of information flows (e. g. sense of missing feedback)? Which information flows affect decisions or action? Accessibility here is taken as positively connoted, as Studentergården is a residence largely based on trust and collaboration (as opposed to competition and individual gain) where all members ideally execute a similar degree of influence. This is supported by their governing structure where representatives are elected but decisions are yet largely taken in a consensus-based manner similar to that of direct democracy[2]. It is clear that in other systems such as for example the market place, the notion of accessibility gains an entirely different - and to an extend counterproductive - dimension.

Naturally, there are endless information flows within a system, whereas this is an attempt to map the flows we found most evident or important for an overall and generalized characterization of the systems information world. The following therefore provides an overview of Studentergården's handling of information to the extent that we could derive it from our empirical data and observation.

With regards to the *digital* information flow within Studentergården, there are different channels for distributing information. For one they have a mail system, where every resident is given a personal address, and each also has the possibility to send a mail to a specific common address, in the case of there being an important message, that in turn gets forwarded to all of the residents in Studentergården. Secondly, there is an intranet holding different types of information and communication possibilities, such as a wall of events and a communication thread where people can ask and answer. The intranet also houses a thread that is directed towards the board, open and available to everybody, as well as summaries of every meeting held by the board. Third, Studentergården has a facebook-group which holds more unofficial announcements, such as inviting other to events or excursions, asking about borrowing things, or questions regarding practical matters.

The digital communication system exhibits a high degree of transparency, and therefore an *open* flow of information. This ensures that the path from having a comment, idea or a problem to communicating it to all or specific people, is considerably short. According to S this is partly due to an explicit attitude within Studentergården, a call for "as much transparency as possible" (S) As we learned from S, information about topics and decisions of the biannual board meetings is not only summarized and posted digitally, but also passed on in person:

[2]See definition and detailed explanation of direct democracy -http://iddeurope.org/direct-democracy-what-does-it-mean-and-how-does-it-work/1210

> *"... every time they (the board) have the meeting, monthly meetings or something, they go out and have dinner at a different hallway to talk about what they have discussed and what's going on in the board (...) they always try to make like small notes that they post in the, in the kitchen books in every kitchen, in the hallways, so they... so people know what they're actually doing"* (S)

Important information is therefore not handed over only through digital means, or during specific events, such as the democracy day, but is an ongoing process that involves interpersonal communication and physical actions such as making posts and writing notes in the kitchen books. According to S, this practice emerged because some people were unsatisfied and frustrated by some of the work (or lack of it) made by the board, and his explanation for why, was that a lot of the board's work used to go unnoticed.

From a systems perspective, this story illustrates how a missing feedback loop is identified and consequent adjustment in the form of an *extra information channel* takes place. The particular format of this new feedback practice is *compelling* (Meadows, 2008), in the sense that it consists of an interpersonal transfer, and second, it is transferred in a meaningful context (dinner).

From what we could infer from the the data, the board also put a lot of weight on making sure that there is not any missing information flows targeted towards the board by the residents themselves. An example of this is the deliberate practice at 'democracy day'. First and foremost every resident can, before the day, write a subject which then will be discussed at the day:

> *"(...) everything can be said here, which means that these days are sometimes four or five hours, we just sit there and listen"* (E)

According to the head of the board careful effort is made to make sure everybody who has something to say is heard:

> *"I just... Just give it time. Give everyone time to make their point of view clear"* (E)

The more informal sharing (and overwhelming amount) of information, shown through notes, posters, pictures etc, was confirmed by the observations we made during our visits to SG. Every hallway and kitchen had several posters informing about rules, meetings, clubs, parties or the like and each kitchen we visited had

an overview of the people living there, a picture of the resident accompanied by personal information.

The kitchen book, in place at every kitchen, is an example of a simple, but compelling information flow containing several information flows: the residents are able to keep each other updated about daily happenings, write humorous and nice messages to one and another, communicate frustrations, or simply inform about whereabouts, such as that one is going away for the weekend. (O) The function of the kitchen book goes even beyond the mere exchange of practical information as it is a holder of memories and history. Over the years, these book have been collected under the Efors care and hold a rich potpourri of stories and insights into how earlier generations organized communal life at Studentergården, their use of language, symbols and humor. For any particularly historical approach to the study of this system these books constitute a rich source of understanding, especially about daily life. For the residents themselves they serve as a source of entertainment and creativity especially in collecting stories and songs to present at common events.

> *"...it's it is something that is also important to the Efor, who keeps record of all of the kitchen books, where I found the anecdotes, and saves them in the basement, so we have this archive that's probably pretty interesting for people who study history because it dates back to 1923."* (E)

This allows for a collective identification with the Gårdbrødre/Gårdsøstre (Gårdbrothers and Gårdsisters) that have lived at Studentergården before and enables the feeling of belonging to something that goes beyond the current version of the residence. The theme of tradition and belonging will be further explored in the last section of this chapter. What is important here is the functioning of the kitchen books and more importantly their keeper, the Efor, as a sort of hard drive of Studentergården where an immense amount of information is stored and can be accessed whenever needed - in person and in the form of documents. The Efor functions as a Patron of Studentergården and lives in a house next to the main building with his wife. He has a full-time occupation at the University of Copenhagen and told us he spends on average one hour of work per day on Studentergården. (B) The Efor (B) is a warm and grounded character with a sharp mind who is very appreciated by students and senior board members alike:

> *"And its amazing his memory of people, I mean it's just unbelievable.*

I think he can list everybody that lived there when he was, at least 40 years (ago)" (O)

B helps the students take care of Studentergården with, for example, preparing the agenda for board meetings. In general his role gives the impression of a facilitator and filler of information gaps.

Neither in our observation nor data did we come across any feelings about receiving second-hand news, feeling that one had 'not been heard' or that information had been filtered or withheld. However, the system is, naturally, not 'waterproof', which the story of the complaints against the board illustrates. In turn, the story further illustrates how an information flow eventually reached a signal point, that is — the board — and resulted in a change of procedure. These above examples are but a few of the many ways the system ensures that information is distributed in an open and transparent manner among all organizational groupings as well as individuals. This seemed very much taken for granted by the residents and no one mentioned any notable difficulties. As we've pointed at earlier, most of the residents take their roles very seriously, which also explains why information has good chances of being spread and received in an appropriate and timely manner. While this section looked at how a level of control is maintained in terms of routines and rather basic tasks that have to be accomplished for day to day 'survival', the next section outlines the role and nature of individual and collective initiatives taken beyond that.

5.2.2 Nurturing Initiative

From what we could observe Studentergården is deeply appreciated by its members and seems to enjoy an excellent reputation on the outside - at least on part of the number of people that apply every year. When asked about what sets Studentergården apart from other residences, of all the people interviewed, all answers were related to the social experience it offers. What exactly then makes this experience so worthwhile? If we were to apply some contemporary personality tagging, also expressed by (S), the residents would be considered 'doers'. Personal and collective initiative and proactivity in helping others start 'this new club' or organize 'that event' are a big part of living at Studentergården. Even at the point of application students are asked to write a motivational letter in which they, among other things, are to outline their ideas for projects that would enrich the place. Further, the Efor usually acts as a reminder of people's personal goals:

> *"So the first question we ask people when they finally have come in here, every half year we see all the new people down here for a bottle of beer and a little to eat, and then I ask them. 'What do you exactly want to do for Studentergården?' "*

As a person sets out on their Studentergården experience they learn and grow in different ways. Some take more initiative some less, some try out different things and gain practical skills and for some members it is more about learning interpersonally.

G told us that since he moved in a year ago he had been responsible for event finances twice, had managed bar logistics for a big party and organized a trip to his home country. While writing or reading this one tends to forget that all of them are full-time students and many have part-time jobs. People commit to spending a great deal of their remaining time on Studentergården - G estimated it is around 30 percent of his time. This does not imply that it is a burden. On the contrary, we were met with a strong sense of enthusiasm about organizing and starting up initiatives where our data suggests that this stem from the general awareness that a) it makes the overall experience for everyone so much better:

> *"You know that if you don't... if nobody is participating in these responsibility groups... things will not happen. So... I might as well, like... apply and say 'I can do it' " (M)*

and b) that one usually learns a great deal:

> *"You learn how to be responsible."* (G)
> *"doing the grocery shopping for 160 people, I've never tried that before, I enjoyed doing it and knowing that, or learning that I can do it."* (M)
> *"I've gotten better at tackling having so many people around me, it's easier for me now to just relaxen up"* (E)

These two elements interrelate with another aspect highlighted by most of the interviewees, namely that small events and gatherings are integral to everyday life at Studentergården. When questioned what first and foremost characterizes Studentergården, M answers:

> *"That things happen. Like.. People do stuff. And sometimes it's just small, silly events celebrating Justin Bieber's birthday, or stuff like that, that... that it's... it's spontaneous events popping up somewhere."* (M)

The residents seem to have a clear appreciation of other fellow residents' initiatives towards arranging what they characterize as 'spontaneous' events - things that 'just happen', and they furthermore seem to always find a reason to play in which humor and fun is essential:

> *"I mean we're even making a 'community-thing' out of pranking the other floor Pharisaer gangen. And then we have a meeting about how to prank them, (...) and then, we're waking up in the morning, like 3 o'clock, make (...) stupid things, and then we're really happy. And it's not necessarily about making them – this guy, who introduced me, he said, there is one rule with pranking: 'You should put more effort and time into setting it up, than for them to clean it up.' That's a good framework.. And then if somebody got pranked - we do it semi-often - then, first, you have to take a picture that (says) 'I got pranked' and then upload it to the FB group to everybody should see it..."* (G)

What we can take from these stories is that not only would they not miss a chance to laugh together or at each other, but do so *within the framework of informal rules* which aims at securing that the delicate social and emotional balance among people and most of all the respect for each other remains untouched. From this one could interpret that, even though the events have the character of being 'spontaneous', they are often based upon and follow informal rules for behavior and conduct.

In accordance with the data collected, members of Studentergården seem to have an ability to get excited about doing even the most mundane of tasks because there, amongst other, is a framework for recognition (roles) and a tendency to see the learning aspect in everything. Even if it is simply learning to get things done, without thinking about whether this is something 'I want to do', that is, self-discipline. This aspect is but a fraction of what is discussed around the theme of 'initiative' in this section. More importantly humor, fun and the experience of spontaneity seem to be a priority in the creation and participation in events or the like, whether it is just for the sake of a good time, or the initiative has a deeper purpose. From a systems perspective this attitude can be understood to be supported by the frequent expression of encouraging and reinforcing feedback.

Positive social feedback

Throughout our observations we noticed how the 'doing', received very positive feedback. Both in terms of verbal as well as non-verbal feedback. Examples are

compliments towards the one who had the role of making dinner or the appreciation of the person who brewed beer for an event (and an eagerness to buy that specific beer instead of others). What we further observed was, that the different roles, at least during the bigger events, were publicly announced, followed by claps and stamps from the audience, signalling enthusiasm about the fulfilling of either a role, such as for example being the 'toastmaster' or 'house-pianist' of the evening, or of responsibility areas, such as making dinner or arranging the room where an event takes place.

Furthermore, the residents frequently expressed the importance of 'keeping up' or cultivating initiatives, so they could grow into what Studentergården see as one of their landmarks: traditions. From what we could infer, not only is Studentergården founded on an already solid ground of traditions, it's further founded on a willingness to create new traditions, of making sure that what has been created is 'passed on'. The below story, told from the perspective of one S, tells about how the initial beer-brewers had an urge for making sure their newly created tradition were kept in place. They further functioned as mentors who both taught and provided the resources necessary for S to learn the 'art of brewing beer'. He quickly picked up the skills and made the brewing his own 'thing':

> *"Well, the two people that started it, two guys, lot of energy, just like me with all the projects, right, they get a good idea and they fund the money and start up and brew beer and it becomes a success and people think it's really nice (. . .) so when I came in they saw an opportunity in me, they saw my interest in it (beer-brewing) and they took advantage of, you know, training me in the art of brewing beer so I could do it. They provided the equipment, the location and all the knowledge, right, and the time and effort to actually show it to me. And they did so because it actually meant something for them. . .*
> *Interviewer: It meant something for them . . .*
> *S: to continue the tradition of brewing beer (. . .) I mean, they also invested a lot of time in learning to brew and also getting the tradition to work and buying the equipment so if all the equipment was just standing down in the basement they would feel, I guess, less successful, right?"*
> (S)

The above quote expresses the interest from both parties respectively, towards learning and preserving, or passing on an initiative. The reason behind it, S suggests, is ensuring that what one has created is maintained, even after one is no

longer present. It also expresses both an identification and a gratitude from S's side for being recognized and for the work that has been done.

Although the instances where we as researchers could directly witness feedback conversations or gestures of recognition remain only a couple, the way interviewees shared their appreciation of their peers and recounted instances of personal pride offers considerable insights into the general attitude around encouraging feedback. Frequently participants' recognition of other people's roles were expressed in an understanding and emphasis of how challenging or time consuming a specific job is, as illustrated in the below quote:

> *"It's a lot of work. Especially that one. There was crazy work with the network. Also, the operations officer: If . . . there a pipe just broke in the basement and there was a mess all over. And he has to (clapping sound) like really. . . "* (G)

Beyond these explicit statements the expectation and consequent appreciation seems to permeate the air of Studentergården. Figure 5.6 is an attempt to illustrate and summarize the dynamics of (implicit and explicit) social feedback, its causes and effects at Studentergården.

The illustration shows how initiatives and personal growth are reinforced direction of development. The reader shall start at 'sum of personal investment' and then move right and down. The (+) indicates reinforcement, while the arrows signal the direction of definite and variable flows. Feedback in this case contributes to growing confidence in residents, taking more initiatives, while people in turn are also likely to adopt the habit of giving positive feedback. From the application letter to the everyday life at hallways, the question remains the same, 'how can I contribute?'. This eagerness to contribute arguably stems from an amount of social pressure. This pressure, albeit forceful, does not seem to impact the residents in any involuntary ways. It is rather taken for granted, and as an opportunity, among the residents. This seems to keeps excitement and novelty at high levels while occasionally filling practical needs (e. g. beer production for parties).

Social pressure

This aligning of personal and system goals is one of Studentergården's biggest strengths in terms of motivating people to contribute, innovate and improve Studentergården.

There lies an implicit social pressure on members to take part, improve and bring joy to their peers while the individual has complete freedom in how to do

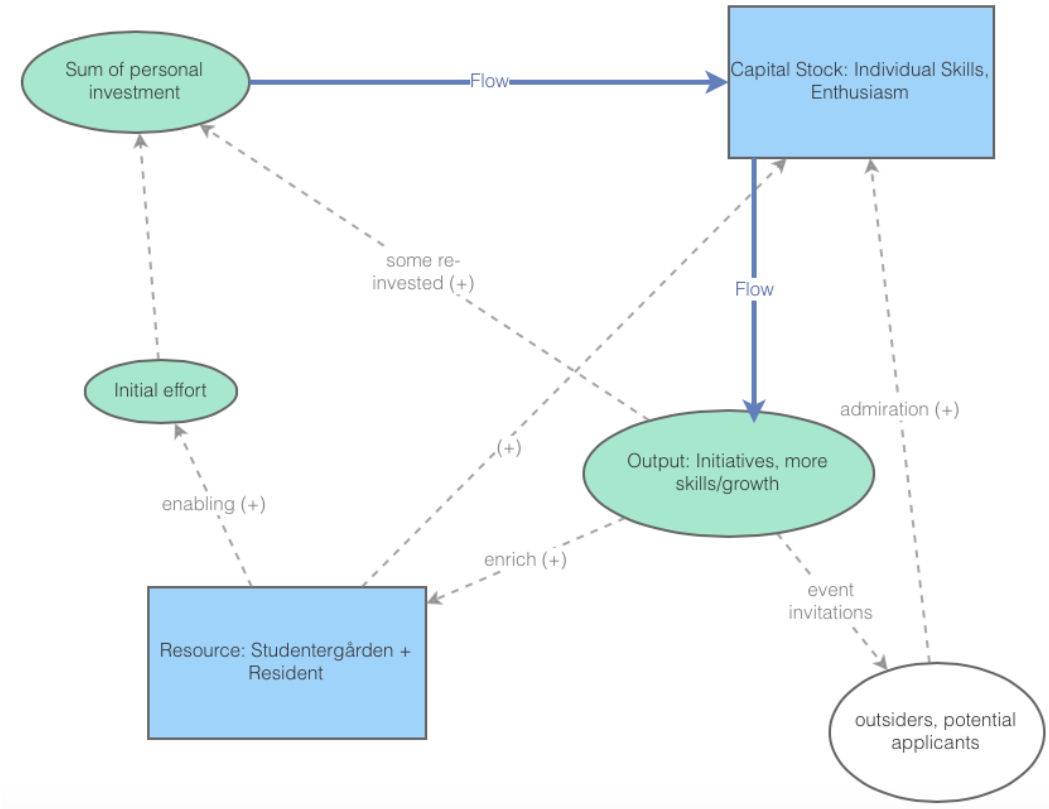

Figure 5.6: Reinforcing feedback. Inspired by Meadows (2008)

so. So on the one hand, it is an exciting prospect to learn something new and be recognized, on the other it is a predetermined rationale that people have to follow or risk being 'socially ridiculed':

> *"Well, everybody has a different way of being, like someone living in Studentergården I guess, but there's definitely the ones that are more... eh... that fits less well, right. (...) It's something that you talk about sometimes, that hallways has like 'ghosts', people that live there but that does not participate."* (S)

> *Interviewer: I have just heard some rumours about, somebody calling someone 'the ghost'...*
> *"Oh yeah. That can happen. But it hasn't happened here (4th floor), I think because we're all new here. And we're not just sitting down and letting other people do the job because we know we all have to do it here. I know that the other halls, when people live here for, like, three years, they start to get like the ghost, where they just like 'now I have done my part of this job and I'm now just leaning back, relaxing, let the newcomers do that'. But, because we've all started here at the same time, nobody has the position to do that."* (M)

This topic surfaced in several of the interviews and further gives the impression that there's, in general, residents who — willing or unwillingly — do not adapt to the 'way of living' at Studentergården, and it further hints at there also being an 'expiry date' for personal initiative. The story which emerged from the interviews is that, as people get older and they have spent well over three years at Studentergården some residents seem to grow out of this experience. Another interesting aspect, however, is that it highlights what is not welcomed or accepted at Studentergården, namely *not* participating in the routines of daily life. Seen from a systems perspective this can be regarded as negative feedback that tries to ensure that people proactively avoid doing what is seen to count as socially out of place.

On another level, the residents also have 'tags' for differentiating those who mainly stick to their own kitchen (gangboer), versus the ones who are known to socialize across all hallways and visit others (gårdboer):

> *"I think, like, I don't know if it's... If it makes any sense but we kind of sometimes have the term, if you're a gangboer or gårdboer, if you're*

> *mainly a resident at your kitchen or if you're more a resident at the whole place, so the people that are all over are kind of the people who makes it all connected"* (E)

From what we could infer from the data, the residents who were better at 'connecting' were seen to be more popular, which corresponds with the value of doing something for the 'common good', for the whole.

In taking a broader look at our participants it is interesting that, the longer they had spent there, the more reflective and critical they were in their explanations. This might partly be due to the mere increase in age and change of perspective. However, we found that Studentergården can become a tiring for some as they live 'the Studentergården way' for longer than an estimated three to four years. The comments around this hint at a lack of learning possibilities and a decrease in identification with the place:

> *"I also think the atmosphere has changed during the years I've lived here (..)*
> *When I moved in there was more a tendency of people spending more time at the kitchens, being more home and, you know, maybe watching some TV together, or let's play a game, the whole thing of just being present with your energy and... whenever you come together something happens, you know. And it's always interesting to be here because something will happen, right. Whereas now people are getting more focused on doing things personally, so everybody has at least five sports or, if they don't do five other things then studying and living here and have a job, then they're kind of not so cool, right, so you have to be, eh, dancing lindy-hop, kite surfing and climbing and hiking (...) learning two new languages and travelling around the world and doing voluntary work you know... all these kind of things. So that means that, at least in my hallway right now, is that everybody does things all the time, so less present."*

A general tone in this interview is one of distance: (S) spoke in terms of 'they' and 'the people here' rather than 'we' and had quite a differentiated but rather unexcited view of things.

In relation to the above story about the beer-brewery project, (S) further explained how he, himself, invested a lot of time, money and effort on renovating one of the rooms in the basement, where they "had an opening evening where we

served like free home brewed beer and like, amazing party, and then I think, half a year afterwards, not very long, the room was taken from us by the... practical guy.. the porter (janitor) it was really, really annoying" (S)

The disappointment expressed in the above story illustrate what could be seen as one of the reasons why S has ambivalent feelings towards Studentergården, and it further points at how social systems are messy, and as we have seen hardly ever functioning perfectly. While positive social feedback loops are usually in place, there are instances where even the most accurate or benevolent feedback fails to do its job or where other factors interfere with continued personal investment and learning. S's experience is a point in question, where accomplishment was taken away and motivation to start something new consequently curbed.

Social feedback goes a long way but does not ensure for an initiative to be successful. This is especially true if the reason for curbing initiative lies in the hierarchy of the system or its agreed upon priorities. Here the individual potentially feels frustrated and has to make the compromise for the sake of overall harmony. On a more constructive note, however, we know that friction and conflict are a necessary part of system development in terms of its intelligence and resilience. Harmonization of system goals is not always easy, but is usually dependent on the "letting go of more narrow goals and considering the long-term welfare of the entire system" (Meadows, 2008, p.116). Despite the evident limitations of reinforcing social feedback, encouraging others to do and learn remains a big part of Studentergården's culture.

We found that the 'doing' and the social recognition that comes from it have a direct impact on the residents' sense of responsibility, partly through the (positive) social pressure they stem from. The initiatives and contribution to recreation and social life described above, whether individual or collective, seem to be an element of Studentergården that is relatively non-negotiable. This pressure has both negative and positive results for the individual but sustains a general inclination towards collaboration, prioritizing the common good and proactivity among the members. In sum this can be called as a strong 'sense of community' which is further detailed in the following section.

5.2.3 Maintaining Relationship

Initial welcoming experience

The feeling of being warmly welcomed, quickly integrated as well as informed about the way life unfolds at Studentergården seems be an experience shared

by all of the interviewees, and paints a picture of a consistent welcome ritual. Even before moving in residents described how they felt serious interest towards them and recount spontaneous invitations to dinner, warm welcome e-mails and an overwhelming amount of information about things they will do in the future, events to attend etc. What most interviewees agreed upon, is that they were met with an excitement and instant acceptance that far exceeded their expectations:

> *"And then like two hours after I moved in I was in a 'Food club' with 20 people (...) and I was like 'What?!' that's crazy" (G), "I just feel that when people move in they instantly, very easily, become part of this" (M), "when we invite people in (...) we invite them for dinner and we're like 'so we have this date, and this date, and these three dates and we'd really like you to be there!' It's like 'wow that's crazy' all these new people"* (E)

The above quotes further illustrates how the practice of informing and welcoming the newcomer is a *collective* effort. One of the residents further reflect upon how this welcome ritual differs from many other social situations, that it's in this way is unique - and also illustrates how the welcome ritual is an act of awareness, something the residents see as 'very important' to make sure that the newcomers instantly becomes integrated and feel like a part of Studentergården:

> *"I remember that, when you move in.. at least to Barbar* (hallway) *I think a lot of the people living there see it as a very important thing that they come to the new person during the first week or so, just sit down and like, 'so, who are you, how do you feel about moving in?' At least I had the feeling that that happened to me, and that was... Really great, and I think it was just really easy compared to so many other new social situations you might find yourself in."* (E)

Other examples of instances where the sense of belonging, of feeling like a part of it, is fostered are parties, excursions and, for instance, a special birthday ritual for each member which involves the entire hallway waking up two hours earlier to arrange a big breakfast. Every kitchen, moreover, has a 'Madklub' (Food-club) from Sunday to Thursday, where the responsibility for cooking is distributed through the voluntary signing up of any person who wants to cook that day. There is no set order in which people rotate, rather they follow a feeling of whose turn it is each day. M moreover described how some kitchens are better at inviting people

over for spontaneous gatherings, like a game night. She reveals an order of value here that indicates how more social interaction (especially across the kitchens) and extroversion are valued over less, an attitude that echoes the one found in the tags persons get of being 'gangboer' (mostly at your kitchen) and 'gårdboer' (all across the place).

Belonging and Solidarity

Each of these shared moments are an opportunity for relationships to evolve, and since attendance is generally a high priority, members create an environment for profound personal relationships to develop. Mutual understanding and holding space for each other, even after arguments, is increased by 'random acts of kindness' which happen spontaneously or is part of the agenda at certain meetings:

> *"And then just one more thing about these kitchen meetings, that we're going through on these really heavy points. And then after we're finished with that, we - and that was crazy when I first experienced that - we're going around the table and then everybody can tell, what happened with you in the last month.*
> *And then people (. . .) really open up. Like, they talk about their family, what happened, (. . .) or 'I just got a girlfriend', 'I just got a boyfriend'. 'I just broke up.', 'hey guys' - and that happened the last time – 'I'm moving out, I'm moving together with my girlfriend'. And then people are like 'oohh, uhm, ahh that's cool but argh'. Or let's say, 'this family member is sick and I'm having a hard time now' . So people really like go, and the first time I was like 'wow that's crazy' (. . .) And you don't have to, you don't have to. You can also say that, yeah "I'm fine..". But usually people go all in. And it's really like wow okay. . . .*
> *And then after that the meeting is officially over, and then we're standing up and then we make a huge group-hug. . . . That also feels a little bit superficial.. and it's always part of it. But when you let it go, it's like so nice. It's just really. . . It's a little bit like, talk about body-language, that if I feel insecure then I do like this (crossing arms) but if I do like this I will be insecure.. or if you're confident you.."* (G)

In the last line in the above quote G explains how the practice might have a feel of 'superficiality', but further defends this argument by presenting an analogy about how physical intimacy has an actual effect on feeling insecure or confident. G

further went on to explain how this brings balance to the social atmosphere because it avoids leaving everyone with a sense of conflict after an exhausting discussion and confirms that it leads to a more nuanced perception of others. Although some of these cues look superficial for some, according to G they seem to have a profound effect. Learning to accept and support each other *physically* transcends the mere qualitative understanding of this behavioral norm.

Making the well-being of others an individual concern is also reflected in the residents referring to each other as 'gårdbrødre' (brothers of the gård) and 'gårdsøstre' (sisters of the gård), a term that appeared shortly after SG was established, and that has survived up to date. It can be understood as a collective role that everybody adopts upon moving in. Members of Studentergården seem to share the belief that others depend on them and an awareness of how their action play out in the bigger picture and can affect others.

> *" (. . .) when somebody has, maybe a depression or something, you figure out how you can, in a group, that (. . .) it might not be better to say 'oh I can't handle that' because for the whole community it's better if everyone is, like, lifted up."* (E)

What (E) describes here is a situation where she values engagement, even if potentially uncomfortable, over letting someone deal with his or her issues alone. It is an attitude towards perceiving the social well-being of one person as vital for the well-being of the whole. The attitude further resembles the norm attached to the role of being a 'Sheriff', in which it is seen as important to act upon an issue as it arises (or as one has become aware of it) instead of ignoring it.

This is confirmed by several of the participant's own reflections about what Studentergården is and how it serves the individual:

> *"I lived in a nice dorm but it was nothing like this, not really a community - yeah, there were some kind of activities, but not a strong community."* (G)

In this quote G further points to what could be a sense of reliability, emotional and practical, that makes for a 'strong' community. Moreover, he compared the sheer number of joint activities to that of places with a weak 'community', which he had experienced both in his home country and in Aarhus. G also makes the distinction between friends and family, in the sense that although one develops strong friendships with some people, what they have at large, reminds more of

a big family where everyone is accepted simply for being part of it. It is about sharing one's life with others (on a different level than usually with friends. (G) Emilie told us that she sees Studentergården as a place to "cover all your social needs." (E). For M Studentergården is a place that offers one the opportunity to build intimate relationships and "seeing where the other comes from" (M). Moreover, she emphasizes that she feels relaxed among people at the residence and has become more aware of how she's acting, that is, in terms of how she presents herself and how that affects others.

Having said all that, the majority of the interviewees' statements overlap with G when he highlights that:

> *"Sometimes it's a little bit too much. Really, really intense social life. But I think for a couple of years its really, really good. So I don't see now why would I leave this place."* (G)

Which relates to our point in the previous chapter, about how Studentergården tends to be a place most suitable for a short-term stay, perhaps more an *experience* than a long-term lifestyle.

Reciprocity & Tradition

Some, not all of the rituals and gestures described above are the product of long-standing tradition. Many of them seem to be relatively new rituals labelled as traditions, such as the earlier mentioned activity of making home-brewed beer.

There is a set of events which are repeated every year, such as the 'Kandidatfest' (graduate celebration) where one or more recent graduates are celebrated in an entire evening of speeches, music and a dinner arrangement and the 'Kastaniefest' (Chestnut-party), the name deriving from a big chestnut tree standing in the entrance yard of Studentergården. From our observation, both of these events were clearly characterized by what appeared, as well as demonstrated by the residents to be, a lot of traditional 'ways of doing things'. For one we observed direct references to previous residents or times at SG in the form of anecdotes told during speeches, which we were told were a usual procedure for major events. Another clear indication of this is what the residents refer to as their 'traditional songs', that is, songs written by earlier residents all the way back to the 1930s, the best one kept in a songbook, and also used at every event.

Not only are the traditional lyric and melody performed, but also the way it is performed seems to be repeated from year to year. Although, as we inferred from

both the Efor and S, the way it is performed naturally change slightly from year to year. (E) (S) The point being, however, that the residents seem to treasure 'holding on to' both the traditions as well as the way they assume them to have been traditionally performed. A lot of the events further seem to have clear-cut 'recipes' for how the event is to be held, often in the form of specific, unique and often carnivalesque rituals. As ritual observed during the candidate party goes by the name "vanding" (watering). The ritual is presented in a short narrative below:

> *Around midnight, after a three-course dinner, the guests of each respective graduate - mainly consisting of family and friends - armed themselves with cutlery and casseroles from the common kitchen, and went marching through all of the hallways at SG, hammering on their respective kitchen equipment in a specific rhythm, with the aim of waking up all of the rest of the residents. All of the residents at SG, either already awake or forced out of their bed by the massive noise, then had to prepare buckets of water, that they were to throw on the graduates who, meanwhile, had dressed up in colourful costumes (such as a superman kostume). After the march, the guests gathered in the front yard of Studentergården, where the graduates climbed on the top of a door, supported by a handful of their friends. As they were lying on the door, they were transported throughout all of Studentergården: a tour through both the inner yard as well as around the outward part of the premises. This tour was accompanied by the guests who continued their rhythmic hammering on pans and casseroles. As they went along, each kitchen at SG opened their window, and the fellow residents poured heavy amounts of water over the graduates. The march ended by a wall of bricks, shielding Studentergården from the street, that the graduates - soaking wet - climbed on top of. The door, now without any passenger, were then transported back to the graduates who were sitting on the top of the wall of bricks, waiting for their door to climb down upon. The final stage of the ritual consisted of the graduates being carried to a set of lion sculptures situated in the inner yard, that they then had to crawl up on. The ritual ended with claps and enthusiastic shouts from the guests.*

This ritual, which in many ways might be characterized as a bit extraordinary, seem to be - according to what we're told by the residents - just one out of many. G claims that SG is first and foremost also known, on the outside, for its great

parties, where 'crazy' things happen. (G) Our data further suggests that these traditions and rituals are highly appreciated by the residents, they are seen as "something special" (E), as something they have to keep up with. (M)

Moreover, the story also illustrates that even though a resident's awareness of the common good seems to be an essential guide for all action at Studentergården, the members give great attention to individuals, whether it is support through tough times or the celebration of personal achievement.

One of the most frequently expressed feelings throughout the conversations was an impulse for reciprocity. All of the interviewees spoke about feeling compelled to give back, doing so, in what we perceived as an attitude of gratitude and joy about what they had gained personally while living there. This was expressed in different ways among people who described 'automatically' feeling like a "bearer of tradition" (S), "moving something forward" (M) or as "burning for making this a better place" (E).

This motivation to give back manifests in different ways. Some important ways is the handing down of knowledge, wanting to participate in as well as initiate activities and events, and taking the time to teach and integrate newcomers (S, E, M). Emilie pointed out how she wants to give back the feeling of surprise and overwhelm that she felt in the beginning as well as how important it is to take time to listen to others (E).

Defining Studentergården

As touched upon earlier, most emphasized the intensity of the social life and assumed that it is probably not for everyone (G, M, S, E). Above all, however, it seems to make for an atmosphere, that according to the participants, no other collegium can compare with.

Some of the most interesting parts in the conversations were those where participants told us about what makes Studentergården different from other residences (in Copenhagen):

> *"(in other collegiums) you have your own private space and your own private kitchen that is very small and stuff like that, where the community is not that good, there it's just like people taking care of themselves even though they live in a place where there's a lot of other students"* (M)

> *"At least it used to be like that and then there is Regensen, which is like a village, so everybody knows everything about each other and some*

> *people think it's too much. I think SG is kind of between those two extremes, it's closer to Regensen, then to Øresundskollegium, presumably. But it's pretty much that, you have the social structure but you also have your choice of being alone, which I think is ideal for a place like that."* (O)

What these above quotes tells us, is that the residents at SG *differentiates* themselves by pointing at local values such as 'the common good', of care and 'social security', and characteristics such as being 'elastic' enough to both accommodate the need for individual as well as shared space, and of being 'big' enough to avoid too much gossip. It also tells us, however, that attributes such as being too self-focused or doing thing for your own interest (without reflecting on how your actions affect others) is considered as negative, an aspect also illustrated by S when asked about what he thinks would be 'not cool' to do at SG:

> *"Ehm .... (pause) go to ... techno-parties or ... like, for example crossfit is not as cool here as it is in the rest of Copenhagen and these very, very... individual kind of trends that are outside of Studentergården."* (S)

In the above paragraph, S points at the 'individual trends', relating them to something 'outside' of SG, as one thing that differentiates SG from the 'outside world'.

A more broad function suggested from Olaf about what constitutes or makes Studentergården different points especially to the educational aspect, seen as a type of *socia*l education:

> *"it's a means of educating young people socially. I mean, if you come across people that have never lived in a student residence like this, they sometimes are very different in their way of being social, so I think living in especially a good place where there are some rules and some interaction going on, then you learn how to respect other people and to accept that people have different views on things and more social and I think that's really important."* (O)

Upon receiving the acceptance to Studentergården people told us they felt 'lucky', 'chosen' or 'special' (G, M, O) Maya said she "had this feeling before (she) went here, that this is, like a big secret society where you're really lucky to get in and to live here." (M) And she further also pointed at the difference of being inside versus outside of SG:

> *"I can feel that there's a difference when I go outside these walls, out in Copenhagen in general, people are not that friendly and open-minded."* (M)

In line with S, M also differentiates Studentergården from the 'outside' world, focusing on the level of openness and friendliness. However, while the residents at Studentergården seems to cultivate the aspect of openness, they also have a somewhat contradictory attitude towards diversity first and foremost to having international students and some less obvious inconsistencies as expressed in the form of reflections such as this made by S:

> *"Because I think it's not about me it's the way people are recruited eh... you, you know it's the people living here that get people in so they always take people that are similar to themselves. In a positive and negative way I guess you get a lot of people in that way that has a lot of energy and want to spend energy helping, trying to make Studentergården a cool place. You also get a lot of the same types, and there's actually in my opinion something I noticed during the years, because I didn't notice it in the beginning, cause I fitted in so well, that there's also some people that there's not room for here..."* (S)

S describes his own perspective changing from being 'a perfect fit' for Studentergården, to noticing that he disagrees with some of the 'collective truths', such as the aspect of openness. While it's obviously a value the residents treasure, Studentergården also shows signs of exclusiveness and a careful selection of 'who's in and who's out'. One of the incidents the Efor referred to as problematic for the overall culture at Studentergården, was the inclusion of internationals, which according to B were set in motion fifteen year ago. Contrary to the normal application process, this is not controlled by SG themselves, but the International Office (CPU). According to B the main problem with accommodating internationals has been the issue of language: the danish residents have expressed frustration over "having to speak english all day" (B). The issue has furthermore been discussed:

> *"We are sometimes discussing it here, if we can solve the problem so that we don't... One kind of solution could be to say that we don't accept foreigners but... then the students here say, 'no it's not made that way' it's we, we want maybe to have a more, influence on what students we get here... It's because we, it's the local board that in*

> *practice select all the other people, but now we have some two foreigners coming just from the heaven and chosen by the international office. "* (B)

As we mentioned in the first chapter of this analysis, one of the important aspects for SG is being able to 'control' who it is that should be 'invited' into SG. The boundaries of SG is first and foremost locally controlled, it's created *by the residents themselves.* Although the residents, including those who are responsible for the application process, show signs towards being aware of and reflect upon the difficulties and ethical dilemmas involved in such an undertaking (E, S), it's however an issue worthy of critical consideration. While it may seem like an exclusionary and cliques process, it however seem to be one of the prerequisites for the strong culture found within the residence, as expressed by S when asked what would happen if Studentergården had an application process common to most other collegiums in Copenhagen, e.g. a list-based selection, with the principle of first come, first serve:

> *"Then I think the atmosphere of Studentergården would disappear"* (S)

The issue of the application process is a hard nut to crack, and there seems to be few 'right' answers to how such a process 'ought to be' performed. The issue is anyhow one worth discussing, and will therefore be reflected upon in the discussion part.

Attitude of seriousness

Across interviews we noticed that people frequently used words and sentences such as 'serious', 'really important', and 'really serious discussion' when describing the day-to-day, weekly and monthly meetings or tasks. Similarly, the described democracy-day, which takes place twice a year, is in principle voluntarily, but from what we could infer, there was a strong feeling of obligation to participate, surfacing, for example, in this quote from one of the residents when telling about her experience of the day:

> *"... but mostly people just sit around, just... Also just to know what's going on, probably also because they were told that they... kind of have to, it's not something that you're forced to, but you know it's like... social pressure, kind of like it's expected of you. Yeah, cause we have a rule, democratic rule, that a certain amount of people have to be here"* (E)

E refers to the 'social pressure' as the reason behind why one feels obligated to participate, while the foundation for such an attitude she indicates lies in the 'democratic rule'. One might therefore claim that the justification for the 'social pressure' in this case points at the official rules - and, hence, it indicates a feeling of 'seriousness' and respect for these rules.

In general, the residents seemed to take seriously the rules found in the 'Gårdlov', the law created by and for the residents themselves. However, the attitude of seriousness seems to not only be rooted in the particular 'Gårdlov':

> *"(. . .) the structure is obvious for everybody. So it's good because you don't have to make excuses. It's clear, we have kitchen meeting, you have to be there. If you're not there, it's not cool. It's really not cool."* (G)

G refers to the kitchen meeting, the monthly meeting where roles are distributed. In the same way former residents themselves remade their own *Gårdlov,* throughout the times they have also created and are re-creating their own roles, both in terms of titles — such as Sheriff — and in terms of the norm, following that role — which also partly explains the high levels of understanding of what the specific roles entail and why they are good.

This high level of integrity and the self-evidence of certain rules became apparent in relation to many different aspects of live at Studentergården as shown throughout the above sections of the analysis. This attitude consequently constitutes a fundamental feature of the community and seems to be in a relation of mutual reinforcement with the practice self-governance. In the following discussion we will further interpret how this could be seen as Studentergårdens organizing principle.

Chapter 6

Discussion of Findings

This chapter addresses the main findings of the the study, roughly following the topics (system purposes) from the analysis. We take a second look at real and potential challenges at Studentergården as well as recommendations we draw from these for CPH:Shelter. Further we relate our findings to the scholarly and societal context this study could be relevant for.

One of the most significant features of the community we studied in our field work is their particular exhibition of a *responsible attitude* and consequently the insights into what being responsible means to them. In the context of the studied group, at the most fundamental level, this stands for interpersonal commitment and mutual recognition by all, of all members. This forms the basis for other types of responsibilities which are distributed in the form of specifically assigned roles. We have shown how these roles are carried out in a serious-minded manner which is rare in such environments.

6.1 Maintaining Control

The amount of roles that different people inhabit is moreover striking. Whether it is a relatively important and work intensive task such as managing the internet network or a seemingly trivial one such as watering the plants. All tasks, no matter what they entail, are distributed to specific residents which in turn are known for their specific role and can therefor be held accountable or simply be a source of information when needed. The degree of commitment to these roles further seems to rest on the fact that the general rules the system is governed by, as well the creation of specific roles, is in the hand of the students themselves, through a democratic, dialogue- and consensus-based decision making process.

Having more or less structured ways of *assigning roles*, through set days, such as Democracy day (roles which include the whole system), and through such processes as kitchen meetings (roles which include the subsystems) ensures that roles are distributed *throughout* the system, which means that both the macro- and the micro-jobs are fulfilled, and connects the subsystems with the 'whole'. These findings support the notion of control, understood as a systems' ability to maintain identity and oneness despite changes (e. g. flow of students coming and going) as one of the core for a system's survival (Checkland, 1981).

Furthermore, the roles are delegated with both practical and social/emotional objectives in mind. We have highlighted the importance of roles being self-made as it creates both individual and collective awareness of the rationale behind them, and of the kind of behavior that is expected for each role.

Lastly, the findings point at a communicative openness, in the form of self-disclosure: of speaking openly and genuinely. This seem to stem from a genuine sense of common values, such as fairness and recognition, which — in turn — nurtures an environment where the 'personal' becomes collective. Alternatively, it can be the other way around, that openness and honesty creates space for shared values to grow (Senge, 1990, p. 274-275). An *open information flow* ensures that information is available to all and, in effect, that signals quickly go to action points, which ensures possibilities for correcting or adjusting actions and limiting delays. Further the findings have pointed at how the residents are able to critically look at their own norms, as in the case of the change in procedures regarding the distribution of summaries of board meetings, and change them, which shows how the system performed a double-loop, that is, questioning whether a procedure is actually conducive to its own goal. Although our findings portray Studentergården as having an open flow of information between the different members, they however also point at some missing feedback loops, as illustrated in the story of S and his effort in renovating a brewery room, where information from the janitor of needing the room for another cause came too late. This points at the importance of reassuring that all information flows, between residents and other more 'externally' related members being in place and of the importance of avoiding information delays.

6.2 Nurturing Initiatives

This structure of everyday life is paradoxically met with a high degree of spontaneity, fun and a natural, relaxed feel of gatherings. The pervasive question of how

one can contribute to Studentergården becomes a creative one for the residents themselves. Through positive social pressures and feedback, residents are motivated and challenged while also showing a intrinsically motivativated enthusiasm to contribute for — it seems — reasons of reciprocity (the joy of giving to a place they love) and of the fulfillment that comes with personal achievement. Residents seem to be proactive both in the organization and adornment of everyday life as well as special celebrations, which makes for a continuously eventful and rarely dull atmosphere.

An interesting aspect in this part, is that the positive feedback starts already *before* as well as on the *very first day* the new resident arrives. That is, the newcomer does not necessarily perform any action that others can 'judge' him or her upon, but is instantly accepted as an equal member of the community. This instant acceptance seems to generate much of the sense of reciprocity the interviewees referred to. It hints at a causal interrelation between acceptance, acknowledgment and the feeling of gratitude. This particular finding is, again, in line with Strawson's (1962) concept of reactive attitudes as based on interpersonal relationships and on the particular image one holds of the other. This strengthens probability of a responsible attitude being something fostered, something that evolves within a specific context, rather than it being something that one 'has'.

This, in turn, relates back to the aspect of roles, as the willingness to perform a role is dependent on how *the others* view the role and what kind of reactive attitudes, such as gratitude and praise, a particular role evokes. Furthermore, the negative feedback, illustrated in the 'ghost' as well as the attitude towards not participating, at for example a kitchen meeting or the democracy day, is met with blame or ignorance. That the residents have such a clear understanding of what one ought *not* to do (there are even informal rules for pranking) is interesting in relation to the cybernetic theory of clear 'limits', as one of the core principles for a self-organizing system to evolve (Morgan, 1997 p. 99). Thus, a possible reason for the 'doer'-culture is, on the one hand, related to reinforcing positive feedback. On the other hand, however, even more so, on the residents shared awareness of the limitations, of knowing what to *avoid*. This makes it easy for the residents to act as they please within that space and, hence, accelerates the growth of individual experimentation and initiatives.

A challenge related to the 'ghost' tag mentioned, is how there might be an 'expiration date' for residents' motivation, especially in the case of people staying for three to five years or more. This hints at how the system might be too 'confining' in the sense the culture is so all encompassing that it doesn't necessarily

have the flexibility to allow for — or 'catch up on' — personal change and some people's inherent need for change. Even though this can be seen as a challenge, it might just as well be a natural process of people having the 'urge' to move on. It is however, a good idea to consider these potential life-cycles of cohorts for the creation of a new student housing project as this factor can greatly affect people's motivation to contribute. This could be resolved by primarily ensuring that there is always a 'critical mass' of residents who have been living there, for instance, not longer than for three years. In a student community this can be regulated by taking in students twice a year or even more frequently, albeit in relatively small numbers, so that the fluctuation rate is high, but the number of people never big enough to have any adverse impacts on the culture. This ensures that the 'stock' of students is always balanced in terms of a decent variation in how long people have been living at the place.

6.3 Maintaining Relationships

As we have seen the initial welcoming experience and the general overwhelming degree of acceptance of newcomers seems to account for much of the motivation for participation and experience a profound sense of belonging. This feeling is perpetuated through scheduled activities such as 'food-club' and fixed arrangements, which often have the character of being 'intimate' on both an emotional and a physical level. Another interesting finding is the special and almost carnivalesque events that seem to make people at Studentergården see themselves as 'unique'. The events have a function both in intensifying emotional bonds among residents and the attachment to the 'whole', as well as a celebration of personal achievements. The residents share the value of *solidarity* and of taking action towards the *common good* and in the sense of seeing the community as a *family*. Most evident is their shared belief in interdependence — that if they don't take care of one another the whole will suffer.

Even though this study set out to discover shared meaning of responsibility and looks mostly at how the system functions as a whole, one must be careful not to depreciate the honoring and encouragement of individual interests that is cultivated at Studentergården and how this is an important point for the creation of social systems in general. In a systems world this means that one makes sure that the commons (in this sense the contributions) are used and replenished in a balanced manner. That is to say that if a system is too focussed on the contribution of the individual for the common good and not on what the individual gains for

herself from being part of the system, then the pool of 'good' for the 'commons' is too easily exhausted and a 'tragedy of the commons' might be the consequence. Conversely, residents might be too selfish which in the long-run has the same effect of exhausting the systems capacity. A basic way to avoid this is to 'educate', that is, appeal to people's morality and make them see the consequences of their actions in the context in the broader context or discourage through social disapproval (Meadows, 2008, p. 116-119).

Overall, Studentergården's smooth operating rests on a strong personal bond among the residents, especially in the separate hallways, which, as subsystems, add great stability to the residence. The interviewed residents refer to Studentergården in terms of 'family' and individually show strong emotional ties to the place expressed through nostalgia, loving words or referring to the great friendships and the 'strong community' they have. Hence, we understand community as a value, as well as a place which fulfills several social needs.

6.4 Responsibility as Moral Status

The previous points culminate in the main finding (or summary of findings) that the system's resilience is rooted in an organizing principle which we call *responsibility as moral status*.

As the analysis of Studentergården has shown, the areas of system functioning, including their mechanisms can be divided into three pillars: Maintaining Control, Nurturing Initiative and Maintaining Relationships. These aspects are intrinsically linked and mutually support each other in the sense that all are essential for the overall system of Studentergården to function as well as for each other to be maintained. For example, if there was a break with the habit of nurturing initiatives, this would arguably affect the system's ability to maintain control as well as remove opportunities to maintain relationships among the residents.

Although Studentergården was, and is, based on a constitution and an organizational structure, the day-to-day practices and laws have, to a large degree, been generated by any given cohort of students within Studentergården. They have structured and restructured their communal lives, and over time they have learned, through errors and experience, to create a resilient system. The system is characterized by a profound shared understanding of what is considered 'good' behavior, and more so of what is not, while resting upon the understanding of one being a part of something bigger (the whole is more than its parts). The residents feel that they are responsible not only for their own well-being but for

that of others, and — in turn — that they can count on each other. In other words, the system is characterized by a high degree of mutual dependence and trust. This provides us with some explanation as to why the system was able to react so 'smoothly' when an outside force (the storm) attacked it, making ten people 'homeless'.

From the very start Studentergården was built upon principles of social well-being and solidarity, and already after the first great party took place at Studentergården, the name 'gård-brother' - which has survived up to date - was established. The 'gårdlov' was also, from the start, created with the primary aim of taking care of the residents' interests. It is fair to claim that the aspects of social well-being and fellowship have been built into the very bricks of Studentergården. In this paper, a responsible attitude has been defined as respect and recognition for the other, of seeing the other as *equal,* worthy of being held responsible (Strawson, 1962; Wallace, 1994). This points to how a *responsible attitude* can be seen as the very *organizing principle* of Studentergården. Following this, the system is based upon a couple of simple organizing rules that highlight the importance of a responsible attitude - of social well-being and fellowship, and of the question '*what can you do for Studentergården?'*. This very question and its underlying principles we argue, set *responsibility as a moral status* at the residence.

Responsibility at Studentergården is seen to entail the most dominant attitudes of residents as highlighted in the analysis, such as compassion for the other, proactivity, solidarity and the self-evidence of practical duties. Responsibility in this sense is the most valued and expected trait among residents, as they themselves have come to experience the benefits of this priority and created an environment in which it is honored. This goes back to the idea of responsibility proposed by Aristotle, the idea that in order to hold someone accountable he or she needs to be considered a moral agent (Eshelman, 2001). As we have seen, however, there is no universal ground for judgment and the ethics behind a morale are dependent on the construction of individuals in a given context (Strawson, 1964). In the world of Studentergården the praise is directed to those who contribute, while everyone necessarily considers the other as worthy and are likely to do so. This moreover, means that moral capacity is clearly understood to lie with the individual instead of with the 'organization' as a whole. It is unthinkable for residents at Studentergården to assume that the system will just run without them or that someone will take care of what has to be done, like it seems to be the case in many other collegia.

The findings moreover show that Studentergården exhibits strong elements

of what we previously described as social capital: it's first and foremost concern (after providing shelter) is the nurturing and building of social relationships, based on values such as fellowship, working together, reciprocity and trust - oriented towards the 'whole': a community that should be nice for all members to live in (Gauntlet, 2011, p. 130). The findings have further pointed at how these social relations are a valuable resource that boost productivity in the form of initiatives and learning experiences, spurred by expectations and invitations to participate and generate even more capital (Putnam, 1995). This appears on different levels: our findings point at how the individuals feel they have gained more confidence in expressing opinions and addressing conflicts, while they also feel they have gained more emotional and social intelligence. And on an overarching level: Studentergården has stood its test of time and still stands a healthy, resilient social system. However, Studentergården also shares many features found in the concept of bonding capital (Putnam, 1995). The residents perceive themselves as more or less the same 'type', and interviews showed a symmetry in what type of people were considered to be, as well as 'not' be, 'Studentergården-people'.

A mechanism that seems to play a great part for the culture within Studentergården, is the application process. As explained, this process is made by the residents' themselves, and except from the case of two internationals, handled by the International Office of Copenhagen University, the students decide the criteria (aside from the strict formal ones), and therefore set the boundaries and choose what kind of members are 'worthy' of being a part of the community. This highlights the issue of boundaries, both in terms of what the system is defined as (what type is it) and also in terms of who is invited into the dialogue, and the execution of, the selection process.

In the light of our other findings, such as different traditions, and specific names and titles flourishing at Studentergården, further supports Bourdieu's notion of social capital, seen as institutionalized roles and relationships that are protected by a common name and institutionalized acts which both shape and inform the members (Bourdieu, 1968, p. 88). The strong culture at Studentergården tells a story of a 'clique', an exclusive community that first and foremost invites and serves a specific 'type'. On the other hand, as Putnam (1995) argues, a community often has features found in both the idea of bonding as well as that of bridging. The latter, in the case of Studentergården, is only reflected in their desire - rather than their practical reality - to foster more diversity. This is especially evident in their struggle with the integration of internationals which has come to be a delicate topic. Our interviews showed that the residents were very aware of the

value of diversity but that they were only able to practice this value to a certain extent. For example, the great learning experience which is provided through the close interaction with people from all kinds of academic backgrounds.

We refrain from making a particular normative judgement on this reality because the system of Studentergården functions very well. Witnessing this slight challenge with diversity, however, a general take away from this is to consider a well-balanced selection committee as well as to actively ensure a balance of 'types' at least in the sense of internationality. This could mean that the task of selection is delegated to more than one person, ideally people chosen from the residents themselves and by all means cultivate a critical awareness about one's own ideals and values, as an overemphasizing of these could lead to challenges in the future.

Figure 6.1 shows our aggregated findings and how they relate to each other in terms of the multiple *functions* (outcome) *structures* (the input, means and cause) and *processes* (activities and know-how) and *purposes* are interrelated and, together, create the whole (Gharajedaghi, 1999). We have, within the frame of systems thinking, identified some of the key interrelated dimensions at Studentergården that, in sum, make up the unique social atmosphere that characterizes the residence (Figure 6.1). Further we have shown how these dimensions are permeated by an organizing principle, namely seeing a responsible attitude as a moral status, e.g. as an overarching tenet guiding the many practices within Studentergården. The study has illustrated how the system primarily is occupied with social purposes: with ensuring social needs are met and relationships built. It therefore supports the idea of seeing purposes within human systems as mainly directed towards maintaining ongoing relationships (Checkland, 1985, Vickers, 1983). These findings are consistent with the idea that emerging properties (such as feelings of gratitude, joy or belonging) are first and foremost a product of the interactions, the relationships people form and the values they share, and are therefore only meaningful in relation to the 'whole'. It is not something an individual, by itself, can create, but something that emerges through interaction with others. (Checkland, 1999) The residents shared sense of values and their tight knit relationships can therefore serve as an explanation for their resilient culture. This hierarchy of values, we argue, is essential for a sense of 'community' to emerge.

There is not one specific factor that 'causes' the residents' common understanding of responsibility, but rather the many different layers described above, which mutually affect each other. Rather than one factor that all else rests upon, it is the interplay and balance of elements which make for a smooth functioning. The

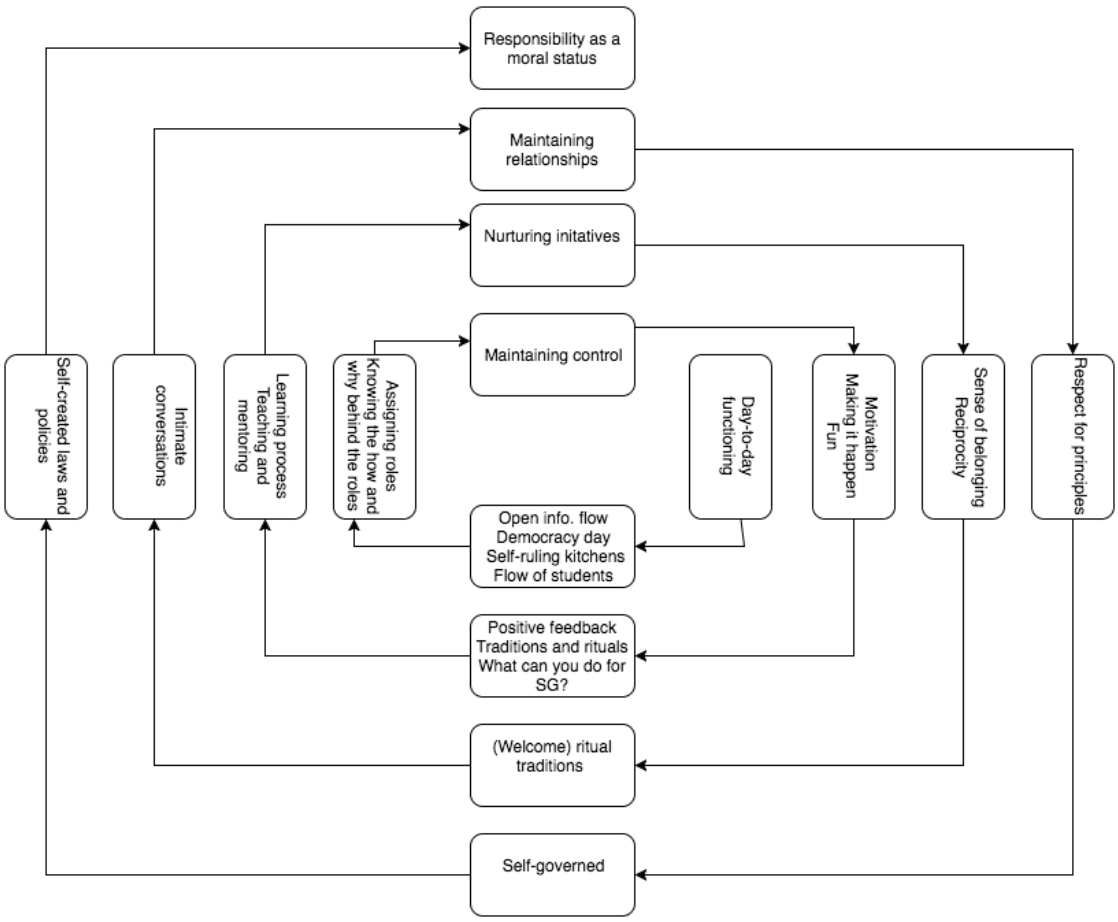

Figure 6.1: A holistic, iterative model based on concepts found in Gharajedaghi (1999).

insight into these through analysis can help us make decisions in the design of similar systems but all creation is first and foremost an iterative process that, when forced into a certain direction bares many dangers - starting with even symbolic matters such as giving a particular name to a group of people, be it community or organization, before they have made up a name themselves.

Having an inspiration or example, however, after which to model a social system, proved helpful in the case of Studentergården. It allows the designers to take what they perceive as useful values and practices and include that into their own version, albeit aware of the limitations that come with planning itself.

6.5 Suggestions for CPH:Containers

Studentergården, as well as CPH:Shelter were both founded due to an urgent need for student housing in their time and contexts. Moreover both initiatives share a certain amount of values which have been, or shall be, deployed in the establishment of each. The overarching value they share is that of community. As we have stated throughout the paper it is impossible to pinpoint exactly what is the recipe for a flourishing community or a functioning, harmonious social system. However we have throughout this process identified some last practical recommendations which we would like to share with the founders of CPH:Containers and others who embark on similar projects.

One aspect that is particularly relevant to include in a design process, is the establishment of several subsystems that can develop their own sense of identity, rules and habits. At Studentergården this is done through the different kitchens, for CPH:containers an alternative solution could be to divide the village into smaller self-governed units, symbolized by for example having the houses painted in different colors, or/and by encouraging the future residents to 'baptise' their area with personal 'ceremonies'. In order to connect these units with the whole, we would further recommend to 1) establish a representative chosen by the residents themselves and 2) encourage a group from the village to *initially* take upon themselves the task of creating some fun events/festivals for all of the residents and 3) Encourage the residents to create roles and responsibilities within their subsystems as well as across the different units. Again: keep in mind creativity and humor. Maybe roles should be thought of as being both practical and social?

A feature which was irrelevant for the analysis but is interesting here, is the aspect of having a common account. At Studentergården a small part of their monthly fee goes to a common account that they can then apply to whenever

they want to arrange an event, small or big. This allows for economic freedom and serves as a good incentive towards 'making things happen'. In line with this we would also recommend to create common spaces, where some might have 'in-build' purposes, like bicycle repair workshop, whereas others might be a 'blank slate' so that the residents themselves have freedom to make what they want of the space. For the interest of creating a community, we emphasise the importance of the different activities and events to be 'open for all'. In an ideal scenario the residence have an unofficial structure to mentor and support each other.

Even though it's a difficult task to 'create', the sense of belonging at Studentergården seems closely knit to what we have called the 'welcome ritual'. We would argue that such a ritual, which quickly integrates the newcomer and make him/her feel welcome, is of great importance for feelings of belonging and reciprocity to evolve.

Regarding the aspect of a community manager we would recommend choosing someone that lives and stays in the area or ideally at the 'village' itself. We propose a careful use of both the word 'community' and 'manager', as they are words that might sound 'shallow' in somebody's ears since they carry such a heavy weight of connotations. Maybe it would be fruitful to create a new word, an entirely new title?

All of the above is dependent on a well functioning information flow. Although there is an innumerable amount of information flows within a social system, a practical suggestions would be to create a digital information architecture that is as transparent as possible, and — further — to not only think in terms of the digital, but also include physical channels. Old fashioned mailboxes, a 'wall of events', a place for suggestions? The future residents will likely have a lot of good ideas which otherwise get lost. The same goes for a place where complaints can be 'filed' somewhat anonymously and then taken up in a general discussion among all people in order to find a solution.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

In this paper we have drawn on literature found within the field of systems thinking as well as literature on the topic of community and responsibility with the aim of investigating into how a responsible attitude is fostered and adopted in a student community. The background for the study lies in an encounter and collaboration with two entrepreneurs facing the practical challenge of how to organize for a community at their local student housing project CPH:Village. In order to assist the social venture in their quest to design a good community, we have consequently looked at what could be termed a desireable case of community, namely the renowned local student collegium Studentergården.

In order to gain a holistic understanding of the residence we have chosen to look at the community through the lens of systems thinking which favors an interdisciplinary approach to research. Moreover, the systems lens provided us with critical awareness with respect to methods and concepts and how these not only describe the world, but also play a part in creating it. This led us to discover the problem of conceptualization in both research scenarios and the practical reality of entrepreneurs. Moving on from this we decided not to conceptualize our object of study as either community or organization but to let these notions complement each other in the analysis and discussion of Studentergården as a social system.

Further we linked the notion of community with that of responsibility as an attitude, showing that the latter is a prerequisite for the former in a well-functioning social system. This argument rests on the discovery that a responsible attitude seems to be inseparable from the meaning an individual derives from the social system he or she is a part of.

In this paper we have adopted the view of a responsible attitude as situated in a context of interpersonal relationships which are based on mutual respect and

recognition. This insight is not without consequences, as it directs our attention towards how a responsible attitude is not something one 'has', but something that emanates from an identification with the other. This view of responsibility makes us aware how an individual's understanding of the nature of 'the whole' determines her attitude towards responsibility. That means the degree of responsibility on show is directly related with how one relates to the 'bigger picture' - an organization, a system etc.

Through an analysis of the themes maintaining control, nurturing initiatives and maintaining relationships we have synthesized our findings into what we have described as an organizing principle, which points at how just a few set of principles can guide many different kinds of actions. Further we have suggested how a shared sense of values combined with a shared awareness of limitations can accelerate the growth of initiatives and experimentation and make for a good atmosphere. Consequently, 'community' in this study is regarded as a value and points to a degree of social well-being, belonging and meaningful relationships.

7.1 Limitations

The systems lens has not only given tools and insights for the examination of the community, but has also provided an awareness of both researcher and designers role in relation to the use of system models for both analysis and design. The findings of this study are of a practical and local nature, so that it is difficult to generalize much of them for the use in very different scenarios, like that of market organizations. As valuable as the insights about Studentergården are, we consider the scope of our empirical study relatively limited as it deals with a group of people who is very unique. With our research we produced insights into the *nature* of the practical problem at CPH:Containers (building community). This means that we have not solved the issue for them, but we have produced a study which can help guide their planning.

What we intended to do beyond this, however, is to make a small step into the direction of the application of systems thinking in the world of social ventures and conversely offer an additional perspective on the notion of community to inspire further study among systems thinkers. In regards to the design of social systems we recommend the ideas of evolutionary systems design of authors such as Bela Banathy or Erich Jantsch and for the most practical approaches to management the work of Peter Senge.

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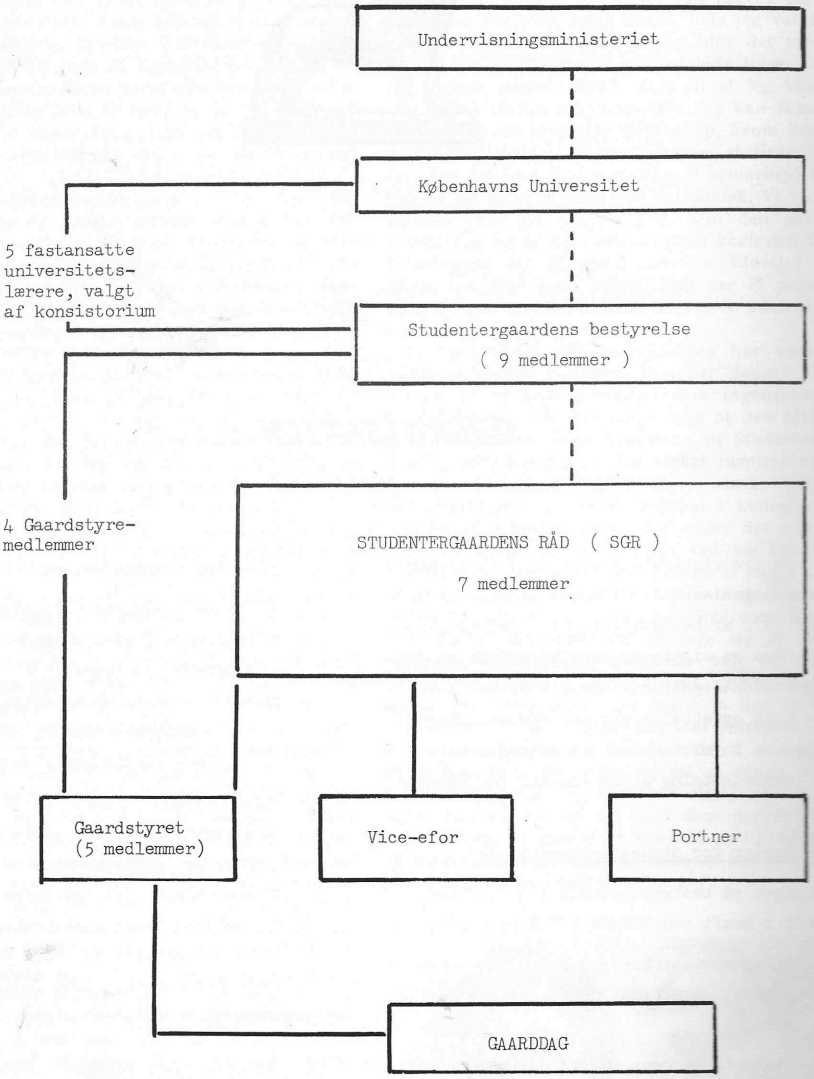
Appendices

Appendix A

Appendices

A.1 Organizational Chart (official version)

Skematisk kan Studentergaardens organisation i dag fremstilles på følgende måde:



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A.2 Constitution (Fundats)

FUNDATS AF 23/11 1992 FOR STUDENTERGÅRDEN
med senere ændringer.

§ 1.
Kollegiets navn er STUDENTERGÅRDEN.

§ 2.
Kollegiet er bestemt til bolig for uddannelsessøgende, fortrinsvis ved Københavns Universitet og Danmarks Tekniske Universitet, jfr. dog § 5.

Stk. 2.
Bestyrelsen kan tillade kollegianerne at blive boende i en kortere tid efter endt uddannelse, når særlige forhold taler derfor, jfr. § 5, stk. 6.

§ 3.
Kollegiet er en erhvervsdrivende fond, som er undtaget fra Lov om erhvervsdrivende fonde og under statsligt tilsyn. Dets formue består af følgende værdier:

a) Ejendommen matr. nr. 5007 i Udenbys Klædebo Kvarter med påstående bygninger og det til disse bygninger hørende inventar, kunstværker m.v. Ved salg eller pantsætning af ejendommen kræves underskrift af den samlede bestyrelse samt godkendelse af ressortministeriet. Bestemmelse herom tinglyses på institutionens ejendom.

b) En kapital bestående af obligationer til et samlet pålydende af 725.000,- kr. (pr. 1. januar 1992).

Stk. 2.
Den under b) nævnte kapital skal stedse være anbragt efter de af Justitsministeriet fastsatte regler for anbringelse af legatmidler. Aktiverne skal lyde på kollegiets eller det pågældende legats navn og forsynes med ressortministeriets prohibitivpåtegning. Den under b) nævnte kapital må ingensinde nedbringes under det ovenfor nævnte beløb. Midlerne bestyres af et dertil godkendt af bestyrelsen udpeget pengeinstitut. Anbringelse af kapitalbeløb, der fremkommer ved udtrækning af obligationer eller på anden måde, sker efter indhentet udtalelse fra bestyrelsen.

§ 4.
Kollegiets indtægter består af:

a) Kollegianernes husleje. Huslejen fastsættes af bestyrelsen. Lejeforhøjelser kan gennemføres efter lejelovgivningens regler

b) Andre lejeindtægter.

c) Renter af de til Studentergården knyttede kapitaler samt eventuelt tilskud fra staten eller andre.

§ 5.
Kollegianerne udnævnes af bestyrelsen.

Stk. 2.
Såfremt der ved ledighed på værelser, hvortil der er knyttet særlig indstillingsret, jfr. § 10, foreligger indstilling fra særligt indstillingsberettigede, skal indstillingen følges af bestyrelsen, medmindre almene grunde taler derimod. Vil bestyrelsen ikke følge en indstilling, gøres den indstillingsberettigede bekendt med grunden hertil og anmodes om at fremsætte ny indstilling.

Stk. 3.
Det centrale indstillingsudvalg for Københavnsegnen kan til 12 af Studentergårdens værelser indstille alle unge under uddannelse, og bestyrelsen skal følge indstillingen, med mindre denne er i strid med de indstillingskriterier, som ressortministeriet har godkendt.

Stk. 4.
I øvrigt udpeger bestyrelsen kollegianerne blandt ansøgere, der opfylder almindelige legatkvalifikationer, dog således at der tages særligt hensyn til uddannelsens hidtidige forløb, ligesom der også skal lægges vægt på, om ansøgerens forhold i det hele gør det ønskeligt, at der skaffes vedkommende bolig på kollegiet.

Stk. 5.
Hvis bestyrelsen ikke skulle være i stand til at udnævne kollegianere til alle kollegiets værelser ved udpegning i henhold til stk. 2 og stk. 4, skal der med henblik på de således ledigblevne værelser i sådanne tilfælde indhentes indstilling fra indstillingsudvalget.

Stk. 6.
Bolig på kollegiet kan kun oppebæres i 5 år og kun så længe vedkommende faktisk er under uddannelse. Dog kan bestyrelsen i særlige tilfælde bevilge en længere kollegietid, navnlig til sådanne kollegianere, der uden egen skyld ikke har nået at tilendebringe deres studier inden for 5 år fra deres indflytning på kollegiet.

Stk. 7.
Kollegianerne oppebærer for den faste betaling bolig med lys og varme samt adgang til kollegiets fællesfaciliteter.

Stk. 8.
Bestyrelsen fastsætter en husorden efter indstilling fra Studentergårdens råd.

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§ 6.
Bestyrelsen består af fem medlemmer, valgt af og blandt gårdstyret og fem medlemmer, der udpeges af rektor for Københavns Universitet. De af rektor udpegede medlemmer skal være heltidsbeskæftigede videnskabelige medarbejdere ved Københavns Universitet eller en anden højere læreanstalt i hovedstadsområdet eller andre personer, der nyder almen akademisk respekt. Dog kan højst to af de af rektor udpegede medlemmer vælges uden for Københavns Universitets lærergruppe. Ved vakancer blandt de af rektor udpegede medlemmer foretager bestyrelsen indstilling til rektor med henblik på udpegning til de ledige pladser. Bestyrelsen vælger selv sin formand og eventuelt en næstformand, idet formanden vælges blandt de medlemmer, der er ansat som videnskabelige medarbejdere ved Københavns Universitet. Bestyrelsen er ulønnet, men kan tage lønnet hjælp. Ved valg/udpegning af bestyrelsesmedlemmer tages der ligestillingspolitiske hensyn, idet man bør tilstræbe en ligelig repræsentation af mænd og kvinder.

Stk. 2.
Bestyrelsen har den almindelige kompetence i alle anliggender, der vedrører Studentergården. Den kan således disponere over kollegiet og dets midler i overensstemmelse med de i denne fundats fastsatte regler. Udadtil - navnlig også i forhold til tingbogen - kan formanden i forbindelse med tre af bestyrelsens andre medlemmer forpligte kollegiet, jfr. dog § 3, stk. 1, litra a.

§ 7.
Studentergårdens daglige drift forestås af Studentergårdens råd, der består af gårdstyret og kollegiets funktionærer. Bestyrelsen fastsætter de nærmere regler for Studentergårdens råds beføjelser.

§ 8.
Kollegiets regnskabsår er kalenderåret. Budgettet for det følgende år lægges af Studentergårdens råd og vedtages senest i december måned af bestyrelsen. Regnskabet, der skal omfatte dels et driftsregnskab og et kapitalregnskab, dels en status ved regnskabsårets afslutning og i øvrigt være ledsaget af en fortegnelse over værdipapirbeholdningen, vedtages af bestyrelsen og revideres af en af bestyrelsen udpeget statsautoriseret eller registreret revisor. Der sendes et eksemplar af det reviderede årsregnskab til ressortministeriet.

§ 9.
På forslag af rektor for Københavns Universitet eller Studentergårdens bestyrelse kan der foretages ændringer i nærværende fundats, dog at kollegiets navn og hovedøjemed ligesom de i § 10 anførte navne på værelser samt fortrins- og indstillingsrettigheder ingensinde må forandres. Ethvert

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sådant forslag skal godkendes af ressortministeriet og Københavns Universitet. I tilfælde af, at forslaget ikke er fremsat af Studentergårdens bestyrelse, skal dennes erklæring være indhentet.

§ 10.
I kollegiet er indrettet følgende kollegieværelser, der ved denne fundats' udfærdigelse er benævnt således:

CHRISTIAN X'S VÆRELSE

A.S.P. BRÜNNICHE OG EINAR BRÜNNICHES VÆRELSE, skænket af Ellen Hirschsprung Brünniche

ADOLPH HANNOVERS VÆRELSE, skænket af biologer og læger

ADOLPH OG JOHANNE SCHEVINGS VÆRELSE

ALEXANDER FOSS' VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for danske studerende ved den Polytekniske Læreanstalt, Danmarks Tekniske Højskole

ANDERS COLLSTROPS VÆRELSE, skænket af grosserer Andreas Collstrop

ANDERS SANDØE ØRSTEDS VÆRELSE, oprettet af det rets- og statsvidenskabelige fakultet

AUGUSTINUS' FONDS VÆRELSE, skænket af Augustinus' Fond

BIKUBENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Sparekassen Bikuben

BIRKERØD KOSTSKOLES SAMFUNDS VÆRELSE. Samfundets bestyrelse har indstillingsret; fortrinsret for studenter fra Birkerød Kostskole

BORGMESTER GAMMELTOFTS VÆRELSE, skænket af konferensråd Carl Gammeltoft

BRYGGERNE J.C. OG CARL JACOBSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Carlsberg Bryggerierne

BRØDRENE REYNS VÆRELSE, skænket af brødrene Peter Emil Christian Reyn, Axel Valdemar Reyn og Axel Lauritz Reyn

C.F. TIETGENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Johan Hansen og Frederik Nørgaard

C.W. GERICKES VÆRELSE, skænket af garvermester C.W. Gerickes Legat

CAPITAIN M. ROVSINGS VÆRELSE, skænket af professor Thorkild Rovsing

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CARL GOOS' VÆRELSE
CARL JUL. SALOMONSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Københavns Universitet

CARL PLOUGS VÆRELSE, skænket af rentier I.I. Berntsen

CARL SCHRØDERS VÆRELSE

CARL STIEFS VÆRELSE, skænket 2010 af proprietær Grethe Stief, enke efter prof., dr.phil. Carl Stief

CARL WITHS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

CHRISTIAN BOHRS VÆRELSE, skænket af professor Johannes Bock

CLAUS PLUMS VÆRELSE, skænket af direktør Harald Plum

DANSKE STUDENTERS VÆRELSE

DIREKTØR HERLOV HANSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af enkefru Hedevig Herlov Hansen

DITLEV BERG OG HUSTRUS VÆRELSE, testamentarisk oprettet; fortrinsret for en polyteknisk studerende

DR. MED. P. TETENS HALDS VÆRELSE, skænket af justitsrådinde D.K. Hald

DR. PHIL. NIELS BANGS VÆRELSE, oprettet ifølge fru Jenny Bang f. Falcks testamente

E. SCHMIEGELOWS VÆRELSE

EFTERSLÆGTSSELSKABETS VÆRELSE

EINAR HANSENS VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for studerende, specielt humanister, fra Lunds universitet, der skal studere ved Københavns Universitet

ELI MØLLER OG ALFRED HELSTEDS VÆRELSE, skænket af læge, dr. med. Eline (Eli) Møller og overlæge, dr. med. Alfred Helsted

EMIL OG AGNES LØBERS VÆRELSE, testamentarisk oprettet

ETATSRÅD C.A. OLESENS VÆRELSE, skænket af bestyrelsen for Aktieselskabet De Danske Spritfabrikker

FINNUR JÓNSSONS VÆRELSE, skænket af Dansk-Islandsk Forbundsfond; fortrinsret for islandske studenter og nordisk filologiske studerende med islandsk som speciale

FRANTS BUHLS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

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FRANTZ HOWITZ' VÆRELSE, skænket af fabriksejer Joh. G. Guildal

FYSIKUS HEIBERGS VÆRELSE, skænket af kolleger og slægtninge

FØRSTELÆRER, CAND. PHIL. RASMUS MÜLLERS VÆRELSE, skænket af enkefru Dorothea Vedel; fortrinsret for studenter under det filosofiske fakultet med historie som studiefag

G.E.C. GADS VÆRELSE, skænket af Gads Fond

GENERAL CLASSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Det Classenske Fideikommis

GENERALKONSUL T. RAASCHOUS VÆRELSE

GUSTAV JOHANNSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Den Sønderjyske Fond; fortrinsret for sønderjyske studerende ved det matematisk-naturvidenskabelige fakultet

H.C. ØRSTEDS VÆRELSE, skænket af etatsråd N.C. Monberg; fortrinsret for en studerende ved Polyteknisk Læreanstalt, der kan fremlægge beviser for trang og flid og gode evner

H.G. ZEUTHENS VÆRELSE, skænket af det matematisk-naturvidenskabelige fakultet

H.I. HANNOVERS VÆRELSE, skænket af kolleger og venner; fortrinsret for polytekniske studenter

H.L. MARTENSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af slægtninge; fortrinsret for teologiske studenter og blandt disse atter sådanne, der har speciale inden for studiets systematiske og apologetiske område. Ved værelsets besættelse skal det være berettiget at tage hensyn til afstamning fra Martensen, uden at dog sådan afstamning skal give nogen egentlig fortrinsret

H.N. ANDERSENS VÆRELSE

H.N. CLAUSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af slægtninge; fortrinsret for teologiske studenter

HAGBART BUCHWALDS VÆRELSE, skænket af enkefru Dorothea Catrine Buchwald; fortrinsret for en student ved Sorø Akademi

HANS ANDERSEN KRÜGERS VÆRELSE, skænket af Den Sønderjyske Fond; fortrinsret for sønderjyske studerende

HARALD HIRSCHSPRUNGS VÆRELSE, skænket af frøknerne Ida og Anne Hirschsprung

HARALD HØFFDINGS VÆRELSE, skænket af beundrere og elever

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HECTOR F.E. JUNGERSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af professorinde Anna Jungersen; fortrinsret for naturhistorikere og blandt disse atter for zoologer

HENRIK BERTELSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af nuværende og forhenværende lærere ved danske gymnasieskoler og gymnasieskolernes lærerforening. Fortrinsret for studenter, der er sønner af nuværende eller forhenværende lærere og lærerinder ved danske gymnasieskoler eller gymnasiekurser

HERLUF TROLLES VÆRELSE, skænket af overretssagfører Chr. Kier

HOLGER PALUDANS VÆRELSE, skænket af frøken Augusta Lønborg; fortrinsret for juridiske studerende

HØJESTERETSADVOCAT C. LIEBES VÆRELSE, skænket af hans søn, højesteretssagfører Otto Liebe

I.N. MADVIGS VÆRELSE, skænket af bornholmere; Rønne Statsskoles rektor i forbindelse med amtmanden over Bornholms Amt har indstillingsret; fortrinsret for studenter dimitterede fra Statsskolen i Rønne, subsidiært for andetsteds fra dimitterede, som ved fødsel eller tidligere bopæl er knyttet til Bornholm

I.P.E. HARTMANNS VÆRELSE, skænket af Studentersangforeningen; fortrinsret for musikvidenskabelige studerende

J. OSKAR ANDERSENS VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for teologiske studenter, fortrinsvis med kirkehistorisk studium som speciale

JAKOB JAKOBSENS STOVA, skænket af færinger; fortrinsret for studenter, der er medlemmer af den færøske Studenterforening eller i tilfælde af, at dennes eksistens skulle ophøre, for studenter, der er færinger; de fortrinsberettigede kan først opnå værelset 2 år efter bestået studentereksamen og kan ikke bebo det mere end 4 år

JENS JESSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Den Sønderjyske Fond, fortrinsret for sønderjyske studerende ved det filosofiske fakultet

JOHAN HANSEN, HAVNBJERG, ALS' VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for alsinger og blandt disse atter for studenter, der er hjemmehørende i Nørre Herred

JOHANNE OG VALD. KLEINS VÆRELSE, skænket af ørelæge Vald. Klein og læge Johanne Klein; fortrinsret for lægevidenskabelige studerende

JOHANNES KAARSBERGS VÆRELSE, skænket af professorinde Henriette Kaarsberg

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JULIE OG NIELS TROENSEGAARDS VÆRELSE

JULIUS LASSENS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

JULIUS SKRIKES STIFTELSES VÆRELSE

JULIUS THOMSENS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

JUTTA OG EDVARD EHLERS' VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for medicinske studenter af danske forældre og fødte i Sønderjylland, derunder indbefattet de slesvigske landsdele, som ved traktat af 5. juli 1920 ikke kom tilbage til Danmark

KAMMERHERRE HANS R. CARLSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Carlsen-Langes Legatstiftelse

KOLLEGIE-VÆRELSET

KRISTIAN ERSLEVS VÆRELSE, skænket af Carlsbergfondet; fortrinsret for en historisk studerende

KØBENHAVNS BYRETS VÆRELSE
KØBENHAVNS LÆGEFORENINGS VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for lægevidenskabelige studenter

LAURIDS SKAUS VÆRELSE, skænket af Den Sønderjyske Fond; fortrinsret for sønderjyske studerende ved det lægevidenskabelige fakultet

LAURITS ANDERSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Laurits Andersens Fond

LAURITZ JØRGENSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af overretssagfører Lauritz Jørgensen; fortrinsret for juridiske studerende

LEOPOLD MEYERS VÆRELSE, skænket af hans arvinger

LOUISE VARVARA HASSELBALCHS VÆRELSE

LUDVIG HOLBERGS VÆRELSE, skænket af Sorø Akademi; Sorø Akademis Skole har indstillingsret; fortrinsret for studenter fra Sorø Akademis Skole

LÆGE CHARLES THORVALD PALUDAN GANTZELS VÆRELSE; Studenterforeningens bestyrelse har indstillingsret

MARTIN BORCHS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

METROPOLITANERVÆRELSET, skænket af Metropolitanersamfundet. Indstillingsret for Metropolitanersamfundet; fortrinsret for studenter fra Metropolitanskolen

MINISTER OIESENS VÆRELSE, skænket af hans børn; fortrinsret for en student fra Bornholm

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MÆGLER MARCUS MEYERS VÆRELSE, skænket af hans hustru fru Signe Meyer; indstillingsret for familien

NATIONALBANKENS VÆRELSE 1

NATIONALBANKENS VÆRELSE 2

NATIONALBANKENS VÆRELSE 3, skænket af Nationalbanken

NIELS HEMMINGSENS VÆRELSE, oprettet af det teologiske fakultet

NIELS R. FINSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af beundrere; fortrinsret for en student ved det lægevidenskabelige fakultet

OSCAR BLOCHS VÆRELSE, skænket af elever og kolleger

OTTO BENZONS VÆRELSE, skænket af forfatteren Otto Benzon; fortrinsvis for farmaceuter, der vil studere videre ved universitetet

OTTO MØNSTEDS VÆRELSE, skænket af Otto Mønsteds Fond

OVERLÆGE, DR. MED. OTTO V.C.E. PETERSENS VÆRELSE, oprettet ifølge fru Elisabeth Petersens testamente

OVERLÆRER J. REINHARDS MINDELEGATS VÆRELSE; indstillingsret for Frederiksborgensersamfundet; fortrinsret for studenter fra Frederiksborg Statsskole

OVERPRÆSIDENT CHRISTIAN KLEINS VÆRELSE, skænket af rektor Ingrid Jespersen

P.L. PANUMS VÆRELSE, oprettet af det lægevidenskabelige fakultet

P.O.A. ANDERSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af statsgældsdirektør, departementschef P.O.A. Andersens enke; fortrinsret afvekslende for en islandsk og en sønderjysk student

P.W. SØLLINGS VÆRELSE, skænket af klædehandler P.W. Søllings legat til Studentergården

PEDER MORTENSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af fhv. landfysikus på St. Thomas, Peder Mortensen

PETER HIORT LORENZENS VÆRELSE, skænket af Den Sønderjyske Fond; fortrinsret for sønderjyske studerende ved det rets- og statsvidenskabelige fakultet

PETER NICOLAI DAMMS VÆRELSE, skænket af bankdirektør Einar Damm

POUL LARSENS VÆRELSE; fortrinsret for danske studerende ved Den Polytekniske Læreanstalt, Danmarks Tekniske Højskole

RABEN-LEVETZAU-VÆRELSET, skænket af Den Raben-Levetzauske Fond

RASMUS RASKS VÆRELSE, oprettet af det filosofiske fakultet

REGENS-VÆRELSET

REKTOR V.A. BLOCHS VÆRELSE, skænket af sagfører Hans Vilhelm Krag Møller og hustru

SIMON PAULLIS VÆRELSE, skænket af distriktsingeniør August Poulsen og hustru Ella Poulsen; fortrinsret for enten studiosus medicinae eller studiosus polytechnices

SOGNEPRÆST C.C.E. JACOBSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af professor J.C. Jacobsen

SOPHUS HAUBERGS VÆRELSE, skænket af Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening

SORANSK SAMFUNDS VÆRELSE; Samfundets bestyrelse har indstillingsret; fortrinsvis for studenter fra Sorø Akademis Skole

STENHUGGERMESTER RUDOLPH NIELSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af enkefru Anna Nielsen, f. Berlin

STUD. JUR. ELSE PUGHS VÆRELSE

STUD. JUR. AAGE BLÆDELS VÆRELSE, skænket af enkefru Hedevig Herlov Hansen

STUD. POLYT. INGVAR JANTZENS VÆRELSE, skænket af ingeniør Ivar Jantzen og hustru; fortrinsret for en fabriksingeniørstuderende ved Den Polytekniske Læreanstalt, Danmarks Tekniske Højskole, der har taget 1. del; indstillingsret for læreanstaltens rektor

STUDENTERNE AF 1906'S VÆRELSE, oprettet for en af studenterne fra 1906 indsamlet kapital

SØNDERJYDERNE APOTEKER TH. NIELSEN OG HUSTRUS VÆRELSE, skænket af deres arvinger

THEA MEYER, f. FRIEDLÄNDERS VÆRELSE, skænket af grosserer Louis Meyer og søn, konsul Vilh. Meyer

THORKILD ROVSINGS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

TUBORGS VÆRELSE, skænket af De forenede Bryggerier

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TYGE JESPER ROTHES VÆRELSE, skænket af handelsminister Tyge J. Rothe

UNIVERSITETSLÆRER, DR. PHIL. OSCAR SIESBYES VÆRELSE, skænket af Ellen og Oscar Siesbye

VAGN AAGESENS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Vagn Aagesens efterladte; fortrinsret for en juridisk student

VENDSYSSEL-VÆRELSET, skænket af vendelboer; bestyrelsen for Hjørringgenser-Samfundet i forbindelse med rektor ved Hjørring højere Almenskole har indstillingsret; fortrinsvis for studenter, dimitterede fra Hjørring højere Almenskole subsidiært studenter, der på anden måde har tilknytning til Vendsyssel

VILHELM THOMSENS VÆRELSE, oprettet af Konsistorium

WILHELM JOHANNSENS VÆRELSE, skænket af apoteker Otto Müller og hustru; fortrinsret for biologer, matematikere, kemikere og medicinere og blandt disse atter sådanne, der har taget farmaceutisk kandidateksamen

København den 20. oktober 2010

Ralf Hemmingsen
Rektor

/Dorrit Wivel

Universitets- og Bygningsstyrelsen
Godkendt af [illegible]
den 11. november 2010, idet det bemærkes, at Julius Lassens Værelse, Julius Thomsens Værelse, Rasmus Rasks Værelse og Vilhelm Thomsens Værelse, jf. § 10, er nedlagt som selvstændige værelser.

E.B.

[illegible]
Kontorchef

(J.nr. 08-030199)

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A.3 Organizational Chart Student (booklet version)

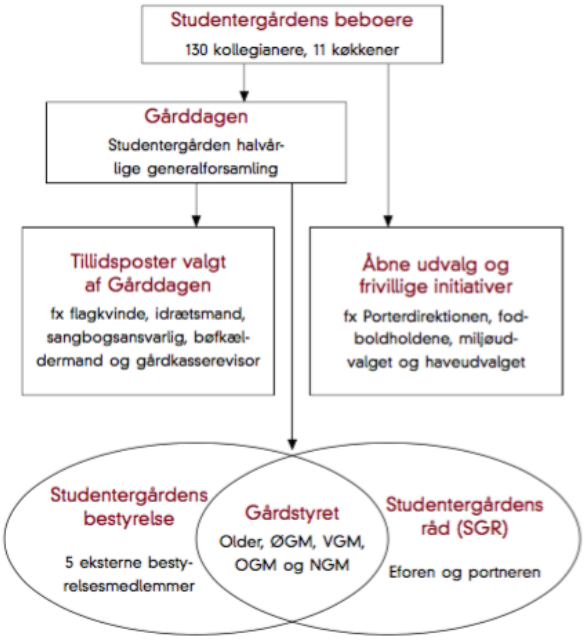

Figure A.1: Organizational Chart Student booklet version

A.4 General Law (Gårdlov)

1. Som vedtaget på den ordentlige gårddag 20.4.1970 med ændringer af 23.9.1971, 29.9.1972, 26.2.1985, 24.9.1986, 25.9.1987, 27.9.1988, 24.9.1991, 22.2.1994, 21.4.1998, 27.4.1999, 24.4.2001, 23.4.2003, 13.4.2008, 19.4.2009, 25.11.2012, 19.04.2015, 15.11.2015.

2. Gårddagen er den højeste myndighed. Ordentlig gårddag skal sammenkaldes med minimum 14 dages varsel. Punkter til behandling på gårddagen skal være Older i hænde senest ni dage forud for gårddagen. Det skal fremgå tydeligt af punktet, hvorvidt der er tale om et beslutningspunkt eller et orienteringspunkt. Dagsorden skal meddeles gårdboerne skriftligt senest syv dage forinden gårddagen. På selve gårddagen kan punkter kun optages på dagsordenen, såfremt ingen af de fremmødte modsætter sig det. Dog kan der altid på gårddagen stilles ændringsforslag til punkter, der er på dagsordenen.

3. Enhver gårdbroder/-søster og fremlejer har stemmeret på gårddagene. Stemmeretten udøves ved personligt fremmøde, hvorfor det ikke er muligt at brevstemme eller give andre fuldmagt til at stemme på egne vegne. Forhenværende gårdbrødre/-søstre kan deltage i gårddagene, dog uden stemmeret. Kun gårdbrødre/-søstre er valgbare, forhenværende gårdbrødre/-søstre og fremlejere kan derfor ikke stille op til valg.

4. Gårdstyret består af 5 af Studentergårdens beboere. Fremlejere kan ikke besidde poster i Gårdstyret. Gårdstyret består af en older og fire gårdmestre; en økonomigårdmester, en ordensgårdmester, en netgårdmester og en fundraisinggårdmester. Hver gårdmester har desuden en suppleant. Older og gårdmestrene har fulde medlemsrettigheder, som følger: taleret, høringsret, stemmeret. Gårdstyremedlemmerne vælges enkeltvis for et helt år ad gangen på en ordentlig gårddag. Efter et halvt år er der mulighed for udskiftningsvalg af et eller flere gårdstyremedlemmer, dersom gårdstyret skønner det hensigtsmæssigt. Valg af older sker først. Han/hun kan ikke genvælges. I tilfælde af olderens fratræden mellem de ordentlige gårddage vælger gårdmestrene en ny older af sin midte eller blandt suppleanterne. Gårdmestrene kan genvælges. I tilfælde af en gårdmesters fratræden mellem de ordentlige gårddage tilfalder gårdmesterposten suppleanten, som har posten valgperioden ud. Suppleanterne har begrænsede medlemsrettigheder, som følger: taleret, høringsret.

5. Gårdstyret repræsenterer gårdens beboere i Studentergårdens Råd og i bestyrelsen og varetager fælles interesser. Det påhviler Gårdstyret at afholde minimum 8 gårdstyremøder pr. år, som der skal føres referat af, og referaterne skal være tilgængelige for Studentergårdens beboere. Der skal offentligt foreligge en foreløbig dagsorden senest 3 dage før mødedatoen for gårdstyremødet. Gårdstyremøderne er åbne med undtagelse af personsager. Hvis en gårdmester ikke kan deltage i et gårdstyremøde, kan suppleanten træde i stedet for gårdmesteren og har dermed stemmeret i stedet for denne. Det påhviler Gårdstyret og Gårdstyrets suppleanter evt. med hjælp af gårdboere at arrangere Studentergårdens fester, foredrag m.m., når passende lejlighed foreligger.

6. Gårdstyret er kun beslutningsdygtigt, når mindst tre medlemmer er til stede. Ingen beslutninger kan tages, uden at tre medlemmer stemmer for.

7. Stk. 1. Et nyvalgt gårdstyre træder straks i virksomhed.
   Stk. 2. Dog med den undtagelse, at alle medlemmer af gårdstyret, som sidder

en fuld periode, skal have mulighed for at deltage i to på hinanden følgende ordinære bestyrelsesmøder, inden deres hverv videregives.

8. Udvalg kan nedsættes såvel af gårddagen som af Gårdstyret. Gårdstyret er forpligtet til at nedsætte udvalg i bestemt øjemed, når mindst 15 gårdbrødre/-søstre forlanger dette. Kravet fremsættes skriftligt og motiveret. De af Gårdstyret nedsatte udvalg fungerer indtil næste gårddag, hvor der kan træffes enhver beslutning med hensyn til deres fremtidige forhold. Udvalget vælger en ansvarsperson af sin midte.

9. Gårdstyret kan til enhver tid med syv dages varsel indkalde til overordentlig gårddag med angivelse af dagsorden. Gårdstyret er forpligtet til indkaldelse af overordentlig gårddag, når mindst 25 gårdbrødre/-søstre skriftligt og med angivelse af dagsorden begærer dette. Overordentlig gårddag kan ikke sammenkaldes i januar, de sidste to uger af juni, hele juli og hele august.

10. På gårddagene føres protokol over beslutningerne, der underskrives af dirigenten og fremlægges senest femtedagen efter gårddagens afholdelse. Det påhviler olderen at opbevare denne protokol. Gårddagene er beslutningsdygtige, når mindst 40 stemmeberettigede er til stede ved valg af dirigenten. Beslutninger tages ved stemmeflerhed (se dog 17.) Under eventuelt kan intet vedtages uden enstemmighed.

11. Såfremt gårddagen ikke er beslutningsdygtig, sammenkalder olderen med to dages varsel en ny gårddag, der altid er beslutningsdygtig, jvf. dog 8. sidste punkt.

12. En ordenlig gårddag kan afsætte det siddende Gårdstyre eller enkelte gårdstyremedlemmer, når mindst halvdelen af de fremmødte gårdbrødre/-søstre stemmer derfor.

13. Gårdstyret opkræver hver måned en gårdskat af alle gårdbrødre/-søstre. Denne gårdskat betales samtidig med huslejen til Studentergårdens efor.

14. Gårdstyret kan udstede reglementer for benyttelsen af tennisbane, billardrum, musikrum osv. Disse reglementer kan dog ændres ved gårddagsbeslutninger.

15. Revisionen finder sted ved den halvårlige regnskabsafslutning. Gårdkassen og Vingårdens kasse revideres envidere af en på en ordentlig gårddag valgt revisor. Ved revisionen skal såvel udgifts- som indtægtsbilag forelægges revisorerne. Disse skal efter regnskabsperiodens slutning efter endt revision fremsætte deres bemærkninger i den dertil indrettede protokol. Økonomigårdmester

og VAP har adgang til i samme protokol at besvare bemærkninger. Regnskabet og nævnte protokol fremlægges til almindeligt eftersyn for gårdens beboere umiddelbart efter gårddagen.

16. Gårdstyret har i en siddende økonomigårdmesters periode til eget forbrug ret til af gårdkassen at disponere over kr. 5625.

17. Gårddagen kan ændre denne gårdlov, når mindst 2/3 af de fremmødte stemmer herfor.

18. Denne gårdlov ophæver alle tidligere gårdlove og gårddagsbeslutninger. Den træder i kraft den 20. april 1970.

Appendix B

Digital Appendices

Submitted on USB drive.

B.1 Interview Transcripts

B.2 Internal Documentation

B.3 Initial Coding Documents

B.4 Codes and Themes Tables

B.5 Data Reduction