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Nordic light on freedom and independency: The non-public schools in the northern part of Europe
The confluence of pedagogy and politics.
– A view on the changes in theory and concepts dealing with pedagogy and education.

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Scandinavia: What`s the story?
To answers:

1) The school system in Denmark (and in many other countries) did actually have some practical and theoretical problems before the reforms.

2) The new focus on the concept of learning represents a change in the way we think about schools and education.
In 2012 the Danish parliament agreed on a major reform of the teacher education.

The "Inclusion Act" was also passed in 2012, aiming to increase the quantitative level of inclusion.

A greater reform of the public schools followed in 2013.

Mostly, there is a political focus on quantitative performativity alongside an ambition to find usable, evidence based and “best practice” methods (Dyssegaard et al 2013a).

Educational research has become more and more strategic, focussing on the priorities of the new reforms.
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<th>Era</th>
<th>Theoretical frame</th>
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<td>Modernity</td>
<td>Linked to great narratives</td>
<td>Studies are carried out within the limits of the great narratives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-modernity</td>
<td>An absence of great narratives</td>
<td>Deconstruction and emancipation</td>
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<td>Post-postmodernity</td>
<td>Linked to a specific construction of a great narrative</td>
<td>Use (and construction) of evidence in line with the great narrative.</td>
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<td>Subjekt</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Person (irreplacable)</td>
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<td>How to rule the population?</td>
<td>The disciplined individual</td>
<td>The free citizen (the good life as an ideal)</td>
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<td>What combines us?</td>
<td>Nation (national identity)</td>
<td>Democracy (participation)</td>
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<td>Right</td>
<td>Freedom (by right)</td>
<td>Equal access to knowledge/information</td>
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Theoretical movements in official educational policy and research

1. All children are special (a systemic view)

2. All children have disabilities (the cannot yet join the workforce)

3. What to they need?: Learning, standardized programs and evidence-based cures!

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Thinkers like Kant and Rousseau based their pedagogical theory on the presence of an eternal paradox: How can we force other people to be free?

Today, modern governments seem to have solved that problem by focusing on competence-based learning programmes. Or have they?
State and pedagogy

Some movements and some problems
The concept have its roots in the Greek *Schole* and the Latin *schola*. Originally, the meaning of the word was ”free time”, referring to the fact that pupils in schools did not have to work. Therefore, a school is etymologically the opposite of anything connected to the labor market.
Democracy and schools

Democracy is often viewed as:
* A formal political organisation
* A way of living together
* An approach to life
* A devotion to reason and freedom of thought

How can we sustain democracy without schools that encourages these ideas?

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“We propose that to speak for education in an educational manner means to express an interest in freedom and, more specifically, an interest in the freedom of the other: the freedom of the child, the freedom of the pupil, the freedom of the student. Freedom is not license. It is neither about ‘anything goes’ nor about individual preference and choice. Freedom is relational and therefore inherently difficult.”

(“A manifesto for education”)
What should the independent schools do?

A new position in society?

A new responsibility?
Independent schools in Denmark

* Friskoler ("free schools")
* Efterskoler (in some ways similar to boarding schools)
* Lilleskoler (often Dewey-inspirered independent schools)
* Privatskoler (private schools)
* Højskoler (Independent schools for adults – without exams)
Some old ideas that might inspire

N.F.S Grundtvig (1783-1872)
Enlightment and awakening

* Bringing things into the light

* To bring the world – and the student – to life

”One has not lived, who has not held something dear”
More old ideas...

Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855)
Love is the beginning of everything!

Individuality

Faith

Love
In conclusion

Perspectives on the major change in paradigms:

What is a human being/ what has it become?

Why are we here?
A final perspective

Reinventing the basic idea of pedagogy and education:

Holding something and someone dear!
Litterature

Thank you!

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