Securing the working democracy

Inventive arrangements to guarantee circulation and the emergence of democracy policy

Marcel Mangold
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Abstract
In the 1990s, Swedish democracy's ability to remain strong and renew itself became increasingly questioned in government commission reports and social-scientific writings. The perceptions of the financial crisis in 1992–1994, new identities, immigration and changes in participation in civic associations and organizations were listed as challenges to democracy. Together, they helped constitute an understanding of an emerging gap between the population and existing representative democratic forms. In response, the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s saw the emergence of several discourses, political initiatives and scientific contributions that articulated and responded to the need to secure a “working democracy”. By analyzing theoretically the arrangements of elements in policy and in attempts to shape the population's habits, dispositions and behavior, the thesis illuminates the role of aesthetics in the knowledge and power effects of these efforts. Methodologically, the thesis draws on Michel Foucault's genealogical approach in four empirical chapters. In doing so, the thesis displays why, when and how the efforts to secure a working democracy emerged, and analyzes the politics inherent to them. The chapters consist, first, of a study of the birth and changes in “democracy policy” as a distinct political domain; second, a mapping of the emergence of the discourse and dispositif of “value-foundation”; third, a mapping of the discourse on exclusion and the discourse on and apparatus to combat “violence-promoting extremism”, and, finally, a mapping of inventive approaches in survey research that articulated how to secure a working democracy. This mapping exposes a vision of democratic dis-involvement and how to contain it infused by risk-management, benchmarking and a monitoring of changes in the population. Taken together, the chapters demonstrate the emergence of a complex network of power relations and knowledge used to achieve congruence between the population and governmental aims. This, the thesis underscores, marginalizes the role of dissent and interruptions in democratic life, to instead equate democracy with a system of congruence, smooth interactions and overall alignment to demands on circulation.

Keywords: democracy, genealogy, democracy policy, circulation, governmentality, dispositif, Swedish politics, värdegrund, exclusion, violence-promoting extremism, Foucault, Rancière.
Sammanfattning


Avhandlingen utgår från att hänvisningen till demokrati och behovet av att säkerställa en ”fungerande demokrati”, fungerar som ett sammanfattande namn för att formulera mer övergripande sociala dynamiker som sträcker sig bortom demokratiskt deltagande och även berör föreningslivet, integration, urban politik, ungdomspolitik, nya krav från marknaden och en förnyelse av skolan. Problemet i materialet som studeras är identifikationen av ett växande och fördjupat ”glapp” mellan befolkningen och en representativ demokratisk ordning i vilken det ställs allt högre krav på enskilda individer samtidigt som frågor om gemensamt ansvar saknar tydliga svar. Problemsformuleringen som avhandlingen studerar avstår från att ta materialets problem för givet, för att i stället ställa frågan om de produktiva effekter som förståelsen av ett glapp mellan befolkningen och den representativa demokratin medför i termer av de politiska ansträngningar, politkområden, nya institutioner, kunskapsproduktion, diskurser m.m.
Avhandlingen ställer därför frågan *varför* politikområdet ”demokrati-politik” växer fram och vilken produktiv funktion det har. Genom att tillgå ett kritiskt, historiskt förhållningssätt (genealogi) inspirerat av Michel Foucault, syftar avhandlingen till att synliggöra och analysera den politik som dessa ansträngningar präglas av – såväl de normativa antaganden och maktrelationer som genomsyrar ansträngningarna som formulerar och besvarar vitken av att ”rädda” och säkerställa demokratins förnyelse på ett visst sätt, som de mer övergripande politiska teknologier och insatser som ansträngningarna kan skrivas in i. Ansatsen dekonstruerar därmed de diskurser, givna begrepp, problematiseringar och ansträngningar, m.m. som växer fram sedan början av 1990-talet till de specifika maktförhållanden, insatser och normativa antaganden som är på spel när de blir till och i den utveckling som de bidrar till att forma.

Teoretiskt utvecklar avhandlingen ett antal kritiska begrepp från en närläsning av litteratur av bland andra Michel Foucault, Jacques Rancière och Gilles Deleuze. Bland de teoretiska begreppen är Foucault-inspirerade begrepp som dispositiv, regerandekomplex (governmentality), säkerhet, polis och cirkulation i fokus. Ett centralt argument i den teoretiska ansatsen är vitken av att fokusera på de sätt på vilka element och delar i ansträngningen för att säkerställa en fungerande demokrati sätts samman; hur dessa formationer designas, vilka skiljelinjer som dras och vilka konstruktioner som skapas. Genom att studera ordningspraktiker (*practices of arrangement*), fokuserar analysen på hur linjer, delar, ytor, relationer, kopplingar m.m. är av vikt för artikuleringen av hur människor ska styras i tid och rum. En sådan analys syftar till att påvisa hur de arrangemang som vetenskap och politik skapar möjliggör sätt att foga samman människors liv, handlingar, vanor och förhållningssätt med villkor för en ”fungerande demokrati” och fungerande sociala relationer. Fokuset belyser därmed policydokuments och vetenskapliga arbetens scenografiska kvaliteter som en förutsättning för att kunna koordinera människors handlingar och förhållningssätt i tid och rum.

De kritiska begreppen gör det samtidigt möjligt att påvisa icke-nödvändigheten i dessa ansträngningar, vilka andra sätt att göra demokrati på som de marginaliserar och de antaganden och maktrelationer som de förutsätter och befäster. Ett centralt teoretiskt bidrag är att använda begreppet cirkulation för att analysera hur hänvisningarna till en fungerande demokrati och ansträngningarna att designa sätt genom vilka fungerande sociala relationer kan åstadkommas. Cirkulation används i huvudsak som analytiskt begrepp i två bemärkelser: dels för att peka på hur ett konkret flöde av människor, varor, ting m.m. är såväl en utmaning som en förutsättning
för regerande, dels för att peka på en form av maktutövning (polis/governmentality) som går ut på att forma relationer, interaktion, kommunikation m.m. så att kongruens och standardisering av mänsklig aktivitet och interaktion möjliggörs.

De empiriska bidragen består av fyra genealogiska studier: 1) av demokratipolitik, 2) av diskursen om värdegrund och värdegrundsarbete i skolan, 3) av diskursen om utanförskap och praktiken att kartlägga ”utanförskapsområden” samt dess släktspolitiskt med diskursen och arbetet mot ”våldsbejakande extremism” och 4) av de kategorier, typologier och givna problemformuleringar som uppfinns inom surveyforskning som på sitt sätt försöker bidra till hur en ”fungerande demokrati” kan upprätthållas och skapas. Det genealogiska angreppssättet syftar till att använda materialet på ett sätt som exponerar de icke-givna maktrelationer som är inbegripna i formandet av för givet tagna och övergripande former och antaganden för att förstå politiska utmaningar i nuet. Som en kritisk metodologi ruckar genealogin på dessa genom att inflika andra möjligheter och överskuggade element, kunskaper och begrepp. Genom en detaljerad form av analys av alla de trådar och beslut som formar en viss övertygelse och typ av politik i nuet, möjliggörs en komplex analys av hur saker och ting som tas för givna i nuet blir till och vilka praktiker och regerandekomplex som dessa förutsätter och skriver in sig i.

Avhandlingen visar hur problematiseringen av befolkningen skapar en viss sorts uppfattningar om politik, om förnyelse och förändring, samt vissa typer av ansträngningar och kunskapsproduktion snarare än andra. Dessa uppfattningar återspeglar en syn på politik som ett slags riskanalys, för vilken det är avgörande att förstå förändringar i befolkningen i förhållande till krav på kongruens i preventativa termer av sannolikhet och genomsnitt som inte bör underskridas.


Sammanfattning av de empiriska kapitlen

Under den första perioden betonas risker och möjligheter med en demokrati som alltmer individualiseras och i vilken ansvarstagande individer kan göras till demokratins fundament. I den andra perioden uttrycks en allt större oro för minskat deltagande och minskat medlemskap i folkrörelser och partier. Analyserna fokuserar under denna period på en allmän förekomst av risker som hotar möjligheten att upprätthålla goda genomsnitt deltagande, samhörighet och tilltro i befolkningen. I den tredje perioden (under den borgerliga Alliansregeringen) ställs demokrati i motsats till utanförskap och målet att uppnå och upprätthålla ”social sammanhållning”. Kapitlet visar hur denna anticipativa typ av förståelse av politik och av befolkningen som ett fluktuerande fält för olika interventioner under denna tid alltmer kommer att präglas av säkerhetslogiker. Demokrati och säkerhet används alltmer synonymt och tas ömsesidigt som utgångspunkt för att analysera och föreslå olika typer av arrangemang för att övervaka och forma befolkningens inbegripshet och deltagande, vilket antas vara förutsättningar för en ”fungerande demokrati”.

I kapitel sex kartläggs framväxten av diskursen om ”värdegrund” i Sverige. Diskursen växer fram och utvecklas i skolpolitiska dokument i början av 1990-talet för att senare – som standard för att reglera beteende i organisa-
Kapitlet argumenterar för att värdegrund, som standard, är intimt sammankopplat med inflytnabetandel för New Public Management i svensk politik och i reformen av skolan under 1990-talet.


I kapitlet sju undersöks framväxten av diskursen om utanförskap i Sverige och en genealogi konstrueras av de praktiker och arrangemang genom vilka utanförskap och våldsbejakande extremism utmejslats som diskursiva objekt. Dessa praktiker är kartläggning av utanförskap, surveyforskning och statistik. I kapitlet visas hur utanförskap problematiserar vissa segment av befolkningen utifrån deras bristande anpassning och förmågor att ta del i sammanhang där de kan bidra till och ta del av det jag kallar cirkulation. Utanförskap avpolitisera därmed fattigdom och marginalisering och gör dessa och demokrati till en fråga om inkludering, det vill säga, till något som har att göra med anpassning till system för rörlighet, produktivitet och kongruens.

I kapitlet undersöks även hur utanförskap historiskt, genom diskursiva praktiker, associeras allt mer med kriminalitet och extremism, vilket för djupar denna avpolitisering. Vidare visas att diskursen om utanförskap och våldsbejakande extremism delar ett fokus på hur grupper formas affektivt med ett särskilt fokus på ungdomar och invandrare. Det finns även ett
strategisk intresse av att motverka miljöer som förstärker sannolikheten att man inte är mottaglig för krav på arbete, politiskt och organisatoriskt deltagande och att man inte tar till våld för att uppnå politiska syften. Kapitlet visar på ett ökat fokus på säkerhet och på att en ”strategisk elaborering” växer fram mellan reflektioner kring säkrandet av en fungerande demokrati och statlig kapacitet att bekämpa kriminalitet och extremism. Detta är bland annat en följd av att demokrati och ”demokratisk medvetenhet” i ökad utsträckning ställs i motsats till utanförskap och våldsbejakande extremism.


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Abbreviations

Abbreviations in the material:
BRÅ – Brottsförebyggande rådet (National Center for Crime Prevention)
KUTAR – Kriminalunderrättelsetjänster (intelligence unit of the police)
NOLG – Nationella Organisatoriska Ledningsgruppen (unit within the Swedish National Police Board)
SOM – the Institute of Society, Opinion and Media
WVS – World Values Survey

Abbreviations of documents:
DC – The final report of the Democracy Commission (SOU 2000:1)
DDC – Democracy Development Committee (SOU 1996:162)
PC – The final report of the Power Commission (SOU 1990:44)

Summary of the main documents in chapters five to eight

Chapter five:
The Power Commission report, SOU 1990:44
The Democracy Development Committee report, SOU 1996:162
The report of the Democracy Council, 1995
The report of the Democracy Council, 1998
The Democracy Commission report, SOU 2000:1
The first bill of democracy policy, prop. 2001/02:80
The government communication, Dialog on the value-foundation of the society, skr. 2009/10:106
The government communication, Action plan to safeguard the democracy from violence-promoting extremism, skr. 2011/12:44
The government communication, A politics for a living democracy, skr. 2013/14:61

Chapter six:
The school curriculum from 1994, Lpo 94
Englund, Tomas, *The Swedish school and the democracy, possibilities and limitations*, in SOU 1999:93
*With democracy as a mission*, the National Agency for Education, Skolverket 2000a
*A deepened picture of the value-foundation*, the National Agency for Education, Skolverket 2000b
*The Value-foundation Book* (Värdegrundsboken), Zachari, Gunilla & Modigh, Fredrik 2000
The school curriculum from 2011, Lpo 2011
Skolinspektionen, *Skolornas arbete med demokrati och värdegrund*, 2012

**Chapter seven:**

The Large City Committee report, SOU 1997:16
*The map of state of exclusion*, Folkpartiet Liberalerna 2004
*Sweden’s 130 exclusion areas*, Nya Moderaterna 2015
The government communication, *Action plan to safeguard the democracy from violence-promoting extremism*, skr. 2011/12:44
*When we care*, SOU 2013:81
*Urban development areas 2013, a statistical follow up on 7 indicators*, Ministry of Labour, 2013.
*A national overview of criminal networks with a large impact on the local society*, the Police, 2014

**Chapter eight:**

Oscarsson, Henrik *Democracy Trends*, 2003
Amnå, Erik *Jourhavande medborgare: samhällsengagemang i en folk-rörelsestat*, 2008
Nordin, Lukas & Oscarsson, Henrik, in *Verklighetens folk?*, 2015
Strömbäck Jesper, *Social cohesion and media consumption*, in Fragment, 2015
Ekman, Joakim Framtiden och samhällets grundläggande värden, 2012
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: urges to secure a “working democracy” in Sweden in 1990–2014

In Sweden in the 1980s, confidence was relatively high among politicians and social scientists that the Swedish model and the Swedish democratic system was robust enough to survive the time to come. In the early 1980s, civic life was still associated with the mass movements and civic associations that had been important, during the first half of the 20th century, in involving large swaths of the population in what had become the particular style of Swedish democracy. The early 1980s saw two experiments in how democracy could be both pushed from below and organized from above. These were the popular referendum on nuclear power in 1980, on the one hand, and the 1983 attempt by the social-democratic government to institutionalize so-called “employee funds” (discontinued after the party’s electoral loss in 1991) on the other. Even if quite different, these events were characterized by an expansive conviction that democratic principles could guide both the involvement and emancipation the people. By the end of the 1980s and during the 1990s, this conviction, as well as the government’s confidence in the capacity of the Swedish model to maintain a vital democratic life, were replaced. The causes were both the gradual challenge mounted by neoliberal ideas of economic reform and individual choice, and the fairly turbulent financial crisis in 1992–1994 which promoted a breakthrough for these ideas.

In the first half of the 1990s, government reports increasingly expressed doubts concerning the ability of Sweden’s democratic forms and civic associations to involve the population and renew traditional forms of engagement. These worries accompanied by a more general debate on fundamental changes affecting Swedish society. At the heart of these concerns was a conviction that a once-strong link, or alignment, between popular engagement and a specific form of democracy had become drastically weak. Democracy was in danger of not “surviving” in the mid- to long term.
The Swedish government reports of the mid-1990s advocated actions to support and save key aspects of this historic link. Suggestions included support for civic associations and creating channels for people to become involved in organizational and political life. The government’s assessment of the situation led to the creation of numerous government commissions, scholarly analyses within the social sciences, and political debates on the future of democracy and on the changes and challenges that Sweden had undergone.

As a consequence, new ways of problematizing the link between the population and visions of democratic renewal appeared, new knowledge was produced, and new discourses responded to the perceived need to secure a “working democracy” and “working social relations” more generally. The population was problematized, but it also emerged as a domain useful in imagining trial methods to solve a range of political, social and economic questions. In these efforts, “democracy” was the umbrella term used to formulate, understand and organize the focus on the population as a domain both of problems and where one could imagine and implement new social dynamics.1

One important example of these efforts was the creation of a policy domain termed “democracy policy” (demokratipolitik). It was institutionalized in 2001, when the government’s investigation into democracy reforms was awarded its own state minister. 2 The domain of democracy policy exemplifies a centralizing instance of previously dispersed or local efforts and discourses that formulated and responded to the perceived need to secure a “working democracy” during these years.

Meanwhile, in other policy domains, such as regional, local, associational, urban and educational policy, the concept of democracy was used as a starting point from which to initiate new practices in cultivating civic

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1 This focus was coextensive to the increasing recourse to surveys and polls. In 1986 the SOM-institute was created, producing annual reports on “Swedes’ habits, behaviors, opinions and values when it comes to society, politics and media”, an activity that cumulatively yields more on more data that can feed into government efforts. https://som.gu.se/om_som [Accessed October 7 2017].

2 While unique to Sweden, the same period has seen similar developments in other Nordic countries. Next to the Democracy Commission in Sweden, Norway and Denmark also formed democracy commissions (Denmark in 1996–1 997, Norway in 1998–2 003), however without amounting to democracy policy as a political domain. https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/makt--og-demokratiutredningen/id96375/ [Accessed April 5 2017]. Starting in 2014, Finland’s government has begun to present democracy political communications on the directions of development that democracy is deemed needing and presented an action plan in 2016 (Justitieministeriet Finland, 2017).
engagement and involvement. School policy became a site for practices meant to secure a democratic subjectivity adapted to the demands of the 21st century. In the schools, so-called “value-foundation work” introduced a new vision of individual and collective responsiveness to democracy, as a way of securing democratic renewal, meant to re-articulate the existing moral educational mandate of the Swedish school.

In Stockholm, meanwhile, the Living History Forum was inaugurated in 2003. The forum’s founding mission was to spread knowledge about and hold workshops on the Holocaust and Sweden’s role in it. The Forum works to inculcate tolerance, collective responsibility, resistance to racism, and, latterly, commitment to a vital democracy. Knowledge production and scientific discourse on social capital, democratic competence and common values are also important, inventive fields in which the population’s democratic involvement and dispositions are problematized. In the wake of major impulses from what has been called New Public Management (Hood 1991), these practices were subjected to modes of evaluation, schemas and standards against which the population could be evaluated from the viewpoint of requirements of democracy and the new challenges.

Many accounts in political science approach this history from the viewpoint of how to strengthen the link between the population and forms of democratic involvement. This dissertation engages with this history by questioning the given status of the link itself. It takes government and academic urges to secure a “working democracy” as a starting point for a critical political analysis of the efforts and practices that constituted this link. This also allows a new approach to studying the responses to these urges. Put simply, and following Michel Foucault (Foucault 2007, Foucault 2008), the problematization of the population, including major efforts to monitor and involve it in arrangements meant to shape its behavior, signals a biopolitical and governmentality-related problem for which “democracy” becomes a common name and grid. Hence, attempts to secure a “working democracy” can be approached as a field of larger government efforts to induce the population to become acceptably productive, healthy, responsible and active. This approach also raises the question of the type of efforts, reflections and politics that are at stake when democracy becomes a process of anticipating and promoting “working social relations”.

A similar approach has, to some degree, already been developed by Magnus Dahlstedt. His work is relevant to parts of this history and to some of the documents I analyze (Dahlstedt 2000, Dahlstedt 2008, Dahlstedt 2009a; Dahlstedt refers to governmentality). However, no dissertation has
focused solely on the impulses and responses mentioned above. Nor has previous work analyzed the genealogy of motivations and practices for securing a “working democracy”. Rather, in the case of Dahlstedt, the work has assumed a pre-established framework for analysis through “indirect government” and “advanced liberalism”.

Dahlstedt has pointed to the fact that some of the efforts discussed in his dissertation played a part in various activating practices aimed at securing active and responsible citizens (Dahlstedt 2009a). Nikolas Rose, Dahlstedt’s primary inspiration, has similarly pointed to the role of ethics in the launching of Britain’s Third Way as a new form of power meant to renew civil society (Rose 1999, Rose 2000). However, the broader stakes and dynamics of an ongoing transformation in which democratic renewal is increasingly aligned with risk, prevention and security have not yet been studied. This also means that the practices, political responses and modes of thinking that have been assembled to formulate the need to secure and respond to a Swedish “working democracy” have not yet been thoroughly mapped.

In contrast to these approaches, with their emphases on disciplinary power relations and how subjects are molded, I argue that the policy of anticipating and then arranging civic behaviors and ways of acting and being corresponds to a “working” order that is not reducible to only such a focus. The above approaches beg the empirical and theoretical questions as to what politics are inherent in, and what actually resulted from attempts to secure a working democracy. What is needed is a more thorough reassessment of the technical character and dynamics of this politics, and a critique that is not content with denouncing them in name of a better or more “real” democracy. The transferral of democratic renewal into a domain of risk-management and the particular strategies, policies and knowledge forms that are implicated in this, must be approached as having its own political dynamic. This dynamic should be accounted for, both empirically and theoretically. In addition, the rationalities and logics behind these impulses – and the efforts to respond to them – must also be analyzed. This includes a focus on how they are invented, designed and integrated into larger frameworks and domains, in order to contain the problematizations articulated through references to a “working democracy”.

Following this argument, the dissertation constructs several genealogies to reveal the problematizations, effects and logics of efforts to formulate and respond to urges to secure a “working democracy”. This also necessitates tracing the emergence and subsequent shifts in the domains, discourses and
formations (today, seen as both important, and given) that were created by these urges. The dissertation argues that such efforts must be understood in terms of their provisionary status: as practices that constantly seek to formulate and integrate fits between the population and an order characterized by demands for congruity, correspondance and flow. Therefore, the dissertation's main contribution is to account for the type of politics – beyond “advanced liberalism” and discipline – that is implicated both in this emerging, “actuarial” understanding of democracy and politics, and in the arrangement of concrete practices meant to secure inclusion and democratic involvement and renewal.
CHAPTER TWO

Inventive arrangements to formulate and respond to urges to secure a working democracy: problem, questions and overview of the chapters

Democracy as a grid

In the early to mid-1990s, several Swedish government commission of inquiry published reports dealing with the consequences of changes that affected Swedish society in general and Swedish democracy in particular. The most important of the earlier reports is that of the Power Commission (SOU 1990:44, the commission was active 1985–1990). In its concluding discussion, the report focuses on how the Swedish democratic ideal and existing patterns of democratic involvement were and could be affected by increasing internationalization, as well as a decline in the mass movements and associations that had underpinned 20th century Swedish democratization. The challenges faced were (according to the report) increased diversity, new patterns of engagement, new values, and new income and power inequalities. Despite this, the report expresses confidence that Swedish democracy can renew itself, not least when new demanding citizens take the initiative and their demands are channelled. However, these confident, fairly optimist assessments would soon be replaced by a more pessimist outlook concerning Swedish democracy’s capacity to renew itself in the light of recent challenges.

In 1991, Swedes elected a liberal-conservative coalition government after more than a decade of social-democratic rule. In 1992–94, the country went through a severe financial crisis, whose effects were felt throughout the 1990s. This, and growing internationalization, led to new ways of perceiving changes in Sweden and the West. The result was a re-evaluation of the challenges facing Swedish democracy and its institutions. A new focus emerged, one which focussed on citizens’ dispositions and habits. According

1 The new government consisted of the parties: Moderaterna, Kristdemokraterna, Centern and Folkpartiet liberalerna.
to surveys and statistics, Swedes had changed their forms of engagement, identities and values, and were notably less likely to become members in political parties and the popular civic associations that were associated with the history of Swedish democratization (DRR 1998). In order to explain this, various analysts pointed to new identities, immigration, individualization and less predictable voting behavior (ibid.). Meanwhile, other reports expressed ideas on the need for the population to be better adapted to a less predictable, more competition-oriented and internationalized world of market-orientation, uncertainty and diversity (SOU 1993:16, SOU 1996:162). Civil and local society, school, immigration and urban policy were identified as fruitful domains for democratic and civic renewal. “Social capital” was introduced as a means of understanding the challenges engendered by a decline in engagement, and of designing ways to address them (DRR 1995, SOU 1996:162, SOU 2000:1).

“Democracy” was the organizing concept used to envision how the population could be motivated to act and relate in a proper, engaged, political way, both alleviating emerging problems and satisfy new demands and needs. Democratic theory and the concepts and discourses related to it – such as deliberative democratic theory – became a type of knowledge used to imagine new forms of involvement, ways of acting and approaches. Ideas like “civic spirit” and “social cohesion” were extended into a broader strategic understanding of how social relations work. This was accompanied by a focus on how to arrange relations and interactions so that citizens would adopt and internalize certain dispositions, habits and values. This, in turn, would allow democracy to survive new challenges. Meanwhile, the NPM-influenced shift to a decentralized, goal- and performance-governed school (SOU 1992:94) meant that Swedish educational policy became a site where visions and efforts to shape “working relations” were to be fostered. Here, it was thought, it would be possible to instill a renewed focus on ethics and moral education. This focus depended on the newly coined term “värdegrund” (“value-foundation”, from 1992 onwards: SOU 1992:94, Lpo 94, Lpo 98), something which constituted the basis upon which social culture could be organized and a responsiveness to good civic and democratic habits could be induced. In the late 1990s, the drive to secure “competent” democratic citizens, and to conform to performance governance’s demand that such things be measurable, was viewed in terms of deliberative democratic theory. Together, these became what thereafter was termed the school’s “democracy mission” (Skolverket 2000a).
Concerns for democratic renewal and the idea that such renewal would require inducing the population to assume new forms of engagement and values culminated in the government-appointed Democracy Commission (SOU 2000:1). This was part of a political effort to create a permanent domain to monitor and reform democracy – “democracy policy”. The Democracy Commission was policy-oriented. It drafted the policy domain whose first objective was to strengthen and safeguard representative democracy by addressing its “mode of functioning” (prop. 2001/02:80). The Commission’s report assesses the multiple challenges facing democracy and discussed how to renew Sweden’s democratic style and patterns of democratic engagement. Its assessment of challenges to democracy includes a long list of factors – increasing immigration, not least of refugees, growing inequalities and unemployment, the financial crises’ effects on the population’s trust in authorities and democratic institutions, new identities and values (often due to increasing individualization), an abrupt drop in civic associations and party memberships, lower electoral turnout and new patterns of voting. The report further mentioned xenophobia and racism and geopolitical changes such as the fall of the Soviet Union, Sweden’s EU-membership, the integration of Eastern Europe and the expansion of the EU, and, finally, digitalization and environmental challenges (SOU 2000:1).

The report characterizes democracy as a “direction of movement” in need of “constant supervision and care”. The report’s list of problems and vision formulate democracy policy as an experimental framework to monitor and shape the population in order to induce working relations and a working democracy. In practice, this meant privileging, monitoring and targeting certain domains, such as youth, immigrants and poor people. This would increase engagement and avoid ignorance, dis-involvement and lack of trust. This echoed similar approaches in other European and liberal welfare states. There, as in Sweden, discourses centered on “exclusion”, values and ethics, social capital, culture, individualization, social cohesion and participation. These claims are presented either as common-sensical, or as given starting points in understanding democratic and political challenges (see also Levitas 1997, Rose 1999a, Rose 1999b, Rose 2000, Hulse & Stone 2007).

Why democracy policy? – Research problem

Below, I dwell on the puzzle or the problem formulation and point to the relevance of the dissertation’s topic and approach. The formulation of the problem serves as an entry point to the dissertation’s questions, aims and
Democracy means the rule of the people. This is a vague and open-ended notion. It could be interpreted as the constitution and self-determination of a people in a process of democratization of different social spheres. This, however, is not the understanding of democracy in the texts analyzed here. Rather, Swedish governments and social scientists saw democratic renewal and continuity as a domain for knowledge production and political efforts meant to alleviate a perceived gap between the population and the requirements of a representative democratic order. The term “working democracy” encompasses several problems. In the texts I study, democracy or democratic renewal pose problems. Once a gap has emerged – and given increasing changes in the surrounding world – it is not obvious how to secure a “well-working” democracy that can re-involve large parts of the population and assure social peace and “social capital”, i.e. trust and engagement that extends beyond democracy. The logical structure of this general problem resembles what William Connolly, citing Jean-Jacques Rousseau, calls the paradox of politics: good laws presuppose good citizens, while good citizens presuppose good laws (Connolly 1995: 138). The paradox highlights the inherent problem of the political order, but also the condition of possibility for democratic politics. To quote Bonnie Honig, the paradox points to a question that is echoed in the governments’ efforts in Sweden: “Where would that good law come from in absence of an already well-formed, virtuous people?” (Honig 2009: 15). In these Swedish documents, the question could be re-formulated as: where would the working democracy come from and how would it be renewed in absence of an already involved, trusting and aware people? Contrary to Rousseau, Connolly and Honig, the government and social scientists studied here go beyond theoretical discussions of this paradoxical condition. Their efforts to secure a working democracy include political and scientific interventions to address the population’s long-term democratic involvement, habits and dispositions. This is, as mentioned above, the focus of the documents. When analyzing the different governments and concurrent social-scientific texts, the subsequent chapters look at
why, when and how the formulation of urges – and subsequent responses to the urges – to secure a working democracy emerged. They trace how this is made into a problem and a given starting point for inventive government and scientific practices. This allows the analysis to look at the dispersed origins of, and thus break down, seemingly coherent, taken-for-granted blocs of responses – the concepts, discourses and overall political efforts. Furthermore, I inquire into why they emerged and what normative and political assumptions that are and were inherent to these responses. Empirically, the problem is formulated in terms of what, more precisely, “democracy policy” is, and why, in a detailed and complicating sense – pointing to the politics that are inherent in its making – it comes into being. As a genealogical study, their lack of taken-for-granted status demands careful attention to when and how these problematizations and efforts emerged, and to the knowledge types, events and power relations that animated the integration of democracy policy. Finally, the dissertation attends to the approaches, techniques and ventures chosen to address the population’s lack of democratic involvement. This renders them and their creation complex objects of critical analysis. Such analysis reveals and discusses the politics inherent to these often inventive scientific and political practices, illuminating how they affect basic understandings of politics, democratic renewal and the shaping of the population and individual citizens in democratic politics.

De-politicization, post-politics, post-democracy and the counter-terror state

The dissertation’s approach and contribution could be inscribed in a larger field of critical re-considerations of democratic politics and the concept of democracy that appeared together with the neoliberalization in the West, particularly Europe, after the early 1990s (Connolly 1995, Crouch 2002, Dean 2009, Mouffe 1993, Rancière 2005, Rosanvallon 2006, Rose 1999). Many of these accounts are centered on and debate the concepts of democracy and democratic politics, including democracy as an idea and order or dis-order. This dissertation does not engage in democracy as a concept, idea or order. Instead, it focuses on the problematizations and practices articulated with reference to urges to secure a “working democracy”. It connects them to
concepts that do not derive from a debate on or theory of democracy. This is done in order to oppose different conceptions of democracy to each other. This, in turn, avoids re-enforcing a supposedly self-evident understanding of democracy, as the concept appears in the texts analyzed. It also avoids inscribing the texts in debates or conceptual frameworks such as depoliticization (Connolly 1995, Rose 1999, Rosanvallon 2006), “post-democracy”, “oligarchy” (Crouch 2002, Rancière 1999, Rancière 2005, Martel 2015), “post-politics” (Dean 2009, Mouffe 1993), or even “hatred of democracy” (Rancière 2005). This diminishes the risk of falling into limiting, ready-made frameworks which lead to a certain type of critical analysis or discussion. In contrast, the detailed focus on that which has come into being in response to urges to secure a “working democracy” points to practices and possible counter-practices that make it possible to re-think relations between government arrangements and ways in which the population is aligned to fit the requirements of a functionalist order. This, I believe, needs to be accounted for in its proper terms. However, this does not preclude contextualizing the dissertation’s approach and account with the help of the above-mentioned concepts and frameworks.

I will therefore not substitute one democracy for another. Instead, I analyze urges to secure a “working democracy” and their strained relation to ways of acting and being that cannot be subsumed or tamed by such urges. Rather, they articulate the Rousseauian paradox of politics (described above) as an “an-archic” possibility – the lack of principle and starting point for new forms of communal life. This tension is closely related to Rancière’s notion of democracy as “a regime based on the indetermination of identities, the delegitimation of positions of speech, the deregulation of partitions of space and time” (Rancière 2004: 13–14). However, in accordance to the above

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2 Rancière (1999) is the first to speak of “post-democracy”, but he does so with less emphasis than Crouch and Martel on any substance to this concept that for him only denotes a state after the advent of the demos has been done away with, and which therefore could also be reversed. In contrast to Crouch (2002) and Martel (2015), post-democracy is for Rancière less a concept than a description of a form of hegemony, or a consequence, after the advent of the demos has been rendered anomalous and done away with.

3 With Anders Fjeld, what Rancière names here is not only the lack of foundation of any instituted order, but its active, actual un-founding, which is ongoing and renewed through a particular, egalitarian forgetfulness of hierarchies, ordered divisions and systems of congruence for how things can and cannot fit, take place, have an impact, change things, etc. (Fjeld 2018: 5–6). Rancière has produced a kind of genealogy of this practice and renewal of unfounding of any given order, which he traces back to the incipiency of the demos in Ancient Greece (Rancière 1999, Rancière 2004, Rancière 2005).
argument on the concept of democracy, I will concentrate less on the democratic “regime”. Instead, I will trace the potential tensions between the possibility of “the indetermination of identities, the delegitimation of positions of speech, the deregulation of partitions of space and time”, on the one hand, and, on the other, the urges to secure a working democracy without referring to democracy in either one of these accounts. By eschewing the overdetermined concept of democracy, the dissertation makes possible a better appreciation of the novel dynamics at stake in the efforts discussed, as well as alternative ways of theorizing the politics inherent in them.

The study could be contextualized in terms of debates on democracy and post-democracy, etc. In a comparable fashion, a constitutionalist perspective on efforts to secure a working democracy would account for democracy policy and the increasing risk-orientation in handling challenges to the democratic order in terms of paradigms such as “militant democracy”, becoming, possibly, a “counter-terror state” (Sajò 2006). While this is a possible way to understand the texts analyzed, this dissertation does not approach the documents in terms of constitutional paradigms. As already mentioned, the aim is – on the contrary – to break down obvious labels and overall frameworks, in order to trace the detailed strategies and discursive practices that formulate and respond to the urges to secure a working democracy.

Previous research

As mentioned in the introduction, Michel Foucault and his genealogies of madness, sexuality, social discipline, normality and the modern state is a source of inspiration to the dissertation. I discuss his work and approach further in chapters three and four. Inspired by Foucault, I seek to make a theoretical and methodological contribution by intervening into the non-given correspondance between the open-endedness of democracy and the formulations and responses to renew and secure a “working democracy”. In order to develop my own approach to democracy policy and the efforts surrounding its creation and existence, I will account for previous research that in one way or another has addressed this and similar problems and materials.

The problem and material have engendered a minor debate among social scientists responding to what they consider either an exaggerated or a misconceived concern about the state of the Swedish democracy (Amnå 2006, Amnå 2008, Ekman & Amnå 2010, Ekman 2012, Erlingsson 2018).
These texts point to what they see as alarmistic calls of a crisis in and efforts to “save” Swedish democracy, most notably with regards to formal participation and party memberships, in particular during the 1990s and the early 2000s. They contest the crisis of democracy thesis as used in public debate and official documents such as reports by commissions of inquiry seeking to reform democracy or create an overview of the state of democracy. However, in doing so, they share the focus on the essential need to secure a “working democracy” and, within that horizon, they advance internal critique of what are considered overly alarmistic positions. They also often help focus on the supposed need to align the population to the requirements of democracy (Amnå 2008, Amnå & Ekman 2010), not least in the works of commissions that have produced these verdicts. On such critic, Erik Amnå, was the director of the Democracy Commission (SOU 2000:1). Some of these texts are addressed in chapter eight in terms of how they respond to the urges to secure a working democracy.

In another publication by the Democracy Commission, in 1999, sociologist Kerstin Jacobsson notes that there have been recurrent democracy commissions in Sweden since the 1950s (Jacobsson 1999). Her text is part of a publication on democratic citizenship, published by the Democracy Commission, which paved the way for democracy policy. It does not address the problem of “why democracy policy” directly. But it does give a historical overview of earlier commissions that Jacobsson identifies as democracy commissions. In doing so, Jacobsson provides a comprehensive account of the “official democracy vision” (den offentliga demokratisynen) over approximately 40 years (from the mid-1950s to the mid-1990s). Jacobsson identifies central documents that see democracy as an order, which means focusing on commissions concerned with the constitution, with participatory forms on the regional level and with membership in the EU. Jacobsson gives a brief account of the Power Commission’s report, but it is not subjected to a detailed analysis. Among the material that she addresses, and that are not addressed in the subsequent chapters, are the final reports of Författningsutredningen (SOU 1963:17), Grundlagsberedningen (SOU 1972:15), Kommunal demokrati (SOU 1975:41), Demokratiberedningen (SOU 1985: 28), Lokaldemokratiutredningen (SOU 1993:90), EG-konsekvensutredningen (SOU 1994: 12), and Kommunala förnyelsekommittén (SOU 1996:169). These reports are mostly concerned with the polity and reforms of its form and composition, rather than with the population and working social relations. Jacobsson terms her material a selection of “democracy commissions”. Even if such commission had occurred regularly in Sweden,
they are fairly different and not always directly comparable (in footnote 2, Jacobsson 1999: 214). This contrasts with the later institutionalization of a policy domain for democracy reforms. The domain has engendered continuous commissions and communications which are more similar and hence more comparable. Jacobsson’s account gives an overview of these reports’ varying official ideals of, and envisioned threats to, democracy. By summarizing the main concepts that have dominated each decade during the 40 years’ period, Jacobsson describes what she terms the official vision of democracy. She sees it as a technocratic vision in which efficiency and the norm of representative democracy have been constant. The technocratic aspect has varied with reforms and with political conditions. For example, Jacobsson points to how the visions of local participation has been altered in accordance with different periods’ dominant pressures. The 1950s prioritized the importance of proximity and anchoring decisions in the popular will and efforts to provide social and economic equality. Then, with the regional levels’ declining economy in the 1980s and 1990s and the social-democratic administration’s adoption of neoliberal influences in response, there was an increasing understanding of citizens as “clients” and service consumers (Jacobsson 1999: 201–203). At the same time, the earlier emphasis on social and economic equality declined (205). Jacobsson also notes the influence of dominant lines of political scientific research on the reports of the commissions in the 1980s and 1990s. The result is a marginalization of alternative political science, of radical democratic alternatives, and of perspectives on new social movements (213). Jacobsson does not discuss the increasing problematizations of the population during the 1990s, nor the increasing risk-orientation. She does however note that Lokaldemokratikommitén expresses a fear that falling engagement and membership in political parties will lead to a dilution of local democracy, as well as a crisis of legitimacy for it and for the Swedish political system (Jacobsson 1999: 193).

In a short essay that builds upon Jacobsson’s text, Gissur Erlingsson observes in 2018 that there has been, since the 1980s, an average of one evaluation every three years of the state of democracy and how to address its problems (Erlingsson 2018). Erlingsson characterizes this official habit as “political hypocondria” and the recurrent alarmism on the state of democracy in the public debate as “political masochism” (ibid.). He claims that the repeated commissions of inquiry and debates give the impression or produce the thesis that “everything used to be better”. Erlingsson contributes to the questioning, described above, of the supposed “crisis of democracy”, while remaining focused on how to secure a working democracy.
Accordingly, he provides eight measures that falsify the “crisis” thesis without abandoning the need to secure a working democracy (as a larger framework or context for his intervention). His work is thus part of the efforts to rectify these assumptions and the general alarmism while still focusing on the need to secure a working democracy.

Stig Montin (2007) writes on the creation of democracy policy and the differences between the Democracy Commission’s proposals and the first bill of democracy policy. The main difference, he argues, is that the ambitious participatory democratic proposals and rhetorics in the Democracy Commission were never adopted in the first bill, which following a more state-centred tradition sought to strengthen representative democracy (without “participatory ingredients”). By discussing the hesitancy within Social Democracy in relation to participatory and direct democratic elements, he tries to explain why four of the main proposals of the commission were never adopted in 2002 (these were: to use separate election days, to hold direct elections of district boards, to hold local referendums and to allow for internet voting).

Unlike other contributions, Montin notes the peculiarity with creating a specific policy field for democracy:

On the surface, this appears to be the standard way of enacting political reforms in Sweden, but it is not. First and foremost, the topic was unusual. For the first time, the government aimed at an overall evaluation of Swedish democracy with all its problems and solutions (Montin 2007: 188).

Furthermore, democracy policy, Montin suggests, “represents a new policy instrument to tackle problems of democracy” (ibid.). Another peculiar feature that Montin highlights was the appointment of a Minister of Democracy, formally placed in the Ministry of Justice. He also notes that democracy policy was created in response to a pessimistic view of the possibility for the democracy to remain vital, in particular due to the decrease in electoral participation and membership in associations, but also due to the budgetary crisis at the beginning of the 1990s (in the aftermath of the financial crisis). Thus, even if Montin’s main focus is to evaluate the outcome of the policy drafting process in terms of internal tensions within Social Democracy, similar to the approach developed here, he does notice the “unusual” topic and that several perceived problems provided a background for the creation of democracy policy.
As mentioned above, Dahlstedt has published several works within the paradigm of studies of governmentality. He looks at some of the same documents discussed in this dissertation (Dahlstedt 2000, Dahlstedt 2008, Dahlstedt 2009a, Dahlstedt 2009b, Dahlstedt & Fejes 2012, Dahlstedt & Olson 2014). In *Aktiveringens politik* (Dahlstedt 2009a), Dahlstedt analyses reports from commissions of inquiry, bills and party documents from 1990–2008. He starts from Rose’s concept of “advanced liberalism”. He then focuses on what he claims are intensified efforts to “activate” citizens in Sweden and to produce arenas in which this activation can take place (Dahlstedt 2009a: 32). He argues that these practices form a “politics of activation” that “consists of different techniques to create active and responsible democratic citizens” (Dahlstedt 2009a: 9). Furthermore, he claims that since the late 1990s, our lives are being more and more subjected to “activating techniques”. These are increasingly transforming Sweden’s welfare regime (ibid.). Following Rose, Dahlstedt lists sites in which the politics and techniques of activation can be studied: work, the school, civil society, therapeutical techniques and the advent of stakeholding. Dahlstedt’s main focus in these chapters is on how the politics of activation produce useful subjects who are ready to take responsibility for their own self-government.

In an earlier contribution, Dahlstedt points to the fact that citizen ideals of democracy policy illuminate ways to discipline “useful” citizens in Foucault’s sense (Dahlstedt 2000: 299–300). However, he does not show that this is the case historically. The main contributions of his texts are empirical. Dahlstedt points to moments and sites in Swedish political history, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, that are important for the articulation of democracy as a concept to organize government practices. By studying internal party documents, Dahlstedt shows how “exclusion” became a strategic concept for Moderaterna and Folkpartiet Liberalerna. Dahlstedt (2009a) and Dahlstedt and Olson (2014) point out that democratic awareness and democratic competence became topics and concepts through which

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4 These activating techniques are: the duty to work and the increasing reliance on disciplining citizens to accept and promote the ideals of “workfare” (work as a duty and no longer a right), the production of democratic citizens through the school (and to some extent facilitated through large scale commission reports such as democracy commission report, whose emphasis on civil society he analyses more closely in his article *Demokratigenom civilt samhälle?*, 2000), the disciplinarization and marginalization of “immigrants” through the typical Swedish ideal in the Swedish civic associations, the increasing spread and generalization of therapeutetic techniques, and the technology of stake-holding (Dahlstedt 2009a).
citizen-formation could be articulated. Dahlstedt & Olson (2014) also reveal how democracy is posited in democracy policy as “already achieved… pictured as apolitical and democratically ‘saturated’”, which, they argue, does not leave space for democratic change to “come into question as desirable or even possible…it leaves us with the notion that things have to be as they are, as we are living in the best of worlds” (Dahlstedt & Olson 2014: 7). The authors prefer to see democracy as “something towards which we are constantly heading” (21), a formulation which comes close to democracy policy’s own vision of democracy as a “direction of movement” (SOU 2000:1).5 Dahlstedt’s work is centered around the concept of “activation”/advanced liberalism, which operates as a single logic in accounting for how subjects are constituted and governed in Sweden since the 1990s. I will further engage with this approach in chapter three.

Tom Nilsson’s dissertation in political science, *Till vilken nytta? Om det lokala politiska deltagandets karaktär, komplexitet och konsekvenser* (2005), points to the growth of official rhetorics of democracy during the 1990s and the emergence of a public domain for democracy policy. Nilsson highlights the more individualistic view of democracy that emerges in the 1990s. He underscores that by the turn of the 2000s, there emerges a problematic gap between the official rhetorics of increasing participatory democracy and the on-the-ground reality. He addresses the question of which discourses shape Swedish democracy policy, and their consequences for local democracy and new forms of participation. In order to understand this, he subjects commissions of inquiry, communications, committee reports and bills to discourse analysis (Nilsson 2005: 187). Repeating Jacobsson’s point, Nilsson analyzes the emphasis on reforms to increase local participation in terms of the representative system’s compatibility with new participatory forms. Echoing Jacobsson’s findings, Nilsson presents a picture of Swedish democracy in which efforts in which political parties have a dominant role create one-way communication between politicians and citizens. The local level functions as a service-provider rather than a democratic space, where efficiency and individuals are emphasized at the expense of collectives and which blur the borders between the welfare state and democracy (ibid.). Nilsson emphasizes that “despite this allegiance to participatory and

5 As I will develop in chapter three, in contrast to a genealogical critique, the quote above on the “saturated” picture of democracy, as well as other work by Dahlstedt, indicate a form of ideology critique centered on denunciation/demystification. The critique also assumes the need for conceptual contestation of democracy, which, as mentioned, is a different approach to the one developed here.
deliberative norms the concrete policies produced are more modest”. In his view, the shift was “primarily rhetorical” (188). Nilsson suggests that the limited effects of the new forms of participation in relation to the rhetorics can be traced to the officials’ half-hearted approach. The risk, Nilsson argues, is that if these forms do not evolve so as to gain legitimacy, they could lead to disillusionment with the democratic status of local politics (Nilsson 2005: 189).

Maria Olson’s dissertation in pedagogy Från nationsbyggare till global marknadsnomad, Om medborgarskap i svensk utbildningspolitik under 1990-talet (2008) provides a detailed study of how citizenship discourses and moral education in Swedish education policy have changed since the 1990s. The dissertation develops important pedagogical insights on the political stakes of the schools’ moral education mission. It starts with how citizenship is understood in Swedish educational policy prior to the 1990s, and then centers on changes during the 1990s. Olson finds that with the decentralisation of the school system in the early 1990s, the concept of democracy was increasingly associated with the concept of freedom of choice in education policy rhetoric (Olson 2008: 251). Her analysis also engages in a critical review of these understandings to highlight what “they seem to include and exclude”, i.e., “what parallel voices in the present situation are included in the texts and what are left out” (Olson 2008: 249). Olson indicates that there has been a gradual displacement of the individual/collective relationship in education policy. In addition, there has been a displacement of values towards an individualist understanding of democracy in the discourse on value-foundation. Finally, she gives an exhaustive account of the knowledge production tied to these efforts in the school.

Another pedagogical dissertation that addresses the relationship between education and citizenship formation is Ylva Boman’s Utbildningspolitik i det andra moderna Om skolans normativa villkor (2002). Boman investigates the conceptual and historical conditions in educational policy and curriculums that link education to the “political and moral dimensions of citizenship”, in particular under conditions of pluralism and diversity (Boman 2002). By drawing upon Foucault and Habermas, Boman addresses the theoretical aspects of this question as central to modernity. Boman then uses the same theories to engage the history of 20th century Swedish educational policy. Lastly, Boman analyzes the normative conditions of education in a discussion of the concepts of community, the political and the need for a cultural dimension of citizenship and education (Boman 2002). Throughout, Boman clarifies the relationship between democracy, education and
citizenship and the values that can found in and are embraced by public education. At the center of this relationship is the notion that education can solve the conflict between the old and the new, create community and reproduce the societal order, the “we” and its forms of solidarity and reciprocity (Boman 2002: 393). This, Boman notes, has in particular been emphasized in post-WWII educational policy as a matter of securing democracy, and later, during the 1990s, in terms of integrating the individual into the country’s cultural heritage (394).

Ellen Almgren’s dissertation in political science *Att fostra demokrater* (2006) is an attempt to critically study the school’s capacity to secure “democratic competence”, understood as political knowledge attained through institutionalized forms of “school democracy”. Almgren evaluates the outcomes of the assumption made in school policy, that the school shall – and does – foster democratic citizens. Her empirical investigation focuses on the effects, on political knowledge, of both “school democracy” and on the segregation of schools. She looks at groups of 6000 pupils aged 14 and 15 (Almgren 2006: 10). She finds that deliberations in classrooms have a positive effect on pupils’ political knowledge, while formal student influence has a negative effect. In addition, ethnic and socioeconomic segregation have negative effects. The study also shows that deliberations are mostly found in schools with pupils with parents with higher education and that direct influence has most negative effects in segregated schools. Overall, Almgren contends, the goals of giving pupils influence and of fostering democrats are in tension. This inhibits both the fostering of democrats and the equality of citizenship education (Almgren 2006).

Political scientist Anders Urbas’ dissertation *The Swedish Election Studies. Science, Democracy and Citizen Enlightenment* (2009) analyzes fifteen reports by the Swedish Election Studies from the years 1977 to 2006 by reconstructing the main assumptions that underpin them. Urbas criticizes the reports as “normative”, terming the role of the scientists in the Swedish Election Studies a “masked guardianship” of a biased view of the conditions for democracy in Sweden (Urbas 2009). Echoing Jacobsson, Urbas shows how this guardianship favors electoral and representative democracy and Sweden’s existing democratic system. In addition, Urbas claims, by assuming that the Swedish citizens are enlightened, the studies use a tautological – and therefore “absurd” – criteria to assess citizens’ political enlightment and self-government (ibid.).

There has been no research on democracy policy in a longer perspective, and there is no research that addresses its development after 2010. This
summary of previous research gives a picture of a particular relationship between policy, science, the relationship between individual and collective, and the understanding of how to secure democracy in a period of increasing change. To make it possible to further engage key aspects in that picture, I will now present my aims and research questions.

**Aims and research questions**

The main aim of my study is to critically trace and map the productive effects of efforts to formulate urges to secure a working democracy – the discourses, concepts and overall political efforts that become integrated into given and coherent blocs meant to respond to the problems formulated in these urges. The aim is also to account for the power relations and the normative and political assumptions that are inherent to these efforts. This will reveal how these power relations, knowledge production and assumptions affect and construct what it means in practice to take part, be involved in and participate democratically – that is, what strengthening and renewing democracy is and how it can and cannot come about. Further, it affects how the texts and emerging approaches studied here have come to relate to the population and to marginalized or poorly involved groups in particular. Another aim is therefore to account for and discuss how the shift to an increasingly risk-oriented understanding of democracy and the population affects a vision of how democracy is made and re-made.

Through the mentioned aims of revealing the productive effects of these efforts, their focus on the population and the integration of knowledge types and strategies over time, a central aim is therefore to account for, or inscribe these efforts in, an account of the dynamics and stakes that they constitute and are part of. The aim of doing so is to enable to reveal logics, techniques and external conditions of this politics that extend to other domains and that it, thus, is connected to. This entails to highlight the overall systems that secure certain ways of being, acting and moving that the urges to secure a working democracy are inseparable from. This will enable to reveal and give a detailed account of less obvious dynamics and stakes of these efforts and ways of contesting it. Doing so also enables to explore a different type of critique and account of what challenging these systems could imply. A final aim is thus to open a space to re-think the conditions of democratic renewal, civic involvement and learning that are actively marginalized by the urges to secure a working democracy.
In accordance with my problem formulation and aims, the following questions are addressed:

When, where and how are urges to secure a “working democracy” formulated and responded to, and when and how did democracy policy emerge as an organizing framework to define and secure a working democracy and how has it become re-formulated? Through which arrangements is a “working democracy” made graspable and possible to secure – what discourses, approaches and arrangements are articulated through, and themselves articulate, urges to secure working social relations and a working democracy? What modes of reflection and recurrent rationalities are shared between the different ways of formulating and responding to urges to secure a “working democracy”? What normative assumptions and politics are inherent to and constituted by the efforts to formulate urges to secure a working democracy and to respond to them?

Selection and organization of material

This dissertation investigates a number of central government documents from different domains. I will present, engage and develop the theoretical literature in chapters three and four, as well as within chapters five to eight. These latter chapters also engage with writings by social scientists that illuminate the discourses of the government documents. Apart from social scientific texts, the main material consists of Swedish commission of inquiry reports, policy bills and written communications from the government.

Chapters five to eight start with the late 1980s, when democracy became an umbrella term and launching pad for practices that were meant to address an emerging “gap” between the population and democratic involvement. This analysis ends in 2014, which marks the end of the second liberal-conservative Centern, Folkpartiet Liberalerna (today Liberalerna), Nya Moderaterna and Kristdemokraterna (between 2010–2014) coalition government. However, there are some differences between the chapters. Chapter six maps material up until 2012 and some of the documents and references in chapter seven are from 2014–2017. Chapter eight engages with social scientific material from 2015, since the efforts and contributions in those chapters exceed the political mandate delimitation. Chapter five is important to the dissertation in that it presents a history and material that is important to the other chapters. It shows how democracy policy emerges as
a response to urges to secure a working democracy and centralizes the claims, problematizations, discourses and ways of addressing these urges. I organize the material in chapter five chronologically. In the following, I will first give an overview of the Swedish government’s tradition of drafting policy through government commissions before discussing what material could be, and what material actually was, selected for analysis.

Commissions of inquiry in Sweden

In the following, I will describe the Swedish tradition of using commissions of inquiry to draft policies, since this material is most central to the dissertation (as are matters of policy design and policy formulation). Sweden’s commissions of inquiry are of different kinds. They often involve well-trained specialists (often scholars) in their work (Petersson 2015: 650). Historically, all major Swedish political policies have been drafted with the help of large-scale commissions. Usually the commissions reflect both a government priority, and an invitation to parliament to ratify their results across party boundaries. The idea has been that the commissions’ input gives politicians information that enables them to better serve the general interest (Gustavsson 2015). The commissions have ranged from smaller committees (often of a technical character), ad hoc government commissions (so-called SOU) and parliamentarian commissions. The latter are established to deal with policy areas that needed broader support to guarantee their long-term performance, such as defense, school and energy politics. (Democracy policy was drafted by a parliamentarian commission). When studying a commission report, one should pay attention to the composition of its boards, the role of the secretariat, the use of science (and the involvement of academics), as well as the commissions’ differing degrees of freedom and the generosity of the time allotted them for their work.

Commissions of inquiry are usually appointed by the government cabinet to investigate a problem or challenge and make recommendations. The reports are often submitted to public agencies and interest groups for comments, which are included in the final draft of the report (Petersson 2015: 651).

The institution of government commissions was key to founding social-scientific research in Sweden. Several large scale commissions later turned into autonomous research centers that could strengthen specific areas of research at various Swedish universities. This was particularly true of Political Science and Pedagogy, which emerged via and were strengthened by
commissions in the infancy of Swedish social sciences and humanities. These same institutions have allowed the state to uphold a tradition of close ties between expertise and government. This has further aided university growth (in Sweden these ties, fostered by expert knowledge demanded by the state, reach back to at least the 16th century, Johansson 1992). Although government commissions are identified today with democracy and an open, rational procedure for creating policy (and as representing a particularly Swedish type of consensual politics), the commissions also played an important role for older types of Swedish governments, at least since the Instrument of Government of 1809. Up until the early 20th century, the King and the government often exerted direct influence on the working committees (Premfors 1983, Wisselgren 2008: 108–109). Most if not all policy domains in Sweden have become fairly autonomous fields through the work of commissions (Premfors 1983). The most substantial commission reports were produced during the years following the Second World War, some of them taking well well over a decade to produce (Petersson 2015: 657). The peak in the number of commissions of inquiry was in the the 1990s, in particular in the post-crisis period of 1994–1998, which is an important period for the dissertation.

Lately, however, commissions have lost their rigorous character and have become less independent of the government, produce less knowledge and are forced to write reports much more quickly (Ruin 1998, Johansson 1992). The time allotted before publishing has shortened especially drastically since the 2000s (averaging just under eighteen months) (Petersson 2015: 653). Further, post-2000 commissions consist of fewer people (a single special investigator is becoming the norm), and have lost their function as a consensus seeking area (ibid.). This is also due to the fact that the number of parliamentary commissions has declined (in the 1970s, around half of the commissions had M.P.s participating). All in all, according to Petersson, the commissions have lost their function as a knowledge producing instance (ibid.). However, this, even if this has affected the quality and scope of the commissions’ knowledge production, does not mean that they have lost importance to the government. The continuous and even expanding tradition of using commissions indicates that they have an important technocratic function in policy-drafting and in producing the discursive and other arrangements through which policies are articulated.

This points to the importance of knowledge types, discourse and scientific or technocratic arrangements for the production of policies. The relations between the social sciences and the commissions are in fact intricate. Rune
Premfors claims that scientific concepts are used to support political standpoints, and that science that supports particular political standpoints is often selected (Premfors 1983: 640). This resonates with Pierre Bourdieu’s view of the importance of government commissions in constituting some of the basic traits of the state: to harmonize, monopolize and create an official scene for the formulation of shared problems. Further, they authoritatively assemble expertise under one official, “objectivized” voice and image of what is at stake in order to harmonize measures and outcomes in relation to such stakes (Bourdieu 2012: 45–50). As I will show in chapter four, commission reports often, on the level of the text, stage stakes so that the aesthetics of the text or document itself – the arrangement of elements – contribute to the factors enumerated by Bourdieu. The texts produce scenographic arrangements that use certain types of prose and rhetorics to arrange certain sensibilities to constitute urgencies and make them into a public concern in need of action.

Possible material and material selected

Amid the range of material relevant to mapping efforts leading up to and constituting the arrangements to secure a working democracy, I have chosen not to use interviews with officials. Nor do I use parliamentary policy and debates. I chose further to avoid participatory observations of workshops and ventures that are central to efforts to secure working democracy, such as those conducted by the Living History Forum or in Swedish schools. Such sources would have allowed assessment – in a fully genealogical fashion – of postures and bodily practices used, for example, in value-foundation work. Since my main focus is not reduced to discourse as such, but rather focuses on discourse in certain moments and events when specific practices of arrangement are articulated, designed or shift, I did not cover extensive parliamentarian debates.

In chapter six, it may have been relevant to look at how value-foundation has been articulated by state- and regional-level authorities (Statens värdegrund). I describe this development, but do not examine it closely since historically it does not present the most important and detailed site into which the larger dispositif of value-foundation has been integrated.

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6 Premfors: “commission members have selected those research findings that have supported policy positions already taken. In the process they have often greatly exaggerated the involvements of research, and have refrained from discussing contrary evidence” (Premfors 1983: 640).
I could have chosen different material for chapter eight, as well. The material I did select shows the inventive contributions used to create ways of thinking up a proper fit between the lives of the citizens and working democracy. They cover different ways in which scientific writings have taken upon themselves to respond to urges to secure a “working democracy” in the years 2003 – 2015.

Nor have I engaged with particular efforts on the local and regional level, in part because these have been examined elsewhere (Nilsson 2005, Dahlstedt 2009a). Further, my main focus is on the overall strategies and considerations that led to the centralization of democracy policy. This means that I have chosen not to look at, among others, commissions that address both the polity and the constitution, nor those concerned with the translation of the identified challenges to democracy on the local level. These include, starting with the 1960s, the following: Författningsutredningen (SOU 1963:17), Grundlagsberedningen (SOU 1972:15), Kommunal demokrati (SOU 1975:41), Demokratiutredningen (SOU 1985: 28), Lokaldemokratiutredningen (SOU 1993:90), EG-konsekvensutredningen (SOU 1994: 12), Kommunal demokrati (SOU 1996:169), Kommundemokratiutredningen (SOU 2001:48), Ansvarskommittén (SOU 2007:10) Grundlagsutredningen (SOU 2008:125), Kommittén för förstärkning av den lokala demokratin (SOU 2012:30) and En kommunallag för framtiden (SOU 2015:24). Due to time-restrictions and the delimitation of my study as concluding after the fall of the liberal-conservative coalition government in 2014, the latest report by the Democracy Commission, Låt fler forma framtiden! (SOU 2016:5), is also omitted.

Of the material I will examine, the most important consists of government documents central to the process that led to the emergence and integration of democracy policy. This material displays several features that are important to map in an account of the politics of formulating and responding to urges to secure a working democracy, as well as their effects. In contrast to some of the material mentioned above, these documents are often strategic and inventive in introducing new ways of problematizing the relations, habits and dispositions of the population in relation to the newly defined requirements of a “working democracy”. They problematize and articulate the how of “working social relations” in light of urges to secure a “working democracy”. Accordingly, they discuss how people might relate, how they ought to relate, how they participate less or differently, etc. Reflecting methodological considerations that I engage with further in chapter four, the
material is also selected as constituting places and instances where something new comes into being. For example, democracy policy becomes materialized, a particular problematization becomes central and is defined as a starting point for actions, etc. As opposed to a single-minded focus on discourse, this Foucauldian consideration views documents and policies in their material and productive character, as conditioning the possibility of integrating and arranging local practices and problematizations into institutions and larger political formations to address an urgent need. These considerations will be developed in more detail in chapter four.

The material will be presented in chronological order. I begin by analyzing the problematizations of Swedish democracy’s capacity to remain well-functioning and renew itself that were produced by the so-called Power Commission’s report (SOU 1990:44; the commission was working from 1985 to 1990). The commission produced a rigorous publication that inquires into the conditions underlying the Swedish model’s particular democratic style. It also discusses how that democratic model can continue to thrive during what is perceived as a transition to a post-industrial society. The commission mainly consisted of academics, with political scientist Olof Petersson as the chair. The final report did not provide any concrete policy proposals, but became influential to later efforts. This was, not least, through its resistance to the government’s directives and its re-interpretation of the Swedish democratic ideal along neo-liberal lines.

After discussing the Power Commission report, I briefly account for the Economy Commission, established in the wake of the financial crisis in 1992–1994. It formulated the stakes in terms of the need to renew Swedish democracy along more individualist, less welfare-oriented lines. I then analyze the first report (1995) produced by the influential Democracy Council (Demokratirådets rapporter, abbreviated DRR, published by the liberal think tank SNS). The DRR published a series of reports, starting in 1994. The aim of the DRR has been to “present concepts, analyses and results from political scientific democracy research”. Further, its yearly reports were to “stimulate a constructive and factual [saklig] discussion on the conditions of democracy” (as summarized in the preamble to the DRR’s 1998 report). These reports presented inventive contributions meant to affect the agenda.

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7 The think tank was founded in 1948 by heads of influential enterprises to promote “social science as a tool for economic and social progress”, https://www.sns.se/om-sns/ [Accessed on May 10 2018]. The reports on democracy are found at: https://www.sns.se/forskningsprogram/sns-demokratirapport/
by producing knowledge, concepts and approaches that would incite debate and stimulate policy.

In the Democracy Council’s first report, one finds the first emphasis on “social capital”. This is relevant to the Democracy Development Committee’s report (SOU 1996:162), which I map next. This government commission was established by the government to inquire into the local-level civil-society conditions, current and desirable, needed to secure a new type of democratic development. Its main contribution is an account of a “democratic infrastructure”. Such an infrastructure could (it was argued) enable individual citizens to take greater responsibility for the renewal of democracy. It consisted, supposedly, of a particular type of civic dynamic characterized by high social capital. Next, I analyze briefly a commission report from the Large City Committee (SOU 1997:118). The Committee identifies new forms of segregation as a threat to the Swedish democratic reliance on high participation. I also map the DRR’s third report (1998) with its verdict on declining party memberships and diminishing engagement in civic associations (charted through an influential survey called the Civic Inquiry). This survey influenced the next document, which is important for the dissertation. The large-scale Democracy Commission and its final report (SOU 2000:1, abbreviated DC) founded democracy policy as a specific domain. This parliamentarian commission worked from 1997 until 2000 and published a total of 13 research and 32 smaller publications, apart from its main report and the organization of numerous seminars (DC: 9).

After examining this report, I analyze the first parliamentary bill on democracy policy (prop. 2001/02:80), drafted by a social-democratic government. The bill is pragmatic. Its long-term goal is, first and foremost, to achieve greater, longer-term and more frequent participation in a broad range of democratic forums, ranging from formal democratic arenas to associations and consumer roles (of public services). After this, I briefly consider a written government communication from the policy domain (skr. 2003/04:110). It evaluated the efforts and outcomes to date. I go on to concentrate on the new practices within the domain with the advent of the 2008 liberal-conservative government. I begin by analyzing a 2008 speech made by the Nyamko Sabuni, then minister of gender equality and assistant education minister. She spoke on the new emphasis on democracy policy. I then trace two efforts that articulated this new emphasis, as well as one written government communication that summarized it. The first effort is a special venture of “dialogue on the value-foundation” (skr. 2009/10:106). The second is an action plan to combat “violence-promoting extremism”
Finally, the last document in this genealogy of the practices meant to secure a working democracy is a government communication that gives an overview of the policy domain and the government’s efforts, as well as additions to democracy policy since late 2013 (skr. 2013/14:63).

In chapter six, my main material consists of texts from governmental commissions of inquiry (most notably SOU 1992:94) and documents from the National School Board, school curriculum documents and publications by pedagogues and others, written in various contexts: commissions of inquiry, research reports, anthologies. The pedagogues’ work is often funded by the government’s research centers for value-foundation studies, which existed between 2000 and 2003. This material participated in shaping the discourse and practices of value-foundation in the context of the school. The documents by the National School Board are often strategic, even if many of them have subsequently been updated or replaced. The school curricula are from 1994 and 2011. In addition, I analyze an evaluative report by the School Inspectorate. I also look at shorter texts from different academic domains and news media on the discourse on value-foundation beyond the context of the school.

In chapter seven, I examine documents produced by the political parties Folkpartiet Liberalerna and Moderaterna, alongside bills and reports by commissions of inquiry. These engage in practices of arrangement that sustain the discourse on “exclusion”, particularly the practice of mapping areas of exclusion. I use two documents by Folkpartiet Liberalerna on the “map of exclusion” (Folkpartiet 2004, Folkpartiet 2012) and one by the Swedish police. The latter produces a correlation between “exclusion” and criminal networks’ geographical and strategic impact (Polisen 2014). As secondary sources, I use a report by the union Landsorganisationen (Björkesten 2014) on the discourse and measurement of “exclusion”, and Dahlstedt’s empirical contributions on the history of transforming exclusion into a strategic discourse within the parties Moderaterna and Folkpartiet Liberalerna (Dahlstedt 2009a). The chapter also maps the action plan, mentioned above, to combat violence-promoting extremism, as well as a one-person commission of inquiry on how to produce educational material to counter violence-promoting extremism (SOU 2013:81, headed by Eskil Franck). In addition, the chapter uses two evaluative reports from 2017 on efforts to combat violence-promoting extremism (IKUD 2017, SOU 2017:67, both written by scholars).

Chapter eight works with six different texts by social scientists within survey research and closely related approaches from 2003 – 2015. The texts
are selected because they constitute conditions of possibility for efforts to secure a working democracy. They show how to arrange a proper fit between the population’s ways of acting and being, on the one hand, and the requirements of a “working democracy” on the other. Or, inversely, they envision how a lack of fit can be contained and monitored. First, there are three reports and essays produced in connection with the annual data published by the Swedish SOM-institute. The first is a text by Henrik Oscarsson from SOM’s annual report in 2003 (Demokratitrender, Oscarsson 2003); the second is a text by Lucas Nordin and Oscarsson and the third a text by media scholar Jesper Strömbäck, published in the SOM 2015 annual report Fragment. These discuss the relation between perceptions of reality and polarization. The chapter also analyzes scholarly contributions on topics of engagement and participation that animated the Democracy Commission (Amnå 2008 and Amnå & Ekman 2010, as well as partly Ekman and Linde 2010). These are published by Liber and Studentlitteratur (as student literature). Lastly, the chapter works with a single publication contributed by Joakim Ekman to the so-called Future Committee. Ekman writes on how diversity affects democracy’s ability to remain vital and well-functioning (Ekman 2012).

Summary of the chapters and structure of the dissertation

In this section, I will summarize the dissertation’s chapters and structure. In chapter three, I develop a theoretical framework to analyze what I call practices of arrangement and their outcomes. The chapter engages with theoretical works by Foucault, Jacques Rancière and Gilles Deleuze, and relates their works to literature on policy design, New Public Management and standardization. Importantly, this theoretical literature draws attention to the centrality of inventive processes through which new governmental discourses, problematizations and practices emerge. In doing so, they produce concepts that make visible their non-necessary status and thus challenge them.

The chapter presents an account of police, policing and theoretical concepts and forms of analysis of governmentality from the viewpoint of the practices of arrangement that characterize them. It also discusses the concept of dispositif as useful in the study of the integration of arrangements. The chapter focuses on what these concepts direct attention to. It ends by showing how other concepts denote, amount or relate to the concepts of circulation and equivalency.
Chapter four develops the dissertation’s particular genealogical approach. I engage Foucault’s writings on the critical-historical approach of genealogy in order to develop more general methodological considerations and discussions on what genealogy can yield in this particular study. This reading shows how I will trace and map the material in chapters five to eight.

Chapter five is a genealogy of the governmental formulations and responses to urges to secure working democracy that led to the birth and development of democracy policy. The chapter traces how democracy policy emerged from an identification made by government commissions of inquiry in the 1990s. These commissions identified a need to address an emerging gap between the population and the existing forms of involvement and engagement in representative democracy, in order to achieve and maintain democratic involvement. The chapter maps the emergence of a dispositif – a network formation of knowledge and power relations – that is meant to address this gap. These are found in a number of political and scientific efforts to find out how to renew and secure a working democracy. The network formation, the chapter shows, is infused by an increasingly preventive vision of democratic renewal in which the urgent need for democratic involvement gradually shifts to an emphasis on security. Chapter five, finally, is important to the dissertation because it gives background history and material that are important to the subsequent chapters.

Chapter six builds on the broad mapping done in chapter five. It traces the development of “value-foundation” (värdegrund) as a universal and a discourse in the context of 1990s educational policy. The chapter shows that the concept of and discourse on value-foundation is a standard that emerges in response to a school reform meant to make schools goal- and performance governed. The chapter argues that the concept of value-foundation, understood in this context of New Public Management-doctrines, emerged in response and is inherent to an actuarial vision of politics. This political vision, important during the 1990s, focused on growing uncertainty and risks in the population. It is concerned with the state’s and the school’s capacity to form sets of similar, democratic citizens. The chapter argues that value-foundation functioned as a node for a larger dispositif. This dispositif addressed growing uncertainty by attempting to secure a minimum amount of “competent”, responsive and collectively responsible individuals. The dispositif extended to the creation of the Living History Forum. It articulated fears of the consequences of growing diversity. It also had a growing focus on youth attitudes, and monitored them through surveys. It later articulated perceived risks with regards to youth violations, bullying, psychic health and
well-being. The chapter also shows how the standardization inherent in the school’s value-foundation work was displaced, in the 2000s, by behavioral sciences. These watered down the capacity of value-foundation work to foster “critical approaches”. Instead, it now, directly or indirectly, fostered conformity.

Chapter seven traces the emergence of the discourse on “exclusion” and “violence-promoting extremism”. I look at how the discourse’s objects (the excluded/extremists) are associated and sustained by various inventive practices, such as mapping and statistics. In contrast to chapters five and six, the chapter’s primary focus is on the last decade, although it also refers to events of the mid-1990s. Chapter seven traces the conditions of possibility for - and analyzes - the creation and integration of various rationalities, arrangements, and political apparatuses meant to address exclusion and extremism. It highlights how these two discourses, and the responses to their constructions as imminent problems to a working democracy and society, produce an increasingly security-oriented vision of inclusion, democratic renewal and involvement.

Chapter eight maps six Swedish survey research and closely related texts. Each, in different ways, formulated and responded to urges to secure a working democracy in 2003–2015. The chapter highlights how the texts use various inventive arrangements in attempts to contain the possible or potential effects of change on existing forms of representative democratic involvement. The chapter’s aim is to account for the political logic inherent in these operations and arrangements. Doing so sheds light on assumptions of proper civic conduct and involvement that are inherent to the scientific procedures. Further, this shows how these assumptions always-already marginalize other ways of linking affects, ways of learning and valuing along lines that might also be conductive to different democratic politics. It is argued that this means that the scholars themselves become inhibited from experimenting with alternative ways of relating to the centrality of change, discontinuity and plural ways of popular involvement (including learning and sharing) in democracy.

Chapter nine first summarizes the arguments and questions. It then develops the central outcomes of the genealogies presented in chapters five to eight. It particularly focuses on the central concepts such as dispositif, circulation and equivalency and the possible future development in the efforts to secure a working democracy in light of this analysis. The chapter also discusses the limitations and possibilities of the approach adopted and
developed in the dissertation, pointing to ways in which similar approaches could be adopted and developed.
CHAPTER THREE

A theoretical framework to account for practices of arrangement

Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons? (Foucault 1977a: 228).

As discussed above, this chapter develops a theoretical framework to map and analyze what I term *practices of arrangement*. I engage the theoretical literature that posit the concepts through which practices of arrangement can be developed. The chapter also presents a theoretical vocabulary useful in thinking through the relation between arrangements and politics. This helps draw attention to different aspects of the material analyzed, not least in uncovering its politics, normative assumptions and forms of power relations. The type of analysis constituted by these theoretical accounts, as well as the above-mentioned creation of concepts, involve concepts that will be discussed and developed further in chapters five to nine.

This chapter builds upon and develops two claims. The main claim concerns how the boundaries, elements, surfaces, relations, circuits, etc., that are arranged in policy, organizations or institutions, matter for the government of people in space and time. Arrangements enable the production – or attempted production – of a specific fit between the lives of people, their actions, habits and dispositions; these amount to a particular circulation in space and time.

The second claim is that practices of arrangement should be studied as a particular political practice. These practices can be studied by analyzing the inventive combinations of political discourse, scientific discourse and knowledge, and practices of design. They appear in the connections and re-connections of these elements in new ways. Policy and research design, how elements are assembled to formulate and address a problem, and the use of theories, images, typologies, tables, indexes, statistics and knowledge to consolidate certain problematizations, are important aspects of the politics of arrangement practices.
Since I mainly examine public policy and scientific writings closely related to policy, this chapter provides a combined theoretical reading. First, I discuss the critical theoretical approaches of Foucault and Rancière, as well as scholars who have contributed to and developed their approaches. Second, I go through other relevant approaches that account for practices of arrangement, such as policy design, policy process, the doctrines of New Public Management (NPM) and literature in sociology on standards and standardization. I discuss these in light of my reading of Rancière and Foucault. This provides me with a rich conceptual vocabulary with which to discuss both a type of politics inherent to different practices of arrangement, and to name the styles and steps in the articulation of this politics.

An overview of the main concepts

In the following, I present a summary of eight more or less related theoretical concepts. The concepts help in developing different ways of critically engaging the arrangements and politics inherent in efforts to secure a working democracy.

The concept of *practices of arrangement*, mentioned above and developed further here, draws attention to the way in which lines, elements, composite parts, surfaces, relations, links, etc. are arranged. These matter in the strategies or organizational contexts of the government of people in space and time. In the material analyzed, practices of arrangement enable the production – or attempted production - of a certain fit between people’s lives, actions, habits and dispositions, and the workings and ends of a particular order (in this case, a particular type of representative democratic order). To cite Panagia, examining practices of arrangement follows an important aesthetic-political assumption, namely that “there are no necessary ways of arranging things…there is no necessary order for the coordination of persons, places, and things” (Panagia 2018: 7). Practices of arrangement refer, accordingly, to the dramaturgical and scenographic activity of arranging things in policy documents and scientific writings. These activities result in certain arrangements of relations, things, forces, places and times, whether done in an attempt to coordinate the wills of citizens or to secure responsiveness to a set standard. As will be developed throughout chapter three and four, the study of practices of arrangement in a genealogical design reveals the dispersed origins and practices of arrangements meant to coordinate peoples, place and things that at present are considered coherent.
and given. Such an analysis reveals the non-necessary status of these arrangements and of any given order for such coordination.

The concept of policing or the police will be used to point to a form of organization that occurs in the documents. In both Foucault’s and Rancière’s reading of policing, the concept “the police” has two dimensions. First, it points to a practice or system of governance of things and beings, meant to ensure circulation in space and time. Second, it directs focus to the fact that the object of this governance is the propriety or configuration of relations themselves as a means to ensure circulation. In order to ensure this circulation, police governance is directed to configuring proper relations. However, as I will show, Foucault and Rancière differ insofar as Rancière’s concept of police directs attention to an organization of life in an aesthetic system. This system consists of correspondences between the ends, activities, times and places that this type of governance both presupposes and consists of. For Rancière, this defines a particular aesthetics of politics. In my use of the concept, it denotes a proper fit between individuals’ activities, places, space and time in relation to a more or less explicit order. This is meant to use, or confirm, different forms of congruence between individuals’ ways of acting and being, and the requirements of a particular order. In a larger social context, this view of police refers to a form of organization of life that secures movement and congruence in space and time, through set correspondences between words and their meaning, places, times, movements and ways of being and acting. The police thereby secure a specific flow and norms, or a normalization of flow, as opposed to frictions, lack of congruence or interruptions. I refer to the flow that results from the establishment, development and administration of systems of congruence over time as circulation.

Drawing on Davide Panagia’s interpretation of Rancière’s work, I point out that the police operate through a logic of equivalency that is inherent to its operations of consensualization. Equivalence here means a framework - an understanding of the world in terms of numbers, exchanges, risk-calculations and general calculability in relation to how things unfold in time. It helps render behavior predictable and is also a standardization of behavior. Consensus refers to a form of policing through the construction of a frame of interpretation that reduces – consensualizes, pacifies – the open-ended meaning of words, images and events, leading to a standardization of

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1 Referring to Marx’ passages on the value-form and equivalence/money, Panagia puts this logic in its simplest terms as the logic “that says \(x\) must mean \(y\)”: “The logic of equivalence is the logic of the hermeneutics’s formula that says \(x\) must mean \(y\), that 20 yards of linen represents 1 coat.” (Panagia 2018: 67)
politics. As mentioned above, the chapter argues that aspects of NPM policy design and doctrines provide various styles of policing, as detected in the documents examined.

The documents also show a vision of politics which includes the rationalities of risk-management and anticipation. This is referred to as an actuarial vision of politics. It displays policy’s and science’s reliance on the transformation of social life into numbers and anticipation, risk-management, benchmarking, prevention and performance-evaluation over time as central techniques. It also refers to the production and use of statistics for the sake of assessing risk with regards to a specific phenomenon. This vision is engaged in producing congruence/equivalency, for example in how a value or “performance” develops over time. As a result, it linearizes political and democratic time. It is also interested in monitoring and shaping the processes of becoming in the population through which value/profit or problems/danger are formed.

The concept of police overlaps with that of governmentality. The concept of the police overlaps with that of governmentality. In the subsequent chapters, governmentality refers to concrete, inventive strategies meant to affect the conduct of individuals and collectives by arranging environments and circuits that induce subject-formation and self-government. In this case, the practices of arrangement refer to empirically concrete, environmental forms of encouragement, or modes of subjectification, of individuals and collectives. In both cases, the aim is to get these to adopt certain ways of acting and being in which government aims coincide with the individuals’ and collectives’ use and understanding of their own freedom. Governmentality refers to strategies that are often relatively explicit.

Finally, the concept dispositif is used in two ways. First, it is used to expose a dispositioning of elements in a text or an image. These are akin to an art work or installation: a hub that disposes matter and arranges elements to produce a certain ordering and co-existence of elements. By the way it disposes things, each type of dispositif allows one to attend to the world in different ways.

The second use refers to an integration of power relations and knowledge into a network formation. This integration manipulates forces and subject-formation for a particular strategic objective. Dispositif here refers to a tangle/formation/network through which - or, citing Giorgio Agamben (Agamben 2009: 6) - where power relations become concrete.
The police, governmentality, security

In this section, I will develop a reading of what Foucault refers to as the police and then link it to Rancière’s concept of the police and policing. I will first account for what Foucault understands with governmentality and security, since these are linked to the police and to the “problem of circulation” that they share. Linking Foucault’s and Rancière’s concepts will enable me to develop ways of accounting for the practices used to formulate and respond to urges to secure a “working democracy” in terms of circulation, as further discussed in chapters five to eight. The discussion of policing will be followed by one on governmentality.

Foucault’s police

I will start with Foucault’s conceptualization of police, since Rancière’s reading draws upon it and since Foucault’s police will be less central than Rancière’s in the following chapters. In his genealogy of the modern state, Foucault derives or comes across the concept as the object of numerous writings in seventeenth and eighteenth century France, Germany and Italy (Foucault 1979). Here, policing is not identified with those institutions (including social workers, the treasury, etc.) that work to repress or prevent crime and manage forms of relationality. Foucault notes that these writings have a concept of police that extends well beyond this. For them, it denotes a domain of knowledge and government technology peculiar to the state, concerned with the population and often concentrated to urban areas (Foucault 1979: 246). The aim of the police, writes Foucault, is an “ordered maximization of collective and individual forces” (Foucault 1990: 25), through an “unlimited regulation [of relations] according to the model of the tight-knit urban organization”. This allows an increase in state power and a proper circulation of beings and things (Foucault 2008: 3). Policing displays a biopolitical logic to the extent that it is interested in “what men do; it is interested in their activity, their ‘occupation’” (Foucault 2008: 322). This means that it “sees to a live, active, productive man” (Foucault 1979: 248).

Therefore, in the first volume of his History of Sexuality, Foucault points out that in the 18th century, sex became a matter for the police. It was defined as a biopolitical problem that, if regulated so as to increase the vigor of

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2 This regulation is usually associated with the German “Polizei-Staat” (Foucault 2008: 3).
individual citizens, could amplify state power (Foucault 1990: 25). As a practice of arrangement, policing in Foucault’s sense comprises a set of operations that seek to secure the mutual vigor of state and population through a concern not only with life and survival, but with people’s happiness and mutual communication: “[the police] sees to the living…the moral quality of life…the preservation of life…the conveniences of life…life’s pleasures…that people survive, live and even do better than just that, is what the police has to ensure” (Foucault 1979: 250, emphasis in original).

When reading Von Justi, Foucault concludes that Polizeiwissenschaft, the science of administration in 18th century Germany, is more than a list of prescriptions. Rather, it is a grid through which the state can “observe” territory, population, resources, towns, etc. To police is thus at once an art of government and a “method for the analysis of a population living on a territory” (Foucault 1979: 252). Its means of regulating relations allows policing to both individualize and totalize (254). This implies that the concept of police extends, as mentioned above, well beyond what is usually identified as “the police”. For example, and to summarize, the happiness, communication, talents, vigor, sex, etc. of the population are all of interest to the police. By managing relations, the police induce a form of controlled circulation in space and time.

As I will further develop below, policing, security and governmentality are coextensive. They do not exclude other forms of power, such as discipline and sovereignty. Instead, these are integrated within them. For example, Foucault underscores that “disciplinary series…proliferates under mechanisms of security and is necessary to make them work” (Foucault 2007: 8). Governmentality and/or security – sometimes used interchangeably (Coles 2016: 75) – emerge in response to a particular police problem, “the problem of circulation” (Foucault 2007: 16). With the suppression of European city walls in the eighteenth century, a consequence of increasing trade and

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3 This is reflected in a quote by Johann von Justi (Elements generaux de police, French trans. 1769, p. 20.) that Foucault brings up in the context of studying the dispositif of sexuality:

We must consolidate and augment, through the wisdom of its regulations, the internal power of the state; and since this power consists not only in the Republic in general, and in each of the members who constitute it, but also in the faculties and talents of those belonging to it, it follows that the police must concern themselves with these means and make them serve the public welfare. And they can only obtain this result through the knowledge they have of those different assets (Foucault quoting Von Justi, 1990: 25).
movements of people, it was impossible to police the right type of circulation – of “movement, exchange, and contact, as a form of dispersion, and also as form of distribution” – through strict police regulation. It became, instead, linked to what Foucault calls “apparatuses of security”. The aim of these is to substitute “a binary division between the permitted and the prohibited” with “an average considered as optimal… and … a bandwidth of the acceptable that must not be exceeded” (Foucault 2007: 6). With the problem of circulation, notions of the political effectiveness of sovereignty, according to Foucault, became increasingly linked to “the idea of an intensity of circulations: circulation of ideas, of wills, and of orders, and also commercial circulation” (ibid. 15). As security became a new principle for policing, a new type of power to manage the new flows of people and things, attention shifted from suppressing circulation to “organizing circulation, eliminating its dangerous elements, making a division between good and bad circulation, and maximizing the good circulation by diminishing the bad” (ibid. 18). In light of this, policing can, according to Panagia, be considered a “service animal” for forms of governmentality, producing conditions that enable it to affect individual and collective conduct through various modes of subjectification. 

Governmentality

Above, I joined Panagia in seeing Foucault’s police is a “service animal” for forms of governmentality. Governmentality refers to different ways of affecting individual and collective conduct by producing specific conditions and environments for self-governance. As an art of government, governmentality takes as its starting point the relative freedom of individuals and collectives. It then creates a range of practices and fields to shape their conduct (Foucault 1991: 93). Social scientists have given governmentality a

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5 A good example of how policing and governmentality are related is the state-controlled domain of issuing driver’s licenses. This issuing both allows for fostering certain forms of controlled circulation, while subjectivizing those who take licenses (often fairly young people) to a specific standard of self-responsibility, and a reflexive awareness of risks, dangers and the larger social-political motives of infrastructure and circulation. In line with Foucault’s understanding of policing, driver’s license are often marketed by the state as a way of ensuring a certain autonomy and freedom of the individual and a way of enabling her to enjoy a “qualitative leisure time”.

6 In contrast to the analyses in Discipline and Punish, with governmentality Foucault increasingly took into account the relative freedom of subjects, both as a context for forms of government that presupposed such a freedom and to better account for processes of self-constitution and resistance (Bröckling, Krasmann & Lemke 2011: 1, Foucault 1988: 1, Rose 1999a).
vast amount of attention since the mid-1990s (Graham, Burchell and Collin 1994, Dean 1999, Rose 1999, Krasmann, Bröckling & Lemke 2011, Rose & Miller 2013). It is important to explore the concept, as it helps identify practices of arrangement (often more specific and strategic) of “environmental” interventions into the shaping of conduct of individuals and collectives. The focus on governmentality thus directs attention to the realm of government between those that allow a lot of liberty (such as families or communities), and those that exercise vast or total domination. Between these two lie areas in which the techniques and rationalities of government prevail. These domains that are infused by bodies of knowledge, reflections and calculations that presume a certain degree of liberty. An analysis of forms of governmentality allows us to understand how fields for self-government and modes of subjectification are envisioned to secure a government aim. Both require government inventiveness, not least in view of a challenge like the securing of a “working democracy”. To study this domain’s inventiveness is to analyze the art of producing strategic relays between the state’s governance and the governance of selves and others. It also directs attention to the compositional character of these relays, in which power relations are effects of compositions of networks of forces. These compositions may well find their place within larger dispositifs (Rose & Miller 2013: 64).

As mentioned above, governmentality is a relatively explicit and strategic government activity. The term often occurs in tributes to indirect forms of government, civil society, etc. It is not as common in analyses of the workings of the police, as conceived by Rancière. However, governmentality should be viewed as operating within police logic. The concept, in the reading presented here, makes it easier to analyze the material in terms of finding specific ways of seeking to shape the conduct of individuals and collectives. According to Foucault, specific environments and modes of subjectification are designed around something that government, authorities and experts define a problem. They are meant to address a behavior or tendency in the population or in sub-groups that for various reasons has become “problematic” (Walters 2012: 60).

William Walters argues that an analysis of governmentality involves answering the following questions: when and how does a specific behavior become a problem for government activity and authorities? How is it identified and made knowable as a problematic realm of governance? How does it become implicated in different arts of government, and subject to environmental types of intervention? (Walters 2012: 60).
Central to this art of government is its reliance on the continuous creation and distribution of environments that promote modes of subjectification. In this way, individual and collective behaviors can be shaped. Walters argues that this enables governments to engage in compensations that lower the impact of destructive tendencies (ibid. 41). Governmentality should therefore be considered inseparable from security (see below). Governmentality need not be confined to the state. Other hegemonic agencies can and do engage in it, even if the forms of governmentality involved in efforts to secure a working democracy are all state-centered.

Critique of “studies of governmentality”

Studies on governmentality sometimes present governmentality something capable of governing everything, of solving all kinds of problems, containing all kinds of conflicts and playing out all energies against each another. By presenting this form of government as complete and fail-proof, it ends up as a ready-made framework for analysis (Walters 2012). However, there is a difference between how texts design and articulate an arrangement, and the outcomes - that is, how people act and relate. This critique, I believe, is relevant to Dahlstedt’s reading of governmentality in Sweden’s politics of activation. As I showed in chapter two, inspired by the field studies of governmentality within critical sociology (Rose & Miller 1992, Rose 1999, Dean 1999), Dahlstedt refers to governmentality throughout his work (Dahlstedt 2000, Dahlstedt 2008, Dahlstedt 2009a, Dahlstedt & Olson 2014). His analysis of an alleged Swedish “politics of activation” entails a single-logic critique of the effects of neo-liberalization in Sweden:

All larger responsibility and demands are put on the individual work searcher: Activate yourselves! At the same time the government [statsmakten] refrains from the responsibility for the effects of the labor market policies. If you are and remain unemployed, it is you – and ultimately you – and no one else who is to blame. To get work you need to work on your employability…The code to be let into the social community is spelled flexibility, responsibility, employability and entrepreneurship. Those who possess these values are let in, the others are exempted [satta på undantag]… Basically any kinds of disciplinary measures are possible, only the imagination puts limits to what is not possible… Re-education is hence a life-long project (Dahlstedt 2009a: 64–66).
Even if we disregard the rhetoric in this quote, it still conveys a picture in which all elements seem to work on the same level. This makes his denunciation of these workings both easier and more powerful. His analysis depends more on demystification/denunciation than on a genealogical critique. Put differently, it is closer to a Marxist view than the type of critique initiated by Foucault in his program of governmentality. By relying heavily on the concept of governmentality, Dahlstedt comes close to adopting what Bröckling, Krasmann & Lemke call a ready-made framework endowed with an “implicit finalism” - that is, governed by a single logic that can be guessed in advance (Bröckling, Krasmann & Lemke 2011: 16). It produces a form of tunnel vision that, by accepting a single logic centered on confirming “activation” and disciplinarization, overlooks other dynamics and discontinuity in this development. Critique becomes denunciation of what appears

7 In an article in English in 2008, Dahlstedt conducts another analysis that could be characterized by implicit finalism:

Since the 1990s, a “regime of truth” in this context has taken shape, with strongly normative efforts to “activate” individual citizens and to “make them responsible.” The justification of this politics of activation brings to light an ongoing political shift in Sweden, from a state-centered regime to a more individual-centered regime. In accordance with this regime of truth, a number of limits have been placed on the legitimate reach of politics, exemplified by the way in which the Commission on Democracy understands the role of politics and the state to be more and more about “pulling back” and “making way” for voluntary and independent actors and associations. … In no way does this political shift mean that the state has abdicated or played out its role. Rather its functions have changed. The role of the state in an ever more “advanced liberal” era consists more of coordinating and managing “activated” and more or less “self-regulating” subjects than, in line with the rationale of the traditional “Swedish model”, “governing through the state”, redistributing resources, and regulating the citizens’ life opportunities through various sociopolitical interventions. Individuals, families, associations, neighborhoods, or regions are given more room to maneuver in order to generate growth and to control their own lives on their own terms (Dahlstedt 2008: 497).

The implicit finalism comes about here through Dahlstedt’s full embracing of Rose’s conception of “advanced liberalism”, to which documents and quotes from Sweden are matched, or which is used as a ready-made theoretical framework to account for this history in Sweden. The shifting role of the state becomes something that can be denounced or criticized, but we do not learn more about the play of forces that have triggered these changes, what contradictions or complexities they display and how to evaluate them other than through “advanced liberalism”.

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as a government agenda. Foucault had, indeed, warned against such a development when discussing disciplinary power.\(^8\)

Security

A brief discussion of security will add to my analysis of governmentality. Security has an impact on how actuarial focus and a preoccupation with population infuses efforts to secure a working democracy.

Towards the end of the 1970s, Foucault began writing on security and biopower in order to lessen the emphasis on discipline that prevailed in his *Discipline and Punish*. In Foucault’s genealogy of the modern state, which also contained an analysis of governmentality, security is viewed as a form of power that emerges with liberalism. Foucault understood liberalism as both ideology and technique of government (Foucault 2007: 48). He highlights that security should not be understood as standing in opposition to freedom. As mentioned above, security is more permissive than discipline. Whereas discipline individualizes and “molds bodies” in attempts to achieve an optimum “should-be value”, security takes the “empirical reality” given by statistics, frequencies, rates of disease, mortality, etc. as a “benchmark” to regulate an optimal medium within a span of variations (Bröckling, Krasmann & Lemke 2011: 4). Liberalism’s enhancement of circulation is therefore inextricable from the biopolitical apparatuses of security that regulate the population as a field of intervention. Indeed, in his focus on biopolitics, Foucault includes studies of social insurance, monetary policy and vaccination campaigns as central facets of liberal-securitarian efforts (Foucault 2007).

As Foucault notes, security is part of governmentality since it makes possible the identification of a population domain and within it, thresholds

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\(^8\) Already in 1976, Foucault reserved himself against the image of a “generalized disciplinary society whose disciplinary institutions have swarmed and finally taken over everything” (Foucault 2003: 252). Dahlstedt’s analysis here comes close to what William Walters calls “panopticitis”, a power analysis lacking curiosity:

panopticitis manifests in the tendency of researchers to find the practices of surveillance and (self-)discipline lurking in all sorts of unexpected places. Panopticitis can result in a kind of tunnel vision: one sees only those figures of power Foucault himself identified and utilized, and frequently overlooks emergent shapes, strange relations, novel patterns that do merit attention but perhaps lack a name. (Walters 2012: 52).

In Dahlstedt’s case, however, it is rather Rose’s “framework” of “advanced liberalism” that creates the tunnel vision.
of acceptable dispositions, values, behavior, participation, etc., as a government problem. In accordance with the inseparable logics of freedom/security embedded in liberalism as a technique of government, it is by way of liberation, or by using freedom, that liberal governmentality seeks to secure its aims. This leads Foucault to conclude that “There is no liberalism without a culture of danger” (Foucault 2008: 66–67). He argues that induced risk – such as investments, loans, etc. – is a desirable element of liberal political rationality. Risk is central to the indirect or self-government of people. In liberalism’s political rationality, civic virtues are constituted around forms of responsibility and entrepreneurial skills. This produces an individualized subject oriented to coping with uncertain conditions. Governing such people means arranging “the conditions under which the individuals can make use of these freedoms” (Foucault quoted in Bröckling, Krasmann & Lemke 2011: 5). In this type of society, as Bröckling, Krasmann & Lemke point out, social inequalities – far from being an unwanted consequence – are a necessary by-product of and condition for its continuance, as well as for intensified circulation (6). Liberalism, thus, in Foucault’s reading, is an indirect form of government that uses security to structure the fields of possibility. The problem facing those practicing the liberal art of government is to determine the “production costs” of freedom and to subject danger to an economic calculus (ibid.) in which security makes it possible to “respond to a reality in such a way that this response cancels out the reality to which it responds — nullifies it, or limits, checks, or regulates it” (Foucault 2007: 47). Circulation should therefore be understood as at once a precondition and an end for governmentality/security.

Rancière’s police
Foucault’s discussion of how the concept of police once encompassed much more than is today identified as “the police” constitutes Rancière’s point of departure for his own concept of police (Rancière 1999: 28). As mentioned above, Rancière defines police as an aesthetic partitioning and division of surfaces, space, places, time and ways of doing, concerned with how things

9 Others following Foucault have pointed out that present technologies of prevention and pre-emption, by the way in which these increasingly take processes of becoming in the social world as their level of analysis, actively blur or destroy the present as a form of coexistence and an expansive, meaningful and political moment (Amoore 2013, Massumi 2015, Nancy 2014, Rancière 2012).
can and cannot fit. This logic, to cite Panagia, is “committed to the right disposition of capacities and subjectivities in the social order. It is synonymous with proper fit and a concordance for ordering actions according to a system of correspondences of space, place, time and way of doing” (Panagia 2018: 42). Importantly, as Rancière and Panagia point out, the police is not primarily a system of oppression or an institution of control. It is, rather, a system for the organization of life. According to Panagia, this system organizes life “according to set principles of correspondence that operate in such a way as to govern the movement and flow of energies” (Panagia 2018: 51). The logic that governs the police organization – what Rancière calls a distribution of the sensible – constitutes a “regulatory principle for the distribution of sense and sensibility [that] works by conditioning those relations that count and those that do not count as appropriate fit” (ibid.).

As Rancière points out, this means that the police cannot see or grasp anything – any subject, way of being, meaning, etc. – that is not already accounted for or which does not exist within a logic of proper names and places. Commenting on this, Anders Fjeld breaks down “the police” to three practices of organizing life according to set principles of correspondence. The police code places with certain features and uses these codes to identify bodies by name and function, and consensualize sensible givens. The police thus produce a proper fit and concordance between actions, places and names (Fjeld 2016: 279).

Rancière’s police thus precedes the workings of power relations insofar as it is concerned with the very determination of sensible coordinates that power relations need to be able to work. Drawing upon Foucault’s remark that policing is a matter of being interested in the occupations of men, Rancière highlights the aesthetic configuration in which any “occupation” must first be partitioned: “policing is not so much the ‘disciplining’ of bodies as it is “a rule governing their appearing, a configuration of occupations and the properties of the spaces where these occupations are distributed”

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10 Rancière calls such a partitioning a “distribution of the sensible”. This partitioning: establishes at one and the same time something common that is shared and exclusive parts. This apportionment of parts and positions is based on a distribution of spaces, times, and forms of activity that determines the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and in what way various individuals have part in this distribution (Rancière 2004: 12).
(Rancière 1999: 29). Thus, as a system for the organization of life according to set principles of correspondence, the police practice an ordering that exists “as much from the spontaneity of social relations as from the workings of the state” (Rancière 2009: 114).

The police’s concern with how things – names, words, activities, subjects, positions, etc. – can and cannot fit lead it to “gathers humans into community” by way of “counting” proper names, functions and places that people can occupy. This is done in accordance with an assumption of a proper fit and that there is nothing beyond this count (Rancière 1999: 28–29). Police practices also privilege certain “proper” modes of attending to the world, such as judgment, identification, validation and representation. These are contrasted to improper modes of attending to the world, which include aesthetic experience, accidental learnings and becomings, and dissensual interruptions. The police is thus a normative system governed by an inegalitarian logic of how people can and cannot attend to the world (Rancière 1999, Rancière 2004a, Panagia 2018).

As Rancière notes, when drawing upon Foucault, policing is primarily an activity that secures circulation in space and time by the way it seeks to avoid any interruption or gap in its logic of correspondence (Rancière 1999, Rancière 2001). For this reason, Panagia (2018) defines the police as a dispositif, a “complex network of circulation enabled by the proper coordination of composite features that guarantee the right action in the right place

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11 Rancière claims that it is only after, or through, this “primary aesthetics” that allocates shares, functions and positions, etc. that the rationalities and workings of power relations can be established, since it provides them with the sensible givens and coordinates they need to be functional. Doing so, he contrasts his conception of the police to Foucault’s:

> In Omnes et Singulatim, Foucault conceives of the police as an institutional apparatus that participates in power’s control over life and bodies; while, for me, the police designates not an institution of power but a distribution of the sensible within which it becomes possible to define strategies and techniques of power. (Rancière, Politics or Biopolitics? in Dissensus, 2009: 95).

Anders Fjeld develops this relationship:

> In other words, disciplinarization, as a specific and historical form of power, presuppose a police logic which is more minimal: the attribution of the places, the identification of bodies by name and function, the consensualization of sensible givens. Before there is efficiency of repression and domination, there is the world in which repression and domination have to find coordinates in order to function: the coordinates of a distribution of identities, functionalities (Fjeld 2016: 279, my translation from French).
at the right time” (50). As I mentioned in the above summary of central concepts, the police, as “a complex system of distributions that guarantees our freedom to act and move about freely”, importantly also “enables a specific form for acting and doing; that is, an isomorphic partition of the sensible” (51), i.e. it produces and puts into circulation certain modes of having part, of moving along, of conforming, of consensus, etc. across the social field (I will further discuss the overlap between this account and that of a sociology of standards below).

In terms of government, policing is, according to this analysis, primarily the production and integration of government systems in which actions already fit ends; in which things, individuals and groups are identified and aligned by their proper name and function with a certain flow – and maintenance of that flow – as outcome. Being concerned with correspondence and propriety, securing circulation is primarily a matter of making sure that no element is left unaccounted for; each is apportioned its “due”, its proper value (Panagia 2009: 41–42). 12 The police’s logic of circulation and equivalence is therefore not only about exercising power, but about enabling “the flow of signification among meanings, letters, and words” (Panagia 2018: 67). Overlapping with Foucault’s concept of police, this definition also means that police practices relate to, but do not automatically match, concrete systems for the regulation of flow, such as roads, infrastructure, laws, standards and other circuits characterized by controlled circulation.

12 To support this claim, Panagia refers to Rancière’s claim (Rancière 2001) that what is proper to the “police” is not, as Althusser would have it, to be interpellated, but on the contrary to secure circulation – to move along. Rancière opposes Althusser’s identification of the police with “Hey, you there!” with “there is nothing to see here”, move along. Panagia writes:

The apportioning of perception creates geometric outlines that establish a surface upon which value might fluidly circulate. This, in the end, is the basis of Rancière’s category of “the police” at the heart of his critique of Althusser. Contradicting the claim of interpellation, he explains how Althusser’s petty officer is not an agent of interruption, as the account of recognition through interpellation might suggest. Rather, the main ambition of the police is to increase the flow of circulation, to move traffic along when the traffic lights don’t work, if you will. Rancière’s “there is nothing to see here” of the police order contravenes Althusser’s “Hey, you there!” by showing us that the work of the police (and what Deleuze and Guattari will also call the work of “the organization of the organs of the organism”) is to ensure the proper circulation of things within a system so as not to leave unaccounted the supplemental elements whose value has, as of yet, been unassigned (Panagia 2009: 41).
In order to make it easier to grasp policing’s stakes and logics, I will briefly relate the concept to another which is incommensurable with it, or heterogeneous to it. Policing’s practices of arrangement are contingent insofar as there are modes of attending to the world that disarticulate any necessary way of arranging things. These challenge the logic of propriety and circulation. Rancière calls that activity that challenges and tinkers with the arrangements that secure propriety “dissensus”. Dissensus is “an activity of reconfiguration of that which is given to the sensible” that constantly challenges and displaces the lines and partitionings established by the police (Rancière in Panagia & Rancière 2000: 115). It often comes about through forms of “partaking”, which is the name that Panagia gives to a returning theme in Rancière’s writings, namely when individual and groups perform activities “that they have not been tasked to do” (Panagia 2018: x). Partaking disrupts or displaces the standards imposed by police logic, standards by which activities, people, places, etc. are accounted for and thereby assigned value. Dissensus is thus an improper way of acting and being. It leads to a break in the logic of propriety established by the police and their partitioning of the sensible. It occurs through poetic inventions of cases in which dissensus is practiced, whether in the arts, everyday life, or protests, that interrupt and disarticulate the police’s way of ensuring correspondences and circulation. However, interruptions must also be seen in terms of their very

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13 Rancière uses the concept of dissensus interchangeably with “politics”. As a dissensual subjectification, politics in Rancière sense, however, is the emergence of an unaccounted subject within the police, who reconfigures the police to open for other ways of being counted and belonging. Dissensus, in contrast, is broader and thus also possible to think in how the arts or in literature can disarticulate a visibility and make visible other forms of relations between things without any political subjectivation, even if dissensus offers modalities through which political subjectivations take place. Formulated differently: art, cinema, literature and different forms of aesthetic practices circulate forms of dissensus and dissensual dispositifs, but these cases of dissensual inventions – even if they disarticulate us – are not of the same kind as those in which a subjectivation stage a relation within the police, forcing it to become different from what it was (Rancière 1999). A good example of dissensus in 2017 and 2018 is the African American NFL-players’ practice of “taking a knee”, a practice that breaks the ethical and consensualized duty to stand in the beginning of a game when the American National Anthem is played. By “taking a knee”, African American players, and to some extent also cheerleaders, break the visible configuration that determines the visibility and meaning of police violence in particular and structural racism, injustices, segregation and class divisions in general. These acts are however also dissensual insofar as they disrupt the clear division of sport and politics, in which athletes and cheerleaders are not supposed to be political. See https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/trump-thrusts-nfl-players-into-a-debate-they-
basic elements. They include not only, e.g., people occupying a street that in police logic is designated for circulation, but also minor dissensual inci- piences; words that do not fit, missed understandings, dis-identifications and ways of resisting the police’s attempt to standardize behavior and code places and activities (following Panagia, dissensus is therefore a way of “occupying one’s unbelongingness to a logic of equivalence” (Panagia 2018: 68)).

Policy design, policy-process and New Public Management as different procedures and styles inherent to the police

In the following, I will discuss concepts and principles taken from “policy design”, “policy-process” and New Public Management. I will show how these approaches relate to processes of arrangement, or are themselves engaged in arranging things, in efforts to invent new policy, set goals, and integrate a chain of corresponding means/ends and apparatuses. These formations, which are made up of mechanisms, laws, policies, institutions, etc., are used to address parts of the population, specific dispositions or behavior. I read these approaches as additional styles of the logic that Rancière calls the police, which are relevant to consider in relation to the particular material analyzed in chapters five to eight.

As a practice of arrangement, policy design is sensitive to how things are arranged in the process of drafting policy. It points to how certain target groups and populations are constructed through policy. It also looks at the impact of policies carried out through specific arrangements of means, ends and implementation structures (Schneider, Ingram & de Leon 2014: 107). Policies are designed to affect targets by facilitating the linkage of different elements. Similar to what has been termed arrangement practices, policy design is supposedly “simultaneously noun and verb, outcome and process”, and, as such, “much less technocratic in nature than…’scientific’ government and administration” (Howlett & Lejano 2012: 358). However, the policy design approach endows the acts of designing policy with a form of telos. This means it overlooks, or does not amplify, the contingent role of how things are arranged. This does not mean that it ignores the fact that some

14 Panagia rightly observes that Rancière’s most famous book La Mésentente is rendered Disagreement in English, a translation that misses out the fact that a “mésentente” is closer to something of a mis-agreement or a “missed agreement” (Panagia 2018).
designs fail, or that design often works to patch over the inherently complex and problematic aspects of policy when it comes to achieving objectives (360). To cite Schneider, Ingram & de Leon, “targets are also affected through many other aspects of policy design, such as rules, tools, rationales, and the causal logic that explains how targets relate to the problem definition or to putative goals of policy” (Schneider, Ingram & de Leon 2014: 108). The stakes of policy design, as a matter of how things are arranged, are therefore high.¹⁵

This approach to policy design, when contrasted to Rancière’s account of an aesthetics of politics, speaks differently about the stakes of the policies. These are seen as instances of the specific arrangement of elements, logics and chains of correspondences. Here, policy design denotes places for intersections of element-arranging logics and the police logics of producing correspondences for the coordination of wills and energies. Howlett & Lejano note that in this regard, policy design overlaps with other relevant theoretical approaches. These include “policy-process”-approaches, with their pre-defined focus on “agenda setting” (construction of problems), “policy formulation” and “policy implementation” (Howlett & Lejano 2012: 360, see also Howlett & Ramesh 2003). Since these other approaches have little to add to my study of policy as a specific place for and practice of arrangement, I will not discuss them further.

¹⁵ Another account points to the centrality of practices of arranging elements in policy that policy design is sensitive to:

policy design contains a substantive component—a set of alternative arrangements potentially capable of resolving or addressing some aspect of a policy problem, one or more of which is ultimately put into practice—as well as a procedural component—a set of activities related to securing some level of agreement among those charged with formulating, deciding on, and administering that alternative. It thus overlaps and straddles policy formulation and policy implementation, and involves actors, ideas, and interests present at both these stages of the policy process (Howlett & Lejano 2012: 360).

While problematic in endowing this process with a telos (“resolving problems”), it however points to the fact that the way in which elements are arranged in shaping the “procedural component” also affects the involved actors (apart from target groups and those touched by the effects of policy).

¹⁶ In very broad terms, Schneider, Ingram & de Leon describe policy design as shaping institutions and the broader culture through instrumental effects of policy and rhetorical, symbolical effects (Schneider, Ingram & de Leon 2014: 108).
There exist general inventive design processes and efforts, meant to initiate new policies and government arrangements and/or (re)arrange elements within them. There are also inventive paradigms that infuse these practices of arrangement with certain norms and principles, based, in their turn, on given ideas of how to integrate a chain of set correspondences, means, ends, etc. Here, I will content myself with a brief account of New Public Management (NPM). This is a broader name for a paradigm that has had a large impact on Swedish public policy and public service since the early 1990s (Ferlie 2017). This account will also help the reader grasp what is at stake in the emergence of “value-foundation”, which I will map in chapter six, when I discuss school governance reform and the school’s mission of forming democratic citizens along the lines of “performance management” (mål- och resultatstyrning).

The term NPM was coined in 1991 by Christopher Hood as a catchword for a number of managerial principles that had gained influence on the governance of public service (Hood 1991). Hood lists six doctrinal components for NPM.17 Two of these are central in understanding how NPM has influenced the policy process. These are: “explicit standards and measures of performance” and emphasis on “output controls”. Both are about design and the creation and integration of a chain of correspondences meant to secure an outcome. These doctrines provide particular articulations of how policy and agency elements should be arranged in accordance with explicit standards, recurrent measures of performance and a re-integration of results (output) as a means to know about and adjust goals. This style of arranging things in policy produces intricate chains of correspondences of how things, actions and outcomes can fit.

By governing behavior and designing policy and public service in accordance with economic theory and managerial principles, these doctrines infuse the police’s organization of life according to set principles of correspondence. They do so by making policy and the vision of politics articulated by public policy “actuarial” in character (I borrow the concept “actuarial” from Panagia 2018). Attention is here directed towards anticipation, risk-management and the translation of the social world into

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17 These are: 1) “Hands-on professional management” in the public sector 2) “explicit standards and measures of performance” 3) emphasis on “output controls” 4) shift to “disaggregation of units in the public sector” 5) Shift to greater competition in public sector, and 6) “greater discipline and parsimony in resource use” (Hood 1991: 4–5). The shift of Swedish school governance in the 1990s reflects all of these, with privatization, decentralization, result-governance and explicit standards and measures of performance as the main ones. See chapter six.
governable points and performance targets. NPM’s diffusion within the police has changed the way policing operates as rule-oriented governance. This is because NPM integrates a chain of correspondences that introduce innovations from the managerial context. These include standards, measures of performance, and frameworks and procedures that enable “output controls”. Further, these doctrines articulate a more general conviction that it is possible to regulate and govern behavior, costs and results through the use of technical devices. Once integrated into a chain, such devices manage risk, producing and securing further correspondences between actions, means and ends.

To show how concepts from NPM have been adopted in Swedish public service governance, I will briefly discuss so-called “goal and result governance” (mål- och resultatstyrning). This helps contextualize the emergence of “value-foundation” which will be mapped in chapter six. The employers’ organization for all the regional state levels, Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting (SKL), describes “performance management” as a mixture of goal and result-governance. Goal-governance is central to any agency or policy. It is characterized as formulating goals and following them up through evaluations (SKL 2014: 7). Meanwhile, in a result-governed system, goal-governance is complemented by performance indicators and output control. This makes the formulation of goals and indicators a central part of policy formulation and governance. According to SKL: “performance indicators and measurement are means to secure goal compliance”.18 This in turn implies that goals, “to have an effect of governance” in a performance governance-model, “must be measurable and build on objective facts” (SKL 2014: 8). Thus, this governance model mandates a translation of the social world’s activities, behavior and other relevant aspects into a form which render them, and the goals, “measurable”. For this end, “performance indicators” must be developed and tracked over time, as a means of gaining knowledge about how results are obtained. As a consequence, these, like parallel evaluations, measures, etc., need to be continuously amended (15).

I discuss this at length in order to show how the integration of a chain of correspondences between means, ends, goals and results hinges on the application of technical operations whose primary task is to render the world measurable. They direct attention to, or produce value through, the modes

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of evaluation of anticipation and risk-management concerning the contingencies that can inhibit performance output. When indicators are tracked over time, focus is re-directed away from professional or institutional visions, skills and traditions (e.g., within a school or a hospital), to actuarial activity and regulation. Those involved in public service, such as nurses, are forced to spend time and resources in formulating goals and tracking indicators, and in assessing results which enhance cost benefits and efficiency. Policy design makes possible frameworks for the integration of these procedures. It also shows the best way to secure output control. The risk or tendency is that the means become the end (Larsson 2014). Echoing Larsson, and in accordance with Jean-Luc Nancy’s reading of Marx and Nietzsche, one could say that the central value of performance governance becomes its measurability. This necessitates the endless monitoring of output control, i.e. endless measurability, something that can replace the “infinite” values related to meaningfulness, dignity, etc. (Nancy 2012, Nancy 2014: 47–50, see also Mangold 2015a, Mangold 2015b).

Above, I introduced the concept of equivalency when discussing Rancière’s definition of the police as securing circulation. In reference to Nancy’s claims concerning measurability, equivalency can be seen as another name for this demand. It is likewise central to performance governance. As a style for the coordination of wills, performance governance operates within the logic of what Nancy, with Marx and Nietzsche call “general equivalency”. General equivalency, as a mode of evaluation which establishes value (Nietzsche), produces a world in which value lies in exchange and convertibility. If value is confined to the operations of exchangeability, measurability, conversion and constant transformation, with money as the smallest common denominator of general equivalency, other ways of evaluating – of having or yielding value – are marginalized. I will continue this discussion on equivalency in relation to the police’s securing of flow and of what Rancière calls consensus below.

Policing through standards

Another aspect of policing related to NPM (but not reducible to it) is “standards”. Standards and standardization are central to the police insofar as they translate and integrate the social world into a series of fits that make

19 With Nancy, this leads to a profound nihilism that reduces the world to a network for exchange he calls “techno-economics” (Nancy 2012, Mangold 2015a).
actions, movements and ways of being correspond. According to the Swedish Institute of Standards, standard as a technical term refers to:

a common solution to a recurrent problem. Standardization is the very process when parties meet and agree upon what the standard should comprise and how it should be formed. Characteristic for standardization processes is openness, voluntariness, interest-motivation [intressestyrning] and consensus. The aim with standards is to create unitary and transparent routines that we can agree upon. It is in everybody’s interest to increase the quality, avoid misunderstanding and not have to re-invent the wheel each time. In addition, you get a more efficient resource effective production (SSI 2018: 7).

Nils Brunsson and Bengt Jacobsson (2002) describe standards as “instruments of control” and standardization as “a form of regulation just as crucial as hierarchies and markets” (Brunsson & Jacobsson 2002: 1). In their view, even when “beneficial”, the outcome of standardization is contested. It sometimes involves too much regulation and too little democratic control (ibid.). Standards are not reducible to clear-cut power effects. There are cases where standards to not correspond to an organization’s actual practices, or where the impact of standards is marginalized by formal directives. Further, standards tend to make people speak rather than act, producing “decoupling” and “hypocrisy” (ibid. 5). In chapter six, I will show how standards, when applied to “value-foundation”, made possible a particular harmonization of NPM with the school’s mandate to foster democratic citizens, albeit with mixed outcomes (Skolinspektionen 2012).

In terms of enabling circulation, standards simplify access to information and the co-ordination of actions, thus fostering uniformity and conformity. As a regulatory device operating within police logic, standards should be considered as making “it easier to orientate ourselves and to understand ‘how things are’…[they aim] at the achievement of the ‘optimum degree of order’” (Brunsson & Jacobsson 2002: 170).20 By decreasing misunderstandings and

20 This societal dimension of production of fits and integration of a set of correspondences of standards is in a different account described as:

Standards are one of the hallmarks of an industrial society. As society becomes increasingly complex and its industrial base begins to emerge, it becomes necessary for the products, processes, and procedures of society to fit together and to interoperate. This interoperation provides the basis for greater integration of the elements of society, which in turn causes increased social interdependency and complexity (“Standards”, Encyclopedia of Computer Science, 1993)
interruptions, standards secure flow. Or, to cite the slogan of the Swedish Institute of Standards, “standards make the world go around” (SSI 2018). In passing, Brunsson and Jacobsson support my reading of standardization as related to the police and to the urges to secure a “working democracy”. They write that “every nation-state has problems in reconciling democracy with efficient government. Standards that are said to solve such problems will always be in demand” (Brunsson & Jacobsson 2002: 145). Others also raise concerns about the relation between standardization and democracy (Timmermans & Epstein 2010).

During the process of standardization, standards can migrate, being adopted in various domains in a process of “isomorphism” (Alm & Storm 2018, Deleuze 1988). In chapter six, I point to the migration of the standard of value-foundation from educational policy to other domains. This both enables and meets pressures to increase standardization of interaction, responsiveness and service in organizations on both the regional and state level.21

I will now turn from policy design, the doctrines of NPM, performance governance and standards, to what Rancière means by consensus. This will further develop the styles, doctrines and dispositifs that influences practices of arrangement within the logic of the police.

21 In this sense, standardization could be related to what Foucault calls a ”diagram”. In Discipline and Punish Foucault mentions diagram only once, to speak of how power relations extend throughout or configure the entire social field with a specific functioning. A diagram is a “functioning abstracted from any obstacle” (Foucault 1977a: 205). Disciplinary power is an example of a diagram. It displays how the diagram is coextensive to the whole social field and cuts across heterogeneous domains (the school, the factory, the penintiary, etc.). The concept of diagram points to “pure relations between forces” and the “transmission of pure particular features” (Deleuze 1988: 82). Deleuze points out that diagrams are therefore like the “software” of the ”hard”, concrete machines (school, factory, prison, etc., Patton 2000: 45). Diagrams only know functions and functionings (in contrast to knowledge, that verifies, classifies, and is concerned with the visible). They don’t have any objects of their own other than this functioning (which is abstract/invisible), and are thus “abstract”; “blind and mute”, which is why Deleuze calls them “abstract machines” (Deleuze 1988: 72). The isomorphism in the spread or adoption of standards resonates with Foucault’s rhetorical question quoted in the preamble of the chapter: “Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?” (Foucault 1977a: 228).

According to Deleuze, Foucault is engaged in diagrammatic mappings that are about circulation insofar as they are about “mastery and control of speed, circuits and grids set up in open space” (Deleuze 1988: 42). Contrary to a vision of a disciplinary society that is continuous, Deleuze however points out that diagrams are “unstable or fluid, continually churning up matter and functions in a way likely to create change” (35).
Consensus

Rancière points out that since the late 1980s, policing is increasingly articulated through a configuration of the common world that he terms consensus (Rancière 1999, Rancière 2010, Rancière 2012). As Panagia notes, in French the concept means something like the “good sense” (le bon sens) of sensus communis. This runs counter to a notion of consensus as an accord between people. For Rancière, who focuses on con and sensus, the concept involves the “matching of sense with sense [con-sensus]: the accord made between a sensory regime of the presentation of things and a mode of interpretation of their meaning” (Rancière 2010: viii). Mutual accord is reached in advance by a proposition declaring that no matter what differences might exist in aspirations, values, interests, etc. “there is one unique reality to which everything must relate”. This presupposes that neither voids, nor additions, exist in or for this reality (Rancière, 2009: 144; Rancière terms these additions “supplements”).\(^\text{22}\) Consensus therefore operates as a standardization of common sense for thought. This, Panagia notes, is “what equivalency does best”. Equivalency introduces set correspondences for how things can enter into a logic of exchangeability and conversion and be exchanged (Panagia 2018: 68). Consensus, as a form of standardization and linearization of the sensuous world and of time, operates within a logic that prioritizes equivalency. This occurs at the expense of modes of interruption, including the frictions produced by dissensual practices of equality and solidarity (Panagia 2018: 6). According to Nancy, who as I indicated above has the same type of reasoning, this means that consensus is a name for a regime of general equivalency that squeezes out the possibility for, and effect of, singularity (and the impact of singularity) more generally (Nancy 2014: 47–50).

Panagia points out that Rancière’s concept of consensus entails a different way of intervening into the ways in which the primacy of equivalency and the advent of neoliberalism have affected dissensual modes of partaking. Here, Rancière is indebted to Marx, whose theory of value is the critical dispositif in “consensus”. As Panagia puts it,

\(^{22}\) Rancière describes it in a later account as “the monopoly of the forms of describing the perceptible, the thinkable, and the doable” (Rancière 2012: 6). He here also notes how the police, through consensus, produces a sensible order that pacifies supplemental elements and events by regulating “the convergence and divergence of times” (5).
What Rancière gets from Marx is the sense that our theories of accountability – of making things count – are the basis of our science of politics and that actuarial science, whose job is to predict a trajectory of equivalency through time, structures our logic of representation (Panagia 2018: 67).23

Equivalence, a different term for the primacy of flow, is thus at the heart of the police. It also underlies the mutation of politics towards the “actuarial”, that is, oriented towards anticipation and risk-management by way of rendering social phenomenon equivalent. As mentioned above, an actuarial vision of politics linearizes political and democratic time by being concerned with shaping processes of becoming through which value/profit or problems/danger are formed. As such, it both marginalizes singularity and autodidactic ways of making sense of sensuous experience, as well as drawing conclusions from temporal consequences and from that which is happening. Apart from normalizing domination, consensus embodies an inegalitarian principle concerning how one can, and cannot, couple sense with sense and draw possibilities from time. In the wake of consensus, politics and news increasingly become domains for various “experts” who are set to anticipate possible ways of making sense of and acting from that which is happening. They are, as Rancière puts it, engaged in securing the “convergence and divergence of times” (Rancière 2012: 23).24

23 Panagia writes:

Marx formula for exchange: “20 yards of linen = one coat, or: 20 yards of linen are worth 1 coat. The whole mystery of the form of value lies hidden in this simple form.” The whole mystery of the form of value, in other words, lies in a representational logic of equivalence that takes one part as exchangeable with another…a logic that admits the universal circulation of things: its ontology is flow, like the smooth flow of traffic that moves us along. Indeed for Rancière the logic of equivalence is the logic of the police, whose singular solitary role is not merely exercise of power but to enable flow – the flow of signification among meanings, letters, and words. The logic of equivalence is the logic of the hermeneut’s formula that says x must mean y, that 20 yards of linen represents 1 coat” (Panagia 2018: 67).

24 As a contrast to consensus’ way of organizing time and accountability, Rancière speaks of the recycling of moments and the reconfiguration of places in a fashion that interrupts circulation and produces an expansive present. With Jean-Luc Nancy one could call such a practice a commitment to the expansion of a time (and democracy) of inequivalency (Nancy 2012, Mangold 2015a). For Nancy, equivalency is opposed to singularity, which is a different way of thinking inequivalency and interruption, as modes of creation and expansion (evaluation) of the singular: the singularity/interruption of moments, of the
To summarize, the concept of consensus alerts us to an intricate overlap between equivalence, standardization and the securing of police flow with the dominance of neoliberalism.\(^{25}\) The concept makes it possible to map the formulation of urges to secure a “working democracy”, as well as ways of responding to them that are engaged in operations of consensualization, integrating a chain of correspondences of means, ends, and inter-operating elements. This indicates how democracy is defined as a hub for the primacy of flow rather than as forms of community and having a part - that which happens when flow is halted.

Foucault’s dispositif

I have discussed, above, the usefulness of analyzing concepts such as the police, policy design, NPM, standards and governmentality through the lens of practices of arrangement. I also introduced two understandings of dispositif. The first means the disposition of elements in a text, movie or art work. The second was Foucault’s use of the term dispositif. He refers to a formation or network where “power relations become concrete” (Agamben 2009: 6).\(^{26}\) I will now develop this second understanding further.

To put it simply, Foucault’s dispositif is a network of relations of force and knowledge. To these, Foucault adds institutional mechanisms, laws, discourses and rules that can enter and help constitute this network. Foucault gives as an example the dispositif of sexuality. This emerged as a “point of access that connected the biopolitical strategy to manage and regulate the life of the species to the discipline of individual material bodies and their organic functions” (Repo 2013: 229). By referring to the formation, arrangement and appearance of subjects, of impressions, of beauty, of taste, of arts, friendships, loves, thinking, etc. (Nancy 2012, Nancy 2014).

\(^{25}\) The policing of circulation in space and time should not be viewed as confined to Western societies. The recent Saudi Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia, is an illustrating example of policing in which the inducement of flow is a major stake in constrast to an earlier more strict form of policing. See http://vision2030.gov.sa/en [Accessed May 10 2018].

\(^{26}\) Agamben himself proposes a much wider and less distinct account of the dispositif. For Agamben (2009), the dispositif offers a way of analyzing various ways through which the “substance” of human bodies are caught and subjectified (in a more or less de-subjectifying way, beyond the subjects own self-constitution), by everything from language to mobile phones, cars, etc. Agamben describes a dispositif as “literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings” (Agamben 2009: 14). He notes that with capitalism, there is an exponential multiplication of dispositifs. I will however refer to Foucault’s concept.
particular articulation of the dispositif, Foucault accounts for sexuality as something that in the 19th century came to function as “the index of a society’s strength, revealing both its political energy and its biopolitical vigour” (Foucault quoted by ibid., taken from Foucault 1990: 36–37). Its strategic function was to maintain the population and its labor capacity, and to reproduce a specific form of social relations (Foucault 1990: 36–37). Central to this conception of the dispositif is that it is strategic. It emerges in response to an urgent need. It is a formation of “strategies of relations of forces supporting, and supported by, types of knowledge…which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need” (Foucault 1980: 196, 194). While the dispositif is integrated into an urgent need at a specific moment, it lacks any definite origin, nor is it reducible to a specific intention or creator. In addition, this dispositif is always traversed by a play of forces that ultimately renders it unstable and finite (Deleuze 1992a: 162). As a consequence – and analytical point – the dispositif is a place for a certain “manipulation of relations of forces” that can lead to reversals, or “completions” of the strategic objective in relation to which the dispositif first emerged. Foucault writes:

27 In a longer description, Foucault describes it with three elements. First, it is a “thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions - in short, the said as much as the unsaid” (Foucault 1980b: 194). Second, the apparatus itself, “is the system of relations that can be established between these elements… the nature of the connection that can exist between [them]”. And third, having a “dominant strategic function”, the apparatus can be characterized as “a formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need” (ibid., emphasis added).

28 Foucault mentions two things that should draw our attention when studying a dispositif. First, there is the prevalence of a strategic objective that is floating around in a crucial moment or in relation to a number of events that call for an urgent response. Second, the continued existence of the dispositif is related to a “double process”: one of functional overdetermination and one of strategic elaboration. It is functionally overdetermined because, “each effect—positive or negative, intentional or unintentional—enters into resonance or contradiction with the others and thereby calls for a re-adjustment or a re-working of the heterogeneous elements that surface at various points.” (Foucault 1980b: 195) This overdetermination and fluctuation leads to a strategic elaboration” that enables to re-work the relations between the heterogeneous elements that the dispositif puts into resonance. Through the process of strategic elaboration, a strategic completion (remplissement) of the dispositif can come about, in which one measure or outcome from the dispositif is put to use or migrates to a different domain. Foucault takes the example of the dispositif of imprisonment to illustrate how the negative measures of locking people up and exposing them to a number of intricate disciplinary measures, engendered a number of positive possibilities (behaviors,
Dispositifs consist of power relations and types of knowledge. They are essentially productive, producing reality and truth. One example is the reality of sexuality and the discursive chatter and confessional techniques through which this reality is consolidated. Deleuze therefore characterizes Foucault’s dispositifs as “machines which make one see and speak” (Deleuze 1992a: 159–160).29

To summarize, the use of the concept of dispositif enables analysis of:

a) first, “strategies of relations of forces supporting, and supported by, types of knowledge”, drawing attention to how knowledge infuses strategies of relations of force and vice-versa;

b) the emergence of a dispositif in response to what is perceived as an urgent need

c) the prevalence of a strategic function or objective vis-à-vis this urgent need

d) a play or manipulation of forces

e) and instability – that the dispositif is unstable and, according to Foucault, functionally overdetermined, because “each effect –

subjectivities, modes of production, etc.) that were “re-utilised for diverse political and economic ends” (Foucault 1980b: 196). I believe that the same can be said about the various programs of “value-foundation” in the school and organizations, that different actors take interest in from very different points of view (health, to foster competent youth, to infuse a notion of collective responsibility, to curb bullying, ultimately to create a productive working place).

29 Dispositifs are in Deleuze’s reading of Foucault fractured by the subject’s own processes of subjectification, when subjects resist the ways in which they are shaped by arrangements and discourses (subjectification as resistance and ethical relation, the giving shape to oneself, is thus characterized by creativity). In this account, the dispositif is “a tangle, a multilinear ensemble…composed of lines”. Since power is internal to the dispositif, apart from lines of subjectification and lines of knowledge, all dispositifs are composed of lines of force; “The line of force comes about ‘in any relationship between one point and another’, and passes through every area in the dispositif” (ibid. 160, Deleuze quotes Foucault from Displine & Punish).
positive or negative, intentional or unintentional – enters into resonance or contradiction with the others and thereby calls for a re-adjustment or a re-working of the heterogeneous elements that surface at various points” (Foucault 1980: 195). This overdetermination and fluctuation leads to a strategic elaboration that allows a re-working of the relations between the heterogeneous elements that the dispositif consists of. Through the process of strategic elaboration, a strategic completion (remplissement; a filling up) of the dispositif can occur, in which the output and strategic objective of the dispositif over time become displaced as a consequence of the very operationality of the dispositif. Foucault takes the example of the dispositif of imprisonment to illustrate how locking people up and exposing them to a number of intricate disciplinary measures actually engendered a number of positive possibilities. It produced behaviors, subjectivities, modes of production, etc. that were “re-utilised for diverse political and economic ends” (Foucault 1980: 196).

As appears from the above passages on standards and standardization, the dispositif seems to overlap with or encompass some of their features. However, Foucault’s concept has a critical function. It displaces the focus from concretely identifiable standards to larger networks and strategic functions. These can contextualize standards. Like dispositifs, standards, it was noted, make people speak. The one, however, cannot be reduced to the other.
CHAPTER FOUR
A genealogical approach to mapping the material

As mentioned above, I will subject the history of efforts to secure a working democracy in Sweden to a genealogical analysis. In this chapter, I will focus on practices of arrangement in relation to genealogical approaches. The discussion will center on the practical considerations needed to complete chapters five through eight. Genealogy reveals the dispersed and discontinuous practices that went into the constitution of things which are, today, taken as given and necessary – revealing, indeed, their non-necessary status. An examination of practices of arrangement promotes this process. It returns our attention to the emergence of concepts, discourses and arrangements that are, today, integrated into coherent, taken-for-granted blocs. One thus examines and challenges the practices that brought these means of coordinating persons, places and things into being. It makes it possible to put them into tension with other possibles and paths, in order to explore possibilities of alternative outcomes.

Genealogical design and archaeological method
Before embarking on a thorough account of genealogy as a critical tactic, I should briefly describe the methodological considerations that apply to chapters five through eight. These will be discussed further under the heading of “mapping”, below.

A first consideration is that the Foucault-inspired genealogical approach presupposes some form of archaeological method, as it traces material, looking for moments of transformation of key functions and arrangements. Genealogy is a tactic that uses history – and therefore archaeology – to exposes the lack of continuity and coherence in that which is held to be important and given today. Genealogy reveals the dispersed origins, as well as the play of forces and strategies that at various moments in history took over the different apparatuses that shape and govern human behavior.
Even if Foucault abandoned the program of an archaeology of knowledge and its focus on discursive orders, he still retained many of its assumptions with regards to history and methodological procedures. He continued to expose the historical conditions and discursive practices that produced objects of discourse. In short, archaeology and genealogy share the aim to “deprive us of our continuities” (Foucault 1972: 147). Both challenge transcendental historical assumptions and subjects, including the universals used to account for society and politics. Together, they expose the conditions of possibility and the dispersed origins through which discursive objects and certain types of practices have come into being and been transformed.

Discourse, in this view – whether as science, political discourse, literature or religious utterance – is a “form of practice which is articulated upon the other practices” (Foucault in Burchell et al. 1994: 70). Samuel Chambers quotes Foucault: “to do archaeology, then, is ‘to substitute for the enigmatic treasure of “things” anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse’ (Chambers 2006: 12, quoting Foucault 1972: 47). While Foucault gives an exhaustive account of discursive formations, including their transformation, rules of formation, regularities, enunciative modalities, etc., we will have to be content with a very thin account of archaeology or a focus on discourse. My main reason for using discourse is to expose how objects, categories, subjects and problems are constructed. Further, I will look at how the boundaries that define them are displaced through various discursive practices, often involving scientific method or knowledge. This means understanding how certain modifications come about and how these are related to shifts in practices, reversals, new strategic priorities, new associations, and new games with regards to securing a certain behavior or disposition.

I discuss these constructions and modifications further below, in the section on mapping. This type of historical exposition does not seek to establish causality. Instead, it discovers conditions of possibility of objects, practices and subject positions, seeking to render “apparent the polymorphous interweaving of correlations” of discursive and non-discursive practices (Foucault in Burchell et al. 1994: 58). This approach replaces the assumption of continuity with an account of discontinuity as “a play of specific transformations” (ibid. 59). This reveals the conditions of existence of a certain discursive object or subject position and the practical fields in which these are formed (ibid. 61). My material presents fields in which political practices are articulated, allowing me to focus, for example, on how political practices modify certain systems that form concepts (ibid. 68). In
the section on mapping below, I will discuss further aspects of a genealogy-inspired approach, including the presuppositions linked to the above account of archaeology.

**Genealogy**

Genealogy is a historical, critical approach mostly associated with Foucault. Foucault constructed the approach after a close reading of Friedrich Nietzsche’s writings. Nietzsche’s works included attempts “to show how a series of practices often taken to be relatively constant over time—say, sovereignty, the state, capitalism, morality, or democracy—is often enough composed of a series of heterogeneous elements with potentialities to shift this way or that after a new shock or infusion” (Connolly 2017b: 1).

Nietzsche’s aim was in part to open for chance and for engaging in arts of the self to become otherwise (Foucault 1980a). A genealogy-inspired approach makes it possible to organize and use historical material to reveal how things that, at present, appear as rational and given came to happen by way of a range of circumstances and a play of forces, or “arbitrary impositions” (Connolly 1993). Ultimately, the goal of “becoming otherwise” is an ethical stake, understood as self-formation. David Owen describes this stake of genealogy:

> By showing that a given limit is not ‘universal, necessary, obligatory’ and thus that we can think and act differently, that we can become otherwise than what we are, genealogy opens a space in which what are experienced as immobile, irreversible and stable limits to reflection are re-experienced as mobile, reversible and unstable bounds. In other words, what is taken to be constitutive is shown to be merely regulative (Owen in Owen & Ashenden eds. 1999: 36).

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1 Whereas Nietzsche engaged in this reflexive, methodological tactics in many of his writings, he only rarely refers to genealogy as a concept. In that sense, the practices that the concept points to, we could say, is something that Foucault reconstructs from a broad reading of Nietzsche’s work.

2 In an interview from 1982 Foucault comments on the rejection of universal necessities: “All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we can still enjoy and how many changes can still be made.” (*Truth, Power, Self*, 1982, no pagination).
I have written, above, about a “genealogy-inspired approach”. For, although the following chapters do have a stake in “becoming otherwise”, a thorough genealogy would demand a larger selection of different material. It would have to trace embodied power effects if it were to fulfill what Foucault terms genealogy’s task of “expos[ing] a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history’s destruction of the body” (Foucault 1980a: 148). To trace the overlapping effects of history in discourses, practices, as well as on the level of the body, is very demanding. I will only attempt a circumscribed practice of “relentless erudition”, concentrating on government and scientific discourses, strategies and practices.

The genealogy-inspired approach traces the historic creation of concepts, discourses, problematizations, rationalities, domains and dispositifs, in order to, as Connolly puts it, “disjoin experimentally complex assemblages that others had tended to treat as universals that form a solid block of practices, or the unquestionable starting point of inquiry, or the implicit end point toward which things point” (Connolly 2017: 3). Foucault uses the term “universal” to describe naturalized, general categories or mental constructs, such as the state, the subject, and society from which common-sense thinking starts. Foucault differs from most social scientists in that his genealogical approach refuses to start from universals. Instead, it seeks to show:

how certain things—state and society, sovereign and subjects, etcetera—were actually able to be formed, and the status of which should obviously be questioned. In other words, instead of deducing concrete phenomena from universals, or instead of starting with universals as an obligatory grid of intelligibility for certain concrete practices, I would like to start with these concrete practices and, as it were, pass these universals through the grid of these practices (Foucault 2008: 3).

When reading the material, it is important to look for moments of inventiveness, when things are redefined and recombined to effectuate new possibilities, functions and power effects. This is particularly important with reference to universals and those given names under which practices range.

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3 Being aware of how history is imprinted in bodies as a reflexive site to fight power effects implicated in this making, also means that the genealogist becomes aware of her own mode of writing and speaking (which is clear in Nietzsche’s case and to some extent in Foucault’s case) (Connolly 2017: 5).
Below, I will discuss central aspects of genealogy as an approach, before describing how I use the approach in chapters five through eight.

By eschewing “the search for ‘origins’” (Foucault 1980a: 140, 142), the historical practice of genealogy produces a dispersion and de-naturalization of that which at present appears as coherent and given. This actively increases chance in the present (Foucault 1980a: 155). Nietzsche, whose use of this tactic Foucault studied, calls “effective history” a way of using history to trace lines of descent and discontinuous forms of knowledge and life. “Effective history” can be used to fight normal, “comprehensive history”, which is written with assumptions of order, continuity, causality, gradualism, temporal linearity and teleology. Further, it has recourse to identities or universals. Genealogy thus involves the cultivation of a sensitivity to discontinuity both in time - concerning moral and political systems - and of the self, undermining assumptions of stability and of any necessity in social life. Nietzsche shows this when he writes:

the cause of the origin of a thing and its eventual utility, its actual employment and place in a system of purposes, lie worlds apart; whatever exists, having somehow come into being, is again and again reinterpreted to new ends, taken over, transformed, and redirected by some power superior to it: all events in the organic world are a subduing, a becoming master, and all subduing and becoming master involves a fresh interpretation, an adaptation through which any previous “meaning” and “purpose” are necessarily obscured or even obliterated (Nietzsche quoted in Connolly 2017: 1, taken from Nietzsche 1989:77).

Genealogy produces a rupture with comprehensive history’s arbitrary impositions and what Nietzsche terms “adaptation”. This reveals the forces that at various moments take over institutions and give them a new direction. In accordance with the above quote by Owen on “becoming otherwise”, genealogy is thus always already a type of struggle; a decision to use historical knowledge to create a different present. In the context of this dissertation’s reading of the material, it means that ethical, political and democratic ways of being, thinking and acting, traditions and possibilities that are overshadowed by the material’s emerging formations, binaries, divisions and so on, are mentioned parallel to these. These can be articulated side-by-side or
in tension with the first, working upon their given and allegedly necessary status.\(^4\)

There are further points to be made concerning Foucault’s reconstruction of Nietzsche’s genealogical approach and its importance to this dissertation. In *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History* (Foucault 1980a), Foucault summarizes genealogy as Nietzsche practices it. Genealogy’s rejection of the search for origins (*Ursprung*) is primarily enabled by two focuses: one on descent (*Herkunft*) and one on emergence (*Entstehung*). As a practice, it demands “relentless erudition” in history (140). The search for origins, like universals, must be rejected because it “assumes the existence of immobile forms that precede the external world of accident and succession” (142). Instead, one traces descent. This allows one to find the dispersed origins of that which in the present appears coherent and given. As Foucault puts it,

> to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being do not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents (146).

\(^4\) Genealogy hence releases marginalized, or “subjugated” knowledges, that are buried in the power-effects of institutionalized scientific discourse. To make this point clear, Foucault calls genealogies “antisciences” that disturb any “positivistic returns to a more exact form of science” (Foucault 1980b:83).

Genealogies are, quite specifically, antisciences… They are about the insurrection of knowledges. Not so much against the contents, methods, or concepts of a science; this is above all, primarily, an insurrection against the centralizing power-effects that are bound up with the institutionalization and workings of any scientific discourse organized in a society such as ours. That this institutionalization of scientific discourse is embodied in a university or, in general terms, a pedagogical apparatus, that this institutionalization of scientific discourses is embodied in a theoretico-commercial network such as psychoanalysis, or in a political apparatus—with everything that implies—is largely irrelevant. Genealogy has to fight the power-effects characteristic of any discourse that is regarded as scientific. (Foucault 2003: 9.)

The practice of genealogy, therefore, is an attempt to “emancipate historical knowledges” from their subjection under the hierarchical order of power associated with science (85).
Again, as mentioned above, the body is the primary domain of descent insofar as it registers history, even the history of previous generations.5

However, genealogy must also be sensitive to emergence, which “is always produced through a particular stage of forces” (148–149). Tracing emergence means analyzing the entry and eruption of forces, which reveal the “hazardous play of dominations”. Genealogy also implies a different, and possibly reversed, conception of systems of rules. Reading Nietzsche in this light, Foucault sees attending to emergence as opposed to any notion of achieving universal reciprocity:

Humanity does not gradually progress from combat to combat until it arrives at universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination (Foucault 1980a: 151).

To summarize, in *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History* (Foucault 1980a), Foucault describes three aims of Nietzsche’s use of genealogy, in his struggle against “Platonic modalities of history”: first, it serves to transform history into “a totally different form of time”, a “counter-memory” (160); second, it serves to create a systematic dissociation of identity to “make visible all the discontinuities that cross us” (162); and, lastly; it serves to sacrifice the subject of knowledge by way of “experimentation on ourselves” (163). With the above practices and aims in mind, let me return to the dissertation’s approach.

Walters distinguishes between three different genealogical “styles” in Foucault’s work: tracing of lines of descent, the practice of counter-memory and re-serialization, and genealogy as “the retrieval of forgotten struggles and subjugated knowledges” (Walters 2012: 115–117).6 The first of these has been

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5 Following Nietzsche, Foucault states: “descent attaches itself to the body. It inscribes itself in the nervous system, in temperament, in the digestive apparatus; it appears in faulty respiration, in improper diets, in the debilitated and prostrate body of those whose ancestors committed errors” (Foucault 1980a: 147).

6 Foucault variously call these "local", "erudite", "subjugated", "popular" knowledges or “counter-knowledge”. This style of genealogy is an attempt to “emancipate historical knowledges” from the subjection under the hierarchical order of power associated with science (Foucault 1980b: 85). Foucault characterizes two types of subjugated knowledges. First, blocs of historical knowledge which are present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematizing theory, what could be called “buried”, erudite subjugated knowledge. Second, there are the knowledges that are “disqualified from the hierarchies of knowledges and sciences” (82). Among these are naive, low-ranking, popular
discussed already. Re-serialization and counter-memory is a practice of unsettling the given by connecting it to historical fields that are relegated to a region outside a particular regime of collective historical memory. As Walters notes, when working on this scale, practical rather than logical reasons preclude attending to the little details and minor variations that the first style of genealogy brings to the fore (Walters 2012: 132). Genealogy as re-serialization involves a double move of disconnection and reconnection. It unsettles objects that appear self-evident to us by dislodging them from their usual frames and placing them in new series (Walters 2012: 131).

Given this, the dissertation’s genealogical-inspired approach allows the identification and challenge of the contingent role of inventiveness. The reduction of the present and history seems inevitably to having led to certain verdicts, distinctions and accounts. Genealogy re-examines the production of particular distinctions and verdicts endowed with necessity. It fights against reductions of, for instance, citizens to individualistic individuals, or as excluded/included, trusting/distrusting, anti-democrats/democrats, etc. The approach emphasizes that subjects and life forms are multiple, or in the making, and always engaged in plural connections across identity and difference. For this dissertation, this means, first and foremost, challenging actuarial visions of politics devoted to tracking changes in behavior and the social field over time. This vision is, in fact, inherent in the urges to secure a “working democracy”.

Using this approach on relevant documents will reveal the special power effects of assumptions about continuity, universals and a telos in history. These assumptions marginalize minor knowledges and alternative ways of attending to the world. As mentioned above, the approach makes it possible to disassemble the present’s integrated, strategic political frameworks and discourses. It allows us to display the elements of knowledge, affect and rationality of which they are composed, and detect their link to specific power effects.

knowledges that are particular, local, differential and incapable of unanimity. These knowledges, so Foucault, were concerned with a “historical knowledge of struggles” (83), that genealogy makes use of tactically to undermine the “tyranny of globalizing discourses with their hierarchy”, whether it be against disciplinary knowledge or total theories. Followi

Foucault highlights that, by introducing discontinuity “into our very beings”, effective history “divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself” (Foucault 1980a: 153). Following Nietzsche, de-individualization is thus a stake of genealogy (Foucault in Deleuze & Guattari 1983: xiv).
Mapping

To trace the dispersed origins of what in the present counts as important and true, and to look for moments of emergence and transformation, is a cartographic practice. In this section, I will describe a certain practice of orientation that I use with when addressing the documents under study, and discuss what one needs to pay attention to when mapping the material. Apart from attending to how objects and subject positions are constructed, the genealogical approach engages the scholar in mapping places, moments, events and problematizations. The analysis must note when something comes into being, when a new force takes over, or when a new knowledge type or arrangement infuses a domain. In this section, I will discuss themes or possibilities identified by Foucault and others when describing this way of working as a critical-historical form of analysis of forms of government. Further, I will give a general description of the particular movement of mapping to be applied to the material. This general discussion is a preamble to the more detailed analyses of the material done in the subsequent chapters.

Topological analysis

Stephen J. Collier (2009) describes Foucault’s procedure of tracing and analyzing the emergence of governmental formations and power forms as a “topological” practice. This practice focuses on “the configurations in which forms of power take shape and function” from the specific viewpoint of “the connectivity properties that arise from certain arrangements of elements, and with their transformations.” (Collier 2009: 80). Collier emphasizes the need to focus on the “redeployments” and “re-combinations”, at specific moments, of techniques, material forms, institutional structures and technologies of power. In other words, the approach allows us to understand - for example - how new forces enter an institution, or how a formation emerges from a new use or new combination of techniques. Topological analysis illuminates the patterns that these configurations shape and the transformations of those patterns. It breaks down the material and a given domain or formation to the functions they perform, guarantee, enable and legitimize. It brings to the fore the practices that integrate and bring about an arrangement by tracing the operative elements and conditions of possibility

Following the argument in chapter two, the study of a “topology” is a cartographic task. Deleuze both speaks of Foucault as “cartographer” and as someone drawing out a “topology of power” (Deleuze 1988).
for a specific political practice or for the formation of a particular form of
government. The use of topological analysis fruitfully looks to the places –
moments, events, problematizations, policies – in which a certain function is
transformed, emerges or becomes articulated. It thereby allows us to trace
the “broad configurational principles through which new formations of
government are assembled” (Collier 2009: 80).

An example of this is Collier & Lakoff’s construction of a genealogy of
Homeland Security. The authors trace sets of practices and capabilities of
security that became integrated into what today is Homeland Security, and
link these to a moment of emergence of schema they call “distributed
preparedness” (Collier & Lakoff 2008).

Formation of government
When one rejects universals and applies a genealogical approach to forms of
government, one has a chance to map the making of particular “formations
of government”. One can trace “how existing techniques and technologies of

9 This view resonates with my critique of Rose and Dahlstedt in chapter three. As Collier
points out, with the focus on “redeployments” and “re-combinations” Foucault “moves
away from an earlier tendency to formulate global diagnoses of power relations in a given
age as stemming from a single logic (of sovereignty, discipline or normalization).”
10 In Collier & Lakoff’s genealogy of Homeland Security, the authors trace set of practices
and capabilities of security that became integrated into what today is Homeland Security, and
link these back to a moment of emergence of schema they call “distributed
preparedness” (Collier & Lakoff 2008). Drawing on Deleuze’s reading of Foucault, they
conceptualize “distributed preparedness” as an “abstract schema” that enable to at once
to define political problems and to identify technical means of intervention (Collier &
Lakoff 2015: 47). In practice, this means that what they conceptualize as “distributed
preparedness”, is “an organizational framework and set of techniques for approaching
security threats” that emerges in the post-World War II USA (Collier & Lakoff 2008: 8).
The schema, whose implementation is “fraught with internal tensions”, emerged in a
complex play between local level and national security strategies (ibid.). The authors
reconstruct “distributed preparedness” from the practices, effects and regulations that
have been effectuated since its emergence to trace it back to its dispersed origins. Doing
so, Collier and Lakoff start from a practice (strategic bombing) to study the
problematications of security that enabled to secure a vital productive power (11).
Following the assumptions of strategic bombing doctrine, the issue was formulated in
terms of whether such an attack “would succeed in destroying America's productive
power” (5). The assumption was that the enemy’s “success…would depend in the main
on the organization and functional efficiency of the country's civil defense” (ibid.). As an
example of a functional analysis, these assumptions pointed to practical questions such
as: how should planners conceptualize the US as a target space? What kinds of
preparations would be appropriate to meeting this threat? And who should be responsible
for organizing these efforts? To address these questions, “distributed preparedness”
emerged as a schema for coordinated planning and response.
power are re-deployed and recombined in diverse assemblies of... government” (Collier 2009: 79). This will be my approach, for instance, in my analysis of how violence-promoting extremism is addressed (chapter seven).

According to Collier, this type of analysis uses *analytical decomposition* to trace lines of descent of a specific practice, technique or political domain (this is what Walters, cited above, terms the first style of genealogy). Second, it *focuses on processes of recombination and re-problematization* when mapping how actors articulate problematizations in specific moments. According to Collier, this means focusing on “the specific activity of thought”, in order to “understand the processes of recombination and re-problematization through which contemporary government – beyond ‘advanced liberalism’ [Rose] – is being refigured” (Collier 2009: 100). I have termed this a dimension of inventiveness, at stake in these recombinations and re-problematizations. Lastly, Collier emphasizes the need to map the *games set up* to handle heterogeneous elements – techniques, material forms, institutional structures and technologies of power. These games can also be understood in terms of the specific concrete assemblages or dispositif that they articulate or are part of.

**Eventalization**

The theme of emergence has been discussed above. Foucault gives a few indications of how to proceed when mapping the emergence of formations and practices. These are often articulated in specific “events”. By attending to these events, one can produce a mapping or “eventalization”. Here, one looks for moments of crisis, events and situations during which an established practice or function is called into question (Foucault 1991: 77, Walters 2012: 57). In the material analyzed in this dissertation, such a crisis moment might be identified – for instance – through the recurrent problematizations, starting in 1990 and becoming acute in the mid-90s, of whether traditional civic associations could function as a site in which to produce well-behaved and engaged citizens. To *eventalize* the material in accordance with the above practices of descent and emergence means attempting to discover the “connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on which at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident, universal and necessary” (ibid.).

In chapter six, I do this by tracing how the standard of “value-foundation” became embedded in the school’s mandate to foster democratic citizens. This happened in a moment of change, just when the school’s governance was modified according to principles of NPM. I also map external relations of
intelligibility evident in the material. This allows me to show how the urge to secure Sweden’s “working democracy” became inseparable from a vision of democracy as a behavioral system, crossed, in turn, by logics of standardization and security. This type of mapping includes exposing the non-given, questionable alignments, dependencies and strategic elaborations that exist between different political and scientific fields.

Practical texts

According to Foucault, practices are best studied in so-called practical texts. These texts are either prescriptive or written in order to offer rules. Foucault himself worked primarily with archive material. He traced forms of knowledge incorporated in the daily practices of institutions, such as routines of incarceration, practices related to the constitution of the “madman” and disciplinary practices. According to Bacchi (2009, 2012, 2016), policy documents can be viewed as practical texts that indicate “what to be done”.

In the Swedish case, policy documents can be complemented by several related documents. The Swedish use of government commissions of inquiry and the close relationship between science and policy (discussed in chapter two) produces a rich variety of practical texts. These include not only policy but reports meant to prepare policy. Such preparatory reports provide input from “experts” whom the government asks to participate in, or lead, the administration of certain realms of political knowledge. In addition, there are evaluations or reports from concerned ministries. This type of material often provides a good overview of how new formations, specific problematizations and new government concepts and approaches emerge from cross-references between policies, institutional domains, surveys, statistical and technical procedures and the social sciences.

Problematizations

Problematizations are also important when mapping, particularly those addressing the functions and natures of specific population sub-groups. Foucault describes a problematization as the process through which certain things become a “problem” - that is, “how and why certain things (behavior, phenomena, processes) became a ‘problem’” (Foucault 1985: 115). This happens through an “ensemble of discursive and non-discursive practices that...constitute [something] as an object of thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, or political analysis, etc.)” (Foucault 1994: 670). Rosalyn Diprose adds that the “something” that is problematized can be:
a “domain of action, a behavior” or zone of life, a technical devise or procedure that becomes controversial because, for social, economic or political reasons, it is “made uncertain” and presents as a set of “difficulties” that require resolving. (Diprose et al. 2008: 277).

The goal of interrogating problematizations is to render their political status visible. One traces the relations – “connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on” (Foucault 1991: 76) – that are involved in creating government formations. For Carol Bacchi this is done by standing back from taken-for-granted objects and concepts integral to the frameworks that govern people. This allows one to “determine how they have come to be through studying the heterogeneous strategic relations – the politics – that have gone into their making.” (Bacchi 2012: 5). Foucault’s approach, however, differs from Bacchi’s language-oriented view (Bacchi 2009: 31). For Foucault, discursive practices, including problematizations, are always set in a material context that both induces and is affected by them. This is also the view adopted here.

Scenes

When mapping practices of arrangement, I also look at ways of staging a challenge or a problem by attending to how sensitivities are arranged in, for example, a typology, with images, and by the use of rhetorical elements. Sometimes, documents stage particular scenes, meant to display a process or link between elements. An analysis of such scenes can make the urge to secure a working democracy graspable in terms of how sensibilities and composite parts are to be arranged. This approach does not reduce government documents and social scientific writings to instrumental texts with a telos. Rather, it sees them as implicated in articulating specific sensitivities that give their efforts a sense of being both taken-for-granted and urgent. They thus articulate a specific vision and affective stance with regards to questions of democracy and democratic renewal. Rancière’s scenographic sensitivity is central to the practice of mapping, in that it highlights the documents’ scenographic qualities. As Panagia emphasizes, Rancière’s practice of writing is oriented towards displaying the scenographic qualities of writers such as Aristotle and Marx. In doing so, he shows how they are implicated in arranging sensibilities. This is evident when one examines how words and ideas are arranged on a page (comparable to analyses of painting and filmmaking, ibid. 67, Rancière 2004: 13–15). In chapters five to eight, I too will show how the material does more than arrange elements through
policy and science, in order to make it possible to achieve goals. It also shares a sense of urgency. This entails a sensibility of the moment that effectively excludes some alternative ways of solving an urgent problem. It directly or indirectly silences alternative ways of thinking and acting democratically, politically and as a scholar.

When one focuses on sciences, one can see how policy- and social-scientific texts are places where a particular material arrangement of things, referred to above as “design”, produces or secures certain forms of relationality and assembly formation. This allows one to map the documents’ rhetorical elements in terms of how they seek to support or nourish a particular form of relationality. In chapter seven, accordingly, I show how the problematization of “exclusion” is continuously staged through rhetorical figures. These permit us to grasp that unless “we”, the readers, accept the problematization as stated, and grant the government a mandate to execute a harsh policy against exclusion, “we” will all lose and society will break apart. This type of analysis involves critical attention to how policy- and social-scientific texts are committed to the arrangement and rearrangement of more or less exclusionary participatory forms (Panagia 2018: xii).

Related to the material aspects – the particular elements, images, typologies, etc. – of the above-mentioned scenes, mapping also attends to a cumulative integration of concepts and discourses. It further notes the document’s form or genre (e.g., commission of inquiry report, bill, scientific argumentation). These insert certain concepts and truths as starting points for new efforts. I will analyze this “material” logic (and the logic of the material) in relation to the politics inherent in this cumulative and discursive integration.

Summary

To end this chapter, I want briefly to return to genealogy, summarizing how its use will structure chapters five through eight. As noted, Walters distinguishes between three different genealogical “styles” used in Foucault’s work: the tracing of lines of descent, the practice of counter-memory and reserialization, and genealogy as “the retrieval of forgotten struggles and subjugated knowledges” (Walters 2012: 115–117). In chapter five specifically, and more generally in subsequent chapters, I will utilize the first style in order to trace the emergence of democracy policy. This policy did not emerge in response to any evident need to create a coherent framework to reform
democracy or to articulate democratic principles. Rather, it emerged in response to the way in which tendencies in the population were problematized. These, in turn, stemmed from what was becoming a recurrent, institutionalized practice of reviewing the state of democracy. The material refers to the requirements of democracy and the importance of its smooth functioning. It assembles a set of correspondences and arrangements that are deemed capable of motivating people to act and behave so as to take upon themselves the task of renewing democracy. Reading these texts through the lens of the theoretical literature discussed above, the path is cleared for what Walters terms re-serialization. Instead of reading the material in terms of a given “democracy reform”, responding to given problems, chapter five will concentrate on the inverted function. It will show how these practices take democracy and assumed threats to its survival as a productive starting point in constituting problems and devising new ways of monitoring and governing the population. But they then effectuate inventive practices and assemble formations meant to address the population’s habits, dispositions and behavior in a fashion that in fact exceeds any obvious requirement of democracy. Similarly, in chapter six, I use two genealogical operations to map the material. First, I use genealogy as a form of descent to discover the dispersed origins of the taken-for-granted discourse concerning the universal “value-foundation”. Second, I re-serialize the material. This reveals a particular dispositif with a strategic objective and a standard formulated in response to the NPM-influenced reform of school governance.

Chapter seven has a less obvious genealogical design. It reveals the mobile and regulative functions of discursive practices that consolidate objects – in this case, the excluded and extremists. The government assembles different government apparatuses in response to these objects. I demonstrate the consolidation of the category of “the excluded” by tracing the practices of mapping exclusion. Chapter seven shows how this field is connected to a discourse, emerging after 2005, on violence-promoting extremism. These fields share a strategic understanding. They seek to affect processes meant to address the supposed problem of people who are not involved in circuits through which they can work socially and be “assets” to society. In this case, the genealogical approach reveals how the strategic elaboration between these fields promotes the exchange between a more security-oriented approach and one oriented towards thinking and addressing processes of change and democratic renewal.

If taken on its own, chapter eight seems to have a less obvious genealogical design. The chapter concentrates on how survey research and texts inspired
by their approaches define democracy and seek to contain the effects of change in Sweden, with specific reference to the assumed requirements of a working democracy. Chapter eight, however, constitutes a genealogy related to the very formulation and perspective of a “working democracy”. It reveals the arbitrary, non-necessary alignments between democratic renewal and the categories and models used by survey research to interpret change.
CHAPTER FIVE

The birth and transformation of democracy policy as a political domain

In this chapter, I map the birth and re-definition of democracy policy. I begin in 1985 with the government directives to the Power Commission (PC) and the final report it produced. This was a moment when the Swedish democratic ideal was re-framed. Here, we find an initial problematization of the alignment between processes in the population and the surrounding world, on the one hand, and the institutional forms of Swedish democracy, on the other. In the PC, two visions of the “Swedish democratic ideal” clash: the government’s collectivist and the authors’ individualist vision. The government directives and the authors (mainly political scientists, headed by Olof Pettersson) disagree on the Swedish democratic ideal. Both, however, postulate that the means of solving citizens’ potential and real dis-involvement in democracy is to produce arrangements to encourage the coherence of the lives, activities and values of citizens and the workings of democracy and institutions. The authors are fairly confident that Swedish democracy can be re-arranged to become individual-centered, characterized by freedom of choice. New forms of participation would replace or evolve along with those associated with the collectivist Swedish democratic ideal.

Next, I argue that reports created in the wake of the 1992–4 financial crisis, articulated democracy through an anticipatory vision of politics. Here, we find the urge to secure a “working democracy”. This urge’s anticipatory, preventative focus enables both government and reform-oriented researchers to track potential risks to existing forms of engagement and to the balance between the population and institutional forms. Both formulate possibilities and responses through these very dangers. The chapter shows that this vision is central to the initiation and integration of the policy domain “democracy policy”. They are equally central to its main goal, which is to safeguard representative democracy and its “mode of functioning”, and to its individualized vision of how to ensure useful civic behavior and, thus, democracy.
The chapter is focused on tracing how this vision is a key element in a larger dispositif. The dispositif’s strategic objective is to secure democratic involvement, mainly participation, but also dispositions, experiences and habits that are in congruence with the forms, ways of doing and requirements of the representative system. I trace the dispositif’s articulation as it develops through three important periods. The first period stretches from the financial crisis in 1992–1994 to the final report produced by the Democracy Commission in 2000. During this period, the objective articulated concerns how to nurture the population’s values amidst the demise of the industrial society and a new, emerging multitude of identities and “chaos of values”. The material produced during this period problematizes the population’s declining engagement in civic associations. This decline, which is seen as central, is framed by the knowledge-type of “social capital” and that it will help cure dis-involvement, along with the fear that “social capital” will dissipate.

At stake, however, is not only the need to contain dangers. The objectives include the constitution of a new type of individual whose beneficial habits and patterns of behavior extend across economic, political and social domains. The new arrangements that indicate these possibilities also indicate the “profit” inherent in changing the population’s habits and ways of acting and being so as to adapt to new conditions of competition and internationalization.

The chapter goes on to trace how this vision is operative in the new problematizations that appeared in the late 1990s. These developed with the emergence of democracy policy in 2000–2001. The report of the Democracy Commission (2000), and those of a range of smaller commissions in the years before, problematize the population’s involvement in democratic forms. They also problematize the population’s qualities more generally, discussing these in terms of scientific demands regarding these forms. The dispositif was now oriented towards containing risks, the foremost among these being a decrease in electoral participation and membership in civic associations and political parties.

The chapter shows how the Democracy Commission’s report dedicated lengthy sections to the introduction of inventive arrangements that infuse the dispositif. The report shows how to secure new forms of democratic
involvement, and describes the type of citizen who would take upon herself the realization of a particular renewal of democratic engagement.¹

Finally, the chapter traces a third articulation of the dispositif starting in 2008. In 2008, engagement in democracy policy was revived by the new liberal-conservative government. The aims and means to achieve them were re-arranged. This had consequences for how democracy and democratic involvement were envisioned and shaped. The actuarial vision of politics is now articulated in managerial terms. This meant treating democratic renewal and strength as a matter of individual influence and responsiveness to standards. The vision was also manifested in a reversal of the policy domain’s stated goals. It was now to foster “social cohesion”. Another central feature in this period is the security-orientation that takes place as of 2010. This orientation led the government to use “well-working democracy” as a starting point to assemble preventative and repressive means to fight against extremism.

A new democratic dynamic?

In 1985, the Swedish social-democratic government initiated an inquiry into the effects of power differences on Swedish democracy. Establishing the Power Commission (PC) was part of this. Five years later, the commission, headed by political scientist Olof Petersson, presented its report: Democracy and Power in Sweden (SOU 1990:44), as well as a number of smaller research publications. Its founding government directives commissioned the PC to analyze the distribution of power and influence within different domains in the Swedish society. The PC was to investigate the “major factors [are] that shape the power to form the Sweden of tomorrow” (PC-directives, PC: 411) as part of an attempt to determine the processes that affect democratic dynamics. The directives did not express urgency; rather, an urge to obtain an assessment of the differences in power in the country with an eye towards improving abilities to maintain fruitful democratic involvement. However, the directives also reflect an awareness that there might exist unnoticed changes or discontinuities that might undermine the balance of a democracy based on high social inclusion: “The actual societal development could therefore very well imply that the real content of democracy on the whole is

¹ On the level of the text, I indicate how civic spirit, dynamic citizenship, participation between the elections, and foremost “democratic awareness” were put together to contain the dangers of a “gap between voters and elected” and to address those who were considered living a “passive” societal life.
hollowed out” (PC-directives, PC: 413). In the directives, the government traces democratic development in Sweden. It postulates that democracy had reached beyond formal participation. It had gradually achieved the ability to affect one’s “living conditions”, which referred to a wider social sphere usually associated with the Swedish economy and welfare state. The government directives present this “everyday democracy” (vardagsdemokrati), supported by growing social rights and including influence exercised at the workplaces and through civic associations, as crucial to the involvement of citizens in “shaping the future” (PC-directives, PC: 412). The government terms the overall beneficial dynamic of these different spheres’ mutually reinforcing elements “the Swedish democratic ideal” (ibid.).

Based on this premise, the directives both demand an investigation of power differences and of how they affect the democratic involvement. This was to show whether the “societal development on the whole is getting closer to the Swedish democratic ideal” (PC-directives, PC: 413). The directives reflect a confidence in the balances and strength of this ideal, although they did not deny its vulnerability. Both confidence and the awareness of vulnerability rest on the notion that Swedish democratic involvement and balance is the outcome of mutually reinforcing domains:

As little as a stagnating economy can guarantee economic security, can a stagnating democracy guarantee the social stability that is both a value in itself [and] as a precondition for economic development. The democratic ideal in Sweden departs from the idea that democracy, social security and effective production mutually reinforce each other and are each other’s preconditions (PC-directives, PC: 412).

In this quote, the democratic ideal conforms to a particular vision of how elements ought to be arranged in order to secure social stability and economic development. The quote addresses critics who prioritized the economy and who wished for a reduction in redistributive public spending and the policy arrangements that attend it. In contrast, the quote advocates solidarity between different social groups, and recommends explicit power relations so as to avoid a sense of powerlessness among the less powerful.

2 The confidence in the existing balances and the ideal is noteworthy in an ending statement of a section in which this ideal is described: “Such was and is still the democratic ideal in Sweden” (Så såg och ser alltjämt det demokratiska idealet ut i Sverige) (PC-directives, PC: 412). This precise formulation was also what the authors of the final report of the commission disagreed upon and defied, by stating that there was no shared acceptance of such an ideal and by introducing a different understanding. See below.
Following this directive, the commission inquired into, coded and assessed the situation in various systems whose changes could be seen as affecting a balance currently assumed to exist. The systems examined included the factors and forces shaping the opinions and worldviews of citizens, the gender-system (or gender contract-system), the power over capital and its concentration and intertwinement with politics, the workings of organized interests, the party system and, finally, citizens’ engagement, the power over markets and the public, elites, and new forms of technology.

Both the directives and the commission report assume and produce an understanding of the forms, concepts, balances, inclusions, etc. that they believe define Swedish democracy at that moment. The report follows the government directives but gives it a different slant. It follows it by investigating changes in the structure of parties and party membership, institutional structures and interests. It also considers how citizens use their leisure time, changes in the family structure, and the ways in which the workplace contributes to the social mechanisms of involvement and political identity (PC: 30–32). In this sense, both government and commission seek to formulate means to contain and use ongoing changes to strengthen the Swedish democratic ideal. The shared focus on the stakes of monitoring larger processes that shape the qualities of the population and on the circuits that can secure these qualities reflect a shared embracing of governmentality.

However, as an inventive a way of re-arranging the elements of the Swedish democratic ideal and its balances, the authors of the report also contest the government directives. They question the government vision of the democratic ideal and of where and how the population’s life chances are shaped. Instead, the commission authors favor a more neoliberal vision (even if they were still forced to add sections influenced by Marxist thinking into systems that might exist above the government and which might impact existing forms of inclusion and participation). They challenge the government vision by creatively re-defining three central concepts: “democracy”, “power” and “societal development” (PC: 11).

First, the report contests the government’s claim that the “Swedish democratic ideal” is unanimously accepted (12). Rather than dwelling on the balances and circuits that secure social stability and solidarity, the report underscores the importance of deliberative democratic capacities. These were, for instance, rational reflection which emancipates the “human” from “drives and impulses” and the ability to change preferences in response to arguments presented in open debate (15). The report emphasized that the “working of the representative democracy” necessarily “presupposes aware
The authors frame this social dynamic in contrast to the inertia of “external obedience” supposedly required of the collectivist vision of the government. They then suggest governmental measures that would promote ways of acting and being that would support a new type of democratic dynamic. In order to do this, the authors present their own interpretation of Swedish democracy. It was described not as a collectivist ideal, but “a search for social safety founded in common orders with the desire for individual freedom” (PC: 409). In support of this claim, they point to a number of ongoing changes that had adversely affected conditions necessary to maintain the fruitful relationships described in the government directives. First, they show that the so-called “Swedish model” is – contrary to the government’s belief – “over”. Or, as they put it:
Many of the solutions of yesterday, such as large scale operation, standard solutions and public expansion do not appear as possible any more (390) …The period in Sweden’s history characterized by a strong public expansion, centralized wage negotiations on the basis of a historical compromise between labor and capital, social engineering and centrally planned standard solutions is over (407).

The authors place the most significant changes in the early 1970s, when Sweden underwent a profound societal change. The question arising from this, in the report, is the effects of this on “citizens’ resources and possibilities to affect their society” (393). Although the authors do identify power differences existing between different citizens and groups, they do not see Sweden as a “two-tiered society”. Rather, the authors identify increasing individualization, changes in values and growing diversity (internationalization) as modern challenges to the existing forms for democratic involvement. These changes constitute what Deleuze & Guattari would term a “de-territorialization” of citizenship and the collective and thus of the sedimented balances to guarantee a certain democratic stability and output.3

The authors view these changes as opening up new opportunities for democracy, if one but adopted their definition of the democratic ideal and its underpinning arrangements. The authors argue that Swedish citizens’ ability to “take responsibility for their society is possibly higher than ever” (399), as are their expectations of having influence (403). By redefining democracy as the search for a balance between the individual and collective, “power” is displaced by “empowerment” and “societal development”. The problem, as defined by the authors, is therefore not the citizens, but the institutional arrangements, which do not allow for this new circulation. By further referring the deterritorializing processes of change mentioned above, the authors argue that this will inevitably challenge the institutions that emerged with industrial society, including the Swedish model as a “problem solving method”. That these now become challenged by several processes of change, the authors conclude, means that Sweden is entering a period of uncertainty.

3 For Deleuze and Guattari (1987), societies are primarily defined by discontinuity, or by “lines of flight”, which displace and transform existing segments, structures, representations, systems, constellations and frameworks. “De-territorialization” is a concept that indicates that all assemblages are defined by lines of flight through which they eventually break down and are transformed into something else. However, assemblages are at the same time stabilized by movements of re-territorialization which fix elements as the assemblage is being carried away by processes of deterritorialization. (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, Patton 2000).
Different institutions and power-structure balances will emerge, and Swedes will be forced to frame responses to them (ibid.).

The report thus emphasizes changes that supposedly problematize the government’s “Swedish democratic ideal”, and argue in support for the authors’ democratic ideal both as a more sound interpretation of this ideal and as a way of defining a new “problem solving method”. The PC had conducted a so-called Citizen Survey that supported this vision. Through this Citizen Survey, the authors produce an anticipatory vision of new contingencies affecting popular involvement with democratic forms and circuits. Its central findings are that a gap between voters and their elected representatives has emerged, that electoral participation is lessening, that voting patterns are increasingly unstable, that party loyalty is decreasingly dependent on class-affiliation, and that new forms of powerlessness has emerged alongside more demanding citizens. Further, young people were less attracted to associational life, while citizens were increasingly likely to abandon existing structures when trying to change things, eschewing remaining within and working on existing structures (403–404). In view of these changes, the authors see the renewal of Sweden’s “characteristic style of government” (styrelsesätt) as depending on a more individualist orientation to democratic institutions and methods for problem-solving (407). This more individualist style, they argue, is a desirable, existing technology useful in creating new institutions and ways of handling the processes of change in the social and political realms. This technology would create a “new balance between…how to join a desire for social safety founded in common orders with the desire for individual freedom” (409).

This redefinition of the Swedish democratic ideal and the re-arrangement of its basic elements in relation to ongoing changes was to have a large impact on subsequent strategic analyses and measures meant to strengthen and safeguard democracy. As, in coming years, several of the challenges mentioned in the report were going to be taken up as urgent problems. “Democracy” – now shorn of any more committed analysis of power relations – became an organizing name when devising policies meant to induce or support the type of circulation recommended by the PC. This approach, it was thought, would make it possible to avoid the dangers inherent in the ongoing changes while fostering ways of acting and doing that ensured a democratic ideal similar to that advocated by the PC.

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During the 1990s, the de-territorializations noted by the PC were coded and conceptualized in additional reports published by political scientists, economists and pedagogues. All shared the conviction of an assumed need for democratic renewal. In 1993, after a major financial crisis that struck the banking sector hard (1992–1994), as an urgent intervention, the government established an Economy Commission (SOU 1993: 16). Its report problematized the capacity of Swedish democracy and its underlying “social contract” to renew itself in the face of new economic pressures and changes. The commission was created as an urgent measure. It was to inquire into and address the acute financial crisis. It delivered its “results” after a mere three months’ work (which is why I have put the word in quotation marks: it was more a program than an inquiry).

The Economic Commission’s report reiterated the PC’s particular democratic ideal, treating it as uncontroversial—something which, given the background of crisis, was a “necessary” matter of a change of “social contract”:

Many concurrent changes have led to the cancellation of the Swedish social contract…The economic crisis indicates an acute need for institutional changes. The question is not if, but rather when and how these changes happen…It is a measure of the vitality of Swedish democracy if it manages to reach a new, working social contract (SOU 1993: 16: 19).

Here, the “vitality of Swedish democracy” is defined as the government’s capacity to, first, reform institutions and, second, to get people to accept new obligations and conditions, including austerity measures.⁴ To support this type of social contract, the report argued for an “active citizenship” in which the “individual citizen has both greater power, but also greater responsibility” (ibid.). Thus, even if the report directed its main critique towards existing regulations and institutions, the goal of changing institutions was to induce new civic duties and habits, i.e. to subjectify a new type of “democrat”.

⁴ In 2013, the author of the Economy Commission report, Assar Lindbeck, inquires if Sweden had managed to reach a new social contract in an article that was published together with an article by economist Ola Olsson (Lindbeck 2013). The core topic in Olsson’s article is why Sweden was successful in addressing the crisis in comparison with many later examples in Europe. Olsson argues that “cultural norms built over a long time” of trust in the state and in individual capacities (of politicians) were the main reasons for the success in having people adopt the proposals (among which ranged austerity measures, Olsson 2013). “Cultural norms” could here be argued to refer to a responsiveness to demands to move along with the proposed reforms instead of resisting them.
During this period, the Swedish government articulated the perceived need for reforms as a matter of securing a “democratic society”. The texts on democratic renewal produced during the mid-1990s often sought to anticipate how processes of change on the level of the population would affect the arrangements through which democratic involvement was (supposedly) secured. One influential non-governmental series of reports along these lines was produced by the so-called “Democracy Council” (Demokratirådets rapporter, abbreviated DRR). Its reports were written in response to an urge to evaluate and monitor democracy and give recommendations for its revitalization. As mentioned in chapter two, the report series was conducted under the aegis of the liberal SNS think-tank. The Democracy Council was created in 1994 and its first report published in 1995.\(^\text{5}\) The reports from the first four years (1995–1998) were particularly influential on governmental reports and policies, both in terms of findings, problematizations, and the knowledge forms with which they framed “democratic challenges” (see below).

Following the verdicts of the Power Commission reports, these reports produced knowledge on general processes of change seen as challenging Sweden’s democratic culture and institutions. In 1997, the authors repeated the interviews that the PC had used, a decade ago, in its inquiry into the relationship between the citizen and the democratic system. The aim was to produce a renewed, large-scale “citizen inquiry” (medborgarundersökning, DRR 1998: 22). The findings of the new “citizen inquiry” showed a continued – but now more drastic – decrease in engagement in civic associations (folkrörelser\(^\text{6}\)) and parties. Further, the interviews showed an increased marginalization of groups that were already less likely to participate and get involved (workers, immigrants, youth).

While these reports were being published, the social-democratic government created its own so-called democracy committees. This work is mentioned by Jacobsson (1999), in a report to the Democracy Commission, and

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\(^{5}\) https://www.sns.se/forskningsprogram/sns-demokratirapport/ [Accessed December 3 2017]. In 1998, the aim of democracy Council is described as to “present concepts, analyses and results from the political scientific democracy research” to, through yearly reports, “stimulate a constructive and factual [saklig] discussion on the conditions of democracy” (Preamble of DRR 1998).

\(^{6}\) Civic associations is a translation of “folkrörelser”. This concept denotes a larger array of political, educational and sometimes leisure-related associations, ranging from trade unions, the YMCA, civic educational or liberal arts-inspired movements, to communal centers, Free Churches and religious communities, non-profit organizations, neighborhood organizations, sport and game associations, Folk High Schools, adult educational associations, and more.
Nilsson (2005), in his thesis, as examples of how the local level can contribute a different democratic dynamic. This was done, for instance, through the Local Democracy Committee and the Regional Democracy Committee (Jacobsson 1999, Nilsson 2005: 154, 158). Meanwhile, the government established a public Democracy Development Committee (DDC), whose directives were presented in 1995 (final report in 1996, SOU 1996:162). This committee was to investigate the changed forms of civic participation and propose ways of increasing citizen influence and make them “part of societal development” (Dir 1995:56). As the name suggests, the DDC inquired into ways of developing arrangements to produce a new democratic dynamic.

In the following, I will trace the articulations of a particular functional vision of democracy and of inventive arrangements meant to secure this vision in these years. I will start with the first report of the Democracy Council (DRR 1995), continue with the final report of the DDC (1996) and end with the third report of the DRR (1998). One central point of analysis is how references to “social capital” are used to underpin comprehensive accounts of the urgent need to renew civic involvement through the production of an individualized and yet responsible citizen. I will argue that these reports, professing the goal of securing a working democracy in the face of new economic and social requirements, display and integrate the first elements of a larger dispositif. This dispositif seeks to address an emerging gap between democratic arrangements and the lives of the citizens, by involving citizens and enhancing – or producing – useful civic behavior. I will point, in particular, to how an economic vision of danger containment and “profit” yields, expressed in terms of civic involvement and engagement, was central to this integration.

In the first report by the Democracy Council, Democracy as Dialogue (DRR 1995), the focus is on how well democracy works. This is formulated as an interest in the “quality” of democracy and in how Sweden’s democracy can be reformed in the post-crisis period. The authors seek to investigate this quality by positing a democratic ideal that renews a Swedish tradition of pragmatism, institutions and order: “an efficient democratic state ruled by law” (en handlingskraftig demokratisk rättsstat) (DRR 1995: 13). The report presents verdicts that had an impact on circulating notions of “democratic urgency” in the wake of the financial crisis. It emphasized the crucial importance of civic associations (folkrörelser) for a “working democracy”, describing them as “schools of democracy and public spirit” (DRR 1995: 52).

This notion is framed in terms of Robert Putnam’s influential theory of social capital, as presented in the years preceding the report. This theory conceives
engagement and involvement precisely as “capital”. It should be possible, it postulates, to invest in trust and relations for the benefit of representative democracy and a well-working market economy. Being capital, the hope is fostered that social capital can positively affect economic, social and democratic spheres: “Interestingly enough it [social capital] also [apart from democratic development] turns out to be a precondition for a strong economic development” (ibid.). By stating that “It is the prevalence of social capital that constitutes the precondition for a working democracy” (DRR 1995: 52), the report makes this lubricant and its functioning for a particular type of circulation primary, and asks (rhetorically) whether Swedish civic organizations are (still) capable of “generat[ing] the necessary social capital in the citizens” (53). Emphasizing the “weak anchoring [of membership in civic associations] in the citizens” it concluded that “The membership is for many an empty formality. Fewer members participate actively in the inner life of the organizations. Thus, not enough social capital is generated.” (DRR 1995: 125, emphasis added).

The report’s combined focus on social capital theory, “working democracy” and downward trends in civic associational membership produced a verdict and a vision of “risks” and “necessary investments” that would prove important to later governmental efforts. Besides underscoring citizens’ fading engagement, membership and participation in civic associations and organizations, the report questions the functionality of Sweden’s public debates and spaces. If these are dysfunctional, the report emphasized, “the whole future of democracy is threatened” (124). The report also emphasizes how both efficiency and citizen control over the agenda has decreased considerably (132). Overall, “the development gives reasons to worry” (ibid.). As a means of influencing democracy, the report recommends deepening the government’s tradition of dialogue (samtal) and encouraging local civic participation, which needed to increase considerably in scope and quality to counter negative developments: “democracy can only be vitalized if the audience comes down from the podium” and starts participating (133). To save representative democracy, citizens are to be educated through circuits of civic activity. This will encourage them to endorse and later participate in formal structures of representative democracy. In this top-down vision, politicians must make the necessary reforms to strengthen the output or efficiency of the democratic system (134).

7 For a closer engagement with the political-economic character of social capital, see Walters 2002.
The report thus produced a comprehensive picture of a democracy in potential crisis, but also of a possibility to enhance a different democratic dynamic. It foregrounds the strategic object of enhancing institutional output and civic engagement, to be achieved by promoting “social capital” and functionality. This overall picture of a democratic totality that could be infused in various ways, provided a functionalist framework through which knowledge types and power relations could be articulated. The emphasis on social capital foregrounded the need to induce enhanced circulation as a means to both strengthen useful behaviors for domains beyond the democracy and, doing so, to strengthen the particular arrangements of an “an efficient democratic state ruled by law”.

The report by the DDC, *On the conditions of the citizens – a democratic infrastructure* (SOU 1996:162) was based on many of the problematizations established by *Democracy as Dialogue* (DRR 1995) and took some of its conclusions as starting points. The government’s directives8 to the committee focus on changes in the citizens’ local-level, civic-organizational forms, how recent events have affected these and how these changes could lead a democratic “renewal process” (Dir 1995:56: 1).9 In contrast to the PC, whose findings furnish the report with a point of departure, the DDC report is problem-oriented. It foregrounds the de-territorialization of the arrangements through which democratic values and habits had been shaped historically: a civic loss of trust in the traditional forms of politics; the increasing power of the media; shrinking membership in parties and associations; and new individualist and network-based forms of influence and engagement (Dir 1995:56: 1). Caused, in part, by Sweden’s entry into the EU, by a decrease in the government’s subventions to associational life, and by changes in governance on the local level, the report emphasizes that the general development “from a democratic viewpoint…is worrying” (2).

Its focus on various forms of citizen membership and activities leads the report to propose concrete measures to increase citizens’ opportunities for democratic influence. The report imagines a “democratic renewal process” assured by special arrangements on the local level and for civic associations.

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8 The directives are found in the final report SOU 1996:162. The pagination therefore refers to the pages in that report (in which the directives are presented in the beginning.)
9 The report was written in a context of several committees that concentrated on the local level and interrelated aspects of welfare services, participation and associational life. For example, it mentions the Large City Committee, the Immigrant political committee, the Regional renewal committee and the Housing committee that were either ongoing or recently finished in 1996. The report also mentions that nine separate scientific reports were produced (mainly by researchers) that gave input to its final draft.
The directives identified displacements in how citizens were involved in democratic forms as a problem, to be solved by increased individual influence for the sake or in the context of a “collective societal process”:

The forms of democracy and its institutions must be developed in a new time – with new conditions. The possibility to affect society must happen in equal forms in which all can act with the same preconditions. A precondition to unite individual influence and responsibility [ansvanslagande] with solidarity is also that one is able to participate in a collective societal process. The renewal and development of the party and associational life is therefore central in a democratic renewal process (Dir 1995:56: 3).

As they had for the PC, so also did these government directives emphasize “solidarity”. In this case, however, solidarity is invoked in a context that is imprinted with the PC’s democratic ideal a search for a balance between the collective and the individual. Invoking increasing individualization and the declining membership in traditional civic associations (those that emerged and were consolidated during Sweden’s democratization), the directives repeat the dilemma that the DRR had formulated: “what happens with democracy when fewer people engage in political organizations and non-profit civic associations” in an era that at the same time “puts higher demands on the individual’s capacity to handle changes, make one’s voice heard and take responsibility?” (Dir 1995:56: 3). The latter emphasis reflects the new demands on citizens to be able to move with and contribute to a new type of circulation. The perceived need to secure democracy allows the question to be posed not only in terms of citizens’ fading engagement, but also naturalizes increasing demands on the citizens themselves.

In response to the perceived, urgent need to help citizens develop capacities to “handle changes”, the committee was told to create a “collected overview of the different forms of organization, groupings and development projects that the citizens so far have chosen to use” and to chart what “patterns of societal influence that have been developed”, as well as the “factors that affect the choice of forms of engagement” (Dir 1995:56: 3). With this way of seeing things, the report seeks to produce knowledge on how to shape the conduct of the citizens on the basis of their own activities and habits and the environments in which these are shaped (governmentality). Accordingly, the report identifies local civic engagement and the values and motivations of citizens as privileged fields for governmental intervention. In
the following, I will analyze the arrangements created by the report in order to visualize how citizens can be engaged in new circuits that can shape their ways of relating, acting and doing. I specifically highlight how the report authors use the new “changes in values” as a starting point in devising institutional arrangements that are to induce new forms of engagement and participation (5).

The report spends three chapters describing the negative effects on democracy caused by individualization and “changes in values”. It also describes how these influences can be contained and even used to promote a new type of democratic development. The report puts the mentioned de-territorializations of values and forms of engagement in context by providing an account of societal and economic changes over the preceding 75 years. It then presents the citizens themselves as its strategic point of departure, emphasizing the need to start from their spontaneous methods of engagement (“bottom-up”) and break with a longer tradition of top-down approaches.

The report begins by placing recent changes in the context of a history of Swedish democratization in order to formulate necessary changes in the near future. Echoing social capital theory, the report depicts democratization as involving the inclusion of marginalized groups. This involves “schooling”, both in democratic “rules of the game” and in certain values. Similar to the PC’s directives (but not its report), this report paints a functionalist, efficiency-oriented image of the harmonious and beneficial arrangement in Sweden that had existed in “the industrial society”. This, it postulates, was a period when the civic associations and work-place engagement together guaranteed a “bundle of values and approaches in the people” (21). With the advent of the “post-industrial society”, these arrangements have been de-territorialized: “A lot indicates that the industrial society is losing its force when it comes to nurturing values [ge näring till värden]. Instead a kind of chaos with struggles between different value-directions reign” (ibid.).

10 In a later passage the report formulates the assumption on values as “That changes in societal values will have effects on democracy is obvious, even if it is hard to today judge which they will be”. In line with the PC, it also advocates for a less pessimistic line, claiming that the Government or the general public, when relating to this fairly “social-engineer”-like vision, should be “open to the new; that there are possibilities to experiment and try out different paths and a space to make mistakes and change oneself” (88).
“Values” here, is articulated in term of a register showing how to involve people and shape their ways of acting and being. Emphasizing values, in ways that echoed advocates of Britain’s Third Way (Rose 2000), the report frames changes through the increasing impact of “life politics”, “post-material values”, individualism, flexibility, self-organization, concern for the environment and the family. (It is unclear to what extent the importance of the family is new, but this could be an allusion to its new role or configuration). In addition, citizens are increasingly customers of public services and, in contrast to earlier, have become politically “iloyal”. As a concluding remark on these changes, the report poses the “natural question”:

whether democracy will survive the industrial society. Are there any political parties and popular movements left in 2016? If yes, how do they look? On what level in society are the decision taken in 20 years? Who takes the decisions? How does it work? (22, emphasis added.)

More than two decades after this was written, this could be judged naive (or not - depending on emphasis). But it reflects the seriousness, and perhaps also an inventive curiosity, in approaches to monitoring changes and finding novel ways of conceptualizing them so as to anticipate their impact. The

11 “Values” is itself a concept that codes change in a particular way, and that, by marking out change, is already engaged in an attempt to re-territorialize the flows that cross individuals and collectives. Deleuze and Guattari highlight this dynamics of decoding/over-coding in their account of the coexistence of movement and rigidity in the social field. They distinguish between two distinct segmentarities, molecular and molar segmentarities, with their respective multiplicities. Values could here be termed a molar concept to denote molecular flows. The two segmentarities above are always in presupposition, they are not opposed and do not cancel each other out: “the molar segments are necessarily immersed in the molecular soup that nourishes them and makes their outlines waver” (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 225). The molar – “values” in this case – is associated with that which is conscious/perceptible, that which territorializes, that which is relatively rigid, and that which operates on a macro level (and articulates a macropolitics), whereas the molecular is associated with that which is unconscious or subtle, that which de-territorializes, which is fluid and that operates on a micro level. Elizabeth Grosz illustrates this relationship as: “If molar unities, like the divisions of classes, races, and sexes, attempt to form and stabilize an identity, a fixity, a system that functions homeostatically, sealing its energies and intensities, molecular becomings traverse, create a path, destabilize, energize instabilities, vulnerabilities of the molar unities” (Grosz 1994: 172). In the material, the molar categories abound: values, identities, attitudes, opinions, classes, groups, ethnicities, age-differentiations, political domains, models of democracy, criminals and non-criminals, meeting places, etc. As I argue below, however, this does not mean that the molecular is not present or is entirely captured (most of the categories above reflect never entirely stable attempts to capture flows and domesticate them for different ends).
quote points to the urgent need to address citizens’ values and involvement, as well as to invent new and alternative forms of engagement. Failing this, and if democracy cannot deliver what citizens desire, they will question democracy. Therefore, democracy must be both re-invented and “safeguarded” (88).

The anticipative tracking of processes of change in civic values and the forms that used to sustain them, the discussion of their potential effects on democracy, and emphasis on a need to invent new arrangements to replace those of the industrial workplace and associations, form a centerpiece of the report. This discussion is underscored by a whole chapter (chapter 2) containing a teleological history describing how civic associations had guided Sweden’s democratization. This is then used to bolster the report’s argument for the need to invent or stimulate a similar teleology under new conditions. These new conditions included greater media influence, increasing diversity, and new, different forms of engagement and values.

The reports differs from the previous commissions’ reports in that the concepts of “social capital” and the inventive contribution of a “democratic infrastructure” enable the report, from the onset, to envision how values can be cultivated and measured. This was to be done in order to design arrangements that would encourage citizen engagement. The report emphasizes that efforts must be grounded in democratic values and principles, and places particular stress on the fact “that the state and the regional level should support civic influence and involvement”. If this top-down approach could be modified the result would be a different, less wasteful dynamic. The report formulated its presuppositions and principles concerning how to promote this type of dynamic, and how it would work:

- “The will cannot come from above but must exist in the individual citizen and take its departure from his or her thoughts, feelings and needs”
- “The resources must primarily belong to the individual citizen and it is he or she who decides to use them, but to a certain degree the public can step in and support”
- “The citizen must devote time by refraining from other things. But the accessible time can also be affected by public decisions and changes on the labor market”
- “There must be places where civic influence and involvement can be practiced. There are good possibilities for the state and the regional level to affect that there are places available”
• “The individual citizen must herself gain knowledge, but the state and the regional level have great experiences of actively offering the citizens education” (78)

As Dahlstedt has pointed out, what is essential here is the new emphasis on citizen’s own affects and motivations. This constitutes a governmentality meant to replace government through older institutional forms and redistributive practices with self-government (Dahlstedt 2000, Dahlstedt 2009). One can argue that this new emphasis is inseparable from an active individualization of the citizen and, through it, the vision of an enhanced circulation. This, in turn, is part of a vision of democracy as a set of relays between the individual and the state (including the regional level) characterized by the enhancement of “good” circulation at the expense of undesirable circulation. This is reflected in the focus on the needed investments that avoid a risky development in which the population would be disconnected from the value-nurturing circuits of the market and democracy, which would not only not “school” the citizens but would also not have them contribute to and participate in these. The citizen thus envisioned is one who “must dare, will, persist, have time, be able and have the right to influence”. Lacking this subjectification, state supportive measures are “without results” (78). This design goes beyond what is possible in an account of discipline. In fact, the arrangement of civic affects and democratic renewal that it builds is envisioned as creating a particular combination of institutional forms, places for interactions, and civic aspirations, i.e. a particular form of circulation that both presupposes discipline and forms of self-government that are oriented towards the use of liberty in particular ways. Together, as a form of governmentality, these would make it possible for Sweden to avoid setbacks in trust, engagement and participations.

The vision is strategically articulated through the notion of a “democratic infrastructure”. This, as indicated by the report’s title – On the conditions of the citizens, a democratic infrastructure – is the report’s central inventive contribution. The goal of this “infrastructure” is to make it “easy for the citizen to be active” by providing the best societal preconditions. Democratic infrastructure is described as a “political basic system” that makes possible different expressions of the popular will. It is made up of general elections,

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12 This point is reiterated throughout the report. In the last section, on concrete proposals, it is summarized as: “democracy grows out of the individual's will and resources” (91).
as well as “components” such as meeting places, information systems, communication systems and education (79). The report invokes a functionalist analogy with infrastructure – roads, rails, harbors, airports, telecommunication nets – in describing that which allows society to “work economically and socially”. In the same way, it argues, one can speak of a “democratic infrastructure”, necessary to a society seeking to “work democratically”, rather than fall prey to inertia, interruption or stagnation. The report dwells on how the infrastructure would empower citizens wishing to engage themselves in societal development.

Reflecting this form of governmentality, the infrastructure, consisting of the “components” listed above, would – it was hoped – be used by citizens in an “optional” way. Central to it, then, is not the exact determination or discipline of the use of the infrastructure, but, rather, circulation itself: “The public for example builds roads from the needs and define certain common rules of the game for traffic. Whereto the individual driver heads and why is not something that the Swedish Transport Administration or the Police reflect upon” (79). The use of this analogy illustrates how a certain type of circulation is always-already presupposed, forming a backdrop to strategic reflections on “working democracy”. However, the analogy with traffic also reveals, contrary to the quote above, that infrastructure is never only “optionally” used. Rather, infrastructure and its various mechanisms enable people to move freely and, while doing so, constitute proper ways of using roads, etc., which then shapes their embodied ways of acting and moving. In this sense, the analogy of infrastructure reveals that controlled circulation provides ways of both enabling flows and interactions and constituting the aims, contexts, motivations and affects during these interactions.13 Social capital helps frame this urge for flow through the democratic infrastructure:

A democratic infrastructure helps people to engage in societal development. This engagement has a crucial impact for how democracy works. When people organize themselves, a cohesive cement is developed in the form of norms of trust and respect. One usually speaks of the emergence of social capital. This social capital implies that one has confidence in each other. One dares to cooperate because one trusts that others are also going to cooperate. The citizen not only sees to her good but also to the whole.

13 In line with the PC and the Economy Commission report, the report explicitly suggests that the public should refrain from dictating too thoroughly what the content of civic activity should be, thereby making associational life more independent vis-à-vis the public (even if the latter funds it).
One develops informal and horizontal networks based on mutual trust; vertical structures to different people in power on the contrary become less important (79).¹⁴

In this light, the aim and correlate of a “democratic infrastructure” is what the report calls a “strong society”. This society is possible to grasp when looking at society and democracy from the perspective of the citizen as the smallest common denominator for a particular form of government:

The main idea in this way of seeing things [a citizen perspective] is that a strong society cannot be built primarily on a strong state and strong regional level, but on strong citizens with the state and regional level as supporting agencies. Such a society is of course very demanding for the citizens. It is not solely a matter of the citizens’ individual capacities to express and safeguard their interests. At least as important are the demands on the will and capacity to solidarize with society in which one lives and to be able to cooperate with others in finding common solutions (81).

As a mode of subjectification, the strong citizens of the strong society are beings high in social capital. They are oriented towards ways of acting and being that ameliorate the worst side-effects of an overly individualist and competitive society. The citizens here emerge as a domain of resilience, enabling society and democracy to bounce back when put under stress.

When implementing a desired change through changing modes of subjectification, concrete proposals must focus on increasing the opportunities or possibilities for civic influence, rather than increasing influence itself (91). Accordingly, the report proposes six major reforms that can initiate the re-territorialization of activities and value-shaping processes in civic life. These are: to create “democracy centers” on the local level, to foster meeting places for forms of organized activity, to create channels of accessibility to politics, to make use of local democratic and organizational practices, to develop local

¹⁴In a later passage on the proposal of increasing “meeting places”, the importance of social capital cannot be underestimated. In economistic terms, the report emphasizes that “investments in social capital”, are, “necessary to get through the transition to a post-industrial society with continued democracy and welfare” (97). It is noteworthy that “social capital” created a large impact on governmental imaginary in these years, often posited as a guarantor for the survival of democracy.
societies, to increase civic possibilities to influence the EU and to create an advisory committee in the government offices (92–143).15

By “meeting place”, the report envisions a local-level hub or entity which would encourage people to find ways to foster a new dynamic. However, not all places qualify as “meeting places”. The term, which could be seen as a topos in this reflection, applies only to places, provided by the public, in which a “more or less organized form of human interaction” occurs (97). Meeting places thus provide a way of designing a “fit” between individual forms of organized interaction and the requirements posed by a “working democracy” based on high amounts of social capital. Meeting places are the term of a topos (theoretical, in thought) of an integrated milieu that provide a certain type of interaction circuits and controlled circulation. As a topos, it presents an almost universal means to solve problems faced by representative democracy, helping to stem parties’ loss of members and influence, etc. On the one hand, meeting places are viewed as capable of containing civic decoupling from representative democracy, increasing, through its enhanced interaction, the odds for more participation in organizational life, parties, established civic associations, etc. At the same time, posited as a topos aligned with the needs of representative democracy, they indirectly shape what democracy can and should be (they standardize behaviors and approaches) at the expense of more experimental ways of interacting and demanding change or influence.

In summary, instead of using the potential of civic energies and their own infinite and active possibilities of creating new democratic forms and assemblages, the report prefers to reinforce regional-level and state democracy by means of a controlled circulation.

In 1998, the Democracy Council published its third report, Democracy and Citizenship. These reports were at the forefront of articulating an understanding of democracy as necessarily “working.” This meant ensuring the minimum quality of the active components of the democratic process and a good circulation - demanding “good institutions, good leaders and good citizens” (SNS 1998: 9). In this approach, democracy was a starting point upon which functional and normative demands could be made on the population and organizations: “what demands can one put on the individuals, the families, organized groups, companies and other agents in the

15 Out of these proposals, “democracy centers” have been created at some regional levels.
name of democracy?” (ibid.). The report echoed the liberal orientations of the reports of the PC and the Economy Commission. It foregrounds not only the rights but the duties that attend citizenship, in order to counteract the fact that the existing formal system had transformed the Swedish citizen into someone used to getting, but not to contributing – a “happy service consumer” (16). To avoid the inertia of such a situation, as in its 1995 report and like the DDC, it stresses the need to involve individuals and increase their civic activity. “Values” and “dialogue” (samtal), which seems involve not so much deliberations as consensus-culture, are emphasized in plans to implement the desirable transition. The report tries to accelerate the process by producing a new “citizen inquiry”, whose results would further impose and reinforce what was becoming a dominant problematization:

In Nordic democracies, civic education (folkbildning) and civic associations (folkrörelser) have been foregrounded as important schools in democracy. The interview material [of the citizen inquiry] confirms the importance of training [förkovran] and dialogue. Particularly important are those discussions and exchanges of opinions that are linked to meeting activities and practical decision making. Civic associations is one out of many ways through which to achieve these positive effects. Next to schools and workplaces, the voluntary organizations have appeared to work as the training camps of democracy. The weakening of the associations engagement thus appear as particularly worrying (DRR 1998: 125, emphasis added).

The quote foregrounds civic associations as the “training camps of democracy”. They foster associational citizens, well-skilled in conducting meetings and practical decision-making. These citizens are contrasted to new, “passive citizens”, who are cast as a potential “tolerance problem”. The problem thus becomes, here as in the DDC, one of maintaining and renewing democratic recruitment and the affective civic constitution that the authors identify with it. It also becomes a matter of finding means to contain threats to these things. To address this, the report recommends additional arenas and meeting places for discussion and exchanges and circulation of opinion and experiences (147, 149).

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16 The quote is revealing: someone, representing the state, speaks in name of democracy, refers to democracy to demand something from those who are to endorse the functions that in turn are deduced from what one defines as democracy. This might not seem unreasonable, but it is nonetheless also by no way a given starting point to relate to and use democracy.
The arrangements of a democratic infrastructure, a strong society and the subjectifications of strong citizens recommended by these reports, and their infusion of enhanced circulation, are all in response to a perceived urgent problem of civic dis-involvement. The objective was to renew involvement through these notions and dynamics. In the intertwinenment of social capital and forms of governmentality, one can distinguish the contours of a dispositif. This dispositif is meant to ensure a maintained, individualized and responsible form of democratic engagement. This response to the urgent need for “training camps of democracy”, which together with “meeting places” - were to produce citizens characterized by values, oriented towards duties and engaged in deliberations, was not to be unheard.

1997: urgencies

In 1997, reports on the ongoing displacements of civic involvement in formal, representative democracy and in associational life formulated several urgent issues. That year, the Large City Committee presented its report (SOU 1997:118), a new bill on integration policy saw the light (prop. 1997/98:16), and a new School Committee report appeared, calling for improved implementation and evaluation of democratic citizen-formation in the school (SOU 1997:121). In contrast to earlier, more confident views of the population, these documents focused on “problematic” sub-groups of the population. These were held to constitute particularly aleatory challenges: youth, segregated immigrants, and other marginalized groups (unemployed, poorly-educated males, etc.). The School Committee concluded that the “substantial” changes had happened among youths in terms of identities and approaches lacked the reference points in the past necessary to make informed comparisons (SOU 1997:121: 23). The Large City Committee...

17 In the School Committee report, En värdegrundad skola, it was stated that: “the value-foundation questions must, according to our opinion, get a much larger impact in the evaluation”, (SOU 1997:121: 303), meaning that it is the evaluation of the impact that should be the new strategic focus. Two years later, in 1999, the then school minister Ingegerd Wernersson inaugurated the so-called “value-foundation year” (February 1 1999-March 31 2000), thereby initiating the “value-foundation project” (under the Ministry of Education) through which the until then rather abstract proclamations of “value-foundation” were to be converted into actual practices through target group adapted efforts (Zackari & Modigh, 2000: 11). This history is further mapped in chapter six.
described a new urban landscape of segregation. It was, the Committee wrote, a threat to democratic participation and values. Finally, a parliamentary bill that transformed Swedish “immigration policy” into “integration policy” (prop. 1997/98:16) raised the question how to construct a foundation for a new Swedish identity when faced with cultural diversity, the demands for a flexible work force and worries about the cohesion of society (Skolverket 2011).

In 1997, the social-democratic government issued the directives for the Democracy Commission and conducted the information campaign “Living History”. The Democracy Commission was to be the largest commission to be created to answer questions concerning democratic renewal and reform (SOU 2000:1). The Living History project, meanwhile, uses lessons on the Holocaust, and Sweden’s role in it, to teach school youth to be historically aware. It is also to foster tolerance and ethical dispositions – that is, to not be indifferent and be prepared to act. The project started out as workshops and the distribution of a book on the Holocaust directed to school youth (*Tell Ye Your Children...*, 1998). In 1999, the government issued directives proposing that Living History become a permanent forum, located in central Stockholm (the Living History Forum, inaugurated in 2003).18

Some of the outcomes related to the urgent issues formulated in 1997, were decisive efforts to launch permanent “value-foundation work” in Swedish schools, the determination to create a permanent policy domain meant to “safeguard and strengthen democracy” – democracy policy and the introduction and consolidation of the now-familiar concept of a “state of exclusion” (utanförskap). In the following, I will map the written directives of the Democracy Commission and highlight a slight shift from the one identified above in the vision of how civic dis-involvement is to be contained, in order to produce new forms of engagement and participation. With the commission, the policy domain democracy policy would be established, the first comprehensive attempt to conceptualize arrangements that would contain the threats to democracy. This was to be done on the level of the population, which was to be given new ways of becoming involved and “democratic”.

18 The project, that became part of a larger information campaign initiated by Sweden, also involved the USA and Israel. It focused specifically on Sweden’s historical responsibility in the Holocaust. The information campaign was initiated by prime minister Göran Persson after he had been informed about a survey in 1997 that revealed high school children’s’ poor historical knowledge on the Holocaust (SOU 2001:5). In 2003, the project was turned into a permanent Forum for workshops on tolerance for school classes.
The large report of the Democracy Commission (DC) provides the clearest picture yet of the perceptions of threats to existing forms of democracy and how these exert stress on democratic renewal. The directives issued to the DC are different to those given to other commissions on democratic renewal insofar as they are already oriented towards instituting a permanent forum (policy domain) for democracy reform. They also envision creating public debate on the conditions of democracy. The directives refer to the PC as the DC’s main forerunner. However, it explicitly contrasts the new commission to the PC’s “academic” character, which meant its report “did not lead to any immediate proposals by the government” (dir. 1997:101). The establishment of the commission is explained by reference to large-scale changes that had occurred since the PC had published its report. These changes, according to the directives, had altered the conditions for Swedish democracy. The government mentions 23 ongoing or recently concluded committees, all of which had contributed to the inquiry into the conditions of democracy.

In contrast to earlier reports, the directives present a relatively exhaustive account of recent, relevant changes, ranging from the financial crisis 1992–1994 to the internationalization of the economy, Sweden’s joining in the EU in 1994, general geopolitical changes and democratization processes in Eastern Europe, the new diversity fueled by increasing immigration, the longer parliamentary mandate period – extended in 1994, after the crisis in the early 1990s, from three to four years - and the influence of NPM on governance. The rather general aim of the commission was, according to the directives, to investigate “the new conditions, problems and possibilities that Swedish democracy is facing on the verge of the 2000s” (DC: 279).

The directives established the background picture that proved the need for this: the loss of the relatively stable and well-established democratic support, as confirmed by various investigations, and manifested in the emergence of a “gap” between those elected, and the voters (282). The “Citizen Survey” conducted by the DRR in 1998 is cited as proof of the existence of this “gap”. The directives complain that these developments have displaced established traditions of “high electoral participation, wide possibilities for accountability and influence, vivid civil society movements and political parties rooted in the citizens” (ibid.). Continuing to fret about Sweden’s growing diversity, the directives postulate that the transition to a so-called information and knowledge society means that citizens’ self-
understanding and their cultural identity has changed, as had their relationship to each other (283). The influence of the DRR-reports and the DDC can be seen in the central emphasis on the need to develop civic associations, made additionally urgent by the civic dis-involvement of particular sub-groups:

The civic movements [folkrörelserna] have during the 20th century been considered more or less a guarantor for the survival and development of democracy. Through associational life the citizens have been schooled for political functions. The traditional civic movements are however no longer an evident platform to guarantee the continuity of democracy. Particularly worrying is the diminished participation among youth and people with other ethnic background. (DC: 284, emphasis added)

The strategic objective of the dispositif and the urgent concern about civic dis-involvement are focused, here, on something which is becoming a problem to government. The main issue is no longer general civic dis-involvement, but that of the weakest and most aleatory/unpredictable/unreliable groups. It is framed as a matter of their lack of “social capital”. The paucity of arrangements that would school these, from this viewpoint, “risky” and diverse groups challenged the continuity of democracy.

The perception of this urgent issue, and the particular way in which it was conceived, was reinforced in 1998 when the commission, as a consequence of the low voter turnout in the general elections in 1998 (81,4%), was given additional government directives – an exceptional occurrence. The directives describe voter turnout as having decreased since the all-time high in 1976 and from the high levels in the early and mid-1980s. “High participation” is described as a “precondition for a well-functioning democratic system” (dir. 1998:100). The commission was thus additionally tasked with formulating arrangements that can secure continued, high participation. In the following, I will turn to the final report’s inventive arrangements, formulated in response to these problematizations and urges and as more general ways of framing desirable social and civic dynamics.

19 Added to this, was to investigate the low voter turnout among “immigrants” and the development on the regional level since the reform of the voter act in 1976.
A democracy of individuals infused by civic spirit – the final report of the Democracy Commission (SOU 2000:1)

As the Democracy Commission was still working, in 1998, not long after the parliamentary elections in which the Social Democrats won, Prime Minister Göran Persson appointed a Minister of Democracy (Britta Lejon). It was however not until 2002 that the government proposed a first bill of an official democracy policy to the Riksdag (Montin 2007: 188). In 2000, the Democracy Commission published its final report, *A Durable Democracy!* (SOU 2000:1). The report represents the culmination of efforts to inquire into the conditions of democracy, both in respect to the scale of the inquiry launched and in the nature of its report.20 This parliamentarian commission had published a total of 13 research publications, with texts from almost 100 scholars from 12 disciplines (Montin 2007: 188), and 32 smaller publications, apart from its main report and its numerous seminars (DC: 9).21 The idea, advocated by Prime Minister Göran Persson, was that the material was to be offered to all Swedish municipal libraries, high school libraries, study circle associations and adult education centers (folkhögskolan) to be discussed all around the country (Montin 2007: 189).

In the following, before analyzing the first bill, I will trace the problematizations, arrangements and proposals that the Democracy Commission’s final report presented.

An ethical whole characterized by flow

The commission’s mission is described as contributing to a “political evaluation of the direction of movement of Swedish democracy”, both by inquiring into the conditions and nature of Swedish democracy and by defining the definition of “a strongly desirable deepening of democracy” (16). This last articulation, both political and normative, is quite unique. It is related to the fact that the commission was established in parliament, which indicated political consensus on the need to create the policy domain. Previous efforts in this direction are described as having lacked explicit

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20 The report also represents an affective or normative culmination in the efforts, seeking to found democracy policy in a more ambitious attempt to strengthen and renew democracy. The name of the commission, *An Endurable Democracy!* displays this. Headings in the report, such as “Strengthen democratic awareness!”, “Develop the participation!”, etc. also reflect this.

21 Being a parliamentarian commission, there were representatives of all parties in the Parliament in the commission. The main secretary was the former cultural minister Bengt Göransson (Social Democrat) and the main chair was the political scientist Erik Amnå.
political opinions on the ideals and models that have been discussed. This creates the need to institute a public democracy policy as a means to secure a long-term “deepening” of Swedish democracy (ibid.).

The DC’s orientation towards a particular vision of risks – unlike the DDC and the reports by Democracy Council – means that it dedicates a longer report section to a description of how the financial crisis in the 1990s had caused severe strains on civic involvement and on trust in public authorities. The report notes that austerity politics had eroded the legitimacy of democracy (54–55). The financial crisis, in particular, had undermined the trust that many of the “weakest” citizens had had in both the public sector and the democratic form of government (55).

When contrasted to a vision of democracy as an inclusive whole, the concept of “exclusion” plays a fundamental role in coding the challenges caused by the financial crisis. New divisions had appeared, with long-term unemployment and “ethnicity as a new class mark”. Together, these had caused “polarization” with “new crack formations” (226). According to the report, these groups’ “political marginalization” – manifested by a relatively lower degree of participation – had resulted in “an important part of citizens that are permanently outside the [realm of] political decision-making”, something the report deems “offensive” (motbjudande). The authors suggest that “inclusion”, participation and having part should be identified as the goal of new arrangements.

“Mobility”, next to increasing pace of decision making and lack of time, is another theme that stands out in this report. It describes the new mobility, along with the emerging network, knowledge and information society, when combined with new, multifaceted identities, becomes what one with Foucault could term a “problem of circulation”; it challenges and renders obsolete the existing forms of democracy – which presuppose long-term commitment, formal and active membership, etc. – in several ways. By dismissing the old movements of democratization as obsolete, new, demanding citizens become a challenge (51). The commission notes that the number of people willing to assume positions of trust is affected by decreasing membership in civic associations and parties. In addition, the report mentions other negative factors: acceleration, the lack of long-term commitments, growing inequalities, individual differentiation, the professionalization of politics, fragmentation, risk and insecurity (it is worth noting that these are in addition to the factors identified in the directives, such as diversity) (54–59). The report presents these different challenges in a way that produce a sort of equivalency between them. They are assembled because they all supposedly constitute
part of the challenges, understood as risks, faced by existing forms of democratic involvement.

The report also refers to urgent issues that were first formulated in the DDC and in the 1998 DRR report. Citizen dis-involvement, the declining membership in parties and associations, are now viewed as putting the whole democratic system at risk. This was explained by postulating a series of vicious circles, each further spreading disaffection (164). This, the report fears, will further diminish “representative democracy’s capability to solve societal problems” (ibid.). In this output-view of democracy, electoral participation is viewed as a “critical measure for democracy’s health” (178). If the legitimacy of public decision-making is threatened, the report argues, so is the defense and “rootedness of the welfare state”. The need to make democracy “endurable” becomes, in light of the long list of supposedly fairly comparable challenges, a need to contain dangers. This is to be done through new arrangements for democratic involvement and for schooling.

“Social capital” is central to the report’s analysis of risks and risk-avoidance. The report reflects that times and spaces can be better used to strengthen democratic engagement and participation. It launches the notion of the “inter-electoral period”. In order to counter polarization and exclusion, the report sees it as imperative that political parties regain the initiative. They must centralize, or capture, the social field in one arena. At the same time, they must enable a “channeling” of opinions and capacities in that arena. The report uses this point as an argument against direct democracy – a potential rival model in discussions of how to combine arrangements and flows. The urge to capture and include so as to guarantee circulation recurs frequently. For example, the report is worried that 23% of the population is “passive in societal life”, “stands outside a continuous social network”, and has low political self-confidence and low trust in the workings

22 Referring to the “citizen inquiry” (Medborgarundersökningen), which in 1997 showed a loss of 250.000 party members between 1992 and 1997, it expresses a worry that the parties won’t be able to “maintain the responsibility for the political government” (165). The parties are blamed by the report for not being inventive and flexible enough in light of the rapid changes. In addition, the parties, “cannot survive if they are conserved in one for all time given form or model”. Instead, change and the need for change must be the main assumption for the parties (168). To be able to maintain the representative democracy, the report concludes that the parties “have to be able to attract different social groups, have candidates compete for positions of trust that are able to mirror the opinions that are expressed in society and in the political assemblies” (173).

23 “The numbers in our study of the local political work transforms some misgivings into urgent unanimous facts” (DC: 164, emphasis added).
of the political system (213). From an affective perspective, the report repeats that youth lack an “emotional bond” to political parties and that new social movements constitute a “challenge” to the ability of representative democracy to renew itself in this regard. By problematizing youth and marginalizing the new social movements’ potential contribution to democratic renewal, representative or otherwise, the report polices their involvement in the hope of maintaining a high-social-capital form of representative democracy. To avoid a vicious circle, the report describes the necessity of giving youth, unemployed and people of foreign backgrounds special governmental attention to “affirm and strengthen their political engagement and deepen their citizenship” (227).

Again, dialogue is mentioned as a useful method. The report encouraged “the traditional politics” to listen to marginalized youth, in particular. The report fears that these risky groups might go from a “state of exclusion” to “irreversible extremism” (ibid.). The authors understand vital democracy as depending on citizens’ giving certain performances, conforming to the circuits of work, engagement, etc. – in short, all that the report defines as “inclusion”, as opposed to “exclusion”. Through this type of analysis, the report thus increases a dichotomization of either/or that in chapter three was central to what Rancière calls consensus. Democracy is here characterized by a development of either blossoming, or ruin, with nothing in between.

This type of analysis takes place in the context of a determination to contain risk and induce flow. This produces particular effects on the level of the text. The report is written with a pathos of inclusion. Its style and objective are also explicitly normative-theoretical. This produces a narrative that is critical of a “system” which, at the same time, it must save. After all, the critique is articulated by the main representatives of that same system, representatives that are dedicated to its salvation. This point is important in understanding the report’s problematizations. Thus, for instance, the “excluded” are cast both as “victims” and as potential problems. They are thus caught in a moralizing discourse which at once speaks for and problematizes them. For example, the report worries, rather reproachfully, that “those who have the most reason to participate to change their situation do

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24 The report here summarizes an individual study by Bennulf and Hedberg that was part of the commission. They define people who are “passive in societal life” as people who, “do not do any voluntary work in the associational life, in informal voluntary contributions [frivillignsatser] outside the associational life, nor have access to an informal network of at least three people” (DC: 213).
it to the least degree” (228). Long-term unemployed, by the same token, are characterized as a “spread of contagion”.

The “excluded” are treated as burdens to society and potential threats to circulation. In a passage on “ethnicity as a new class mark”, “the state of exclusion” is defined as something that has “befallen” people of foreign background, in particularly those recently arrived from Iraq and Somalia – as if exclusion were a storm or a natural phenomenon (ibid.). In its efforts to speak for the excluded concerning the “failures of integration”, the report describes how a society that excludes people with a certain skin color must “search its heart” (rannsaka sig självt), which would, the report hoped, occasion a “change of values” in relation to people of foreign background. This moral failure must, the report claims, be reversed. People of foreign background should be seen as “assets”, which is ultimately what they and a democratic society “deserve” (229). Instead of suggesting substantial state measures against segregation, racism and inequalities, the report depoliticizes “exclusion”, characterizing them as “smitten” (drabbad) by a situation defined by shortcomings, and needing support and special handling in order to become social assets rather than burdens.

Disposition arrangements

In the passages of the report that address how to ensure a highly-participative democracy, democracy is described as a functional whole with an “impressive capacity to survive”. As an institution, its survival could compare only to that of the church and the university system (50). However, this functional whole now faces “problems of adaptation”, confronted by conditions very different than those obtaining during its emergence. This vision of democracy as a whole, characterized by certain ways of functioning which guarantee the whole – including a certain circulation for which it strives and upon which its survival depends – is the focus of a chapter called “Democracy”.

Here, a teleological history of the emergence of Swedish democracy in the first half of the 20th century is narrated through the lens of modern notions. Swedish democracy is seen as both caused by, and resulting in, a “competence development” which included individualization, the market economy and self-confidence (14–16). In order to control democratic renewal in the population, the report describes democracy not as an attainable goal but a “direction of movement that must be kept alive”. For this reason, democratic institutions demand “constant supervision and care” (15). This
account places democracy in a political domain subject to an actuarial understanding centered on risk-anticipation and change.

In this light, the report summarizes its political mission as protecting representative democracy by endowing it with new participative forms and dynamics. It recommends involving citizens in forms of participation that can pave the way for a new type of democratic activity and citizenship. The report’s overall goal is to “strengthen the citizens’ democratic value-foundation – their civic spirit - and to within that framework create the largest possible space for them to commonly govern themselves” (241) – a conception that reflects the imperatives of governmentality (with its focus on shaping the citizens’ use of their liberty so as to ensure self-government).

Thus, value-foundation is used as a standard by which democratic conduct is to be regulated or “standardized” (I develop this further in chapter six). To do this, the report draws on participative and deliberative democratic theory, claiming that the foundation (grundval) of the “democratic societal idea is ethical in nature” (17). Unless the focus on basic values is increased and strengthened, the report continues, Western democracies risk reduction to “hollow shells” (17). To increase the relays between the citizens and the state – and to fill those hollow shells with “content” – these values must be cultivated in the population:

*The democratic state* is thus dependent on the existence of a value-vital society with living and clarified [medvetandegjorda] moral understandings among individuals and groups, and that the moral understandings which exist found and support the democratic values. It is therefore important and legitimate that the state partly further that which supports democracy, and partly clearly combats that which is against democracy (18, emphasis added).25

The formula reflects the hen-and-egg problem of democracy policy, echoing the paradox of politics mentioned in chapter two: it must be infused by moral understandings while also itself producing these understandings. Reflecting the “critique of the system” presented above, the report articulates its own normative political-theoretical argument. It explicitly advocates a “moral foundation” described “not only an abstract idea” but as something that

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25 In a later passage, it formulates this as “a trustworthy democracy is dependent on that there is a value-foundation in society that make democracy possible” (18). I will engage the standard of value-foundation further in the chapter six.
“compels to be translated into action” (förpliktigar att omsättas i handling) (17). This emphasis on values casts democracy as a relation between civic involvement, various resources (trust, skills, etc.), and an “individual act of will” (18). These pathos-infused sections of text might seem superfluous. However, as a way of founding democracy policy, they weave together additional layers of knowledge, moral arguments and power relations which form the report’s strategic objective. The objective is to address civic involvement and the excluded and thereby safeguard the high social-capital type of representative democracy that currently exists. In consolidating this objective and finding means to respond to urgent needs, the report produces lengthy sections suggesting various arrangements that advance visions of different forms of civic interaction and responsiveness.

A major part of the report’s response to the challenges facing democracy deals with the ongoing individualization of democracy. The report focuses on the affective and moral constitution of the individual, including her “values”, “norms” and “civic virtues”. The report both individualizes and ties the individual to forms of self-responsibility and responsibility for others:

One can never free the human [människan] from her self-responsibility. Each person must feel responsibility for more than herself...therefore each sign that citizens themselves want to take responsibility must be welcomed. Each sign that the public power wishes to control the civic society must be judged critically (20).

The quote mirrors the (liberal) combination, noted in earlier reports, of individualization and responsibility. Later, the report reiterates that a combination of self-responsibilization and active individualization are a condition for a new type of solidarity and circulation. It does this by defining the “aim of democracy” as “neither a big government nor big regional levels but a society of individuals who are inspired by a civic spirit that keeps the belief in righteousness and solidarity alive” (31).

This vision of society presupposes the ability to maintain both civic spirit and the individualizing process. However, individualization’s negative consequences can only be checked by tying it to increased self-responsibility,

26 The moral approach is here described as a contract in which people ought to show respect and tolerance and thereby grow empathy and solidarity beyond the immediate family and friend circle. This in turn fosters the mentioned “social trust” (social capital), which is said to be a “precondition for conflicts to be possible to solve in a peaceful way and with maintained trust” (17).
articulated so as to reinforce the common order. The report accordingly stresses that the institutional right to participate amounts to an individual duty to be engaged, involved, implicated and interested, thereby making it possible to “keep societal organization together” (37). It further emphasizes the need to link individualization and differentiation to “common institutions that claim human dignity” (59). Again, as for inclusion/exclusion, the formulation is in terms of either/or: Sweden must promote “inter-human trust”, “virtues” and “norms” that “ennoble the general interest”, or face a further “erosion” of existing forms of engagement and participation. If the latter happens, “the social capital that has been a national treasure” (nationalklenod) will be “dispersed by resource-rich citizen groups’ self-centered struggle for their own privileges and by misguided democracy experiments” (196). Here, the report directs moral arguments towards the social elite. Again, it avoids anything that might promote the politicization of the conditions that cause the erosion of “inter-human trust”.

The report’s creative act of endowing a democracy of individuals with a moral foundation means, ontologically, that values are posited as things that can be listed and presupposed. They are posited as things through which democracy can be validated. Norms, by contrast, are embodied. They are developed over time, creating conditions that enable democracy to “work stably over time” (19).

To posit an “ethical-type” democracy (av etiskt slag, 17) is to endow it with a particular “perspective on human nature” (människosyn). This perspective assumes that each citizen can learn from experience, gain knowledge and form an opinion, and also commit herself to certain values.27 The report sees these citizen capabilities as fundamental components of a particular flow. This flow presupposes a division between what is “inside” the democratic order and what “falls outside of it”. The latter, seen as a group, is included in the flow, for it would otherwise pose a threat: “it is useless to forbid people to be anti-democrats. To isolate them is also not appropriate [ändamålsenligt]” (18). Yet, at the same time, the report’s reference to basic values and “value-foundation” clearly highlights that “everything that conflicts with them [basic values] are automatically the enemies of democracy” (19).

Here, the model of ethical democracy posits a strategic vision that specifically targets possible interruptions and frictions. This vision is directed

27 In these normative-theoretical terms, it describes the “smallest common denominator of democracy” as “the citizen’s unforced conviction of democracy as the best (or at least the least bad) way of organizing a common problem solution”, (DC: 20).
towards moral urges that individuals must have in order to maintain the “moral order of society”, joining in common care for the social community’s best interest, the interest of the “we” (ibid.).

Civic spirit

The report makes an inventive contribution to efforts to arrange relations between the citizens and a particular representative democratic order. In addressing the problems of dis-involvement, as seen above, it makes recurrent references to “civic spirit” as both a precondition for and an end of democracy. “Civic spirit” defines a form of lubricant of social relations and operates in the text as a type of schema for how to induce certain civic dispositions and behaviors. These, then, allow the report to define how both individual citizens and public servants should be and act. The term, in fact, refers to what Deleuze calls an abstract machine: a specific functioning on the level of the citizen and between citizens and the public, shaping dispositions and habits and extending across the social field. For example, when listing the participative forms that enrich representative democracy, the report advances civic spirit as a precondition for citizens’ respect for other views and mandates (29).

In this arrangement of virtues, civic spirit is defined as entailing “critical rationalism”, “law abidingness” and “solidarity” (these are taken from earlier reports by the Democracy Council). The report describes critical rationalism as a will to know. This will combines knowledge and values when creating a moral foundation for arguments and standpoints (20). Law-abidingness evidently marks a certain restraint and commitment to the social order. The report does not bring up solidarity except when noting that it sometimes interferes with the desire to be law-abiding. Solidarity is thus presented as other, belonging to or coming from that which is left outside the report.

By recommending an extension of interventions and practices meant to enhance civic spirit, the report envisions the possibility of a further “democratization” of other spheres. They would then be included in the flow fostered by civic spirit. Thus, in responding to the urgent need of civic involvement, “functional” civic virtues are described as a precondition for democratic renewal:

[civic spirit is] the base for a necessary, recurrent conquering of democracy and a possible, nuanced consideration, so-called deliberative democracy. Then different interests can meet. Then the commonly struck
accords and prioritizations can come around and be constantly reviewed through dialogue and argumentation (20).

As a knowledge type or theory, deliberative democracy offers a solution to the problems of dis-involvement under conditions of diversity and fragmentation. The concept of democracy – advanced in order to meet challenges – as consensus-oriented, deliberative, and something to be constantly reconquered, dovetails with a particular flow of accords, reviews and deliberations. The quasi-utopian promise inherent in this vision of circulation is reflected in the repeated use of “then” (which itself indicates when conditions for congruence are met) together with “deliberative democracy”. This linkage helps formalize democracy as a matter of flow and circulation, capable of replacing dysfunction, but also not conflict-oriented.

In this all-inclusive ethical order, civic spirit is supposed to monitor the dangers posed by those “outside” – or police the very possibility of an “outside” – as well as by those who threaten to appropriate democracy for their private interests. If civic spirit flows and is renewed, the social order produces “democrats”, beings who have internalized demands for flow:

Without democrats, democracy comes to a halt. Rule by the people [folkstyrelsen] is predicated upon citizens who have the spirit and resources needed to make the system work. It demands that there are people that both want and can shoulder the responsibility that is needed for democracy to survive” (196, emphasis added).28

Similar to – or possibly identical to – social capital, civic spirit is viewed as a concrete resource. As a scheman, as mentioned above, it also infuses a form of thinking into the report that helps the reader envision the convertibility of exclusion, egoism, etc. to the currency of social capital and responsible, democracy-oriented individuals. This equivalence-thinking recurs in the DC’s report, indicating how conversions can occur and how one can lubricate democratic forms of engagement and institutions in order to linearize civic interactions and thereby support and legitimatize existing forms of representative democracy.

28 In later passage, it articulates this as an all-including ideal: “All societal groups shall have part in the politics. It should not be shaped by a few groups, while others end up outside” (213).
The dynamic citizenship

Civic associations are presented as particularly central in inducing “civic spirit”. This is because they create social capital and extend across the social field, making it possible to capture a pluralistic social constituency. In order to make this dynamic visible, and show how these inducements can come about, the report crafts a specific intellectual device it terms “dynamic citizenship”.

In order to secure the duties and responsibilities that are necessary functional components of the flow of a “democracy of individuals infused by civic spirit”, the report uses the example of dynamic citizenship as an arrangement that disposes participation, involvement and influence, “each of which demands specific attitudes and institutional setups” (33). In the report, dynamic citizenship functions as a grid, or theoretical dispositif, that allows an analytical evaluation, displaying inter-related processes and relations as visible elements. It also allows the reader to grasp the social field in terms of the relations between participation, influence and taking part, thereby displaying how to induce these elements.29

The arrangement of dynamic citizenship allows the report to envision how to guarantee connections between civic involvement, on the one hand,

29 At the end, the report is summarized as having on the whole tried to analyze how to increase participation, involvement and influence in the population (DC: 240).
and the legitimacy and strength of the formal democratic system, on the other. The outcome is a flow characterized by “mutually respecting citizens”, citizens who “generate a large human and social capital that brings joy and utility to all spheres of society” (33). Responding to the urgent threats posed by dis-involvement and the strategic objective of promoting involvement through new forms of subjectification, the report contrasts people who lack schooling and the refinement of their “more primitive instincts” to those shaped by the dynamic citizenship. The latter become “assets to themselves and to society” both in the public and private spheres (33). This leads Dahlstedt to emphasize that the DC indirectly casts those who are not “dynamic citizens” as failures and burdens (Dahlstedt 2000). My casting of this dispositif shows how the arrangement of dynamic citizenship also offers a way of imaging civic involvement as a means to ensure the existing form of democracy and yet, doing so, without politicizing inequalities in a challenging fashion.

Whereas civic spirit is characterized by particular dispositions (“virtues”) inherent in the citizen, “dynamic citizenship” defines the conditions and outcomes of that active citizenship: participation, influence and involvement (or taking part). Whereas the abstract machine of “civic spirit” can be conditioned, and is to a high degree dependent on institutional elements, dynamic citizenship provides a mode of subjectification with specific strategic aims. Negatively formulated, these aims are to avoid fragmentation and increase civic sense and acts of responsibility. Here too, the moral emphasis on creating self-responsibility for collective ends is underscored:

Against the institutional right to participate however, correspond individual duties to be engaged, concerned, involved, and interested. In this way societal organization is kept together in terms of values and the emerging differentiation and fragmentation is countered. For both the collectives’ and the individuals’ sake, the civic imperatives to take responsibility and contribute must be inculcated [inskärpas], be grown and demanded. Unless this is done, one cannot stop the elitism, the powerlessness and the state of exclusion [utanförskapet] to grow in the Swedish society. A democracy of citizens that in different ways and in different

30 Focusing on how citizens can be affected (affectively), the report emphasizes that every citizen at some point in their lifetime should participate in different ways of solving the common affairs. It is therefore crucial that the State and local level must promote forms for participation that are deemed efficient and meaningful (34).
contexts take responsibility for more than themselves constitutes both the goal and the only way forward to that goal (DC: 37, emphasis added).

Yet again, the report argues in terms of either/or: “Unless this is done…”, “the only way forward…”. In this vein, the lack of trust-creating meeting places is viewed as potentially sowing an undemocratic societal development of cynicism, intolerance and violence (ibid.). Certain lines are established that render visible the proper surfaces for the cultivation of useful citizens and that cast out improper modes of being, those that do not promote the aims of “dynamic citizenship”. The report reflects the significant fact that these processes take place in bodies and that dynamic citizenship offers a form of subjectification by repeatedly emphasizing that this is no “theoretical” matter, but rather something that must be practiced in dialogues and acts to be “trustworthy” (34). The strategic objective of this subjectification is “to change deep values” (djupgående värderingar) within both citizens and political representatives.

In accordance with my tracing elements of a larger dispositif, the report argues that to change deep values is to take seriously civic critique of the lack of democracy. It is necessary to take this critique seriously in order to avoid citizens’ abandoning the formal system and turning to other avenues of influence. As this aim suggests, together with the quote above, it is a matter of involving citizens (bodies) in the circuits which affectively reinforce an interplay of dispositions, participation and involvement. The triangular arrangement of dynamic citizenship produces a probabilistic vision of civic will to participate and exert influence:

The less the citizen experiences that she has this access [to the political government], that she experiences herself to be participatory [delaktig], the less the probability that she will want to participate. The more the citizen experiences that her and others’ participation leads to influence, the higher the probability that she will want to continue to participate (33, emphasis added).

The quote postulates terms of conversions of affects that will eschew risk and increase the likelihood of increased engagement. Participation, personal will, and a relationship of probability are envisioned from the viewpoint of how they can mutually reinforce one another.
As a dispositif of governmentality, the triangle highlights how what could be called factual/empirical/functional or formal conditions (political equality, transparency and openness, meaningful participation) are linked to the three elements of dynamic citizenship, with an emphasis on the need for civic access to environments – “forms and arenas” – that can provide and induce participation. When all conditions are met, the effect is a virtuous circle of increased probability for a desired outcome, characterized by congruent conversions between the citizens’ affective involvement and the processes that strengthen the existing representative democratic forms:

If both the possibilities to participate and influence are good, the individual citizens can be expected to experience involvement [delaktighet]. Then their experiences of the democratic process are such that they consider it legitimate. It can lead on the one hand to that their will to participate in the process is strengthened and on the other hand that their values will be characterized by greater tolerance and their knowledge by greater depth. Involvement has a dynamic function to develop the democratic process. (38).

In the same reflection, deliberative democratic theory, articulated through the inside/outside binary, is used to illustrate what happens when citizens do not feel that they are involved. This leads to a downward spiral in which they are in a “state of exclusion”, either rejecting the democratic processes or engaging in political action outside the established democratic forms (38). The quote reflects an encounter between a technocratic interpretation of deliberative democratic theory and an actuarial understanding of civic life. The actuarial science of politics is, here, one of affective probability (“can be expected to experience”), an economistic view of how “profit” is yielded under the right conditions.

Acts of inclusion and involvement presuppose a strategic center. Authorities that carry out such inclusions are characterized by a policing that, by the forms and knowledge that they articulate on democratic participation, marginalizes some of the democratic ways of acting and being that the citizens themselves might invent and that cannot be known in advance. At the same time, the “most important problem” is described as handling citizens’ critique of the institutions’ lack of democracy (that is, meaningful participation based on political equality). However, this does

31 In a later passage, the role of the public administration is said to be to work for the good
not diminish the report’s taken-for-granted hierarchical and centralized understanding of democracy: “A democracy gives each citizen access to the political government, i.e. makes her involved in societal development” (33, emphasis added). This centralization, which is also articulated through the exceptionalism of a state that needs to protect existing forms of democracy and fight its enemies, contrasts with the report’s endorsements of “civil society” and participation, which are advanced as a critique of the historically centralized Swedish model.

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A durable democracy! ends by proposing five domains for a public democracy policy. These are, to strengthen “democratic awareness”, to increase participation, to strengthen autonomy, increase institutional responsibility and continue to evaluate and research democracy. Addressing the strategic objective of creating containing dis-involvement, the main goal, to strengthen representative democracy by introducing participative elements, is, as mentioned above, cast as involving efforts to “strengthen the citizens’ democratic value-foundation – the civic spirit and to within that framework create the largest possible space for them to join together to (gemensamt) govern themselves” (241).32

The focus on training “democratic awareness” stands out as a frame for the need to check the risks of increasing dis-involvement, enabling citizens to be able to “solve their conflicts in a democratic spirit”. Having underscored the need to target people’s affective constitution, especially those of certain constituencies, “democratic awareness” becomes a strategic goal aimed in particular at youth and immigrants. The school is foregrounded as a key strategic institution. In the next chapter I develop some of the practicalities involved in making the school into a democratic laboratory. To contain dis-involvement in the current arrangements, the aim is also to integrate the sub-

32 Reflecting governmentality articulated through representative democracy, the latter is casted as an arena to train the citizens’ ethical dispositions in an integrated fashion: “The representative democracy forms the foundation of Swedish democracy. It is in the representative democracy’s interplay with the experiences and wills of the citizens that the development is determined. In the many meetings between the citizens, the virtues and norms are formed that a democracy both presuppose and lead up to (241).
cultures and social movements currently preferred by Swedish youth into those circuits that hitherto have secured a vital democracy. The same goes for “ethnic integration”, which the report stresses requires “extraordinary efforts”, in particular in fighting discrimination on the labor-market.

When touching on conditions that need to be altered, the report also endorses more traditional democracy-inducing measures. These include increasing public spaces for transparency and participation. These range from political institutions to libraries and party organization, as well as how media shapes debates. I believe that these should be viewed in light of their potential to dovetail with a more general circulation, by lowering thresholds and obstacles and increasing flow. This is meant, in part, to strengthen local government by enabling everyday encounters between citizens and authorities.

Reflecting the affinity between research and policy, the report opts for “democracy political reforms in the intersection between research and policy” (the report advocates the formation of an “expert group”). The report’s recommendation that the strategic objective of state-driven involvement be addressed through the support of associations and individuals reflects the hierarchical relation of these efforts: “Recognize, affirm, support and stimulate the citizens’ free associations! Invite them to recurrent democratic conversations on how we in a long-term fashion create the cement that deepens democracy!” (208)

Democracy policy was founded in response to the supposedly urgent need to address civic dis-involvement. Its foundation was part of a search for new forms of engagement and legitimacy, as well as long-term affective and identificatory attachment to the representative democracy. In the following, democracy policy is mapped in order to highlight the new emphases and measures that emerged once bills and written communications were drafted within the policy domain.

**Democracy policy for the new century**

After the termination of the DC in 2000, before any bill was proposed, the Minister of Democracy Britta Lejon worked hard to establish the policy field. She initiated the Parliamentary Commission on Local Government Democracy (SOU 2001: 48) and managed to get support for democracy policy as a distinct political field. However, according to Montin, Lejon failed to convince Prime Minister Göran Persson and leading Social Democrats to adopt the more radical participative democracies proposals in the Democracy
Commission. With the first bill on democracy policy, Lejon was going to be dismissed as Minister of Democracy (Montin 2007: 189).

The bill *Democracy for the new century* (prop. 2001/02:80) reflects a pragmatic, top-down stance with the main aim to strengthen representative democracy. The bill presents democracy policy as a “long-term strategy to safeguard and deepen democracy” (1), deemed crucial for the “defense” of the legitimacy and “anchoring” of the political system (31). The bill references the DC, interpreting the situation as not a problem of democracy as a form of government – “the citizens have high confidence in democracy” – but rather of its *mode of functioning*, due to “marginalization, states of exclusion and passivity” (20). In particular “passivity”, understood as a lack of engagement and membership in parties and civic associations, is seen as a major problem.33

In contrast to the DC, when addressing this identification of the urgent issues that would need to be addressed, the bill has a pragmatic approach.34 Part of the pragmatism, as Montin notes, was to reject the “participative elements” advocated by the DC due to a fear that participative elements would undermine representative democracy and political equality (since

33 The notion of “passivity” was later interrogated by several social scientists who claimed that it was based on a view on participation as traditional, formal membership in organizations, rather than a broader engagement (Amnå 2008, Ekman & Amnå 2010). These interrogations are analyzed further in chapter eight.

34 It simply posits that as a condition for a “democratic society” there must be “active and well-informed citizens” (38) who are democratically aware. Democratic awareness is a “realization of the fact that it is the citizens of a democracy who constitute democracy” (39), i.e. that the citizens “feel a responsibility for the survival of democracy” (40). It articulates this vision against the background of problematizations of the “more general displacements in peoples’ thinking, attitudes and behavior” (21). It mentions that civic associations have lost a considerable amount of its members (halved twice: 1970–1 990 and 1990–1 995), and the electoral participation has decreased since the all time high of 1982, with 1998 as the lowest in modern time (81,4%, with 78% in regional level elections and 42% and 39% in the European Parliament elections of 1995 and 1999, 22). In a different section, the bill speaks of urgent issues, exemplified with the emergence of “anti-democratic forces”, claiming that democratic values cannot be regenerated simply on their own, since the “democratic culture is not shared by all” (25). It also mentions the events of Gothenburg in 2001, when leftist groups and anarchists were involved in riots with the police during an EU summit with the US president George W. Bush, as well as 9/11 2001 as a context of this antagonism and the need for the project of democracy policy. Another motive or problem is the dissatisfaction of the voters with the receptivity of the political system to citizen demands, even if the trust between citizens and democracy as a whole is large. The pragmatic and fairly alarmistic stance of the bill thus further articulates the dispositif and democracy policy as a coherent framework to address these issues.
strong interests would gain in influence at the expense of weaker segments of the population, Montin 2007: 188–189).

Addressing the “mode of functioning” of the democracy, the bill proposes means to increase voter turnout, to increase the number of people taking on a commission of trust “once in their lifetime”, to create better possibilities to participate, to create more equal participation and to increase democratic awareness (31). These goals reflect the strategic objective, discussed above, of halting the decrease in citizen participation by creating relays between the lives of the citizens and various processes and requirements of the representative order. In contrast to the DC, the bill does not develop in detail the modes of conversion and registers meant to induce flow (ethics, civic spirit, etc.). To close the gap between the population and the representative democracy, i.e. to “save” the latter, “participation” within the framework of the representative democracy is embraced as the main antidote. It is viewed as a possibility for an involvement that would reflect the “population's composition” on every level of representation (32).35

By embracing participation as the means to address the mentioned gap, the bill opts for a strategy of seeking to affect as many groups as possible in the social field (horizontally) in ways that maximize continuity. For example, the general goal of increasing voters’ awareness of their right to vote, and voter turnout, is complemented by the goal to increase by 10,000 the number of people who take on a commission of trust (förtroendeuppdrag) in the approximately eight years before 2010, and then, in the long term, to increase that number in proportion to the size of the population. But the goal concerns not the number of people but also one of a distribution of the experiences of participating: of having people take on a commission of trust once in their lifetime. In this strategy and arrangement of governmentality, the more these occasions were distributed both horizontally and over time, the more people, or bodies, would come into contact and be affected by the embodied experience of taking on a commission of trust, even if experienced indirectly, through a friend, a relative, colleagues, etc.

This reflection, oriented towards both the probability and prevention of further decline, therefore seeks to secure the affective formation and the acceptable span of participation of a large constituency. As a consequence of its view of security/governmentality of the temporal-spatial distribution that

35 The report puts the challenges of these goals bluntly, in moralizing terms: “A democracy that lacks legitimacy and rootedness in wide groups among its members can in the long run not be called a democracy. Neither can it lay claim to be representative” (36).
affects citizen involvement and citizens’ affective formation or subjectifica-
tion, and influenced by notions of social capital, the bill sees more people
taking on a commission of trust both as valuable in itself and as a means to
multiple ends. It would diminish the distance between citizens and people
taking on commissions of trust, increase sensitivity to the voters’ wishes,
augment “social representativity” and “opinion representativity”, by
“sending a signal to the voters” create role-models (förebilder) and, finally,
diminish the number of people “feeling political and social exclusion” (32–
33, emphasis added). In this design, getting people to assume a commission
of trust becomes a major way of imagining how to safeguard a well-working
representative democracy and bridge the gap between population and
elected.

The bill also points out that increased knowledge and understanding of
political missions and the democratic decision-making process among the
elected and for “people in their surroundings” would result from the
measures listed above. This would lead to an increased “legitimacy for the
system” (33). An increase in the number of volunteers would maintain the
voluntary character of commissions of trust, since it would then remain
possible to do the task in one’s free time.

Thus does the bill add its own, more practical approach to the inventive
contributions of the DC in its determination to design and translate the DC’s
aims into practical objectives. The bill envisions participation and taking on
commissions of trust as the primary modes to achieve a certain convertibility
from negative feelings to positive ones, from exclusion to inclusion, ignorance
to knowledge, etc. In this actuarial approach, oriented to probability and
a “pay-off”, widely-based civic participation in the intervals between elections
becomes another means to increase the odds of securing participation
and the particular flow of a high-participation representative system. Welfare
consumption is also a domain that expands the domains that implicate
citizens, even it is not considered identical to participation.36

Civic associations are cited, once again, as strategic to “save” representa-
tive democracy. They provide citizens with additional possibilities to be
heard. The bill’s economistic thinking views the benefits of associations as a
matter of how they increase influence of the “under-represented”, produce
information on societal needs, create competence and engender social trust,

36 The report points out that the regional levels’ improvement of service offer cannot be
considered a democracy reform, since democracy implies “to meet and discuss to find
solutions” (33).
and, importantly, force their members to “take a common responsibility”, leading to a form of schooling (34). To make this possible, political equality must be reinforced. This would make it possible for those with foreign background and “excluded people” to exercise “autonomous citizenship” (35). More than in any document before it, the bill also stresses the need to couple economic and social redistributive measures to political equality in order to “empower citizens who feel powerlessness” (36). Thus, it presents a vast repertoire of ways to secure participation and involvement that would induce the will to take responsibility and restore the mode of functioning of the democracy – or, rather, as has shone forth, of the population in relation to the institutional requirements of a particular kind of representative democracy.

Relying on the technique of “abolishing obstacles” (which was then in vogue) to secure the functioning of self-government, the bill envisions how one can influence the “will to take responsibility”. It “is a matter of abolishing obstacles for citizens’ own initiatives, engagement and will to take responsibility”, by “initiating a work with attitudes, values and approaches among those in power” (ibid). This focus on encouraging participation and making things work smoothly and with less direct effort is also tied to several additional projects. These include the need to strengthen human rights, an upcoming action plan to fight racism, xenophobia, homophobia and discrimination, efforts to strengthen “trust”, a democratic infrastructure, democratic awareness and the need to safeguard democracy from a too-strong market influence (39–40). In response to the urgent threat of dis-involvement, the integration of these measures would allow the cultivation of what the bill calls a “democratic society”. 37 Central to this society, or a condition for it, is “democratic awareness”, implying a common feeling of “responsibility for the continued existence of democracy that everyone has” (116). As a preventative measure, to induce it in the population would imply to make democracy “endurable” and to counter “fragmentation”. As with the DC’s “civic spirit”, so also does the bill establish the core of democratic awareness as a matter of individual rights and responsibilities:

37 A new problematization in the bill is violence against representatives (96–97), the growth of which the Government will further inquire into. To do so, it asked Kommunförbundet (the Association of Local Authorities), Landstingsförbundet (the Federation of Swedish Country Councils), Rikspolischyrelsen (the National Board of the Police), the SÄPO (the Security Services), Riksåklagaren (the prosecutor-general) and Brothsöfrebyggande radet (the National Center for Crime Prevention) for statistics and expertise (97).
A democratic awareness is an insight that it is the citizens in a democracy that constitute it. It is an insight that democracy does not only give rights but that the citizens in a democracy also have a responsibility. It is about each citizen’s obligation to show tolerance and respect for other people (116).38

The bill mentions that such awareness can be enhanced in the school, on the regional level and through libraries and museums. Democratic awareness is thus another name for a type of governmentality, or policing in Foucault’s sense, that seeks to ensure conditions for a well-functioning state, by regulating or shaping the relations and approaches of the population.

Thus, beyond addressing the mentioned gap by increasing participation, the dispositif that the bill articulates and is part of, is also tied to the inducement of certain approaches and ways of acting and being that could ensure the mentioned “mode of functioning” of representative democracy.

In practice, the measures of the bill are less ambitious and inventive than the objectives and the arrangements through which they and particular dynamics are envisioned. To increase electoral participation, the government presents campaigns to raise awareness on the importance of the vote, discusses the benefits of the recent reforms in the vote (more possibilities to select individual candidates), and suggests better information campaigns by the electoral authority (valmyndigheten), more opportunities to use internet,

38 Democratic awareness is central to the articulation and integration of the dispositif. Democratic awareness seems to be a concern about individualization as a motive for state exceptionalism in the sense that responsibility is not going to be enacted or cultivated unless the state demands it. The main means for the Government to increase democratic awareness is by increasing “knowledge and insight on democracy” and by fostering a “competence to solve conflicts together in democratic spirit”. The bill wants to see a more active and influence-oriented vision of democracy in the school of what it means to be a citizen. An important part of increasing democratic awareness is the “value-foundation work” in the school. To allow for the objective of making democracy into something one practices (praktisk handling), the bill presents the Government’s development of two “value-foundation” centers (at the University of Gothenburg and at Umeå University in collaboration with Ersta Sköndal, these were operative in 2000–2003), whose mission is to develop knowledge on this and to evaluate the efforts taken in the school’s value-foundation work. In addition, the bill mentions that Växjö University was tasked to develop a diagnostic material to measure the pupils “democratic competence” (118) (next chapter develops this more in detail). Next to the school, the bill also mentions the Living History Forum (then in the making, it opened in 2003), an introduction program for refugees and people who have obtained the right to asylum in Sweden (being taught “basic norms”) as well as the Action Plan for the Human Rights mentioned above (Skr. 2001/02:83) that primarily clarifies the state’s responsibility for human rights. It also stresses the need for “strengthening the knowledge on human rights” (117).
increased accessibility and regional elections. In line with the emphasis on participation, the bill also presents several possibilities for citizens to either affect the political agenda or introduce proposals that can be passed on the local level. This includes the so-called “folkinitiativet”, in which a regional council can call a referendum if at least 10% of the region’s or county’s voters present an issue to the council (161).

In summary, this first bill on democracy policy thus advocates pragmatic arrangements that focus on affecting as many as possible. They also encompass a strategic emphasis on participation and democratic awareness meant to secure involvement and the flow, or forms of congruence, competence and embodied habits of an acceptable “mode of functioning”. The bill’s main orientation is towards increasing probability, to raise the odds that citizens will themselves take responsibility for the continuity of the arrangements that have secured or will secure high political participation and social capital.

In the following, I will trace how democracy policy was gradually redefined after the bill, altering the strategic objectives and arrangements meant to secure involvement.

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In 2004, a written communication addressed the aims of the first bill (skr. 2003/04:110). Electoral participation had continued to decrease after the dip in 1998 (81.4%), reaching a low point in 2002 (80.1%). Thereafter, it slowly rose again in 2006 and 2010, culminating in 85.8% participation in 2014.39 An important element in practical measures meant to increase participation was the “development work” conducted by the government initiative Tid för demokrati (Time for Democracy, 2000–2002).

The aim of the venture was to “develop democracy in the long term and create conditions to increase the citizens’ active participation in political assemblies and in societal life at large” (Lindqvist & Nord 2003). Responding to the urgent need to reach those who participate the least, the venture, headed by the so-called Demokratidelegationen, financed 1200 projects in the years 2000–2002, all meant to “engage those groups who are less involved with a focus on local democracy and questions of school and democracy” (ibid.). Other measures included the celebration of 80 years of universal

suffrage and the creation of the internet-based Democracay Square (Demo-
kratitorget). Tid för demokrati foregrounded the need for democracy-
promoting efforts to have an enduring, long-term character. In the budget of
2004, additional funding was secured for new efforts to increase partic-
ipation, in particular in elections to the European Parliament (skr.

In 2006, after being out of power for 12 years, a liberal-conservative
coalition government (Alliansen)\textsuperscript{40} won the elections. Its 2008 budget
renewed democracy policy (prop. 2008/09:1). Below, I will trace the new
government’s emphasis on and efforts to secure democracy.

**A Living Democracy**

A speech on the new aims of democracy policy from 2008

At the conference “Demokrati i en ny tid” (Democracy in a New Time) given
on May 7, 2008, gender equality and assistant education minister Nyamko
Sabuni (Folkpartiet Liberalerna) gave the speech “Levande demokrati – en
framtidsvision” (Living Democracy - a Vision for the Future). In it, she
presented new strategic priorities for democracy policy. The speech focuses
on the strategic possibility of using Folk High Schools, adult educational
associations, religious communities, organizations, authorities and the
school to create meeting places that induce democratic awareness. As a re-
arrangement of the elements that can secure the new goal of a “living demo-
cracy”, in the speech, democracy and value-foundation are opposed to a new
“state of exclusion” that is said to have emerged in the last decade (1998–
2008). She begins by framing the present with a dark picture of this state of
exclusion (literally “utanförskap” denotes a “state of exclusion”):

During the last decade a new landscape of state of exclusion [utanförskap]
has emerged in Sweden. A landscape of long-term unemployment and
dependency on social security, of cemented housing segregation and
growing divides between peoples and groups...Children are hit the
worst...growing up without seeing their parents go to work. Children
who graduate school without having reached the [school’s minimum]
knowledge goals...[who] as teenagers have already lost their hope for the

\textsuperscript{40} Alliansen consisted of Nya Moderaterna, Centerpartiet, Kristdemokraterna and
Folkpartiet Liberalerna.
future [and] risk getting stuck in drug addiction and criminality (Sabuni 2008).

The image is one of a landscape ridden with increased and increasingly radical dis-involvement (“exclusion”). The worst hit are the most molecular and un-formed groups: children and teenagers – posing a danger to the continuance of democracy. To substantiate her claim, Sabuni refers to “areas of state of exclusion” (utanförskapsområden), a real unit that she claims grew in 2002–2006 (during a social-democratic government) from 128 to 156 territorial areas, and with the population living in those areas increasing with 25% in the same period.

The speech is articulated within what I have referred to as a logic of equivalency that views the danger of “state of exclusion” in terms of a paucity of “meeting places”. In this view, these meeting places are places where citizens, cured of the negative lock-in effects of exclusion, become assets. By referring to exclusion, Sabuni radicalizes the division of an either/or, for instance when she describes how people in exclusion lack both knowledge and understanding of the basic foundations of democracy. Nor do they properly understand their responsibility in a state governed by rule of law.

The urgent issue regarding the democracy’s mode of functioning, is here casted through the concept of exclusion: “The greatest enemy of democracy is the state of exclusion”. Sabuni therefore adds that breaking the state of exclusion is a matter of “defending democracy” (ibid., emphasis added). Finally, she casts “lack of trust” as the major obstacle to political participation: “For the poorest countries in the world, the shortage of food is a democratic obstacle...For people in our part of the world, it is the shortage of trust that bars them from democratic participation” (ibid.).

41 The excluded are here constituted not only as victims, but as problems insofar as they are not considered responsible or in contact with conditions of self-responsibilization. In this regard, they remind of the constitution of the “excluded” in Britain as a “moral underclass” (Levitas 1998). Or in Rose’s words:

As exclusion, poverty is reframed in terms of a lack of belongingness, and hence a lack of the responsibilities and duties to others which such belongingness generates through connection to the responsibilizing circuits of moral community. It is the absence of the stabilization of conduct and self-control provided by the stakes of work, family, housing and so forth. (Rose 1999: 487)

42 The construction of “areas of state of exclusion” is analyzed in chapter seven.

43 She repeats the vision of democracy policy as an endless task: “we must never languish
the new fragmentation as a matter of (a lack of) “social cohesion”, Sabuni asks rhetorically “what shall keep us united as a people?”

The cultural and religious diversity put demands on dialogue and on what shall keep us united as a people. If we do not share culture and religion with our neighbors what can then unite us and make us feel belonging? (Sabuni 2008)

These statements both reformulate the urgent issues that democracy policy address within a larger dispositif, and, as a consequence, open for other knowledge types and measures to address them. When compared to earlier texts, one sees, here, a displacement of emphasis from the urgent issue and possibility of strengthening civic associations and participation to discourses on “culture”, “religion” and the need to secure “social cohesion”. Cohesion emerges as simultaneously a problematization of voids and gaps in the social field, and an assumption of saturation, in need of being infused with “civic spirit”, responsibility, etc. 44 Another problematization that emerges is the

in the work to deepen democracy and constantly seek new tools to create involvement and influence”… [democracy] “is never finished. There always remain challenges for the next and next and next generation to take charge of” (Sabuni 2008).

44 To contextualize these claims, the discourse on social cohesion, according to Hulse & Stone (2007), emerged in policy in liberal welfare regimes (Britain, Canada, New Zeeland and Australia) in the 1990s and 2000s. They contend that the concept and discourse on social cohesion has been part of a negotiation of the transformation of the social models of these regimes along neoliberal ideas that proclaimed the economic inefficiency of social expenditures and the harmful effects it had on individual self-reliance and enterprise (Hulse & Stone 2007: 119) and liberal ideas of independence and character-improvement (120). In 1996–2006, a displacement of welfare models to be based on participation through paid work has been the core of this transformation. This new “employment-based” social model, with Hulse & Stone, “emphasized connection, inclusion, integration or participation…through paid work” (120). This is in sum the context in which social cohesion emerges in Sweden, even if the discourse itself has varied somewhat between countries. In the EU it has been articulated both as a way of articulating the transformation above (de-politicizing it) and as a way of arguing, within the frames of the transformation, for measures to balance the negative social consequences of it (121). As I show below, in a Swedish policy context, social cohesion articulates both these aspects. Another feature of the discourse is its emphasis on culture and ethnicity as a way of displacing the focus from social justice, inequalities and discrimination (122).

Värdefulla möten (2010), a report by National Board of Youth to develop practices to foster social cohesion however contends that “there is not yet any generally accepted definition of the concept”, and, that despite the concept being used in different countries, “there is no common definition or understanding on what social cohesion is or contains as political or scientific realm” (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2010: 12). Media scholar Jesper Strömbäck points out that “Sometimes social cohesion denotes a process, sometimes a
construction of organized criminality as a threat to democracy and the need to work preventively with youth to counteract it. Lack of trust, of social cohesion, increasing diversity and fragmentation point to a different assessment than that of “passivity” and the need to involve as many as possible. In its stead, it seems to both problematize a “bad circulation” and, doing so, assume a good one of induced responsiveness through standards (of a “living democracy”: of inclusion, social cohesion, value-foundation, etc.).

The “living democracy”, which is now the main goal of democracy policy, is a democracy in which “the individual’s opportunities for influence are strengthened and human rights are respected” (Sabuni 2008). The new focus on regulation through standards, on dangers, and on “living values” and “living democracy”, reflects an increasing use of management and security-oriented terms within the framework of democracy policy. Sabuni presents four strategic priorities of this vision. These include a government initiative of “dialogue on value-foundation”, countering threats to political representatives, the use of IT to enhance transparency and influence and reinforcing possibilities to claim accountability.

In the following, I will analyze the government document *Dialog om samhällets värdegrund* (Dialogue on Society’s Foundational Values, skr. 2009/10:106) in which the dialogue and communication on value-foundation is developed. By mapping the new arrangements and focuses that emerged with this new focus, I will focus on concepts like social cohesion and value-foundation casts the inducement (of the dispositif) a democratic mode of functioning in a new way, and display other, or additional ways of seeking to achieve controlled circulation than those advocated by the first bill on democracy policy. Then, I will concentrate on how safety and security were articulated in democracy policy in a specific written communication, one that discusses how to combat violence-promoting extremism.

In the government document *Dialog om samhällets värdegrund* (Dialogue on Society’s Foundational Values/Value-Foundation, skr. 2009/10:106), the state; sometimes subjective values and approaches, sometimes the lack of objectively existing lines of division between different groups in society” (Strömbäck in SOU 2015:65: 343). *Värdefulla möten* refers to the recent interest in works by sociologist such as Emile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies in the 1990s (note the typically “organicist” view of sociology of these sociologists) and its articulation by governmental organizations and countries from the mid 1990s onwards (it mentions the EU, the European Council, the OECD and Canada). In more recent years, the U.K., New Zealand, Australia and Sweden have been interested in the concept according to the report. Strömbäck mentions the sociologist Simmel and the World Bank (Strömbäck in SOU 2015:65: 343).
government analyzes and summarizes the results of a two-year political government initiative (2008–2010) of the same name. The venture focused on the creation of environments, especially on the local level, where people with “different backgrounds, values and life situations” could meet. The venture was motivated by the vision of a society characterized by “social cohesion”, in which democracy and human rights are arranged as “norms” that lay the basis for a regulative value-foundation through which social cohesion can be obtained. This new way of arranging the relation between democracy and involvement – that is, through social cohesion and value-foundation – applies the new focus on “living democracy” to how people ought to relate and interact.

Earlier, democracy was envisioned as both an end in itself and that which would “keep society together”. Now, it also promotes “social cohesion”. As a consequence, efforts now have a two-fold set of goals, both meant to enable the circulation of social cohesion (put in the new managerial language): 1) to “anchor” and “make living” democracy, increasing knowledge of democratic processes and “rules of the game”, and 2) to increase and broaden “insight” (insikten) into human rights and their importance for an open and democratic society. In practice, the reversal is effected by making democracy and human rights into the foundation on which to frame “the existing value-foundation” (skr. 2009/10:106: 4) and the “norms” to which all people must relate: “a basic acceptance and understanding of these norms is a necessary part of social cohesion” (4). Democracy and human rights appear, here, as a standard to use to implement a certain regulation of behavior, meant to ensure the flow of social cohesion. Or, to use the language of NPM, the “output” of a “living” democracy and human rights was to secure the flow of social cohesion. The “output control” (Hood 1991) of democracy and human rights, i.e. democracy policy, is a means to achieve social cohesion, conceptualized in terms of high social capital. In this view, democracy and human rights become quasi-pedagogical questions, something to be taught by coaches who train people in insight, acceptance of “the rules of the game”, understanding, knowledge and learning. In contrast to this, one could imagine democratization occurring – for instance – through interruptive

45 Influenced by a deliberative democratic ideal, and as a regulative standard, the government however refrains from defining what values that shall reign in order to stimulate an “open and reflecting conversation on the closer meaning of democracy and the human rights as basic norms for society”. Apart from being described as norms, human rights and democracy as described as a “base” for society.
movements of solidarity and emancipation, or simply through something more related to democratic principles.

*Dialog om samhällets värdegrund* describes social cohesion as obtaining when “there is a shared understanding that all individuals and groups contribute and are important to society” (7). This understanding of the social field reflects an ethical mode of defining how an individual can have a part in what is common to the community, or what Rancière calls an ethical distribution of the sensible. In this understanding, people are “counted” (Rancière term) in terms of their involvement in and contribution to a smooth community of bonds, contracts and interaction. The flow of social cohesion reigns, when:

- “there is a generally shared notion that all individuals and groups contribute to society
- everyone has the same rights, obligations and possibilities
- there is a general knowledge and awareness of rights, obligations and responsibility in relation to society and fellowmen
- people in general have confidence in society and the authorities, not least because the authorities treat people fairly
- when people feel belonging and feel they have part in society and trust in their fellow men”.

This account produces an equivalence between and dispersion of elements and positions. Instead of focusing on specifically democratic, political or ethical principles, social cohesion delineates the affective and functional conditions necessary for a trustful situation. This, in turn, is characterized by a smooth circulation and particular state of mind (confidence, belonging, fairness, trust, etc.). Social cohesion appears to be an anti-image to polarization, reflecting the primacy of non-interruption. By evacuating disputes over how things are arranged – that is, marginalizing dissent and other modes of interruption – the account de-politicizes democracy.

Social cohesion is described as requiring two types of trust: trust between people, and trust between people and the authorities/state (7). Not unlike how markets need trust/social capital to work, if these conditions are met, they are believed to mutually reinforce each other. Like “civic spirit”, social cohesion brings into view certain civic and institutional conditions that the

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46 It seems that this list has been copied or taken from the British context. In Värdefulla möten a similar, older list to describe social cohesion is referred to a British context in the early 2000s (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2010).
government can seek to affect, such as increasing self-responsibility, min-
mizing polarization and creating meeting places in which people can find
common ground. Part of this strategy is to get agencies and authorities to
treat “individuals” fairly, according to the rule of law, to induce respect for
democracy, and by promoting knowledge and awareness of democracy and
human rights. As an to visualize a particular social dynamic, social cohesion,
then, is to help involve “all parts of the population” in forms of interaction
and trust that go beyond mere efforts of integration. The latter are said to be
a “necessary but not sufficient condition for social cohesion” (8). It is there-
fore, like civic spirit, both a goal and precondition for a specific type of
circulation. It presents a community that is, on the one hand, fairly pacified
in terms of dissent and the politicization of social issues; and yet, on the other,
is activized when it comes to its (supposedly) proper responsibility: that is,
tolerance and smooth forms of relating and interacting.

In earlier texts, democracy is related to but not reduced to a more general
circulation. In Dialog om samhällets värdegrund, circulation is made
primary. Making social cohesion primary reduces democracy to the aims of
social capital, working relations, smooth relations and ultimately growth
and/or equivalency. This alters the strategic objective of the dispositif of
securing involvement and a democratic mode of functioning to become
inseparable from a the more general set of congruence, or a more general
flow.

As in Sabuni’s speech, the problems to such congruence and its flow are
“a lack of meeting places”, increasing diversity, segregation and inadequate
knowledge and awareness of the responsibilities that come with rights. The
document’s five points of departure for the dialogue on the value-foundation
reflect that the strategic objective mentioned above is always-already infused
by a anticipative, “actuarial” vision of politics oriented towards acting upon
contingencies and change itself:

1) Democracy and human rights are never eternal givens [always at risk of
being lost].

2) There is a need for an increased consciousness, on the part of each person,
of his or her own responsibility for upholding human rights and “societal
development at large” [contingencies of individualization and the
costs/burdens of human rights need to be alleviated by the individuals
themselves].
3) The norms of democracy and human rights “leave room for different interpretations and understandings” [contingencies and open-ended notions of democracy and human rights need to be handled].

4) Democracy has to build on wide and active civic participation [no-one is allowed to be “outside”]

5) Sweden is heterogeneous and segregated in several ways [risk for dysfunctionality and “fragmentation”]. (8)

By defining awareness of one’s personal responsibility for democracy and human rights as comprising a “personal understanding” of these things, making people feel the responsibility for the democracy becomes a pedagogical problem: how to transfer knowledge about democracy and human rights to the citizens (8). The government initiative itself did not try to transmit knowledge or define value-foundation, however. It was, instead, a sort of workshop to stimulate dialogue and discussions by creating encounters between “people in different life situations, and with shifting backgrounds, experiences and values”. To respond to the urgent need discussed above, it specifically targeted groups that “participate more rarely”, such as the unemployed, newly arrived immigrants, people without higher education and people living in areas with a lower “level of organization” (55), as well as “young men and women who study in vocational programs”, who are described as having a “deficient knowledge of democracy” (15). Towards this end, it is important to “include those who question or dismiss democratic rules or human rights” by using civil society organizations as channels and arenas to shape the conduct of those involved (13).

To further articulate the need for self-responsibility, the report adds an additional inventive re-arrangement. It re-arranges the relationship between rights and responsibility by problematizing human rights. In doing so, it makes the understanding of rights into a potential domain for governmental intervention, related to a vision that seeks to detect and to contain risks. The authors repeat that people need to be aware of their rights and “understand” and “respect” other people’s rights and “the democratic rules” (9). However,

47 The government demands a mapping of the knowledge and experiences of work with social cohesion and the value-foundation of society in regions with so-called “local development contracts”. These are contracts that in 2008–2 010 were signed between the government and the regional level (21 in total) to conduct work on social cohesion and the value-foundation in 38 urban areas where “the state of exclusion is widespread” (58). I will analyze these geographical divisions and the references to them further in chapter 7.
it adds that “while, legally, human rights are a matter for the state, individuals also have a responsibility to respect other individuals’ rights” (9).

Formulated thus, human rights do not seem sufficiently to comply with, or risks inhibiting, the conditions of a smooth circulation. The context of the claim is that human rights become a problem insofar as some people use their rights to infringe on other people’s. Even if this does not mean that the state does not pose conditions for (villkora) human rights in a strict sense, the report claims that: “An increasing awareness of the proper responsibility for human rights and for societal development at large is needed” (9). It refers to article 30 in the UN declaration on human rights and article 17 in the European Convention to support its interpretation of individual responsibility. Apart from the “duty to comply to national law” (7), the report contends that “All individuals thus have a responsibility to use their rights in a way that does not infringe on others’ rights” (9, emphasis added).

These formulations seem superfluous insofar as they are obvious. Nonetheless, they demonstrate how one can problematize the use and understanding of rights in order to create a domain in which it is possible to change citizen behavior. This is done by separating rights from the improvised modes of interruption with which they have been historically aligned, and re-aligning them in conformity to the demands of flow.

These claims delineate the endeavor to align rights according to certain exceptionalisms. The same applies to the opposition posited between a “pedagogical” understanding of rights as aligned with the state, and auto-didactic modes of claiming rights, often directed against the state. It is one thing, thus, to say that people should not violate other people’s rights, and

48 Since the communication seems to condition human rights to responsibility, or does so on the level of the phrase, if read literally, it at a later occasion stresses that: “It is not a matter of conditioning the rights of the individual, but instead of strengthening a social cohesion that builds on an awareness that all individuals have equal rights and at the same time equal responsibility” (51). It is therefore something close to what the DC termed civic spirit; something that needs to infuse the formal rights and institutions to make them function in a particular way.

49 The mentioned conventions state that no one has the right to infringe on other people’s rights. The communication however stresses that it is by virtue of enjoying human rights that they do so, while the emphasis in the conventions is basically that rights should not be infringed (not that rights as such are problematic). Human rights are also problematized from the viewpoint of the “large space for different interpretations and understandings that they open for” (9). The rights themselves are described as potentially contradictory and conflictual, which could lead to situations in which one right is met at the expense of another one. To avoid this, the government envisions discussions in which the “individual”, in a self-responsibilizing fashion, takes it upon herself to articulate their concrete meaning in the everyday life and for society at large.
another to claim that the rights themselves, insofar as they permit violations, are problematic. Again, the report defines responsibility as putting people in need of knowledge and awareness of human rights and “their significance” (again, a pedagogical emphasis), an awareness citizens currently lack:

it is obvious that many today lack such knowledge and awareness and that many do not respect other people’s rights. A clear expression of that is racism, discrimination and hate crimes, which are acts that are opposed to human rights’ basic principles of all humans’ equal worth (49).

Other examples mentioned are crimes against women committed by men, “honor violence” and “violence in a broader sense” (50). We have moved, here, from an emphasis on civic associations and training citizens’ participative capacities, to a general orientation to dangers emerging from the social field. By positing social cohesion as the goal of democracy and human rights, that which inhibits social cohesion is casted as a direct threat to democracy and human rights.

To yield social cohesion, the report devises concrete forms of interaction (governmentality) directed towards “those who participate the least” (which here emerge, but also remain, a prioritized urgent issue): the creation of “arenas” where people with different backgrounds, values and belongings can meet “in person” in dialogues or in other activities related to democracy and human rights. Its other proposals include “outreach programs”, such as dialogues that can reach people in their “everyday lives”, meant in particular to affect those who participate the least (10). The report comments that state stimulation of and support for meeting places and dialogue – the embrace of forms of governmentality – entail a relatively new direction for Sweden (55). The government also envisions cultivating social cohesion at, for instance, the regional level, among local associations, within local society and in schools. Techniques are to include “dialogue fairs”, “engagement guides”, partnerships and “urban dialogues” in so-called exposed areas.

In order to address problems inherent in human rights, the report also mentions the funding Sweden received from the EU program PROGRESS for a project called “Human Rights Dilemmas” (MR-dilemman). This project trains youth between 12 and 19 years of age in awareness of potential problems and questions arising when human rights are “in conflict with each

50 In this context, however, even dialogues are problematized since the government doubts that people will respect each other and comply to the rules of dialogue (11).
other” (59, see the discussion above). The government has also created an expert panel called “idérum” (the Room of Ideas) and a website homepage for the project of promoting dialogue on value-foundation (20).

New types of knowledge had an impact in these re-arrangements within democracy policy and the larger dispositif. This is evident in the report’s reflections on how democracy, government and community relate. Its emphasis on “trust” as a primary form of knowledge and grid, in order to devise governmental problematizations and interventions, shows the report’s dependence on the World Values Survey (WVS). The Survey influenced the report’s perception of how to interpret changes in behaviors, values and dispositions (14–15). The authors draw on reports issued by the WVS (quantification of attitudes and values) and by the National Board of Youth (ibid.).51 This means that the report problematizes the aggregate effects of educational level, generational aspects and “national background”. These combined effects on encounters across differences are supposedly worsened by segregation and a paucity of “meeting places”. In this aggregate vision, pluralism becomes an asset for social cohesion since it amounts to adding things together: “If all these differences can be seen as part of a totality, rather than as fracturing differences, then the large assets of knowledge and views can be better utilized and interact” (41–42). This seemingly economic approach is further expressed by formulating the meetings’ potential as fostering “creative solutions that are needed in today’s globalized world” (42). As argued above, this shows how the report’s reflections on “social cohesion” are transfused with a logic of equivalency. Accordingly, the report is dedicated to finding opportunities to convert and exchange elements, behaviors and values, and so facilitate a smooth circulation, underpinned by responsible modes of relating and belonging in the context of fragmentation and increasing market demands.

51 The government requested in December 2007 that the National Board of Youth would summarize and systematize all the results from surveys from 2000–2 007 on youth attitudes (15), a summary that the communication specifically draws upon. The input from these surveys appear important to the communication. It mentions another survey (Något håller på att hånda. Morgondagens värderingar i världen och Sörmland, 2008) that presents data from 20 countries to point out that nationality, ethnicity and religion are less important for young people than identity, family, friends and consumption. Migration is said to create challenges to provide the “newly arrived” with knowledge and occasions to “reflect upon” what it implies to live in the Swedish society (38). Globalization and migration are linked to a discussion on a “variated population”. In light of migration, and drawing upon WVS, it problematizes the “differences in values that there are between some people who have migrated to Sweden and some people born here” (39–40).
Security through democracy
In 2010–2011, “democracy” was used as a starting point for an Action plan to safeguard democracy against violence-promoting extremism (skr. 2011/12:44), commissioned to devise ways to fight “violence-promoting extremism”. I will argue that the perceived need to “strengthen democracy” was used as a grid when devising new arrangement for security, the need for which supposedly arising from a division between democracy and its “enemies”. Both this document and the discourse on violence-promoting extremism will be analyzed, at greater length, in chapter seven.

To strengthen democracy in order to prevent extremism is, the document points out, a novel approach: “efforts to prevent extremism have not been part of policies aimed at improving and strengthening Swedish democracy” (5). The perceived need to strengthen democracy in order to “counter the threat from anti-democratic forces” is, nonetheless, traced back to the first government bill on democracy policy (prop. 2001/02:80). In fact, as mentioned above, prop. 2001/02:80 was committed to this. However, efforts had, thitherto, been directed to supporting and protecting elected officials from violence. Now, strengthening democracy is described as a “fundamental component in the fight against terrorism” (ibid.). In light of this re-framing, the support for democracy is described as:

the government considers it important to intensify efforts to safeguard democracy in order to counter tendencies that may constitute a long-term challenge to the democratic system. Awareness of democracy must be strengthened on all levels of society and efforts must be made to counter the breeding grounds for all forms of violence-promoting extremism. These efforts cannot be limited to measures taken by the police and judicial authorities but must be cross-sectoral in nature and be based on a broad consensus in society (skr. 2011/12:44: 6, emphases added).

The quote reflects how the existing, risk-management vision of politics and democracy, now extended to encompass “tendencies that may constitute a long-term challenge to the democratic system” and efforts to “counter the breeding grounds for all forms of violence-promoting extremism”. In light

52 I will analyze the construction of violence-promoting extremism and the governmental strategy to counter it more in detail in chapter seven. The report above however specifies what it means in two quotes, in which violence-promoting extremism is homogenized and opposed to democracy:
of this view, it underscores the importance of a “well-functioning democracy” in this regard:

A well-functioning democracy offers the best protection against extremism [En väl fungerande demokrati är det främsta skyddet mot extremism]. As long as people have trust in the democratic system and feel that they can influence the decisions that affect their everyday lives, extremism will be confined to the outer fringes of society (19).

Irrespective of these claims’ validity, a “well-functioning democracy” – here defined as citizens with trust in the democratic system and its influence on their day-to-day lives – becomes a means and an end for security. The urgent issue and strategic objective of the dispositif here not only seeks to close a gap or induce a particular flow, but becomes to prevent and repress extremism. Democratic awareness is the main preventive measure meant to secure a well-functioning democracy (6).53 To support efforts for democratic awareness among youth, it gives the Living History Forum the task of conducting

Their ideological differences aside, these various violent extremist environments are similar social phenomena. They are often based on a black-and-white and conspiratorial view of the world. Conflict with the surrounding society and the glorification of violence are central to them. It is basically the same social mechanisms that motivate individuals to join a violent extremist environment, regardless of whether it promotes a classless, an ethnically homogeneous or an Islamist society (4–5).

The word extremism is used here to describe movements, ideologies or people who do not accept a democratic social system. The concept of “violence-promoting extremism” is interpreted based on the description used by the Swedish Security Service in their report on violence-promoting Islamist extremism. According to this description, a person is said to be violent if he or she “is deemed repeatedly to have displayed behavior that not just accepts the use of violence but also supports or exercises ideologically motivated violence to promote something” (9).

53 The efforts are centered around handling and diminishing the impact of extremism:

- To enhance awareness of the values upon which our democratic system is based.
- To increase awareness and knowledge of violence-promoting extremism among authorities, municipalities, organizations in civil society and the business sector.
- To develop or establish mechanisms and structures to allow authorities, municipalities and civil society organizations to be able to cooperate more effectively on preventive work.
- To intensify efforts to prevent individuals from joining violence-promoting extremist movements and to help individuals to leave them.
a workshop-series called *Mission: Democracy*, consisting of 22 different workshops on democracy, human rights and tolerance. These are directed towards school classes and are to challenge pupils to “learn about the present… to reflect on democracy, tolerance and human rights”. The document demonstrates an actuarial approach, analyzing the mission in terms of probability and output control: it refers to survey research that shows a correlation between attitudes and the number of lessons a pupil undergoes on democracy and human rights. The pressing need to promote involvement and tolerance by inculcating democratic awareness is traced, in part, to Sweden’s increasingly heterogeneous pupils (ibid.).

**A summary from late 2013**

The last document to be analyzed here consists of a 2013 evaluation of efforts taken within the new policy domain (skr. 2013/14:61). In accordance with the re-articulation of democracy policy in 2008, the domain’s aim is defined as the cultivation of “a living democracy in which the opportunities for an individual to exert influence are strong and human rights are respected” (skr. 2013/14:61 ENG: 3). In the managerial terms of the document, in “living democracy”, “each individual has the opportunity to influence the decisions that affect their daily lives and has confidence in decisions concerning private citizens” (skr. 2013/14:61 ENG: 3). This, as I have pointed out earlier, defines democracy as a smooth, conflict-free space for circulation. As in 2008, democracy and human rights are posited as “society’s value-foundation”, standards to which one must respond in order to promote social cohesion.55

- To strengthen efforts to counter the breeding grounds for ideologically motivated violence.
- To further develop European and global efforts to prevent extremism by deepening cooperation and knowledge exchange. (7)

While democracy above was used as another name for circulation, the list shows that a certain notion of circulation in space and time precedes or can dispense with democracy as well. In the list, democracy is no longer the main term to elaborate how to go about in practice. Instead, most practices seem to stem from security practices and strategic routines linked to these. In chapter seven, I will analyze closer the formation to combat violence-promoting extremism that these constitute.

54 I will use the English version of the communication, which I will call skr. 2013/14:61 ENG.

55 In contrast to the concrete and ambitious goals of participation in the first bill of the domain, the aims of social cohesion are rather vague. Notable is that the first bill’s ambitions have been watered down, reflected in the fact that the aims of 2002 are turned into “points of departure” for a *future* focus of democracy policy. Added to them is the formulation from the action plan from 2011, “to safeguard democracy against violence-
In 2013, however, the standard of value-foundation is highlighted as that which makes “individuals able to agree on and accept decisions that are made and to take responsibility for advancing [the] society they share.” (skr. 2013/14:61 ENG: 3).

The 2013 report adds to previous problematizations of urgent issues – of a gap, the mode of functioning of democracy, of marginalized segments of the population, and inhibitions to social cohesion – by identifying risky “parallel information structures”, stemming from new ways of using media and due to an increase in the proportion of people who never use any news media, with the consumption of news media declining among young people in particular. The report refers to media professor Jesper Strömbäck who locates the problem in citizens’ increased ability to choose between different news media. This makes it easier for people to isolate themselves from information they dislike. The report emphasizes that this might contribute to a “polarisation of views and perceptions of reality” (38).

In an effort to respond to challenges to political involvement, the report presents five future “points of departure” that all transpire with a calculus of the maximum effects from a minimal direct governmental intervention. The first aim, to achieve a high voter turnout in all social groups, is argued as a matter of avoiding an otherwise “incorrect” reflection of the interests and opinions “expressed in society”. Apart from addressing a potential problem of legitimacy that low voter turnout constitutes, the report views high participation, as an embodied habit, as always desirable. In this vision, high participation in turn affects the will of the voters to perceive the “value” of promoting extremism”, the newcomer in the context (skr. 2013/14:61 ENG: 4–5).

56 Strömbäck elsewhere claims that social cohesion is what makes the “democratic society possible” (Strömbäck in SOU 2015:65: 341):

For a democratic society to work some form of social cohesion that rest on a voluntary foundation is needed. It is needed for there to be something that ties together people who do not have any direct relations and who might never meet, for people to be able to cooperate and reach common goals, for people to feel that they are part of a greater totality than themselves, and for the democratic processes and democratically taken decisions to be perceived as legitimate. That in turn is related to the will to pay taxes, to obey laws and rules and for people to accept a welfare-state that redistributes resources … The question of the nature of the social cohesion – or, to paraphrase Simmel, how the democratic society is possible – is thus central to analyze the democratic societal development. This is not least the case in times of large and transformative [omvälande] societal changes like the period in which we live today (Strömbäck in SOU 2015:65: 341–3 42, emphasis added).
voting, by showing that the democratic form is “well anchored” (10). The report echoes the DC and the first bill by describing “social representativeness” as a matter of utilizing human resources, of “harnessing society’s resources to the full” (22). To avoid wasting efforts and energies, those who participate the least are to be encouraged to engage by lowering thresholds for their participation (21–22). In this resource and risk-management logic, it is strategically more important to increase the participation of the “risky” segments of youth and people born abroad, that is, those who participate the least. This also affects the political equality of society.

As other examples of how governmentality was central to these aims, and to affect those who participate the least, the government gives the National Board for Youth Affairs the task of funding civil society organizations and municipalities that run activities aimed at increasing voter turnout, favoring those that focus on “young people and the foreign-born and are carried out in areas with low voter turnout in previous elections” (12). The agency will, in addition, conduct mock school elections just before the general elections, in order to get pupils to simulate/practice voting (15). The report also recommends increasing voter turnout in the European Parliamentarian elections by supporting efforts by various political parties to spread information about them, as well as efforts by the Swedish Commission for Government Support to Faith Communities (SST) to stimulate the faith communities’

57 The government here refers to – and at the same time rejects – the advice from a report by the political scientist Ludvig Beckman (Beckman 2009), who in name of democratic principles, in a normative political theoretical reflection and analysis of ideas, questioned if high participation is always an important or the most important objective. The government’s argument for rejecting this objection is interesting insofar as it reflects how the government reasons in an actuarial fashion in which democratic principles are not primary. In this view, it matters to minimize risk and increase good probabilities by having people be conditioned by the disposition to vote and the habit of voting (no matter how well one can motivate this behavior in terms of democratic principles).

58 This is a work in progress. The report stresses that, it intends to return with an assignment concerning support to “municipalities implementing work using innovative methods, strategies or initiatives to strengthen the influence of young people in local democracy” (22). In this context, the communication also repeats problematizations from the first bill on democracy policy. The decline in party membership is deemed to eventually pose a challenge to the democratic form of government (19). Another problem is that many politicians leave their elected position before the end of their term (the “recruitment base” for elected office has diminished, with a growing workload for those who remain in office, 20). To address these problems and have decision making in political assemblies “reflect the population composition”, the government envisions to abolish obstacles in order to create “new paths into politics” for those least implicated (20–21).
similar informational efforts leading up to Sweden’s general elections. These relays are meant to enable organizations in “reaching out and communicating election information in voter groups that participate to a lesser extent, particularly those [groups of people] born abroad” (15).

The government report further shows how, since 2012, the connection between security and democracy has spurred new efforts to increase awareness of threats and violence against elected representatives. The report encourages political parties to develop their own security efforts. This is done, for instance, by helping SALAR in 2013 to produce a method book containing examples of preventive and follow-up work “to counter threats and violence against elected representatives at the local and regional levels” (Ju2013/3888/D, 25). In addition, the government announces its intention to continue monitoring and surveying (kartläggning) the extent and development of threats, harassment and violence against elected representatives.59

In terms of security, the report refers to the action plan’s proposals to combat “violence-promoting extremism” and the type of arenas and techniques needed to minimize forms of radicalization and segregation.60 One such arena is the Swedish Commission for Government Support to Faith Communities, which receives government support to foster “stable and vital faith communities that operate in accordance with the fundamental values of democracy” (40). However, to not run the risk of being inefficient or counterproductive, the report also alerts readers to the need to avoid a “dissociation” or demarcation between “oneself” and “those with extremist views” that “may merely reinforce their involvement” (43) Again, this is a strategy of “inclusion”.61

59 To enable this, The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) was tasked in 2013 to follow up on the survey of elected representatives' exposure to and worry about threats, violence and harassment.

60 The last objective, the focus on policy to safeguard democracy against violence-promoting extremism, involves to not only promote democratic values, but also to “counter anti-democratic manifestations in society” (41). Reflecting the action plan, part of democracy policy is now, as this quote reveals, to:

counter tendencies which could ultimately pose a threat to democracy. The Government therefore believes that it is important for the work to safeguard and strengthen democracy, and to counter the breeding grounds for violence-promoting extremism, to be broad, cross-sectoral and long-term in nature (42).

61 The communication also stresses that preventative efforts could be problematic from the viewpoint of how they infringe on freedoms of opinion and association. As a countermeasure to this, it stresses, that “Knowledge about extremism must therefore be based on factual and scientific data”. As a strategy of governmentality – between total control and
Among security efforts to “counter the breeding grounds for violence-promoting extremism”, the report mentions “educational efforts” directed towards professional groups that “come into contact with individuals who are in the risk zone for being drawn into violence-promoting extremist environments or who are active in such environments” (43). The report refers to several measures taken after the action plan was published, indicating the continued integration of security practices into efforts to “safeguard” democracy.

During these years, the National Board for Youth Affairs took on a strategic role as the agency meant to carry through on efforts to affect the conduct of specific groups. It was told to support those organizations dedicated to keeping individuals clear of extremist environments that promote violence and defection, and to analyze what it is that enables individuals to leave “violence-promoting” groups.

The report reflects the policy documents’ concentration on surveys and behavior and the specific knowledge types that the identification of urgent issues within democracy policy rely upon. It refers to several new reports that reinforce its strategic objectives. For example, it mentions the World Values Survey’s attitude survey on authoritarian and anti-democratic attitudes, two reports by the SOM and one on the degree of satisfaction with the way democracy works (Svenska trenden 2012). In addition, it cites a report on the prevalence of intolerant and xenophobic opinions (I framtidens skugga, 2012), the Future Committee’s report (2013), and a report by the National total freedom – it seems particularly important to avoid producing counter-productive tendencies.

62 This proposal was criticized by social scientific scholars for how it encouraged people working in schools to denounce youth in risk of being radicalized to the Secret Services (SÄPO). https://www.dn.se/debatt/forslag-mot-extremism-hotar-demokratisk-grund/ [Accessed March 2 2018].

63 The government appointed an inquiry chair that it tasked to come up with an updated status report on the violence-promoting extremist environments in Sweden, and to describe the trends that may affect the future development in this field (a report was presented in 2014). It also appointed a committee of inquiry to work out a more effective work to prevent violence-promoting extremism (ToR 2012:57), and to produce training material containing methods on how to tackle and prevent violence-promoting extremism directed to “persons in the relevant professional groups” in order to “help them to better identify those who are at risk of being recruited into violence-promoting extremism” (43). Part of the security measures that the committee of inquiry is tasked to do is to make sure that the preventative work can respond to “various forms of extremism” (44) and find government agencies that can “disseminate the training material to the relevant actors and suggest how the work to prevent violence-promoting extremism may be developed in the future” (ibid.).
Board of Youth Affairs (Fokus 10 – En analys av ungas inflytande, 2010). These reports additionally problematize the population’s tendencies and focus on domains that are already problematized (youth, “anti-democratic attitudes”, etc.). “Lack of trust/confidence” is identified as a problem specific to certain groups, such as young, poorly educated males with unemployed parents (38).

The report’s – and policy domain’s – reliance on surveys reinforces the anticipative identification of youth as a risk and aleatory segment that is privileged to these efforts to secure democratic involvement, its mode of functioning and ultimately its “renewal”. An international survey supposedly showed that 8 percent of pupils have very poor knowledge of democracy and human rights. This makes it imperative, the government concludes, to (among other things) strengthen young people’s awareness as media users.

In response to the problematization of youth with regards to the renewal of a well-functioning democracy, the government commissioned the Living History Forum to develop and disseminate digital materials for use in primary and secondary schools. The materials were to be based on “testimonies from the Holocaust, the crimes of Communism and other crimes against humanity” (39). In addition, the National Board for Youth Affairs is asked to make funding available to civil society organizations, allowing these to become “arenas” that can “support activities intended for the prevention of anti-democratic behavior and for democracy and leadership training for

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64 Again, in this context, reflecting the general accounts that we have seen at the core of democracy policy, it reiterates that:

The government believes that it is important that the public institutions work to strengthen awareness of the fundamental principles of democracy at all levels of society. Work to increase democratic awareness should be conducted on a continuous basis. If democracy is to endure, its fundamental values must be constantly reclaimed and rooted in society (39).

65 The survey is the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study accounted for in Morgondagens medborgare (National Agency for Education, 2010). This priority has been reflected several times in the material, and is articulated anew through in the communication through developmental-psychological theory stating that, “It is during adolescence that the values which individuals bear with them through life are formed. Against this background, the government believes that work to strengthen young people’s democratic values is necessary” (39).

66 One technique used in this shaping of conduct is digital training material aimed at increasing young people’s media and information literacy, in particular to become resistant to anti-democratic and violence-promoting messages on the internet and in social media (the Government instructed the Swedish Media Council in May 2013 to produce this training material).
people who are or could be role models at the local level” (40). A special section on democratic awareness relates government concerns about youth to the general, preventive goal of securing “democratic competence” in the population. The managerial concept “democratic competence” is described as “knowledge” - a minimum knowledge that the citizens must have to function well in democracy (that is, they should have basic knowledge about political rights and the “rules” of democracy). This is “necessary for individuals to be capable of participating in the democratic process and to take well-considered decisions in the general elections” (37). Against such a standard, in this actuarial vision, democracy, far from something that you relate to or appropriate on your own, becomes the organizing name for a form of benchmarking.67

Conclusions

In this chapter, I mapped how democracy policy emerged in response to problematizations that consolidated the vision of a “gap” between the population, and in particular marginalized sub-groups, and the representative democratic order. However, democracy policy was far from being a simple framework to address problems and achieve goals. It was, rather, infused by a vision of politics oriented towards anticipation, risk and profit, dangers/security, contingencies and change, related to a more general circulation beyond the immediate realm of democratic institutions. At the heart of the emergence of democracy policy and this vision of politics was a perception of the non-given renewal of democratic values, habits and dispositions in the population in general, and in youth, immigrants and poor people in particular. I have argued that this vision was central to the formulation of a perceived urgent need to monitor and shape processes of change in the population so as to secure democratic involvement and renewal. I have sometimes termed this vision of politics “actuarial”. I noted that it was differently articulated over time: as more risk- and profit-oriented in focus on social capital and participation, as only risk-oriented in the vision of a more general problematization of several changes that put pressure on the existing forms of democratic involvement, and as a more directly security-oriented vision,

67 In chapter six, I further trace how “democratic competence” first entered the framework of school policy from where it was later integrated into democracy policy. I there also bring up how it has been developed and measured by political scientists.
oriented to preventive means to secure acceptable degrees of democratic awareness, trust and interaction (in meeting places).

By referring to a particular dispositif and in the emergence of the strategic objective to secure a renewed democratic involvement and individual responsibility for the renewal of democracy, I have postulated three periods, each with a particular contribution to the formulation of the urgent need and its solutions. During the first period (roughly 1992–2000), government responses addressed several events defined as problematic for traditional forms of democratic engagement and values. These were associated with Sweden’s industrial society. Here, the stakes were both to formulate how to address increasing political dis-involvement and simultaneously shape a new type of citizen who would be an asset in the economic, social and political spheres.

During the second period, the dispositif and the vision of politics infusing it was re-oriented towards containing risks. Its main objective was to contain dis-involvement by addressing the steep decrease in voter participation as well as in party and association memberships. The Democracy Commission, as a draft for the first bill on democracy policy, inventively formulated several arrangements showing how civic involvement might be promoted under conditions of diversity and large-scale changes. Finally, the chapter traced the third integration of the dispositif, spanning the liberal-conservative government’s renewal of democracy policy between 2008 and 2013.

In conclusion, during 2008–2013, the response to the urgent challenge of dis-involvement was formulated more in terms of avoiding the immediate dangers of polarization, violence and lack of knowledge, than combating the risks of poor schooling, engagement and participation. I argued that democracy became more generally oriented to demands on circulation with its alignment to – becoming a means for – social cohesion. This was also the case for human rights. In the strategic elaboration that takes place within the dispositif in 2008–2013, I noted that security and democracy became increasingly synonymous and interchangeable.

As a different way of assessing this development, the chapter also highlighted the centrality of circulation, both as a way of understanding what securing democracy by addressing the population should amount to and, thus, as a technique to achieve other desired ends: social capital, social cohesion, security, responsibility. Viewed in this light of circulation, the efforts to secure a working democracy, which led to the emergence of democracy policy, consisted in a genealogy of inventive arrangements that indicated
how “good” circulation – of trust, tolerance, interaction, participation, involvement, etc. and a more general congruence between civic ways of acting and moving – and representative democracy, could be achieved. Inversely, they indicated how bad circulation (of violence, distrust, interruption, etc.) could be avoided.
CHAPTER SIX
Securing responsive citizens in a performance governed school: the birth and integration of value-foundation

The previous chapter mentioned policy documents’ discourse and presentation of values during the first half of the 1990s, as well as later references to a “value-foundation” (värdegrund).¹ “Value-foundation”, even if used across different policy domains, appeared during the 1992 drafting of school policy. It is referred to again in the 1994 school curriculum. Initially, the concept denoted a set of values said to constitute the foundation of Swedish society. These could, therefore, be used to create guidelines for what Swedish schools should teach, not least with regards to the school’s mandate of moral and civic upbringing. This emphasis on values emerged at the same time as discourses on social cohesion and social exclusion became commonplace in Europe and elsewhere during the 1990s (e.g., Canada, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand, cf. Hulse & Stone 2007). Dahlstedt notes that in the Swedish turn to values, “other cultures” were contrasted to the Swedish norm. In Dahlstedt’s interpretation, values thus became a catchword (my term) for the endeavour to get other cultures to adapt what were, supposedly, Swedish norms (Dahlstedt 2009: 93).² In 2011, the fact that the Swedish state defined its value-foundation is described as internationally unique (Skolvardagens komplexitet, 2011). By 2018, the concept is used as a universal in Foucault’s sense. It is presented as a common-sense yet abstract concept, spreading the assumption that organizations, political agencies and collectives in general need to increase their responsiveness to values and norms.

¹ I deliberatively keep the strangeness of this concept by translating it literally. “Värdegrund” is composed by “värde” (value) and “grund” (foundation, ground, fundament). Marking it out with an in English even stranger concept, “value-foundation”, is done to eschew a translation of it as referring to any evident notion of fundamental values.
Starting in 2000, the concept migrated to organizations. On the regional level, it came to denote something equivalent to “policies and values” (Nyström Höög 2015). It underlay assumptions on the need to regulate proper behavior and predictability in organizations, mainly state agencies and regional-level agencies. In this context, documents on value-foundation formed a genre of their own (ibid.) as the state defined its own value-foundation through the so-called “Value-Foundation Delegation” (Värdegrundsdelegationen).

This chapter will begin by showing how value-foundation was integrated into school policy, establishing a standard for regulating behavior in order to meet the requirements engendered by the transition to a performance-governed school. The standard was developed through the school’s mandate of moral and civic upbringing. Around 1997, this mandate was casted as the school’s “democracy mission”. Second, I will discuss how value-foundation had an instrumental character as a response to a NPM-reform as well as serving as a nexus through which a risk-oriented dispositif was integrated. This dispositif, once invested in the school, could respond to a number of what were perceived as the 1990s’ threats to the renewal of democratic habits, social capital and involvement. The regulation through value-foundation was seen as necessary to “handle” growing diversity because pluralism put pressure on the school’s capacity to form citizens. Further, new identities among increasingly individualized youth were seen as a risk factor with regards to “democratic” requirements of common approaches and responsibility, while it was also necessary to address lagging civic knowledge skills (as ascertained in surveys), as well as growing racism, bullying and inequalities. Other challenges included increasing pressures exerted on individuals to take an individual standpoint and to be flexible and socially competent amid increasing pressures to cope, engendered, in turn, by growing competition and internationalization.

This dispositif resembles that discussed in the previous chapter. By contrast to the strategic documents that assess the democracy and its renewal

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3 In Norway, the concept “verdiplatform” is a comparable function and history to the Swedish “värdegrund”, even if it is not as spread as the latter (Nykänen 2010).

4 http://www.vardegrundsdelegationen.se/om-delegationen/ [Accessed March 5 2018]
The State’s value-foundation was developed by KRUS (Kompetensrådet för utveckling i staten) in an effort to install a vision of a “public ethos” among civil servants. KRUS, which was a State authority, existed in 2008–2012. Its questions of a public ethos was later taken over by Uppsala university. http://www.publikt.se/artikel/universitet-tar-over-efter-krus-15794 [Accessed September 17 2017].
through popular involvement, the school and the discourse on value-foun-
dation offer sites in which, as Agamben puts it in his description of Foucault’s
dispositif, “power relations become concrete”. Here, the dispositif becomes
invested with particular strategies for the formation of democratic citizens
and knowledge types (pedagogy, social-psychology, democracy-theory) in
congested environments, thereby enabling particular a subjectification to
emerge. In view of its subjectification – of a subject who is reflexively aware
of its own approaches, how it relates to others, who takes initiative and
responsibility, etc. – the strategic objective of achieving these “working social
relations” of the dispositif stretches beyond the school to other organizations
and domains, although the school offers a site to study both its emergence
and its concretization. This concretization can also be mapped in decisions
to establish the Living History Forum, in increased survey research on civic
attitudes, in increasing concern about psychic health as a biopolitical concern
and violations and in new laws on discrimination, as well as in demands on
civic and personal skills by organizations and companies more widely. In
contrast to the dispositif in the previous chapter, which sought to induce
involvement and thereby bridge the gap between the population and the
representative democratic order (and induce various types of circulation),
the dispositif accounted for here, and the school as a site in which “power
relations become concrete”, thus, seeks to ensure a particular type of
responsiveness and relationality (more infused by discipline than the overly
security-oriented vision in democracy policy). Its objective, I argue, is to
secure the individual renewal of certain behavior and approaches that
conforms to, and thus induces, the flow, or the dispositions and approaches
that are demanded in face of increasing diversity and competition.

This chapter is disposed in the following way. First, I present examples of
how value-foundation has migrated to different organizational domains, and
how it operates and is used as a universal in 2017–18. I also show how it was
articulated as a centerpiece of the school’s 2011–12 “democracy mission”.
Value-foundation, I argue, differs from earlier notions of moral education in
being a standard related to a NPM-understanding of how an organization
can govern behavior and foster responsiveness to common norms and aims.

Second, I trace the emergence of value-foundation. I begin by discussing
its difference to earlier visions of democratic fostering, in order to display the
shift to (what I term) performance governance. The main tool, here, is the
creation of an “explicit standard”. I then trace how this standard was
developed in response to several urgent needs, identified in the mid to late
1990s, whose solution, it was felt, could be handled within the school’s
universal mandate to foster citizens. Deliberative democratic theory was integrated into this standard, so that it represented an overall image of mutually reinforcing connections between different elements in the school’s teaching of democratic values. By mapping documents from the National Agency for Education, which articulated the strategic functions of the standard in responses to the challenges and aims in 1999–2001, I show how the standard and value-mission of the school served as a nexus. This nexus formed a platform whence one could reflect on and re-formulate still greater needs among Sweden’s youth, helping to manage the “risks” of an increasingly uncertain future.

Lastly, I trace the history of value-foundation work in the school. It shows the standard’s discontinuity, as the larger dispositif is affected by new knowledge types and political priorities during the early to mid 2000s. This discontinuity changed the output of the school’s value-foundation work. I discuss this shift both in terms of the standards’ weak form of control and regulation. This includes a chance of de-coupling, and demonstrates the instability of the dispositif as new forces and knowledge types alter its strategic objective.

Value-foundation and the school’s democratic mission

In 2012, Joakim Ekman describes the need for a common value-foundation in society as a matter of “giv[ing] all people in society common approaches to what at least on a basic level is right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable, and what ought to be aimed at and what ought to be rejected” (Ekman 2012: 29). At that time, “value-foundation” had already assumed the status of a given concept or universal in Swedish political discourse. Ekman’s quote reflects the desire to regulate behavior according to a definite measure which helps determine what is “right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable”. If one juxtaposes Ekman’s quote with the description of a standard from the Swedish Standard’s Institute (cited in chapter three), the character of “value-foundation” as a standard becomes clear:

A standard is a common solution to a recurrent problem. Standardization is the very process when parties meet and agree upon what the standard should comprise and how it should be formed. Characteristic of standardization processes is openness, voluntariness, interest-motivation [intressestyrning] and consensus. The aim with standards is to create unitary and transparent routines that we can agree upon. It is in everybody’s interest to increase the quality, avoid misunderstanding and not
have to re-invent the wheel each time. In addition, you get a more efficient resource-effective production (SSI 2018: 7).

Different means have been used to achieve the standardization of value-foundation. As shown above, and further discussed below, dialogue or “deliberation” was seen as key to how the value-foundation would both induce shared approaches and regulate or delimit acceptable behavior in organizations. The concept and its general claims have led to the incorporation of standardization into several organizations, all more or less affected by NPM. To take a fairly “extreme” example, provided by a “value consultant” arguing for the need to “build a value-foundation”, the standards of value-foundation should be seen in terms of the desirability of enabling common approaches and regulating behavior so as to achieve or maintain an uninterrupted flow:

There is no manual for all the situations that we confront every day at work – at each occasion we must immediately [blixtsnabbt] decide what is right or wrong. If an activity [verksamhet] has common, explicit and living values the decision becomes easy and right since we can get the answers from there. Then the behavior is not contingent [slumpmässigt] but a genuine reception disregarding customer, colleague or situation. It provides a space for security [trygghet] and development and indicates the path to success!5

The quote describes value-foundation as a standard that can free behavior from autodidactic approaches, misunderstandings and contingencies (note the management-term “living values”, comparable to “living democracy”). Value-foundation here operates as a lubricant to induce the flow and congruence of embodied, standardized approaches and behavior.

Another example showing how value-foundation is used as a standard can be found in a 2018 text produced by the hospital Södersjukhuset in central Stockholm. This is an organization strongly affected by the pressures of performance management. In a leaflet on the hospital’s value-foundation, For the patient – with the patient: value-foundation, the latter is described as:

a support for how we, all who work at Södersjukhuset, decide and act. Basically, it is about always putting the patient’s best in focus, regardless

5 http://miahultman.se/forelasningar/ [Accessed and translated from Swedish on April 16 2018].
of [one’s] professional role. It can seem self-evident, but it is not always easy. Value-foundation becomes a reminder to do right. We need to ask ourselves: does what we are doing right now create a value for the patient? (SÖS 2018).

The quote reflects the regulative aspects of the standard. It promotes approaches and relationality, while urging responsiveness to the standard, the need to work “through it”, using “value for the patient” as a performance indicator.

Having given these examples of how value-foundation can serve as a standard to regulate organizational behavior, I will now turn to educational policy and the school. It was here that value-foundation emerged and lasted longest.

In 2012, the School Inspectorate describes the school’s “democratic mission” as follows:

The school’s democratic mission aims at supporting the pupils’ civic competence by working to promote that the pupils shall share the basic democratic values that value-foundation establishes [fastslår], that they should develop knowledge about society and politics and also possess some of the civic capacities required to live and act in a democratic society (Skolinspektionen 2012: 56).

The quote shows that although the school should seek to at inculcate value-foundation in its pupils, this is – unlike, say, competence in Swedish or math – not formulated as a goal that must be reached. Performance governance means, in fact, that the curriculum distinguishes between “strävansmål” and “uppnäsemål”, that is, aims to strive for, and aims to achieve.

Value-foundation “establishes” the basic democratic values that ought to be transmitted, suffusing school and teaching as environments for interaction. On the homepage of the National Agency for Education, the school’s value-foundation is described as valorizing the “sanctity of human life, individual freedom and integrity, egalitarianism, equality of the sexes, and solidarity between people”.

The document on the school curriculum’s “value-foundation work” describes the democracy mission as comprising knowledge concerning democracy, human rights, influence, involvement, and the ability to exert “democratic competence” in communication (Lpo

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The “work with value-foundation” is further divided into supportive, preventive and rectifying parts (56). In the 2011 school curriculum, “democratic competence” is defined as:

The ability to affect one’s life conditions and to actively participate in societal life on the basis of basic democratic values demands democratic competence, meaning knowledge about democracy and human rights and the capacity to communicate with others on common questions and problems. Democratic competence is developed in encounters with others, through conversations [samtal] and relations. Conversations and relations are also a foundation for the open classroom climate that is a precondition for a good environment and learning (Lpo 2011: 64).

The standardization of value-foundation is thus linked to a form of output indicator that ensures that “democracy” is inculcated on different levels. In substance, various outputs of “democracy” are to be achieved through certain environments and a standardization of conversational interaction, which become, in turn, the central performance indicators. Value-foundation work consists of learning about rights, responsibilities and democratic forms. It is promoted by, for instance, roll-playing. It can also be integrated into various teaching situations and exercises which concentrate on deliberation (Lpo 2011). To further secure the output, school exercises are to be complemented by “controlled” exercises formulated by the Living History Forum’s “Mission Democracy” (mentioned in the previous chapter).7 To quote Lpo11: “in this way, the negotiation of the school’s value-foundation is filled with content”. In addition, one can measure things: when a child has attended the workshop it can be issued a certificate, etc.

In the following, I will first present a historical overview of the school’s mandate to foster democratic citizens in the post-Second World War period. This will enable me to trace how this framework and value-foundation work have become common sense, and to highlight the stakes and politics endemic to this process.

From form to content: twists and turns of the school’s educational policy with reference to democracy, 1946–2000

Value-foundation has been characterized as returning the school to its traditional mission of moral training (Englund SOU 1999:93, Englund for Skolverket 2000, Hedin & Lahdenperä 2000, Olson 2008, Dahlstedt 2009a). Although my mapping goes beyond this established frame for understanding the emergence of value.foundation, it is still useful to trace the political stakes in preceding changes in moral education. Moral training, research shows, has always existed in modern Swedish schools, albeit articulated in different ways and not always explicit (Almgren 2006, Ekman 2007). After the Second World War, the school was endowed with a specific mandate to foster democratic citizens. Before WWII, according to the pedagogy scholar Tomas Englund, such training had been conceived in terms of a “patriarchal” matter of shaping the character of the pupils by preparing them for sacrifice. They were to commit themselves to society and to identify themselves with or feel that they belonged to something specifically Swedish (Englund in SOU 1999:93: 20).

The mandate to foster democratic citizens thus appears to be new in the post-war context. It mixes the school’s authoritative elements with the non-authoritative principles and values of democratic ideals. This mix, combined with pedagogical and scientific trends and the specific definition of democracy, means the mandate was articulated in different ways (Englund & Englund 2012, Englund 2000, Almgren 2006). The two first decades following the war were initially characterized by a more formal or functional view. This switched to a normative view of the school and its relation to democracy (Englund in SOU 1999:93, 17; Englund himself is a supporter of this latter approach). During the initial period, democracy was understood as a means to promote a certain form of decision-making. Subsequently, democracy is identified with democratic processes, as an “end in itself” (ibid.). Whereas the initial focus is on teaching about democracy in fairly separate forms, the latter – to quote Englund – implies “a greater effort to within the framework of the school seek to contribute to create equal conditions for all to understand the basic premises of democracy and become capable of participating in democracy” (ibid.). Democracy is, here, a “way of living”, and teaching democracy is mainly a matter of subject- or citizen-formation. It is to shape the process that promotes a desirable subject-formation, putting more emphasis on teaching either participatory or deliberative democracy.
After the late 1940s, the school had undergone a historical distinction between a more collective and a more individual view on democracy. The collective view had been dominant in Sweden until the mid 1960s. After that, an increasingly individual view on education and its relation to democracy takes over. (It was, however, still influenced by traditional forms of education in obedience and proper behavior.) References to democracy overlap with ways of inducing identification with, or subjectification through, a sovereign common order.

In the school commission of 1946 (SOU 1946:31) and later in the parliamentary commission report SOU 1948:27, the school is endowed with the mission to enhance societal development based on the citizens’ “proper insights and wills”. For this to be possible, school teaching was to be formulated scientifically, remaining “neutral”, non-authoritarian and non-doctrinal. This included avoiding “promulgating democratic-political doctrines”. This meant that fostering democracy was mainly a “scientific” matter of learning. It consisted of gaining information and capacities through knowledge of democracy, as opposed to explicit value-training (Englund in SOU 1999:93). This also meant that there was no authoritative way of making democracy the superior principle of education; it was but one area of knowledge, next to others. However, in order to promote this area of knowledge and induce the “insights and wills” of the pupils to develop democratically, the state founded the school subject “social studies” (sammhällskunskap) for pupils aged 10–15 years (Englund in SOU 1999:93: 22–23).

During the 1950s and 1960s, new, technocratic and science-infused ideals of social reproduction were launched. The education of democratic citizens was de-emphasized in favor of moral education as a matter of shaping citizens for economic and labor-related ends. As a reaction to the 1970s’ instrumental or “scientific-rational” school, a more “normative” approach to fostering and democracy emerged. This shift is reflected in the national curriculum of 1980 (Lgr 1980). This curriculum departs from those of earlier post-war decades in explicitly articulating the need to foster democratic citizens:

the school shall actively and consciously affect and stimulate children’s and youth’s will to embrace our democracy’s fundamental values and let these be expressed in viable, everyday practice. The school shall therefore develop such capacities in the pupils that can sustain and strengthen

8 Englund creates this contrast in 1999, when democracy, with the “value-foundation project”, was about to be developed as an overarching method and principle for teaching.
democracy’s principles of tolerance, collaboration and equal treatment between the humans. (Lgr 1980: 16f)

In this document, in the wake of the debate and referendum on nuclear power in Sweden at that time, “conflict” was also emphasized. The school was now an institution through which collective will-formation ought to be shaped. This new mandate for fostering pupils introduced, for the first time, the formulation that the school shall also actively seek to include the “immigrants in our country” into Sweden’s societal community (17).

This innovation, articulated by (among other documents) the Power Commission’s report, emphasized individual choice, self-responsibility and consumer roles. Education was viewed less as a “public good”, using civic and political lessons to promote social inclusion, and more as a “private good” (Olson 2008). In short, the new direction altered the content of schools’ democratic education. It no longer concentrated on larger political domains and questions central to democratic involvement. Instead, it shifted to civil society’s smaller, private contexts, including consumption of public services, local influence and individual choices (Englund in SOU 1999:93: 31, Olson 2008). Thus, educational policy and the school adapted itself to, and became a site for the articulation of, neoliberal ideals of individual choice and processes of individualization.

According to Maria Olson, the increased focus on the individual and her life-project now overshadowed previous central values such as equality, solidarity, collective justice and fellowship. In school policy documents stemming from the second half of the 1990s, solidarity is for example almost entirely replaced by “respect”. Institutional goals are increasingly expressed in terms of promoting specialization, efficiency and evaluation (Olson 2008: 110).

Educational reform in 1992

The policies of 1992 did more than develop an existing mandate to foster democratic citizens. Its invention of value-foundation was part of a global transformation. Instead of responding to or articulating a vision of democracy, the new policies adapted the school’s moral-educational mandate and its governance to the requirements of NPM. This development had been initiated in the late 1980s, when the social-democratic government initiated the decentralization of the school from the state to the regional level. This was endorsed by the Ministry of Education and reinforced the influence of
the expert-led National Agency for Education (Larsson 2014). It did not primarily entail a shift in pedagogical ideals. Rather, the transformation responded to urgent needs and pressures caused by changes in the population and the surrounding world. The changing view of educational policy and the school was, one can argue, part of a general departure from a technocratic or visionary view of the school and its training in democracy. Now, the school was to train pupils to deal with governing contingencies and a “world in flux”. This is reflected in the 1992 bill on school policy. It criticizes the “planning thinking” of the 1946 school commission: “In today’s Sweden, such planning thinking has largely lost its applicability. Sweden has come to be dependent on a surrounding world in flux [en föränderlig omvärld] that it seems impossible to let the curriculum with any certainty reflect the future society that we expect or desire” (prop. 1992/93:220: 12).

In this actuarial vision, to address the need to renew collective approaches in an increasingly diverse, competitive and fragmented world, the school needs to “invest” in pupils, giving them freedom of choice and opting for plurality. By striving for the strategic objective of making the pupils ethically, socially and civically “competent”, they would be able to cope with a growing uncertainty. The educational policy in 1992 identifies several challenges to be met. Two stand out as relevant to my argument: how to govern the school, practically, through performance management; and how to couple the new vision of democracy – permeated by ideas of individual choice and the consumer role – with a clear articulation of the need to foster citizens. An additional challenge, emphasized in 1997 (SOU 1997:121), was how to best harmonize these two goals. What was the best way to evaluate and secure the output in terms of the new “value-foundation work” (Zackari & Modigh 2000)?

In the government commission that preceded the bill “School for Civic Education” (Skola för bildning, SOU 1992:94), the school’s mission is defined as being to “prepare the next generation to recreate the values, languages, knowledges and capacities and to prepare for the future” (SOU 1992:94: 32). This set of goals is framed as an answer to the written directives’ claim that each historic period must “give its own answers to questions of stability and

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9 Maria Olson highlights how value-foundation efforts in the late 1990s must be seen as a counter-weight to the ever-stronger individualizing forces in school policy, which, in order to secure an active citizenship, opened for more individual political influence, rights and autonomy (Olson 2008: 201).
change”. The commission’s report characterizes the early 1990s as a period of change – citing the vast recent political changes in the neighboring region, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the creation of new states, and ongoing internationalization and increasing cultural diversity. At the same time, environmental issues were now more complex and challenging, technical innovations and databases have grown substantially, computerization has tripled in ten years, and the number of women in the workplace had continued to increase (Dir. 1991:9: 6). The report identifies freedom of choice as a means to deal with these changes – encouraging efforts to actively “stimulate the homes in making active decisions and choices when it comes to the education of the pupils” (Dir. 1991:117: 2). In what is presented as a period of change, the directives emphasize the need to focus on “lasting knowledges” (language, math, cultural heritage, ethics) and to prepare the pupils to be flexible and to expect variation (3). With the increasing pace of change, new demands for social competence, inclusion in decision-making (medinflytande), the ability to assume responsibility and undertake critical investigation and, finally, the need for increasing international exchanges emerged. These were accompanied by an increased need for reflexive capacities that can enable individuals to “realize the consequences of a certain action” (ibid.). The latter emphasis, the directives underscore, could be secured through a focus on “cultural heritage”. This was a precondition for coping with and adapting to change. To meet new demands and be able to orient themselves in a new world, Swedish citizens needed a more proactive moral education:

The activity of the school is not, and shall not be, neutral in terms of values [värdemässigt neutral]. As before it ought to build upon ethical norms such as the inviolable nature of human life, individual freedom, solidarity with weak and exposed people, respect for the individual human beings’ singularity and integrity and everyone’s equal worth, all of which are

10 The commission, which worked in a moment of governmental change, had two different directives. The first directives were written by the social democratic government and the second by the liberal-conservative coalition government (Moderaterna, Kristdemokraterna, Folkpartiet and Centern). The two directives did not differ greatly from one another. The main difference was the decoupling of the pre-school (from the school) as something the commission would inquire into by the right-parties. Another difference, analyzed below, was framing of the moral educational mandate as a matter of transmitting “Christian ethics and Western humanism”. 

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This last passage gave rise to media debate and was, in the end, omitted from the 1998 version of the school program (Hedin & Lahdenperä 2005). Schools were both to embrace change, in the sense of exploiting the possibilities of differentiation and individual responsibility, and create a bulwark against the erosion of common interests and experiences.

Next to “cultural heritage”, the report uses the Swedish word “bildning”, the equivalent of German’s *Bildung* – that is, civic/political education – to denote this double articulation (tradition/change). A combination of *bildning* and a “critical analytical approach” would encourage participation and foster “active societal citizens” (samhällsmedborgare) (1992:94: 57). The authors emphasize that although *bildning* is an old concept, Sweden has never had a school in which it is a main goal (ibid.). Larsson, however, argues that the concept is invoked only to justify a new form of school governance – it has never entailed a redefinition of the content of knowledge (Larsson 2014: 333). However, I believe that these concepts (cultural heritage, bildning) help frame the subjectification of a citizen who both recreates common norms and approaches, and who does so by, or while, adapting to changes. The report concludes that it is impossible to guarantee the continued health of democracy, but schools *can* foster a “value-culture” and train pupils to take responsibility – both preconditions for the development of democratic approaches (1992:94: 107).

Ethics is advanced as another domain, next to *bildning*, to envision this subjectification. The “actuality of the ethical questions” are “eternal”. Nonetheless, rapid social changes mean that there are no given answers; new ones must be developed (1992:94: 111). Similar to the “strong citizen” mapped by the Democracy Development Committee (see the previous chapter), so also does this construction place high demands on the individual. She must exercise judgement in “everyday life, work life and societal life”,

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11 “Bildning” here, among other things, means “development of self-esteem in using the spoken and written language, an inducement of the capacity to critically review and to meet and value arguments, a habit to work in a democratic fashion and an insight of our cultural heritage in a wider sense” (1992:94: 113). In a later contribution to this focus, pedagogue Tomas Englund refers to the philosopher Amy Gutmann to illustrate the function of “political education” in similar terms: “Political education prepares citizens to participate in consciously reproducing their society, and conscious social reproduction is the ideal not only of democratic education but also of democratic politics” (Gutmann quoted in Englund, SOU 1999:93: 40)
according to a “well-thought-out personal basic view” (genomtänkt personlig grundsyn) (ibid.). It is in this context – of defining demands on a reflexive citizen whose utility extends across heterogenous domains (economy, democracy, society) – that the term “basic values” – which later becomes “value-foundation” – first appears. These values, it is feared, might vanish or fail to be reproduced:

The basic values that our society rests upon are not once and for all given. They must be understood, anchored, explained, defended and developed. The norms that the school’s activity should build upon, such as respect for human dignity, individual freedom and integrity, gender equality between men and women, the care for those who undergo hardship, personal responsibility, have a deep anchor in our land and our culture (ibid.).

Establishing a mandate of school education through this standard of “basic values” constitutes a reinforced conviction that the norms and values will not be renewed on their own. With the reality of basic values as an actual problem in terms of how to renew them in the population (similar to the paradox of politics, discussed in chapter two) ethics and democracy increasingly become pedagogical and hierarchical problems for the state, problems that must be understood, explained, transferred, etc. This formulation is particular insofar as it is coupled to policy that advocates active individualization and the encouragement of consumer attitudes that challenge collective approaches and values. It is as if the standard responds not only to changes and new challenges, but to the very consequences of the turn to more neoliberal ideas of governance and education that it, itself, emerges from (by making individualism into a problem, it becomes a nexus for forms of governmentality).

In this context, the concept of democracy is aligned to values and discursive references to values as tangible, evaluable objects. The latter allow a response to new, urgent issues. One of these was how the school’s ability to transmit knowledge and values had increasingly become challenged by increasing diversity and new identities. The bill contends that “immigrants are from cultures that have a different view on many societal questions than

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12 The bill also rejects the notion that moral education would come on its own (which it pejoratively depicted as “free fostering in the shape of an unbridled development of capacities”, a description that probably refers to what had existed since the 1970s) (prop. 1992/93:220: 12).
most Swedes” (prop. 1992/93:220: 19). This challenge was in turn related to increasing xenophobia and bullying. In response to these plural challenges, “values” is referred to in order to formulate the need to induce a particular dynamic, or congruence, in the social field. Democracy is here described as: “a number of basic values that are necessary for a good society” (prop. 1992/93:220: 19). A “democracy that rests upon values” is further lauded as foreclosing the collectivist possibility of a “tyranny of the majority”: “all that which a majority decides is not good” (19). Democracy, or a new democratic dynamic, must, under these conditions, be founded on values to avoid becoming “empty and void of content”. Therefore, schools must not become “value neutral” (ibid.). Only thus can one handle the contingent present, threatened by the effects of an induced freedom of choice and by diversity.

The concept “value-foundation” was, in the words of those who first coined the concept, created in an attempt to design the higher, “non-authoritarian” goals of school education – schools in themselves being institutions with the authority to train and educate children (Skolverket 1999: 12). The concept “value-foundation” would, it was hoped, stand for the authoritarian inculcation of non-authoritarian values. The authors see the concept as addressing the need to induce democratic responsiveness in pupils, parents and school personnel:

[The concept was invented] to create an agency [verksamhet] in which value-foundation [the list and “reality” of basic values] engenders practical consequences and in which a living discussion is held with and between the school’s personnel, the pupils and the parents, on values and the consequences of values (14).

Similar to how a new type of circulation was identified in the previous chapter in reports such as the PC and the DDC as a means to enhance a different type of democratic interaction, educational policy offers a site to re-arrange how democracy, basic values and perceived challenges in view of a desired output of moral and civic education. As has been analyzed above, these are arranged, or strategically elaborated, so as to envision a different controlled circulation that could relate or extend to other domains that demanded standardized individual and common approaches. In the following, I will further analyze this strategic elaboration in the years after the creation of the concept of value-foundation and the new school curriculum.
“Realizing the value-foundation”

The school curriculum of 1994 (Lpo 94) continued to emphasize that internationalization and diversity exerted new demands on Swedish schools. Schools, which “rest on the foundation of democracy”, were to advance cultural heritage and basic values as counter-weights to these pressures (Lpo 94: 3–4). In a departure from earlier means of fostering democratic citizens, and as a step for the inducement of a different circulation, the new school was to create forms of teaching which would train pupils in basic values:

> It is not enough for teaching to transmit knowledge about basic democratic values. Teaching shall be conducted in democratic working forms and prepare the pupils to actively take part in societal life. It shall develop their capacity to take personal responsibility (Lpo 94: 5)

In order to produce the democratic individual and “democratic working forms”, value-foundation work would have to be developed. This was not least because it was still unclear how the work of value-foundation was to function in practice. Further, it was puzzling to know how the success of the work could to be evaluated according to the requirements of a goal- and result-governed school. Given this, and given growing concerns about how to foster ethically responsive and knowledgeable youth – with the call to create the Living History Forum and the first references to “exclusion” – a new educational-political commission of inquiry formulated new policies (SOU 1997:121 and Ds 1997:57).

This commission emphasized the need to improve the means of assessing the school’s capacity to “constitute a culture in which democracy can be experienced, learned and practiced” and thus make pupils into “democratic humans that embody [som bär på] democratic values” (SOU 1997:121: 33). In accordance with the requirements of performance management, the authors underscored the need to evaluate how well the standard fostered youth: “value-foundation questions must, according to our opinion, be given a much larger impact in the evaluation”, (SOU 1997:121: 303). Implementing the measures needed to produce responsive citizens involved the implication of new knowledge types, as well as efforts to harmonize the new educational mandate with the requirements of evaluation.

In order to design “value-foundation work” that would have a measurable impact, the government launched a “value-foundation year” (February 1 1999 through March 31 2000), to be held at the Ministry of Education. The
rather limited effects of “value-foundation” work achieved thitherto were now to be taken as starting points for efforts directed at a target group (Zackari & Modigh, 2000: 11). The project’s efforts and results, meant to make the school an environment in which “value-foundation must permeate all activities”, were summarized in the Value-Foundation Book (Värdegrundsboken, Zackari & Modigh, 2000).

During and just after the value-foundation year, the National Agency of Education published a number of strategic documents. These developed the arrangements of a strategic framework necessary to secure output in terms of “value-foundation work”. They also evaluated developments in the field since 1994 (Skolverket 1999, Skolverket 2000a, Skolverket 2000b, Skolverket 2000c, Skolverket 2001). Two documents in particular drafted an authoritative strategy on how to ensure that “work with value-foundation” would yield practical outcomes (Skolverket 2000a and Skolverket 2000b).

The documents address the need to understand “how value-foundation is practiced” in order to develop instruments to evaluate that practice. The school’s work with value-foundation, as conducted since 1994, is summarized in terms of how pre-schools, schools and after-school centers (fritidshem) managed to “create space for deliberations, meetings and good social relations, as preconditions for the work with basic values” (Skolverket 2000b: 6). By using deliberative democratic theory, the report envisions “realizing the value-foundation” in terms of schools shifting from transmitting fundamental values to offering democratic arenas. Below, I will discuss how this strategic elaboration led to the formulation of new solutions to pressing problems, not least by how it enabled to differentiate between types of responsiveness induced by value-foundation work.

The report Med demokrati som uppdrag14 (“With democracy as mission”, Skolverket 2000a) lays out a plan to better “identify the factors that seem to be of greatest importance for a successful work with value-foundation”.15 The

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13 Other reports by the Swedish National Agency of Education that are referred to as sources to these central documents are Dnr 98:588, Ung i demokratin, Skolan och värdegrunden (written by Englund), Gemensamt i mångfalden, Det goda samtalet, Den rimliga skolan and Med känsla och kunskap are also referred to as having infused them.

14 The report is based on En fördjupad studie om värdegrunden, a mission that the Government gave the National Agency of Education in 1999 (Skolverket 2000a: 5), the summary of which forms the other strategic document, Skolverket 2000b.

15 The conditions are described as substantially differing between schools: “Some have come far and work with a high degree of awareness, longterm approach and deepening. Other schools have not come that far.” (ibid.) Further, there are differences within schools, between schools and school-forms, as between and within all other domains that
report describes a relation in which children see value-foundation as something they “conquer” (ibid.; this notion is repeated a decade later, in Skolverkets komplexitet, 2011). Once “conquered” and practiced, value-foundation turns into “values, thought-patterns, norms and actions” through which the children “learn in many ways” (Skolverket 2000a: 5). The “conquering” is characterized as a way of directing attention to and framing interaction within the school, as pupils were explicitly to motivate behavior, standpoints, etc. in the terms of “value-foundation”. The report contrasts earlier modes of teaching about democracy and democratic values to the new type of teaching that “transmits, anchors and molds” values (förmedla, förankra, gestalta, ibid. 7). The report describes what happens when such responsiveness is achieved:

the agents [aktörerna] are changed; the pupils develop, grow and progress into different phases, they quit some and enter new ones. Also the personnel enter into new constellations and the activities [verksamheterna] are changed as are the groupings within the deciding organs on the regional level (ibid. 6).

Med demokrati som uppdrag emphasizes that, strategically, deliberations make it possible to render explicit the reasons or the reasoning underlying opinions, and expose them to discussion (ibid. 14). In its more elaborate versions, deliberation is seen as securing a degree of non-conformity, critical mindset and the capacity to cooperate with and listen to others.16 Some scholars, such as Tomas Englund, saw this turn as an opportunity to renew the promise of a school for “public good”, with political/civic education used to foster “democratic citizens” (Englund 1999).17

are related to the school (after-school, breaks, and other non-teaching times and spaces that can be associated with the school), which therefore pose challenges to the ambitions of these efforts.

16 In this vision, by learning critical argumentation, deliberation is thought to make the teachers and the pupils speak up for democracy (Olson 2008: 198). Taboos, gross language, silences and cultural traditions are particularly targeted from the viewpoint of how they inhibit the development of a fruitful environment and silence an ongoing and well-distributed deliberation (Skolverket 2011).

17 In 1999, in one of publications of the Democracy Commission, Englund sketches the basic elements of a new connection between ethics and politics based on the social right to education as a right to “develop a capacity to practice political rights” through “democratic deliberation”. He ties it to the worries in the directives to the Democracy Commission on the loss of political and associational participation (Englund 1999: 36). The education system is here foregrounded as endowed with a potential to function as a
In this document, the knowledge type of deliberative democratic theory is used to foreground the environments and temporal divisions of the school as a space for relationality (where power relations become concrete). That space is primarily viewed as one that ought to constitute working relations as a precondition for deliberations. Thus, even if qualitative deliberations and communicative capacities were promoted, the strategic elaboration in this reflection actually foregrounds a more basic – and possibly more disciplinary – shaping of conduct. To secure working social relations as a means for deliberations, “lasting approaches” were to be inculcated, which, together with deliberations, could secure a particular responsiveness to how we “treat, communicate and value each other” (Skolverket 2000a: 13).

Observing the school as a concrete environment, in terms of its temporal and spatial divisions for interaction through deliberative democracy, and in view of the aim to achieve working social relations, Med demokrati som uppdrag notes that “value-foundation is expressed no matter where we are – both in the formal and informal learning environment, i.e. both within and outside of the teaching situation, during the breaks, in encounters in the corridors and in lunch-rooms” (Skolverket 2000a: 7):

It is often in the informal environments that for example bullying and other types of violating behavior takes place. Therefore one cannot only see value-foundation as a matter of teaching [en undervisningsfråga]. One must also take responsibility for how relations and meetings work in the informal structures (ibid.).

The report thus stresses the importance of including all school environments in one ethically and affectively permeated whole, since children otherwise would learn that there are some environments in which some things are allowed that are not allowed elsewhere (8). This totalizing vision, and its “meeting place between different cultures, different understandings, different basic values, where the overarching aim would be to develop a communicative competence and mutual respect among the participants” (ibid. 40). The input by deliberative democratic theory gave the efforts with reference to value-foundation a new impetus, in which deliberation could work as an antidote to the ways in which engagement had been undermined. In addition, it was also a way to further legitimize the explicit moral fostering that the was argued for in 1992. For conscious social and ethical reproduction to be possible, an authoritative element in the teaching was deemed needed, particularly directing attention to consequences of certain actions and dispositions (41).
focus on controlled circulation in space and time, leads to the natural conclusion that value-foundation work is “a long-term process that takes place in all contexts and during the whole school time – constantly, always.” (10). Similar to democracy policy, which is to endlessly act upon processes of change and becoming, school environments and time schemas are reconstructed in an actuarial vision of potential and probable conversions from incongruent behavior and approaches to congruent ones. Operating as a grid through which interaction in the school and the school as an environment could be observed, value-foundation was therefore referred to as a concept that could enable to “estimate whether a school is democratic or not” by assessing both “formal and informal democracy on the individual and collective level” (Skolverket: Dnr 1613: 14). Observed through this grid, another report composed by the National Agency for Education formulated some questions that could assess the degree to which personnel and pupils engage in reflexive self-observation:

- What characterizes social relations?
- Is there a will to deliberate?
- Does the school have and provide possibilities for democratic deliberations?
- Are deliberations used as a means for working with values and norms?
- Who participates/does not participate in the deliberations?

(Skolverket 2000b: 14)

This translation of the outcomes and aims of value-foundation work to measurable outcomes, working social relations and the particular type of circulation envisioned was enhanced by the integration of the concept of “democratic competence”. “Democratic competence” is here both a sort of performance indicator and, as such, a concretization of the type of subjectification that the dispositif seeks to secure (as a way of securing the renewal of common approaches, responsibility and thus conditions for

18 *Constantly, Always!* is the title of a report by the National Agency of Education that summarizes how value-foundation was formulated and put into policy in the early 1990s. In the introduction of that report, this expression was put as: “Deliberations with and between the school’s personnel, pupils and parents about these questions must constantly be pursued. Constantly. Always!” (Skolverket 1999: 6).
The report describes democratic competence as an affective conversance with or responsiveness to “value-foundation”:

Democratic competence implies being able to reflect on, emotionally process, relate to and act upon basic values (value-foundation). [It]…includes being able to participate in and affect democratic decision making processes. The capacity to communicate with others in difficult and complex questions, also when opinions differ, are hereby put at the center. Children’s and youth’s democratic competence is a part of and a precondition for their lifelong learning, their social development and health (Skolverket 2000b: 3).

The Agency’s report presents democratic competence as a concrete aim, to be advanced by the output of value-foundation work. This means formulating a vocabulary of technical terms related to performance governance. With time, several political scientists would adopt and sponsor the idea of evaluating outcomes, discussing the measures needed to achieve this (Jarl 2004, Almgren 2006, Ekman 2007, Ekman 2012). The strategic elaboration of democratic competence and the flow it could yield, also meant envisioning a need to secure teachers’ and parents’ democratic competence, lest they inhibit that of the individual child (Zackari & Modigh 2000: 60–62, Skolinspektionen, 2012: 8).

These visions of how to ensure the formation of democratic citizens by using ethics and value-foundation as a standard to ensure the particular flow of a “democratic society”, thus consisted of new arrangements of central concepts and elements to the school’s mandate to school democratic citizens. At the heart of these re-arrangements was a shift from learning on

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19 The integration of “democratic competence” can be traced to Sweden’s participation (through the National Agency of Education) in IEA's ”International Civic and Citizenship Study” in 1999 (also in 2009), the core of which is a knowledge test of questions on politics and questions that test capacities to understand politics and relate critically to it (Almgren 2006, T. Ekman 2007). See also Norris 1999. I want to thank Joakim Ekman for pointing out this origin of “democratic competence”.

20 In summary it brought into view and arranged the following elements and relations:

- deliberations, relations, norms and values
- the formal and informal learning environments, meeting places and the ongoing processes through which values and norms are shaped
- that values and norms are ongoingly tested and the need for people with different backgrounds, living conditions, etc. to meet
- to develop trust in collective preference formation (viljebildning) and in
democracy to a subjectification of “being democratic”, which in practice meant that “democratic values [were to be considered as]...superordinate to democratic freedoms and rights” (Skolverket: Dnr 1613: 10). This re-arrangement reflects the vision of inducing a particular type of interaction and more extensive social congruence (“competence”) through the standard of value-foundation. It at once sought to secure an immediate aim of a particular democratic and collective-individual ethos and interaction, and, being an inducement of a particular circulation, extended beyond this aim, into other domains in which the flow and responsiveness of value-foundation could be of value.

The growth of a discourse

After the value-foundation year, and after the government had established an additional pair of “value-foundation centers” at Swedish universities in the years 2000–2003, value-foundation became a subject for knowledge production in pedagogy and social science discourse.\(^{21}\) Reflecting how the dispositif makes one “see and speak” – beyond how it induced reflexive approaches to “how we treat each other” in the school – several books and reports, written mainly by pedagogues, addressed how to translate “value-foundation” into practical, critical and ethical questions of importance to the school and to pedagogy. These scholars included Orlenius, writing in 2001, Boström in 2000 and Sigurdsson in 2002. Publications that intensified efforts to articulate school-based value-foundation included Zachari & Modigh 2000, Hedin & Lahdenperä 2005 (first ed. 2000), Lindgren 2001, and Matsson

- consensus-seeking, and to develop the capacity for pupils to participate in the democratic process
- democratic values are superordinate democratic freedoms and rights, they should “permeate all activities” [in the school] and be tied to action-oriented norms and an “ethical preparation to act”
- that, as a consequence of the above, pupils (and teachers, parents) develop “democratic competence” (meaning a knowledge about democracy and an insight and familiarity with democratic values).
- a new relation between the individual and the collective. On the one hand democratic norms and values as something that all shall share and that are developed through interaction between people, and on the other hand individual democratic rights and duties.

(Skolverket 2000a)

\(^{21}\) The centers were set up at Ersta-Sköndal University College together with Umeå University, and at Göteborg University.
2001 (on setting up the Living History Forum). Some pedagogues expressed unease with the concept but most proceeded, nonetheless, to imaginatively develop the concept (and the particular responsiveness it sought to induce).22 The title of Kennert Orlenius’s book, *Value-foundation – does it exist?* (2001) does not reflect an attempt to reject the notion. Rather, it explores ways of understanding it. Other “critical” works include Ola Sigurdsson’s *Den goda skolan. Om etik, läroplaner och skolan* (2002), which also accepts most of the claims made by the discourse, albeit pushing the concept in what he claims are moral-philosophical directions. This is also the case for Bengt-Ove Boström’s text *Styrningen av den svenska skolans värdegrund i kritisk belysning* (in Andersson et al. 2000). It likewise accepts the claims of value-foundation. Those who formulated policy and also creatively developed and defined “value-foundation” included Christer Mattson, who wrote on value-foundation as a strategic concept in the context of setting up the Living History Forum. Mattson echoes the definition of value-foundation articulated by the National Agency for Education: value-foundation must be a form of “communicative community”.23 These works furthered general

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22 Some pedagogues have rejected the concept and instead used “value pedagogics” (värdepedagogik) (Ekman 2012: 28). Also, in the context of a governmental venture to foster social cohesion, the concept “value-foundation of society” has been deemed problematic due to how it could be interpreted as something monolithic and thereby inhibiting efforts to generate social cohesion in a plural society (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2010). Both of these examples seem to indicate a minor resistance to the standardizing pressures that value-foundation articulates.

23 Mattson’s critical account consists in tracing the concept’s origin and embracing its strategic and pedagogical intentions, or its “reality”. Mattson mentions that the concept (in 2001) does not appear “in the Swedish Academy’s Wordlist, in the National Encyclopedia, in the Pedagogical reader or in any other kind of wordbook”. (SOU 2001:5: 201). The fact that the concept does not exist in any wordbook points per Mattson to the fact that it was “no concept” when it was formulated in Lpo 94 (“For a concept to at all be able to be called a concept it has to have an explanation value” (ibid.). To resist a reductive character of “value-foundation”, he proposes to interpret it in Habermasian terms (he refers to Karl-Otto Apel):

value-foundation is a foundation for values that is established in temporary communicative communities. The thought that people in a certain contexts and points in time have the capability – against the background of a common language and a mutual understanding – to establish communicative community for shared, if not commonly lived, experiences beyond the strategic action of self-interest. This communicative community, i.e. value-foundation, is in other words dependent on earlier experiences and would look different if large parts of the past had never taken place or would be unknown for the participants in the community…The Holocaust thus becomes the communicative content for the work with value-foundation…to understand the emergence of our era’s values with the experience of the Holocaust (SOU 2001:5: 204).
interest in and debate on the school’s fostering function (Olson 2008: 196). Authors who were early adherents of the promises they identified with the concept have noted that it became, with time, “a word of honour”, that “has in hindsight assumed a linguistically positive, rhetorical position that many want to adhere to…” (Englund & Englund 2012: 7). Scholars have also noted the concept’s objectified character and the claims to responsiveness made in name of its singularization (the value-foundation; Orlenius 2001, Dahlstedt 2009a). Ekman notes that the concept of the “value-foundation of society”, as “the basic values that our society rests upon”, is presented as a factual claim, when in fact is a desired outcome (Ekman 2012: 26). The firmness and “thingy” character of the term “foundation” seems however to have been intentional. It advances the concept’s function of fostering predictability in how people relate in a grey-zone between the regulation of a standard (as a notion from management discourse) and the demands, or centralization, of sovereign power to one shared framework (society/state/democracy/school). Discursive practices that constituted the object and reality of value-foundation in pedagogics creatively interpreted the thingy character of the standard. Christer Hedin & Pirjo Lahdenperä, for example, show how the standard forms a dispositif (as a hub, arrangement of elements that allow to visualize a dynamic) whose arrangement of composite elements constitute a form of regulation:

A foundation is something firm. A house usually has a stable foundation upon which it stands. society’s value-foundation can therefore be more clearly understood if one compares it with a house – society – that stands on a foundation, i.e. on the firm value-foundation. The “house” is tenanted by people who constitute society. As social constructions, there are values in the common conversation, rules of the game, activities and interaction between the tenants of the house. Common values are thus used to mark the belonging [felt] between the tenants and to distinguish them from people living in other houses – or societies. (Hedin & Lahdenperä 2005: 7).24

24 In Värdegrundsboeken, this quote is developed in the following way:

A house usually has a stable foundation upon which it stands. society stands upon the foundation. The house is peopled by people who constitute the inhabitants of society. The values are expressed in relations between those who live in the house, through dialogues [samtal], the rules [spelregler] that pertain, etc. The common value-foundation is used by inhabitants of the house to create meaning, dignity,
Again, the quote reflects the (desired) standardization of conduct through value-foundation and the visualization of a particular circulation.

Instability and new forces taking over: value-foundation work after the year 2000

The standard and concrete arrangement of value-foundation work have often been affected by political changes. Discontinuities in politics and science changed how the dispositif addresses growing contingencies in the constitution of democratic citizens, affecting efforts to promote their continuous democratic involvement. Several obstacles were identified. As early as 2000, *Med demokrati som uppdrag* asks whether allowing citizens to choose private schools might lower the reach and impact of value-foundation work (Skolverket 2000a: 16). Meanwhile, despite the promotion of an “ethical perspective” and value-foundation, the 1990s saw an increase in school violations and bullying (also of teachers) (22). Further, schools rarely found enough time to foster deliberations and good social conditions due to the pressure put on them to fulfill their mission of transmitting knowledge (23–24). As a result, the report finds that value-foundation work often took on a “fire-fighting role”, used to address acute problems or relegated to specific days and events. It was thus far from “permeating” all school activities, every day (36). This also applied to the school’s work with gender equality and cultural diversity (ibid.).

The authors in *Värdegrundsboken* claim that the essence of the quote is the emphasis on developing a “democratic mentality” (they refer to the analytical philosopher Alf Ross for this concept). Dahlstedt refers to this quote in the context of the “evident” fact that value-foundation is articulated as a nervousness and fear for the impact of immigrants on the Swedish value-community (Dahlstedt 2009: 90), a claim this chapter shows is reductive in its focus.

25 In addition, the report (Skolverket 2000a) states that many pupils display shallow skills (to take personal standpoints, etc.), personal responsibility is easily eschewed and values tend to become relativized (24). Related to the lack of responsibility is the fact that many pupils do no feel that they can influence their situation in the school (thus there are no real opportunities to take responsibility) (25). The report also states that many pupils show mistrust towards the formal democracy in the school (i.e. student councils and similar organs), which the report concludes is due to the focus on form and not on content...
More than a decade later, Tomas Englund and Anna-Lena Englund presented a comprehensive assessment of twenty years of “value-foundation work” in Swedish schools. They highlight how competition from behaviorist “programs” and “modules” to secure working social relations marginalized deliberative democratic theory between 2003 and 2010. Behaviorism had become increasingly popular, due to its ability to offer or sell services claiming to foster “good behavior” and prevent mental ill-health and bullying (34). The influence of this knowledge type in the existing dispositif, according to Englund & Englund, meant that value-foundation work lost its “promoting” character. It became reactive, i.e. even more oriented to managing risk (ibid.). This development favored, in its turn, technological programs claiming to foster “democratic, empathic and social competence” (quote from Equal worth of different people – on the work against bullying and violating behavior, quoted in ibid. 37). All this re-arranged the forms through which value-foundation work was conducted and the aim of fostering democratic citizens was conceived.26 As a consequence of the

(bsd.). In addition, the increased mandate to foster has created conflicts between parents and the school on what this implies. Added to these challenges, the report mentions that teachers do not speak enough to each other about value-foundation aims and that the lack of competence is substantial (39, 43). Another problem is the teachers’ relations to the school and to the regional level (since 1991 responsible for the schools), which many teachers have low confidence in. The report states the problem as: “If the personnel does not get influence over their work situation there is a risk that their confidence and trust in the democratic structures decrease, something that can easily infect the pupils” (26, emphasis added). The quote displays the priority of having an affective balance, in which trust and a democratic paths contaminates pupils and not the other way around (with distrust). This dilemma displays how the school, and any molar arrangement or machine that seeks to produce a certain channelling, can rather quickly deteriorate to produce a different and sometimes opposite outcome. Ideally, the schools should work with a “promotion-perspective”, focusing on the “good forces”, starting from problem-solutions as a preventive strategy to “prevent that problems emerge” or that the same (old) problems emerge (Skolverket 2000a: 37). It seems, however, that these fairly vague formulations and ambitious strategies are marginalized by the “fire fighting role”.

26 Contra Dahlstedt & Fejes (2012) and with Englund & Englund (2012), the above account shows that the behaviorist knowledge types and programs did not add themselves on top of the strategy of “communicative democracy” to double up ways in which youth are governed in name of democracy, but rather marginalized “communicative democracy” and changed the functions and the actual practices and possibilities to secure any qualitative outcome (Olson 2008 confirms this image, 217). Where Dahlstedt & Fejes see “deliberations” as homogeneous and constant, the teacher-led and open character of the dialogues in the deliberative democratic period were replaced by manual-based deliberation that focus on preventing bullying, offensive behavior and that promote disciplinarization, specifically targeting “disorderly” pupils (Englund & Englund 2012: 39).
report, an array of “methods” based on behaviorist and individual-psychological theories on how to counteract bullying were cast as “promoting value-foundation”. This process was part of the involvement of biopolitical concerns regarding the psychic health of youth. Now, the practice of “deliberation” was re-oriented to emphasize confessions, self-assessments and declarations of intentions and ambitions (42, Dahlstedt & Fejes 2012).

The concern with violating and bullying behavior continued into the mid-2000s. Sweden’s Public Health Agency showed interest in value-foundation work as a means of indexing and ensuring youth health (first and foremost psychic health).27 This meant that the school’s instruction in “life knowledge” (livskunskap) and more therapeutic programs and manuals were integrated into the school’s democracy mission. As a result, self-discipline, self-control, emotional self-awareness and a focus on “disorderly pupils” became central (Englund & Englund 2012: 39). One leading impetus for this was new legislation meant to counteract school bullying (38). Thus, the regulation of value-foundation, what it would secure and measure, and the objectives of the larger dispositif it was set in, were slightly displaced (as a possibility inherent to the fairly abstract aim of ensuring working social relations, which these new knowledge types and pressures re-defined/re-interpreted).

The changes continued while the orientation towards programs lost ground. This happened in beginning in 2009, in the wake of criticism of the methods thitherto favored by the National Board of Education.28 The school curriculum of 2011 (unrevised in 2017), returned to a deliberative-democratic oriented approach, including the advocacy of deliberative communication, philosophical dialogues and Socratic dialogues as practical means of training democratic skills and deliberation (Skolverket 2013).

27 According to Englund & Englund, in 2006, Sven Bremberg from the Public Health Agency of Sweden, who wrote a government committee report (SOU 2006:77) that promoted the behaviorist methods a year earlier, launched a “health-economic” method-book directed to the regional level, for them to reduce costs by taking ill-health-preventing aspects into account. Englund & Englund argue that there is a direct overlap with the interest of these actors and the watering down of the deliberative democratic articulation of democracy-training (Englund & Englund 2012: 39).

28 In the report På tal om mobbning – om det som görs (2009), the National Agency of Education began to problematize the “methods” that had entered the framework of value-foundation work and in particular the knowledge types that underpinned it. In particular references to training of “emotional intelligence” and references to brain functions were questioned (Englund & Englund 2012: 40). In 2011, National Agency of Education concludes in an evaluation of eight programs in 39 schools (Utvärdering av metoder mot mobbing 2011) that none of the programs could be recommended and that all contained parts that could be considered problematic (Englund & Englund 2012: 43).
Thus did the strategic objectives and the subjectification of “being democratic” or democratically competent of value-foundation fluctuate. So did the framework’s more qualitative output. In 2012, the Swedish School Inspectorate evaluated – and criticized – the Swedish school’s value-foundation work, which it found weak and shallow (Skolinspektionen, 2012).\(^{29}\) Neither school leadership, teachers nor pupils were sufficiently imbued with a “critical approach”. The pupils were inadequately trained in “abstract critical thinking” (7). In addition, the training exercises used vocabulary and idioms too little connected to the pupils’ own language and experiences (7–8). Since teaching presupposes trust and a strong adult presence, it fosters environments and exercises that promote an ideal of conformity. This necessarily inhibits expressions of diverging opinions; racist attitudes, for instance, are often concealed (9). These remarks point to a contradiction in value-foundation work: the ambitious outcomes supposedly produced by school deliberations falls short through their simplistic regulation through a standard. Further, the use of a standard to foster democratic citizens seems to be related to the fact that this fostering, as expressed in terms of performance governance, is only a “strävansmål” (something to aim at, but not to achieve). It is not something that the school must achieve (unlike skills in math, Swedish, etc.).\(^{30}\) The standard seems to promote a shallow regulation of behavior, resulting in a blind or unspecified demand on obedience. As a result, the particular flow envisioned through the references to deliberations seem to produce forms of responsiveness characterized by conformity. The demands of responsiveness of value-foundation has, in consequence, led some to question the discourse and framework of school value-foundation work.\(^{31}\)

\(^{29}\) The report reveals that the different missions of the school – that are supposed to be integrated – are in practice often separated into three parts: knowledge development, preventive value-foundation work and democratic citizen-formation. The second “part” reveals how what used to be articulated as two missions to be harmonized, has now – perhaps as a consequence of the new laws on bullying and the program turn – in practice split into three domains (7). The report contends that there is a weak awareness of what democracy fostering mission implies and that it is too often separated from the knowledge mission and not enough integrated into teaching. The critique reveals how problems that were pointed out in 2000 (above) remain and have become complexified.

\(^{30}\) Brunsson and Jacobsson note, that, “when states or other organizations cannot resort to directives or orders, the need and opportunities for standardization increase.” (Brunsson & Jacobsson 2002: 32).

\(^{31}\) Recently, other voices have expressed this problem in different ways: Torbjörn Elensky, *Lyd våra värderingar* in *Axcess*, 2017:
Conclusions

In this chapter, I mapped the emergence of value-foundation as performance governance was applied to Swedish schools. I showed how the concept emerged in response to growing uncertainty and contingencies affecting the renewal of democratic approaches and values in the population, as well as in response to demands on new individual approaches with increasing internationalization and competition. In response to these challenges, I argued that value-foundation work in the school was assembled to induce the strategic objective of a particular subjectification of shared, common approaches in youth in a context of a population that had become more diverse, individualized and consumer-orientated. Value-foundation, I argue, was the result of an increasing reliance on NPM as a means to reform the governance of organizations and policy domains. It was, further, a standard whose task was to both regulate and, after some amendment in the late 1990s, produce measurable outcomes showing how well the school performed its “democracy mission”. As a standard, value-foundation had its own dynamic and consequences, in contrast to earlier moral education efforts. Similar to earlier moral and civic education in the school, value-foundation was linked to economic and social demands beyond the immediate requirements of democracy. Reflecting this, I showed, further, that the standard and discourse of value-formation, in an organizational isomorphism, had spread beyond educational policy and the school. These entities, influenced in one way or another by the doctrines of NPM, increasingly present their own “value-foundation”.

Related to the dispositif traced in the previous chapter, value-foundation became a site for the development of arrangements whereby the stakes of renewing a “democratic society” in youth could be concretized parallel to a more general standardization of behavior in the context of increasing demands on individual approaches and “competence”. This applied both to actually training people in physical environments and to monitoring them – that is, observing how they are trained or how this training could be useful for several aims. However, the chapter showed that the nexus of value-foundation was unstable and that its focus on working social relations or conditions for deliberation, actually undermined the more ambitious goals
of deliberation as conceived by deliberative democratic theory. It was, as a result, gradually displaced from deliberative-democratic deliberations to focus mainly on youth attitudes and surveys monitoring them, and later on the risk of violations, bullying, psychic ill health and the lack of well-being among youth. In consequence, the standard’s more visionary subjectification of “democrats” has been weak, fostering conformity rather than “critical approaches”. This may well reflect the fact that the weak regulation through standards tend to influence what people say more than what they do (Brunsson & Jacobsson 2000: 145).

Nonetheless, the standardization of value-foundation and the larger dispositif in which it operates do foster a linearization of behavior centered on predicability and congruence between ways of behaving and talking. It further encourages urges towards normalization and the evaluation/measurement of behavior in collective, organizational contexts. In this sense, the discourse on value-foundation, and its controlled circulation in the school, is related to other processes that assume and reinforce linearization, i.e. that produce forms of equivalence that take part in what I in chapter three referred to as a more general circulation.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Constructing and addressing incongruence: mapping and conceptualizing “exclusion” and “violence-promoting extremism”

This chapter analyzes the function of constructing of a binary which opposes the social field of a democratic society to its problematized “outsides”. The latter, characterized by the excluded, extremists, forms of violence, etc., was constructed between 1997 and 2017. I put “outsides” in quotation marks because although “exclusion” and “violence-promoting extremism” are cast as peripheral or outside, as problematizations they are, in fact, always-already included. They are posited as “inside-problems”; identified in relation to their lacking congruence to a general system of behavior and approaches, or what I, with Rancière, term circulation (or the police as a system for the organization of life). That they are problems inherent in compulsory inclusion is, as the title of this chapter suggests, important, pointing to how these problematizations are infused by an actuarial view of forms of marginalization and challenges to the state’s sovereignty. This view casts and monitors these “problems” in terms of varying degrees of failing congruence to social, economic and “democratic” requirements. Through it and the particular circulation in which, or through which, it seeks to contain this failing congruence in a combined articulation of sovereignty, security and discipline. I seek to show and argue in this chapter that “inclusion”, thus, is a renewed articulation of governmentality and/or a consensual form of policing (in Rancière’s sense) – infused by new arrangements, discourses and binary divisions – meant to ensure the population’s self-government.

In chapter five, the increasing opposition between democracy and exclusion was first noted. It appeared in the opposition posited between a state of exclusion and democracy (as launched in 1997), and, later, in the opposition between violence-promoting extremism and democracy (as of 2011). These divisions indicate the usefulness of tracing these dividing lines in understanding practices that articulate and assemble means to secure certain modes of relating, acting and being. This chapter maps the effects of these
practices in terms of monitoring and reaching out to additional population segments perceived as threats to others. I map the distinct discursive practices and problematizations through which the realities and objects of exclusion and violence-promoting extremism emerge. These constitute what became “necessary” and “natural” reactions – that is, what is afterwards adduced as making the actions necessary. In this dynamic, risks are not only handled, but consolidated – rendered coherent and given – as risks: constructed and discursively cultivated, making it possible to address them by a certain repertoire of practices. As the chapter shows, this is done by way of inventive practices such as the production of statistics, mappings and strategies.

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A variety of researchers have described how the discourse on “social exclusion” developed during and after the 1990s (Hulse & Stone 2007, Levitas 1998, Rose 1999, Wolter 2014). In Sweden, the new liberal-conservative coalition government in 2006 made extensive use of the discourse of “social exclusion” (utanförskap, literally “state of exclusion”) (Davidsson 2009). It was, for instance, a cornerstone in discursive practices tied to the politics of workfare (“arbetslinjen”, ibid., Dahlstedt 2009a, Björkesten 2014). Less noted, this increased usage was accompanied by an increasing focus on political extremism and preventive attitudes towards social dangers. According to Ruth Levitas, in the early 1990s, exclusion was used in EU reports as an euphemistic way of framing new forms of poverty and class divisions (Levitas 1998). Levitas traces its origins to French left-wing social policy developed during the 1970s. She shows how it was re-articulated in Britain in the mid-1990s, and especially in the 1997 campaign and politics of Tony Blair (Labour). Here, it was associated with social cohesion, stakeholding and community (Levitas 1998: 2).

Levitas notes three ways in which the discourse was articulated. First, as a redistributionist discourse that emphasized inequalities, which resembled its original articulation in French social policy; second, as a “moral underclass” discourse that problematized the behaviors of the “excluded” people themselves; and, finally, a “social integrationist” discourse that focused on integrating people through paid work (Levitas 1998, Hulse & Stone 2007: 114). For Levitas, the binary opposites that the concept introduces has a particular capacity to create a visibility that de-politicizes the root causes of poverty and society itself:
Social exclusion represents the primary significant division of society as one between an included majority and an excluded minority. This has implications for how both included and excluded groups are understood, and for the implicit model of society itself... What results is an overly homogeneous and consensual image of society – a rosy view [made] possible because the implicit model is one in which inequality and poverty are pathological and residual, rather than endemic. Exclusion appears as an essentially peripheral problem… (Levitas 1998: 7).

Being pathological rather than “endemic”, Rose describes the main results of the problematization of exclusion as shifting focus from political conditions causing poverty to the behavior of the poor people themselves (Rose 2000). In the British context during the second half of the 1990s, Rose describes how exclusion circulated as defining poverty as a lack of belongingness:

As exclusion, poverty is reframed in terms of a lack of belongingness, and hence a lack of responsibilities and duties to others which such belongingness generates through connection to the responsibilizing circuits of moral community. It is the absence of the stabilization of conduct and self-control provided by the stakes of work, family, housing and so forth (Rose 1999: 487).

Rose’s account of exclusion resonates with Rancière’s as constituting a preemptive, ultimately de-politicizing way of re-envisioning segregation, poverty and marginalization. In this account, exclusion becomes a state of lack within inclusion in which everyone is already included (there can be no real outside, which is the smallest denominator of what Rancière calls consensus). Instead of postulating a dividing line between society and those marginalized that can be used to start political disputes, any claim to such a line is blurred by the term “exclusion”. This term eliminates conditions for dispute. Instead, it provides various ways of conceiving marginalization as a lack of congruence with the requirements of participation, work, engagement, etc.– that is, what I have termed circulation. The preemptive logic of exclusion, including the exclusion of political dispute by the marginalized themselves, is – in this account – related to an impatience with the spontaneous, unanticipated becoming of the social field. This impatience belongs to the logic of an actuarial vision of politics that instead of waiting for this becoming, seeks to shape it in various ways. As we shall see in this chapter, these preventive logics constitute problems which return as legitimate causes for risk-oriented political practices (what Deleuze terms the “inversed
causality” inherent to the productive character of power relations, Deleuze 1988: 39).

I shall now turn to a brief overview of how “social exclusion” was articulated as a problem threatening Swedish democracy in 1997, before analyzing the discursive practices through which the term was rendered coherent during in the first years after 2000, as a reference point for governmental practices.

Exclusion in 1997–2000

In Sweden, the concept of exclusion as a political problem can be traced back to the Large City Committee report (Storstadskommittén, final report in 1997) and its ensuing parliamentary bill. The committee was led by social democrat Ilja Batljavan and by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (Socialdepartementet) and was a follow-up to a similar commission whose results had been presented in 1985. The Large City Committee’s mission was to “describe the conditions of the most vulnerable areas in the large city regions over the last years and to give a picture of segregation in the large cities” (75), with the aim to “stimulate a debate on how to create possibilities to break structural unemployment and welfare dependency” (3). It is based on a mapping of urban areas carried out by its 1980s forerunner. The report concludes by pointing to a “serious” new development: “an aggregative economic, social, ethnic and demographic segregation that has been reinforced. The accepted image that it is primarily an ethnic segregation is not true. Instead, a clearly economic and social segregation that has developed” (3). The concept of exclusion (utanförskap, literally “state of exclusion”) is used as a concept assembling psychological, class-based, ethnic and segregational factors into one coherent problematization. This is done by emphasizing the aspects of injustice from which the people who are said to reside in this condition suffer:

What is it then that characterizes those who live in the socially and economically most vulnerable areas in large cities? Well, to be in a state of exclusion (utanförskap) is the most substantial common trait. Different ethnic groups are often perceived (by the majority) to have chosen to live by themselves and not to want or often not to be able (for example due to language difficulties) to have contact with the majority of the domestic population. Those born here, social outcasts, are in an even worse situation since they do not to any notable extent seem to exist for the majority of the domestic population (since it is immigrant areas or more precisely immigrant-dense areas that we are talking about). The relationship
between the state of exclusion and economic preconditions becomes very clear (SOU 1997:118: 72).

While the quote expresses moral consternation, politically, the term “state of exclusion” invites seemingly contradictory conclusions. On the one hand, segregation is problematized. It is described not as an “immigration problem”, but as a new type of class society: “it seems that we are getting a refined class society” (76). On the other hand, the report’s conclusion transfers the gaze from structural causes of exclusion, to seeing the excluded themselves as problems:

What is it that makes segregation a societal problem? It is ultimately about the foundations of society. *Society simply needs common values to keep together and work*. One must be able to trust one another. One must not need to build fences and walls and hire security guards to be able to go to work or to travel on vacation. One must also be able to trust that it is through general elections that one elects the representatives of the regional and national government. One must be able to trust that all official power emanates from the people. A thirty percent voter turnout *(the socially and economically most vulnerable areas are not there yet, but are on their way)* is not congruent with any of the above-mentioned. A thirty percent voter turnout means that people do not trust each other. (78, emphasis added)

The excluded become “incongruent” to the “foundations of society” (and to democracy). The quote emphasizes the need for trust and common values. The reference to democracy when transposing the problem from structural causes to the excluded themselves underscores the association of exclusion with dangerous and irresponsible behavior:

In due time [after exclusion] they have understood that there is no one who cares about their situation, which often can lead to yet another accumulation of problems… Criminality and welfare planning can become alternative ways out for those socially deprived and excluded from the established society. (79).

Exclusion becomes a privileged problem by being constructed as the opposite of the systems of congruence and fit required by democracy, the market (trust) and a welfare society.
Just as the DC presented a moral critique that spoke in the name of those who participate the least, the Large City Committee report at once speaks critically about and in the name of the poor and marginalized. It also speaks for the state’s and agencies’ concern with securing congruence. The term, when used in relation to poverty and marginalization – which could potentially be politicized – operates as a pre-emptive and de-politicizing frame for these and consolidate incongruence, or lack of integration to the requirements of flow, as a problem for government.

The Large City Committee concluded with the concept of exclusion as a way of summarizing the aggregate effects of social segregation. A few years later, Folkpartiet Liberalerna and Moderaterna were to pick up on the concept and produce statistics and inquiries that were based on the concept. It would be used, during the early 2000s, to articulate the need for work-fare instead of social security benefits while backgrounding segregation and social factors (Björkesten 2014).

In 1999, the Moderate Party established a task force that produced three reports on “social segregation and the state of exclusion” (Dahlstedt 2009a: 59, Björkesten 2014: 6–7). The first report, Förnyelse och medborgarmakt (1999), targets the Swedish model in language that resembles that of the Power Commission. The Swedish model is depicted as “plan-oriented, centralized, large-scale and homogeneous”, inciting people to seek “social security benefits maximization” (report quoted by Dahlstedt 2009a: 59). In 2000, the second report, Från bidrag till arbete is presented, and in 2001 the final report Bryt utanförskapet!. Both construct the state of exclusion so as to endorse a replication of the Clinton administration’s 1996–99 cuts in social welfare benefits. Accordingly, the reports refer to the Large City Committee’s identification of 49 “exposed areas” in Sweden’s three large urban areas with “very low” or “extremely low” income (Björkesten 2014: 7). One report proposes the replacement of social welfare benefits with economic support spanning a maximum of nine months over a five years’ period. After that ran out, the unemployed person would have to take any available job (ibid.). During the same year, parliamentary bills were introduced reflecting this aim and referring to the measures taken by the Clinton administration. The main impact would come few years later. For example, in a bill called “State of exclusion” (2000/01:So527), Henrik Landerholm, Lars Lindblad and Per Bill (all from the Moderate Party) refer to the findings of the Large City

1 Later, after changing party to Folkpartiet Liberalerna, Rojas drafted the bill Bryt utanförskapet! (summarized in Folkpartiet 2005).
Committee in presenting ways, as they describe it, to break the dependency on economic benefits and the “social state of exclusion”. Targeting social-democratic welfare politics, the bill’s writers emphasize that segregation and social exclusion are a grave problem in Sweden, one that should be traced to politics rather than to individuals. Breaking the state of exclusion is formulated as breaking individual powerlessness, providing empowerment from the “citizen perspective”. The parliamentarians specifically problematize the “suburbs”, whose problems are, they maintain, caused by welfare politics. They warn that Sweden is on the verge of being divided and will reach a point of no return unless welfare reforms are implemented.

Constructing “areas of state of exclusion”

In 2001, one of the main architects of the new focus on exclusion in Moderaterna, Mauricio Rojas (then a Ph.D. in Economic History) went from being a Member of Parliament in Moderaterna to become a Member for Folkpartiet Liberalerna. The latter would become the main party to nurture the discourse on the state of exclusion in the first years of the 2000s (Dahlstedt 2009a). By creating a document that claimed to be a map of the state of exclusion, Rojas and the leader of the party, Lars Leijonborg, presented an innovative account of the “excluded” as Sweden’s main social problem (Folkpartiet 2004). After 2004, when the state of exclusion was rendered concrete with statistics and maps, the discourse on exclusion grew significantly, especially between 2006 and 2010 (Björkesten 2014). Between 2004 and 2013, a total of six different measures appeared concerning the “state of exclusion” (Björkesten 2014: 3–4). After the liberal-conservative government won the elections of 2006, finance minister Anders Björk was questioned, in 2008, by the Swedish National Audit Office concerning the absence of a specific definition of exclusion. Björk replied:

2 These six measures are: Folkpartiet’s definition from 2004 (which I analyze below), the definition by Centerpartiet from 2006, the Moderaterna’s definition of state of exclusion as “wide unemployment”, the Ministry of Labour’s definition of state of exclusion (analyzed below), Riksdagens utredningstjänst’s definition of a person who fully lives on social security in a year (a so-called “helårsekvivalent”) based on Statistics Sweden’s definition and Ekonomifakta’s definition of state of exclusion from 2013 (Björkesten 2014: 9–12).
The main aim of the government with the concept of state of exclusion is…to illuminate that far more people than those who count as unemployed can have labor-market related problems. For many these problems can even be more serious than the situation for the unemployed. The state of exclusion is thus a generic term for a more serious societal problem and it does not let itself be quantified in one single quantity. The development on the labor market must therefore be monitored with a wide repertoire of indicators that describe the work situation for the whole population of able-bodied age.3

The quote reflects how the state of exclusion, as a vague, “generic term for a more serious societal problem”, sustains (“illuminates”) the sense of an irreducible reality and urgency that motivates various actions. The quote also reflects the politics of maintaining exclusion as an irreducible problem. In the following, I analyze how the supposedly concrete, irrefutable fact of the “state of exclusion” was achieved by the creation of statistics and maps that grounded the concept and certain political practices associated with it. This allowed the Ministry of Employment to approach the issue as a given starting point for a number of political measures.

The first “map” produced (Utanförskapets karta, Folkpartiet 2004) is important insofar as it served as a battering ram to establish the uncontestability of exclusion as a self-generating problem, in what Levitas calls the “moral underclass” account of exclusion. This document is longer and more thorough than later reports (78 pages in contrast to 27 in 2012). Presented in late 2004, it contains an important comparison, much used by later documents, between the situation in 1990 and the situation in 2002, that is, between two supposedly comparable economic booms in Sweden. As a forerunner to Sabuni’s speech on Sweden’s “new landscape” and the new direction for democracy policy, the preface the document stages a particular scene or image:

a new social landscape has emerged in Sweden, a landscape characterized by lockouts from the job market, housing segregation, dependence on social security benefits, powerlessness and vulnerability. It is a matter of tens of thousands of persons for whom vital social mobility has ceased to work and of districts where life is characterized by socio-economic

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conditions that drastically contrast to the rest of society. (Folkpartiet 2004: preface)

As a distribution of the sensible, the claim constructs a situation of lack and of not having part in what is common to the community (work, social mobility). Importantly, the front page of the document, as well as 59 out of its 78 pages, consist of maps of Sweden spotted with alarming red dots, charts and statistics. The preface depicts the “state of exclusion” as a force of its own, a “cohesive cement”. This gives credence to a general concern about a group and area where processes of involvement do not apply or function. This “tragic development” and “process” is said to be about to “divide Sweden” (Folkpartiet 2004: preface). To account for and respond to it, the document postulates a pandemic “spread” of exclusion, a claim supported by its so-called “maps” which give the problem visibility: “the image that emerges of this map of the state of exclusion is alarming and ought to urge to immediate action” (Folkpartiet 2004: preface).

In the introduction, the document paints a “landscape” image of the state of exclusion by referring to the suburb of Rosengård in Malmö, an area that supposedly displays factors emblematic of “the destructive hold of the state of exclusion” (5). In illustration, and in order to narrow the latitude of interpretation, the document cites alarming newspaper headlines concerning Rosengård, as if these represented a simple, unbiased set of facts. Or, as the report puts it, “they hardly require comment”. This tactic reappears when two sentences from an article in Sweden’s largest newspaper, Dagens Nyheter, are said to “be enough as a summary”. After these moves to cancel nuances and doubt, the report concludes with a short sentence: “that’s how it is” (“så är det”, 5).

The report then presents a “map” that helps it claim that the problem extends far beyond Rosengård (whose function appears to have been to paint a dark image). Before showing us the map, the authors prepare us by presenting a theory of how the “state of exclusion” has an agency and capacity of its own.

First, Sweden is described as “being dangerously close to the point when ethnic and social conflicts can deteriorate into open riots and other extremely tragic events” (Folkpartiet 2004: 6). In claims that appear to have been borrowed from a Marxist discourse on historical development, false consciousness and alienation, exclusion is described as first getting a hold of an area through unemployment, which causes a deterioration of all other socially useful behavior. Unemployment leads to a general dis-involvement
from participation and engagement in organizational life (12). Work is established as the necessary precondition for society. Unemployment not only destroys the goods mentioned above, but necessary precludes all solutions: “without work there is no way out of the state of exclusion” (6). In addition to establishing this critical dispositif (as a certain arrangement of elements/assumptions) of a necessary development fed by the alienation of exclusion, the report posits that if cultural differences are added to unemployment and segregation, the state of exclusion becomes “deep”. (8). In that case, a situation can emerge in which the groups that live in exclusion cannot even understand how these central societal arenas work and neither [do they understand] the bundle of values and cultural reference points that give these arenas their cohesive cement. This is what we could call a deep state of exclusion and it singles out in a striking way the situation in which immigrant groups find themselves, in contrast to native groups that are also hit by marginalization and the state of exclusion. (8, emphasis added)4

The quote inverts Marx's “false consciousness”, albeit using the same type of dispositif. Marx defines false consciousness as a misperception of one's social and economic situation. “Deep exclusion”, similarly, is an economic, ethnocultural segregation that lead to the misperception of social arenas and the need to live in congruence with them. This type of critical dispositif allows the authors to speak for others, creating a form of mastery position (Rancière 2009).

The authors further paint “deep exclusion” as exacerbated by the “physical concentration” of individuals and groups. At a certain point, “individual exposure [to this creates] …collective processes with their own dynamic” (8). In such a case, the dispositif yields “exclusion” as no longer an effect, but a cause.5 Taken together, the various elements of exclusion create a “culture” of exclusion. This is because:

4 Later on the document adds that they do not point out the development of “state of exclusion”, to, “pick out or stigmatize already strongly stigmatized areas. We do it as a urgent appeal to action and as a tool to effectively be able to channel our efforts in the fight against the state of exclusion” (6). The quote above on “deep exclusion” is in tension with this latter claim insofar as it singles out immigrants as a potentially more problematic group.
5 Dahlstedt 2009a also notices this shift.
the state of exclusion generates an additional state of exclusion in which the culture of the state of exclusion is inherited by new generations that in turn see their life chances become limited still more by this cultural heritage. It means that what from the beginning was effect – the state of exclusion – has now become a cause. (9)

The quote is, in fact, a commentary on the text’s own dispositif, showing how a deleterious effect is transformed into a cause. Having established this narrative of necessities, the authors contend that the “Swedish state of exclusion” has achieved the state of “self-generating dynamic”. It thus forces the conclusion and generates a sense of urgency. Affectively, the rhetoric prepares the readers for a form of politics presented as the only possible cure for the problem. It squeezes out alternative ways of relating to marginalization and poverty. This sets the stage for the authors’ proposal:

Thus we need a radical change, a shift of perspective that breaks with the segregating integration politics that have existed so far and opens the path for an including development politics based on autonomy [egenmakt] in place of caretaking, offering work instead of social security benefits. (6)

After preparing us by their theory on exclusion, the report sets out to establish the irrefutable status of a “deep” and self-generating state of exclusion. This is done through scientific discourse. The reader now encounters 90 diagrams and six maps of Sweden, which together constitute what the report calls “the map”: “a map of an outermost problematic landscape whose existence we can no longer either deny nor disregard” (6). Technically, the mapping depended on numbers provided by the Swedish Statistics Bureau (SCB). This agency provided levels of employment for persons aged 20 to 64 in the years 1990 and 2002 – “those years when the earlier and most recent booms culminated in terms of employment”. These numbers were mapped according to two geographical variables: that of neighborhoods in Sweden’s larger cities, and that of election districts in the rest of the country. To this, the authors add statistics on school results provided by the National Agency of Education, numbers on electoral participation from the National Election Board and statistics on crime rates from the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention. Together, these numbers created (the report claimed) a “foundation for the map of the state of exclusion whose aim is to give a multifaceted illumination of the state of exclusion” (6–7, emphasis added). Terming the text the map of the state of exclusion is revealing: the authors
have discursively crafted an unambiguous single image of a supposedly incontestable reality. The document in fact provides no single map, only statistics and charts and two images of Sweden that are referred to as maps. The first is dated 1990 and the second 2002. It is the latter, presumably, that the report considers “the” map. The statistics used here are the same as those described above, and show a total employment rate of below 60 percent for persons between 20 och 64 years, while satisfactory school results or electoral participation are below 70 percent. The 2002 map describes 136 problematic neighbourhoods, as opposed to only three neighbourhoods in 1990. The conclusion is that the “growth of state of exclusion areas has in other words been explosive” (12). This explosive spread is supposedly accompanied by a deepening of exclusion. The number of areas with “deep” exclusion had increased from none at all in 1990 to 93 in 2002. In these, the state of exclusion included an employment rate of under 55 percent (12).

In this presentation, the statistics are automatically correlated to the “self-generating dynamic” of a deep state of exclusion for which the reader has already been thoroughly prepared. The report’s aim is less to prove that social inequalities – expressed primarily through unemployment – have increased between majority and minority in urban neighbourhoods, which might open up for discussions of causes. Rather, the report seeks to preclude contestation of the meaning of these changes. The introductory definition of exclusion means that the function of “maps” – the statistics and the imagery of 90 diagrams and six images of Sweden – is to eliminate all doubt concerning the (potentially political) meaning of marginalization and poverty. Mirroring what Rancière calls policing, the material references of statistics and “maps” close the gap between the presentation of segregation and government polices. Doing so, it narrows down how to relate to inequalities and marginalization. Exclusion thus operates as a consensualizing frame for the meaning of poverty and marginalization and what measures that can address it: “The problem has reached a spread and a depth that does not permit anything else, and it is urgent” (71, emphasis added).

The statistics do show that structural unemployment increased between 1990 and 2002. Given that unemployment had been very low in 1990, and the subsequent advent of a financial crisis, an IT-bubble and new work-place technologies, as well as processes of internationalization/globalization/de-

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6 By making either school results or electoral participation count to qualify someone as excluded, the number of people who can be counted as excluded grow significantly.
industrialization (to mention only a few factors), this is hardly surprising. Further, in view of this, it is difficult to assess if it is possible to compare the economic booms of 1990 and 2002 in the first place.

The report thus uses statistics and diagrams to establish the theory of the state of exclusion. It uses additional devices to render its claims robust. For example, it creates an “index of the state of exclusion” and repeatedly refers to the “reality of the state of exclusion”. The supposedly single “map of the state of exclusion” (actually, there are several) is produced by discursive practices – statistics, the theory of exclusion, different maps and the report’s index. References to “the” map give the statistics materiality and concreteness. Images move people affectively and thus help materialize claims and arguments concerning the meaning of the statistics. Here, this is done through the frame of exclusion. The maps of Sweden, for instance, start with an outline of the country afflicted by three small red dots, and end with an

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7 The employment level in the year 1990 was the highest on average during the whole period from 1976–2 004. Statistics Sweden (2005): https://www.scb.se/statistik/am/am0401/sysselsattning_och_arbetsloshet_1975–2 004.pdf [Accessed August 18 2017].
outline infected by dense outbreaks of red. This fosters a sense of a truly alarming development.

The term “map” materializes claims that the culture of the state of exclusion has an alarming dynamic in ways that cannot otherwise be verified. I will not analyze the political program of workfare which was launched in order to address this “dynamic”, as this has already been done (see Dahlstedt 2009a, Björkesten 2014).

An important aspect of the discursive practices in relation to exclusion was to sustain the image of the excluded across different documents, moments and forums. In the late summer of 2005, Lars Leijonborg, Mauricio Rojas and Tina Acketoft published a debate article in the major Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter, in which they give an updated version of the map. It is based on employment data from only one year, 2002–2003, school results from the two school years spanning 2002–2003 and 2003–2004, and crime statistics from three years, 2002, 2003 and 2004. The authors find that things had worsened considerably during these few years, during which there had been no economic boom. They have, further, constructed a “gender inequality ratio” (“ojämställdhetskvote” which they maintain) shows that “in particular the women are hit the worst”. The overall image is one in which:

We see...a country that is more and more mangled, divided deeper between those who contribute with their work and those who are forced to live on others’ work, between those who participate in societal life and those who stand outside and in desperation turn their backs on society.

Whereas the first report criticizes the government’s politics generally, the newspaper article clearly targets the government that existed a year before the elections ushered in the new government coalition in 2006. The affective register is, however, neither one lamenting social injustice nor calling for compassion. Instead, it stages a sense of “everyone is a loser here”, directed to the majority society’s more affluent readers - a “Sweden” that “cannot afford such a government”.

8 There could be sociological or other arguments on spatial dynamics that explain the difficulties experienced by people living in a given area (for example Strömblad 2003), but such sources are not referred to here. The dynamics is simply assumed.
After two electoral wins by the liberal-conservative coalition government (Folkpartiet Liberalerna, Nya Moderaterna, Centern and Kristdemokraterna) in 2006 and 2010, the “map” was produced once more, in 2012. The riots of suburban youth in Paris in fall 2005 spurred Folkpartiet Liberalerna to develop the discourse, fearing – or inciting fear – that Sweden would experience similar riots. In contrast to the first “map” document, this version contains no diagrams or images, offering only an “index of the state of exclusion”, to which it refers frequently. The new proposals continue the emphasis on “work” as the stabilizing, perceptible form – what Deleuze & Guattari term a molar category – necessary to conceive how a person can take part in a community and thus stop threatening the requirements of inclusion. Gender equality, addressed in terms of wage-work, is also emphasized: the authors conclude that “the stronger the state of exclusion, the more substantial the gender inequality”.

The contributions were not restricted to Folkpartiet Liberalerna. The New Moderate party composed a comparable document, the 2015 Sweden’s 130 Areas of State of Exclusion. Again, the authors paint a dark picture of utanförskapet (the state of exclusion). Echoing the landscape metaphors used in Folkpartiet Liberalerna’s documents, the New Moderates present a dystopian narrative of irreversible decay – irreversible, that is, unless new policies replace those currently in place. Otherwise, “within a few years, one million people risk being in a state of exclusion and dependence” (Nya Moderaterna 2015). The document however uses different statistics and zeroes in on the welfare/workfare problematization and on criminality.

These texts reflect the affective politics at stake in the construction of exclusion as a frame of interpretation for poverty, segregation and the state-of-exclusion areas, as a way of fostering the undeniability of that frame. Taken together, these “findings” constitute an additional anti-image of what is imagined as “society”, in which the latter is characterized by demands on congruence and, thus, circulation.

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The Folkpartiet Liberalerna and the New Moderates were part of government coalitions in 2006–2010 and 2010–2014. This allowed them to translate some of the political aims advanced in their documents into policies to be implemented by, among others, Sweden’s Ministry of Employment. In 2006, the government initiated what it called “urban development work”. This further constructed exclusion, inventing new associations and practices in the process. The aims of “urban development work” are described as:

To achieve a positive socio-economic development in urban districts with widespread social exclusion, to decrease housing segregation, as well as to strive for socially and economically sustainable living environments and better school results in these districts (ibid.).

Several smaller efforts were also launched under the umbrella framework of “urban development work” in 15 neighborhoods in nine different regions (URBAN-15 areas). These included the creation of the arrangement of so-called Local Development Contracts (Lokala utvecklingsavtal, “LUA-areas”; 23 neighbourhoods in 15 regions that had “local development contracts” with the state until 2012, Urbana utvecklingsområden 2013, statistisk uppföljning av sju indikatorer, 2013: 3) in 2008–2011, meant to promote contacts between the state and the regional levels in order to promote “social cohesion” in the most vulnerable or “problematic” urban districts (depending on the emphasis of the discourse) (Värdefulla möten, 2010). In initiating these projects, the statistical “definition” of “state of exclusion” serves as the productive starting point, in accordance with which various regional-level governments managed to apply for financial support. However, now that this type of measure is “officialized” in the report of the Ministry of Employment, the measurements are more strict and less rhetorical. Employment must be lower than 52%, longterm economic support higher than 4.8% and eligibility to upper secondary school lower than 70%. As an assessment of the state of lack when it comes to congruence between their own lives and the requirements of society – what I have termed circulation – the main aim of the report is to assess the gap between averages in the problem areas and averages in their surrounding regions (Urbana utvecklingsområden 2013, statistisk uppföljning av sju indikatorer, 2013: 3). The indicators and measures used to track the development of these areas over time reflect this focus: 1) employment, 2) long-term social security payments, 3) young people who neither work nor study, 4) people aged 20–25 who neither work nor study, 5) pupils who never qualify for upper secondary school, 6) difference in employment
between those who are moving in and out of the areas and 7) reported crimes and levels of feeling safe (3–4). Exclusion, when translated into these “scientific” categories, is more than a pre-emptive frame for interpreting poverty and segregation. It has become a grid used to observe and assess problem-area residents in terms of their degree of integration into or segregation from the requirements of inclusion.

The main finding of the report, however, contradicts alarmist warnings of a fatal downward spiral to be checked by radical measures. Earlier documents constructed the excluded as a rhetorical and political act. Now, mapping is reduced to an actuarial rating of development over time in terms of positive/negative. “Positively”, the employment rate is slowly rising and social security benefits slowly decreasing. “Negatively”, excluded-area women are still working less than average. Overall, the report states, “the development goes in a positive direction, in particular in the large cities” (ibid.).

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The Swedish police were also implicated in constructing the “state of exclusion”, referring to it explicitly in their En nationell översikt av kriminella nätverk med stor påverkan i lokalsamhället (Polisen 2014). By being tasked to correlate exclusion to organized criminality, as a reality and discursive object, the former would be increasingly associated with the latter. Comparable to the map-document by Folkpartiet, the Police also uses maps of Sweden with alarming red triangles to highlight its “picture of the state of affairs” (lägesbild). This shows an example of how exclusion has increasingly become a problem for the articulation of state capacities to maintain security and sovereignty.

On February 5, 2014, the NOLG (strategic unit within the Swedish National Police Board) asked the police to investigate and report on the dynamics created by exclusion. They are to concentrate on organized criminality from the viewpoint of the strategic capacities of criminals. The police’s report is related to a report by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) that links organized criminality to “ethnic and economic segregation, high unemployment, low education levels and poor health” (8). To produce its results, the report refers to the measurements 12 The development has not changed in a noteworthy way for 15 years (1997–2011) (3).
discussed above. En nationell översikt av kriminella nätverk med stor påverkan i lokalsamhället tries to find a match between areas of exclusion, and what the police claim are 55 areas in which criminal networks influence local society. The construction of the excluded, “exclusion areas” and URBAN 15 districts are thus inherited by police and used in police and legal constitutions of particular criminal formations – as located in 55 areas. The mission is to produce a “picture of the state of affairs” (lägesbild) through a correlation of “state of exclusion” with criminal networks. The “continual image of the state of affairs” is meant to function as a “basic document” for the police to use when suggesting measures (based on successful methods for intelligence information) that can be turned into operative decisions (Polisen 2014: 5). The police’s document announces its aim of producing the first national “problem image”, meant to “specify what terms the police can use to describe the problematics” (ibid.). The directives, it seems, seek to find a link that is perhaps not there, i.e. the problematization of the link comes first. The police used the following schema to introduce topics of discussion:

- Which underlying problems could have spurred the development?
- Who commits the crimes and how are they organized?
- What crimes are characteristic?
- According to police experience, what effects have the situation had on local society?

The knowledge sought concerns criminality’s effect on local society. The report comments on its own analytical mission and as a possible coincidence, a moment of equivalency between the two correlated knowledges. It states that, “if the areas [of exclusion and criminal networks] coincide”, this “strengthens the image that there is a relationship between socio-economic exposure and the problem [of criminal networks affecting the local society]. It would also imply that statistics could be used to identify areas that risk to develop similar problems” (6, emphasis added). Here, we see how the link between “excluded” and “criminal networks” transforms what was, at first, a problematization of welfare politics into a logic of security. This logic, moreover, is given a preventive slant: it can be applied elsewhere. The involvement of the police and its knowledge production moves the focus on exclusion still further from its initial formulation as a threat to a full citizenship and democratic participation. It is now a danger that must be monitored and, if possible, countered with preventive and repressive measures.
In summary, in this first part of the chapter I traced the construction of exclusion in Sweden and the practices that cultivated and sustained that construct. I argued that “exclusion” should be viewed as a frame of interpretation that preempts a more open-ended, contingent way of understanding marginalization, poverty and segregation, one that might allow dispute and emancipation. Exclusion, I further argued, is therefore another for the imperative of circulation and for the activity of guaranteeing circulation as a privileged form of government. I then argued that “areas of state of exclusion” were constructed to further support this pre-emptive function and the consolidation of incongruence as a major problem. I then mapped how exclusion promoted a mode of assessing certain segments of the population in terms of (in)congruence, particularly through the focus on work, social security benefits and segregation. Lastly, I mapped how the NOLG commissioned the police to produce a correlation between areas of exclusion and areas exposed to criminal networks. I argued that the intersection of statistical and scientific practices between the domain of exclusion and that of criminal networks used exclusion as a starting point to enable agencies (in this case the Police) to articulate problems for sovereignty and security and the degree of urgency of these problems.

An antipode to democracy: “violence-promoting extremism”

Related to the above, I will now map the construction of “violence-promoting extremism” as an phenomena and discursive object that is placed in opposition to a “working democracy” and “working social relations”. In chapter five, I showed how “violence-promoting extremism” was constructed in opposition to democracy. This problem was to be addressed by the 2011 Action plan to safeguard democracy against violence-promoting extremism (Skr. 2011/12: 44). In this plan, exclusion is linked to radicalization:

Exclusion and poor integration are factors that can affect the likelihood of a person being radicalized. Young people who feel excluded and alienated in relation to the surrounding society can be easily enticed into violent sub-cultures. The feeling of not taking part in society can lead to young people looking to find affinity in gang cultures that express resistance to the established norms of society in one way or another. Exclusion and unemployment are particularly common among young people and foreign-born individuals. A project aimed at enabling young
people and newly arrived migrants in particular to establish themselves on the labor market can therefore help to create a cohesive society (29).  

This definition of the excluded as automatically inhabiting the risk-zone of “violence-promoting extremists” is not only misleading but counter-productive, according to a 2013 commission of inquiry report written by Eskil Franck, director of the Living History Forum (When we care, SOU 2013: 81: 34). The report was meant to help develop a manual for preventing radicalization in schools and on the regional level, something that built further on the government’s action plan recommendations. Nonetheless, in 2017, many of the initiatives suggested in the action plan were integrated into a larger formation involving several state agencies, new laws and consolidated sets of strategies and techniques. In a state commission report authored mainly by researchers, Våldsbejakande extremism, en forskarantologi (SOU 2017:67), this integration is summarized in a way that displays how close the association had become between “exclusion” and “extremism” and it as a productive starting point when integrating security practices:

Violence-promoting extremism has in the last years motivated a number of different measures to strengthen society’s resilience, among other things through investment in welfare and in efforts of long-term crime-prevention. This year, the government invests 110 million Swedish crowns in measures against car burnings and criminality in exposed areas, a sum that is gradually going to increase to 250 million in 2020. At the same time the government has developed strategies against terrorism and violence-promoting extremism and parliament has adopted a new anti-terror law (dir. 2017:14; prop. 2015/16:78; skr. 2014/15:146; SOU 2014:18). More forceful tools against organized criminality have also been adopted (prop. 2015/16:113), and a new national crime-prevention program to join forces in crime preventive work has been introduced and a new center against violence-promoting extremism will be instituted at the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention. Many state agencies have also prioritized the question through among other things knowledge inventory and knowledge overviews (SOU 2017:67, 15).

Here, the bloc of phenomena, practices and knowledge referred to under the rubric “violence-promoting extremism” allows for a smooth association

13 The report refers to a report by the Security Services on violence-promoting Islamist extremism according to which “violent ideological environments tend to emerge in areas where social exclusion is widespread” (30).
between car burnings, terrorism and organized criminality. This strategic capacity was enhanced by the designation of a national coordinator for these efforts, established in 2014, and in 2015 an “expert network” that was tied to the work done by the coordinator (ibid.).

While the discourse on violence-promoting extremism is new, in the process of being constructed in documents such as that analyzed below, the construction of a dangerous outside in opposition to the state, society or democracy becomes a starting point for practices of security and the articulation of state capacities that have existed throughout the 20th century. Heléne Lööw has pointed out that other outsides have been constructed, in other historical and political contexts, branded as (for instance) “ultraism” (ytterlighetsinriktning), “anti-democratic orientations”, “subversion” (statsfientlig verksamhet), “politically unreliable” (see SOU 2017:67, 21–42). Lööw identifies the 1990s as a turning-point, however, in efforts to address these constructed outsides. Previously, they had been mainly about surveillance, moralizations and repression. Now, they became more youth-oriented and

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14 This coordinator and the larger efforts tied to the installement of this position, reflect the larger strategic formation and capacities that have been integrated in response to the construction of violence-promoting extremism. Since June 20 2014, there is a “national coordinator to safeguard democracy against violent extremism”, who works to “improve cooperation between government agencies, municipalities and organisations at national, regional and local level to protect democracy against violent extremism.” The coordinator is under the Ministry of Culture (in contrast to many countries in which similar agencies are under the Ministry of Justice) (IKUD 2017). On the homepage of the coordinator, its work is described as to “increase knowledge about violent extremism and promote the development of preventive methods”, having since 2014 resulted in around 20 regional conferences, in the collection of “thousands of local practices”, more than 260 regional visits and several dialogue seminars for knowledge exchange (http://www.samordnarenmotextremism.se). The coordinator is further described as an “implementation committee”, with the mission to initiate concrete measures against violence-promoting extremism. The coordinator has also, together with the test-regions of Stockholm, Göteborg, Borlänge and Örebro initiated so-called “knowledge houses” (kunskapshus), to use local knowledge (expertis) to support the local work. The coordinator has also produced a “state of affairs”-image (compare with the Police’s mission above) of all of the regions’ preventive work against violence-promoting extremism, showing that these efforts have vastly progressed (since the initiation). Affectively, the work is centered on “defectors”, and methods and strategies to try to make people defect and trying to deter defectors from anew becoming radicalized. Apart from these efforts the coordinator also works as a catalyzor of research, having initiated a “knowledge bank” and a reference group (of 16 State agencies and Sweden’s municipalities and county councils (SKL)) with the responsibility to develop concrete preventive measures. In 2017, there is a national “worry telephone” (Orostelefonen) and all 290 regions have a contact person who coordinates the local work and they are to develop so-called “local action plans” to prevent violence-promoting extremism.
preventive. They resulted in a combination of preventive and security-oriented, repressive measures (ibid. 34).

In the following, I map how these two reports construct “violence-promoting extremism”. I highlight how constructions and references to a working democracy design different arrangements to combat violence-promoting extremism. I will start with the Action plan to safeguard democracy against violence-promoting extremism (skr. 2011/12:44). This report allowed for an inventive formation to address the processes through which people become radicalized, as well as how they lose contact with democratic involvement. This will mean identifying dividing lines (or binaries) drawn in order to articulate capacities to combat “violence-promoting extremism” both preventively and repressively. I will also map how the above-mentioned report by Franck (When we care, SOU 2013:81), constructed the types of persons prone to be attracted to violence-promoting extremism.

“Violence-promoting extremism” is a concept that originates in secret service security reports in 2009 and 2010. Two such reports were particularly important to the action plan. The first was Våldsam politisk extremism (Brå 2009:15), composed by the National Council for Crime Prevention and based on interviews and intelligence material gathered by the secret services in 1999–2009. The second was the secret services’ own Våldsbejakande islamistisk extremism i Sverige (Säkerhetspolisen, 2010). As noted in chapter five, the action plan reformulated this discourse as general opposition to democracy and thus motivated practices and strategies to fight “violence-promoting extremism” by fostering “democratic awareness”, securing that the “basic values of democracy [are] well anchored”. Accordingly, it discusses processes that will secure democratic citizen-formation and combat extremism (skr. 2011/12:44: 4). However, the document also contradicts these aims by moving closer to the Police’s mapping of exclusion. It concentrates on how to prevent anything leading to political subversion or violence. Thus, the focus shifts from the promotion of democratic involvement to a discussion of the affective attachments and emotional needs that inoculate people from radicalization; and, when these fail, how to control radicalized people through surveillance and repression.

15 In chapter five, I highlighted how practices of security within the efforts to secure a “working democracy” was novel: “Historically, to prevent extremism has not been a part of the politics to strengthen and develop Swedish democracy” (skr. 2011/12:44: 5). I also pointed to the particular assumption, that, “Well-functioning democracy offers the best protection against extremism” (18).
In order to address the creation of extremism, the action plan first identifies the group of people who necessitate preventive and repressive practices in the first place:

There are however people who do not accept the foundations on which our open society is built – individuals and groups who believe that the rule of law lacks legitimacy and that breaking the law and using violence to achieve social change are justifiable courses of action. Extremist groups who operate on the fringes of society normally attract just a small number of individuals, but when they commit violent acts that are aimed at the very core of our democratic system; they become a pressing concern for the whole of society. (4)

Contrary to similar binary opposition of democracy and its outside discussed in previous chapters, this discourse establishes “violence” as the common strategic denominator that defines the outside. It goes on to address the affective registers that are linked to the propagation of violence. Viewed through the grid of violence, “violence-promoting extremist movements” are all “similar social phenomena” (4):

They are often based on a black-and-white and conspiratorial view of the world. Conflict with the surrounding society and the glorification of violence are central to them. *It is basically the same social mechanisms that motivate individuals to join a violent extremist environment,* regardless of whether it promotes a classless, an ethnically homogeneous or an Islamist society. (4–5, emphasis added)

In this logic of equivalency, the claim that the “social mechanisms are basically the same” homogenizes both the movements, and what they violently opposed. The latter – that is, society and democracy – become correspondingly consensualized, unparadoxical, and closed to contestation. The cover of the English version of the action plan communication displays both its homogenization of the movements and its anticipatory approach:
In accordance with its behavioral and affective focus, the action plan seeks to construct a form of sovereignty or hegemony. Its aim is to combat processes that allow “anti-democratic values [to] gain a foothold” and thus “provide a breeding-ground for violence-promoting extremism and ideological violence” (9, emphasis added). As noted in chapter five, this preventive work is to focus on democracy. By “safeguarding” and “strengthening” democracy, democracy and security reinforce each other. Democracy makes “society more resistant to violence-promoting extremism” (6, emphasis added), confining “extremism to the fringes of society” (7).16

The action plan’s formulation of processes that incline – or disincline – people to democratic values and, thus, conditions attitudes to violent-promoting extremism singles out youth and immigrants as objects of analyses and practices. After all, immigrants are supposedly more prone to alienation and/or the taint of clan loyalties and/or alternative value systems. Youth, unformed and open-ended by nature, is a similarly privileged domain since “Many of the values that a person [människa] bears with them through life are

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16 A claim that reflects a confidence in the capacity of dominant arrangements and the circulation that they can ensure, whose validity, however, could be questioned in many ways.
formed during adolescence and it is also true that it is primarily young men who join violent extremist movements” (10). The focus on youth as a risk is reinforced by references to a survey by the National Board of Youth that monitor young people’s “support for authoritarian alternatives”. The action plan notes, for instance, that the survey show 20 percent of people interviewed do not believe it is morally wrong to use of violence for political purposes, which “should still be seen as a high percentage” (skr. 2011/12:44, 20). Reflecting the need to address environments that can challenge the existing environments for the shaping of “democratic” individuals and collectives, the document underscores the need to target “environments” “networks” and “destructive subcultures” characterized by molecular flows (9).17

The logic of equivalency inherent to the construction of “violence-promoting extremism”, the homogenization of both extremist groupings and of democracy and society and of the forms of congruence that they presuppose to “work”, also appear in the action plan’s focus on violence as the behavioral or affective characteristic that distinguish extremists from democrats. In constructing a general economy of violence, the action plan identifies being fascinated by, prone to or exercising violence as the primary common denominator or operator of equivalence that homogenizes the outside. It is that which makes leftists, right-wing extremists and islamist fractions into “similar social phenomena”. According to the logic of a preventive focus on processes of attachment and becoming, the objects under examination include not only people who break laws or commit violent acts, but also – even, primarily – those as yet law-abiding persons whose affective and personal constitution makes them prone to violence or a culture of violence. By marking out a domain of population that is prone to violence, the document draws a line through which power relations of repressive means (the only violence considered legitimate) are articulated and through which an abject outside/contender to that power is made visible. The concepts of “violence” and “extremism” are central to the construction of “violence-promoting extremism” as an opposite to democracy:

The word extremism is used here to describe movements, ideologies or people who do not accept a democratic social system. The concept of “violence-promoting extremism” is interpreted based on the description used by the Swedish Security Services in their report on violence-promoting Islamist extremism. According to this description, a person is

17 This strategic perception is similar to Deleuze & Guattari’s (1987) contrasting of peoplings, packs and multiplicities to the state-form.
said to be violent if he or she “is deemed repeatedly to have displayed behavior that not just accepts the use of violence but also supports or exercises ideologically motivated violence to promote something” (9).

The quote defines “violence-promoting extremism” as a hybrid of these two last concepts. One can note that extremism is given no positive characteristics, which makes it impossible to speak of it in its own terms. It is endowed only with negative characteristics: it is defined by the lack of acceptance of a democratic social system. I emphasize “social system” to highlight how (as we have seen earlier) the notion of a “democratic society” is preferred to the term democratic political system. The term democratic social system goes beyond politics, in that it mandates the “acceptance” of the system’s “working relations” and points to a particular form of circulation.

Importantly, while the quote defines extremism and “violence-promoting extremism”, violence itself is a seemingly homogeneous given. Yet, apart from scattered examples, it never becomes clear what violence denotes, when it starts, or what its spectrums might be – physical, psychological, verbal, etc. Nor does the above quote discuss when “ideologically motivated violence” begins, nor how it operates, nor what an ideology is, etc. It does, however, clearly delineate that the “acceptance of use of violence” – that is, support for and exercise of ideologically motivated use of violence – are the behavioral tendencies that indicate whether or not one is a violence-promoting extremist. Resonating with Rancière’s account of consensus and its relation to a logic of equivalency in which the social world is accounted for in simple terms of positive/negative, healthy/sick, etc., whose development is tracked over time, violence marks out a radical outside that is simply negative. As a consequence, in line with the confluences noted above, democracy and society become aligned with requirements of congruence and a positive flow of trust and participation, which Rancière also describes as a form of saturation (there is nothing to add to it). Viewed from how Foucault, in chapter three, spoke of circulation as a problem that could be responded to by “positive circulation” (at the expense of “negative” circulation), violence is clearly a negative circulation in these documents’ analysis (as will be shown below in relation to how the contagion of violence is viewed and sought to be anticipated).

Once the report has arranged these elements by referring to violence as a divide, and established the conditions needed to move from one side to the other, it lists affective factors that cause recourse to violence. These include “a feeling of frustration and powerlessness” (8) that it contrasts to the
“tolerance” obtained by “strengthening trust” (9). Thus, even if the capacity for repressive violence is brought up in, and to some degree prepared by the action plan, the focus, even that of a general economy of violence, is primarily preventive; the action plan concentrates on converting bad affects to benign elements of the capital of “trust”. Reflecting a possible preference for forms of governmentality over blunt repression, the report notes that any successful effort must realize that “A democratic and open society can never be entirely invulnerable to violence-promoting extremism”. Part of the reason is that it is “difficult to establish which factors give rise to political violence and will affect the long-term threat from violence-promoting extremism” (16). Thus, the movement of constructing a dividing line, and fairly taken-for-granted understanding of what to address and how, is imbued with a hesitation with regards to the very behavioral economy that it presupposes that it know and intervene in.

I will now briefly account for what Franck’s report _When we care_ (SOU 2013:81) added to the constructions in the action plan, before returning to the plan’s views of radicalization. In _When we care_ (SOU 2013:81) (referred to above as a continuation of the mission tied to the action plan), Franck elaborates how to prevent the “transition from an extreme opinion into a criminal act of violence” (21). If one is to understand the conditions that promote this, and formulate strategic measures to address these, one must formulate basic assumptions. Reflecting the preventive focus, noted above, on changing affects (rather than attempts to “win” over them), the report points out that “extremism” and “violence” have “always been and will always be an integrated part of human life” (33). In this preventive and actuarial logic of a general economy of affects and varying degrees of tendency to violence, violence should be viewed as something that “humans and societies must learn how to counteract and master if the violence is to be kept in check” (33). In contrast to the action plan, Franck’s report relates

18 Drawing on British researchers, this implies three “insights” that must take into account if one wants to govern these processes:

- “To be radical is an important part of being young. Therefore, there must be channels that can provide an outlet for young people’s radicality, differences of opinion and attempts to make a change in ways that impinge the need to take to violence when doing so.
- Human behavior has always been non-linear and unpredictable. Societies can learn how to handle violence-promoting extremism but there are no societies without it. This implies that instead of seeking a definite solution, societies must learn to identify and prevent each discovered case.
violence to an “emotional driving-force that come from within”, with “extremist environments” feeding off distress or a sense of lack or void. As noted, these environments thereby compete with society through their ability to provide the individuals with emotional needs: self-esteem, community, friendship, control and power, identity, affiliation, status and possibly, in Franck’s words, even a “home”. In contrast to the action plan, the report thus identifies the extremist environments’ and networks’ positive features, in that they can provide for individuals’ needs. This is what then makes them prone to violent options. For example, the extremist groups’ social dynamic, social intercourse and charismatic leaders are described as “key to individuals’ developing a propensity for violence”. This is the force of what the report terms “radicalization”; a molar name meant to stabilize and capture a purely molecular process, one that is affective, fluid and that escapes.

Let us return to the action plan and its focus on the process of becoming radicalized – or becoming democratic. The plan describes “radicalization” as “a process by which the individual is conditioned into taking on the group’s world view and political norms” (skr. 2011/12:44, 17). By incorporating radicalization into a general economy of “social-psychological factors” (which excludes ideological motives) the report can conclude that “the actual ideological content is seldom of crucial significance” (17). The actuarial understanding of an economy of violence is extended, once again, to justify a homogenization of different extremist groups. By extension, this logic also makes the environments of “violent-promoting extremism” comparable to other domains, or “violent sub-cultures”, where affects of violence are central to what it means to be part of that environment (36).

The best way to fight extremism is to have a liberal attitude to differences of opinion, radicalism and disagreements. In this way, it can be demystified and de-glorified without excluding too large groups of people. At the same time, the liberal attitude implies a responsibility to promote powerful arguments against and alternatives to the ideas of extremists.” (33–34)

19 The report was criticized for this claim. See: https://www.dn.se/debatt/forslag-mot-extremism-hotar-demokratisk-grund/ [Accessed March 2 2018].
20 By breaking down the analysis to the affective formation of the person, the report gains access to the basic conditions of this formation. First, a person must have time to engage herself, and not be caught by any dominant molar form through which this constitution could take place: work, family or other commitments that “demand force and attention and fill the individual’s time with other obligations.” (skr. 2011/12:44, 37) Other important factors are the social ties and group-feeling that are formed by joining this type of environment, which sometimes attract whole groups. Again, ideology is secondary, but also important (ibid.). The report dwells on the phenomenon of lone radicals, which it
later when the report, in emphasizing probability or risk, deals with disturbing attitudes and behaviors that might lead to radicalization. Here, the dividing line of “breaking laws [to] reach political objectives” receives the same treatment meted out to “violence” above. It is transformed into something at once homogeneous (given) and negative. The report disregards what the laws are and what the objectives are. People who do not actively reject violence are ranged alongside those who are associated with radicalization and law-breaking for political objectives (20). In this extension, “illegal political actions”, such as squatting, defacing public buildings with slogans and damaging private or public property during protests become equated with a tendency towards radicalization. This extension displays how security and risk-management monitor the degree to which one is affectively in (in)congruence with proper modes of being and acting politically. This, in turn, reflects the identification of democracy with an ideal of political conformity of affective moderation and hesitancy. In summary, the actuarial vision that infuse the arrangements that define the tendencies and thresholds that are to be monitored, conflate both democracy and non-conform political behavior to degrees of congruence or lack thereof.

Integrating a strategic formation

As the name “action plan” suggests, many practices were initiated with the 2012 document. In the following, I will map how a formation to monitor and govern extremism was assembled in inventive exchange with other domains that had been objects of similar anticipative accounts. The action plan presents a repertoire of agencies, techniques and forms through which the preventive efforts can be articulated. The anticipative analysis and logic of claims are never really lonely. Many who join find it an exciting environment and some use it to take shelter and as a pretext to act out various forms of drug addiction. Even if the report sketches these basic conditions, it also contends that, “Every typology that is created must thus be used with the greatest precaution when it comes to identifying real or presumptive extremists. Each case must be treated as more or less unique” (38). Thus, the analysis seeks to create a vigilant and open-ended approach that can adapt the anticipative grid case by case.


22 The document presents work done by the Police and the Swedish Secret Services, such as identifying young people who are in the risk zone of radicalization and the participation of the Swedish National Police Agency (Rikspolisstyrelsen) in an EU-project, Community Policing Preventing Radicalization & Terrorism, to develop methods and educational material (skr. 2011/12:44, 30). Other efforts have been “cross-sectoral in nature”, for
equivalency discussed above are also evident when the report relates violence-promoting extremism to other violence-prone “environments” in which people are conditioned, such as “youth criminality” and “sport-related crimes” (or hooliganism). These function as an input in the report’s analysis of a general economy of violence, indicating how to act upon the processes by which such groups are formed. As they are all “destructive subcultures” (35), they “display many similarities with the kind of violence perpetrated by extremist groups” (36). This equivalency allows the action plan to transfer experiences and apparatuses from these domains to a discussion of means to address extremism: “In many respects, the social mechanisms that lead young people in particular to join criminal networks are similar to the mechanisms that cause the same young people to become violent extremists”. Hence, “several [existing] crime prevention measures can also therefore help to prevent young people from being drawn towards violent extremist environments” (35) The action plan mentions “young people’s perspective” on and the “long-term approaches” of youth-crime prevention measures as factors directly relevant to the process of becoming extreme.

In another exchange, the action plan refers to the report issued by the Commission Against Criminal Groups, *Criminal groups - combating recruitment and facilitating defection* (SOU 2010:15, March 2010). This report proposes, as a preventive measure, the formation of social task forces consisting of local-level social services, police and school personnel, working together with voluntary organizations. These were to work with young criminals on an individual case level (skr. 2011/12:44: 35) in order to help them foster reflexive self-awareness. Furthermore, the National Police Board had been already tasked to initiate a pilot scheme of social task forces for young people “who are at risk of becoming criminals”, an experience that also became relevant. Another agency, the National Board for Health and Welfare, had been given the task to produce a risk assessment manual to “better be able to identify young people who run the risk of being recruited example, through the way in which the Police cooperate with different authorities, voluntary organizations and groups such as parental associations and businesses to prevent that demonstrations to get out of hand (31). Between the central and the local level, a so-called “best-practice”-pamphlet has been circulated with examples of how “violence-promoting extremism” has been counteracted in successesfull ways on the local level (31). The report points out the importance of non-governmental organizations, in particular when it comes to defectors.

23 This strategy has been criticized by among other Christer Mattson: https://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/christer-mattsson-tog-debatten-anda-blev-eleven-nazistledare/ [Viewed March 25 2018]
to criminal networks or who want to leave one”; further, the Board was poised to develop a guide to support measures “for the benefit of young people targeted by the social task-forces” (35). Finally, the report also accounted for local forms of cooperation and operative divisions in so-called “areas in the state of exclusion” (a term discussed above).

This dynamic combines police efforts and practices by the Social Insurance Office and the Public Employment Service to create new types of cooperation and strategic possibilities. This opening for exchanges presents all these efforts to combat youth criminality as analogous – an analogy that will be key to the integration of practices into a larger formation to address why certain youths become extremists.24

The second domain that the action plan refers to is sport-related crime. This domain provides an additional example of an attempt to address the environmental and pro-violence conditioning of (mostly) young men. Sport-related crime is described as displaying:

many similarities with the kind of violence perpetrated by extremist groups. Hooliganism is a violence-fixated sub-culture that primarily involves young men. It is not uncommon for individuals to move between these two violent environments. (36)

However, while the police and the National Council for Crime Prevention had integrated techniques, strategies and measures to minimize the impact of sport-related sub-cultures, this type of violence is seen as a less important type of youth criminality. Combating hooliganism was more a matter of containing public order disturbances than launching a series of efforts to protect youth from violence-endorsing environments. Nonetheless, the fact that both types of groups operate as frameworks when discussing how to

24 The communication summarizes the network of knowledge and practical efforts in relation to the so-called local development agreements:

An action plan for cooperation between the Police and the municipality was developed in 2008. The National Police Board and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions are working to implement this action plan and the National Council for Crime Protection is providing assistance in the form of knowledge (PoA-450–3 788/06). Under the local development agreements concluded by the Government with municipalities in 2008 and covering inner city areas with widespread exclusion, partnerships involving the police authorities, the Social Insurance Office and the Public Employment Service have been established (36).
address violence-promoting extremism shows how the logic of equivalency translates behavior and measures into entities that can be exchanged, converted, tracked over time, etc.

As mentioned in chapter five, in its efforts to integrate this formation, the action plan presents new measures to “safeguard democracy from violent-promoting extremism”. It focuses specifically on possibilities to monitor/detect radicalization and on state capacities to affect and prevent these processes. As mentioned in chapter five, these are ranged under six domains.25 To be able to achieve the different aims, the government recommends twelve specific measures, which together form the “cross-sectorial” formation that constructs and responds to “violence-promoting extremism”.26

25 These are: to strengthen the awareness of the democratic values, to increase the knowledge on violence-promoting extremism, to develop structures for coordination, to prevent individuals from joining violent extremist groups and support defectors, to counter the breeding grounds for ideologically motivated violence and to deepen international cooperation (skr. 2011/12:44: 35).

26 Efforts to indirectly shape the conduct of individuals by way of modes of subjectification stand out. For example, the main agency, the National Board for Youth Affairs, was tasked to distribute funding to civil society organisations to finance activities aimed at strengthening young people’s democratic values, and the Swedish Commission for Government Support to Faith Communities was tasked to initiate an “extended dialogue with faith communities on democracy-promoting efforts” (36). By using networks that are closer to the ground and that actively promote modes of subjectification, the government thus sought to shape the processes of affective subject-formation (or at least to inhibit and detect undesirable ones). The Living History Forum was tasked to disseminate methods and study material to “strengthen young people’s democratic values”, and an inquiry is working on proposing how xenophobia and similar intolerance can be more effectively combated (37). To this measure, it adds that it intends to give a special investigator the task of developing study material on preventive methods against violence-promoting extremism and to “promote cooperation and knowledge exchange on prevention between actors in municipalities, authorities and civil society organisations and to present proposals on how to develop and organise future prevention work” (38). Reflecting a concern with the flows that shifting media consumption today bring about, the Swedish Media Council was tasked to perform a study on how young people can be made less vulnerable and “be protected against the influence of anti-democratic messages spread via the Internet” and make young people reflexively aware as media users “to prevent organisations, movements or networks with an anti-democratic agenda from getting their message across online” (41). The government also intended to take special measures to enhance knowledge about antisemitism and islamophobia among children and young people in 2012–2014, and it tasked the Swedish Research Council to broaden its support to interdisciplinary democracy research to include “knowledge about the threat against democracy”. Furthermore, it intended to give the National Council for Crime Prevention the task of performing an analysis of the current extent of threats and violence against elected representatives in Sweden and has tasked Statistics Sweden to perform a study that highlights the conditions facing elected representatives in a representative democracy, in particular to know why some of them leave their position
Conclusions

In this chapter, I have mapped the discursive practices and arrangements through which the problems of exclusion and violence-promoting extremism were constructed and addressed. The chapter specifically focused on the inventive use of material practices and arrangements to construct these problems, such as statistics, maps, indexes, surveys and theoretical dispositifs. This directed attention to the normative and political assumptions and the larger political stakes and power forms articulated through these constructs.

Following Rancière, I argued that the construction of “areas of state of exclusion” served as a material and discursive reference used to consolidate poverty and marginalization as forms of inclusion characterized by lack in relation to political, economic and societal demands on congruence. This, in turn, obstructed the possibility to be outside and thereby blurred the aesthetic conditions to articulate the political status of marginalization and poverty. The association of exclusion with criminality and extremism further deepened this operation. It continued to render poverty and marginalization into lacks of congruence vis-à-vis the requirements of certain ways of acting and being, and thereby, directly or indirectly, further associated democracy and having part in society with “inclusion”, i.e. with moving along and contributing to circulation.

I showed that there was a specific interest in monitoring and shaping the processes of affective attachment and democratic becoming of, in particular, youth and immigrants. This focus also had a negative focus: to monitor and address the processes of “radicalization” or the tendency to violence, and the type of environments that sustain such processes. In the association of exclusion, criminality and extremism, the chapter traced a strategic elaboration that tied democracy and a focus on working social relations to the development of a preventive and repressive (sovereign) capacity. This capacity’s main focus was on monitoring and acting upon processes of affective constitution and becoming. As noted briefly in chapter five, this strategic elaboration increasingly made democracy into a condition for security, and vice-versa. The actuarial understanding of violence, but also of early (45). Added to this, the government intended to give the National Defence College the mission to study examples of successful measures taken in other countries to prevent “violence-promoting extremism” and intends to intensify and expand cross-border cooperation and knowledge exchange. Lastly, it intended to initiate a project to disseminate examples of successful ways of preventing violent right-wing extremism within the EU (47).
other indicators of behavior of for example exclusion, were central to this elaboration insofar as it enabled to envision how efforts to renew democracy could become bulwarks of security and how forms of security could be integrated into the very efforts to strengthen and renew democracy (“democratic awareness”).
CHAPTER EIGHT

Inventive arrangements in scientific writings: survey research inputs into the urges to secure a working democracy

Earlier chapters have focused on governmental commission reports and policy bills. This chapter addresses practices of arrangement in Swedish scientific writings that respond to and stimulate efforts to secure a working democracy. Influenced by American political science from the 1950s-1970s (with Putnam as a late-comer in the 1990s) and the work by Ronald Inglehart and his “World-Values Survey” (Denk 2009), Swedish survey research has produced its own input concerning the question of how to secure a working democracy. It supplied democracy policies with new categories, alternative problematizations, and novel ways of forecasting the development of civic capacities, dispositions and values.

As shown above, the proximity between sciences and policy, in particular technocratic social engineering, leads to sharing between scientific input and policy formulation. Accordingly, this chapter maps arrangements formulated in 2003–2015 in response to, or as a way of articulating, the perceived need to secure a working democracy. All these arrangements seek, more or less, to contain the effects of declining engagement and rapid changes on circuits, forms of involvement and “good” civic habits. They police the population with an eye to promoting a representative democratic order, seeking to produce correspondences between civic modes of acting and being and the requirements of a “working democracy”. Their inventions help them produce systems of congruence that close existing or potential gaps between these civic modes and the requirements of an existing or imagined order. This means they continuously seek to re-align democracy and these congruences. This, again, marginalizes dissensual, improper and autodidactic approaches to democratic involvement. I argue that their commitment to policing leads them to equate democratic and political involvement with normative and political ideals supposedly inherent to Swedish democratic tradition. The ways that systems of congruence are assumed and policed
close off improper and uninvited forms of acting and being political, infusing the forms, instead, with conformity.

Postulating supposedly proper fits between activities, attitudes and change is central to the production of opinion through polls and surveys. I will discuss three texts, each published by Sweden’s government-founded SOM-Institute. The SOM-Institute began its systematic inquiries in 1986. It has come to play a particularly important role as a technical infrastructure and publication venue for the construction of a world of opinions, structured by practices of prediction and assumptions about the relationship between equilibrium and change (Ohlsson, Oscarsson & Solevid, 2016). In this research, reflecting both older and more recent influences such as Almond & Verba (1962) and Norris (1999), the population is viewed as problematic in relation to the requirements of a democracy, with a particular focus on the population’s behaviors, values, opinions, and habits (Denk 2009). In the later writings in Sweden, the “citizen agenda” is for example called a “critical factor” (Ekman & Linde, 2010: 8, 20) and “civic discontent” is categorized and surveyed for “its consequences for democracy” (Ekman & Linde 2010: 20). These later texts focus on “attitudes” as a strategic category to assess whether and how liberal democratic regimes are consolidated (Ekman & Linde 2006).

Such approaches use assumptions of continuity and equilibrium that render change and discontinuity problematic. In practice, this often means approaching and containing discontinuity through positing a “normal” situation that is antecedent to change. In a 2016 publication by the SOM-Institute called Equilibrium (Ohlsson, Oscarsson & Solevid, 2016), change, as an object to monitor, is contrasted to equilibrium - defined as “stillness, harmony, rest and safety” (Ohlsson, Oscarsson and Solevid 2016: 11). By aligning democracy with assumptions concerning the balance and continuity that supposedly characterized previous decades, the SOM-Institute’s study concludes that equilibrium was disrupted by changes in “societal domains”. Three such domains are the “citizen agenda”, the “conflict structure”, and the media system, all once characterized by a “normal state” (normaltillstånd) of “Swedish opinion and societal climate” and a “balance” in the representative democratic system (12). The article produces survey evidence showing that this balance was lost by 2016, or, as the authors put it, “nothing is in place” (39). The authors themselves wonder whether the supposed break with normality might, in fact, “say more about the relative peacefulness that has long characterized Swedish social life” (39). However, this insight is downplayed. Instead, the whole study, including the light shed on the question of
democracy, remain framed by assumptions of stability and continuity. This both contains the open-ended meaning and effects of changes as something people can do something with, and makes them into anomalies. I have dwelt on this example to indicate how this type of text, even as it reflexively questions some of its own assumptions, still creates congruence not only of habits, opinions and values, but of linearized democratic time characterized by stability and peacefulness.

In the following, I will analyze the practices of arrangement that build these and other congruences into material spanning 2003 to 2015. I am especially interested in how their inventive arrangements articulated and responded to efforts to secure a working democracy.

Fitting the population’s times and activities to the requirements of the “working democracy”

In SOM’s Democracy Trends (2003), published a year after the first bill on democracy policy, Henrik Oscarsson describes how the anthology contributes “necessary illumination of how the state of democracy has changed during the 1990s and, based on that knowledge, looks forward and tries to say something about where democracy is heading” (Oscarsson et al. 2003: 7). This approach resembles that of democracy policy (see chapter five). In a new departure, however, it also directly articulates the underlying assumptions of these analyses: “To what degree are the citizens’ capacities and behaviors compatible with the demands and ideals that can be deduced from different democracy models?” (7, emphasis added). This links models of democracy and a “well-working democratic society” with the assumed need for a proper fit between capacities and democracy, or “the relative satisfaction of system and actors’ demands” (ibid.). The authors term this assessment of the “civic capabilities” of “the Swedish people” the “democracy-evaluating activity” (demokratiutvärderingsverksamhet) (8).

The assumption of the need of a proper fit between democracy and “civic capacities” is not only reinforced, but becomes a domain through which the population is observed:

[it is] the Swedish people that is the object in a democracy-evaluating operation…we try to evaluate the development of Swedish democracy by studies of how different civic capacities change over time. We focus on the citizens’ preferences, interests, media habits, leisure habits and values (8).
This type of policing in the name of democracy resonates with Foucault’s and Rancière’s conceptualizations of policing, in that it polices everything concerning humans, their relations, happiness and “occupations”. At the same time, an actuarial science of politics is clearly at work. This is reflected in Oscarsson’s description of the “democracy-evaluating operation” as a form of “democratic benchmarking”. The use of democracy models as normative analytical schemas allows one to judge whether things are developing in the “right” or “wrong” direction, and estimate the implications of the direction in question. Oscarsson refers to eight influential Swedish research publications from 1995–2003, among which one finds the DRR reports (see chapter five), that develop “benchmarking” as a means to monitor and secure a “well-working democracy” (8).

In order to emphasize the need for a proper fit, Oscarsson summarizes the “democracy demands” that could be put on the citizens by quoting Bernard Berelson, an American political scientist who formulated, in the 1950s, a “political theory of democracy”:

The political theory of democracy, then, requires that the electorate possess appropriate personality structures, that it be interested and participate in public affairs, that it be informed, that it be principled, that it correctly perceive political realities, that it engage in discussion, that it judge rationally, and that it consider the community interest (Berelson 1952 quoted in Oscarsson et al. 2003: 9).1

The quote reflects efforts to ensure propriety, that is, a proper fit not only between the citizen and democracy, but internally, within the citizen herself – the citizen’s “personality structure”. She is to possess a reflexive awareness of community interest and be “principled”. Oscarsson elaborates on how to understand these preconditions for democracy: the list of attributes, he claims, can be seen as concerning electoral, participative and deliberative democracy. Each of these is in tension with the other; nonetheless, these aspects constitute dominant ideas of “the good democracy” (10) and are a “fully necessary basic precondition regardless of the social system and democracy model” (12). However, Oscarsson goes further than Berelson. He formulates his own version of what is required of the “democratically minded citizen”:

1 The quote seems important to Oscarsson who uses it 12 years later in Fragment (Oscarsson et al. 2015).
The citizens’ support for the common norms and rules of the game is probably a fully necessary basic precondition disregarding the social system and democracy model. This would imply...a basic feeling of belonging or identity, a recognition of human rights and the democratic state’s constitutionally protected civic freedoms and rights...the capacity to recognize commonly accepted rules of the game even in those cases when decisions work against one’s own will ought to be spread. Democracy also demands good losers...a wide support for prevailing norms demands a constant discussion about the democratic rules of the game...[from which] a kind of superior demand for knowledge on all citizens in a democratic society can be deduced: that all citizens have basic knowledge of the character of democracy and the rules of the game in order to set in stone a democratic legitimacy (12).

This may seem a common-sense list. In fact, it imposes criteria by which to judge what is and what is not “democratic” (and thus prioritizes validation as register to account for how one has or has not part). It thus overshadows and marginalizes forms of democratic participation that are not reducible or cannot be judged and validated according to such set standards. These could for example be different ways of inhabiting spaces and times that articulate political questions of inclusion and social justice and thereby articulate questions of belonging, identity, etc. as political matters.2

A few years later, further texts on system support and engagement attempt to align the population to proper modes of participation and engagement. In a chapter to the anthology *Politik, Populism, Protest*, Joakim Ekman and Jonas Linde (Ekman & Linde eds. 2010) take a vigilant stance by framing the anthology with a quote by Russel J. Dalton:

Contemporary democracies are facing a challenge today. This challenge comes from democracy’s own citizens, who have grown distrustful of politicians, skeptical about democratic institutions and disillusioned about how the democratic process functions (Dalton quoted by Linde in Ekman & Linde 2010: 62).

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2 In this sense, the list also presents a possibly weak attempt to secure a working democracy, since it is hardly certain that a social engineering operation of securing and correcting civic dispositions and habits is actually able to guarantee “support for common norms and rules of the game”, etc.
This formulates the vitality of democracy in terms of attitudes towards regime alternatives, evaluated as a matter of “system support”\(^3\). The stakes of this vigilant approach are summarized in a number of questions:

What role do civic attitudes play for the legitimacy and survival of the democratic system? How does the support for democracy as a form of government look like? Are there any regime alternatives that in the eyes of the citizens constitute credible alternatives to representative democracy? Does regime support relate to other political attitudes or any specific socio-demographic factors? (62)

The focus is reactive insofar that it prefers not to ask how citizens might (re)do democracy; instead, it concentrates on the “survival of the democratic system” and worries that citizens – particularly youth – might endorse alternatives to representative democracy. This forecloses active but possibly “impure” forms of civic participation in and appropriation of politics and democracy. The authors’ focus on risks and dangers to a sound democratic renewal allow them to underscore the “changed conditions” of politics. The increased distrust in democracy demands attention:

it is hard to see cynicism, indifference and intolerance against others as desirable qualities in a population. We cannot close our eyes to the risks. The critical citizens that entirely lack trust in democracy and those elected can operate as an important resource for intolerant groupings, populist parties and authoritarian leaders (Ekman & Linde 2010: 8, my emphasis).\(^4\)

\(^3\) An important text in this field is the anthology Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government by edited by Pippa Norris (1999). The book works in the skeptical spirit that infuses many of the texts in Sweden, viewing democracy (in 1999) neither as in a crisis, nor that “all’s alright with the world” (which is referred to as the “Panglossian view”). She calls the good middle ground between these “to steer between Scylla of crisis theories and the Charbybdis claiming that all’s alright with the world”) (Norris 1999: 2, 5). In the introduction, Norris formulates a similar view to the Swedish material; that if people are discontent with the performance of democratic government it might affect their democratic values and their belief in democracy itself, which will then affect the representatives negatively. However, more than in the Swedish material, Norris also mentions contributions in the anthology that emphasize the problem as not being the values of people, but rather that people with strong democratic values find the “structures of representative government…to be wanting” (4).

\(^4\) If one only expects that citizens will endure existing forms of democracy and existing affective subjectifications through which “democrats” have emerged in these forms – for
In the following, I will analyze two texts that echo the approach formulated by Ekman and Linde. I will concentrate on how they define the type of civic engagement that fits proper forms of participation - and the type that does not. The first, *Citizens on Duty* by Erik Amnå (2008), is a contribution to research on civic participation. The second, published in the anthology *Politik, Protest, Populism* by Amnå and Ekman (2010), is a continuation of the first, in that it present an exhaustive typology of civic engagement and participation (or the lack thereof).

Amnå (2008) localizes his contribution in recent survey research. He formulates his contribution as treating the trend towards the “individualization of politics” in a relatively “more nuanced”, less reactive and pessimistic way. Amnå uses the World Values Survey’s (WVS) systematic quantification of values to establish a narrative of enchained, seemingly necessary changes:

> the wealth of a country has step by step displaced values…post-materialism has changed people’s values and areas of interest, in particular for those born after WWII. In a post-material society the political questions tend less to concern class and more life politics… (Amnå 2008, 7–8).

The reference to “post-materialism” is taken from the WVS. It naturalizes shifts that are partly results of political changes and power relations. A genealogical approach would show how this notion became taken-for-

example the traditional civic associations – the risk is that one forecloses active ways in which new affective subjectifications, or “cultures”, could re-invent democracy. The account does not reflect an anti-affective or non-affective account, but one that articulates a different relation to the role of affects in politics and, doing so, operates its own version of affective politics (or micropolitics). This version is only tangible in the assumptions and between the lines: in the suspicion to those who use affects more deliberately to articulate politics, in the focus on “trust” as a main stake for and discourse of politics, and in the vigilance of the scientists in relation to the population (“we cannot close out eyes”). By marginalizing reasons for grievances and the need to also engage these affectively, these are cast as residing outside democracy. Following Connolly (2017), the risk with addressing and yet downplaying the affective dimension of political life is that you risk further insulating a segment of the population from politics, playing into the hands of those who know how to appreciate the affective dimension of politics.

5 Amnå was the head secretary of the Democracy Commission. Ekman has contributed with a volume on value-community and social cohesion to the Future Committee (2012) and has written on value-foundation in the context of school policy (Skolverket 2010) and, together with Jonas Linde, on democratization processes (Ekman & Linde 2006).
granted, promoting a certain view of political life. The author draws on the WVS, which uses tables and maps of “structures of values” to plot changing values as a scientific, objective, tangible process with clear-cut consequences for the world’s democracies. For Amnå, the reference to post-materialism underscores individualization as a specific challenge to democratic renewal in the Swedish population. The combined focus on “youth” and “individualization” frames a particularly worrying development for democracy, since youth, as we have seen above, is equated with “risk”. Endorsing an actuarial vision of politics that track risk-development over time, Amnå writes:

> It is not certain that the values of the youth remain the same later on … But if they do, not even the greatest optimist could exclude [the conclusion] that the recruitment problems of representative democracy would worsen. The comparison between citizens in different countries points out the Scandinavians as those who are going to expose their democracies to the toughest strain as a consequence of their individualist orientation. (Amnå 2008: 10, emphasis added).

However, Amnå does not fully commit to this account (using it only as a productive way to problematize the issue). Rather, he uses the account to show how engagement is necessary to participation. The text contributes to a general economy of engagement and its putative link to participation, in that it presents a less reactive account of democratic renewal in the population.

Nonetheless, the account continues to present individualization as problematic to the democratic order and to Amnå’s ideal (which is close to the DC’s, which in fact Amnå headed). For example, individualization is said to undermine the citizens’ dispositions to form a collective will and “subserve themselves to hierarchical, even representative structures”(10), producing a gap between the existing arrangements and the citizens. However, while thus framing the problem, Amnå re-evaluates how individualization and order might relate in a different dynamic. In doing so, he problematizes some the

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DC’s passive/active participatory distinctions. Sweden, in Amnå’s view, does not allow enough space for new forms of civil society, while older forms have become part of the state. Amnå here puts his finger on the reactive character of the existing efforts to secure a working democracy: “The Swedish democracy model has the forms and levels of engagement and participation that it itself has caused [som den själv har bäddat för]” (20).

To imagine how to increase individuals’ engagement/participation and responsibility and thus get them to channel their energies into renewing the existing order, Amnå develops the “engaged citizen” as a specific mode of civil-society subjectification (14). This image is reminiscent of several of the concepts already found within democracy policy – civic spirit, value-foundation, dynamic citizenship. Like these, the “engaged citizen” is at once individualized and order-oriented. S/he is infused by a specific ethos or “orientation”:

To be engaged in what happens in a society is to take one’s responsibility for the commonality [det gemensamma]. An engaged citizen weighs in other people’s situations and does not only think about what happens to herself. She softens her ego-centrism and watches over the commonality [Hon bevekar självupptagenheten och vakar över allmänningen] (Amnå 2008: 14).

Amnå finds several tendencies that complicate the DC’s distinction of active/passive citizens. He emphasizes the notion of civic engagement to nuance the image of participation and summarizes the findings in the following “actuarial” claims:

- The societal engagement has not been weakened.
- There is an “endurable” preparedness for an active political participation even among what seems to be apathetic citizens.
- The young movements display both similarities and differences with the older ones but they often display a more attractive offer of working forms by focusing on acute societal questions and larger possibilities for a variated participation in both time and space.
- Parties and other older movements view themselves as part of the state and not as part of the civic society.
- The organizations in the Swedish civic society are demanded but they have gone through major changes and become drawn into the state to such a degree that their democratic importance as autonomous projects of diversity and emancipation risk being reduced. (Amnå 2008: 13).

Amnå defines the broad mode of subjectivation of citizen engagement in terms of an ethos: “I consider the societal engagement simply as an orientation, an attitude, a feeling or an intellectual disposition that is directed towards the conditions of importance for citizens beyond the closest family and friend sphere” (19).
The quote assumes that ego-centrism (hinted at twice) is bad. Consequently, the intended subjectification is to re-direct individualization towards an (ethical) orientation to the needs of the commonality. Reflecting earlier strains in democracy policy, civic engagement is conceived in terms of a particular mode of subjectification, that both enables to eschew risks of a democracy with little engagement and low participation and render citizens into assets in an order that presupposes involvement and social capital:

On the societal level citizen engagement is precisely that which characterizes the particular political culture, the civic spirit, that is superior to other political cultures, because it permits the citizens to both be citizens and subjects [undersåtar]. They are citizens who are ready to be active in the public life based on their competence. They have trust in their own resources and in their possibilities to make themselves heard and believe that they can make a change. But they are also disposed to be loyal to the societal community and to follow the laws that have been passed by the state (26).

In this account, engagement as a type of subjectification and domain of governmental interventions offers more long-lasting effects than do efforts that merely target participation (as was done in the first bill of democracy policy). Amnå’s general economy of engagement is actuarial insofar as it understands engagement as similar to social capital – a “good” investment since it yields more profit over time. Electoral participation can also exist in authoritarian states. Engagement, by contrast, cannot be commanded: it is “anchored interiorly” [förankrat inå t]. Triggering rather than demanding subjectification of engagement (as is inherent in governmentality as opposed to blunt command), one can find more lasting ways of creating engaged citizens while avoiding the counter-productive distinction between active/passive citizens found (Amnå holds) in the DC.

If engagement is at stake, it is crucial to “find the drivers behind societal engagement” (15). In accordance with his actuarial desire to affect a process

9 With his actuarial account, Amnå directs his contribution to decision-makers, speaking of engagement as “a potential that the decision-makers must count on [kalkylera med] in terms of likelihoods and, above all, as an indication of a democratic political system… The level of engagement in a society appears as at least as interesting as indicator of strength as the political participation” (18). Echoing sources of inspiration, such as Almond & Verba (1962), Amnå however stresses that while there should be engagement, and it should be “lawful”, there should not be too much of it. The goal is a renewal of civil society to be at once autonomous and based on more individual engagement, more active than today and at the same time aligned to the needs of the representative democratic order.
of becoming, Amnå launches the concept of “latent participation”. This accounts for engagement’s potential to yield long-lasting participation:

The most important point with focusing on societal engagement as the overarching theme in this study is precisely because it addresses a general orientation and disposition that can vary over time, between citizens and between political questions. My attention is directed to the latent, that which is a preliminary stage to or a condition for more manifest and concrete action. Like being prepared to act in case something happens. To put it straightforwardly: without engagement no participation, at least not voluntary. But also: without any direct reason to act, no participation. Engagement is hence a necessary but not sufficient factor for concrete participation. In addition to it a number of individual, organizational and structural conditions are needed that can trigger an action (16).

The focus on likelihood and resilience, “as an indication of a democratic political system” (18), provides – at least in theory – possible ways the government can monitor and control individual and collective conduct. For instance, Amnå directs his contribution to decision-makers, speaking of engagement as:

a potential that the decision-makers must count on [kalkylera med] in terms of likelihoods and, above all, as an indication of a democratic political system… The level of engagement in a society appears at least as interesting as indicator of strength as political participation (18).

Amnå’s effort to align civic engagement with democratic order can be traced, further, in how he designed his interviews so as to support the subjectification of engagement. In these interviews, social life is distributed into “spheres of engagement” that already fit the requirements of the representative system and in which different resources are accumulated that affect civic input into the representative order (39). Amnå effectively fits the citizen and the democratic order by asking the political parties how they view the citizens’ engagement, by mapping concrete action according to familiar categorizations of how an action is recognized as civic engagement, and by searching for the impetus for such engagement as well as studying it is organized from below and from above. This fit is reinforced through a table

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10 These are: the personal sphere, the civil sphere, the market sphere, the public sphere and the life-political sphere (Amnå 2008: 39).
which aligns societal engagement as an empirical category with the social properties of society, state, organizations (new vs. old) and the citizens and their actions. This fit defines “citizen resources” as physical, human, social and cultural capital. Citizens’ motivations are listed as duty, importance, capacity, demand, efficiency and meaningfulness. It thereby reflects an ideal of an overlap between state, civil society and individuals that infuses an affective economy of capitals, will to engage, etc. that indirectly marginalize or overshadows the existing or fruitfulness of intervals or gaps between these.

A later text by Amnå, co-written with Joakim Ekman, further developed his reflections on a general economy of civic engagement by adding forms of dissent. I will now turn to that contribution, examining how it formulated additional ways of inducing civic engagement by the way it policed deviations from (what was conceived as) a proper, civic way of being and acting, in accordance with the requirements of a particular type of representative democratic order.

In *Politik, Populism, Protest* (Amnå & Ekman ed., 2010), the authors craft a typology meant to give “the complete picture” of societal engagement. Here, the authors take Amnå’s idea of “latent participation” as starting point, but add dissent and other actions that extend Amnå’s focus on societal engagement. Building on Amnå’s objection to the DC’s blunt passive/active distinction and in order to develop the vision of engagement as a form of capital more likely to induce participation, the authors write that “it could well be the case that established democracies do not at all need to have high levels of manifest political participation the whole time”. This also constitutes an objection to the assumption of a “crisis of democracy”. Continuing their actuarial analysis and less reactive focus, the authors view engagement as a “reservoir” for future participation rather than simply something one can scan in the present. “Citizens of all ages do a lot that cannot directly be called ‘political participation’ but that can still be very important for future participation” (35). They add:

Today there are many alternatives for the person who wants to feel that s/he ‘does something’ to change the world. One can be politically conscious or engaged in many ways. It is far from certain that what happens in relation to the political parties or the conventional channels for a political engagement is the most relevant study object. Maybe it is even so that we in the ‘non-political’ societal engagement have a form of reservoir of participation, and that all talk of the ‘crisis of democracy’ is perhaps blatantly exaggerated (38, emphasis added).
The non-political but engaged and active population is a reservoir with “resilience” in continuous latent participation (51). However, this account is still set in a study that seeks to evaluate and track the state of democracy over time, which is why it is important to make clear “what it is that decreases, changes or needs to be aimed at” (40). It is a matter of improving the assessment of risks, stability and possible profit over time. This re-arranged vision of how engagement and participation relate allows the authors to construct a spectrum in which some forms of non-participation can be grasped as “latent participation”. This inclusion is illustrated by a typology, or table, that arranges and illustrates the “complete picture” of this general economy of engagement (36).

Ekman later applies this reasoning in the school context, where he stresses the “latent”-approach to highlight that even if pupils (future citizens) are not always participating (or visibly participating), the school still shapes a capacity and preparedness in the pupils to engage themselves at some later point (Ekman 2012: 142).
Table 1. Table on latent and manifest political participation, (Ekman & Amnå 2010: 36)

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<th>Civil participation (latent political participation)</th>
<th>Manifest political participation</th>
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<td><strong>Involvement (attention)</strong></td>
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**Individual forms**

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This table seeks to produce forms of congruence between ways of being and how they promote or fit into a particular order. This reflects the authors’ repeated formulation of what participation can be in this or that slot. The endeavor to form a “complete picture” means that the focus on what one “can” do in a certain slot returns twice (41, 42). As a form of policing, the table transforms these modes of acting and being into requirements of the democratic order, first of all by rendering proper and instrumental actions and ways of being. As a way of arranging things, thus, a typology is not an order as such, but an ordering. In Rancière’s terms, the typology reproduced
above produces surfaces in which some activities and events are recognizable as political or not political, some places and times are configured as places in which politics take place, etc. As mentioned earlier, the general economy of engagement views these actions in terms of their input, i.e. in terms of how much or in what way each slot “works” for the overall goal of high participation. As a practice of arrangement, the typology aligns civic life, even in its “negative” forms, to be included in the police as “parts and forms of action of the policing apparatus” (Rancière 1999: 72). Through its endeavor to provide a complete picture, it closes out anything coming from the outside. It thus operates what Rancière calls an eradication of dissensus, reminiscent of his example of how the forerunner to social science, “political philosophy”, eradicates dissensus by identifying politics with the police order and its allocation of shares and parts (Rancière 1999: 63).

When looking at the typology, the first things to note is the binary structure that informs it: either/or engagement/involvement, manifest/latent, legal/illegal, formal/activist and individual/collective. While the typology clearly offers an alternative to the DC’s active/passive (which had rendered societal engagement invisible), and, hence, is called “optimistic” (Ekman 2012), it still reproduces a binary logic albeit in a number of different fields. As in Amnå’s *Citizens on Duty*, the typology counts political participation as a deduction from the given forms of participation organized by the political order. It is described as “direct” and “rational”, something possible to observe and to measure; it concerns “ordinary, individual citizens’ wish to affect the form of the politics in a society, the outcomes, the decisions on common matters” (40). It ranges voting and abstention, and is, hence, strictly aligned to forms of influence and participation and the temporalities organized by representative democracy. The collective form of political participation is described in terms of “membership” in contrast to non-governmental, “activist” participation. The distinction between legal and illegal activism is motivated as a scientific argument, an “analytical distinction”. As I will argue below, this policing of legal/illegal not only equates law with what is right and law-breaking with what is wrong, but also blurs nuances between different types of unlawful behavior and lawful ways of acting in political modes.

The “analytical distinction” between legal/illegal reflects a politics of affects that is inherent to the crafting of the typology. This is evident in the designation of evidently “illegitimate” modes of acting and being in light of a specific frame of interpretation. For example, the categorization of “unconventional” political activity is an articulation of a specific way of linking
affect with political rationality. The use of words like “conventional/ unconventional”, “naturally” and “quite intuitively” operate as a frame of interpretation that consensualizes the meaning of the actions described, as well as concepts such as citizenship, social life, civic action, community and democracy. Similarly, activism is framed in the text by referring to the “media image” of activists, assuming that this image is familiar to the reader: the cliché of a masked activist who “unprovokedly” throws stones at the police, who in turn retaliate with “excessive violence”, an image which is then said to be “partly true”. The comment on its meaning effectively closes the open-endedness or gap between the image and its meaning, which then becomes consensualized. According to Rancière, media and this type of policing share the operation of consensualization that distances people from appropriating and using the open-endedness of images and meanings in an autodidactic fashion (Rancière 2012). This shared consensualization is further reinforced by the fact that the so-called “media image” appears on the front cover of the anthology Politik, Protest, Populism itself, showing that it is much more than a mere media image.

The typology reveals that involvement is another important form of capital, or “resource”, through which engagement is grasped. Just as violence is homogenized in the efforts to counter extremism, so also does “involvement”, as the typology renders it, produce an equivalency in which vegans, punks with left-radical leanings, animal rights and anti-sexism activists and skinhead gangs of “right-radical profile” end up in the same category (53). The authors comment on this by saying that the distinction is sometimes

12 This affective politics does however not lack nuances. Politically the authors seem to opt for a more plural way of understanding civic activity. For example, the authors distance themselves from a simple image of a more legitimate form of participation (membership, participation), but also from activism. However, due to the limitations of the rigid scientific approach (which imposes interdictions and restraints on explicitly articulating the scholar’s own affective stance), the affective politics ends up in a fashion that produce a strict hierarchy between forms of activity in relation to how they give input to the representative democracy. The outcome is a narrow path of at once being open to and curious about forms of engagement, but only insofar as this engagement can be articulated (policed) so as to serve the existing forms representative democracy.

13 The same writing style is used in Ekman’s text for the Future Committee report (Ekman 2012). Considering the fact that these words are not necessary to the analytical statements, a count of them can reveal an important insight to their “material” significance as rhetorical elements in the articulation of a certain affective position and necessity-infusing writing style. In that text (approximately 135 pages long) a count yields the following: quite generally (rent allmänt) 5, in general (i allmänhet) 13, quite generally (rent generellt) 7, generally (generellt) 12, naturally (naturligtvis) 12, conventional (konventionell) 18, often (ofta) 16, usually (vanligtvis) 5, classical (klassisk) 5.
hard to draw and that some groups have very little in common (ibid.). Even if the typology is supposed to be neutral with regards to the general economy of involvement presented, both non-formal participation and unlawful actions are rendered deviant and morally policed by comments that seek to fix the meaning of some of these actions. For example, commenting on the “delict” of civic disobedience that does not involve violence, the authors state:

*It is not permitted* to break into Saab Bofors Dynamics weapon factory in Eskilstuna and “disarm” some rocket launchers by hammering on them. One can think that such actions are morally understandable protests and one can point out that no violence against people occurs or is intended in such contexts, *but it is nonetheless criminal behavior* (43, emphasis added).

The light ridicule cast on the motives of activists in question (“disarm”, “hammering”) plays on an affective register meant to render the act less intelligible. The reference to the law consensualizes the act not as political or open-ended, but wrong and criminal. It is, at best, “morally understandable”, i.e. not political, a formulation that silences further objections and alludes to some form of fear or restraint. Like the media image postulated above, the quote stages a particular scene of familiar tropes that produce a consensualized fit. This is done by directing one’s attention to an immediately recognizable trope and its meaning. The arrangement of the typology and its narrowing of the open-ended meaning of these actions reduce or squeeze out doubt as to how to interpret unlawful actions: they are all rendered wrong and deviant. The pressure to close the gaps of open-ended givens in fact limits the authors themselves, who probably endorse some of the political ideals some activists embrace. For example, they do not reject civil disobedience even if they seek to distance themselves from its ethical gray zones. But the authors’ political convictions must give way to the typology and its police logic. This logic, configured by consensus, imposes interdictions and (possibly) a more conformist ideal than would otherwise be the case.

When the authors discuss non-participation, they focus on “active non-participation”. Whereas passive non-participation is apolitical and reflects a lack of interest and time (55), active non-participation is a *choice* (and thus, it seems, morally questionable). In an endeavor to produce a correspondence

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14 This is also reflected in an example of a “respectable doctor” who helps “illegal immigrants” as an example to show how even such a person could break the law (assumed to be wrong in itself).
between activities and how to understand them, they define “anti-political non-participation” as when, for instance, people “demonstratively change the channel on the TV when politics is on” or choose consciously to not vote, or when someone “gets angry just because someone else starts talking about politics” (55). Again, the examples presuppose that the gap between appearance and meaning is patched over; the fit is established beforehand. Another example of “anti-political non-participation” is the clichéd and yet specific example of youth in suburbs burning cars and throwing rocks at the police and ambulances/fire fighters (55). In light of a preestablished fit, such acts of “anti-political non-participation” are rendered into an undesired and partly unintelligible mode of acting and being, seemingly out of the reach of the dominant circuits through which citizens become engaged. However, this is nuanced through references to “powerlessness and social exclusion”, opening for a more sympathetic way of interpreting these phenomena.15

From this discussion of an economy of engagement and involvement and a fairly hopeful outlook on the possibilities of creating “resilience” and continued participation, I will now turn to “perceptions of reality”. The study of these perceptions constitute a vigilant position of risk-management vis-à-vis groups that are assumed to be outside the reach of those beneficent circuits that secure democratic involvement as well as an affectively balanced constitution of trust and reason.

**Perceptions of reality and the state of exclusion**

In the annual SOM-publication of 2015, *Fragment* (a title that refers to the “fragmentation” of the social field), two texts discuss the population’s “perceptions of reality” and the thresholds at which these perceptions correspond or do not correspond to the requirements of a working democracy (Nordin & Oscarsson 2015, Strömbäck 2015). The authors conduct survey research to try to determine the correlation between the spread of more or less diverse media consumption habits, on the one hand, and variations in conceptions of reality over time, on the other, in surveys done mainly

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15 The articulation of affectively “deviant” reactions without engaging the grievances that animate some of the examples further alienate the authors the conditions that feed these reactions. The almost too sure way of recognizing affectively deviant behavior, reflects a vision in which “correcting” this behavior is assumed to actually change it. This risks missing more fruitful ways in which to engage an increasingly affectively “sour” segment of the population.
between the late 1990s and the years 2012–2015. I will focus on the contribution by the second text, by Strömbäck, but will first discuss the claims advanced by this type of research in a short account of the first text, *Verklighetens folk* (Nordin & Oscarsson 2015).

In *Verklighetens folk* Nordin & Oscarsson stress the importance of their research in shedding light on how “perceptions of reality” are founded. This is articulated against the background assumption that variations in perceptions of reality reflect an increasing polarization, “which means how large the variations are in perceptions of different societal circumstances” (185). This, in turn, increases the risk of conflicts.16 The inquiry also intends to assess “how correct people’s understandings of reality are” (185–186). The text concentrates on how perceptions of reality are founded and whether there is an increasing variation in perceptions of reality over time (as in Oscarsson’s 2003 text, presented above, the quote by Berelson on the “political theory of democracy” is used in the preamble as a way of framing the text). The authors point out that they assume that perceptions of reality are going to be more “straggly” due to individualization (186). By the end of the study, however, this is shown not to be the case (193). This does not mean that the authors reject the approach and the assumptions underpinning it. Instead, the supposed risk of more straggly perceptions of reality infuses the article as a whole. It reinforces the normative, scientific and political assumption that one ought to monitor the formation of perceptions of reality, and that these ought to be fairly coherent and correspond to the requirements of a particular representative political order. This reflects a form of containment and an ideal of correspondence whose primary orientation is on how a system can or should work. It thus creates a reactive relation to change and novelty that shifts focus away from, for example, the active formation of perceptions of reality as a democratic stake.

In the same anthology, *Social sammanhållning och mediaanvändning*, media scholar Jesper Strömbäck contributes a regression analysis that links new media consumption habits to “social cohesion”. He assumes that processes of change put stress on social cohesion.17 He links these two domains

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16 While it is obvious that the authors are wary about conflicts, it is not clear if a total lack of polarization is something that they opt for. They mention for example that “Where there are different understandings about things or about causalities there is also space to form opinion and politicize differences of opinion” (Nordin & Oscarsson 2015: 185).

17 Strömbäck however only shows that there are fears that social cohesion “is on the verge of weakening”:
by creating links of possible correspondence between them. In order to break
down the concept of social cohesion into something useful for political and
scientific strategies, Strömbäck distinguishes between “objective” and
“subjective” definitions of conditions for social cohesion. The “objective”
conditions are “various objectively existing dividing lines between groups in
society”, for example income inequalities. Objective thus denotes material
and concrete variations rather than inalterable differences. “Subjective”
conditions are the ways in which “those differences that exist are experi-
cenced” (Strömbäck 2015: 63), an affective-perceptual “variable”. The
analytical task is to find a correspondence between these two variables upon
which a generalization and perhaps a causal relation can be built.

By focusing on these factors, the reality of social cohesion is already made
present. The task becomes to account for the dynamic that characterizes it.
This privileges the assessment of the affective dimension of “subjective social
cohesion”. As in Verklighetens folk, here also the focus is on people’s
perceptions. This focus makes it possible to know something about the
relation between media consumption and social cohesion. It may also
contribute knowledge on how one can act upon these perceptions. Reflecting
a logic of what Foucault terms security, the measure monitors that people
have a sufficient feeling of belonging and community (gemenskap) with
others despite prevailing differences. Social cohesion thus becomes a name
for the acceptable span and nature of inequalities within a functioning
society. It presupposes that citizens are affectively constituted so as to react
to and perceive differences in a certain way. Strömbäck, however, adds to

In light of among other things the globalization, the individualization and the
rising migration there have been new fears that the social cohesion is on the verge
of weakening. That the Social Democrats before the elections of 2014 repeated
that ‘something is about to break’ in Sweden can be seen as an indication of that,
as when the first budget of the Red-Green [Social Democrats-Greens]
government was called “A Sweden that sticks together”. Internationally, several
governments and policy organizations like the World Bank have taken the
initiative to inquire into and strengthen the social cohesion. (Strömbäck 2015a:
63, emphasis added)

The quote indicates these fears, but perhaps even more a general growth in the discourse
on social cohesion. The quote is however problematic since this growth could possibly be
tied to Strömbäck himself and his influence in for example the Future Committee (2013).
Strömbäck was the head of the Future Committee, which made “social cohesion” into a
main focus in analyzing processes of change. Strömbäck has also written numerous
reports in which the concept is central. For example he was the head of the commission
report Om Sverige i framtiden – en antologi om digitaliseringens möjigheter (SOU
2015:65).
concrete differences the assumption that Sweden has become increasingly heterogeneous. This, he writes, is an additional challenge to social cohesion.\textsuperscript{18} These various challenges make perceptions of reality a crucial question. Since the material, objectified differences are assumed to be inalterable – Strömbäck never discusses radical measures against inequalities – the only thing to do is to monitor that segment of the population that has become “low-trusting”. This population segment is characterized by what Strömbäck calls a “perceptual state of exclusion”. It is however not clear how attention to such a segment will contribute to social cohesion. It seems as if identifying a problem/danger is a preventive measure in itself.

The inventive contribution here is the construction of a specifically risky segment of the population that acts as a brake to the congruence and flow of social cohesion. Instead of pointing to grievances shared by these different people, Strömbäck describes them simply as “low-trusting”: the young, those with low education and low income, rural citizens and/or citizens of other countries as well as all “sympathizers with the Sweden Democrats” (70). They supposedly share a particular affective constitution, being people who “perceive” – “feel, think and experience” – that they neither belong or are needed (ibid.). The questionnaire, which charts people’s ways of partaking along the lines of “belonging” and feeling needed, is thus a way of arranging and counting ways one can or cannot partake that necessarily produces this positive/negative spectrum. Like “exclusion”, or since it is a form of exclusion, it presupposes inclusion, which renders unbelongingness into a state of lack while being “inside”. The task of the scientific operation of regression analysis is to verify and construct this “group”.\textsuperscript{19}

Strömbäck’s assumption that different types of media consumption corresponds to different groups and their affective constitution is not

\textsuperscript{18} “Difference” is constructed as “objective” and not as something that as such must be seen as constructed. Thus, whereas the subjective social cohesion can fluctuate, heterogeneity is given, making the “quantity” of heterogeneity problematic. It is the problematic character of this irreducible difference that makes subjective social cohesion strategic to his analysis, since it can indicate how a combination between perceptions and “objective” difference can cohere or not. Since, in Strömbäck’s view, both inequalities and “differences” are going to are irreducible, the ethical glue of belonging, feeling and perceptions become crucial to bridge these these “differences”.

\textsuperscript{19} Here, there are several technical procedures that I will bracket. In short, Strömbäck verifies the so-called “perceptual state of exclusion” by constructing another measure, of experienced belonging with other groups along a “belonging index”, and an “exclusion index”, to definitively conclude that “there is a group of people in Sweden in perceptual state of exclusion” (Strömbäck 2015: 70).
confirmed by the inquiry results. These show only that those who avoid news media altogether are to a higher degree in a so-called “perceptual state of exclusion” (which is tautological, given that the criteria of not being in “perceptual state of exclusion” is to consume media). This does not lead Strömbäck to reject his initial assumptions. He writes: “The medias and media consumption could affect subjective social cohesion in many ways. By being exposed to the same or similar medias and media content common frames of references can be formed” (70, emphasis added). Again, this assumption is not confirmed by the text’s regression analysis. And conversely, Strömbäck continues, “fragmented media consumption can contribute to weakened social cohesion” (ibid.).20 The assumed correspondence and problematization thus precede any observation. Participation based on citizens’ alternatives to standard media consumption, i.e. creating a whole picture by learning, belonging and appropriating in improper and autodidactic ways, is precluded. Nonetheless, the conclusion is not unwelcome to someone like Strömbäck. The final view is less rigid and more hopeless than that obtained by a strict correlation between media consumption and perceptions of reality. Thus, the approach harbors a tension, since, for the benefit of scientific monitoring, it produces a reactive correspondence that is lacking rather than seeking to expand the improper and possibly messy reasons that resist any strict correlation.

In the ensuing process of trying to measure a “perceptual state of exclusion” through a survey arranged along an index of belonging and exclusion, Strömbäck constructs a correspondence between different groups and different perceptions of reality, i.e. a form of policing of the correspondence of a position with a certain form of perception. I will bracket this routine procedure for the operationalization of survey research that singles out cut-cut differences between groups even as Strömbäck speaks of identities as “multidimensional”.21 Concerning this categorization and the survey that confirms it, as a confirmation of a specific mode of evaluating and reproducing difference, Strömbäck comments:

The results show that the degree of belonging [felt] with people who differ from how one is oneself [hur man själv är], varies between groups among

20 The claims and the assumptions thus seem to stand on their own, and impose themselves through the discursive scientific practices and their materiality in the text. This, despite the fact that they were not confirmed by the scientific inquiry.
21 Strömbäck for example states that, “People [Människor] and their identities are multidimensional and each individual generally has a number of different identities, more or less central for ones own self-understanding (den egna jag-uppfattningen)” (63).
those who responded. For example, men feel less belonging than women, older less belonging than younger, lower educated less belonging than highly educated while low-income people feel less belonging than high-income ones. In the same way, those who are citizens of another country feel less belonging than those who are born in Sweden, those who live in the pure countryside or smaller towns less than anyone in the three larger cities of Sweden. When it comes to party preference it is clear that Sweden Democrats feel less belonging than people that differ from how they are, while the opposite is the case with in particular the Greens and the Left Party. (70, emphasis added)

The construction of a category of “how one is oneself” (necessary for any “operationalization” to be possible) operates within the police logic of identifying bodies by their name (“leftist”, “woman”, “immigrant”, “worker”, etc.), and a consensualization of that category in which one becomes conflated to “oneself” (men are men, women are women, etc.). For the sake of operational categories, the possibility of contradictory or open-ended elements of oneself as a multiplicity, are thereby squeezed out.22

From mapping how the constructed groups relate to others, the aim shifts to constructing a segment of the population that is in a “perceptual state of exclusion”.23 At the end of the article these are said to constitute 20% of the respondents. What has one learned from this result? Since there is no comparison available, one cannot know if this is a higher or a lower “perceptual state of exclusion” than usual, or if the variation between groups has improved or worsened (perhaps these numbers have always been like this). Against the consensual assumption of inclusion, however, 20% “deviance” is assumed to show a deterioration of, in particular, the “Nordic model” that presupposes a high degree of inclusion (76–77). Thus, the construction of a “perceptual state of exclusion” is, whether it can be confirmed or not, the construction of a tangible problem.

In the next move in this construction of processes, Strömbäck (as hinted above) links “perceptual state of exclusion” to media consumption. Media consumption is assumed to affect how “people view those groups of people of whom one does not have any major direct experience” (71). The inquiry

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22 “Heterogeneity”, in this view, for example does not refer to differences that cross subjects in uninvited and unconscious ways, but on the contrary operates as a category to re-inforce clear-cut, reified differences, identities and groups.

23 A “state of exclusion” that, as he adds, must be also be bigger than the actual survey displays, since “those people” are less prone to participate in surveys.
now centers on the relation between the degree of one’s “belonging” and the number of times one consumes a specific media type. The informal and anonymous web discussion forum Flashback gives the lowest results. But even so, the study does not yield the clear cut results that Strömbäck presupposed when categorizing different media. Strömbäck concludes that the relationship between media consumption, a perceptual state of exclusion and the sense of belonging to “groups that are different from you” is “complex” (76). When these results are put through a regression analysis that brings the older categorizations back into play (sex, income, etc.), there is a similar lack of clear correlation.

In the end, Strömbäck returns to the distinction between objective and subjective social cohesion to explain his finding 20% of the respondents in a “perceptual state of exclusion”. Since these respondents are generally from what could be termed the lower classes, Strömbäck concludes that people with “fewer resources” are over-represented among the 20%. The problem with this conclusion is that a “sense of belonging” could be interpreted as a material condition. If so, the findings merely confirm the categories that were selected (they become tautological). Put differently, the fact that people who are worse off feel bad about it and people who are not doing badly feel quite alright about it does not strike the reader as a complex mystery.

As mentioned above, the hypothesis of a correlation between media consumption and social cohesion was antecedent to the results and is unaffected by them. Despite this, Strömbäck concludes that “a continued fragmentation of media consumption…can have negative consequences for subjective social cohesion” (77, emphasis added). The verification of an alignment of perceptions of reality, media consumption and social cohesion reflects a normative vision of a social order characterized by proper relations between media consumption and perceptions of reality, possibly inherent to and produced by the notion of “social cohesion” itself. (This is similar to how Durkheim and other sociologists viewed their task as re-creating a social

24 The media study is questionable from viewpoint of the way the selection of media sources is done. Established newspaper are put side by side with Flashback. The way in which Flashback is put side by side with the largest news papers in Sweden and turns out to yield the lowest results in terms of belonging reveals the trope-like selection of medias and their assumed consumers, also reflected in the construction of difference above as a way of confirming a notion (inherent to policing/consensualization) in which people are assumed to remain true to “who they are”.

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Rendering heterogeneity, culture and “population composition” into problems at the expense of a community of multiple connections

To end this account of the construction of difference and perceptions of reality as essential to social cohesion, I turn to the final text, The future and the basic values of the society (2012) by Ekman. The text, a single independent publication of the government’s Future Committee, discusses how “heterogeneity” and markers such as “ethnicity” and “culture” are equated with challenges for a working democracy and society. Its contribution is to focus on the relation between “cultural diversity” and the “population’s composition” as a strategic domain, necessary to understand possible conditions of democratic renewal within the population and, in particular, the value-community that supposedly characterizes – or should characterize – Swedish democracy. In Ekman’s words, “The possibly greatest challenge for the future is to handle social diversity” (Ekman 2012: 144).

25 In a different report, Strömbäck develops these assumptions with reference to the sociologist Simmel and his assumptions on “how the democratic society is possible”:

For a democratic society to work some form of social cohesion that rest on a voluntary foundation is needed. It is needed for there to be something that ties together people who do not have any direct relations and who might never meet, for people to be able to cooperate and reach common goals, for people to feel that they are part of a greater totality than themselves, and for the democratic processes and democratically taken decisions to be perceived as legitimate. That in turn is related to the will to pay taxes, to obey laws and rules and for people to accept a welfare-state that redistributes resources … The question of the nature of the social cohesion – or, to paraphrase Simmel, how the democratic society is possible – is thus central to analyze the democratic societal development. This is not least the case in times of large and transformative [omvälvande] societal changes like the period in which we live today (Strömbäck in SOU 2015:65: 341–3 42, emphasis added).

The quote reflects how the notion of social cohesion produces an invisible “glue” that is casted as the necessary condition per se for democracy to be possible – as well as for many other things. Reflecting this policing operation, it produces an account of a proper alignment between parts in the society, ways of feeling belonging, learning and having part.

26 The report is viewed as a social scientific text and is framed as not being official, i.e. it is not a commission report.
states that diversity should not be viewed in terms of being good or bad, but that it should raise the question of how “we, in the future, practically combine diversity with a common value-foundation…We must be prepared to handle value conflicts in society” (144). Instead of remaining insecure about how to handle value-conflicts, Ekman claims that being heads-on in these matters is to “stand up for a democratic political system and a society that protects everyone’s freedoms and rights” (145). Based on an understanding of democracy as a given system and culture that does not allow for plural connections across identity and difference, the problem is framed as:

Swedish society has in a relatively short time been transformed into a society with ethnic and cultural diversity. The amount of citizens with roots outside of Sweden has risen considerably in the latest decades. Diversified societies are as such not necessarily problematic but can also be quite dynamic [väl så dynamiska]. At the same time there are a number of empirical studies from the last years that [show that] it can, in societies that are characterized by ethnic heterogeneity and large income inequalities, be difficult to foster inter-human trust. (Ekman 2012, 12, emphasis added.)

In the sections following this quote, the “amount” of foreign born people and their effect on the “population composition” are foregrounded, whereas “large income inequalities” are omitted. The account presupposes a police identification of bodies by their name – their culture, skin color, religion, “ethnicity”, accent, etc. – and that everyone remains true to this identification. Under such conditions, the question becomes: “More generally one can pose the question if cultural diversity and societal community [sammhällsgemenskap] are compatible” (12). Ekman’s answer seems to be that they are compatible, but only if there is a “common value-foundation”, i.e. a specific lubricating hub that allows for connections across identity and difference:

Can we have a society in which people feel strongly bound to a certain culture and at the same time are expected to have part in a society that is characterized by cultural diversity? Is it in that case necessary for members of society to share a common value-foundation? (ibid.)

The common value-foundation cited here is the condition or glue that makes it possible for a diverse society to “work”. The question of whether one can have a society with large inequalities is lost from view, overshadowed by the
looming problems of disparate cultures and values. Again, as with Strömbäck, the relation between what is desirable – the above-mentioned plural hub, or standard, of common value-foundation for a culturally diverse society – and the way one formulates how to achieve the desirable, inhibit one another. The result is a reactive vision in which “culture” becomes an inescapable and static element. This is an alternative to focusing on progressive modes of being together and sharing that are not marked out by molar concepts and supersedes or transforms frictions related to differences. This reactive vision is summarized in the focus on the “population’s composition”. The population’s changed composition needs to be handled, Ekman argues, by fighting discrimination, by supporting tolerance and by making “Swedes in general…accept a new reality” (12). However, he also stresses the need to be:

clear about rights and duties in relation to newly arrived [nyanlända] citizens. Swedish society builds on certain clearly stated norms and values, and “integration” is not only about increasing tolerance in the society among people with Swedish family background but also to make clear demands on people who settle in Sweden. We cannot accept values that are against the text of the constitution on sex, sexual preference or religious affiliation. We cannot accept that freedom of speech and the press are set aside when for example some groups demand the censure of art works, even if these works of art could be seen as religious provocations. We have to safeguard [värna] democracy at the same time as we maintain respect for cultural differences (12).

These comments, which associate democratic norms with Swedish culture and characterize that which threatens them as coming from outside, allow Ekman to pose the rhetorical question of whether a “certain degree of homogeneity” – a “value-foundation”, something shared to which one responds – is needed for democracy to work. 27 The problem with the above quote is that it seems to presuppose that this “homogeneity” of common approaches, and its ensuing flow, is lacking (a claim that dovetails with right-extreme parties’ claims, even if they understand homogeneity differently). Rather than maximizing that which is shared, the quote demonstrates a reactive notion of a need for adaptation. It also intensifies the assumption

that people need to be coordinated according to explicit, set standards upon which behavior and involvement can be judged (more than is already the case).

Conclusions

This chapter mapped six inventive practices of arrangement in Swedish survey research texts and closely related approaches. In 2003–2015, these formulated and responded to urges to secure a working democracy. I have shown how the texts sought to contain possible or potential effects of change and discontinuity. They did so by producing different systems of congruence and fits between civic ways of acting and being, and the assumed requirements of a “working democracy”. The contributions ranged from developing an actuarial understanding of a general economy of engagement and involvement, to “democratic benchmarking”, the production of a typology of the complete picture of participation and the consolidation of links between perceptions of reality and polarization on the one hand, and perceptions of reality, media consumption and social cohesion on the other.

The chapter highlighted these contributions’ normative and political assumptions. These are discussed in terms of their commitment to consensualizing the meaning of an appearance or behavior, on one side, and the links between changes in the population and societal requirements on the other. Part of the politics inherent to these contributions was to squeeze out improper and disruptive modes of democratic being and acting, perhaps most importantly by seeking to control surprise and discontinuity.

To end, I want to dwell on the scientific procedures that produced realities, links and a certain enchantment of processes even as their own scientific results showed that there were no such links. The intricate preoccupation with meaning, connections and results that were antecedent to the actual verifications in Nordin & Oscarsson’s text on the relation between individualization and perceptions of reality, and in Strömbäck’s assumption of a correlation between media consumption, perceptions of reality and social cohesion, as well as in the construction of a population segment in a “perceptual state of exclusion”, reveal what Rancière would call a form of fictionalization.

Fiction, for Rancière, is not the invention of imaginary beings, but rather a structure of rationality at stake when one has to produce a meaning to reality; a certain framework through which things, subjects and events can be identified as belonging to a common world that determines how they
coexist and succeed, and the causal links that animate them (Rancière 2017: 14). The way in which assumptions of connections remained even when scientific operations proved them wrong illustrates how the structure or framework of rationality allows certain concepts – perceptions of reality, individualization, culture, heterogeneity, social cohesion, media consumption – to already weave the sense of reality of the present moment. They associate certain segments of the population and democracy with attributes and consequences: a fragmented and polarized society, people out of reach of the good circuits and habits of a working democracy, a democracy that will not be renewed, etc. I noted how this fictionalization to make sense of reality produces a reactive outlook on change and discontinuity that overshadows active ways of sharing, learning and renewing democracy or community. It also overshadows possible reasons why there were no clear correlations between media habits and perceptions of reality. This structure of rationality, from the viewpoint of how it dictated clear-cut processes and conditions, identified dangers, and established loyalty to clear-cut distinctions of either/or and proper ways of political acting and being, seemed to inhibit the scholars from re-thinking the possibilities and limits of their approaches both normatively and politically. One might further investigate why some of the assumed, somewhat pessimistic links between (for example) perceptions of reality and polarization were not confirmed. If this were done, or the text did not a priori frame how one should feel about civic disobedience, discontinuity, difference and multiplicity, one might see these not only as dangers, but also as conditions for communal and democratic renewal (of a different kind). Instead of starting with an identification of dangers, such approaches would point to ways to transform and renew – showing how plural learnings, sharings and ways of acting come about.28

28 I do concede that this to some degree is Amnå & Ekman’s ambition.
CHAPTER NINE

A map of mobile efforts to secure a working democracy

This final chapter is divided into two parts. First, I briefly summarize the formulation of the problem, aims and the approach developed in chapters two to four. I then summarize and develop what type of displacement that the genealogies in chapters five to eight amounted to and the politics that they enabled to analyze and discuss. Finally, I return to the approach itself, discussing its limitations and benefits and the ways in which it could be used and developed further in other, similar studies.

Why democracy policy? A summary of the problem’s formulation and the approach to mapping practices of arrangement

In chapter two, I argued that the attempts to secure a working democracy in governmental reports and social scientific writings could fruitfully – and critically – be studied from the viewpoint of how they constituted a particular domain of problems for different types of government interventions. This argument was developed by highlighting the ways the documents identified the problem: there was, supposedly, an emerging gap between the population and the existing forms of democratic involvement. Reflecting the formulation of the thesis’ problem, I then set out to construct genealogies to investigate the responses and coherent, given blocs – the universals, discourses and overall political efforts to secure a working democracy – why they emerged and what politics they constituted.

Following the problem’s formulation, the aim of the dissertation was to reveal the power relations and normative and political assumptions, as well as the characteristics of the politics inherent to those responses. More specifically, I sought to reveal how these efforts affected the construction of concepts of democratic involvement and participation, the nature of democratic renewal and of what hinders or helps either. I also sought to discuss how an increasingly risk-oriented understanding of democracy affected visions of how democracy is made and re-made. Further, this understanding
affected how the reports and bills I analyzed related to the population and in particular to marginalized or poorly involved groups. I further discussed alternative ways of relating to democratic renewal, ways of learning, sharing and being that were obviated by the texts’ vision of democracy and politics and the discourses and domains that they used. I meant to complicate the texts’ anticipative and risk-oriented mode of understanding politics and the imperative to secure a “working democracy” and working social relations. This was in order to open a space to re-think what contestation or democratic renewal could mean in the context of a politics that aligned and developed requirements of a representative democratic order to the imperatives of circulation.

The problem’s formulation and the aims were reflected in the research questions:

*When, where and how are urges to secure a “working democracy” formulated and responded to, and when and how did democracy policy emerge as an organizing framework to define and secure a working democracy and how has it become re-formulated? Through which arrangements is a “working democracy” made graspable and possible to secure – what discourses, approaches and arrangements articulate, and are articulated through, and themselves articulate, urges to secure working social relations and a working democracy? What modes of reflection and recurrent rationalities are shared between the different ways of formulating and responding to urges to secure a “working democracy”? What normative assumptions and politics are inherent to and constituted by the efforts to formulate urges to secure a working democracy and to respond to them?*

In the third chapter, I developed a theoretical framework through a reading of, among others, Foucault and Rancière. I developed eight theoretical concepts that made it possible to trace the types of arrangements, practices and formations that were conditions for, outcomes of or inherent in efforts to secure a working democracy. Building on Panagia’s reading of Rancière, it was argued that *practices of arrangement* draw attention to how the way in which lines, elements, surfaces, relations, links, etc. are arranged matter for the government of people in space and time. Arrangements enable the production – or attempted production – of a certain fit between the lives of people, their actions, habits and dispositions, and the workings and ends of
an order characterized by a particular type of circulation. Practices of arrangement refer to the dramaturgical and scenographic activity of arranging things in policy documents and scientific writings, amounting to certain arrangements of relations, things, forces, places and times, whether it is in attempts to coordinate wills, to allow an urge for responsiveness to be met or to secure behavior in relation to a set standard. Insofar as the approach of studying practices of arrangement returns to those concepts, discourses and arrangements that have become integrated into coherent, given blocs or arrangements for how to coordinate persons, places and things to the activity through which they came into being – to become practices – it reveals the non-necessary status of these arrangements or any given order for such a coordination.

In chapter four I developed a genealogical approach to map the material. I argued that genealogy is fruitful in that it reveals the non-necessary status of concepts, discourses and formations that have become integrated into coherent, given blocs to coordinate persons, places and things. By returning to the dispersed and discontinuous practices that have been implicated in the making of these given blocs, the approach highlights how these emerge not as given responses to natural causes, or in accordance with a linear notion of time, but rather through a play of chance and forces that afterwards is rendered coherent and given. The genealogical approach, it was argued, allows a form of critique of the normative and political assumptions and power relation that are assumed and implicated in this construction and integration of seemingly given problems.

Practically, the focus of the genealogical approach consisted in mapping strategies and problematizations as conditions of possibility for the integration and development of certain practices, arrangements, techniques and political efforts over time. Central to this approach, as it was developed in chapter four, was to highlight the inventive moments when things happened: when problems were re-defined, when a new arrangement was created and when new forces took over an existing arrangement. Discontinuity, it was emphasized, is therefore central both as something to which the efforts in the material react and as something that the approach reveals, or produces, as a way of breaking apart the apparently given, natural or continuous character of social phenomena and political strategies. All in all, the approach of mapping, it was argued, implies the need to focus on the twists and turns that made it possible for a formation, inventive articulation of a problem or concept, tendency or development to become integrated into a framework –
a practice or formation that made it possible to articulate ways to secure a “working democracy”.

Related to the above concept of practices of arrangement, in chapter four I also pointed to the importance of attending to the material’s form and arrangements of sensitivities. Government documents and survey research, I argued, are in this view not only instrumental texts, but are also scenographic in the way they articulate specific sensitivities through the arrangement of words and ideas on a page or through rhetorical elements.

Securing congruence: circulation and efforts to secure a working democracy

Turning to the genealogies in chapters five through eight, I will summarize and develop what they revealed, in particular in terms of the arrangements and political and normative assumptions that were inherent to efforts to secure a working democracy. I will also bring up possible objections to and problems in the chapters’ overall contributions.

In chapter five, I provide a genealogy of the birth and re-definition of democracy policy and of a particular dispositif to address the population’s democratic involvement. The chapter mapped how democracy policy and this dispositif emerged in response to several problematizations that consolidated a vision of a “gap” between the population – and in particular between marginalized sub-groups – and the representative democratic order. This genealogy also revealed how democracy policy and the dispositif were infused by a particular vision of politics that increasingly rendered democratic renewal into a matter of anticipation, risk-management and prevention. In this “actuarial” vision, contingencies and change became objects of knowledge and starting points from which to motivate the need for democracy policy and supportive and preventative measures to shape the population’s involvement with the representative democratic order. This, it seemed, pulled efforts, or their strategic elaboration, in two possible directions: to monitor and address the perceived gap, on the one hand, but also to integrate approaches and build frameworks that addressed processes of becoming within the population. The latter was less clearly linked to actual goals of securing a vital democracy. This second direction was at first informed by an economic vision of how renewing associations and involvement could not only strengthen democracy, but create conditions for an overall adherence and input to the requirements of enhanced circulation. In a later elaboration, it however became tied to a vision of how strengthening
democracy could be used to observe the population and device forms of security when the former deviated too far from the requirements of “inclusion”/circulation.

In summary, it was argued that there were roughly three different ways in which the above mentioned actuarial vision of politics infused and was infused by the dispositif to secure and renew democratic involvement. The making or re-articulation of democracy policy was, accordingly, divided into three different periods. In the first period, roughly 1992–2000, the view of a demise of the industrial society and of its capacity to provide stable contexts for the nurturing of values, habits and skills of the working class, and losses in formal participation and membership in parties and associations, were addressed by a vision which viewed the changed situation and its discontinuities not only as risks, but as a potentially fruitful opening for a more individual and civil-society oriented vision of democracy. This vision was articulated with reference to “social capital”, but also in more general understandings of the possible economic and social profits deriving from more individual, autonomous and responsible citizens.

In the second period, the focus shifted to containing the risks of a supposedly drastic drop in democratic participation and party and association memberships. This period’s risk-orientation was displayed in a broader assessment of various potential threats to the systems through which representative democracy assured the democratic involvement of broader segments of the population. All this was taken into account in analyses of potential challenges to the existing forms of political involvement. The notion of an “endurable democracy” – in the title of the Democracy Commission report – reflects this vision.

Finally, in the liberal-conservative government’s renewal of democracy policy in 2008–2013, the response to a perceived urgent need to combat disinvolvement became both a matter of extracting potential democratic “profit” through standards and notions such as value-foundation, democratic competence and social cohesion, and a matter of avoiding the immediate dangers of polarization, violence, extremism and lack of responsibility. This sharper division differs in its approach from the earlier identification of the risks of poor schooling, passivity, engagement and participation. It was noted that what I termed circulation operated as a mode of analysis and technique, and as a primary goal – both as an end for efforts to strengthen democracy and as a framework to problematize lacks of adherence to its requirements. Put differently, democracy and circulation were strategically elaborated through one another. Democracy was used as a
reference and grid to define overall conditions of involvement, or fits, between the population and on the one hand a representative democratic order, and, on the other hand, other domains (social, urban, local, economic). Circulation was a central technical feature and end through which, and in relation to which, a new democratic dynamic, the strengthening and securing of democracy, its renewal, etc. was conceived. This was displayed in the reversal of aims of democracy policy to be primarily a matter of ensuring the smooth circulation of “social cohesion” and democracy and human rights as a matter of responsiveness to standards (such as value-foundation). The numerous invented and integrated arrangements displayed this double-directed strategic elaboration, and what with time could possibly be called a mutual completion (“remplissement”) between these (this is strictly what equivalency is about: to produce conditions for interchangeability and exchange).

Due to the short duration, in time, of democracy policy, the exposed patterns and shifts ought to be viewed less as tensions than as modifications within a more general problematization of change, contingency and renewal, which in different ways used democracy as a framework to design forms of congruence, monitoring and anticipation. Put differently, reflecting the just mentioned, democracy became aligned with requirements of compulsory “inclusion”, i.e. fit in the circuits of circulation so as to secure and possibly reinforce them. In addition, it was noted, that, by making democracy into a grid to envision equivalency, it helped linearize democratic time and depoliticize conditions – of poverty and marginalization – that could create frictions to this linearization/equivalency.

In chapter six, I mapped the emergence of value-foundation as a universal in the context of the Swedish school system’s shift to performance governance. I argued that the concept emerged in response to growing uncertainty and contingencies in the conditions of securing a renewal of democratic approaches and values in the population in general and in youth in particular. The school’s value-foundation work was assembled both in response to challenges in the population, which had become more diverse, individualized and consumer-oriented, and in response to the school’s diminishing capacity to foster citizens under such conditions. As a result of increasing reliance on NPM doctrines in formulating reforms in the governance of organizations and policy domains, value-foundation, I argued, emerged as a standard whose task became to both regulate behavior and – after some changes in the late 1990s – to produce measurable outcomes in terms of how well the school fulfilled its “democracy mission”. The chapter showed that
value-foundation had its own dynamic and consequences, in contrast to earlier moral education efforts. It also observed that the standard and discourse on value-foundation, in an organizational isomorphism, had spread beyond educational policy and the school after 2005 and during the 2010s. After these years, organizations increasingly presented their own value-foundation to secure forms of responsiveness, predictability and flow.

In contrast to the dispositif traced in chapter five, the chapter argued that value-foundation offered an arrangement in which the stakes of democratic involvement and the continuous production of involved, engaged and aware “democrats” could be concretized. This entailed both in terms of how “democrats” are trained and created in the physical environments of the school and in terms of knowing something about them – observing and evaluating how they are trained. It could be argued that this is the same dispositif as that described in chapter five – that the two overlap or are related through a form of strategic elaboration or mutual exchange. As mentioned above, value-foundation as a standard and “democratic competence” did migrate from educational policy to democracy policy. The analytical difference – the analytical purpose of keeping them distinct – however, seems to be that the dispositif of value-foundation has a function in a concrete setting and even in buildings and particular environments, in which it can produce predictability and a minimum degree of relationality and well-being, particularly when it comes to the malleable domains of youth attitudes and long-lasting dispositions. In contrast to the dispositif in chapter five, which was mainly about overall strategies of security in Foucault’s sense – about monitoring and governing an acceptable span of involvement of the population as a whole – the dispositif in chapter six (or the articulation of a larger dispositif in the context of the school’s mandate to shape civic and moral dispositions) involves discipline and is infused by other knowledge types.

For this reason, and with shifting political and scientific priorities, the dispositif was gradually displaced to focus on risks with regards to violations, bullying, psychic health and well-being among youth. While weak in its actual capacity to foster critical and reflexive “democrats”, it articulates a mixture of discipline and security. Thus, the chapter revealed that the standardization of value-foundation does foster a kind of linearization of behavior centered on predictability and congruent approaches in collective, organizational contexts. The history of value-foundation work displayed that while value-foundation shaped congruence between ways of behaving and talking, it did so in ways that led to conformity, rather than to critical
approaches inherent to the school’s “democracy mission”. I argued that the elaboration of the particular congruence of responsiveness and shared approaches through value-foundation was inseparable from other – social, economic, organizational, health-related – domains, possibly also affected by NPM and neoliberal doctrines, whose general economy of behavior presuppose and demand such approaches and congruence.

In chapter seven, I mapped the discursive practices and arrangements through which exclusion and violence-promoting extremism were constructed and the practices and formations that were assembled in response to these perceived problems. The chapter specifically focused on the inventive use of material practices and arrangements to construct these problems, such as statistics, maps, indexes, surveys and theoretical dispositifs. This directed attention to the normative and political assumptions and the larger political stakes and power forms articulated through these constructs. Following Rancière, I argued that the construction of “areas of state of exclusion” served as a material and discursive practice used to consolidate poverty and marginalization as forms of inclusion characterized by lack in relation to political, economic and societal demands on congruence. This, in turn, obstructed the possibility to be outside and thereby blurred the aesthetic conditions to articulate the political status of marginalization and poverty. The association of exclusion with criminality and extremism further deepened this operation. It continued to render poverty and marginalization into lacks of congruence vis-à-vis the requirements of certain – conform and depoliticized – ways of acting and being, and thereby, directly or indirectly, further associated democracy and having part in society with “inclusion”, i.e. with moving along and contributing to circulation. I showed that there was a specific interest in monitoring and shaping the processes of affective attachment and democratic becoming of, in particular, youth and immigrants.

The chapter traced a strategic elaboration that emerged in the discursive practices that tied exclusion to criminality and extremism. This elaboration tied democracy and a focus on working social relations to the development of a preventive and repressive (sovereign) capacity. This capacity’s main focus was on monitoring and acting upon processes of affective constitution and becoming of individuals and collectives, for example in the focus on “radicalization”. The actuarial understanding of violence, but also of other indicators of behavior of exclusion, were central to this elaboration insofar as it enabled to envision how efforts to renew democracy could become bulwarks of security and how forms of security could be integrated into the
very efforts to strengthen and renew democracy ("democratic awareness"). In this elaboration, sovereignty was articulated as a matter of environmental interventions (governmentality) that competed with the “environments”, “networks”, “sub-cultures”, etc. of criminal and extremist assemblages and their strategic and sovereign capacity to challenge the state.

Finally, chapter eight introduced a different kind of material. The chapter mapped six practices of arrangement in Swedish survey research and the texts they inspired. This brought to light different ways of formulating and responding to urges to secure a working democracy in 2003–2015. The chapter showed how the texts sought to contain potential effects of change through various arrangements. These included producing different forms of congruence and fits between civic ways of acting and being, and the assumed requirements of a working representative democratic order. The chapter focused on the normative and political assumptions inherent to these contributions, often in terms of their commitment to consensualizing the meaning of an appearance or behavior and the links between changes in the population and social or democratic requirements. It was noted that the politics inherent to these contributions squeezed out improper and disruptive modes of being and acting democratically. This reflected a stance towards controlling surprise and discontinuity more generally.

Lastly, the chapter discussed how several of the contributions articulated these politics through a structure of rationality that produced an assumed linkage between a state of exclusion, polarization, media consumption, social cohesion and individualization, and an assumption about how these relate and reinforce one another, even if these conclusions were contradicted by scientific examinations of these links. It was argued that the structure of rationality inherent in these contributions produced a reactive outlook on change and discontinuity that overshadowed active ways of sharing, learning and renewing democracy, an outlook that kept scholars from re-thinking the possibilities and limits of their approaches both normatively and politically. Through its analysis, the chapter exposed the non-necessity between democratic renewal and behaviorist interpretations of change and discontinuity.

The chapter could be criticized for being too different from and irrelevant to the other chapters. Its difference does raise an important question on the relation between the different chapters’ source material. This critique is better answered here, at the end, after the genealogies have been constructed. The answer might be that the material in chapter eight is important insofar as it displays a dynamic of exchange and elaboration between discursive, scientific and political contributions in the formulations of urges to secure a
working democracy and the efforts to respond to these urges. The chapter reveals the knowledge effects and affinity of particular strategies of relations of force and a certain normative-scientific view of politics and democracy. Inventiveness appears central to the exchanges between science and policy insofar as novel contributions push open demands for new scientific and political measures or produce discursive modifications that demand readjustments, etc. Such a dynamic could possibly have been more explicitly discussed in chapter six, or in chapter four, where this aspect is mentioned in relation to the genealogical design of the chapters.

Concluding reflections

The summaries of the chapters above, point to how the efforts to secure a working democracy consisted of reactions, explorations, innovations and strategies that used democracy and developed democratic renewal as a means and end for circulation – and vice versa. Different power forms, formations and frameworks were articulated and set up to envision, monitor and police forms of congruence, or fits, that ensured a social field characterized by interaction, flow and certain shared approaches. These were inseparable from, or extended to, other domains that both presuppose and enhance circulation, such as the economy more generally, and work life, urban life, internationalization, etc. more specifically. In this sense, as mentioned, the urges to secure a working democracy operated both as strategic elaboration through and for circulation. The connections or relations between efforts to strengthen and secure democracy and more general operations to shape conduct and approaches in the population, it could be argued, operated as strategic completions of more general strategies of governmentality and standardization of behavior and approaches. Democracy, deliberative democracy, civic spirit, democratic infrastructure, social cohesion and the larger stakes of “inclusion” all reflected different ways of articulating and enabling this completion, which, while aligning democracy with circulation, pushed democratic renewal and conditions for democracy (and, also, rights) away from practices and approaches of disobedience, incongruence, interruption and frictions. The genealogies revealed not only the non-given status of the coherent blocs, concepts and discourses that made democracy and efforts to secure it into a means and end for imperatives of circulation, but also questioned the normative and political assumptions inherent to this making. It thereby produced a complex image of central stakes of political techniques,
knowledge production and strategies of relations of force in relation to the social field and to the open-endedness of the notion of democracy.

I here want to develop or summarize the analyses and reflections in terms of circulation. In chapter three I developed the concept from Foucault’s reading of how policing in the urban setting of 18th century Europe was reconfigured when faced with the “problem of circulation”. On a more general level, thus, circulation denoted intensified flows of goods, people, objects, disease, etc. that would have to be taken into account by particular forms of assessment and techniques of government that Foucault discussed under the concept of police and “apparatuses of security” (both presupposed in the more over-arching concept of governmentality). Circulation in this sense could imply both “good” and “bad” circulation, with the management of circulation being to increase the former and decrease the latter. When articulated through Rancière, the concept denotes a more general technique to organize life according to principles of correspondence, congruence and equivalency. Circulation is here primarily a matter of the flow that such organization and principles for it allow for. Circulation, here, thus rather contrasts to interruption, intervals, stalemate and total control. Policing in this sense, was a matter of securing this congruence, or the system of fits which already integrate, or channel, conform ways of acting, doing and being. Circulation is here also a matter of systems of equivalence of meaning, words, images, frameworks, etc. that enable organizational and social isomorphism across heterogeneous domains.

As noted above in relation to chapter five to eight, elaborations of strategies of relations of force and knowledge were enabled by the integration of such systems and the exchanges that they opened for. The analyses of democratic infrastructure, value-foundation and social cohesion, as strategic conceptions and designs, revealed a mode of analysis in term of the “controlled circulation” in open spaces that Foucault was interested in and the system for the organization of life that Rancière denotes with the police. Even as I referred to circulation in many ways depending on context, I did so mainly to point to a framework for governmental and strategic reflections and the integration of a system of fits, i.e. a governmental technique, and, as such, also, an end for efforts to secure a working democracy. One could even say that the studied efforts put some hope into the actual capacity that such an integration and its presumed ensuing flow would yield mutually respecting, interacting, active and responsible citizens. Doing so, however, as limit to this study, I did not study how the larger systems of equivalence and flow denoted as “economy” or for example how urban regulations and
standardization of movement in space and time has emerged and developed. Nor did I study how digital technologies, algorithms, artificial intelligence and other new and emerging technological dispositifs have vastly altered and intensified the stakes and possibilities of these forms of governmentality and their controlled circulation.

I pointed to how the reactive outlook of policing in relation to aleatory elements and change in the social field was articulated in terms that reflected the stakes of circulation. Problems were articulated in terms of lacking integration, failed inclusion, mis-matches, emerging gaps, distrust, failing skills and capacities, weak awareness, affective proneness, etc. – i.e.; missing circuits, fits, environments, pathways, etc. for the subjectification of productive and conform individuals and collectives, for standardization and the enhancement of congruence and flow (be it in name of the need for deliberation, debate, participation, etc.).

A possible objection to the selected approach is that it could have worked with fewer concepts. A difficulty in using the concept “practices of arrangement” was that it is open-ended with regards to what counts as a way of arranging things. This allowed the argument to grasp the use of democracy as a framework to arrange the shaping and coordinating people. At the same time, this open-endedness made it possible to devise case-to-case accounts of various arrangements both in terms of the connections and dynamics they had in a specific context and in terms of the design and other qualities through which political and normative assumptions could be studied. This made it possible to point to how these documents opened spaces for strategic elaborations of how to secure a working democracy as well as forms of congruence between the population and different arrangements for the coordination of peoples, places and things. The open-endedness also allowed for an exploration of what a particular arrangement or discursive practice was and how it operated. This made possible, in turn, an exploration of the analytical concepts themselves in the particular cases analyzed.

The concepts, in this view and in light of the study’s contribution, should not be evaluated solely in terms of whether they “worked” or not, or whether they were applied equally. They had to be set to work in the material in order to be developed. The study thus worked back to the concepts themselves, not to “falsify” or criticize them, but to develop them from the material and through new concepts (such as “congruence”) and tiny shifts in direction, which exposed their affinity and mutual relationship. The exploration and the genealogies therefore went in at least two directions: not only in the direction of tracing origins and exposing the forces and knowledge types that
infuse a domain, etc., but also as something that returns to the concepts that were set to work and to the practitioner who becomes affected by the genealogies and by the consequences or nature of that which they revealed.

Even if chapters five to eight provide rather detailed accounts, this exploration served to respond to the main aim – that is, to expose the politics, sensitivities and rationalities inherent in the urges to secure a working democracy. The high-resolution accounts that the approach sometimes yielded could be considered tiring. At the same time, working with a combined focus on archaeology, mapping, scenes and practices of arrangement with the concepts presented allowed me to produce a detailed account that served the main aim above.

A possible objection to the design and approach, is that it might be accused of overestimating the importance of democracy policy and/or the force or impact of the domains studied in chapters five to eight. However, one could answer this by saying that the approach does not pretend or mean to respond to that type of evaluation. Rather, the approach displaces this focus. Instead, it exposes the non-given status of arrangements and their discontinuity. The genealogies show that the urges to secure a working democracy served as productive ways of constituting fields for knowledge and political interventions that are characterized by non-given, plural and mobile combinations of rationalities, techniques and objectives that integrate democracy to larger systems of congruence and strategically elaborate the needs and ends of democracy through these systems. To assume that democracy policy is unimportant or without considerable effect would in such a view be not primarily right or wrong, but beside the point and reductive. In place of such an evaluation, the approach makes it possible to relate to these urges in terms of the productive spaces for strategic elaborations, monitoring and capacities that they opened and tied together, the inventiveness they spurred and the rationalities, normative and political assumptions that were articulated through them. It thereby points to the centrality of the strategic elaboration that takes place between science, policy, security efforts, democratic renewal and visions of how to act upon processes of change and becoming in Sweden during this period.

In retrospect, the value seems less a matter of giving a pragmatic account of these politics, but rather a matter of producing a type of analysis that – as done through mapping – worked along two different axes⁴ to expose, trace or map, the conditions of possibility of all of the practices and connections –

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⁴ I am here referring to the longitudinal and the latitudinal axis of mapping.
of this complex network – made and integrated in the name of securing a working democracy. The first axis could be characterized as historical, political and discursive and the second as aesthetic, scientific and inventive. The analysis kept visible how both mattered for the integration and articulation of what became the politics – in plural – inherent to these efforts and the larger dynamics and strategic elaborations in which they were inscribed. Taken together, the chapters thus expose a field of immanence, which is a different way of answering the question of whether democracy policy is important or not. It is, from the viewpoint of this radical immanence: for it displays a co-existence of strength and weakness insofar as the mobile conditions that are exposed are at once productive, potentially dangerous and unstable, with the potential of becoming either more preventive and repressive, or irrelevant or counter-productive vis-à-vis fluctuations in the social field and therefore possibly replaced by something else. A possible disadvantage of this high-resolution analysis, aside from the demands it makes on both practitioner and reader, is that the materiality of all relevant aspects risks overshadowing more fundamental twists and turns (this has hopefully been sufficiently avoided).

Ending on a speculative note, one can ask what the possible future consequences of the alignment and elaboration of democracy with circulation could be, and more generally what democracy policy and the discourses on values, cohesion, etc. could become in the future. This question can be posed in light of the fact that the genealogies constructed in chapter five to eight, covered a period during which “new forces” took over not only the social field, but the institutionalized forms through which power is distributed. I am here thinking of the rise of the Sweden Democrats in Swedish politics, and, with it – and with changes external to Sweden – more general displacements in political discourse. Rather than viewing the frameworks of democracy policy, value-foundation, social cohesion, etc. as in opposition to these, as this work has displayed, they might as well be reconfigured by these “new forces”. Clearly, “circulation” would be somewhat different in such a case (since the Sweden democrats have a particular view of the “good” circulation in opposition to the “bad” one, and of congruence more generally), but it could also be argued that the imperatives of the current arrangements and dispositifs that ensure circulation in space and time would – or already do – shape how Sweden democrats envision or relate to various systems for the organization of life based on congruence (such is the hope of democracy policy, value-foundation, etc. as they are conceived in the studied period). Put differently, standardization is not only affected by,
but also extends to and affects Sweden democrats. Ultimately, what remains central, what could be argued will remain, it seems, are two things: first, a making of democracy, rights, values, etc. into domains for governmentality, security and an anticipative, “actuarial” vision of democratic involvement and politics. Second, related to the first point, an explicit or implicit marginalization of forms of dissent, disobedience and of an appreciation and cultivation of spontaneous, un-anticipated ways of acting and being politically, as well as the learnings, sharings and autodidact acts of solidarity and equality that these presuppose and could articulate. To end the speculative discussion on the new forces of Sweden democrats as “new forces” taking over, it does not seem that these two points are incompatible with these forces – on the contrary.

A limitation to the study is that it study only indirectly says something about democracy and the desirability of the efforts described. However, in place of that type of analysis, as argued earlier, it invites attention to other series (circulation, actuarial vision, etc.) and, through the practices of tracing and re-serialization, a stake of becoming otherwise – through these practices – as an ethical and agonistic matter, inseparable from a less orderly vision of democratic struggles. This hopefully opened a space of invitation to link other forms of sensitivity, affect, scholarly approaches and political interventions to address differently the dynamics and challenges to democracy and to a political community more broadly. Perhaps exploring the tension between public efforts to strengthen democracy and agonistic interventions to open other ways of thinking and acting in relation to such efforts can guide other attempts to conduct genealogies or introduce alternative ways of linking affects, knowledge and power relations. This could possibly enable to address broader challenges (such as global warming, emerging fascism, etc.) through new democratic assemblages and ways of acting and being (together). It could open for more pluralistic calls to creatively engage and experiment with how multiplicity, discontinuity, affects and challenges to existing forms of democratic involvement and circulation can be or become possibilities in thinking about and engaging democracy and democratic challenges. Doing so, it could possibly open for small experiments in ways of becoming otherwise that could further inject notions of how civic actions, other and local knowledges, scholarly practices, ways of engaging politics, of un-conforming, etc. contribute to political renewal. This, I believe, could further foreground the spontaneous and autodidact ways of articulating democratic principles, and thereby provide existing attempts to renew these
– in light of new democracy-challenges and debates, as well as broader political challenges – with new directions and impetuses.
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Some words on the front cover

The picture on the front cover was taken in West Baltimore. The former object – some kind of toy? – has been shattered against the stony concrete. The pieces from it are not arranged in any particular way. They show us two sides: one, glimmering violet and one matt black; carved rubies and blunt charcoal. The arrangement of the pieces does not validate, represent or command anything. It is without purpose. Yet the pieces convey intensities and singularities – of materiality, color, concreteness, trash, dirt and beauty – with the capacity to capture and retain the gaze. By stopping one in one’s tracks, they display the power of beauty – the power of non-purposiveness.
Between 1990 and 2014, Sweden produced government commissions of inquiry and social-scientific works addressing the need to ensure a “working democracy”. In four Foucauldian-inspired genealogies, this work critically exposes a vision of democratic dis-involvement tainted by risk-management, benchmarking and analyses of political radicalization. Summarized in the emergence of the policy domain “democracy policy” and articulated through a focus on participation, habits, values and dispositions, the resultant discourses, policies and scientific contributions suggested combating the decline of democratic involvement in the Swedish population by securing congruence between the lives of the citizens and the requirements of the representative democracy and of social and economic systems. Doing so, this work suggests, they increasingly align democracy with a system of correspondences and circulation at the expense of knowledge and habits of interruptions and incongruence that, historically, have been central to democratic renewal and involvement.

Marcel Mangold completed his graduate studies at Södertörn University. He is currently teaching political science at Stockholm University. From 2014 to 2016, he spent two years at the Johns Hopkins University with a Fulbright grant. He has also translated and edited numerous texts in political theory and philosophy, notably several texts by Jean-Luc Nancy.