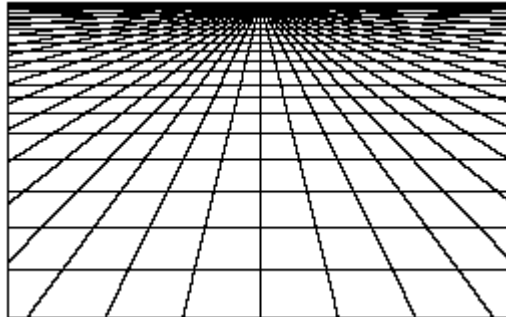




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The Other Entrepreneur – Alternative approaches to economics, culture and how to do business

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Abstract

Empirically the thesis is based on a qualitative inquiry of five companies in the cultural sector. They have all been chosen because of their alternative ways of thinking in relation to the purpose of economic activities. They represent a social criticism not usually associated with entrepreneurship, they are not growth-oriented, they work in both the cultural- and the market sphere and they operate through networks. The purpose is to give an examination of their values and ideologies and how these affect their businesses. Theoretically the thesis provides a context in which the entrepreneurs can be interpreted. They do not fit with the neo-classical approach to economics but can rather be seen as a sign that the economic system is undergoing profound changes. This is evident in their ecological values and their way to combine cultural work with traditional business which challenges the current growth economy.

Keywords: social criticism, culture, value-based entrepreneurship, ideology

Table of contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
1. Introduction.....	2
1.1 Aim and research questions.....	3
1.1.1. Demarcations.....	4
2. Theory.....	6
2.1. Background – the growth economy and neo-classical economics.....	6
2.1.1. Business entrepreneurship.....	7
2.1.2. Capital accumulation, alienation and commodification.....	8
2.2. The relation between culture and the market – background.....	10
2.2.1. Culture from a policy perspective.....	11
2.2.2. Culture as social critique.....	12
2.3. Postmodernism – social structures in transition and new spaces for action.....	15
2.3.1. The reflexive subject.....	15
2.3.2. Alternative economic approaches.....	17
2.3.3. Alternative views of the economic subject.....	18
2.3.4. Social entrepreneurship.....	19
3. Method.....	21
3.1. Interviews.....	22
3.1.1. The interviewees.....	23
3.1.2. Collection and analysis of data.....	23
3.2. Discourse analysis.....	24
3.3. Limitations / difficulties with the method.....	26
3.3.1. Generalizability.....	27
4. The entrepreneurs – environmentalism and social criticism through culture.....	28
4.1. Apocalypse.....	28
4.2. Damanco.....	29
4.3. Good World.....	30

4.4. Misplay.....	31
4.5. Unsworn Industries	31
4.6. Distinguishing values, believes and ideologies of the entrepreneurs.....	32
4.6.1. Social criticism and environmentalism.....	33
4.6.2. The aim is to make change	34
4.7. How to run a business based on ideology.....	35
4.7.1 The resigning of profit maximization.....	36
4.7.2. The falafel soap – a product with an ideology	37
4. 8. The practical conduct of the companies	39
4.8.1. Diversification and culture.....	40
4.8.2. Competences through networks	42
4.9. Difficulties of being ideological entrepreneurs.....	44
4.9.1. Organizational forms.....	44
4.9.2. Lack of understanding for cultural enterprises	46
5. Final discussion.....	46
5.1. The growth economy reconsidered.....	47
5.1.1. Aspects of commodification.....	48
5.2. In between culture and the growth economy	50
5.3. An alternative approach to entrepreneurship	52
5.3.1 Ecological values	53
5.4. Implications of the findings and further research.....	54
6. Bibliography.....	56

Acknowledgements

My interest in the essay topic arose when I did interviews with companies for a research project at CIRCLE. I came into contact with a number of companies that did not fit into the usual, from a policy perspective, understanding of entrepreneurship and found the matter so interesting that I decided to write a thesis about it. It has not been an easy task though, there is still not much written about the topic and with the perspective I have chosen it almost becomes a whole new area. There are some persons that have contributed to my understanding of the phenomena and whom I would like to thank. First and foremost the interviewees: the alternative thinking entrepreneurs whose insightful stories about their business not only provided a good essay topic but also helped me maintain my interest and motivation during the process of writing. Their unwillingness to compromise with their values and beliefs makes me hopeful for the future. Thank you! Furthermore I would like to thank Anette Fischer, Håkan Hydén, Tobias Linné and my supervisor, Emelie Stenborg.

1. Introduction

Is the current economic system about to be revalued? Considerations of environmental and social issues imply that there is a growing awareness in how products and services are produced. In the long run this leads to reflections on the meaning of economic activities such as entrepreneurship and the purpose of the wealth creation of economic system.¹

There are forms of entrepreneurship that are not motivated by profit but by a strong environmental and community involvement; companies that are not only financial organizations, but serve as platforms operating power into the society. These organizations have been difficult to fit into the academic and political interpretation of entrepreneurship. Not at least because they are also into a social criticism that is not linked to the business standards. They form a critical entrepreneurship based on a concern for our environment, and a need to challenge the current production and consumption patterns. They operate through the cultural sphere where there is scope for the exercise of criticism of the economic approach, but they do so as entrepreneurs. Since they are active in the field of culture it may well be easier for them to cross the limit more than traditional production companies, they can therefore truly be said to exercise alternative entrepreneurship. The thesis at hand aims at providing a detailed examination of this phenomenon.

The entrepreneurs in this thesis represent a break with the traditional notion of entrepreneurship. Common for these companies is that they do not have a pronounced desire to grow in the form of higher turnover and more employees; they are not growth oriented. Because of this they miss many of the opportunities and support that traditional businesses receive. This is proble-

¹ 1 This development is reflected in, among other things, the searching for alternative measures of progress, other than GDP (GDP and Beyond: measuring progress in a changing world; Jackson 2009).

matic because even if these companies do not contribute to wealth measured in the form of GDP growth they contribute to creating other values. Their strong environmental awareness and community involvement is essential to meet the challenges facing our world today; they provide us with enriching experiences that brings new perspectives. They also create work opportunities for others; most of their projects are done in collaboration with self-employed people in their networks. While contributing less to economic growth they do more for the cultural growth, and the turn to a more sustainable development of society.

Theoretically the thesis focuses on three areas, first, the growth economy; fundamental values represented by it and its most basic rules. Secondly, the relation between culture and the growth economy and the dual role of culture; as an important competitive advantage and as a way to exert social critique. Thirdly, alternative perspectives of economics and entrepreneurship and the reasons why these are growing in importance today. The empirical investigation is done by in-depth interviews with five companies that have been selected according to their alternative ways of thinking with regard to the purpose of their businesses.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The purpose of the thesis is to identify and understand what is assumed to be an alternative perspective on entrepreneurship in comparison to traditional interpretations of it. The entrepreneurs in the study distinguish themselves from traditional entrepreneurs in several ways and I intend therefore to provide a deep-seated description of their motivations and practices; of how and why they differ. The empirical material aims at giving examples of what values, beliefs and ideologies they have and how these affect their businesses. I have chosen to use a theoretical perspective which allows social contextualization of the entrepreneurs; the aim is therefore rather to explain them as part of an overall development of society than to simply analyze them from a business administration perspective. From my point of view the most interesting aspect of them is that they can be seen as a sign that something is happening with how we perceive the meaning

of the economic system. The purpose can be said to be twofold, the first being to describe them and the second to analyze them. In order to fulfill the purpose I will focus on three subject areas which has proved to be relevant in the analyzing of the material. Melted down to three research questions, these are:

- What kind of values and social criticism do they represent?
- How do these values affect the ways they chose to run their businesses?
- How do the companies operate in practice?

In connection to the above stated purpose the difficulties and problems associated with alternative entrepreneurship will be taken into consideration; in relation to policies on economic development, to the common perception among people and to the existing legislation on business and economic activities. By doing so the piece of research becomes relevant to the wider society in a more through way.

1.1.1. Demarcations

The thesis is about entrepreneurs and companies in the cultural sector which have a slightly different way of thinking in terms of meaning and purpose of their activities. I chose to treat them as part of a wider societal development; a natural consequence of my background being in economic geography and gender studies and not business administration. This means that instead of looking into the micro level of the companies I turn my attention to the wider structures of society and see in the companies signs of a possibly ongoing social and economic development. I have made a conscious choice to focus on companies that have a different attitude than what is usual and this inevitably leads to that other perspectives and aspects of the development are not addressed. This should, however, not be seen as a failure but a consequence of the limitations associated with the writing of a thesis. Furthermore, the subject of analysis is taking place in

Sweden and the theories about the economy and social change are mainly developed in a European and North American context.

2. Theory

The purpose of the thesis, to examine how the entrepreneurs can be understood in relation to ongoing societal- and economic developments, requires a rather broad theoretical base and this is provided in the chapter that follows. Three areas are focused in the theory section, the growth economy and its characteristics, the relation between culture and the economic system and alternative approaches to economics and entrepreneurship. Section 2.1 and 2.1.1 provides some background information on how the economy and entrepreneurship is interpreted in academic and policy discourse while 2.1.2 introduces a number of central concepts for the understanding of the current economic system. Section 2.2 deals with the relation between culture and the economy, from a policy perspective and from a critical perspective. In 2.3 alternative approaches to economics and entrepreneurship are introduced and some conditions that are necessary for these alternative perspectives to gain acceptance are discussed.

2.1. Background – the growth economy and neo-classical economics

“There is apparently so little disagreement among contemporary economists as to the scope and content of their discipline that the introductory chapters of most modern textbooks of economics are virtually identical” (Throsby 2001:1).

Neo-classical economics can be thought of as the dominant paradigm of economic thinking today and its influence reaches far beyond the academic sphere (Daly 1999; 1996; Söderbaum 2000; Throsby 2001; Swedberg 1990). This means that the market is interpreted in terms of ‘supply’ and ‘demand’ and that organizations mainly are ‘profit maximizing firms’ and human beings are ‘consumers’ aimed at ‘maximizing utility’ (e.g. Becker 1976). As a consequence the ultimate goal of business entrepreneurship (unlike social entrepreneurship) is always profit maximization (Trexler 2008).

Economist Söderbaum points out that the dominance of neo-classical economics is not only a result of effective authority exercised by economic scholars but also a result of the interplay be-

tween the 'supply' and the 'demand' side on the 'market of ideas' (Söderbaum 2000). Business leaders and other rather powerful actors in society have a perceived need for neo-classical theories and thus choose to adopt them. It is for instance common to focus on the monetary and financial aspect of an organization rather than seeing it as a unit for the fulfillment of social goals. "With a focus on profit maximizing, that is a kind of 'monetary reductionism', issues such as the social responsibility of a business can effectively be played down" (Daly 1999:5).

The sociologist Max Weber writes about how the idea of profit maximization as the ultimate objective for enterprises developed out of the protestant ethic. A central aspect of this ethic is the struggle to live a pious life by fulfilling the duties put on the individual on basis of her/his position in the world, while at the same time avoid moral degradation by not giving in to redundant consumption. The result is that capital accumulates, the amount of capital becomes a measure of the value of a person's deeds; it provides evidence both of hard work and of thrift (Weber 1934/1997).

Hence profit maximization became a central aspect of the economic system and this is reflected in economic theories - and economic practice - both on the macro- and the micro levels. Exponential growth is the norm embedding financial institutions today, Daly (1999) refers to it as "the exponential growth culture" and withholds that it is the central culture of society. In neo-classical economics growth in GDP is equalized with the more general concept of wealth creation (Daly 1999; 1996; Söderbaum 2000). This view is criticized by Baudrillard (1998) among others, who point out that "wealth" in this sense is nothing but increased consumption.

2.1.1. Business entrepreneurship

The exponential growth culture is visible also in how entrepreneurship is interpreted; business entrepreneurs are expected to make profits. This is a fact so clear it is seldom outspoken, yet taken for granted in academic literature on entrepreneurship (c.f. Shane 2003; Landström 2005).

Shane defines entrepreneurship as “an activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organizing, markets, processes, and raw materials through organizing efforts that previously had not existed” (2003:4). At an operational level entrepreneurship is defined in two ways; the formation of a business venture or not-for-profit organization or a person that is self-employed, i.e. working for personal profit rather than for wages paid by others (Shane 2003). While recognizing in the definition that entrepreneurial activities may result in not-for-profit organizations, it is later stated that entrepreneurship is about exploiting opportunities in order to generate profit and the not-for-profit dimension of entrepreneurship is not given further attention by Shane.

Furthermore, *growth* is an important operational measure of entrepreneurial performance, be it in terms of increased employment or increased sales. *Profit* is another important measure and an indicator of successful entrepreneurial activity (Shane 2003). Likewise, research of organizational models usually focuses on growth-oriented entrepreneurs who aim at developing commercially useful ideas (e.g. Parker 2008).

2.1.2. Capital accumulation, alienation and commodification

The exponential growth culture is reflected in that companies are expected to seek to enhance their turnover so that owners of different forms of capital accumulate that capital and increase their wealth. Hence capital accumulation is an essential feature of the current economic system. In classical Marxist theory this is accomplished by the use of labour power to produce commodities which are sold on markets.

The possibility to make money from trade in goods, money and services and to accumulate that money forms the fundament of the capitalist economy. Labour power is used to produce ‘goods’ which are given an exchange value - they are being commodified.

In the way I understand Marx there is a difference between 'good' and 'commodity'; goods, in order to be commodified must be alienated from their producer, i.e. the worker who created them. Alienation is an important concept in the theory of capitalism. In the capitalist economic system goods and services are produced for the purpose of being sold on markets, they are being exchanged. This is what is meant by commodification. In the process of commodification the relation between the worker and what he creates is cut loose. The worker in the capitalist economic system becomes alienated to the fruits of his work; the objects produced appear as something foreign, as external (Marx 1867/1990). This is visible also from the point of view of the consumer who does not know anything about the worker who produced the goods; commodities are decoupled from the context in which they are created. Goods on the other hand, may appear as commodities to the consumer but also as just products (or services) that are purchased in a way that is dependent on the context of their creation.

In Marxian theory the worth of a commodity can be divided into two different kinds of values; use-value and value. A commodity's use-value is its usefulness for fulfilling some practical purpose, the practical value it has for the purchaser. In Marxian economics value is the general or abstract measure of a commodity's worth in comparison to other commodities. Marx (1867/1990) employs yet another concept, that of exchange value, which is the ratio at which commodities should be traded for one another, a realization or form of value determined by the amount of other values a commodity can be exchanged for on a market.

In a capitalist mode of production, all or almost all of the inputs and outputs of production are supplied commercially as commodities. The labour input of cultural workers is also a commodity traded on the market; cultural workers and artists making their living in a capitalist society can do so only as long as they get money and nobody pays the cultural worker unless it pays to do so, that is, unless their work helps to increase capital, for instance by adding value to other commodities. Cultural entities are sold on markets as goods and services at a price not determined by

some intrinsic value but by competition and market changes and fluctuations (Hesmondhalgh 2007; Berman 2003).

2.2. The relation between culture and the market – background

From a comprehensive point of view contemporary economies can be said to be increasingly based upon the processing of symbols (Lash & Urry 1994; 1987; see also Scott 2006). In an economy “of signs and space” knowledge and communication are used to process information in order to create symbolic values (Lash & Urry 1994). This change also becomes evident in regard to the geographical production patterns of consumer goods and intangible values which form an increasing part of the total value of goods (Dicken 2003). From a policy perspective this is interpreted in terms of the knowledge economy; knowledge, information and learning, and how to speed up the processes of these become prioritized policy areas (Maskell & Malmberg 1999; European Commission 2006; Link & Siegel 2007; Lorenz & Lundvall 2007; Rodrigues 2002).

According to Lash and Urry (1987; 1994) capitalism has reached a state of dis-organization; a post-organized capitalist order replaces the earlier production order, which was highly organized. The concept of dis-organized capitalism differs from many notions about a post-industrial society (knowledge economy, information economy etc) in that it points at how the current order is still very much a capitalist order; capital accumulation takes place and capitalist relations continue to exist (Lash & Urry 1987, see also Baudrillard 1996 pp. 172-175). Thus the ways to create value and accumulate capital are changing but this does not mean that the fundamental premises of the economic system are changing; we still very much live in a capitalist growth economy.

2.2.1. Culture from a policy perspective

The information economy is characterized by an increased significance of cultural² goods (as these can be thought of as intangible values), in the shape of content inherent in other goods. From the perspective of economic policy makers it is stated that creativity has two major impacts on the economy. Firstly the impacts are visible in the setting of economically successful cities and regions, as in the creative city and skills of creative individuals which provide a valuable competitive advantage for firms (Florida 2004; KEA 2006; UNCTAD 2008; ITPS 2007). Secondly, the output of cultural workers may become the content of functional consumer goods: the value is not in the flat screen television set but in the movies and TV shows that can be viewed in it (KEA 2006). Hence, a clear objective for policy makers in providing the right conditions for growth is to strengthen the production of symbols that companies can turn into competitiveness. Such symbolic values may come in the shape of arts and culture and accordingly support for these sectors become prioritized by policy makers.³ In policy documents a distinction is usually made between *the cultural sector* and *the creative sector*⁴ (KEA 2006; ITPS 2007); the former deals with production of cultural goods and services and the latter consists of cultural activities that “becomes a ‘creative’ input in the production of non-cultural goods” (KEA 2006:2). The economic policy approach is directed towards *the creative sector* which impact is mani-

² Academic novelist and critic Raymond Williams (1976) writes that culture is one of the most complicated words in the English language. Culture can mean (a) “the independent and abstract noun which describes a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development” (b) “the independent noun, whether used generally or specifically, which indicates a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general” (c) “the independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic creativity” (Williams 1976:90). In relation to the market sphere culture is usually understood in the last way, as commodities. However, Williams argues for the need to view culture as a way of life and cultural activities as an expression of particular ways of life.

³One example is the experience industry, a Swedish nationwide policy initiative funded by the knowledge foundation

⁴ Sometimes the term experience industry is used in a way similar to the creative sector. The usage varies in different counties (ITPS 2007; KRUS 2008).

fested for instance in the huge attention given to Richard Florida and the concept of the creative economy.⁵

The fact that the cultural industries are increasingly important sources of wealth/growth in many economies (UNCTAD 2008; KEA 2006; ITPS 2007; Lovink & Rossiter 2007) effects the way we understand the relationships between culture, society and the economy (Hesmondhalgh 2007). A common distinction, in discourse as well as in practice is that between culture and the market, or between cultural activities and economic activities. Culture is thought to do better without the influence of the market (e.g. Kulturutredningen 2009; Stenström 2009; KEA 2006). When policy measures focuses on the creative sector a shift for the role of culture takes place so that the influence of the market on it increases. This is visible in that cultural workers are supposed to be more entrepreneurial and become better at commercializing their products (ITPS 2007; Nielsén 2008; Algotson & Daal 2007). Culture is to be a part of the market and subsidiaries seem to be considered somewhat obsolete (Kulturutredningen 2009). It is therefore not a question of making culture more independent from the market; rather the ability of companies to capitalize on the “cultural resource” is allowed to increase.

2.2.2. Culture as social critique

There are, however, still many who defend the free (from economic thinking) culture and thus value its role as a carrier of critique. An interpretation therefore is that culture has two major intentions; either it may be a way to exert critique against the system or it work to support the system by bringing valuable inputs to commodities. It might seem a bit paradoxical that the market is forced to capitalize on something that is by tradition critical to the market; according to me this is one of the most interesting problems with the ‘creative economy’.

⁵ In recent years the socio-economic impact of the cultural and creative sectors have been highlighted, for example the KEA report states “culture and creativity used with a social purpose contribute to sustainable development and societies” (2006:9). The cultural and creative sectors made up 2,6 % of the EU GDP in 2003 (KEA 2006).

The term ‘culture industry’ was developed by Frankfurt school⁶ scholars Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer (Throsby 2001). The concept was intended to shock, culture and industry were thought of as opposites that in the modern capitalist economy collapse together in a devastating way (Hesmondhalgh 2007).

For Adorno and Horkheimer culture was understood as art, a special form of human creativity that had the ability to exert a form of critique of other parts of society. Art in this sense might provide a utopian picture of what the social order could have been like. When cultural goods are being commodified they lose their power to exert critique (Hesmondhalgh 2007) and instead enter the realm of the capitalist economy, thus supporting the system rather than challenging it. The freedom that was previously inherent in the cultural practice disappears as culture come under the logic of the rational instrumentality of capitalism; culture is no longer a way of human emancipation but becomes an instrument of control (Lash & Lury 2007).

An example of culture as social critique is what is termed critical design, a practical design perspective represented by Dunne, among others. Dunne writes that design research in the aesthetic and cultural realm should draw attention to how products “limit our experiences and expose to criticism and discussion their hidden social and psychological mechanisms” (2005:xvi). By employing a critical design perspective, the arts can contribute to the values of consumer goods and offer a critique of the present through the material embodiment of functions derived from alternative value systems (Dunne 2005). Instead of making goods more attractive to consumers, the abstract attractiveness is put into question, thus also the ground for the exchange value for which the product is sold.

⁶ The term the Frankfurt school usually denotes critical social researchers associated with the Institute for Social Research founded in 1923 at the University of Frankfurt am Main.

When the Frankfurt school was active, at the time when cultural studies first developed, culture was fundamentally a superstructure and cultural entities were exceptional. Today the culture industry has become global and cultural entities are everywhere; they are the rule rather than an exception. In the information economy cultural entities may become symbolic values, content, in other goods. Lash and Lury refers to this process as thingification; “culture, which was previously a question of representation, becomes thingified” (2007:4). This has to do with a shift in the production of identity. Before this was accomplished by the distribution of multiple cultural goods, all alike, which served as a basis for a shared sense of belonging to a group. Today the production of identity is no longer a process of likeness but of difference, the identity of an individual is communicated through the marking of distinction from a group.

It is easy to be led to believe that the consumption of cultural values now occurs without the involvement of market thinking, that the project identity is a matter of opposition against capitalism. But it is only a shift from the fordist mass production to the post-fordist, information intensive production of difference. According to Lash and Lury (2007) the paradigm of indeterminacy and difference in cultural industry is not a matter of resistance by consumers but rather a process of successful capital accumulation (Lash & Lury 2007).

The consumption of artifacts that only possesses an exchange value becomes the one true meaning of consumption (Adorno 1991; Baudrillard 1998). The shift, from consumption of goods with a user value to consumption of goods that only possesses an exchange value also means that every cultural experience that is freed from the coercive power of the exchange value becomes potentially subversive. Consumption forms the foundation for the entire growth economy and every expression of culture that cannot be commodified, that cannot be given an exchange value, becomes potentially disruptive for the capitalist system.

2.3. Postmodernism – social structures in transition and new spaces for action

The shift to an economy based on information and the consumption of cultural goods for the purpose of creating an identity distinct from others is connected also to a situation usually referred to as postmodernism. Postmodernism denotes a state of reconstruction of the great narratives that used to constitute the life worlds of people (Lyotard 1984). This means also that the social structures that were previously determinant on the lives of people are dissolving and new spaces for action are opened up with more opportunities for people to exert influence.

According to Castells (2000) society is increasingly being organized in networks at both micro and macro levels; the network is the element of which organizations are built. Even though Castells points at how the new paradigm brings about new forms of domination for those in authority, he also acknowledges the ways information systems and network organizations increases peoples' capacities and opportunities to organize and integrate. The use of information technology favors community before individualization, thereby threatening the traditional western conception of an autonomous subject (economic man). In this sense there is a subversive power in the use of information technology (Castells 2000). This is acknowledged also by Hydén who means that in the information age electricity is no longer primarily a source of power but a source of control and new technologies makes it possible to store information in a way that might increase people's intelligence (2008:75). The possibilities for learning more increases as does the possibilities to exert critique.

2.3.1. The reflexive subject

According to Lash and Urry a central feature of the late modern society is an increased reflexive capacity of the subject (1994:35; c.f. Ziehe 1986). The individualization process means that individuals can create their own identity less dependent of societal structures that characterized the

pre modern and early modern age. The concept of reflexivity is partly based upon the concept of the risk society (Beck 1992) and the notion of the increasingly self-reflexive agency (Giddens 1991) (Lash & Urry 1994). The object of reflexivity is either the individual self in relation to a societal context; this is connected to the paradigm of difference and distinction in consumption. It can also be the expert systems that surround the individual and provide guidelines for how the individual should act. This is connected to the decline of faith in the modern project that began as the deficiencies of industrialization started to show (Fischer 2000; Caracostas & Muldur 2000). The industrial society and the associated modernist idea was much about continuing scientific and technological progress and increasing wealth, accomplished by economic growth. The criticizing of the industrial paradigm is by necessity also a criticizing of the idea of economic growth. Hence reflexivity occurs either by the means of critique against science or knowledge in a broad sense or as a self-monitoring activity. The most crucial prerequisite for the reflexive subject though, is what Lash and Urry calls aesthetic reflexivity. This is linked to the processing of information and symbols in the post-organized economy; “aesthetic reflexivity is the very stuff of post-organized economies of signs and space” (1994:59). The increased significance of signs and symbols fosters people to become more reflexive and forces them to reflect upon the symbols that become more and more important in everyday life.

The development of the reflexive subject can also be viewed in relation to the dual character of modernity and the contrast between the rationality ideal of the enlightenment and the romantic ideas that were formed in opposition against it. In the same manner the environmentalist movements of today form their politics on basis of the hermeneutic tradition of modernity. This is reflected , among other things, in the rejection “of the abstract commodity form and of consumer capitalism in general and in the rejection of highly mediated forms of material culture for an empathy with nature” and “a rejection of cold abstract logic for feeling and empathy (Lash & Urry 1994:49). Thus there is large potential for a questioning of the current economic system

which is based upon ever-increasing growth at the expense of softer values and empathy with nature.

2.3.2. Alternative economic approaches

From a macro perspective ecological economics attempts to challenge the rationalized economic culture (the dominant neo-classical paradigm) by studying also the ecological system and the social system (Gareth et al 2000; Daly 1999). By doing so the purpose of the economy changes from being to generate GDP growth to serve the social system while not growing beyond the limits of the life-sustaining ecosystems⁷. Basically ecological economics is an attempt to internalize what has traditionally been thought of as externalities, i.e. natural resources. Daly uses the concept of ‘uneconomic growth’ to describe the nuisance with today’s economic thinking. Uneconomic growth describes a state in which the economy is treated as the total system while other systems, such as ecosystems, are considered to be subsystems (1999; 1996). The current growth economy is characterized by high throughput of energy, material and waste, to such an extent that it exceeds the carrying capacity of the eco systems.⁸ Daly proposes instead a low-throughput economy that better take care of natural resources; the economic system, in order to be sustainable, must not grow beyond the limits of the life sustaining ecosystems. Daly applies a macro perspective in his analysis, the main point for this study however is, that there are limits to the extent to which the economy can grow and this in turn leads to the thought that environmental awareness might lead to the notion that profit maximization must not be the only objective for enterprises.

⁷ There are also feminist economists who aims at challenging the economic culture (c.f. Casey 2004). Feminist perspectives on economics typically takes into account the un-paid work done by women in the realm of the home, which contributes to social wealth rather than to growth (Donath 2000).

⁸ Carrying capacity is a concept originating in ecology and it describes the size of a population which the environment can sustain indefinitely given the food, water and other necessities available (Miller & Spoolman 2009).

2.3.3. Alternative views of the economic subject

Söderbaum writes about the importance of ideology for people's as well as organization's decision making processes. He uses the concept of ideology in a rather broad sense; "ideas about means-end relationships" (Söderbaum 2000:2). From an ecological economics point of view Söderbaum argues that the ideologies of actors in the economic system are important to take into consideration, which is not done in neo-classical economic thinking. Ideologies are based on beliefs, not just about the present state of affairs but also about possible outcomes of acting in different ways. Ideologies may direct people's actions towards a more environmentally sustainable development. Therefore economic theory should take into consideration other ideas than that of profit maximization. Söderbaum argues that since man, (in a genderless sense) acts according to his or her ideological orientation 'man' should be regarded a political being. "Instead of, or in addition to, neo-classical Economic Man, a Political Economic Man/Woman is suggested; or to simplify our vocabulary, a Political Economic Person (PEP)" (2000:32). Daly too argues in favor for the view that the individual is more than an autonomous object acting to maximize her yield. Instead the self is constituted by its relations in community with others, i.e. identity is social rather than atomistic. This means also that self-interest, in which individuals in neo-classical theory are thought to behave, cannot be "defined independently of the community" (1999:35). Because we are social beings what is good for society or community is also good for us.

In a similar view the entrepreneur could be seen as someone who is in the service of society. Miller (1998; 2005) uses the ideas of Pope John Paul II and catholic social teaching and points at the need for a new understanding of the concept of entrepreneurship. 'Life-sizing' entrepreneurship, the term Miller proposes, is similar to the traditional interpretation of entrepreneurship in that it is about engaging in some kind of reflection on a perceived problem and causing impact through innovation. Life-sizing entrepreneurs though, have in addition to this a life-sizing ele-

ment which "is the power within the individual to envision and to shape a balanced life in a world of disparate experiences, symbiotic relationships, and a constantly changing (work) environment by recognizing the legitimacy of a larger purpose than short-term aggrandizement and by continually re-focusing on the long-term common good through a process of considered reflection" (Miller 2005:223). Etzioni also writes about how peoples decision making have a moral dimension instead of being only about profit-maximization (1988).

In a similar way ethiconomy⁹ can be described as value-based economics that is based on the awareness of environmental problems and the impact of human actions on these. It is similar to the economic theory of Daly in that the effects on nature from human actions are recognized, but while Daly focuses on the macro level ethiconomy can be used as an overall perspective for guiding all levels of action within the economy. Ethiconomy is to be thought of as a framework for economic and entrepreneurial behavior that takes into consideration not only environmental sustainability but also social and economic and aims at preserving rather than exploiting (Hydén 2008).

2.3.4. Social entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship research is done within the field of neo-classical economics and business administration and hence attempts to explain the phenomena by means of concepts developed with regard to traditional entrepreneurship. Although most research on social entrepreneurship focuses on the individual level (Massetti 2008), and therefore does not assume that a transition of the economic system is taking place, the subject is interesting because it shows that ideology is given increasing significance in the field of business. Social business models in contrast to traditional business model are designed not to assure monetary profits but other goals (Hartigan

⁹ The concept is of particular interest because one of the interviewees in this study participated in the development of the concept of ethiconomy, together with Hydén and Carlström.

2006; Trexler 2008). According to Trexler (2008) sustainability is a central issue in the field of social entrepreneurship, that is, environmental, social and business sustainability.

The term social entrepreneur was coined by Bill Drayton¹⁰ to describe people who combine goals of a social reformer with methods of business entrepreneurship (Tarrant 2007). Monti et al (2006) define social entrepreneurship as “men and women that add a for-profit component to their non-profit organization in order to accomplish their larger social mission”. According to a Business Week article “Rather than depending solely on handouts from philanthropists, social entrepreneurs generate some of their own revenues and use business techniques to address social goals” (Hamm 2008). Hence social entrepreneurs are perceived as operating in nonprofit enterprises rather than in enterprises engaged in profit maximization and also combining the resourcefulness of traditional entrepreneurship with a mission to change society (Seelos & Mair 2005). Usually social enterprises are directed towards a particular problem such as for instance poverty reduction (e.g. Neck et al 2009; Rhodes and Donnelly-Cox 2008; Seelos & Mair 2005).

¹⁰ Drayton is head of The Ashoka Foundation, an organization that invests in social businesses.

3. Method

According to Wodak & Meyer the term method usually denotes “research pathway” (Wodak & Meyer 2001:14). Method is a way to proceed systematically from the researcher’s own standpoint or from some theoretical assumptions to a point of observation.¹¹ In this thesis the theoretical conjecture has been developed after the empirical material was collected and hence the purpose of the method was to gain understanding of a phenomenon that was observed and to generate theory, i.e. the approach was inductive rather than deductive (Flick et al 2004).

The empirical investigation is mostly based on qualitative interviews with entrepreneurs within the arts/cultural sphere. In addition to this, discourse analysis has been conducted of artifacts produced by the companies in the study. The two different methods are not separated from one another but rather used in relation to one another in trying to create a contextual understanding of the subject for the study.

Qualitative methods are especially useful when the nature of the subject being studied is multifaceted and complex, as it is in this case. Also, when the initial understanding of the subject cannot really be related to the existing body of theory and thus cannot be conceptualized by the existing concepts a qualitative point of departure is necessary (Flick et al 2004; Reinharz 1992). I could have tried to explain the observed phenomena by using theories from business administration but in my opinion such theories fail to take into consideration the full meaning of entrepreneurship and I therefore chose to try to develop my own.

The methodological approach used in the thesis resembles ethnographic methods in the sense that the research questions are directed towards creating a scientific explanation expressed through theory and based on the subjects own understanding of their social world. The approach

¹¹ See Latour (2005) for a critical discussion of the concept of method.

could be said to be an understanding one in Webers (1922/1983) sense in that it aims to understand social actions through an analysis of the actors own interpretations of these.

The methodological approach could also be described as feminist in the sense that it strives towards an integration of activism and scholarship (Reinharz 1992). Thus it is not feminist in the sense of focusing on women only, or aiming at improving some quantitatively understood 'equity' but rather in the sense that the empirical findings is considered in relation to how they can contribute to the further existence of companies working outside the current economic system, where growth is only measured in quantitative and monetary values. This is an important notion because my interest for the subject was all from the beginning based in a social criticism quite similar to that expressed by the interviewees.

3.1. Interviews

Interviews are, according to Gubrium & Holstein (1997), a valuable empirical method when it comes to creating an understanding of people's sense making of their lives and social situations. Interviewing might be a way of gaining a better understanding of people's ideas, thoughts and memories as they are expressed in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher (Reinharz 1992; Flick et al 2004). According to Reinharz "open-ended interview research explores people's views of reality and allows the researcher to generate theory" (1992:18). The approach can also be compared with Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory, an inductive approach to data-analysis which often relies on interviews with open-ended questions (Reinharz 1992).

The interviews for this thesis were semi-structured and the open-ended questions aimed at receiving a better understanding of how the interviewees viewed their activities, the objective of their work, obstacles encountered and strategies adopted to overcome various difficulties. Each

interview consisted of a rather broad discussion in which the interviewees elaborated on issues central for the thesis topic.

3.1.1. The interviewees

All in all five companies were interviewed. At least one interview was conducted with each company; in one case a follow-up interview was made and in three cases follow-up question was asked by email or telephone. I had already interviewed two of the companies for another research project¹² and these became the first cases which in turn made suggestions on companies with similar views that might be suitable for my investigation. The sample can thus be said to be gathered using a 'snowball' strategy (Flick et al 2004).

The interviewees were approached by an email explaining the purpose of the study and asking them to participate. Appointments were made by telephone and the companies were asked to suggest a suitable time and place for the interview. The interviews took place in the studios of the interviewees in four cases and at a café in one case and ranged from 45 minutes to three hours time. Three of the enterprises consisted of two people and those were interviewed together. This gave a certain dynamic to the discussion as the interviewees discussed the questions both with each other and with me. In one case the company consisted of five persons of which one was interviewed and another company consisted of a larger number of employees and in that case the executive was interviewed in an open environment in the company's premises with employees being around and sometimes making a comment.

3.1.2. Collection and analysis of data

The interviews were recorded and then transcribed in full. Afterwards the transcribed material was read through a number of times and coded and sorted on the basis of both prior knowledge.

¹² Constructing Regional Advantage: Towards State-of-the-art Regional Innovation System Policies in Europe (coordinator: Björn Asheim)

Analytical themes was developed using the initial broader categorization and the relation between different themes in the empirical material was made visible. The initial analysis formed the basis for the theoretical perspective developed.

The interviewees had many personal ideas and subjective theories on why things are as they are. Subjective theories "refers to the fact that the interviewees have a complex stock of knowledge about the topic under study" (Flick et al 2004:155). This is certainly true for the entrepreneurs whose experiences from thinking and acting in a 'new' way have made them reflect upon what makes them different. They were generally very willing to share their thoughts and experiences of being part of the cultural and/or creative sector. Some of the interviewees were also curious about what I had studied previously and wanted to know more about what I planned to write in my thesis. I sometimes got the feeling that the interviewees wanted to figure out something about my own ideology. This can be interpreted as a desire to tell their stories in a way that wouldn't be misunderstood.

3.2. Discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis is not to be considered a method but rather an approach consisting of different methodologies at different levels. Critical discourse analysis assumes a relation between language (not only linguistic but also visual language) and society and it is in this sense the approach has been made use of here. Norman Fairclough (2003) defines discourse in opposition to the rather narrow linguistic definition of a discourse. At the core of Faircloughs understanding of what constitutes a discourse lays the idea of discourse as social practice. By defining it as social practice the understanding of what a discourse is, is broaden. As social practice, discourses shape situations, institutions and social structures (Fairclough 2003). With this broader understanding, Fairclough also points at the importance of making the interconnectedness of things visible in order to develop a critical approach on discourse.

In this thesis, the discourses surrounding the field of economics provide in part the foundation for the very study. These discourses are mostly implicit and taken for granted in policy making as well as in academia and therefore it has been difficult to point to specific documents and the like within which discourses are hidden. The analysis is aimed at the discourses that determines how companies are viewed, what their main function in society is understood to be and how the value of entrepreneurship and the value of culture and creativity is perceived.

For example it is difficult to point to the fact that companies are profit maximizing organizations when this is so self-evident that practically no one points it out. A basic element of this thesis is that the neo-classical branch dominates the school of economics today. This assertion is based in a discourse analysis of theories from the field of economics and entrepreneurship research. Thus it can be said that parts of the theory section also constitute empirical material. Another way of doing it could have been to treat economic- and entrepreneurship theories as empirics and perform a more traditional discourse analysis of these, this conduct would however have made the thesis unnecessarily messy. In any case it should be noted that the research questions require a critical interpretation of theories and theoretical assumptions that are normally not put into question.

The discourse analysis approach in the thesis also consists of a closer look at the cultural artifacts produced by the companies. As Reinharz put it; the only limit to what can be considered a cultural artifact – and thus used as a "text" for research – is the researcher's imagination" (1992:146). That these entrepreneurs actually make things, how these relate to society and the wider economic system and for whom and for what purposes these artifacts are made are central aspects of their work and the circumstances under which they are working.

3.3. Limitations / difficulties with the method

One problem is that the interviews were conducted in Swedish. This leads to problems concerning the interpretation when the transcribed interviews are translated into English; small misinterpretations, of which I take full responsibility, might have occurred due to this. Another difficulty is that much of the communication in the interview situations was not verbal. The interviewees expressed themselves by nodding, making gestures and changing their voice modes. Because of this a more in-depth conversation analysis of the interview transcripts could have been valuable. James (1985; 1986, quoted in Reinharz 1992:20) for instance suggests it is important to pay attention to non-verbal communication because members of a subordinate group usually cannot clearly express their frustrations and discontents which may instead be expressed in inchoate ways. Subordinate is not the right word to describe the interviewees of this study but in relation to policy makers' interpretations of entrepreneurship and economic activities they are inferior. The frustrations they have experienced from this in their contacts with various policy initiatives and the like was often expressed by means of sighs, chunks, laughter and knowing glances. The understanding of the enterprises does not only come from what was communicated during the interviews but also from the context in which they took place and the feelings I got about the interviewees through their behavior and ways of being. It could for instance be mentioned that the clothing, appearance, the interior of their offices as well as those' locations in the city contributed to my understanding. This makes the empirics, in the strict sense, broader than what appears in the actual text. Yet it's quite difficult to communicate those impressions without making a full participation observation study which I afterwards have realized might have been interesting.

The selection of what empirical material to present has been made on basis of the purpose of the thesis; to explain how the entrepreneurs differ. This procedure will inevitable mean that other themes which may be equally characteristic for them will not be taken into account. I hence

choose to see the companies as something new and this affects the focus of the empirical presentation. Even though the companies have other qualities I will highlight those which indicate newness and a transformation of the current economic system. Hence there is a risk of me excluding things that they themselves would have considered important, most likely part of the complexity is lost when focus is narrowed down. I hope that the interviewees will forgive me for that and that they share my fascination for the new economic order of which they are an important part.

3.3.1. Generalizability

The number of interviewees in the sample is rather small and this raises the question of generalizability. However, the purpose of the thesis is not to generate data from which general results can be drawn but to make an in-depth analysis of an observed phenomenon. The interviewees are rather to be thought of as examples, or cases, about which I strive to generate new theories. Behind the requirement of generalizability there is an approach that believes the social sciences, in a manner like that of the natural sciences, should be able to make general statements about observed phenomena when in fact the quality of social research should be its ability to shed light on what has not yet been given attention (Flick et al 2004).

4. The entrepreneurs – environmentalism and social criticism through culture

In the chapter that follows a brief introduction to all the companies will be provided. The purpose is to give an idea about what they do and what their businesses are about. According to Shane's (2003) definition the interviewees can be termed entrepreneurs both in that they have created some kind of organization that did not exist before and in that they are self-employed, i.e. they are working for personal profits rather than for wages paid by others. Furthermore all of them could be sorted under the category of cultural workers, although they do very different things. They produce services, 'experiences', as well as tangible goods; it is more the content than the form which is relevant to see in order to understand them.

4.1. Apocalypse

Apocalypse is a design studio consisting of two industrial designers that uses design as a tool to work for sustainable development. They produce traditional consumer's goods as well as narrower designer goods and in addition they offer consulting, lectures and workshops.

Apocalypse works with sustainable design and re-use of materials, they have developed a method, called past, present, future (PPF), that is used to guarantee that in all their products the whole life-cycle of the materials is taken into consideration. Furthermore, their work is done according to a manifesto that is supposed to guarantee the quality of all their products or services (from Apocalypse web page):

- There's an everyday need for this product.
- The product is made entirely, or partly, by waste/used materials and can be recycled.
- The product is locally produced, in relation to the material.
- The product strives to be environmental friendly in every step of the production line.
- The final product carries an interesting recycling story.

- The product has a thought-trough design.

Their first and most celebrated product was the 'falafel-soap', a soap made of recycled frying oil from Malmö's falafel kitchens. This product is, according to Apocalypse “a great example of how we think and the type of questions we want to ask”. The falafel soap will be more thoroughly analyzed below.

4.2. Damanco

Damanco was grounded in 2005 by four persons who shared the same values and believes. The interviewee from Damanco previously had an association with the aim to problematize the world view in which everything is divided into the dichotomy of nature and culture, because “really, how sustainable is that?”. This in turn led her to start a business as a sole trader in which she worked with communication from a sustainable perspective. When the business became too large to handle for one person she got together with a number of colleagues and Damanco was born. Today the company consists of five persons who work on projects within development and communication as well as marketing. The interviewee describes the company as a communication agency that creates allover solutions for sustainable urban development.

The company works almost exclusively with the municipality and this is a conscious choice, according to the interviewee “it sounds a bit crazy because most people believe the opposite, but I have always thought that at the municipality level it’s possible to actually make some change”. They also work in close collaboration with a wide range of companies and entrepreneurs from various areas. The company has evolved from in the beginning doing more of traditional things, “events and exhibitions, film productions and flyers” to now working more with “strategies, visions, development of concepts and coaching”. The focus on sustainable urban development has also emerged over time and the company has now found a niche in which they are quite successful.

4.3. Good World

The very name of this company reveals something about their attitudes to economic activities and the line “in good we trust” expresses this view on their home page. Founded in 2000, the company consists of a number of persons varying between 12 and 15. Good world is active in the field of film production and post production. They produce their own projects as well as those of others and they work on commissions from public and private sector. One example is the tv-program “papas kappsäck” that made music stories from around the world.

Good World have a target image towards which they work: ”we want to work with people who we like and who likes us because then we like it best”. Hence it is much about creating a company where all employees thrive and this is more important than generating a large profit.

The company was founded by working on a project on environmental issues, for which the funding partially came from the Ministry of the environment. This search for new solutions, including funding a film project with other money than those usually assigned to the film industry has always been a strategy for Good World. The interviewee maintains that her background as an artist has been valuable when it comes to working with monetary issues. “What an artist is good at is creating what not yet exist. Art is about inventing new things, trying out and finding new ways and in a way this is similar to doing business”.

During the interview we talk a lot about the problems with the current economic system and the crucial need to transform it into a more sustainable direction. The interviewee maintains that “it is also about thinking laterally when it comes to economics, and not believe that it must be like it was yesterday /.../ we may not fit perfectly with the economic system, we are not as rational as it is presumed”.

4.4. Misplay

Misplay consists of two independent artists who are currently employed as PhD students at the University of Malmö, in media- and communication studies and in interaction design, respectively. They are equally involved in the projects they do under the Misplay brand and have been working together since 2003. According to their home page, their activities are about “exploring [their] interest in collaborative storytelling, participation and everyday communication using several channels of communication such as answering machines, embroidery, text messages and eye-to-eye meetings”. In addition to this they offer lectures and workshops and work on commission from private as well as public sector. They have, for instance, been working with team building for SonyEricsson based on the methods that form the basis of their work. According to themselves “it’s some kind of artistic practice /.../ we’re good at creating situations for meetings, for example, or just hold workshops to get a flow of ideas”.

Misplay work from a feminist platform and have also been participating in academic conferences on the topic of feminist practices. In the context of their PhD positions they also teach students who eventually will work with some form of culture and hence they have good insight into the intentions of these.

4.5. Unsworn Industries

Unsworn Industries is an interaction design- and innovation studio consisting of two interaction designers. The enterprise moves in the area between art and traditional production of goods and services and according to themselves they have “a pathological unwillingness to draw a line between art and the other things we do”. Unsworn Industries are made up of no less than eight different departments, to be able to handle the various missions they work with and the web page title “an epicenter of excellence” expresses the straggly character of the enterprise. They don’t work with products or services in the traditional sense but as one of them puts it during the interview: “We usually say that we are making rooms for action, action spaces”. While, ac-

ording to one of them, many interaction designers are working with interfaces or mobile phone applications and the like they “are working a bit broader than that, we work quite a lot in different rooms and outside of the screen, though there is often some kind of digital technology involved”. Action spaces are to be understood as something different from the experiences on which the creative sector rely; while the latter are rather predetermined the former are not finished until the user has contributed with something. While pointing out that “we don’t see ourselves as activists” they appreciate the possibilities that come with artistic work while still being a traditional company.

One of their most renowned products is the parasopes which are “tall binocular viewers. By looking into a parascope you can have a peek into panoramic visualizations of potential futures in a particular place”. (from Parascope web page). Thus they can be thought of as a tool for city planning with civic influence.

4.6. Distinguishing values, believes and ideologies of the entrepreneurs

The following section addresses the specific values and ideologies of the entrepreneurs interviewed. They do not resemble traditional, profit-seeking entrepreneurs (Shane 2003; Landström 2005) but may rather be seen as people who shape their business in unity with their ideology, much like the ideal described by Söderbaum (2000), Miller (1998; 2005) and Hydén (2008). Common themes in the interviews include environmental and social concerns together with a genuine interest in societal development questions. Instead of doing what entrepreneurs usually do they choose to try out new paths. Values, believes and ideologies constitute the vary basis for the ground-breaking element of these entrepreneurs.

4.6.1. Social criticism and environmentalism

Social criticism is usually not associated with entrepreneurship, at least not with the traditional meaning of the concept. But for the entrepreneurs interviewed it can be said to constitute the very foundation of their businesses and the dedication they give it.

Apocalypse is grounded in a general wish to put into question consumption and gadgets. The reason why the two persons who make up Apocalypse met in the first place was a common interest in alternative perspectives of the design profession. They explain that they have always had a strong engagement for environmental issues and that this result in what they feel is a conflict within the design profession, as one of them puts it:

I never felt quite at home in the design world, though I enjoy working with the creative part. It's just that, I cannot imagine to design just a new chair, if you go to the furniture fair, for instance, that's just what they do year after year after year, exhibit that new damn chair. I have always sought after some deeper meaning and this combination we work with in Apocalypse is the only thing that feels right.

Unsworn Industries express similar experiences with being in the design profession because “the design world is traditionally pretty firmly anchored in consumption culture and you’re doing things that are intended for mass production”. They maintain, however, that in interaction design “there was some kind of reflection, small embryos of critical thinking even within a design education, it was not just about craft skills”.

The interviewee from Good World talks a lot about asking completely different questions than what is common within the moving images branch and points out that, “I don’t see those questions as less market oriented. On the contrary, for me, it’s a future market”. During the interview we talked about policy initiatives for the moving images branch and how these tend to fail in being reflexive about the type of questions they pursue: “It is way too much about men and economy and way too little about women and content”. The interviewee correctly points out that the initiatives “are about economic growth, not about cultural growth”. In contrast to this Good

World works in a project together with the University of Malmö in which the problematizing constitute the very foundation and this is of much greater value for the company. They choose to work with a different kind of content because they feel more comfortable in doing so but they also realize that, as the interviewee puts it “businesses will be more and more about that kind of things, about audiences and target groups, and these people are not just excluded, they are also a certain audience, a certain target group, consumers”.

4.6.2. The aim is to make change

Unsworn Industries work on a wide array of projects, one example is the parascope, which are binocular viewers that help people imagine potential futures. They have for instance been used by the city of Malmö in order to stage possible outcomes of city planning. The parascope were placed around the city of Malmö in January 2009. Unsworn Industries explain that: ”each parascope presents five different proposals on future scenarios of the traffic planning. And the proposals were based on suggestions from people in Malmö”. The parascope are not just a commission but has a deeper purpose, according to one of the interviewees from Unsworn Industries: ”Ultimately we hope that people in Malmö will be able to draw their own prospects, and hand over to the parascope, so that it will be a radical democratic tool, in a way, we hope”. According to the home page of the parascope: “realizing that the design of urban space is not set in stone, feeling that change is possible is a first step towards participating in it and acting upon how the urban environment is shaped” (from parascope web page).

The businesses of Damanco is also to a large extent about reveling new perspectives and opportunities for sustainable urban development, i.e. to cause change; to find strategies for how to solve real environmental- and social urban problems and difficulties. The company can be said to have an agenda; they do not only accept any commission but it has to be in line with their ideals.

During the interview Unsworn Industries talked about “designing the right thing, designing the thing right”. There is, in part, a handcraft approach to design that empathizes user-friendliness

and sufficiency of goods but there is also a potentially critical dimension to it. By their work they often take the opportunity to, in one way or another put the established production and consumption patterns into question, in the words of one of the interviewees:

Maybe we shouldn't be designing better entertainment systems for cars because then we are in fact helping to make car driving more bearable / ... /as designers we have a responsibility not only to make the DVD player easy to handle but also to take responsibility and ask ourselves, do we want to contribute to, do we really want to promote that transport system.

Apocalypse is a good example of what it could be like when the founders of a company are seriously committed to reducing its environmental impact. Apocalypse uses as much train, boat and bike as possible "always when we transport ourselves, but it is more difficult when it comes to our products". They explain that they have been mapping out all transport firms in Sweden in order to find the most environmentally friendly option.

4.7. How to run a business based on ideology

A fundamental point of view among the entrepreneurs is the unwillingness to compromise with their values and beliefs. Misplay explains that they would have nothing against contributing to the welfare of the business sector "without changing our activities too much". When they have been working with, among others, SonyEricsson they have done so while still "holding on to our ideals". The interviewee from Good World believes that it is important to work with the kind of content they believe in, in order to be a good producer of content: "the kind of content we choose to work with is a kind that we believe in". Thus it can be said that the values and beliefs of the entrepreneurs are affecting their companies, what projects they choose to work on and who they chose to collaborate with. When I ask the interviewee from Good World if the company has ever declined collaboration because of opposition in regard to values, she tells me about one of her proudest moments:

I declined an affair worth seven hundred thousand, it was with [two large Swedish service companies], because I thought their message was so miserable. When I think back, it's like god damn it, I said no to seven hundred thousand... and that sure makes me a bit proud.

Their sticking to their values and beliefs could also be said to be grounded in a kind of branding strategy, “whatever we are and whatever we do we exploit ourselves to the world and I think that’s branding, and because of that its very important that we stick to what we feel is okay”, according to one of the interviewees from Misplay.

4.7.1 The resigning of profit maximization

The wish to make money is of course shared by something else (Apocalypse)

One consequence of the ideologies accounted for by these entrepreneurs is the difficulties with getting the business to generate enough yields, even if the demands are quite small. One of the interviewees from Misplay explains that “basically, I need money to pay the rent and such /.../ I need an income but that income must not come from anywhere”. And rather than tolerating an income from something that is not in line with the ideology a lower salary is accepted.

One of the interviewees from Apocalypse explains that: "We are not driven by earning fast money but this doesn't mean, in any way, that we don't want to take out salaries". The interviewee from Good World too elaborates on the issue and says that: “I think it’s generally and without question assumed that market thinking is just about maximizing the economic surplus”. Good World instead works on maximizing other values than purely monetary.

When evaluating different tasks and commissions Unsworn Industries take into consideration a number of bars, symbolized by different figures, by which possible projects can be evaluated:

The dollar sign here, that is how much money we get for it, a very important factor. The second one is the attention it can give us, branding. Yet another important factor for us is if we learn something, we are everlasting students, the kind that never give up learning so that's an important factor also. If we learn a lot it does not matter that

much if the other bars are a bit low. The fourth is the contacts it brings, networks, new customers, partners and such. Or, just people we have wanted to work with for a long time. And fifth, we have quite many bars, it started with four, then we have added the star, if we make the world a better place, some kind of idealism. And finally we realized that we needed to have one last factor, if it made us happy.

None of the entrepreneurs are against growth per se, what is rejected is the idea that growth is the only aim for their activities. From a policy perspective there does not seem to be much understanding of those who wish to make enough money for a decent living but still does not consider profit maximization an ultimate goal. According to the interviewees from Apocalypse “there is very much focus on product and marketing and very much a focus on revenue, revenue, revenue”. While carefully pointing out that they are not against growth per se, they do believe it is a problem that this is the only focus companies are assumed to have.

Yet another consequence is that the companies, by necessity, will need to have a rather long-term perspective in regard to revenues or ‘market successes’ for their products. A project isn’t always expected to generate money but also when it is those must not come within a certain time frame. One of the interviewees from misplay explains that “we don’t necessarily work with short-term perspectives, I believe that things can happen after many years, you start something and then you wait and see”. The interviewee from Good World maintains that “we want to have a long-term perspective”.

4.7.2. The falafel soap – a product with an ideology

The falafel soap is a multifaceted product with many analytically interesting aspects. Here it will be treated as an example of a product with an ideological value. What makes it particularly interesting is that it is, after all, a typical mass consumption product. By producing it in a whole new way a possible development of the traditional production system in its broadest sense is shown. The development of the soap is an example of a different thinking in regard to entrepreneurship and how to run a business as well as in terms of product development.

The interviewees from Apocalypse explain that they have been working with various forms of crafts and therefore got interested in soap making. Soap has been manufactured for a long time and in the pre-industrial age leftovers from slaughter; pig fat that is, was the basic component together with an alkaline, usually ash.

So we started to think about what rest-fats we have today, that is not animal, we are both vegetarians and we think it's disgusting to wash in pig fat and wanted to get away from the use of ingredients with animal origin. Finally we realized that we have a lot of falafel kitchens in Malmö and they use vegetable fats... and so that's the way it was.

The soap is made of recycled frying oil. The oil is cleaned by a special filtering technique before it is mixed with the rest of the ingredients and then left to solidify. The first version of the soap was made without perfume so that consumers would not think that the scent masked a smell of old falafels. In order to get access to the skills and knowledge required for the production Apocalypse contacted and started collaboration with a chemist. The scent 'ultra fresh bakery bouquet' is developed together with a perfumer and the soap is manufactured by Apocalypse themselves¹³.

The falafel soap came to being from a desire to put into question the established means of production and to show that it is possible to do things in a different way. In the interview Apocalypse explain their reasoning that led to the idea:

It was important also with the recycling aspect just that ... the oil is a big problem actually, it comes out in the sewage system and even when it is recycled, that is not to make the best out of the oil ... so we wanted to give it a new life. Plus, we're designers and we know that we want to continue working as designers but we also want to raise debate and ask questions about consumption and gadgets and products, this soap is

¹³ Lately they have found a manufacturer who helps with the rather time-consuming production process.

an excellent example of how we think and the kinds of questions we want to ask.

Potential revenues were not crucial for the development of the falafel soap. According the interviewees from Apocalypse the soap “almost pays itself /.../though it is not something we have thought, that will make us millionaires exactly, that’s not why we chose to make falafel soap”. Instead of applying for a patent or some other kind of product or brand protection Apocalypse says that:

We think on the contrary that it would be great if someone else would like to do this soap too /.../ It is something that makes something good for the environment and for humanity, and why would we keep it to ourselves when others also could do well ... thus, we can ... do we gain personally in this, or, now it sounds very big but, or should the whole world benefit from this, that’s the issue here.

4. 8. The practical conduct of the companies

In the part below a more detailed description is given of how the entrepreneurs operate in practice. The counterpart in traditional entrepreneurship would be an examination of business models or plans. It might not be however, appropriate to speak of business models when the ‘business’ differ to such a large extent from traditional ones.

Two things distinguish the models adopted by these entrepreneurs. First, since they are acting within both the cultural and the economic sphere they have the possibility to make use of subsidies, scholarships, etc for artists, and also work on assignments from the cultural sector of galleries, museums and other instances. Second, they usually manage their enterprises by the use of, often loose-composited, networks. These two characteristics will be elaborated upon, they are not, however, quite easy to separate since they both affect each other. None of the companies can be said to belong to one branch only and their most common denominator is that they all engage in the creation of cultural goods, expressions or experiences of some kind. Their work often includes combinations of different knowledge sources and influences, a procedure that

requires a broad base of input. As a consequence the input comes from many directions which is why it is beneficial to have a large network.

4.8.1. Diversification and culture

The interviewee from Damanco explains that an explicit aim for the business is to combine research- and education instances with public- and private sector with arts and culture. Their activities are a lot about engaging the right persons from the perspective of the employer and could include the research- and business community as well as the city citizens. In a similar manner Unsworn Industries explains that their enterprise has “three legs, art, business and research and education, so that we have many possibilities to implement certain projects”. Apocalypse works a lot by combining different knowledge areas and finding competences from different fields “we are good at finding key persons with the right competences for the right project”. Good world also cooperate with research and education instances in various ways and have taken on commissions from public as well as private sector. According to the interviewee they are: “working of course with both economy and culture, and as I would like to call it, in my way of thinking ... nonprofit commercialism, which is my own concept”.

As Unsworn Industries work with both self-initiated projects and commissions from other employers, they have to find different ways to get their projects funded “either by the industry, then we are working as consultants, or if we can find funding in the cultural and artistic spheres, and sometimes we also work with education, and research ... so it is quite mixed”. They don’t prefer to work with one rather than the other but “we like projects that are fun”. The film branch traditionally fund their projects both by means of subsidies and revenues, and this is true also for Good World, according to the interviewee it’s about “either sending invoices, or get some kind of film funding and economic support” in order to maintain the business. Misplay, being PhD students, get their main funding from the research- and education sector while also taking on commissions from “outside the house”.

Hence, they are not entrepreneurs in the traditional sense but neither are they ‘artists’ or pure cultural workers. The interviewee from Good World explains that “I have one leg in culture and one in the market”. Below one of the interviewees from Apocalypse answer the question of whether they consider themselves to be primarily cultural workers or a company:

We are a mix ... We are a company, and we must be for taxation reasons, but also because we sell products and goods and services, but we also have a strong cultural commitment.

This is a consequence of the nature of their projects and the meaning and purpose inherent in them; they are not likely to yield profit in the way fully market oriented projects would.

According to one of the interviewees from Misplay “the art sphere has been best suited for the things that I wanted to do, it was probably the only possible place to implement them”. The strategies they develop in order to financially realize their ideas are not restricted to either one sphere but may include revenues from products and services, commissions from public- and private sector and subsidies and scholarships. Apocalypse for instance, each have their own firm when they’re freelancing “and that helps putting food on the table”. In addition they gain income from lecturing and holding workshops.

Furthermore, some of the entrepreneurs express that they would not want to work as pure artists. While talking about one of their projects, one of the interviewees from Unsworn Industries explain that “we think it’s interesting when you don’t really know, is it a work of art or is it a telephone service?” The products become more interesting when they invade the area of everyday life instead of being located in a museum or an art gallery. Or as one of the interviewees from Misplay puts it:

For me, it could also have been an interesting, challenging sounds very pretentious, but then, I'm really not first and foremost interested in museums or galleries in that kind of way, I mean, it's also interesting and fun, but it's also fun when it can come out in everyday life /.../ if it was possible for me to work with that kind of things within a compa-

ny, I would have had nothing against it... But if the kind of values that we work with had not been given priority within the company, it would have been impossible.

It would rather be chosen to realize ideas within the shape of a traditional company then doing it by means of traditional cultural work but because of the nature of the projects this is not accomplishable. By being able to move between different economic formations the opportunities to realize their ideas and work with what they are interested in are higher. Unsworn Industries consider it to be an advantage to be able to operate in both spheres, as one of them puts it “we have an opportunity, we are organized as a company, but we also have access to the art world, we have been working as artist and we also have contacts within academia and the university”.

4.8.2. Competences through networks

The lonely entrepreneur is definitely not a role model for me, I hardly do anything alone nowadays, everything is in collaboration (Misplay)

There are several reason why the entrepreneurs in this study chooses to manage their enterprises in networks. Because they are not growth oriented they need not and cannot hire employees on a regular basis like traditional businesses do. Instead they provide work for people who often are self-employed like themselves, on a project basis. The interviewee from Damanco says that “we often say to those we want to work with that if you start your own business we can almost guarantee you three projects this year, but we cannot guarantee work all the time and we cannot afford to hire you”. Good World expresses a similar view when the interviewee explains that the kind of business they run have to manage an economic reality in which not much is certain. “I tell our employees that one of the things they get to learn here is how to handle uncertainty when it comes to economic matters. I can’t promise you economic security but on the contrary you might get the chance to experience something else”. Furthermore there is an important aspect of autonomy in this practice; Unsworn Industries would not be able to be ‘unsworn’ to the same extent if they had employees to take into account.

Another case is when the project come about in a loose constellation and “when you don’t want to formalize it into starting a traditional business”, according to one of the interviewees from Misplay. Those are projects which also require a large amount of autonomy of the participants. A good example of such a project is the ‘x-front pants’. These pants were developed out of “A practice-led research project about fashion, social norms, anxiety, and standing up to pee” (from x-front web page). According to Misplay, who took part in the project, there is great potential to make a product out of it but it has not yet been done because “it is a loose composited network”. The problems with introducing a product that comes out of a network of individuals and not a traditional business enterprise has to do with the division of tasks and income, for instance and according to the interviewees there exists no well functioning model for how to operate a business together with people “in a much more loose constellation”.

The network character is suitable also because of the many different skills and the various knowledge sources required. Unsworn Industries also maintain that having a large network is important for their business and that they have been quite successful in creating one. This means that they implement their projects in collaboration with other small businesses or individuals which can best be described as self-employed. The ability to get access the right competencies is important also for Apocalypse, whose projects often involve expertise from diverse areas. ”We make an extreme amount of research before each project, that’s almost the most important part of it”. It’s not possible to have all that competence in-house, why ”it is collaborations that apply to us, different networks for different projects and methods”. Apocalypse maintain that they have a particularly broad network and they constantly increase it.

Damanco is perhaps the best example of this; they are the archetype of a network company. Damanco involves a large number of people and acts as a node, which often handles the admin-

istrative tasks and pays the salaries to f-tax workers¹⁴ who work on a project basis. They mostly undertake commissions from the municipality “we work almost exclusively for the municipality” and serves as ‘the spider in the web’, which organizes the implementation of the project defined by the municipality. According to the interviewee there are many advantages with this approach “it gives us a degree of credibility, we can come and say that, yes we fix this, we have the contacts needed to compile the right skills”.

For Good world the network is “the very foundation of the company /.../ everything we do relates to the network”. One example is the Living Lab for new media which according to the interviewee consists of “a network with ideologies”. Participation in this lead Good world to produce the program ‘Miljonprogrammet’ for Swedish national television.

4.9. Difficulties of being ideological entrepreneurs

We’ve always felt that we’re outside of the whole damn system (Apocalypse)

Part of the purpose of this thesis is to provide insights into the problems and difficulties associated with this kind of entrepreneurship and this is done in the section that follows. The topic will not be given so much attention in the analysis but it is nonetheless important, not least in regard to future policy initiatives. I have chosen to focus in two problematic areas, legal organizational forms and the deficient understanding for companies that move in several fields in society, the cultural, services and traditional production of consumers goods.

4.9.1. Organizational forms

The legal forms of these companies vary. Two of them are limited liability companies, one is an economic association, one consists of two sole traders that share the name and brand and one consists of two people who have chosen not to start a formal business but instead looks to be

¹⁴ F-tax denotes a person who has a sole proprietorship and thus works on a consultancy basis.

employed together by their commissioners. A common theme in the interviews is that there exists no suitable legal form for them. The existing company forms are not perfectly satisfactory either because they are meant for growth oriented companies or because they do not fit with the network form, or both.

This becomes most clear in the case of Misplay who has chosen not to operate as a firm at all. In addition to the above mentioned reasons this decision has an ideological dimension, in the quote below one of the interviewees resonates about why it is so:

For me, it has been so much about, who am I if I am a 'f-wage tax'. I know there would be a lot of simplifications with it. But it's been a kind of, really a struggle with my ideology on how we are supposed to act against each other in the world. So that, I still send a-tax invoices, even though there isn't really no such thing, when I do things outside the house. Because, well, let it be uncomfortable, I often feel very uncomfortable. And there are really jobs that I have not been able to take, because it becomes too complicated with payment and so for that I have not f-wage tax.

The interviewee from Damanco has also been thinking a lot about different juridical forms for enterprises and the problems and possibilities associated with each of them. She started out with having a non-profit organization and took on commissions from various constituents. The negative aspects of this procedure become painfully clear when she became pregnant and realized that she had almost not entitled to any parental leave at all.

As one of the interviewees from Misplay puts it: "We have found it very difficult to scale up our business, and the very idea of entrepreneurship is to grow, grow as in higher turnover and more profit, for instance". The difficulties come when the business, because of its nature does not manage to growth in the ways traditional businesses are supposed to do.

At the time for the first interview Unsworn Industries consisted of two sole traders who shared the enterprise brand. When the second interview was conducted, however, they were on their way of becoming a limited liability corporation. There are a number of reasons for this, the in-

interviewees explain that exploiting the limited liability form is an important learning process. They believe it's interesting to see what could be done in this "the most fundamental capitalist form that is both interesting and a bit scary".

4.9.2. Lack of understanding for cultural enterprises

Some of the interviewees raise the point that commissioners are often unwilling to pay for their services and that this is a big problem. For Apocalypse the problem is not a lack of commissions "we could spend 40 hours a week just traveling around and holding lectures for free", but the lack of payment. According to the interviewees people often tend to suppose that because they are so involved in what they are doing, they are more than happy to do it without payment. This is recognized also by Misplay, especially in their role as teachers for prospective cultural workers.

Furthermore, the network approach poses problems because the vast number of help instances does not have the proper understanding of the phenomena. Most companies have, or seek to have, their competence in permanent staff and increased employment is an important measurement of the success of a firm or a policy initiative. Likewise there is little understanding of companies that are not profit maximizing. According to the interviewees from Apocalypse they often come upon a view held by business developers that "it feels a bit like there is a view that either you want nothing but to make money or you wish not to make money at all". Apocalypse, by contrast, do not work solely for the purpose of growth and they want to be able to make projects that are not profit maximizing.

5. Final discussion

The entrepreneurs presented in this thesis represent a new way to run a business based on qualitative values and realized through networks. Furthermore they adopt both culture-oriented and market-oriented strategies in order to realize their ideas. In the part below the intention is to, in an analytical sense, connect the empirical finding to the theories gone through above. It is quite

clear that the entrepreneurs in this study represent an alternative approach to entrepreneurship and I intend to discuss how this can be understood. Entrepreneurs who often express criticism against trade and business and the consumer culture on which they themselves depend might seem strange, in any case they do exist and their attitudes will affect the ways they choose to run a business and realize their ideas.

I would like to introduce a new concept; since I have not found any suitable concept by which to describe this kind of entrepreneurship I choose to call them post-capitalist entrepreneurs. Post-capitalist denotes not a fixed phenomenon but can rather be used as a description of entrepreneurs who are neither business-oriented nor applies to the usual description of social entrepreneurs. Post-capitalist entrepreneurs challenge the capitalist economic system. They are self-employed and use the opportunities that come with it to realize their ideas and exert influence on social development in different ways.

5.1. The growth economy reconsidered

The “exponential growth culture” (Daly 1999; 1996) is challenged by the behavior of the entrepreneurs who not only explicitly refuse the aim of profit maximization but also aims at and manage to make a living out of their businesses. The fact that they are not growth oriented does not mean, however, that they do not want to have a salary for which it is possible to make a decent living. If the purpose of the current economic system is to create monetary surplus the purpose with their businesses is to create both monetary and other values while at the same time being able to influence social development. They are not interested in staying outside the economic system, like cultural workers sometimes are expected to, but rather than to adopt to it they try to change it to fit better with their condition.

A strategy for managing their businesses is by operating through networks. As the interviewees explain there are several advantages of organizing projects by networks of collaboration partners

who are self-employed. This could be interpreted in terms of ‘flexibility’ on the labour market; it does bring a certain amount of insecurity in regard to the employees’ monetary situation and ability to make a decent living. This seems to be offset, however, by the entrepreneurs in this study who value the freedom of work high enough not to take ‘any’ job, unless it’s really necessary. Perhaps this is a sign that the security systems have not yet adapted to the situation for post-capitalist entrepreneurship. This is confirmed by the interviewees complains about the lack of formal standards for doing business in their way.

The network character of these enterprises might be understood as post-capitalist in the sense that there is no central nod towards which capital can accumulate. Capital accumulation is the very stuff of capitalist economies and this is rendered impossible when a project is committed by a loose composited network.

There is another radical dimension to the network character, noted by Castells (2000), namely the power of self-organization. According to Castells there is a subversive power in the network organization and this is because of the lack of a central unit where capital and power can accumulate.

5.1.1. Aspects of commodification

When a traditional entrepreneur gets an idea this idea is modified to become a business that will be as profitable as possible; if an idea does not prove to be profitable it is most likely rejected. It could be said that ideas that are considered good in the view of the traditional entrepreneur also has to prove that they are actually good by generating profit. In the case of the entrepreneurs in this study on the other hand, the initial business idea is held on to, even though this leads to making it more difficult or more expensive. A good idea is a good idea even if it does not generate profits. This does not mean that the goods they produce are restricted from generating any profits at all but that they have to without being changed in their character. So when Unsworn

Industries implement their parascope on commission from the city of Malmö they not only create a successful product but realize their idea of “a radical democratic tool”.

This could be interpreted in terms of a strong connection between the entrepreneur’s personal ideas and the goods and services they produce. From the Marxist point of view, in traditional capitalist production the worker becomes alienated from what she produces; the connection between her and the fruits of her work is cut loose when those enters the market sphere as commodified goods (Marx 1867/1990). Cultural goods, too, become commodified when they appear on the market in the shape of experiences or content inherent in other consumer goods (compare to Lash & Lury’s 2007 concept of thingification). To produce only for the purpose of (somebody else’s) profits, which is fundamental for the capitalist growth economy, means that the worker and the products becomes alienated, regardless of whether the product is a good or something intangible. When the entrepreneurs in this study refuse to modify their products in order to adjust them to the market they avoid this and remain in control of what they produce. For them it is not an alternative to blindly adapt to the market reality surrounding their products and therefore those cannot really be considered to be commodities. A commodity has to be produced for the purpose of being sold on a market and the person who produces it has not much influence over how the profits are being used. This is probably the main reason why post-capitalist is such a suitable term for these entrepreneurs.

The falafel soap is an interesting product to analyze in regard to different kinds of values. The way I see it, it certainly have a use value in its ability to clean, which is what soaps are normally for. It also has an exchange value; it can be purchased for money in a store. In addition, it possesses a value of “making the world a better place” as one of the interviewees from Apocalypse puts it. Its ability to make the world a little bit better lies in the way in which it is being produced; purchasing it becomes a small contribution to a sustainable economy.

This is not to be thought of as a symbolic value which is one of emotions, of representations and simulations (Lash & Lury 2007). The value of the falafel soap is concrete; the incentive for buying it is not in that it represents some desirable symbolic meaning but in that it actually helps recycling frying oil, which “is a really big problem”.

5.2. In between culture and the growth economy

The entrepreneurs are both cultural workers and traditional companies. In the theory section, however, it was said that there is a difference between these two, both in a practical and in a discursive sense. So how can this be? Because their conduct is to such a large extent a matter of criticizing they would not have been able to survive if they would have to fully adapt to market reality. The cultural sphere has always been a place where to exert critique (Adorno 1991; Hesmondhalgh 2007) so by partly being cultural workers they obtain a certain degree of freedom to do so.

In the projects of Unsworn Industries it is possible to detect an influence from the critical design perspective. The parascopes, for instance, could be a common future attribute in urban environment; it enriches the creativity and makes it possible to think through binoculars. It is about creating a direct democracy in which citizens are given the opportunity to take a greater part in shaping their local environment. The parascopes makes it possible to imagine a reality in which parascopes and similar innovations would be common features in the urban setting.

The falafel soap, too, is a good example of how design as a cultural practice can change the meaning of a traditional consumer good. The soap is intended to raise debate and ask questions about consumption and in this it can be considered subversive. It is a critical design product in that it offers a critique of the present through the material embodiment of functions derived from alternative value systems, in this case the ecological value system (Dunne 2005).

When cultural goods become commodified they lose their power to exert critique (Hesmondhalgh 2007; Adorno 1991). It was stated above that the products and services of these entrepreneurs does not resemble commodities and therefore it would be paradoxical to aim at making them successful in terms of profits. This means also that, as noted already by Adorno (1991), they become potentially disruptive for the capitalist system. What is interesting though is that they all manage to make a living out of their business; they do not fit into the image of the poor artist. When the significance of culture on the economy increases (Florida 2004; KEA 2006; UNCTAD 2008; ITPS 2007) our understanding of the relation between culture and the market changes (Hesmondhalgh 2007). So if the (often) critical cultural worker or artist is to become entrepreneurial this means that the economic system must adopt to fit better with their values and ideologies.

With the policy maker's vocabulary, the entrepreneurs in this study could be said to belong to the creative sector and they thus constitute an important requirement for economic growth. They are, however, more interested in exploring alternative approaches and value systems other than the strictly economical, therefore much of their work is not consistent with the needs of the business sector (which is to increase economic growth). The fact that they still aims at and manage to make a living out of their businesses challenges the distinction between culture and the market. This could be seen as if the growing importance of culture for the market is transforming not only culture but also the very economic system. When the market is forced to capitalize on a resource that traditionally has been critical to market thinking it would be strange if this would not have far-reaching consequences. Thus the activities of these entrepreneurs can be said to require, and thereby shape a post-capitalist order in which values other than monetary matters most.

5.3. An alternative approach to entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurs represent an alternative way of thinking in their views on society and economy as well as business practice. This becomes evident for instance in the interviewee from Good World's choice to turn down a deal because she thought the commissioner's message was too absurd. When Misplay refuses to form a company and thereby lose a piece of a potential market their ideological standpoints determines the decision. Likewise, the mapping out of all transportation firms in Sweden that Apocalypse did was not in order to find the most affordable one but to find the one matching their ecological ideals. Consider also Unsworn Industries way to assess possible commissions; monetary factors certainly have an important role but are far from the only factor taken into account. Hence decisions are made on basis of ideology (in a broad sense) rather than instrumental rationality (See Weber 1934/1997; Fischer 2000 for a discussion of the questioning of the scientific rationality). This is in line with the reflexive character of the post-modern subject (Lash & Urry 1994); ideological businesses seem like a natural step of this development.

The entrepreneurs could be thought of as political economic persons (Söderbaum 2000). They also fit into the perspectives of lifesizing entrepreneurship (Miller 1998; 2005) and ethiconomy (Hydén 2008) in that these denotes value based, in spite of revenue based, entrepreneurship. To a lesser extent they fit with the concept of the social entrepreneur. Social entrepreneurs are in many ways similar to traditional ditto, apart from their having social and not monetary goals they both strives to achieve clearly defined objectives and the results of their efforts can typically be measured; be given a quantitative value. Social entrepreneurs are therefore governed by the same instrumental rationality as are traditional entrepreneurs (in theory, in reality it may be different). The entrepreneurs in this study on the other hand, strives for more abstract social change, they wish to challenge, stimulate debate and reveal new opportunities rather than trying to for in-

stance eliminate poverty in a concrete way (c.f. Neck et al 2009; Rhodes and Donnelly-Cox 2008; Seelos & Mair 2005).

5.3.1 Ecological values

Environmental carefulness and sustainable development is frequent themes among the interviewees and some of them also have their 'ideological background' in the environmentalist movement. This can be compared to the fact that the highlighting of environmental issues has been a major reason for the transition to the information economy (Castells 2000; Lash & Urry 1987; 1994; Fischer 2000). Like environmental awareness has lead people in general to consider social issues and realizing values other than purely monetary the awareness has lead these entrepreneurs to form their businesses in consistency with their ideals.

Söderbaum, Daly and other ecological economists argue for an economy that can serve in harmony with the ecosystems and so does the entrepreneurs in this study when they challenge the established business standard. Hence they may be thought of not only as economic enterprises but also to large extent ecological enterprises.

Among the entrepreneurs there is a wish to form a more environmentally sustainable economy and this is accomplished by means of products and services that raise debate and asks questions about the current social and economical order. Although the falafel soap does not resemble a successful product in terms of profit or sales numbers it is successful in causing extremely little impact on the ecosystems. Therefore the facilitating of the processing of such products would be a good idea; they do provide ecological values and in the light of the environmental challenges facing the world today these should be considered as important as economical. The soap can be seen as a 'low throughput economy' (Daly 1999) kind of product and purchasing it becomes a contribution to a change towards a more ecologically sound economy. It could be assumed that the falafel soap possesses an ideological-ecological value in addition to its other values.

5.4. Implications of the findings and further research

Since the current economic system more than anything is based on the idea of growth, an enterprise that does not follow this idea becomes potentially disruptive for that system. This does not mean that the entrepreneurs should be considered extremely radical (which they themselves reject), rather they should be interpreted as a sign that the economic system is about to undergo changes; values other than monetary becomes more important.

The companies I have studied are not included in the economic theories underlying the framework for policies on entrepreneurship, it is therefore crucial to ensure they are included in the system in the future. Why? Because they represent tomorrow's entrepreneurship showing new ways to go for companies, they represent creativity, ecological- and social sustainability and societal conscientiousness. These elements have to be taken into consideration in the near future; they need to be included in policies on business development.

From a policy perspective it is often required that companies should contribute to growth in the form of employments if their existence is to be recognized. There is a risk that the employment to which these companies contribute is overlooked in statistic measures because it is not on a regular basis. They do, however, contribute to giving people jobs and this should be recognized. They do also, and this is even more important, contribute to the 'cultural growth' in society and provide interesting and enriching perspectives and alternatives. Wealth of society in the broader sense includes diversity, creativity and a new way of thinking which enhance the values of democracy and creates ways to sustainable development.

There is need to study this type of business closer, and to do so without the economic pre-understanding which is so common in the field of policy making. It would be interesting to look deeper into the issue of organizational forms, how these can be developed to fit better with alternative entrepreneurship conditions and to see if their organizational forms could be custo-

mized to fit with more traditional companies as well. It would also be motivated to look more into the question of policy measures aimed at supporting the cultural sector as well as the sustainable dimension of the economy. Issues such as how to develop support for non-growth oriented companies as well as how to better measure their social benefit would be of high priority. One way of doing this would be to let the companies take part in the development of support systems and measures. Because they are very aware and have clear opinions about what works and what does not their knowledge could be utilized more than what is done today.

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