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Research Paper no. 1/01

**Investigating urban governance - from
the perspectives of policy networks,
democracy and planning**

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Research Papers from the Department of Social Sciences, Roskilde University, Denmark.

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Abstract

The article concerns a discussion of theories in the fields of governance, democracy and planning - different theoretical perspectives, which are altogether relevant for empirical investigations into urban governance. Theories on these issues are manifold: they focus on different issues in urban development and some of them are contradictory. In the article it is argued that theoretical diversity is constructive for urban governance research and that theories can be seen as different social constructs offering various interpretations of what the researcher sees as “reality”.

The article presents a number of central concepts used in the different modern and postmodern theoretical discourses within each of the three research fields. In relation to organisation and governance, the article deals with the shift from government based on hierarchy and rules, to governance based on networks, regimes and partnerships. Regarding the democracy discussions the article focuses on the shift from a corporate aggregated democracy to a democracy dominated by hyperpluralism or neo-elitism or reflexive integrated pluralism. Finally in the planning discussion the article presents the shift from the rational and instrumental planning to the neo-rational or communicative planning. Apart from presenting these central concepts the similarities and differences are located across these theoretical discourses on governance, planning and democracy.

The article concludes with speculations on a comparison and combination of these theories and the relevance for a study of urban governance in practice.

Keywords: policy networks, governance, planning, democracy.

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1. Introduction

Governance is widely used to describe new forms of organisation and steering in cities and in society in general. This article is about governance at a meso level in cities and concerns research into different theoretical perspectives which are useful for investigating urban governance.

The central theme of urban governance discussions is the question of how urban public policy and administration are exercised in interaction with private enterprise and citizens. It concerns the everyday affairs and decisions, but also implementation of large projects such as building a metro and a shopping mall and renovating a degenerating housing area. The focus of urban governance discussions is often on organisation, but in this article two other theoretical perspectives will be related to the organisation discussion namely democracy and planning. Organisational forms, democracy and planning are all perspectives on collective action and steering but are so in quite different ways. The question of organisation concerns the kind of relations that are made between urban actors when they act together in cities. The question of democracy concerns how decisions are made or ought to be made in the city. The question of planning concerns the activity that enables actors to consciously manage toward a specific decision or goal. Going through the literature, it seems that these three theoretical fields combined could add some value to the general discussion of urban governance. The democracy and planning discussion could be used as relevant perspectives in evaluating the consequences of specific urban organisational forms. The main purpose of this article is to present and discuss the relevance of using different theoretical perspectives in an study of urban governance and to discuss the relevance of a *combination and comparison* of the three theoretical perspectives.

A conclusion of several theories concerning organisation forms, democracy and planning is that, especially in the 90's, there has been a major shift in organisational forms and forms of democracy and planning caused by a development from the modern to the postmodern or late modern city and society. In each of the three theoretical fields opposing views on modern and postmodern/late modern development can be identified, but without there being general agreement about the consequences of the new tendencies. In fact, in the democracy and planning discussions there are contradictory conclusions about the consequences. Due to this observation the research in theories presented in this article is concentrated on identifying these *opposing views* in perceptions of the modern and postmodern/late modern and on identifying *differences* within especially the postmodern theories in all three theoretical fields.

In relation to modern and postmodern/late modern organisation forms the article will present the development from government to governance with the weight on policy networks, regimes and partnerships. The democracy discussion will concern the development from corporate aggregated pluralism to hyperpluralism or neo-elitism or reflexive integrated pluralism. And finally, the planning discussion deals with the development from rational instrumental planning to neo-rational or communicative planning. Throughout the article Danish examples of developments in organisation forms, democracy and planning will be briefly described. The article concludes by discussing a combination of theories in the three fields and how these

theoretical thoughts can be useful in a research project on urban governance. But first there is a need to consider the use of theories in research projects.

2. The use of theories in social constructivism

The reason for presenting different theoretical thoughts is not only to show the relevance of combining theories of organisation forms, democracy and planning in a study of urban governance, but also to consider the use of theories in a social constructivist approach. Judge, Stoker and Wolman write in their introduction to the book: *Theories in Urban Politics*, that “there are now *so many* theories that it is increasingly difficult for scholar and student alike to keep pace with them, let alone comprehend or evaluate their respective merits” (Judge, Stoker and Wolman 1995, p.1). Right they are. A study of the literature on urban governance and politics reveals a large number of issues, perspectives and theories. There does not seem to be any clear cumulative development in theories or one Grand Theory dominating the theoretical field. The question is whether this multiplicity constitutes a problem for a study in urban governance? The answer to this question depends on ones background in theory of science and the role for theories defined within this background.

Taking a social constructivist stance in social research has profound implication for ones view on and use of theories. A social constructivist perspective is critical towards the possibility of obtaining objective knowledge and finding the Truth about reality. There might be a reality or essence beyond our present understanding, but our access to it will be relative to our being in a specific historical and cultural context. Our understanding of reality and the methods we use to investigate reality are themselves theory laden (Gergen and Thatchenkery, 1996, p.363). The knowledge we can obtain is therefore an artefact of its time and place and constructed on the background of specific social, political and economic circumstances at a given time in history (Dovlén, 1999, p.3). “Facts are invented as much as found”, as Bevir and Rhodes put it (1998, p.5). Social constructivists thereby challenge taken-for-granted knowledge (Burr, 1995, p.3). In this sense social constructivism opposes both positivism and empiricism (searching for objectivity and facts) and hermeneutism (searching for the essence in subjective understanding and meaning).

As persons we construct our knowledge of “reality” through daily interaction in social life - through social processes - and as researchers we intervene in the processes and build our knowledge on these construction processes (communicated to us through action and language). We construct our theories in the context of our own interpretations of these processes and by doing that we contribute to the construction of knowledge about “reality”. The interpretations are based on our scientific learning and personal preferences. Theories then become social constructs about what the social life might be about, and can always be told otherwise based on other “empirical evidence” and on other scientific and personal preferences and interpretations (Burr, 1995, p.4). Viewing theories as *different social constructs* of “reality” implies that the multiplicity of theories is not a problem for research into urban governance, rather it is productive in the sense that it illustrates a variety of possible interpretations to build on in further research. The article consists of a

presentation of theories as social constructs and a discussion of how the variety in theories can become productive in a study of urban governance.

If knowledge is not objective, given or external to us, but constructed through social processes, then knowledge becomes power and vice versa. Foucault points to the idea that knowledge is the particular version of “reality” that has received the stamp of truth in society and its construction is always intertwined with power relations (Flyvbjerg, 1991, p.107). Where there is knowledge there is power and power is exercised in the construction of knowledge. For a specific piece of knowledge to become the truth it has to exclude other kind of common-sense views of social life. Due to this there is a constant struggle going on in society about the determination of the truth – the “right” knowledge - and researchers are an institutional and personal party in this struggle whether they use this power position consciently or not. An example of the power aspect in the construction and use of (theoretical) knowledge is the selection of theories presented in the book: *Theories in Urban Politics* (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995). The theories presented in this book and those not mentioned illustrate a process of inclusion and exclusion in the theoretical knowledge construction on the issue of urban politics. As the editors themselves comment in the introduction to the book, they try to “bring together leading scholars from both sides of the Atlantic to explain and assess the major theories underpinning the study of urban politics.” (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, p.1). The words “leading” and “major” indicate that other scholars and theories are marked as “not leading” and “minor” and are therefore not included in the book. Saunders criticizes in a review of the book that it is not explained properly why e.g. feminist theories, neo-marxist and neo-liberal theories are excluded from the book (Saunders, 1996, p.592).

In this article certain theories have been selected to emphasize specific ideas about urban governance and politics and thereby others have been *excluded*. It is also an expression of power in intellectual research work. One can only make the premises for the choices made by the researcher clear and be explicit and open about the (powerful) position taken up by the researcher in this process.

If one affiliates oneself to the view on theories as offering different interpretations and social constructs of social life it is not in general possible to judge a theory false or true. What is possible though, is to make a *contingent and normative* judgement of theories based on comparing one theory against alternatives and based on “local reasoning and reconfirmation”, as Bevir and Rhodes write (1998, p.5). Local reasoning refers to certain contextual practices, traditions, and interpretations as the foundation for any communication and development of knowledge including theories. Reconfirmation is a more complicated question. Bevir and Rhodes (1998) suggest three key points: 1) a discussion of the meaning that the theories make to others e.g. practitioners and users, 2) a discussion of the theories’ logic and consistency with the agreed facts and 3) a discussion of how the theories follow the agreed rules of intellectual honesty (Bevir and Rhodes, 1998, p.6). I will not discuss these points but show how some of them have been important for the selection of theories made in this article.

Firstly theories have been chosen according to how they evoke a response in the Danish context. I have chosen some of the theories that have been repeatedly used in the Danish theoretical discussions on urban organisational forms, democracy and planning in the postwar period and examples of Danish practices related to these

theories are briefly described in the article. In this sense the choice of theories are made due to their relevance for the Danish historical and cultural context. But secondly theories have been chosen on the background of my own research and personal interest especially when it comes to the “postmodern” theories. There is a wide range of new theories coming up these years related to postmodern or late modern conditions and the ones I have chosen are only a few among many. Thirdly choices have been made in a process of discussing the theories – especially the “postmodern” ones – with practioners and users of the research on e.g. seminars and conferences in order to “test” whether they were meaningful for these actors. Fourthly, the selection has been based on the opposing and alternative character of the theories which needs a bit more explanation.

In a social constructivist perspective theories can be used in different ways. One way is to quit universal theories altogether (e.g. on urban policy development) and create a foundation for research solely on methodological theories like e.g. social constructionism. Here, the focus is on presenting the uniqueness of construction processes and the different meaning given to these processes by the actors involved in a specific situation. Another way is to include generalizations about the research subject in order to continue the work on making generalizations as a foundation for making sense of “the world” and for making guide lines for urban societal development. Generalizations in this sense have to be understood as constructed and contingent. Both approaches are relevant in a social constructivist perspective. This article is based on the latter approach due to an interest in making research based on contingent and normative generalizations. A criterium for the choices between multiple generalizing theories has been to find *opposing and alternative* theories of urban organisation forms, democracy and planning. The presentation concentrates on bringing out these differences in a rather superficial and compressed form, marking what I find to be code words in the theories (by using italics). Code words are understood as repeatedly used words and concepts in a theory, which establish a coherent understanding of a phenomenon and a common meaning of concepts in the theory.

The result of presenting theories like this is a severe simplification of the selected theories and not a fair presentation or discussion of each of them. The reason for using this form of presentation anyway is to open up and provoke the reflection of the researcher in the process of collecting and analysing empirical data. Not in the usual meaning of eclecticism where different theories are put together to complement each other in order to constitute the universal explanation. Rather in the meaning of presenting and creating alternative social constructs that make room not only for a reflection of the researcher but also of the persons who are involved in or has to make use of the research. During the seminars with practitioners this idea of presenting competing and alternative social constructs about “reality” has shown to be very effective for reflection and debate that are useful in further research.

In the following section the different theories will be presented in a compressed form. The “postmodern” theories refer to two different approaches. One is the observation of new tendencies in urban and societal development named postmodern or late modern (a new epoch) and investigated by using the modern science ideals. The other approach is the observation of the same tendencies but introducing a postmodern theory of science to interpret them (a new methodology). This methodology is based on e.g. the belief in contingency of

knowledge and social constructivism, incommensurability in lifeforms and the ambiguity in interpretations of reality (Pedersen, 1996, p.68, Bevir and Rhodes, 1998, p.4-5).

3. Organisation forms: From government to governance?

The discussion of modern and postmodern organisation forms seems to be dominated by two major alternative views. One is about government related to modern society and the other is about governance related to the postmodern or late modern society (see e.g. Bevir and Rhodes, 1998, Rhodes, 1997, Bogason, 1998a, Kooiman, 1993a, Harvey, 1989). They can be presented as follows:

3.1 Modern government

Government is about a *cohesive* and *integrated* public sector with a *central political* management center – the Government – based on national parliamentary sovereignty and accountability through elections. The parliamentary chain of control is the center of the governing process with elected politicians as the authoritarian decision-makers and a neutral administration based on *bureaucratic means* as the implementing factor. Bureaucratic means are *hierarchic* relations between superiors and lower-level staff and units, a clear division of work and responsibility between different actors and offices, specialized work functions, work based on expert knowledge and formalized work processes and information preparation. A precondition for government is a *clear division of boundaries and responsibilities* between politics and administration and between the public and the private sector. Rationalisation, objectivity and universality are the leading principles of society and are expressed through *specialisation, scientification and formalization* in the modern organisations (Bogason, 1998a, p.13-18; Pedersen, 1996, p.61; Rhodes, 1997, p.181-84).

In **Denmark** the structure and organisation of the public sector during the 60s and 70s can be argued to reasonably match this idea of government. The national parliament is seen as the overall, political steering and control center with county and municipality (some called city- councils) as lower level units. The accountability is secured through general elections every four years. The Danish administrative structure and the organisation of central government and municipalities are dominated by hierarchical relations between different administrative units and consists of strongly specialized units staffed by numbers of professions dominating an administrative area with they expert knowledge. The decision-making lies with the politicians often on a very detailed level while the bureaucrats and professionals implement the decisions and citizens follow them. Finally, cooperation with the private sector emphasises clear limitations of divisions of work, responsibility and authority (Bogason, 1998a, p.13-18; Jespersen, 1996, chapter 2).

However, both internationally and in Denmark a shift in this public organisation form has been noted and new theories have developed. It is the theory of governance based on theories of policy networks, regimes and partnerships. The theories are related to the postmodern or late modern society based on increasing fragmentation, differentiation and complexity in social and political life – a new

epoch (Kooiman, 1993b, p.254; Rhodes, 1997, p.181-84; Bogason, 1998a, p.18-27). And lately the theory of governance and policy networks represented by Bevir and Rhodes (1998) is moving towards a postmodern methodology labelling the theories of Government and Governance as two narratives.

3.2 Postmodern governance

Governance indicates a new kind of social-political steering logic in the public sector characterised by a *differentiated and multicentered political system* with a *mix* of private and public actors participating directly in the decision making process *without any clear hierarchic* relation between the many centers and actors. The actors recognize the *interdependency* between *relatively autonomous* parties and this recognition is based on the understanding that nobody possesses total knowledge, information, overview or other resources to solve collective problems. Governance becomes the result of *interactive* social-political management and the concern is, foremost, to find and develop *a common understanding* of problems and solutions. Focus shifts from structure and form to *problems* that must be solved and the possibilities to do so. Administrative units and persons participate in policy making side by side with politicians, and the *boundaries* between politics and administration *become unclear*. One-way management from public to private sector changes to *two-way management* that considers problems, understanding, wishes etc. on both sides. The boundaries between public and private sectors not only move they change character (Kooiman, 1993a, p.4-6).

In the literature of public administration governance is discussed not only as a new form of steering logic but also as a new ideal type of organisation called **policy networks**. Rhodes (1997) sees governance as characterized by self-organized, interorganisational networks (p.15). The theoretical thought of networks is developed as an alternative type of organisation in contrast to the hierarchy of the public sector and the exchange and competition of the market. Network is seen as a third type of organisation. Rhodes (1997) defines a network as a cluster or a *complex of organisations or persons* joined together through their *interdependencies of resources* (like money, information, know-how and experience) (p.37). Networks are based on dependency and interchange of resources. Rules are rooted in *confidence and negotiated* by the members and networks have a *significant autonomy* in the relation to government or municipalities. They are found in different forms and may emerge in a continuum from closed, exclusive and stable *policy communities* with few participants to open, inclusive and unstable *issue networks* with shifting participants (Rhodes, 1997, p.38-39).

Studies of networks in practice show some common conclusions about networks that can be tested in an urban study of governing relations (see e.g. Greve 1994, Rhodes 1997, Mayntz and Marin 1991, Jordan and Schubert 1992). The conclusions are that networks vary between countries, but also within policy areas and during policy processes. Moreover, different types of networks are not mutually exclusive. Networks can have an inner and outer circle with the inner circle consisting of actors having regular and stabile contact and the outer circle consisting of possible actors involved in a specific political agenda. In particular, two resources provide access to networks: economic position and knowledge. Networks can be like institutions and influence the actors as institutions do. Networks are often conservative, create routines, continuity and stability in policy processes. Besides

these issues the authors suggest, that one could look further into the networks' structure and function, the kind of relationship between actors, the number and position of actors and the political operating level when a study has to be made.

Examining urban political theory the same thought of organisation forms that differ from "government" can be found in the discussions of regimes and partnerships. Both are founded in the network theory but are especially associated with steering and management processes in cities.

Stone is the American inspiration for **regime theory** (see e.g. Stone, 1989, 1993 and 1997). Stone defines a regime as an "*informal yet relative stable group with access to institutional resources* that enable it to have a sustained role in making governing decisions" (Stone, 1989, p.4). Stone talks about the *social production of power* – actors from the public and private sector pooling their resources and by that obtaining power to act. The "*iron law*" of regimes is that they must be able to mobilize resources suitable for the political agenda at a given time and place (Stones, 1993, p.21). Stone's regimes are based on a *common understanding* of purpose and direction and on recognition of *interdependency* between actors. A regime can be interpreted as one of the above mentioned networks: the closed, exclusive and stable policy community gaining control of the overall management of a city for a longer period. Regimes can be investigated in the same way as networks. Several theoretical contributions to regime theory develop categories and typologies relevant for empirical studies (see e.g. Harding, 1994, Orr and Stoker, 1994, Jones and Bachelor, 1993, Stoker and Mossberger, 1994). They are much like the suggestions from the network theory.

The discussions of **partnerships** are also very closely connected to the theory of networks. Bailey (1995) describes a typical definition of partnerships in the literature to be a concrete organisation form characterized by "*a coalition of local elites and agencies with varying degrees of local dependencies in order to exert influence over growth-related and redistributive strategies in defined areas*" (p.37). *Mutual dependence and trust* are leading principles for partnerships. Different typologies are developed in the literature like joint ventures, development trusts, promotional partnerships, agency partnerships, policy partnerships, management partnerships etc with different actors, different rationales and different dominating interests (Bailey, 1995, p.28-31; Kouwenhoven, 1993, p.120-27). The literature on partnerships is mostly concerned with concrete organisation forms and how to investigate them in practice. Most literature is very descriptive and direction of action is often proposed in order to make partnerships work effectively as a new method of steering. The partnership definition resemblance the definition of networks in the sense that the discussions concern a diversity of partnership forms – e.g. they can be like a policy community or like an issue network or something in between.

The development in **Denmark** can be interpreted as showing clear signs of governance in the form of policy networks, regimes and partnerships. An organisational fragmentation has occurred especially through decentralization processes. Firstly, from national government to counties and municipalities and to the European Union with more tasks and more responsibility transferred to these political and administrative levels. Secondly, a decentralization from counties and municipalities to public service institutions like hospitals, institutions for elder care, schools and kindergartens. Thirdly, a decentralization to citizens in users boards as

a rather new political institution connected to several types of service institutions like schools and kindergartens. Finally, tasks and responsibility are turned over to voluntary/non-profit organisations and to private enterprises on contract (Sørensen et.al., 1996, p.9-11; Bogason, 1998b, p.37-41). At the same time there is an upcoming of different kind of partnerships between public agencies and between public and private agencies in different policy areas like e.g. housing renewal and construction of infrastructure. Furthermore, former state companies are turned into limited companies with joint public and private stocks and responsibility (Greve, 1994, p.3-8). The consequence is the emergence of a differentiated and multicentered political system where private actors (e.g. enterprise, citizens, voluntary organisations) and public actors (e.g. national government, municipalities, public management and institutions) play new roles and act together in new ways (Pedersen et.al., 1994, p.196-201). Some of the networks turn out to be like policy communities or regimes and others more like issue networks.

3.3 Comparing new theories of urban organisation forms

The discussions of networks, regimes and partnerships have a lot in common. They are all developed as a challenge to theories of pluralism and corporatism or elitism. They focus on a meso level in policy processes (sectoral or sub sectoral policy levels) and consider time and context to be important elements in the theory making. They establish a connection between the theories of pluralism and corporatism in pointing out that practice might show “evidence” to sustain both sets of these general theoretical thoughts – it is not an either/or (Stoker, 1995, p.55-62; Rhodes, 1997, p.29-32). The claim is, as in pluralism, that there is some diversion and decentralization of power in society and that several groups of actors are competing for political influence besides the influence they obtain through elections and the representative institutions. The state is only one actor among others influencing political processes and potentially everybody have resources to act upon though they do not always have the ability to do so. However, regime theory and network theory emphasize, like the theories of corporatism and elitism, that certain organizations and actors possess or have easy access to important powerful resources in society and that these actors in some instances take control. They become powerful elites in society and perform their power through e.g. urban regimes or policy communities. Further the theories are often closely connected to theories of interorganisational relations based on theories of dependency and cooperation (Milward and Provan, 1996, p.2) and they focus on the integrating element in relations.

The idea of governance dominated by specific organisation forms like networks, regimes and partnerships represents an alternative frame of concepts and interpretations to the story of government. The alternative understanding points to the undermining of central political steering and management and to the undermining of the function of bureaucratic means. It stresses the dissolving of a clear division between politics and administration and between the public and private sphere. Furthermore, it suggests a new foundation and theoretical background for theory building by integrating elements from both pluralism and corporatism. The new concepts and typologies can easily be investigated in an empirical study.

In a study of urban organisational forms the idea of government and pluralism or corporatism on the one hand, and the idea of governance based on networks, regimes and partnerships on the other hand might be used as competing ideas that each of them offers valuable interpretations of practice. Perhaps the investigation will show a dominance of “either government or governance” in the present situation? Or maybe practice will show “networks in the shadow of hierarchy”? Or maybe we will see a quite different mixture and development of organisation forms that needs further theorizing?

4. Democracy: from corporate aggregated pluralism to reflexive integrated pluralism?

Theories of democracy are often dominated by normative ideas about how democracy ought to be rather than how it actually works. A presentation of some of the theories of democracy is influenced by that. In the presentation it is not possible only to present one modern and one postmodern idea due to the disagreement in the interpretations of practice and in the normative backgrounds for democratic theories. There are alternative theories both in the modern understanding and in the postmodern understanding.

4.1 Modern aggregation and integration

March and Olsen (1989) suggest a distinction between only two fundamental perceptions of democracy when handling the modern theories. One is dominated by the idea of aggregation and another by the idea of integration (p.118). They are competitive normative ideas.

The idea of **aggregation** makes a point of democracy as a *means* or procedure for aggregating different interests in politics in order to govern society. The democratic procedures are *guidelines* for how decisions are to be made and hence the focus is on the arrangement and development of effective and equitable procedures. Democracy in this understanding is a means *for the distribution of resources and power* and for *mediating conflicts* in society (Sørensen, 1995, p.29). Politics is a *competition* between conflicting groups and citizens have *pregiven individual interests* that have to be canalized into the governing system (March and Olsen, 1989, p.120). *Representation* by delegation is a positive factor for democratic life and the citizens participate through elections and through replacement of competent spokesmen in parliament and in interest groups. The elected and enlightened *elite secures stability and unity* and protects the citizens (Sørensen, 1995, p.33). Freedom is comprehended as a protection of the *individual freedom*, a maintaining of the private sphere and the establishment of strong institutions for collective governing. Equality is comprehended as equal rights to participate in the political system and *civil and political rights* are of great importance (Hansen, 1999, p.10-12). Theories of pluralism, elitism and liberalism are based on this aggregative understanding of democracy.

The idea of **integration** is the quite opposite one. Democracy is not seen as a means but as a *goal* in itself and a lifestyle. Democratic procedures have to apply the necessary support and accept from the citizens but *participation and dialogue are the prior conditions* for political decisions. Through participation and dialogue the citizens

become *socialized* by the norms and values of society. The *education* of citizens to be democratic citizens, the generating of legitimacy, equality and community are essential elements in this understanding of democracy (Sørensen, 1995, p.38). The image of “*the common good*” is central for these elements and every citizen has a duty to serve for the common good. Politics is a matter of *equalizing conflicts* through rational debate that *generates consensus and common understanding* and the interests of citizens are created in this process (March and Olsen, 1989, p.126-127). Representation is a practical necessity in modern society but only as a mandate with limited autonomy and *strong popular control*. Freedom is comprehended as all citizens’ *equal right to participate* in the governing of society. And equality includes *social as well as civil and political rights* due to the assumption that social rights are the precondition for making use of the other rights (Hansen, 1999, p.10-12; March and Olsen, 1989, p.126). The theories of the Republicans and the Communitarians are based on this integrative understanding of democracy.

Most democracies, including the **Danish**, have developed with a continuous shift from stressing aggregative and integrative elements. These shifts represent changing social and cultural values and norms of democracy and participation and changing power relations in societies. In the Danish society there is a long tradition for participation and community and it effects the development of the Danish democracy. In the early postwar period the parliamentary system combined with corporative networks dominated the democracy. The most important channels for influence and participation were general elections, membership of political parties and representation through interest groups. In particular, the labour market organisations became an integrated part of the political system. In the 50’s and 60’s the values of freedom, equality and community were believed to be fulfilled through the welfare state. In the 70’s social movements became an important channel for influence with broad political issues and mobilization and the introduction of new values and demands of participation and self-determination (Andersen et.al., 1993, p.223-227). The characteristics of the whole period are collective possibilities for influence and influence on the input of the political system. The field of interest is the general and wide coherence in society. These characteristics are the reason for the modern Danish period being named “corporate aggregated pluralism” in this article.

However, changes have been noted internationally and in Denmark in urban politics and democracy. The changes are related to the postmodern or late modern tendencies in society and new theories are developed. It is the theories of hyperpluralism, neo-elitism and reflexive integrated pluralism.

4.2 Postmodern hyperpluralism, neo-elitism or reflexive integrated pluralism

Hyperpluralism is a further development of the traditional theory of pluralism combined with postmodern time and context. Savitch and Thomas (1991) argue that cities are constantly growing and the diversity in citizens’ values and interests is increasing. It becomes impossible for one elite to control a city. Competition and pluralism accelerate and the result is *an increased diversion of power (splintered forces) and ungovernability* in the new urban politics. The numerous interest groups and the reduced overview of political matters cause *political instability* and *fragmented, ineffective* decision processes. Savitch and Thomas point to the consequence of an *extreme*

pluralism with politicians, administrators, business communities and local pressure groups involved not in “street fighting pluralism”, but in “periodic *negotiations* for a share of the pie in the *city corridors of power*” (p.246). Another example is DeLeon (1991) who combines hyperpluralism and regime theory in a study of the fragmented social and political structures in San Francisco. DeLeon talks about the development of *regimes and anti-regimes* fighting about control of the city. *Anti-regimes* block private interests and *protect* the city from the market forces and from comprehensive growth programmes. They *secure* social diversity in the city and the most important instrument is the *control of land use*. Anti-regimes are obstructive hyperpluralism and in this sense a variation of hyperpluralism (Judge, 1995, p.26; DeLeon, 1991, p.210-211).

Neo-elitism is a further development of the traditional theory of elitism focusing on the same elements in urban development in the 90’s with growing cities and an increase in interest groups and different values. Though their conclusion is the opposite one. Logan and Molotch (1987) are an example with their theory of “*growth machines*”. They discuss the use value and exchange value of land use and emphasize the *role of the business community* and especially “*rentiers*” in the development of cities (p.52-53). Rentiers make *coalitions* with e.g. corporations and developers and some times with city officials in order to *exploit the exchange value* of the land. Some rentiers are local but others are not and the members of a growth machine are only united by their *common interest in economic growth* and the benefits they can achieve. Logan and Molotch focus on elites in general in cities and not only related to political decision making. They point to the fact that growth machines are essential for the development in cities and that they are able to *set the political agenda and take control* of power in a city using the argument that economic growth is beneficial for all urban citizens. Local pressure groups fight for the use value of the land and they can challenge and temporarily stop a growth machine. However, the elite will remobilize, and the political system will support or be directly involved in a growth machine (Harding, 1995, p.42-44).

The third postmodern understanding registers the same kind of urban development (the new epoch) but presents a quite different outset for analyses and interpretations based on the postmodern science ideals mentioned earlier (the new methodology). It is the idea of **reflexive integrated pluralism**:

Pluralism is the core issue based on the observation of an increased differentiation in social and cultural interests and values in growing cities. *Pluralism prevents authoritarian* tendencies in the definition of interests and secures the right for everybody to formulate their different interests. The *right to be different* and the right to see that these different interests are fulfilled are essential in this new understanding of pluralism. The modern perception of pluralism is based on the possibility in the end to reach a point of peaceful coexistence between interests. The new perception redefines pluralism to be based on *continuous conflicts and struggles* between interests with the possibility only to obtain a *temporary balance* between opposite demands and interests. The aggregative aspect of democracy is stressed with the weight on pluralism but the new perception emphasizes the aspect of integration by pointing to the importance of not only one, but a *diversity of channels for democratic influence* (Hansen, 1999, p.8 and 15-16; Torfing, 1999, p.257-258). *Public debate and active participation is a precondition* for developing a sustainable and dynamic community and for securing the support for both *social, civil and political rights*. Participation is exercised both through *representation and direct participation* but direct

participation is of great importance. It has a value of its own – not only to achieve democratic control and socialization but also to achieve a *common understanding* and identity that does not exist as a substantial doctrine. It has to be developed over and over again. Consensus between plural interests is the result of common understanding and not of negotiations around a fixed point between interests (Andersen et.al, 1993, p.14-16). Theories of deliberative democracy and radical plural democracy are based on these thoughts –though given weight to different elements of consensus and power.

As we see the individual freedom to pursue different goals and lifestyles is emphasized in the idea of reflexive integrated pluralism. Rights are thereby central as they are in liberalism. But this new thought of democracy *differs* from the liberal in expanding rights to include social and democratic rights and in the claim that a constant creation and maintenance of the political community is a precondition for exercising individual freedom. Concerning the idea of community and common interests there is a likeness to the Republican and the Communitarian theories but the idea of reflexive integrated pluralism *differs* in the claim that the substantial contents of the “common good” is developed through debate and not defined or existing beforehand (Torfing, 1999, p.266-71; Andersen et.al., p.14-16).

In the **Danish** development of democracy the postmodern elements mentioned in all three postmodern understandings are recognized.

The rise of new semi-public and semi-private organisations is one example. Former public organisations are some of them transformed to relatively autonomous units controlled by contracts and boards populated by appointed members like politicians, administrative executives and other branch experts. Others are turned into joint stock companies operating under special laws (Greve, 1994, p.3-8). The development is registered in very different policy areas, like health care, culture and education, planning, transport and energy. These new relations between private and public are examples of the above mentioned policy networks that can undermine the control of central government. The democratic consequences are few participants in the policy process and that active participation from citizens is reduced. The new organisations are based more on the logic of economics than on politics and their openness is limited. The same kind of consequences is observed in the change of the Danish democracy towards internationalization of the policy process, especially related to the European Union. A new level of policy decision has emerged and undermines the sovereignty of national government. Most decisions are taken behind closed doors and by few politicians and administrators some of them appointed and not elected (Sørensen et.al., 1996, p.12-18). This kind of development can be seen as the background for conclusions like the ones made in the theory of neo-elitism.

But there is also another trend in the development of the Danish democracy. In the 90's the role of citizens and users of public services has been strengthened in the management of service organisations and of local community matters. User boards in primary and secondary schools, in kindergartens and other forms of day care institutions, in social institutions and in institutions for elderly have been established. So have advisory councils in specific policy areas (for the elderly) and in some local geographic areas in cities and municipalities. Furthermore, national reforms and grants concerning e.g. regeneration of urban areas (e.g. “kvarterløftsprojekter”) and environmental matters (e.g. Agenda 21) initiate the

involvement of citizens and voluntary associations in the management of local politics and democracy (Bogason, 1999, p.3). The democratic consequences are that a large number of citizens are mobilized and integrated in the public policy and management processes but most of them in the position as users either appointed or elected by only few citizens. The possibility for participation is increased but still restricted to certain policy areas. The decision processes become more open but mostly to the citizens' involved. More political debates and conflicts evolve and we see an increased politicization of local matters (Sørensen et.al., 1996, p.12-18). This development is close to the elements registered in the theories of hyperpluralism.

Altogether the Danish case illustrates that the actual democratic development does not follow one dominating tendency. What we see is an increasing diversity of channels for influence and a mix of representation and direct participation. We also see an increase in the institutionalization of citizens right to participate in various public affairs. Elements that are emphasized in the idea of reflexive integrated pluralism and point to the relevance of this interpretation for the Danish democratic development.

4.3 Comparing new theories of urban democracy

The theoretical understandings of hyperpluralism and neo-elitism focus on new tendencies in urban social and political life - the postmodern epoch. They are founded in the modern science ideals and the modern idea of pluralism or elitism as an either/or and as opposing theories for understanding urban democracy. Both of them focus on the aggregative aspects of democracy stressing competition and conflicts between groups and procedures for equalizing these interests. They also have a starting point in the pre-given interests of actors and a focus on negotiations between these interests. Furthermore they emphasize the distribution of resources and power in cities. Though observing the same tendencies in urban development their conclusions differ due to different normative backgrounds and due to observations of different phenomena in the democratic urban development. They construct two different images of the urban development. None of these theories deals with the elements of integration.

In the reflexive integrated pluralism there is elements from both aggregative and integrative democratic theories and from both pluralist and corporatist/elite theories. These elements are not seen as an either/or, but neither are they used in a pure combination. Representative democracy is still "the final argument" but integration and direct participation is a precondition for this. We see a reformulation and reinterpretation of central concepts in the traditionally opposing modern theories of pluralism or elitism and corporatism. The same principle was used in the theory of governance. Likewise we see a reinterpretation of "old" issues as "rights" and "common good" in order to bridge the liberal and republican theories in a new way of understanding. The idea of reflexive integrated pluralism points to the hypothesis that "in practice" we could find a complex and differentiated democratic development in cities as the result of governance based on the tendencies observed both in theories of hyperpluralism and neo-elitism (postmodern epoch). We therefore have to look for new and different forms of both representation and participation in the democratic system as a result of e.g. policy networks, we have to look for new combinations of representation and participation in governance practice and maybe for different foundations for

representation and participation like geography, functionality, ethnicity etc. as a result of the new urban organisation forms.

Furthermore the idea of reflexive integrated pluralism provides an alternative normative and theoretical frame for interpretation (based on postmodern methodology) of this democratic urban development. It raises the question of how democracy is and ought to be constructed as an important part of urban governance studies and stresses the importance of making democratic values explicit in these studies. Democracy is not just there, it is constructed and reconstructed in a continuous process based on shifting democratic forms and values. A study of urban governance and the democratic consequences should focus on these construction processes.

5. Planning: from rational and incremental planning to neo-rational or communicative planning?

Like the theories of democracy, the theories of planning are also very normative and concentrate more on how planning ought to be performed than on how it is practised. In planning theory there is a fairly agreement on what the central idea in modern planning is. It is the idea of rational and incremental planning. But when it comes to the postmodern planning discussions we will have to present several ideas again and like in the postmodern democracy discussions they are contradictory ideas. It is the ideas of neo-rational and communicative planning.

5.1 Modern rational and incremental planning

Rational planning stems from functionalism. Functionalism is based on *reason* as our ability to observe and learn from observations. The rational planning theory has become part of planners' understanding of the nature of planning and also of their practice even though practice might differ from the rational ideas.

Davidoff and Reiner (1962) describe rational planning as a process consisting of three different stages: Establishment of *goals*, identification of *means* and *implementation*. Certain methods are associated with each stage and the *planner plays a central role* during all stages. The planner identifies and clarifies the different interests and goals in the political process and incorporates them in the planning. If there are different goals and decisions or conflicts, the planner has to *prepare alternative solutions*. After having identified the goals the planner has to find the most *suitable means* to realise the goals and supervises the implementation. The planner elaborates a plan that reflects the goals of the interested parties (p.11-39). The rational physical planning defines itself through this rational and instrumental idea and the main purpose is to seek for *dysfunctions* in the physical and social environment and find *technical and rational* (often large scale) *solutions* that remove or minimize these dysfunctions. The solutions reflected in the urban constructions have to *express the urban functions* (Kjærdsdam, 1995, p.112-18) and the planner becomes the *functionalistic social engineer* (Pedersen, 1996, p.61). The political and democratic processes are enacted in the definition of interests and goals and in the decisions of the preferred result.

In this rational understanding of politics and planning (administration) there is a *clear division of roles* for politicians and planners and for the public and private sector. The politicians and the public sector define the goals and the framework for urban development and the administration/planner and private enterprise implement them. The rational decision process is central for the planning process in order to *steer, control and regulate from the central center*.

A criticism of certain elements in rational planning in the 70's develops the idea of **incremental planning**. In incremental planning theory the notion of rational planning, steering and control as a solution to urban problem is maintained. But it is stated that *it takes more* knowledge, new indicators, new planning tools and more planning to solve the problems (Petersen, 1985, p.xxvii). The reason for this statement is observations and experiences from practice that show a difference to the rational idea. In incremental planning the point of departure is not the establishment of goals but *policies that involve goals and means at the same time*. No general optimization is made but *differences and potential marginal improvements* as a result of a policy are considered. Development is controlled through a succession of *incremental changes*. Knowledge gained from previous and existing policies is the basis for coming planning projects. The most significant difference between rational and incremental planning is the *different ways of connecting goals and means* and particularly different ways of considering goals with the *planner in a less exclusive role*.

In the 50's and 60's the idea of rational planning and the regulation of urban environment dominated the **Danish** planning idea and practice. Large scale plans and reforms are the foundation for urban renewal and for the construction of new urban areas and suburbs based on the image of "the proper life" in modern society (Gaardmand, 1991, p.19-22; Kjærdsdam, 1995, p.112-24). Total renewal, New Towns and secondary centres are central for this idea of rational urban development. There is a wide consensus on the values for planning. It is the image of the welfare state based on continuous economic growth as the main driving force in society and cities and therefore the main object for planning. Proper life conditions for all citizens are the ideal for welfare but it is the expert (the planner) that defines the needs of the citizens and constructs the cities accordingly. All values are founded in the logic of functionalism (Petersen, 1985, p.xxv-xxvi; Kjærdsdam, 1995, p.112-18). In Denmark the concrete planning tools in this period are based on formal regulation of land use with numerous spatial planning legislations including national, regional, municipal and local plans. Furthermore local government conducted an active land policy by buying land and developing sites for private enterprise to build on.

In the 70's there was a change towards incremental planning in Denmark. The current experience was that there were several problems and conflicts in the planning strategies that could not be solved by using traditional techniques. In this period the focus in urban planning is on redevelopment and renovation of existing physical structures and negotiation with citizens and private enterprises becomes a central part of the planning process (Simonsen, 1987, p.3). Negotiated planning becomes a new concept and planning method. A new planning law is also decided in this period saying that all planning proposals have to be sent to public hearing in order to involve the citizens.

In the 80's and especially in the 90's a change in planning practice and in the idea of planning is noticed in most western European planning systems and in the Danish

planning as well. New practices and theories are developed and related to the notion of the postmodern development of society and cities. Especially two different understandings dominate. One is about neo-rational planning and the other is about communicative planning – again two opposing understandings.

5.2 Postmodern neo-rational and communicative planning

Neo-rational planning is an attempt to *reinststate central regulation and planning control* and to *recreate an overview*, insight and control related to the postmodern fragmented, complex and differentiated development of society and cities. It is a recreation of the belief in rational planning based on *the potential of data and information technologies* (Gaardmand, 1991, p.69-70). The ideal is to *develop models and systems* with all relevant data which make it possible to *predict and control* the new urban development. New management methods (like New Public Management) are the precondition for *effective planning and control* and the *planner as an expert* defines the needs and values in society. Neo-rational planning initiates large, complex urban societies and ensures the historical context by rebuilding historical townscapes (Kjærdsdam, 1995, p.133). *External form* is emphasised and the creation of streets and squares has to *promote social and political activities*. But *citizens are not supposed to be involved* in the planning process or the design process controlled by experts and decided through the representative democratic system. Neo-rationalism is as we can see not a new concept or idea in planning. It is rather a further development of rational planning ideas adjusted to the postmodern time and context. The new aspect is the renewed believe in the improvement of the data and knowledge base that makes it possible to achieve the “proper” rational planning.

The theories of **communicative planning** introduce a quite different understanding of planning (see e.g. Healey, 1997a and b, Forester, 1989 and Sager, 1994). Communicative planning theories are all based on a whole new perception of planning inspired by postmodern tendencies in urban social and political life (epoch) and by postmodern methodology like social constructivism. The common starting point for the theories is *a critic and denial of the rational idea* of planning (Healey, 1997a, p.43). Communicative theories renounce the belief that planning can form a whole and cohesive development of society or cities – practice shows its failure. In practice the rigorous well-defined and planned system is breaking down and political techniques connected with management through a representative system are dissolved. Instead the communicative theories point to a new form of *bottom-up organizing*, where the *needs and preferences* of individuals (the small stories) are not pre-given but *developed* in the planning process and being crucial for the planning result. *Direct participation* is decisive in this process in order to give room for *plural interest* to be expressed (Healey, 1997b, p.21-33). That is why communicative theories focus on the *process* firstly and on the product secondly.

Planning and politics are not only about competitive interest bargaining but also about *collaborative consensus building* and the *building of cultures* (Healy, 1997a, p.65-68). Planning is thereby an *interactive process* in a specific social context and a *political activity* – it is not merely a technical process of design, analysis and management. *The planner* plays a central role in this communicative planning process by initiating critical conversation (Forester, 1989, p.119). *Power relations* do not only occur in the process of distribution and aggregation of resources but “through the fine grain of taken-for-granted assumptions and practices” (Dovlén, 1999, p.10). *The planner is a*

part of these power relations (Forester, 1989, p.27). *Different meanings* are given to a certain planning object by different groups of actors and the planner becomes a player in a *game of interpretation* and has to *reveal the ambiguity and differences* in interpretations of “reality”. The postmodern planner is not only a political planner but also a *reflexive planner* (Dovlén, 1999, p.11) and a main role of planners is to make *people participate* and *empower* citizens and community actions (Forester, 1989, p.27).

In **Denmark**, the idea and methods of neo-rational planning are to be found in recent urban development. We see this kind of planning especially in the establishment of overall objectives for cities in a global perspective and when it comes to e.g. general environmental matters (Pedersen, 1996, p.62). It is also recognised in the process of establishing large scale physical constructions as shopping malls, new towns (e.g. Ørestaden) and new large housing areas and in the process of constructing new infrastructure like e.g. bridges (e.g. Storebæltsbroen and Øresundsbroen), motorways or a new metro (in Copenhagen). It seems like the neo-rational planning is dominating certain urban policy areas of especially national or international interests and large physical constructions.

However, the new planning idea of communicative planning can also be found in Danish urban planning practice especially in the 90's. In this period planning for the existing city is the main object for planning. Planning becomes fragmented and based on ad-hoc projects. Some talk about the “dismantling” of physical planning (Simonsen, 1987, p.6). Focus is on development of separate elements in cities like a quarter or a building site and different strategies of planning is used related to different urban issues without considering the larger urban or societal context. Negotiated planning and participation is further institutionalized involving all interested groups in the planning process through e.g. community meetings and working groups. Problems, solutions and values are determined in the process. In particular, many urban regeneration projects follow this planning idea with a weight on partnerships, participation and dialogue. And most local plans are the result of an application for a building permit for a project that requires a local plan and frequently a subsequent change in the master plan. Furthermore some local municipalities experiment with communicative planning methods in the process of deciding the future development of an urban area. It seems like communicative planning is mostly found in policy areas related to housing and in local urban planning processes.

5.3 Comparing new theories of urban planning

In the presentation above of different postmodern democracy theories, hyperpluralism and neo-elitism were described as a further development of traditional theories of pluralism and elitism combined with the postmodern epoch in urban democracy. The same principle is used in the theory of neo-rational planning. This theory builds on modern science ideals and tries to adjust the modern idea of rational planning to new urban conditions. The planning system and the planner is separated from and objective in relation to the democratic political system. Focus is on how planners can find *the* best possible technical solutions for urban development without too much interference by lay people (politicians and citizens).

Communicative planning theories agrees on the postmodern urban development (the epoch), but reject the whole idea of rational planning as a possibility or a goal in this epoch. They present a further development of the incremental planning idea in the sense that focus is on involving many actors in the process of determining the goals and the “best” relation between goals and means. But in communicative theories the main objective is not to combine goals and means in the best possible way and mediate pregiven conflicting interests in the planning process. In communicative planning the main objective for the planner is through critical listening to clarify agreement and ever present conflicts (Forester, 1989, p.110). The communicative theories introduce new planning concepts and new understandings of the planning process as a construction process with political and reflexive planners (methodology).

In a study of urban organisation forms and the resulting effect on planning these different planning discussions are important to keep in mind in the interpretation and analysis of urban governance practices. They could both be relevante for studies of urban governance in different planning and policy areas as the danish examples show us. Important questions are e.g. whether the two planning ideas are challenging each other in the same planning area as competing planning ideas or if they co-exist and function well side by side? And whether some organisation forms sustain one or the other planning ideas? The different notions of planning in the combination with specific organisation form can create different rationales and expectations in an urban planning process and these are important research issues in an urban governance study.

6. A comparison and combination of theories - conclusion

Looking at these different theoretical fields of organisation forms, democracy and planning in cities, one notices the similar tension in all three fields between the “old” and the “new”. Changes are registrered in the organisation of the public sector, in the relations between the public sector and society, in urban social and political relations, in the democratic system and in the planning system. The *changes* in societal and urban relations are mostly conceptionalized as *fragmentation, differentiation and complexity* and in the new theories we can find commom codewords like: a differentiated and multicentered political system, autonomy, unclear boundaries, the undermining and dissolving of the parliamentary representative political system, the breaking down of the bureaucratic and the planned organisations and methods, growing cities, increasing diversity in the values and interests of the citizens and an increase in interest groups. So far, the theorists agree. Some interpret these changes as a shift towards the postmodern society, others see them as an extension of modern society to the late modern society. In this article it is not important whether the changes are interpreted as postmodern or late modern – the article concentrates on the changes towards further fragmentation, differentiation and complexity as *new conditions* for organisation, democracy and planning in cities. This perspective of changes in urban conditions has been the starting point for the article in order to analyse what the theorists in the different fields say about the consequences for urban organisation forms, democracy and planning.

The article shows that there is a widespread agreement about the consequences for new *organisation forms* whether they are named policy networks, regimes or

partnerships. The very idea of governance and networks in various forms has become dominating in the literature as a theoretical background for interpretation of new tendencies and we *do not see a tension within* the discussion of new organisation forms. The different contributions to the discussion do not argue against each other when they develop their theoretical thoughts but against the "modern" idea of organisation. The disagreement is mostly found in the argument concerning how widespread the new organisation forms actually are. Perhaps the idea of governance and networks are in the process of becoming the "truth" about the new organisational development in society and cities. And in relation to new theories of urban organisation forms we come close to a traditional cumulative development in theories. This calls for researchers to be cautious about using this new idea of urban organisation forms as "taken for granted" knowledge. Holding on to different understandings is one way of challenging the theoretical work and the empirical investigations in a study of urban governance.

We do not find the same agreement in the discussions of consequences for *democracy and planning*. There is a profound disagreement about the consequences of the postmodern or late modern epoch for new democratic forms and planning forms. There is a *tension and competition within* the new understandings and it seems like a struggle of ideas is going on in the literature. In the democracy discussion some of these tensions can be traced back to the tensions in modern understandings (aggregation versus integration and pluralism versus elitism) and are continued in the new understandings but a quite new understanding has also entered the scene (reflexive integrated pluralism). In the planning discussion the tension is found in the new understandings between one perception building on former modern thoughts (neo-rational planning) and another building on a whole new idea of planning (communicative planning). These tensions within the new understandings of democracy and planning lead the theorists not only to argue against the modern theories but also to argue against the competing new theories when they develop their own. For the time being there does not seem to be a development towards one new "taken-for-granted" knowledge in these theoretical fields. No single theory has yet obtained the dominant position as the "true" knowledge. If the question of democracy and planning is integrated in a study of urban governance one has not only to be aware of the difference between old and new understandings but also of the difference between various new theories on the issues.

Looking at all the theories in the article it is obvious that there is a difference in their weight on *description and on normative* judgement or visions. The theories of governance and policy network, regimes and partnership, the theories of hyperpluralism and neo-elitism and the theory of neo-rational planning concentrate on describing how they think the new "reality is". They are implicit or explicit normative and ideological in their choice of outset for the theorizing (e.g. what are the motivating factor for actions and relations) but they do not as a part of the theorizing judge the development as either "good or bad". If they do, they make a clear distinction between the "description of reality" and their own normative and ideological opinion. The theories of reflexive integrated pluralism and communicative planning concentrate explicitly on the normative and ideological issue in both the outset for the theory and in the result. They integrate the way they see reality and how it ought to be (visions) without claiming to uncover "the reality". Due to their belief in social constructivism they do not find it possible. The latest discussion of governance and policy networks presented by Bevir and Rhodes

(1998) moves towards the same starting point for analysis (presenting two narratives). This difference between new theories in the article is mentioned as a difference between working with "postmodernity" as an epoch and/or a methodology. In the postmodern methodology there is no clear distinction between description and judgement or normativity. It is stated that we always make *constructed descriptions* of what we think reality looks like and by doing that we contribute to the construction of reality. In the postmodern methodology the issue is not to uncover how "reality is" but to investigate how "reality becomes constructed".

As shown during the article, all of the theories can somehow be "empirically proven" in the Danish case depending on the focus and the eyes that see. We have to be aware of this in the selection and development of theories when we are doing a concrete study of urban governance. Even though one theory has become or is trying to become dominant, this process is always based on exclusion of other theories and interpretations and can always be challenged. In the discussions of new forms this challenge is more obvious in the new theories of democracy and planning than in the new theories of organisation forms. To be aware of, and explicit about, these exclusions and challenges is one way of questioning one's own research work in urban governance.

As we can see in the article there is a *likeness in the method* of making new theories of governance, reflexive integrated democracy and communicative planning. They all reject "Grand theories" and the "Big Truth" and concentrate on making a foundation for theories telling "small and different stories". They also all try to bridge the old/modern theoretical contradictions by integrating former opposing concepts and theoretical positions. Furthermore they redefine these concepts and positions and develop new concepts and understandings for interpretation of the new tendencies. Whether they are successful in this theoretical work is not an issue in this article but are of course an issue to be discussed in further research work.

Turning to the *substans* of the new theories about organisation forms, democracy and planning one finds similarities between the theoretical fields in certain *combinations*.

The idea of policy networks including policy communities and issue networks (different kind of partnerships) "match" the idea of democracy in the form of reflexive integrated pluralism and the idea of planning in the form of communicative planning. We see some of the same codewords and meanings presented in these theories. In the organisation discussion: a complex of organisations and persons, interdependency, confidence, negotiations and autonomy. In the democracy discussion: a diversity of channels for influence, the right to be different and act on one's own behalf, conflicts and negotiations about the common understanding, participation and debate. And in the planning discussion: bottom-up organising, ambiguity and differences, participation, consensusbuilding and games of interpretation. One could say that these codewords are positive codewords – or rather they would be in a Danish context, building on traditions and values of participation, community and consensus. Therefore, we could call this combination of theories the *positive story* of new developments in organisation forms, democracy and planning.

Besides the similarities in the positive story we also find similarities in the use of codewords in another combination of the new theories presented in this article. The ideas of policy communities and regimes "match" the idea of democracy in the form of neo-elitism and the idea of planning in the form of neo-rational planning. The codewords related to the organisation forms are: closed, stable and few participants, informal organisation, a sustained governing role, exclusion, taking control and power. In the democracy discussion: elites, growth machines, closed coalitions, exploitation, setting political agenda and taking control of power. And in the planning discussion: reinstatement of central control and regulation, overall models and systems of planning, effectiveness and expert control. These are certainly not codewords that are positively laden in the Danish political and cultural context, and we could call this story the *negative story* of new tendencies in organisation forms, democracy and planning. We can illustrate the two stories in a model with only some of the code words:

Model 1: A positive and negative story of policy networks, democracy and planning

	Positive story	Negative story
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mix of actors in open, plural networks • interdependence • confidence and trust • common understanding and negotiation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • powerful actors in closed networks • elites and exclusion • taking control and setting the agenda • power and conflicts
Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diversity in channels of influence • the right to be different • dialogue and participation • developing common understandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elitedomination • growth machines and closed coalitions • exploitation • taking control
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bottom-up organizing • ambiguity and difference • participation and debate • consensusbuilding • games of interpretation and local reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reinstatement of central control and regulation • general models and systems • effectiveness and efficiency • expert control

In the article we could find "empirical evidence" for a mixture of forms and ideals in the Danish practice. In a study of urban governance it could be of relevance to look for different practices and ideas/ideals in different cases of solving urban political problems. Focus could be on analyzing and discussing the actors experience of the matches or mismatches and tensions between practice and ideas and between the three issues discussed in this article. One tension could be actors or organisations trying to implement communicative planning and the ideas of reflexive integrated pluralism in a situation dominated by regimes and policy communities. Another tension could be actors or organisations trying to implement

neo-rational planning in a situation with a diversity of channels for influence, multiple political centres and a wide differentiation in norms and values.

The possibilities for the practical combinations of the thoughts mentioned in this article are numerous. But each of them and the different combinations might be of value as an interpretation of an urban governance study. All the code words mentioned in this article are guidelines for keeping the single "stories" apart for analytic purposes and constitute a form of ordering of the different offers of interpretation. Maybe the result of a study will show quite different code words and meanings relevant for an urban governance study which are not integrated in the presented theories. They could then be building stones for further development of the theories seen as social constructs.

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