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The Ground as A Facilitator of Collaborations

Organizational Design and Cultural Analysis

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Abstract

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This thesis is based on the research that I conducted in a co-working space called The Ground, located in Slussen, Malmö, Sweden. The aim of the research is to investigate how The Ground (and other co-working spaces, as well) can become more pro-active in facilitating collaborations, especially inside its own community. The Ground is a small host organization itself. Parallel to its future growth, the research results suggest installing a shared services provider unit that operates with the purposes of running daily operations, community building and facilitating collaborations. This unit is discussed in the context of a description of the professional community generated through the fieldwork, in relation to concepts borrowed from sociological, anthropological and management studies literatures.

Keywords: co-working, start-up, collaboration, incubator, facilitator, professional community, management, social capital, rational myths, organizational studies, cultural analysis

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1 INTRODUCTION

Referred to as “Ground” or “the house” in daily language, The Ground is a co-working space founded in 2012 in Malmö, Sweden. It is very pet-friendly, has a small yard with a barbecue and a large common area with cafeteria-style tables, a few couches and armchairs, a TV, a kitchen and three meeting rooms. Above this area there are office floors and more meeting rooms, spread in two buildings. Ground has a board which has no active daily task. So, there is only one staff for running the place daily, who is “The Head of Community and Operations”. Renee Gonzalez currently occupies this position. She is also a cultural anthropologist from USA and a MACA graduate, who joined The Ground in 2017.

While this research was ongoing, the board was convinced that it would be a good idea to hire a second staff for assisting Gonzalez in daily operations. As the research revealed at that point, The Ground is more of a workplace for the participants, rather than a place in between home and work. The tenants expect certain office services such as delivery of mails, welcoming visitors, cleaning, maintenance and so on. Although, convenience of office services is not the only reason for joining a co-working space. According to the participants, they avoid isolation and procrastination of the home-office, thanks to The Ground. It is a working environment for professionals to focus on work, on the other hand, the cosy vibe nurtures the community. In fact, The Ground’s home-like concept helps to provide a decent working environment because there are almost no distractions. The common area is decorated quite plain, without any large objects or vivid colours, lights, signs etc. It resembles a traditional Swedish home but with an oversized living room when you enter through the front door, into the common area. It is usually quiet, except the lunch time - the most crowded and social time of the day. The dress code is quite casual at The Ground, so most individuals add to the home-like concept. Shoes are not allowed inside, thus, socks are the fashion. Besides, there is no shoe noise.

Even though distraction factors are minimized, there are still a few things that could possibly cause distraction: there is a huge shoe rack next to the entrance, sort of a mess with many shoes all over. The office floors do not share the same cosy vibe and the distractions depend on how tenants use office spaces. There are several dogs, various breeds, going around the place while waiting their owners to call it a day. They might be a pleasant distraction.

Depending on the time of the day, and the day of the week, there might be very few people at The Ground. Although, The Ground is almost never completely empty. Besides people, most of the times there is at least one dog. In the common area, it is possible to play with dogs, to watch a start-up team trying out some devices, or just to run into some sort of event or gathering. Standing next to the coffee machine makes you open to interactions. Around the building, but usually in the common area, it is possible to see piled-up cargo deliveries and mails, kitchen stuff left outside due to loaded-up dish washers, empty mugs or left-over mess after events. Some these happen often, and some others happen rarely. Although, when they do, they may raise some tension among relevant people. Other than that, The Ground is a peaceful place for everyone.

The Ground was founded as *"a place to do cool stuff with friends"*, Gonzalez told me. The founder, Hampus Jakobsson, is a well-known entrepreneur in Malmo's start-up scene. He is one of the founders of TAT (The Astonishing Tribe), a mobile user interface company, which collaborated with large technology and telecommunication brands such as Sony-Ericsson, Samsung, Motorola, Nokia and Google's Android. After growing through these collaborations and reaching 180 employees, TAT was eventually acquired by Blackberry for $150,000,000 in 2010. The story of TAT is very similar to success stories from Silicon Valley and this is quite big for Malmo's start-up scene: Former members of the TAT team started several new companies, started professional communities such as Skane Start-Ups and The Ground and/or funded many other new ideas as investors. So, The Ground's first ever tenants (and, more-or-less, a bunch of friends to do cool stuff with) were some of those companies started by former TAT members. Since 2017, with such good references around Malmo, The Ground grew fast. Currently, it hosts 20 organizations and its community has around 140 members, including few freelancers and non-profits, as well.

After its growth, The Ground was no longer a playground for a group of friends. A new sort of community began to emerge. This research began as an attempt to understand this new community's interactions with and experiences of the co-working space. It developed into understanding the community identity and, eventually, the findings inspired the board for reconsidering the future vision and goals of The Ground: what could The Ground become beyond only a shared space?

I had the chance to ask Hampus Jakobsson about how he imagined The Ground at beginning and how it turned out, as he accepted my invitation for an interview. He has a quite small office, I guess around 6-7 m^2, where he placed a treadmill in front of his high desk. Why not? Walking helps thinking clearly and this office in question is probably not used for hosting formal meetings. I interviewed Jakobsson while he was walking on his treadmill, but he was still quite engaged. This interview revealed that The Ground was never meant to be merely a shared space. It also revealed that the intentions for The Ground in its first years, were faded into background noise while everyone were busy with their “real” start-ups. In Jakobsson’s words:

> *“One of my headaches about The Ground is we are very serendipitous about what our goals are. We are like it’s supposed to work and not break down but that’s no goal. If that is your goal in life, you can have a very weird lifestyle. It’s kind of like having the goal in life as staying alive”*

My impression has been that the tenants see The Ground as a community formed by themselves, rather than an institution that forms its own community. In contrast, for instance, MINC (an affiliate of Malmo Municipality) can be considered as an institution (an a hub) that provides support for start-ups in their first steps, thereby, creating a community of ambitious entrepreneurs. Unlike MINC, The Ground is self-defined as a “facilitator”, instead of “an incubator”. There are co-working spaces that provide extra services (such as marketing or financial consultancies, networking services, fund raising etc.) to “incubate” the start-ups. The Ground is not one of those as it does not provide any services except the community and the shared space. It is an only-by-invitation co-working space, mainly for start-ups: freelancers are hosted only in exceptional cases. As a facilitator, *“it is not the first step, but it is the next step”* as Participant Kemal puts it. Although, what “facilitator” means is not so clear: it should be clarified what it facilitates, how facilitating is different than community building, or what the methods are used for facilitating etc. This unclear positioning of the co-working space creates an ambiguity in many aspects, such as its goals or its only staff’s job description. According to Gonzalez, there are times when the tenants get confused about if she is an office manager or a community builder or both. Throughout the research, Gonzalez seemed to be unsure, as well.

In early February 2019, the research status at the time and the plans for further research were presented during a board meeting. Although we already agreed on this with Renee Gonzalez earlier, during this meeting the board also showed interest for the idea of developing the research into a thesis project. Further research was planned to focus on "collaboration", as becoming a facilitator of collaborations can be a possible goal for The Ground.

1.1 What is co-working?

"Co-working" is not an entirely new concept but it is a new interpretation adopted by entrepreneurs, who are operating in knowledge economy. A start-up co-working space, and its community as *"an entrepreneurial milieu"* (Pfeilstetter, 2017:2), is a workplace where freelancers, remote workers and entrepreneurs are gathered (and in some cases investors, too). This way of working offers a more autonomous, inclusive and flexible environment compared to traditional office spaces. Evolved from shared offices, start-up co-working spaces are one of the hottest trends in business world. Co-working is a new-concept workplace and a new way of organizing businesses. It is spreading rapidly worldwide. It can also be argued that although it is a great marketing success, in fact, the concept itself is quite old.

"Co-working", etymologically, comes from the same Latin roots with the word "collaboration"; both are meaning "co-labouring" (Brown et al., 2011). However, "co-working" does not necessarily refer to collaboration, but it may refer to sharing a workplace or a professional community, as well. Co-working spaces are defined based on their function of hosting other organizations, and also based on their communities. For instance; marketplaces, bazaars, bottegas, malls, workshops, factories… All these workplaces may qualify as "co-working spaces", depending on different perspectives: each includes different sort of parties and communities with different types of businesses. In other words, such spaces are designed for specific purposes, and based on specific types of knowledge, different than each other's.

In this study, co-working spaces will be taken on as developing institutions. A co-working space is essentially an organization. However, organizations (which are institution-like structures) can be regarded as institutions with limited focus, functions and/or authority. *"For scholars such as Williamson and Selznick, organizations are relatively distinct institutions that are either designed by or evolve out of the choices made by organizational agents"* (Scott, 2014:183). While organizations are focused on making pragmatic use of knowledge and information they have, institutions also produce, conserve, transfer and/or transform relevant knowledge and information (Scott, 2014). Depending on what type of knowledge and information they deal with, institutions steer communities or societies towards specific goals or changes. Such knowledge and information may contain known facts, shared ideas, common discourses and well-established practices. If we're talking about a religious institution, for instance: it reproduces and transfers religious ideas, discourses and practices as it accepts religious knowledge as the most legitimate one. Co-working spaces, on the other hand, are host organizations that are making use of capitalist knowledge and business information. However, by the nature of their business, they create relatively small and local communities. This leads co-working spaces to accumulating social resources. Recognizing co-working spaces as "developing institutions" does not imply that all similar organizations shall evolve into institutions. It rather means that if a co-working space can consolidate and mobilize its social resources, it may develop into an institution that produces new knowledge and/or promote a certain type of behaviour in a society.

Besides hosting a professional community, co-working spaces also provide consultancy services (not necessarily) and networking opportunities for their tenants. However, they do not tend to institutionalize further. Ultimately, this study presumes three main types of co-working spaces:

- those that merely provide a shared space
- those that build a community within a shared space
- those that are institutionalizing specific goals and identities to shape their communities

This research is focused on the transition between the second and the third ones listed above: The Ground is a co-working space which is building its own community, and it is ready to institutionalize specific identities and goals.

1.2 Research Aim: Facilitating Collaboration

The aim of this research is to investigate how a co-working space may be more pro-active in facilitating collaboration. Following that, the main research questions are:

- How is collaboration started or facilitated, under which circumstances and by whom (in relevance to The Ground context)?
- What are the community principles, values and practices that may be institutionalized in order to improve collaborative capacity?

This research depends on individual participants' contribution. Thereby, individual experiences of collaboration will be the departure point in answering the first question above. Also, individual feelings and opinions will be considered relevant and analysed for further insights to support the research aim. In order to answer the second question, a description of the community that provides an understanding of the community identity will be needed. Such description should cover at least some of the community values and practices so it can be regarded as a material for analysis.

A co-working space is designed to be a "natural" environment for new networks, ideas and opportunities to pop up. Co-working spaces can be considered as proto-institutions that potentially improve identification and transfer of ideas, knowledge and opportunities (Bouncken et al., 2018). This is expected to happen through collaborations, but collaborations are thought to happen spontaneously and/or incidentally. In order to make sense of a collaboration, parties must have common interests, mutual benefits, common problems and/or motivation and willingness to work together. A co-working space brings small organizations closer to each other so they can notice opportunities of working together. Although not necessarily, co-working spaces may provide additional shared services to help small organizations in identifying collaboration opportunities. Of course, all these are not done for the sake of working together but for start-ups to develop and for co-working spaces to profit. Here it is important to note that co-working spaces may be non-profits or public organizations, as well.

A community is essential for potential parties to have some level of knowledge about, to build trust and reputation for, and to have platform to communicate with each other. Thereby, a community enhances the collaborative capacity in a co-working space. Collaboration, while it has its own weaknesses, can potentially reduce risks, increase value and knowledge transfer, speed up production process and create new networks (Snow, 2012). As Bøllingtoft and her colleagues put it: *"A community nurtures the capabilities of its members, and it recognizes the need for shared services which allow the firms to collaborate with one another and to accomplish more than they could on their own"* (2012:92). Building upon the description of The Ground community created through fieldwork, an analysis of the community principles, values and practices will be presented. This analysis is expected to show some of the potential institutional tools of The Ground. Following that, what is (or should be) the role of a co-working space, as an institution, in facilitating collaboration will be the main discussion.

Collaboration does not always lead to innovation or solution; there is always a chance that it fails and thus, it requires maintenance. Pursuing bigger goals and accessing new knowledge may be benefits of collaboration but it requires negotiations between parties - on the issues of decision-making, authority, transparency, accountability and boundaries - in order to ensure pursuit of these benefits instead of wasting time and resources to conflicts (Brown et al., 2011). A rather negative perspective on collaboration from Cooke-Lauder highlights the fact that collaborations also require a preparation phase to overcome uncertainties, to prevent conflicts and to keep things simple:

> *"Collaboration is not a process but a noisy, complex, unwieldy and unpredictable situation where the competing interests of different parties are always present, and where the resulting tensions and ambiguities need constant attention"* (Cooke-Lauder, 2005:37 in Brown et al., 2011:658)

Indeed, collaborations may leave a mess behind, with at least one party ending up frustrated and disappointed, besides a lot of wasted time and other losses. Such experiences lead individuals to take a more cautious stance towards collaboration opportunities yet to come. Working solo allows individuals to concentrate better and it is considered more time efficient and flexible, compared to "noisy and complex" situations. History of successful collaborations in a community may change this perspective opposed to collaboration (Brown et al., 2011). Individual parties' willingness and interests are essential for collaboration to happen. Investigation of the co-working space's role in facilitating collaboration will go through interviews with individual participants where different individual perspectives will be discussed. Thereby, a side aim of this research will be gathering material about individual experiences and opinions on collaborations.

1.3 Research Methods

All discussions will be based on the literature review and audio materials generated through fieldwork at The Ground, Malmo. Fieldwork materials were generated through 20 semi-structured interviews with 17 different participants that were carried out in Autumn 2018 and Spring 2019 (Whatmore, 2011). Most interviews took place at The Ground while two of them took place at another co-working space in Malmo named MINC, for the convenience of the participants. Besides the interviews, we held meetings with Renee Gonzalez occasionally for updates on The Ground and the research process, and for discussing the community.

Participants were recruited for this research through The Ground's Slack[1] channel. Renee Gonzalez gave me access to the channel. Through this channel, I was able to invite community members for interviews and schedule them. Also, she provided me a list of some community members who would be more willing to participate, who had some complaints about The Ground and who were at The Ground since its beginning. She also introduced me to as many members as she could. After Gonzalez's contribution, it was up to the community members to volunteer or not. I tried to contact every start-up, non-profit and freelancer in the community. Eventually, some of them preferred not to reply, and some replied saying that they are not available. In other few cases, those who agreed to participate had to cancel the interviews due to their tight schedules. Thereby, not all the small organizations in The Ground community were represented in this research.

For increasing diversity in standpoints, I especially invited members with various job titles: among the participants there are founders of organizations as well as long-term employees, recent or short-term employees, employees with different roles and titles, non-profit representatives, freelancers, The Ground board members and one staff from MINC. Aiming and selecting for diversity in job descriptions was the main criteria, thus, the sampling strategy adopted in this research is theoretical sampling - parallel to the method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The interviews took place at The Ground and were carried out in the meeting rooms at the common area. These meeting rooms can be booked through an online system open to all community members, and the community members are familiar to the rooms. They provided the privacy for participants to feel safe and to speak their minds.

1.3.1 Analysis Based on Audio Records

18 of the semi-structured interviews were audio recorded. Two interviews happened spontaneously, when there was no available recorder. These audio records are the materials generated through fieldwork to be used for analysis. The records were not fully transcribed, but the relevant parts were selected by the researcher for transcription. This selection was done in accordance with the analytical method used in the research, based on the coding process (which will be explained further in this section).

[1] Online platform that provides communication services and teamwork tools for businesses.

Working on audio material is more time-efficient, in the first place. Also, audio records are less alienating in terms of remembering the interview experience, compared to texts. It has less details than video materials, but it has more compared to texts. Considering tools and devices that are available with current technology, storing, working on and carrying audio materials is not less practical than text materials. Most of what is considered text today is on the same devices with audio records. The audio files on electronic devices are easy to manage, to share and to revisit. As the interviews follow a semi-structure, it is also easy to track different topics in audio records.

On the other hand, depending on participants' contributions, most of the spokenword in an audio file may be transcribed – or it may be the other way around, as well. This does not mean that the material is not well-reviewed: transcribing partially refers to the selection process where relevant parts of the audio material are transformed into text format to be used in further analysis. Besides various formats available, there are also softwares available in the market to use for qualitatie analysis. However, these softwares provide basic tools for transcribing, coding and organizing manually. Thereby, the qualitative analysis itself is undertaken by the human mind, and format of the materials to be analyzed is not essentially relevant, except it is to the researcher's convenience.

To develop the analysis that this thesis presents, all audio files were fully listened to and reviewed. Parts from interviews were transcribed after being selected based on their relevance to research questions and research aim. All audio records were revisited for second reviews, reconsiderations and further transcriptions. When the transcriptions were done, the text material was used for developing concepts to be used in the analysis.

1.3.2 Grounded Theory Method

The aim here is not to explain the grounded theory method in details, but it is to explain the use of this method in this research as the method of qualitative analysis. Grounded theory method was proposed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, in 1967, as a systematic way of analyzing qualitative material and producing qualitative theory. This research was developed from an earlier research to investigate tenants' experiences of the co-working space. It was inspired by questions asked in relation to workings of the co-working space, rather than an already existing theoretical framework. The theoretical framework was put together in light of the fieldwork material. Thus, this research qualifies as a qualitative inquiry.

According to grounded theory method, the analysis begins at the design phase of the research rather than being a further stage in the research process. Following research questions, more questions to be asked are generated during fieldwork, in relation to the research aim. These questions, intentionally, put participants' answers in a framework. After fieldwork, the generated material is coded not only based on the framework that questions provide, but significant points outside that framework are coded as well. "Coding" means tagging or marking certain parts of the material to be used as departure points for the analysis. Style of coding may depend on the researcher's style: codes (or tags) created are usually keywords summarizing the selected quote from an entire interview. When coding is done, the codes provide a conceptual framework. Bringing relevant codes together leads to concepts. These concepts are used for developing further categories based on relevances between them. They are the basis for the analysis. These concepts are developed into further categories which leads to the theoretical framework of the analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Here, in order to show how the analysis began, categories of questions asked in interviews and concepts that are derived from initial coding of the answers, will be presented.

The set of questions that were asked in order to create a community description, as mentioned in the research aim, can be categorized as:

- Questions related to demographics
- Questions about the participants' routines
- Questions related to individual professional role of the participant
- Questions in regard of the organization that the participant works for
- Questions about The Ground and its community
- Questions to answer figuratively, in regard of imagined workplaces of the participants

Answers given for the interview questions above led the research to a description of the community through these concepts:

- **Meritocracy** (in their way of describing the community identity)
- **Work** (when participants are describing how they see and value their work)
- **Hold-back** (reason to not to collaborate)
- **"Suits"** (referring to uniformity and hierarchies in other contexts)
- **Enclave** (community features of The Ground)
- **Hierarchy**
- **Autonomy**
- **Community** (referring to The Ground as a community and to the community history)
- **Knowledge exchange** (collaborations between members)
- **Organizational** (referring to organizational culture and practices)

The second round of fieldwork, focused on collaboration, had a different set of questions to be asked in the interviews. In this second round, I tried to interview the same participants for a second time, to be able to build on the first interviews. Although I invited all of the participants from the first round, it cannot be expected of all participants to volunteer for a second time. I tried to reach the most willing participants and accepted those who would like to participate for the first time, as well. So, I had to keep some of the basic question categories for first-timers:

- Questions related to demographics
- Questions about the participants' routines
- Questions related to individual professional role of the participant
- Questions in regard of the organization that the participant works for
- Questions about the participant's organization's needs for collaboration
- Questions about collaborative capacity of the community
- Questions in regard of participants' experiences of collaborations
- Questions about how participants imagine "an ideal collaboration"

Answers given for the interview questions above led to an understanding of role of the co-working space in facilitating collaboration through these concepts:

- **Bridging ties** (referring to relations with organizations outside the community and literally bridging two different organizations, introducing individuals)
- **Bonding ties** (relations inside the community)
- **Social capital** (when relations are mentioned as a resource, a potential or an investment)
- **References** (in relation to members' reputations, peer-pressure inside the community, members' comments on other members)
- **Trust** (when the participant talks about reliability, importance of subjective feelings and lessons to take from previous collaborations)
- **Progressive** (when participants describe themselves, their organizational culture or the community as progressive, developing, growing, evolving etc.)
- **Dark side** (when collaboration is defined in negative terms such as a waste-of-time, a loop of meetings etc.)
- **Boundaries** (divisions of labour, decision making processes, hierarchies and boundaries between partners, organizations, community members etc., leadership and taking initiative, ownership issues)
- **Reasons** (if the participant mentions specific reasons to collaborate or to avoid collaboration, such as knowledge exchange, problem solving, motivation, common interests/goals etc. or uncertainty, homogeneity, lack of motivation etc.)
- **Common** (if the participant mentions specific goals or interests)
- **PACMAN** (if the participant mentions any experience related to PACMAN)
- **Procedure** (how collaborations are started and managed, not necessarily "procedures" but also customs, rituals and practices suggested by participants)
- **Flat** (when participants mention flat organizations - in a positive or negative way - besides talking about boundaries)
- **Generalist** (it is the way some participants call employees who fulfil multiple roles in a start-up)

All the concepts in both lists are the basis of the analysis of this research. Some of these concepts came up through the fieldwork and some came up through the literature review. These concepts, later, gathered into intersecting categories: “community description”, “collaborative capacity”, “individual perspectives”. The theoretical framework was constructed to analyze The Ground community based on these three categories, in relation to the research questions.

1.4 Ethical Measures

In the previous part it was explained how research participants were recruited. Here in this part, the research participants, who will be quoted to support the analysis, will be given nicknames to keep their anonymity. The only people whose real identities will be revealed are the The Ground staff and founders as they are stakeholders of this research. The reason of anonymity is to protect the participants from any kind of unforeseen damage that might be caused in the future by revealing their real identities here in this thesis. All participants were asked for permission to record the interviews to be used for this thesis. They are all informed about the research itself and that their identity will be kept anonymous. However, there will be minimum information about these participants so that readers can have an idea about their standpoint when assessing the quotes coming from them.

- **Kemal**: He is the child of an immigrant family and the founder of a social media start-up at a young age, between 18-23.
- **Sven:** He is an experienced programmer, a father and a musician, aged between 40-50.
- **Amanda:** Although she is quite experienced in tech-business, she is currently a freelancer who is in catering business. The Ground is also one of her clients. She is aged between 50-60.
- **Christopher:** One of the younger members of the community, who joined an AI-developing start-up at an age between 23-28. He is not a founder but running the start-up with his partner. Very social outside his business as he has many side projects and activities.
- **Fredrik:** A young member of a start-up who currently employs more than 15 men and no woman. Although, he is aware of the situation and agrees on that the start-up needs more diversity. He is Swedish but he is a minority as he is not a tech-guy.
- **Ronald:** He is an experienced designer and a core-member of the community. He has a design consultancy firm consisting of three people. Although this firm is not a start-up but an established firm in the market. He sees himself as a bridge between the start-up world and the large corporations.

Another naming issue, but this time with a legal entity, also needs to be explained here. As it will be elaborated in the relevant section, a large corporation's name came up during the interviews, when some participants talked about their careers and professional experiences. I do not have permission from this corporation itself. Also, I did not discuss the issues with a representative or I did not include an opinion from this corporation in the research. Thus, I will not use its name in this thesis. Instead, I will call this corporation "PACMAN". The reason for this self-censorship is to protect participants from any unforeseen harm to their careers and professional reputations for speaking about a former or a potential employer.

1.5 Text Structure

The next section will present the literature review on previous research about different kinds of co-working spaces in various locations. Following that, the theoretical framework section will present the analytical tools and concepts that will be used in further sections. After that, research findings will be presented from an analytical perspective. At the end of the section, research finding will be summarized in relation to the research aim and questions. Finally, the text will conclude with further analysis and conclusions. In the final section, further analysis will include a perspective on how to contextualize and to make use of research findings. Through the end, there will be suggestions for further research and suggestions for The Ground.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Reviewed literature during this research mostly comes from the field of management studies. The reviewing process was focused on relevant qualitative research cases: qualitative research conducted in co-working spaces and other types of professional communities, especially those focusing on the topics of institutionalization, start-up culture, collaboration and/or knowledge economy. There are also some reviewed studies with focus on similar topics, which are not relevant to co-working spaces or professional communities but rather conducted in other professional contexts. In addition to academic sources; a few online articles are covered, as well. These articles present relevant cases and examples of public opinions.

There are several studies included in the reviewing process that are directly relevan to co-working spaces and professional communities. These studies are based on qualitative research conducted inside Europe, in cities such as Barcelona, Milano, Manchester, Berlin, Hannover, several cities around Finland and Denmark, as well as outside Europe, such as research conducted in Japan, USA, Mexico and Israel. This thesis can be considered as a contribution to this literature by adding a research case from Malmö, Sweden.

2.1 Types of Co-working Spaces

A motivational article from Harvard Business Review, authored by Piero Formica (2016), reminds the readers about “bottegas”, Renaissance-era workshops in 15th-century Italy. Formica associates bottegas with today’s co-working spaces: both are places of actualizing ideas and developing networks and collaborations. Also, Formica highlights that bottegas used to bring art and science closer, as modern co-working spaces host interdisciplinary communities where arts and science are brought together. Here, “a bottega” (taking in account the nostalgia for Renaissance behind it) is “an ideal” created to reflect a desired working environment where production and innovation are at the core of a community that consists of skilled, dedicated and intelligent craftspeople from diverse backgrounds and fields of expertise. This “ideal”, reflected as either a bottega myth or a Silicon Valley myth, is built on success stories of “craftspeople” who are redefined and remembered as legends/heroes/champions such as: Michelangelo, Da Vinci or Copernicus of Renaissance or Bezos, Musk or Jobs of Silicon Valley. Such imagery based on ideals of progress, industry, workplace or career etc. affects professional communities all around the world. However, this affection goes through cultural appropriation, as the imagery of ideals is interpreted differently by different cultures. In general, communities that occupy co-working spaces (including The Ground) consist of knowledge economy bourgeoisie, who have access to global knowledge and global imagery. Still, that does not mean they all share same values and interpretations. Thus, each co-working space and each professional community should be treated as a unique organizational culture or subculture.

As mentioned ealier, co-working spaces may have “incubator” qualities or they may be identified with different qualities. There are more examples of various types of co-working spaces in Malmo. Some of these are public enterprises, while most others are private enterprises, like The Ground. Another private co-working space in Malmo is Box Space which hosts freelancers only, opposite to The Ground. The is also The House of Ada which hosts only people who work “digitally”, with softwares. Broadly, two main types are discussed in the literature: co-working spaces that does not provide services beyond a shared space (also known as shared offices) and co-working spaces that provide services in various forms other than only providing the space.

Bøllingtoft and her colleagues (2012) take on collaborative communities of small organizations as an emerging organizational form, regardless of if they share a space or don’t. Their research compares three different collaborative communities, each with a different form of SSP (shared services provider). Only one of these communities is settled in a co-working space and their SSP is consisted of one individual, just like The Ground. According to Bøllingtoft et al. (2012), every collaborative community needs some sort of SSP that should act as a facilitator of collaboration. SSPs can consist of only one individual (like a community leader or a project leader), it can be in the form of a committee, or this role may be taken on by an organization. The role of facilitating collaboration, different than coordinating, involves continuously encouraging, promoting collaboration and assisting in networking, communication and knowledge transfer by providing resources and an institutional platform (structure) for its community. The goal of a collaborative community and its SSP is to push small organizations towards innovation (Bøllingtoft, 2012).

The Ground has a one-person SSP, although, it is not clear what services are to be expected from this position. Gonzalez often complains that she is not just an office manager or caretaker, but she has other duties, as well. These other duties do not really include facilitating collaboration. Her role is more of a community builder than a facilitator. She is not involved in tenants’ work in any way. At The Ground, as well as in other co-working spaces, collaboration is perceived as something to happen by itself, or through the "natural" course of events. It is usually not considered as a need for someone to attend to. Thereby, neither tenants nor Gonzalez herself expect any action or a structure, in regard of facilitating collaboration, from the SSP position at The Ground.

Comparing a co-working space in Milano to another one in Barcelona, Parrino (2015) argues that if co-working experience is reduced to merely sharing a physical space, then collaboration remains very limited. However, if there is an institutional platform that facilitates interactions (between individuals or between organizations), then collaboration may become an important feature of a co-working space. Parrino's study shows that such interactions do not develop by themselves and in the absence of a facilitator, "co-working" itself might be nothing more or less than a myth:

> *"On the whole, the results of the study contradict the image of co-working spaces as places for 'natural' relationships, collaborations and interactions among workers"* (Parrino, 2015:270).

Parallel to Parrino's conclusions, Jakobsson pointed out that the same perspective exists in Malmo, too:

> *"I have such a hard time to understand why people are not using each other more. I was in a meeting yesterday; they are like we are trying to do this. And I pointed out 3-4 people at The Ground that they should talk to. And they were like; let's go talk to those people. I feel like how come they haven't already talked to them. It is super strange"*

In the anecdote above, Jakobsson's role is introducing two parties to each other. He is not alone in this, as there are usually other members of the community who take the same role occasionally. This will be mentioned in research findings in more details, however, this role is recognized as a voluntary one that emerges from ethical responsbilities, instead of professional needs. According to this research's findings, such roles are supposed to be defined in SSP's job description, in addition to community building. SSP's effectiveness makes a difference between professional communities and shared offices and The Ground is definetely more than just a shared space.

2.2 Asana Example

A web article from Fast Company, authored by Taylor Lorenz (2017), covers an interview with Asana[2] co-founders, who are former Silicon Valley workers. The interview is about organizational culture at Asana. Two co-founders explain that they see organizational culture as “a product”: something to be designed and maintained rather than something “just happens by itself”. They work on organizational culture by holding regular meetings with a representative from each department, where they reconsider company values, goals and the progress towards them. Later, they create anonymous feedbacks based on meeting outcomes. Even though Asana is a single organization on its own, the co-founders designed an internal SSP in the form of a committee that takes each department as an organization. Practices such as anonymous feedbacks and identifying social issues as “culture bugs” are some of this internal SSP’s institutional tools.

Asana, like many other organizations and workplaces do nowadays, provides amenities which help maintaining an enjoyable workplace. However, culture should not be reduced to amenities (not that they do so at Asana but speaking in general) such as pets, games, catered meals, unlimited coffee and leisure areas etc. Instead, amenities should be regarded as a part of organizational or community culture, which SSPs may provide and modify. Events that are not organized on a regular basis (like trainings) and that are not directly relevant to business (like networking events or informative events) should also be regarded as amenities. Such events may be about social issues or other very important topics, but without persistence they don’t have a lasting effect on the community identity.

2.3 Collaborative Communities

Traditional organizations rely on strict hierarchies. While traditional organizations tend to downplay autonomous collaboration and prioritize self-reliance, their hierarchical structures do not provide enough means of encouraging and managing collaborative practices. The difference between new community-based organizations and traditional organizations is in decision-making processes and how they share resources and profit (Snow, 2012). In other words, this is a difference between types of legitimate knowledge in regard of management and ownership. According to

[2] A software developer company that creates apps for managing work and presentations

Snow, this difference emerged when the Linux movement started against Microsoft, in 1980's. He claims that this movement was a game-changer because it was a first-of-a-kind community-based collaboration which influenced tech industries and relevant organizations by proving that individuals will contribute if they are motivated and agreed over a common goal:

> *"The pace of evolution of new community-based organization designs will depend on how quickly and clearly their purposes and processes are defined and understood"* (Snow, 2012:4)

Snow argues that new community-based organizations' strenght is to seize collaboration opportunities where traditional organizations fail to do so. Although, it is problematic to define these as "new" or "traditional" because it can be counter-argued that hierarchy in "traditional" organizations is an outcome of collaborative processes refined and distilled through a history of organizational and institutional experiences. To avoid such confusion, it is important to clarify what is exactly new or different about community-based organizations, or at least, what their goals are and how they operate towards these goals.

In their research, Jarvenpaa & Wenick present the SHOK[3] case from Finland; a collaboration between academia and business. SHOK is a collaboration with a quite broad scope and there are many different parties with different interests (mainly academic and commercial parties) represented in this collaboration. During an interview, one of their research participants describes SHOKs:

> *"The SHOK collaboration ensures that research has relevance for business, focuses on something more ambitious than what we could do with our internal resources, and means much tighter collaboration between industrial and academic partners than before"* (Jarvenpaa & Wernick, 2012:18)

The quote above is a good example of sharing resources but it does not give much insight on processes of establishing and maintaining such collaborations. For a better understanding of suitable mechanisms to replace hierarchies (as Snow suggests) and how collaboration works from the inside, Jarvenpaa & Wernick reviewed organizational design literature. According to them, control mechanisms are sorted in two main categories: Informal control and bureaucratic control.

[3] Strategic Centers for Science, Technology and Innovation

“Informal control mechanism” refers to social norms and peer pressure, while “bureaucratic control” is based on formal regulations, procedures, monitoring and hierarchy. When the goal is uncertain and knowledge transfer is limited, use of bureaucratic control methods increases (Jarvenpaa & Wernick, 2012). This can be interpreted as, bureaucratic control mechanisms being most needed when “uncertainty” is associated with “risk” that cannot be afforded. Then, bureaucratic control becomes a way of taking back control. “Traditional” organizations, and usually large corporations, rely on bureaucratic control which is established through hierarchic distribution of authority. Such organizations operate with the priority of minimizing risks and uncertainty as much as possible. Strong pressure coming from market competition in a world where markets dictate, makes large corporations to take strict measures. Start-up communities, on the other hand, face a different challenge: entering the market. That makes innovation and short-term funding bigger concerns than market pressure and long-term financial plans.

If professional communities are imagined as meta-organizations with specific goals shared by most members, then they can be described as innovative networks. Interactions within such networks must be coordinated and networks themselves must be open to diverse knowledge (in sense of new expertise and insights). Organizations within professional communities should operate agilely and be inviting towards potential collaborators. Within professional communities, on the other hand, trust relations are needed to maintain and to improve community qualities. If a network is based on trust relations and is relying on members’ integrity and participation for its own continuity, then it qualifies as a professional community. Bureaucratic control may be useful while founding a professional community, so long as it is replaced by informal control mechanisms in time, because bureaucratic control mechanism eventually becomes an obstacle to trust relations (Jarvenpaa & Wernick, 2012).

Andersen asks: *“How do firms manage their participation in innovation communities?”* (2012:59) Trusting other parties within a community, and generating a degree of belongingness, is essential to voluntary participation which is intrinsic to collaborative work. Without trust, participation turns into a dilemma: in a community, there might be exploiter parties or parties who are less engaged. Such parties may cause other parties to get confused and demotivated. After all, participation in collaborative communities can mean exposing organizations to new opportunities (and maybe to learning lessons from experiences) as well as new risks, because some collaborations might turn out to be very demanding and costly. When it comes to building trust while reducing uncertainty, one concept stands out: transparency (Andersen, 2012).

Transparency varies in degree; a higher degree allows more opportunities to be identified and more knowledge transfer. Andersen (2012) implies that innovativeness is the goal and knowledge transfer is the method of professional communities. Although, knowledge transfer is not always a smooth process because transparency can be limited due to ownership concerns. Very limited transparency can be observed in collaborations for product testing, for instance, where the product is clearly owned by one party and the other party is a test group who is not aware of production details. There may be slightly higher level of transparency in other cases such as where one party's goal is to deliver an information or a message while the party is in the role of an audience or a receiver who learns or evaluates. Level of transparency varies mainly depending on the purpose of a collaboration and parties' willingness to be exposed. Also some collaborations may begin with low transparency and promise to increase the level in time (Andersen, 2012). Full transparency is suitable for co-working spaces which build communities and facilitate collaborations through their SSPs: *"In the case of full transparency, the role of ownership boundaries is downplayed in favor of boundaries of identity and competence, seeking to develop a shared vision and mind set among participants"* (Andersen, 2012:65).

It requires flexibility to sustain a policy of full transparency. The reason for that is: possible issues of boundaries and ownership in a collaborative community can be avoided or solved with a more dynamic and flexible approach from organizations. Van der Weerdt and colleagues (2012) compiled several definitions of "flexibility" from management studies literature. According to their review, flexibility might refer to organizations' ability of adapting to new situations and reacting fast. It might also mean organizations' managerial tools of adaptability and fast decision-making processes, or a wide range of options available to an organization. Flexibility can be a short-term managerial goal, but long-term organizational flexibility depends on organizational structures that organizational agents operate within.

Van der Weerdt and colleagues hypothesized that *"innovative cultures are positively associated with strategic flexibility"* (2012:111), based on mechanic-organic dichotomy, in a Durkheimian sense: *"mechanistic"* organizations prioritize regulation, formalization, specialization, centralization. Compared to them, "organic" organizations prioritize performance-oriented planning, intuition and experimentation while tolerating a significant degree of uncertainty and ambiguity. According to this comparison, strategic flexibility is associated closer with organic organizations.

While the level of transparency changes from one organization to another, most organizations in The Ground community are quite flexible as they mostly consist of "generalists" (who have flexible job descriptions in practice). The community have an awareness of organic[4] relations' importance in collaboration processes. Reviewed literature and relevant previous research will be used for contextualizing and understanding The Ground community, together with the research findings and the theoretical framework. By elaborating on flexibility of the organizations at The Ground and on the issue of transparency and boundaries, the description of The Ground community will be developed in the following sections.

[4] The term "organic relations" is used here in regard of Van der Weerdt's (2012) study. As will be explained in the theoretical framework, I will prefer to adopt the term "bonding relations" instead.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, theories and concepts borrowed from relevant studies will be presented. Among these, there will be concepts and theories from the anthropological literature that may seem less relevant to co-working spaces, organizational culture and to management studies. I would like to introduce these concepts here in this section, to demonstate their relevance and potential uses in the analysis. While concepts such as ”Gemeinschaft & Gesellschaft” and ”social capital” already used in the relevant literature, I would like to present new interpretations in the context of professional communities. Other concepts such as ”guilt & shame cultures” and ”the double-bind” are borrowed from the anthropological literature, thinking that reconsideration of these concepts in regard of organizational contexts would be useful. These concepts can be useful, for instance, in organizational culture and design studies and management studies. This theoretical framework can be considered as an outcome of grounded theory method as the concepts and analytical tools are selected in relation to the concepts and the categories generated through grounded theory.

3.1 Knowledge: Legitimacy of Different Types and Sets

An organization’s culture consists of a set of knowledge that is taken for granted by its members (van der Weerdt et al., 2012). The mechanic-organic dichotomy mentioned above is an example of how organizations and institutions can be designed and defined based on different types knowledge. At the beginning of the introduction section, more examples were mentioned in relation to different types of knowledge to define organizations, institutions and their purposes. In the reviewed literature it is confusing that how concepts of “organization”, “institution”, “organizational culture” are used almost synonymously. For instance; Bouncken and her colleagues define “institution” as *“…common beliefs or generally accepted ways of how to design structures and processes of organizations”* (2018:387). This definition overlaps with the definition of “knowledge” as *“a cumulative set of normative, ideological, technical and scientific understandings”* that people have in their minds for making sense of the world (Adler & Bernstein, 2004:295). “Common beliefs and generally accepted ways” may also refer to “a cumulative set of understandings” that are attributed legitimacy by an organization or a community. This definition of “knowledge” from Adler & Bernstein will be adopted in this study. According to this; the concept of “institution” will be regarded as organizations concentrated on an eclectic set of various knowledge types, with the purpose of reproducing, representing and/or transforming that knowledge. On the other hand, the concept of "organization" includes adaptive, flexible groups or teams of people working for a commercial or a social common goal.

In a post-modern world where communication and transportation technologies are accessible, people interact more often with different and distant types of knowledge. While being exposed to various knowledge and information, it is expected from an individual to adopt multiple, permeable, intersecting sets of knowledge (Adler & Bernstein, 2004). Legitimized or marginalized knowledge sets draw the line between "self" and "other" and determine what knowledge is legitimate, what social codes are valid, what is good and what is bad, what is rational and what is not etc. "*In other words, it is about how systems of knowledge, inscription and representation enable some things to be known and perspectives taken, whilst other things and perspectives are made invisible, irrelevant and lacking in importance"* (Skeggs, 2004:45). In this sense, "knowledge" does not refer to absolute truth in any way; it is comprehended based on subjectivity of individuals and groups as it is constructed through histories, experiences, beliefs, techniques and/or interests. Knowledge depends on internalized discourses and practices and their dynamism make knowledge subject to change over time.

3.2 The Grid-Group Theory

How legitimate knowledge defines institutions is well pictured (and sort of caricatured) in Mary Douglas' grid-group theory. Referring to grid-group theory, Pfeilstetter (2017) argues; start-up communities are rather "individualist" in terms of hierarchy-individualist dichotomy. As an element of a set of knowledge that shapes the individualist character of start-up communities, the study points libertarian ideology. Compared to The Ground there more similarities such as Northern Quarter community reproducing myths of the Silicon Valley and the creative-tech-community. However; beyond the caricatured, stereotypical image of the individualist community with its capitalist myths, Pfeilstetter's further analysis suggests that start-up communities have "enclave" features that are overlooked but still to be explored.

Mary Douglas (2006) proposes 4 stereotypes of cultural formations in her grid-group theory; the hierarchist, the individualist, the enclave and the isolated. She links these stereotypes with Max Weber's *"types of rationality"*. The bureaucratic rationality is linked with the hierarchist; market rationality with the individualist, religious charisma with the enclave. These stereotypes differ from each other according to what type of knowledge is legitimate and valuable for them. “The hierarchist” refers to a culture in which strict hierarchy, regulation and high specialization are favored. “The individualist” refers to a culture driven by competition in which individuals are ranked according to merit. Although it is egalitarian in principal, commitment is its weakness. “The enclave” refers to relatively more egalitarian groups where competition is not a core value and who *“...has no ranking or grading rules for the relations between its members”* (Douglas, 2006:5). Religious groups and sects can be examples of “enclave” cultures (Douglas, 2006). “Flat” organization are, on the other hand, usually gathered around a leader (a founder, an investor etc.) with a similar “enclave” formation mentioned in the quote. Co-working spaces’ and start-up communities may inhabit dominant subcultures (such as a profession group etc.) that are formed in an enclave-like way.

The grid-group theory stereotypes are extremes that cultures converge towards but in fact these extremes are never met and remain as myths. A group or a community at any given time is in a state of *“...mixing, modifying or shifting in between the extremes”* (Douglas, 2006:3). Culture becomes complex and dynamic due to constant “mixing, modifying or shifting”, thereby, a culture borrows elements from each legitimate source and forms its knowledge set in an eclectic way.

3.3 Capacities of Aspiration and Navigation

While societies can be picky or reluctant in legitimizing certain types of knowledge, they can also be restricted to certain types of knowledge by being denied to access other types. In other words, valuable types of knowledge, just like valuable information, may be conserved inside tight networks where access requires a degree of privilege in a society. An individual’s capacity of “navigation” is the ability of accessing various types of knowledge by moving through/across various networks in a society (Appadurai, 2004).

Limited access to knowledge is both a source and a result of social inequalities; creating a loop of inequalities. Types of knowledge that an individual is exposed to (its capacity to navigate) shapes individual’s capacity to “aspire”. The individual imagines their own decisions, plans, goals, desired self within a framework of knowledge sets which that individual and its social milieu have access to (Appadurai, 2004). In this sense, the capacity to navigate constructs an individual’s “habitus” – as Bourdieu would call it.

According to Appadurai's (2004) theory, it can be argued that, a young individual's aspiration to either become a bureaucrat who prioritize security, or an entrepreneur who takes risks, or a priest dedicated to tradition, each comes from a different source/type of knowledge – depending on - which is internalized most and considered the most legitimate and desired. But most importantly; it all depends on what sort of sources/types of knowledge are available to this young individual (and to its community), in the first place. This theory on privileges of aspiration and navigation will be used in following sections for an analysis of The Ground community, as its members are individuals with a certain degree of privileges in terms of access to knowledge and having diverse options and aspirations.

3.4 Rational Myths and "Translation" Process

The concept of the "rational myth" is adopted in this study, from a research conducted in Israel, by Tammar Zilber (2006) which includes an analysis of job advertisements' contents on newspapers. From late 1990's to early 2000's, she analyzed the role of "the symbolic" in institutionalization process of Israeli tech-industry by this method: briefly, "the symbolic" refers to rational myths (as it will be explained below) and institutionalization, according to Zilber, works as a "translation" process rather than "a diffusion".

Rational myths *"- the shared meanings and understandings associated with social structures - are the institutional context within which organizations operate"* (Zilber, 2006:282). Shared meanings and understandings can be understood as (sets of) shared knowledge that defines institutions. Then, rational myths are discourses and associated practices; institutional tools produced based on shared knowledge, which keep institutions operative. In other words, rational myths are tools for utilizing knowledge. They are not entirely myths because they are rational to a degree; they are based on legitimate knowledge. Although, they are not grounded in actual evidence and facts, either.

Zilber's study presents examples of rational myths from Israeli context: *"The nationalistic rational myth is embedded within a specific place and time: Israel, in the Middle East, at this historical moment. It is based on the assumption that high-tech industry is essential for the development of the national project"* (2006:293). Another, more global example presented in the same study is the myth of "enchantment"; the belief that technologic progress is universally good and necessary to make human life better. Traditionally in tech-industries, most organizations feed on the myth of "enchantment" as they usually claim to "revolutionize" a market, an industry or even daily-life itself. According to these examples; nationalist discourses and common understandings of progress are elements in a set of knowledge types, but these specific elements are narrated in the form of rational myths, for mobilizing tech-industry. Rational myths have impacts on different contexts of co-working and collaborations by adding on new meanings and purposes beyond actualizing an idea - such as "a contribution to the greater good of a nation" - which may eventually cause relations with different qualities. If so, these qualities will be considered legitimate because they are grounded in, for instance, nationalistic knowledge and knowledge of modernity.

How is knowledge shared and how are rational myths produced? In a hierarchic structure, it is expected to be top down; like a "diffusion". This method does not seem suitable for facilitating collaboration in a somewhat individualist community. A more realistic process of reproducing knowledge and sharing myths, with better equal access for community members, would be more of a "translation" process. What is meant by "translation" here is; taking in account that individuals need time and cultural appropriation for internalizing new discourses. "Diffusion" does not happen as a linear process, as if it is a process of copy-paste. By each individual and by each organization, institutional discourses are re-appropriated with some nuances. "Translation" is a metaphor for this process (Zilber, 2006).

3.5 Knowledge Exchange

Andersen (2012:66) argues that: *"Knowledge exchange in innovation communities is contingent on the interdependence of tasks and problems to be solved".* He pictures an innovation process where different manufacturers have different approaches and different interpretations based on the same technology: Organizations' transparency and ownership strategies determine the interactive and collaborative structures which includes the issues of division of labour and common goals. So, if an organization adopts a strategy of limited transparency where transparency is provided only for a specific purpose/task, then the knowledge exchange will be limited on that same level (Andersen, 2012).

Knowledge exchange depends on organizations' willingness for level of participation; to share and to learn. Andersen's (2012) examples and cases are from more crowded and more distant collaborations instead of a compact community - such as a co-working space community that brings organizations closer to each other in terms of time and space. Still, each organization in a co-working space determines their own transparency strategy. However, in a co-working context transparency also determines the participation to community. Promoting participation, providing a more transparent environment for everyone and assisting in building collaborative structures are prerequisites for facilitating collaboration and thereby they should be taken on by a legitimate SSP.

Bergenholtz (2012) draws attention on social ties' role in quality of knowledge exchange. According to him, most of the literature on knowledge exchange is based on the dichotomy of strong ties-weak ties. Strong ties (closer relations, bonding ties) are necessary for sharing complex knowledge but they are more costly. In this kind of relations knowledge becomes homogenous eventually and "home blindness" is inevitable. Strong ties based on frequency and intensity result in familiarity, trust and appropriate social context for exchanging complex and private knowledge. Weak ties (distant relations, formal relations, bridging ties), on the other hand, are useful for accessing new, heterogenous knowledge. Although, this kind of relations require a build-up phase for establishing collaborations. If this is the case, there will still be knowledge exchange but on a different level.

Simple knowledge and information that does not require specialization are shared most in weak ties due to barriers and lack of reciprocity. It is more likely that knowledge and information that require specialization, complex knowledge, are transferred through strong ties (Bergenholtz, 2012). Although, the matter of strength and weakness of social ties is quite subjective. Disagreeing with Bergenholtz, this research will take in consideration that stronger bonds are not necessarily defined by informal socialization because a professional and formal relationship may be quite strong without involving much socialization. Thereby, relations will be considered as strong ones based on parties' statements and the trust between them.

3.6 Two Dimensions of Co-working: Gemeinschaft & Gesellschaft

As mentioned earlier, the example Mary Douglas gives for enclave cultures is religious communities. Pfeilstetter (2017) comes up with new examples enclave communities such as "techies", hackers, nerds; those who are "native" to the digital world. He argues that *"digital technologies and individualism also create what they are supposed to erode: collective solidarity and a sense of place or belonging"* (2017:4). This paradox has implications that are very close to what Marshall McLuhan called “the global village”. The new kind of connectedness came with digitalization disrupted the boundaries between the public and the private, and, between large societies and local communities (Pfeilstetter, 2017).

When boundaries are blurred with the rise of digitalization and knowledge economy, exposure to new and different types of knowledge and information also increased rapidly. Such a fast flow of knowledge evoked an expectation for alternatives to traditional organizations which once pioneered digitalization and knowledge economy but eventually turned out to be too “bulky”. These expectations received response from the market, which re-organized itself in return, by creating more space for community-based (or trust-based) organizations (Adler & Kwon & Heckscher, 2008). Three main factors in this process are: the strictly hierarchical organizations, the market and communities. According to Adler et al. (2008), these three factors do not suppress each other, instead, they are all depending on each other and transforming together. Ultimately, this transformation leads to emergence of professional communities as a result of rapidly developing and flowing knowledge - that cannot be handled efficiently by “bulky” corporations and competitive-in-principle vast markets. Adler and colleagues predict that these communities shall evolve into a collaborative form:

> *“…a strong implication of our analysis is that communities of practice in knowledge-intensive contexts will be more effective when they take a collaborative, as distinct from a Gemeinschaft or Gesellschaft, form”* (2008:371)

Adler et al.’s study (2008) interprets the concepts of *“Gemeinschaft”* and *“Gesellschaft”* in a way that the concepts represent organizational stereotypes: craft guilds are associated with “gemeinschaft” along with a stereotype of mechanistic organization, while modern capitalist organizations are associated with “gesellschaft” along with a stereotype of organic social division. As an alternative to these two, their study proposes a “collaborative form” of organizations.

In this research, concepts of “Gemeinschaft” and “Gesellschaft” will be regarded as two different dimensions of a professional community: the context of formal, professional relations (Gesellschaft) and the context of trust-based community relations (Gemeinschaft). A professional community must maintain a balance between these contexts which are shaped by different types of knowledge. Then, returning to the grid-group theory, a Gesellschaft-context would be shaped mainly by individualist knowledge and “hierarchist” knowledge due to prioritized individual interests and a need for control. A Gemeinschaft-context, on the other hand, would be shaped mainly by enclave knowledge and individualist knowledge due to a need for trust and maintaining autonomy. In order to maintain a balance, a professional community has to be in a state of constant mixing, modifying or shifting between these two dimensions so that it can accommodate different relations with diverse qualities.

The 4th extreme in the grid-group theory, which is sort of underestimated, is isolation. Compared to other three extremes (individualist, hierarchist, enclave), isolation may be considered as a domain of unknown or unrevealed knowledge without transfer. Isolation in a digitalized world is quite difficult, at the same time, it is highly undesired. Businesses need to build networks to sustain themselves and they need to reach out to customers/buyers. In theory, both Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft contexts (each on their own) are open to risk of leading to isolation. Community relations might evolve into quite homogenous groups (or "bubbles") which may end up isolated from new or different knowledge. Professional relations, on the other hand, may leave out trust, commitment or daily-relations so that small groups or individuals may feel disconnected. In fact, this is a big reason for small organizations and individuals to settle in co-working spaces – because they provide community relations. In case of a balance between two dimensions, it is likely to avoid isolation because professional relations and community relations are supposed to neutralize each other's risks. Professional relations may bring new resources and different knowledge for innovation and progress, while community relations may provide a trustworthy environment, a context for daily relations, committed partners, recognition and references for new professional relations.

3.7 Social Capital: Bonding Ties and Bridging Ties

There are different interpretations of the concept of "social capital". From one perspective it may be understood as a collectively shared resource and the other perspective expands the concept to an individual-scale where social capital plays a crucial role in determining socio-economic status. (McDougall & Banjade, 2015). Social capital may be *"understood roughly as the goodwill that is engendered by the fabric of social relations and that can be mobilized to facilitate action"* (Adler & Kwon, 2002:17 in McDougall & Banjade, 2015:2). Here, "goodwill" refers to "reputation" or "prestige". It is an imagined (or remembered) resource which may be converted to other sort of capitals (Adler & Kwon, 2002).

An individual's social capital is the source of its capacity to aspire and to navigate a society. If a group that has a common goal and that is progressing collectively may share their capacities of navigation and aspiration, as well. Putnam's definition of the concept as collectively shared knowledge sources, which also takes it on the bright side, points out that social capital may be used for facilitating collaborations:

> *"the features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve that efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions"* (Putnam, 1993:167 in McDougall & Banjade, 2015:2)

As social capital is generated through social relations, an individual cannot have full authority over it. For the same reason, social capital requires maintenance because social relations need to be reconfirmed and reproduced over time (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Social relations, on the other hand, consist of bonding ties and bridging ties. A community context[5] is a result of bonding ties, while a professional context[6] is a result of bridging ties. So, as mentioned earlier in relation to the concepts of "Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft", both kinds of ties work synchronically against the same risks of isolation. However, these ties (that are starting points for accumulating social capital) should not be understood as starting points of collaborations – even though social capital is a resource of facilitating collaborations. Both bonding ties and bridging ties are rather routine interactions and neutral (in terms of collaboration) relations. For these ties to become starting points of collaborations, these neutral relations should be recognized and framed, in the first place, as potential collaboration opportunities. This recognition should include as many qualities of social relations as possible, such as different perspectives and inequalities within them. This is crucial for avoiding potential conflicts or managing conflicts if they arise (McDougall & Banjade, 2015).

In this research, the concept of "social capital" will be understood and used as a third dimension that adds depth to a professional community: social capital stitches the professional context and the community context together. It includes networks, reputations, identities, norms, initiative, commitment, hierarchies, commonalities, new knowledge, legitimate knowledge, mutual benefits

[5] Gemeinschaft
[6] Gesellschaft

and shared goals… All socially exchanged, shared and converted kinds of resources in professional communities.

3.8 Guilt and Shame

So far, all the concepts explained in this theoretical framework section are analytical tools for understanding and contextualizing professional communities and The Ground, in particular. They are relevant to structures and workings of professional communities. However, these analytical tools are not enough for explaining motivations of individuals who take place in such communities. Ultimately, it is individuals' participation and engagement that make professional communities functional and meaningful.

In her well-known book "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword", Ruth Benedict used the concepts of "guilt" and "shame" (and the difference between them) as analytical tools. This study was heavily criticized due stereotyping societies and nations based on these concepts. Creighton (1990) offers a new conceptualization for the purpose of cultural analysis, away from the ethical debates. Her study implies that every society plays upon individuals' feelings of guilt and shame in order to install a control mechanism. Creighton's approach is grounded in psychoanalytic and cognitive theory: briefly, shame feelings begin during infancy due to fear of isolation (from parents). Guilt feelings, on the other hand, are the learned fear of violating norms and punishment. In this sense, guilt is felt only if the individual internalized the norms and admits to itself that it deserves punishment. Thereby, guilt feelings require further socialization compared to shame feelings. Although every society has such control mechanism, these are formed in different, unique ways (Creighton, 1990). According to Creighton's model of guilt-and-shame-based control mechanism, a society systematically and constantly puts a certain amount of pressure on individuals for them to adapt to social norms. Although, intensity of the focus on either shame or guilt (or both) may vary from one society to another.

The control mechanism based on guilt and shame feelings steers individuals towards completing their responsibilities and tasks. At the same time, both concepts play an important role in building up the sense of belongingness. This means literally belonging to a community but also it refers to motivations of individuals to participate and their willingness to take initiative. In this research, concepts of "guilt" and "shame" will be used as analytical tools for understanding individuals' sense of responsibility and motivations in collaboration contexts and in their organizations. Shame will be regarded as individuals' ways of building reputations, dealing with peer pressure and risk of isolation. "Guilt" will be used in relation to individuals' motivations and determinations to achieve goals and to fulfil responsibilities.

3.9 The Double-Bind Theory

The double-bind theory was proposed by anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1972), very specifically for explaining a possible cause of schizophrenia – which is quite out of the scope of this research as other cognitive development subjects. The reason that this theory will be explained here is that the double-bind theory will be used in further sections for describing uncomfortable situations that might demotivate individuals and discourage participation and collaboration.

The double-bind theory refers to a situation where an individual receives conflicting messages in a way that it cannot ignore either of them. Bateson (1972) focuses on a mother-child relationship where the mother sends conflicting messages to her child quite often. For instance, a mother saying to her child "you must love me" sends conflicting messages to the child: the child already has an emotional bond with the mother, although, the mother ignores this and puts pressure on the child, anyway. According to Bateson, this kind of relationship may turn into an abusive one in the long run. In a similar way, an unresolved situation may have the same affect. The individual might have to accept/acknowledge a situation even though it is obvious that the very same situation will repeat with the same problems. This could be, for instance, a child in conflict with a sibling. If the child is forced by parents (who are the higher authority) to drop the conflict and accept the situation even though the child knows that the same sibling will soon cause the same conflict again, then the child is in a double-bind situation. If an individual is exposed to double-bind situations regularly since a young age, then this may alter the person's cognitive development. In result of this, the individual may lose the ability of putting social interactions in an accurate and meaningful framework, and eventually will lose its sense of causality. According to Bateson (1972), this could be how schizophrenia develops.

Schizophrenia and abusive relationships (such as mobbing) are out of the scope of this research. Also, the participants of this research are not children and they are not selected based on a history of traumatic experience. A double-bind situation might be recognized merely as an undesired, forcing or uncomfortable situation instead of a traumatic experience, as most adults know how to deal with them. It might happen in many different contexts as well as work context. For instance, if a worker in an organizational context has been told to drop an issue by its superiors even though the issue is not resolved for all parties, then this may leave the worker in a double-bind situation as the worker will have to drop the issue in expanse of trust. Or, if one party puts pressure on another by sending the message “you must keep collaborating”, this might have a negative affect on the collaboration because one party might feel being taken advantage of.

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Community

This section will include a description of The Ground community, with its structures and workings. The description consists of research findings, reflections and analysis on who the community members are, what the prominent community principles and myths are, and how these principles and myths are beneficial or harmful for the community.

4.1.1 Autonomy

During the interviews, participants were asked about their daily and work routines with their own ways of time management. Almost each participant took a different approach (from working hours to dress codes and weekend-working etc.), but all answers were somehow related to "autonomy". Here "autonomy" refers mainly to deciding their own working hours, locations and settings while being able to leave time for other daily or weekly activities. One participant stated on The Ground "dress-code":

> *"I'm like, yeah okay I work at a start-up, I can go to work wearing shorts. Maybe for some people that's like; of course, you can go to work with shorts. And I have other friends who are like; how can you do that!?"* (Fredrik)

Expressive and/or casual dress-codes are totally acceptable at The Ground. On the contrary, "uniformity" or "conformity" – or "the suits" as they call it in The Ground community - are not so welcome. Autonomy is not taken only in terms of personal preferences and expressions, but it is also a part of the professional character of co-workers. Another participant, who is an experienced designer, explained during the interview that one shouldn't wait for instructions from anyone else, instead everyone should be pro-active in their works and figure out how they can be useful in an organization or in the community. According to that, every individual should be an entrepreneur to a degree and should carry the responsibility of self-auditing. In this sense, it can be argued that supervision and management are sort of downplayed, especially since middle-management positions at large corporations (where some of the participations had first-hand experiences) are the inspiration for "infamous suits".

Autonomy is one of the main promises of the co-working concept. It can be considered as a benefit, as participant Kemal explains: *"Especially developers! Sometimes they wanna be at home, you know. In a start-up it's not like you can offer massages or food for free and all that stuff. So, you have to create some benefits"*. As a benefit of The Ground and the organizations inside, there are flexible norms that are open to negotiation. For instance; the co-working space is open everyday, 24 hours so members can use the space any time. It is okay to bring pets - and sometimes even kids – as long as they don't annoy other people. Privacy for working is created individually via earphones or temporary spatial isolation. Another example is that it is not welcome to take a nap at the common area but members with reasonable excuses may create exceptions. Autonomy is fundamental to sustaining an individualist environment, however, such negotiations also require a community context.

To have an understanding of how The Ground community is being mixed, modified or shifted between different extremes of the grid-group theory, some of its prominent cultural elements will be sorted out here:

Individualist elements can be thought as the principles of entrepreneurship, autonomy and reciprocity. These principles are thought to be typical for co-working spaces, which makes them generalized as individualist environments (Pfeilstetter, 2017) and places of "natural" collaborations (Parrino, 2015).

"Enclave culture" elements, on the other hand, would be the subcultures such as nerds, geeks and tech-guys that the community inhabits. Also, there is an absence of direct competition between member organizations of The Ground community. This keeps the market rationality away from the community context, as market rationality becomes meaningful only in the professional context and in bridging ties

of external community relations. The Ground accepts tenants by invitation only which may lead to a rather homogenous community – typical for an enclave. Considering that The Ground community was founded by a group of TAT founders and former employees, the community had a high level of homogeneity at the beginning. It is undeniable that Jakobsson's and his colleagues' reputation and networks in Malmo helped establishing The Ground community, in the first place. In the grid-group theory, enclave cultures were associated with "religious charisma" in Weber's terms. Hampus Jakobbson does not represent any specific ideology, although he is a public figure as a successful tech-entrepreneur. This caused The Ground to have a reputation of "Hampus-campus" which is considered quite undesired by The Ground board since they are working towards more diversity in the community. While diversity is encouraged, The Ground has a "no-shoe" policy that must be followed without any exceptions. The no-shoe policy may have deeper meanings for the community and these will be discussed later. For now, it is regarded as an enclave-feature of the community identity.

"Flat organizations" are quite popular at The Ground, as they are very common in start-up industries. A participant, who is a tech-guy and an experienced programmer, stated: *"We cannot afford having specific roles in the company"*. Indeed, many start-ups are based on small teams and small budgets so each team member takes on multiple roles and responsibilities. This way of flexible working without a specific and stable role is called being a "generalist", which is a popular term at The Ground. Being a generalist is crucial because a start-up team must use its resources very efficiently in order to grow. While teamwork and solidarity are essential for growth, there are also individual risks due to multiple roles and responsibilities. Autonomy creates an environment where it is normal that individuals take more risks and take more initiative. Thereby, "flat organizations" can be seen at the intersection of "individualist" and "enclave" extremes: they require full collaboration of competent individuals.

Hierarchist features do not vanish in communities dominated by individualist and enclave perspectives. They are all transformed together, as Adler et al. (2008) argue, so hierarchies still occur in different forms. At The Ground, hierarchist elements emerge in various interactions, depending on qualities of relationships between parties. Such relationships involve bigger and smaller organizations, founders and employees, investors and founders, experienced and promising workers, recent tenants and the former ones etc. So, hierarchy is not the main governing principle of The Ground community, unlike large corporations. Especially, dependence on strict hierarchies in large corporations is not even considered as legitimate type of knowledge for designing organizations and communities. Hierarchic relations at The Ground are rather informal and occassional kinds of hierarchies that are usually derived or borrowed from external social norms. It can be argued that member organizations and individuals have autonomy in their own relations for forming different kinds of hierarchies as well as disposing them.

4.1.2 The Ground is a Meritocracy

So far, The Ground community is described based on autonomy and individualist principles (and market rationality), with its strong enclave features. It was mentioned earlier that professional communities in co-working spaces mostly consist of knowledge-economy bourgeoisie, and "suits" (or conformity) are not welcome at The Ground. Often during the interviews, it was repeated that The Ground is not the right place for those who are not really motivated for what they are supposed to do. Those who would not fit in The Ground community were described as "profit-driven people", "business-oriented people", corporate culture people, "suits", "consultants" etc. When asked Hampus Jakobsson about who would not fit in the community, he mentioned "The Ground stereotype":

> *"If you are a sales-person, if you are a bragging person, if you think you are more important than other people; I don't think that fits The Ground stereotype that much"*

Not having significant class differences between community members, and a level of conformity or homogeneity enable The Ground community to develop enclave features. To build the "enclave", there must be some shared meanings, understandings and common grounds. So, the earlier statement about conformity not being welcome at The Ground should be corrected here: if the conformity will not be for "suits" and loyalist values attached on them, then it should be for merit and virtue. For instance; participant Kemal, who could be considered a minority from several angles, expressed how he belongs to The Ground community:

> *"I am different, I know that. At Ground they always pitch that it is a place for weirdos, a place for different people, people that are willing to think different"*

The knowledge-economy bourgeois is an individual with certain privileges. To be more specific, these privileges are risk-taking capabilities and making (relatively) independent decisions such as what to study, what to work on, who to work with, when to work and when not to work – privileges that are not available in most other types of workplaces. Majority of The Ground community were born and/or raised in urban locations, most of them have higher education, they have economic and political freedom to navigate and to explore, and all of them can speak at least a second language. It is fair to say that they have privileged access to knowledge and to diverse networks in the society. Thus, they are to be expected to have higher capacities of aspiration and navigation.

This may reflect on their skills, decisions and goals, as well as, on their desired self-image – both as individuals and as a community.

During the interviews, participants were asked *"what it takes to be a part of this community?", "what it feels like to be a part of this community"* and/or *"what makes you a part of the community?"*. Here are some examples from participants' answers:

> *"Be great at what you do and mind your own business"* (Jakobsson)
>
> *"It is also fun for me to work with these gifted people"* (Ronald)
>
> *"You need to be quite smart to feel at home"* (Fredrik)
>
> *"This is my business; this is my passion"* (Kemal)
>
> *"I think that the people in this building are self-motivated. I have been around self-motivated people for such a long time now, that I almost get surprised when I go to a bigger company and meet all those people who don't like their jobs"* (Sven)

In accordance with the quotes above, The Ground community identifies itself as a group of smart, skilled, gifted, ambitious, passionate, dedicated, productive individuals. Such virtues and merits are expected from new members, as well. In return, the community promises its members a desirable network of other merited individuals. In practice, some members identify themselves as "nerds" or "geeks" in terms of dedication to their work, nevertheless, all participants used very similar discourses of meritocracy and self-motivation.

Meritocratic discourses ideologically fuel up "flat" organizations within professional communities, by providing the necessary confidence to workers for taking on multiple-roles and taking more initiative. It helps maintaining standards of efficiency and production by motivating workers and assuring that they deserve collective success. It encourages using their capacities of aspiration and navigation to the full. It is The Ground's prominent rational myth, resembling the Silicon Valley myth, as well. It is rational and pragmatic to keep this myth alive in the community for the sake of the community identity.

"Meritocracy" as an ideology is supported by liberal arguments that favour individualism (Heywood, 2017). By Heywood's definition, ideology of meritocracy rewards hard work along with talent and skill. However; hard work, talent and skill are quite subjective concepts.

Meritocracy, like any other ideology, aims at a utopic “ideal”: the belief of a society/community should be led by the most deserving and skilled individuals. As there is no method of objectifying such belief, it is essentially a myth. Moreover, this myth can be debunked in The Ground context, if it is approached from a gender perspective, for instance.

There is a gender debate at The Ground, as there is in global tech industries, about the industry being heavily male dominated (Kaplan, 2015). Indeed, two NGOs settled in The Ground aim to improve gender equality in tech industry. With their participation and the contribution of an invited speaker, an open event was organized to inform community members about gender inequalities at The Ground in early October 2018. Such informative events related to gender and diversity issues take place at The Ground often. Also, during the interviews, some female participants brought up the issue of women being a minority in the community. I have been told that the women of The Ground have a women-only contact group.

In response to gender discrimination claims, it can be argued that due to patriarchal and capitalist norms of the society and the gender roles dictated on its individuals since their young ages, men are more inclined to have an interest in tech business and that’s why there are more men in the industry. Still, this argument does not support any claims of meritocracy, but it only casts more doubt on it.

4.1.3 Work Is “Sacred” at The Ground

The Ground creates its conformity through the meritocratic myth. In The Ground context, “work” means the process of actualizing ideas. It is not a place where work is mechanical (in a Durkheimian sense). Individuals are recognized based on their work where “work” means more specialization and each individual member’s identity is embedded in its work. Thus, it’s not a routine job to replace an individual who is already recognized and attributed a unique value by the community. In other words, instead of “work” being banalized where authority matters more, it is the opposite at The Ground: while hierarchic authority is banalized, “work” is at the core of the community. Jakobsson reflects on the no-shoe policy, expanding its meaning beyond purposes of cleaning and cosiness:

> *“The reason we are taking off our shoes is because this is their working place. Don’t make it dirty. These people are working here, they are crafting these amazing ’saddles’. Like, if*

> *you go around shouting during a presentation, you're going to disturb them. And that means the 'saddles' are not produced good"*

Previously in this text, no-shoe policy was considered an enclave feature of the community. At first, no-shoe policy seems to be for cleaning purposes, and it is thought to give a cosy feeling as if it is a home rather than a workplace. There is a resemblance with Swedish custom of taking shoes off before entering someone's home. No-shoe policy is accepted by the majority while some members do not ascribe a meaning to it beyond "a Swedish cultural thing". There is, on the other hand, a resemblance with religious places of worship, such as a mosque or a Buddhist temple, where it is considered inappropriate to walk in with shoes on. Thus, together with Jakobsson's explanation, no-shoe policy can be interpreted as a sign of exalting "work" and imagining the workplace as a private sphere. Moreover, it is not only exalting the work, but it becomes a tool for building a community identity. One of the participants, who is the same person who talked about start-up dress-code earlier, explained no-shoe policy as if it is the border between the community and outsiders:

> *"We set the tone with people need to take off their shoes when they get in, which basically says come down to our level… A London banker that would walk in here. That person would not be accepted here. We wouldn't be accepted in his office and he wouldn't be accepted here. Because he would probably keep his shoes on and walk straight in"* (Fredrik)

"Setting the tone" sounds like a control mechanism against those who do not belong to the community. Here, it should be noticed that "a London banker" is not only an outsider but also a stereotype of "suits" who are particularly not welcomed at The Ground. The reason for that is not only wearing suits or representing conformity but it is also a lack of humble attitude. The Ground community shouldn't be pictured as a self-enclosed, unwelcoming community. In Jakobsson's "crafting" analogy, craftspeople are to be protected from distractions and interruptions while provided with all possible means of production by the community. Considering also the previous stereotypes coming from Jakobsson and other participants, "craftspeople" should put on a humble attitude in return of the community benefits.

The "crafting" analogy can be regarded as a rational myth – "the crafting myth" – that contains overtones of the Swedish concept of *"lagom"* and bottegas of Renaissance era. "Crafting saddles" refers to production processes and the products of the organization settled in The Ground: tech-innovation, social innovation, software and artificial intelligence development, electronic devices and hardware development. It is their "work" that is protected by no-shoe policy and other community practices. So, the community, with its enclave features and its professional relations, has "work" at its core. In other words, "work" is at the core both as a way of making a living and as a core value of the community.

The "crafting myth" is rational because it is grounded in legitimate (and traditional) Swedish knowledge. It also emphasizes the symbolic value attributed to labour (or to "work"), and it affects the relations between the individuals and their work and the community. However, this rational myth is not shared by the majority. It is rather shared by a core group within the community, which have a longer history with each other than the recent members. Expanding this myth to the whole community could be a goal of the institutionalization process of The Ground.

4.1.4 <u>Translating Rational Myths: Institutionalization at The Ground</u>

As a part of the interview topics, participants were asked: *"if The Ground was a private residence, yet, still hosting all the organizations, the people and the events, on the same daily-routine, then who would be the person living here?".* While this question had the purpose of pushing participants' creativity and make the interviews more enjoyable, it also aimed for understanding how people imagine the community. There were interesting answers, such as: *"Queen Christina of Sweden[7]"*, *"a very generous and extrovert person"*, *"someone who is not shy and who has no sense of shame"* and so on. There were also participants who tried to keep it more "realistic" and these participants said: *"The Ground reflects its founders' personalities"*; *"The Ground reflects Hampus Jakobsson"* or *"Hampus Jakobsson is that person"*.

According to the quotes above, it can be said that The Ground is seen as a hectic workplace where there is constantly a crowd (even though it has very calm and empty times during a week). Even those quotes that points out founders of The Ground may be included in this opinion because Jakobsson is also known as a hyperactive, quite busy and very social figure. For instance, him using a treadmill instead of an office chair adds to that image. When Jakobsson was asked what he thinks about those answers which imply that The Ground reflects his or its founders'

[7] Historical figure (1626-1689) known for her travels, besides her intellectual and social character.

personality, he disagreed. According to him, even if this was true at the beginning, now it has changed due to the rapid growth in the recent years. Before, according to him, The Ground had a personality - whether his or not – but since it grew, it has no personality left. He continued by stating that whoever the Head of Operations and Community is, that person should add a part of his/her own personality in building The Ground community. This can be understood roughly as "adding personality" to the community is expected to be an SSP responsibility.

"Losing the personality that used to be there at the beginning" looks exactly like what Zilber (2006) described as "a translation process" – or, in this case, absence of such process. The initial "personality" in question here was provided by a core group of the founders and first tenants. As Ground grew over time, and more people joined the community, that "personality" was lost in translation due to lack of an institutional platform that recent members of the community may relate to and may internalize its discourses.

4.2 Collaboration

So far in this text, The Ground community has been described with its prominent values and practices. To summarize this description: The Ground is a professional community where individual members value their autonomy and where most member organizations adopt flat structures. The community reproduces the meritocratic myth to define itself. Meritocratic myth has also pragmatic uses such as motivating individuals for innovation, taking on multiple roles and setting higher standards of productivity. It is the concept of "work" that defines individual identities inside the community. "Work" is the core value of the community, instead of hierarchies (based on titles, pay scales etc.) or personal reputations. The Ground is a proto-institution (a developing institution) which means that it is at the beginning of an institutionalization process.

This section will focus on facilitating collaboration as an institutional goal of the co-working space, together with individual opinions about collaboration. There will be no distinctions made between collaborations of organizations and collaborations of individuals etc. No clear distinctions were made during the interviews. Instead, defining and describing collaboration was left to participants' own understandings and experiences. For instance, one of the participants put "collaboration" also into a family context besides the professional context:

> *"It's a good example of bad collaboration. One party is uninformed, have completely different interests and, you know, is working often in a completely different direction then yourself. And you still have to collaborate with them. You have to make it work. You have to find the arguments to get them to work in your way. You also have to give, you also have to say that 'this is not optimal, we're supposed to be in school in ten minutes and you're not dressed yet and you refuse to wear these clothes. So, I will let you wear the clothes that you want to wear, but I personally think you shouldn't go to preschool in a unicorn costume. But fine, go in the unicorn costume'. I think that's a perfect example of collaboration gone bad where someone just has to yield and say 'ok, fine'."* (Sven)

Thereby, this section (especially in the quotes) will present various understanding of collaboration, in various contexts. These understandings and contexts will not be explained one-by-one, but they may be regarded as bonding ties, if collaboration is inside the community or an organization (or in a family). If collaborations involve parties from outside the community, such relations may be regarded as bridging ties.

4.2.1 Discourses of Progress

Besides those mentioned earlier in this text, another rational myth that is mentioned in Zilber's (2006) study is the myth of "enchantment": the belief that technologic development is necessary for a better future. While it is undeniable in rational terms that technologic developments change many aspects of human life in a positive way, there are still significant costs and it is a very subjective matter – depending on different types of legitimate knowledge - that what should be the purpose, focus or direction of technological progress. It can be argued that the enchantment myth is common in tech-industries as technological progress is the goal of many startups around the world.

"Progress" does not necessarily refer to technology and scientific knowledge. Even though modernism and technology may be seen closely related to each other, "progress" is a fundamental concept in constructing the knowledge of modernism which also effects social, cultural and economic aspects of human life. For instance, participant Amanda, who is a freelancer and who adopts progressive discourses in her business, stated:

> *“I never – or very rarely- cook the same dish twice. And that is because I like to develop and evolve”*

“Developing”, “growing”, “evolving” are the common words used to express the idea of progress, as will be seen in the following quotes from other participants, too. Different than the quote above, where the participant takes “progress” as a side goal of working, participant Kemal uses discourses of progress for creating an organizational culture for his start-up:

> *“We have a culture in our team that you are always developing, always growing, always going to the next step in your life, always curious”*

Different than both quotes above, progress does not have to be about a single business, as well as an individual is not. A “post-modernist” approach is adopted by participant Cristopher in his career, who describes his career as more of a satisfaction in creation, in bringing things into the world, rather than a matter of achievements and/or consistency:

> “*It’s more interesting to take on different roles. If you always do the same thing, no matter what, then I will stagnate, I will get bored with it. Sometimes it can be fun organizing things, other times it can be fun buying things or integrating new ideas. I would say, in that sense, I am more of a developer who likes to create something and expand on that. Maybe, once that thing, whatever it is, can have life on its own then I think it’s fun to move on to something else”*

In the quote above, progress may be understood as “moving on”, while in the previous ones, “progress” is understood as either an aim or a state-of-mind of working. Progress is often the expectation when two or more parties collaborate. In the absence of discourses of progress, collaboration may lose its point. Although, “progress” might mean different things for different parties. Parallel to that, there may be different reasons to collaborate as many as different understandings of progress.

4.2.2 Possible Reasons to Collaborate or Not to Collaborate

The two most obvious reasons for collaborating that participants mentioned are: 1) achieving bigger goals by sharing resources. 2) problem solving by sharing experiences. As an example of the first, a participant mentioned a YouTube video that he made in collaboration with a friend. He told that if he did the video alone and did not share resources with someone else, it would have less content and it would reach less viewers. As an example of the second, another participant told that his job is managing supply chain and people often ask him about shipping or customs procedures. It is also known that designers and developers in the community get help from other members for usability testing. So, sharing experiences can be sharing professional knowledge, but also it can be literally sharing an experience such as user experience etc.

In addition to sharing resources and sharing experiences, another reason for collaboration might be reducing stress points which is similar with problem solving but not the same. The difference is that problem solving usually refers to a single occasion when a specific problem is solved by help from experienced and/or resourceful partners, while reducing stress points is a process in which labour and burdens are divided. Participant Cristopher, who mentioned the benefits of reducing/sharing stress points first, explained:

> *"You don't always solve problems by having a collaboration. I had a colleague and friend of mine, saying that when you create a new product, it shouldn't necessarily make something better or improve solutions. It should reduce the pain points somewhere. Like if something giving you stomach cramps at night or like something just tedious that you have to do every time. A successful collaboration makes that feeling go away"*

Another participant, who is the founder of a design-consultancy company (not a start-up) that employs three designers, pointed out that recruitment can be a very important reason to collaborate – especially in the start-up world. The participant explained collaboration in recruitment is crucial for both start-ups and workers, with a probable scenario: a start-up that is raising its funds and seeking new talent may recruit from another which is low on funds and looking to decrease costs. Everyone wins in this scenario, at least financially. Of course, financial status is a decisive factor in establishing collaborations. Each party needs financial resources - along with other types of resources - to invest in a collaboration. Also, each party would like to get no less than what they invested. Most of the times, the end goal of a collaboration is profit, and for some participants it's the main goal, except favours done in Gemeinschaft contexts.

Knowledge exchange and gaining new perspectives are mentioned by participants as other reasons that are worth collaborating with other parties. The issue of knowledge exchange was discussed in literature review and theoretical framework, as an outcome of collaborative relations, which depends on boundaries, ownership and transparency. Issues of gaining new perspectives and reaching new knowledge were also discussed earlier in theoretical framework, in terms of the two dimensions of a professional community: Gemeinschaft contexts tend to evolve into homogeneity, in terms of shared knowledge, and bonding ties tend to become less effective over time. In result, new knowledge and new perspectives may require new bridging ties, and such ties can be acquired through Gesellschaft contexts. Both contexts' advantages and challenges were mentioned during the interviews - which are also "the bright side" and "the dark side" of collaboration. Participant Amanda explained the difference between the two contexts (two dimension of co-working) and reaching new knowledge, in her own experience:

> *"When I work with people that are similar to me, like, ooh we get along so well, we've got so much in common, this is amazing… It's like, you know, this love phase that's like oh, it's fantastic. But then, sometimes, that person is a bit too similar to me so, not much happens. Then in another occasion, I am working people that are very… 'ah, this is tough', you know, why is it so difficult to collaborate with this person or with this organization or whatever… But when you get over the threshold, you realize that there is a universe that I could not allow myself because I didn't see that"*

What meant by "the dark side" (before the quote) are some of the reasons for not to collaborate, such as the uncertainty that comes with new collaborative relations. This uncertainty will be discussed further in this text, in relation to the issue of setting boundaries. Briefly, uncertainties are caused by differences between collaborating parties and these differences may be serious ones such as one party is being less engaged or interrupting other parties' processes etc. If boundary issues are not solved, then collaboration is likely to fail, and it will be remembered as a time-wasting experience.

Another reason emphasized by the participant, who owns a consultancy company, is that start-ups may see collaboration as a waste of time because they are not paid hourly, but they might get paid only if the collaboration works in the long run. In relation to this, participant Cristopher expressed concerns about collaborations bringing too much procedures and formalities:

> *"Both in volunteering organizations and in large companies: We have weekly meetings, we have to discuss something, so we create the discussion for the sake of it. It never really*

leads to anything... If it's not about solving a problem or creating something new, I don't really see where that helps"

According to this participant, collaboration causes side-effects such as spreading panic in the group, increasing stress and rushing work. All of these may be considered in relation to time-wasting, which is hardly affordable for small organizations as they have limited resources. In the end, *"a smooth and optimal collaboration is a utopia"* as said by a participant who is an experienced programmer and a multi-role-performer in a start-up. To overcome the issues mentioned above, from the beginning of a collaboration, all parties should give enough time and effort for communication and planning, so that they can set realistic goals and expectancies.

4.2.3 How Collaboration Begins?

The participants were asked *"how collaboration begins?"* to see if the processes of starting collaboration within The Ground community resonates with Parrino's (2015) conclusions: the idea that collaboration happens "naturally", "on its own". Participant Cristopher confirms this idea, saying that collaboration cannot be forced but it must be somewhat natural:

"Some of the people working with us now, are collaborating with us because at one point I saw the need to work with them. Because I knew they are good people to work with. And then it just happened naturally. I don't go out looking for collaborations unless I know from the start that this would be a good idea. The hardest thing about starting a collaboration is finding the right people who will solve the need that you may not necessarily know you have"

The quote above agrees with the idea that collaboration should begin "naturally". However, it also highlights the importance of who to collaborate with, in the first place, which can be considered as the first evidence that collaboration requires human agency. Participant Ronald mentioned a community practice that he called "introduction culture", which works together with favours:

"Introduction culture is very strong in the start-up community… It has two advantages; one of them is pure culture. Pure pay-it-forward culture. People have been nice to me, you know, Hampus and Karl are nice to me. Of course, I can try to pay it back to Hampus and Karl, but it's better if I pay it back by helping somebody else. So, people are being nice to

> *me and I pay back by being nice to others. This morning I met a new design consultancy team who are starting up. They might become competitors to me, but I still gave them a lot of good advice. Because it's good for the bigger community and it's good for Malmo that we help each other. But it is also egoistically nice"*

"Introduction culture" is a networking practice, whereas, a community member introduces individuals or organizations that it considers relevant in terms of business. Such introductions are framed as favours. The quote above explains a rather broad type of collaboration on the community scale. Ronald's generalization includes the entire Malmo start-up community. It is practiced with an altruistic, and somewhat serendipitous, approach for the purposes of either facilitating collaboration or expanding networks. While "introduction culture" is practiced at The Ground, such practice may be more effective with community agency, in addition to human agency. There haven't been many participants who mentioned this practice. Thus, it would be fair to question if this practice is well-translated throughout The Ground community.

Participants were also asked with whom they would like (or prefer) to collaborate. The answers were quite parallel to the opinions about who would fit in the community and who would not (as explained in community description). Collaboration is not possible, according to the participants from The Ground, unless they decide the other party is engaged and reliable enough. Being engaged and reliable means: *"getting things done"*, *"actively contributing to ideas instead of only hearing and cheering"*, *"delivering on time"*, *"being reachable and motivated"*, *"being able to work autonomous"* and/or *"being assuring and confident instead of complaining and panicking"*.

It seems like without a consensus on that all parties are engaged and reliable enough, there is no sufficient trust relationship to collaborate. Also, without an SSP, all parties must have to make a judgement about each other, on their own. In that case, each party may have different criterias, understandings and values of judgment based on its own Gemeinschaft context (an SSP could prevent miscommunications and help to find common grounds, in this case). However, if all parties are trusting each other, then collaboration usually begins through a series of coffee sessions and meetings. The content of such sessions and meetings consist of different forms of brainstorming over an initial idea. According to participant Kemal, who used to make YouTube videos often, collaboration begins like "magic". Brainstorming happens when each party brings relevant resources to the table and engages the initial idea with either a constructive or a deconstructive approach, while every move is approved by other parties. So, the initial idea develops into a collaborative project. “Magic” is in the smoothness and success of this process when it actually works.

4.2.4 Boundaries and Hierarchies in Collaboration Context

In case the brainstorming process turns out to be less productive than expected, the reason may be organizational differences between parties. These differences might appear as one of the parties (or its representatives) not being authorized to make final decisions and has to request permission from superiors or third parties. If this is the case, then it is a typical example of setting strict boundaries to protect ownership in expanse of flexibility and transparency - a likely scenario of a collaboration between a start-up and a large corporation. Such differences in organization sizes may create hierarchies that may force boundaries in favor of the larger ones.

Ideally, all parties should be well-informed about goals, boundaries and the division of labor from the beginning of a collaboration. All the participants agree on that boundaries should be based on a clear division of labour. However, they also stated that it is not so realistic to have very clear boundaries in start-ups and small organizations as they rely on flexibility and teamwork in almost every aspect of their businesses. As mentioned earlier, taking on multiple roles and being generalists are the norm in small organizations. This means less specialization and more fluid boundaries, in contrast to clear division of labor which means more specialization. Participant Sven stressed the importance of flexibility by saying:

> “*You can’t always get the fun part. Therefore, some people eventually end up with the turds. And, if you bitch about it, then you are not a part of the company. You are not part of the culture and you don’t have what it takes”*

According to this participant, “acceptance” is the key for a flexible division of labor and that means embracing multiple roles. It is not only about “getting the fun part”, but it is also about taking risks and showing confidence for taking initiative. The participants described “the ideal collaboration”, in general, as a flat structure where there is only a network of professionals instead of hierarchic structures. Leadership still exists in this context, but it is only occasional and temporary, depending on who takes on which roles in order to solve which problems and who takes what risks and/or initiatives to what degree. This fluidity and flexibility that small organizations use as a survival strategy may be understood as uncertainty or unclear boundaries in collaboration context. Even though there is a clear division of labour in theory, as participant Cristopher explains, boundaries may be hard to maintain in practice:

> *"Fairly loose boundaries, we have. Elin is focusing on the business side and I am focusing on the technology side. And then, at some point, Elin is saying, in panic, all these things with the technology have to be solved right now. And I go like; aaaaaaaah! The boundary is somewhere in between"*

The quote above, even though it is only one side of the story, shows that: there is a clear division of labour in principle and there is mutual trust enough to be on the same team. Because that they are on the same team, it can be assumed there is no issue of transparency. However, in time, one of them gets too engaged or the other gets less engaged. So, one party decides to claim ownership/authority on all over the business instead of following the division of labour. Thus, panic begins, and the boundaries becomes "loose". Participant Cristopher also added that more clear boundaries would help their team in the future, but not now "*because it is a start-up and you do what you have to do, to get things running"*.

The literature review showed that full transparency and tenuous boundaries create an environment well-suited for collaboration and innovation. The participants seemed to be agreeing during the interviews, even though some admit that clearer boundaries could help. Here it is important that boundaries should not be based on hierarchies as this would damage the autonomy principle, the sense of community and, ultimately, the meritocratic myth and the division of labour principle. In their current flat structures, the participants told that they are quite happy with the level of ownership they feel for their work as there are less boundaries in between.

4.2.5 Managers Without Suits

During one of the interviews with a participant who used to work for PACMAN and who is currently working for a start-up, I realized that many members of The Ground community used to work for PACMAN. Also, some other members who never worked for PACMAN have co-workers, partners and friends who did. Because this realization was in the late stages of the research, I did not have the chance to discuss the topic with all participants. The discussion here is based on 3 interviews, although, these interviews show that PACMAN is closely related to the start-up culture in Malmo.

As a global technology brand and a multi-national corporation originating from Japan, PACMAN is one of the largest employers in Malmo (and in Skane). PACMAN also used to be known for its collaboration with a Swedish telecommunication giant. Its relation to my thesis is through PACMAN's discharges of employees and the procedures followed during these discharges:

> *"Back in 2015, PACMAN was firing like a thousand people or 700 or something around there. They had like two ways you could leave the company; one was to take the money and run which was fair. Basically, they have several packages for everyone. And the other solution was to join a group at PACMAN that helps you to start your own company"* (Cristopher)

So, according to the participant and the quote above, PACMAN did not only discharged employees, but it also encouraged them to start their own businesses. Thus, many people who left PACMAN and decided to build on their own ideas went to co-working spaces around Malmo and Lund. This situation also helps to explain how the 3rd biggest of city of Sweden turned into a hotspot for start-ups and co-working spaces:

> *"We went to MINC and stayed there for a while. A lot of people from PACMAN were there. We met a ton of new start-ups with people from PACMAN"* (Cristopher)

Some participants said that this not really in favour of the discharged employees because they will be shifting from a regular income to an irregular one. During this shift, they will need new skills and knowledge to grow their start-ups as they will face new challenges that they are not used to. According to these arguments, not everyone can become an entrepreneur even though they are good in their own fields of expertise. In the meantime, this is a great opportunity for PACMAN to save money: PACMAN can still outsource projects to relevant small organizations when it's needed, so it does not have to pay monthly salary to so many employees at the same time.

> *"They fired a lot of people, but they kept the consultants. In the yearly report, in the balance sheet, consultants cost nothing because you can stop using them at anytime. Whereas, to an actually-hired employee, you have to pay until you terminate the contract. Consultants are expensive in hourly cost but in terms of balance sheets they are very cheap"* (Sven)

Some other participants, on the other hand, believe that leaving PACMAN is good for people. Participant Cristopher explains it from his own experience:

> *"A lot of people who are leaving are okay with it. I mean, it's nice to be able to get the severance package and then do something else. I have spoken to some people who left the company or who are leaving the company now. They are getting the same treatment that I had. My own boss was great but someone else in the organization said no, you can't do that… Simple because they are saving money and they are focused on saving money"* (Cristopher)

The reason that "people are okay with it" is claimed to be the strict management hierarchy that creates boundary issues from the employees' perspective:

> *"A lot of people have been fed up with PACMAN because they have such a high management-overload. So, you get decisions pushed down on you from the top. And you just have to accept them and move on. I think it's natural for people coming from large-management organization like that. It's a fresh start to come to collaboration spaces and to start on their own project"* (Sven)

The management-overload mentioned in the quote above, and the neglect of needs for autonomy, individualism and a sense of community are what considered to be unacceptable in co-working spaces today. Because, ownership cannot be claimed when there is no individual recognition and autonomy, which turns creative and innovative processes into stressful situations. The term "suits", referring to uniformity, seems to be born from such hierarchic structures in large corporations where boundaries and transparency (or "opacity", in this case) are non-negotiable, even within themselves. Participant Sven elaborates the management-overload issue:

> *"PACMAN is a very old corporation, right? And it's Japanese. Both things add to the very traditional way of looking at management and organization charts. I know the fact that there have been many times at PACMAN, and many other companies' history, where they have had to sort of just stop and say 'we have to throw out middle-management because we have so much middle-management. We need middle-management to manage middle-management'. You know, it's a pyramid, right? But there are layers within the pyramid*

> *which are only management for the layer below. So, it becomes this behemoth of management structure"*

Pyramids are not built in The Ground, where the norm is rather building flat structures. To make flat structures work, "the individual" must be recognized through meritocratic discourses and discourses of diversity, as an autonomous unit, with its own ownership rights. Flat structures should be transparent (internally and externally) as much as they can, in order to maintain their "flat" qualities. As autonomous beings, individuals in flat structures should be able to negotiate boundaries in a transparent work environment.

While it is not the main purpose of co-working spaces to build organizational structures for small organizations, co-working spaces may institutionalize and encourage "flat structures" as a community principle. This would be beneficial for small organizations that are operating in knowledge economy, and whose operations are based on creative and/or innovative processes. According to the participants, who take part in such processes in their work, hierarchic structures disrupt these processes: less management interference supports a smoother creative/innovative process. More flat structures and more transparency, on the other hand, may provide more space for SSPs. Professional community SSPs can take on the role of a minimal management, by getting involved in multiple organizations' creative/innovative processes for merely communication and organizing purposes. As this sort of management support would not be a part of the organizations which it collaborates with, it would be less likely for SSPs to disrupt the quality of production and transparency levels. It is also less likely for SSPs to grow invasive ownership claims or boundaries. It is most certain that it would not grow into *"a behemoth of management structure"* inside any single organization.

SSPs taking more active role in communicational and organizational issues would make them more active in facilitating collaboration as SSPs would have more knowledge about operations and processes of small organizations. Also, small organizations and community members may take part in SSP units. With the contributions of an active SSP, co-working spaces may build communities that are more open to collaboration.

In fact, co-working spaces already promise "a new institution" as an alternative to traditional large corporations which converge to institutions. Although, traditional large corporations rarely complete their institutionalization processes due to strict hierarchic structures that limit authority, transparency and boundaries depending on certain individuals or (core) groups. This dependence leads to a transfer of values and norms into an organizational context, which are unauthentic to the organization, thus, not so inclusive or "translatable" for everyone. Participant Amanda's experience makes a good example of this:

> *"I left PACMAN 9-10 years ago which is a long time. So, I don't know what it is like now. But at the time, yeah sure, the most challenging part was how to manage the Japanese hierarchy and the Japanese way of doing business, compared to the Swedish way. And they have very different systems that didn't work very well… For example; that I am a woman which was really hard…"*

According to the quote above, PACMAN employees in Sweden are mostly Swedish. Although, the organizational culture is claimed to be dominated by Japanese culture. Because that PACMAN originates from Japan, it can be argued that the core values and norms are transferred from Japanese culture into organizational context. However, these norms are not well translated to this Swedish employee: they are inauthentic, out-of-context from her perspective as she cannot find a way to negotiate them, or a way to be a part of the processes that develop them, due to lack of transparency. Nevertheless, these norms remain due to hierarchies of authority and boundaries that support them.

4.2.6 Individual Opinions on Collaboration

The entire section of "Research Findings and Analysis" may be attributed to individual opinions of the research participants. Here, what is meant by "individual opinions" is how individuals feel in collaborative contexts, in terms of responsibility, ethics and motivation. Autonomy and individualism cannot be experienced to their extremes as the individuals are in a community context and in organizational contexts (unless they are freelancers). Thereby, their relations and experiences effect or change their individual opinions.

During the interviews, the participants were asked to give examples for successful collaborations and/or failed ones, in their own experiences. Most answers were about failed collaborations, as one participant said that bad experiences are remembered clearer. Different cases of failed collaborations have a lot in common: in most cases the reason for failure was explained as either trust and reliability issues, or, engagement and continuity issues.

To begin with trust and reliability issues, uncertainty (on the dark side of collaboration) came up as a barrier between the participants and their potential collaborators. In contrast, some participants stressed the importance of looking at collaboration opportunities on the bright side. Nevertheless, this is a minority opinion as cases of unsuccessful collaborations remain in organizational and community memories for "taking lessons from". Such case was shared by participant Cristopher:

> *"Several years back, we had a guy who came into the organization and he was really upfront about he wants to do everything. He was really positive, really engaged and he was saying like don't worry, I'll make this happen. For a while we thought it was working out. Then suddenly we heard that… He was saying he was part of an organization, but he wasn't. He was saying he was engaged in this project, but no one knew about him. The more we heard, the more it became apparent that he was a compulsive liar*"

In the quote above, the person being called "a compulsive liar" could be someone trying to raise himself above the crowd to get the job. Obviously, it is not exactly ethical to do so. The participants who had this sort of experiences could be expected to be more defensive towards collaboration opportunities, but that does not necessarily happen. Participant Ronald, who usually takes collaboration opportunities on the bright side, suggests adopting a more patient and optimistic attitude:

> *"I think you almost never get a no, but you get like: Well we don't have anything right now and we will get in touch if we have. It is a no. In practice it is no. That happens all the time. But it is hard to know if it is actually true or not. Sometimes it is just bad timing. They like you but the timing is not good. They might come back half-a-year later or a year later. You never know. So, you just have to do a lot of these meeting and coffees"*

Participant Ronald suggests more empathy and patience while not to judge other parties for "white lies" or small excuses, so long as they are acting within ethical boundaries. The same participant also had some bad collaboration experiences that other parties were acting unethical and frustrating towards his organization by lowering transparency and not paying the bills. The two participants who own the two quotes above have a lot of differences in age and business experience and this might be reason for the difference in their attitudes. However, it is significant at this point that none of the participants shared any self-criticism or any case that the fault was theirs at least to a degree. While there were suggestions for empathy during some interviews, it would be fair to say that empathy is not a strength of the community. The "compulsive liar" case is an extreme case, but when asked for bad collaboration experiences, most participants pointed out collaborations with volunteers or freelancers. Those collaborations are where most of the reliability, engagement and motivation concerns come from. For instance:

> *"Especially when I work with volunteers, you see people who say no, this is too much or I'm sick today and then they drop-out and disappear. Or you see people saying; don't worry, I'll do this and then nothing happens for half a year. Those type of people are horrible to work with because you're expecting things. If you want anything to happen, then you have to be constantly on top of them, to make sure that it actually occurs. Those type of people, you get them with volunteering organizations and it's horrible"*

Another relevant example from participant Kemal:

> *"In the early days, I didn't have technical team. So, I had to hire freelancers; different types of freelancers for different types of projects. And each project failed. When freelancer has finished the project successfully and you want to move on to the next phase because you finally have new ideas bla bla bla… You see the freelancer has already moved on to another job. I can't teach how to take over the project or I can't just hand it over. I lost a lot of money and that's how I learned I had to build an in-house team"*

In both quotes above, freelancers and volunteers are blamed for unreliability, disengagement and/or discontinuity. While doing so, freelancers' and volunteers' perspectives and struggles were completely ignored. This negative attitude against such collaborators, without admitting any responsibility or guilt in the process, seems relentless to me.

To understand in which circumstances they might be feeling guilty in collaboration and/or workplace contexts, participants were asked *"what would you do if you mess up the work?"*. The answers were, again, far from any example or sign of guilt. Mistakes are totally fine in the community, so long as whoever responsible comes up with solution offers. I interpret this as a deeper aspect of the meritocratic myth: you must be daring and confident enough to take risks and to make mistakes so long as you are good enough to make up for them. Another point (also relevant to meritocratic myth in terms of being self-motivated) that makes "the others" guilty but not the participants is that they define themselves as self-motivated and engaged while "others" are not.

So, those who are worthy to join and those who are not, are sorted out mainly based on this difference in motivation. Showing confidence and motivation (or dedication) is quite important in the community:

> *"To me it's also important that the person or the network that I would collaborate with has a drive on its own, if you see what I mean. So, I will drive whatever I do and then we collaborate but the drive from the other party; I think that's very important"* (Amanda)

In theory, self-motivation should mean that a sense of guilt drives the individual in case of failures or mistakes. So, it could be presumed that in a community where self-motivation has such a high value, guilt culture is the dominant driving force for individuals to fulfil responsibilities and/or pursue achievements. Because that this subject did not develop well during the interviews and the participants did not say much related to sense of guilt, here it is assumed that shame culture is more effective in the community based on the fact that the community is a point of reference for organizations and individuals:

> *"I don't think you can fake it in a tight knitted community, if you do good work rumour will spread. And the more people know about it and know each other, the rumour will spread better"* (Ronald)

The quote shows that peer-pressure is effective on his organization, however, this can also be considered as a benefit of Gemeinschaft context. Without a community context – and it is supposed to be tight-knitted one – such peer pressure would not work: people may not care about each other's opinions or they may not have enough information to have an opinion on each other's work. The example quotes about blaming freelancers and volunteers (also lack of self-criticism and admitting guilt) take place in Gesellschaft contexts. There are conflicts in Gemeinschaft contexts, too, but these conflicts are reflected more like complaining about others rather than blaming them. One example is an ongoing conflict between participant Cristopher and his partner:

> *"That can be terrifying. Don't tell her I said this, but Elin is a bit of an overachiever. She knows this as well; likes to have her fingers in everything which often means that I can feel pressured by her wanting to steer or to control the things that I am working on"*

From the double-bind theory perspective, the situation presented in the quote can be interpreted as: there are already-set boundaries between two partners. One party crosses the boundaries by getting involved in other's work. So, the participant has two options left. If he drops his work, he will lose together with his partner. Or, if he decides to ignore the "trespassing" he might lose his side of the boundaries, eventually. So, in both cases this situation puts stress on the participant and demotivates him for collaborating. Another example, this time from a Gesellschaft context, for a similar double-bind demotivation:

> *"For more normal organizations, you sometimes get people who want to question everything. Sometimes it's good for people to have different ideas and try to develop an idea. But for some people it's more about questioning or trying to find faults with what's going on. That's also a negative in an organization… It's demotivating for the first part. I mean, if I'm working on and putting time in something and then I get like; no, you shouldn't be doing this because I don't like it, then it's demotivating. Often it can turn into a discussion that's not productive. Like, it's more about creating a discussion than to produce a result"* (Cristopher)

Here, the participant explains that he was working on a specific project. He is the type who does not like being questioned but he is in a context that he is obliged to answer them, anyway. The other party wants to cancel his project. In this case, he has two options: if he gets into a debate to make his point for continuing his project, he might not have any higher authority than the other party or the other party might be irreconcilable (it is assumed that convincing the other party is not an option, thus, the issue remains unresolved). If he agrees to stop working on the project, then he will end up wasting time and effort for nothing.

The double-bind situations explained through the two quotes above may be significant factors for individuals to refrain from future collaborations, to remember collaborations as exhausting and unproductive processes and/or simply to be demotivated for maintaining current collaborations.

4.3 Summarizing The Results

4.3.1 Institutionalizing community principles, values and practices for improving collaborative capacity

The Ground is a professional community consisting of various kinds of entrepreneurs. This community of small capitalist organizations, freelancers and non-profits, operates in knowledge economy. They have the means to do so, as they are privileged individuals with higher capacities of aspiration and navigation (Appadurai, 2004). They are privileged in terms of having access to knowledge, operating with high level of autonomy and individual recognition in their jobs. The Ground community can be seen at the intersection of the stereotypes of individualist culture and enclave culture. Flat organizations are trending in the community because flat structures promise better distribution of ownership and more transparent boundaries. The participants described the community through meritocratic values and discourses. The meritocratic myth fuels up flat organizations by assuring that every individual is competent enough to take risks, to take initiative when needed and to work in multiple roles continuously.

The Ground community does not like “suits” and it prefers to recognize individuals through their work. Thus, work is “sacred” at The Ground and individual reputations depend on it. According to some, each worker in the community shall be considered as “a craftsperson”, producing something of value by individual skills, creativity and finesse. Although, this idea of “crafting myth” that holds work in high value, is not well-translated throughout the entire community. “Translated” here refers to Zilber’s (2006) analogy for institutionalization process: it is a process of “translation” rather than “diffusion” because it does not happen top-to-down, but it happens one-by-one as specific meanings associated with the institution are internalized by each individual.

By installing a more effective SSP (in the form a team, if possible), The Ground can minimize translation issues and become more effective in community building. The Ground is building its community while it is at the beginning of its institutionalization process. Proceeding with such process requires institutional tools and setting clear goals, besides community building. Setting new goals means institutionalizing new meanings by clarifying its position as, for instance, a facilitator of collaborations. Potential institutional tools that can help to motivate, organize and develop the community can be identified and mobilized by an SSP.

Connecting back to the first question, the results show that The Ground may institutionalize community principles, values and practices in order to improve its collaborative capacity by identifying and mobilizing already existing rational myths and practices as well as by developing new ones. They may also consolidate the community identity by adding on to both its individualist and enclave features, clarifying goals and setting new goals in accordance with the community.

Installing an effective SSP for managing all the institutionalization process shall improve collaborative capacity.

4.3.2 Facilitating Collaboration

The Ground is a progressive community. Depending on the situation, collaboration may be understood as a way of progress, but not necessarily. It might mean sharing resources and experiences to pursue bigger goals, to solve immediate problems, to recruit new talent or to reduce costs etc. However, collaboration also has “a dark side”. For the participants, making the difference between the bright and the darks sides of collaboration depends on memory of collaboration, their own trust and reliability criteria, demonstrated engagement and motivation from other parties. While memory of bad experiences does not necessarily make some parties more defensive, memory of successful collaborations may be considered isolated incidents that happened “naturally”, on their own.

Connecting back to the second research question of “how collaboration is facilitated, under which circumstances and by whom?”, collaborative processes (in The Ground context) usually begin with realizing common interests and exchanging knowledge and ideas through brainstorming. Collaboration does not start naturally but it requires taking initiative, finding the right people, holding a series of meetings and precisely planning the course of it. A collaborator is not a passive supporter or a listener, but it is an active contributor. Ideally, all parties in a collaboration shall be well-informed about goals and boundaries of the collaboration. The participants are in favour of setting boundaries based on clear divisions of labour. Establishing new collaboration between organizations that are flat and transparent as much as possible may be facilitated by an SSP. As an extension of the co-working space, an SSP would make the co-working space more pro-active in facilitating collaboration. An SSP operating with the function of facilitating collaboration may contribute to collaboration processes by tailoring structures for specific collaborative contexts and by managing/monitoring these structures – from the organizational scale to the individual scale.

5 FURTHER ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 ”The Three-Dimensions” Theme

SSPs should consider the professional community as a network with three dimensions: the community dimension (Gemeinschaft), the professional dimension (Gesellschaft) and the social capital dimension. Start-ups, as small capitalist organizations, are working to grow and to expand their production and influence. Thereby, they have to be pragmatic in every sense. For instance, joining a community is not only a convenience, but it is also an investment. Start-ups are risky businesses so they need to be benefit-oriented as benefits of all kinds of relations might lead to financial profit, eventually. From this pragmatic point of view, some benefits of Gemeinschaft dimension are commitment and consistency, references, trust relations, common grounds and harmony. Benefits of Gesellschaft dimension, on the other hand, are new knowledge and perspectives, new resources, networks and funds, fresh opportunities, gaining a legal personality and potential of wider recognition. The social capital dimension of a professional community shares the benefits provided through the other ones.

There are risks to each dimension as well as benefits. The Gemeinschaft dimension poses a risk of homogeneity (or a kind of ”home-blindness”) as mentioned earlier. Relations on the Gesellschaft dimension are usually uncertain at the beginning, also much less transparent. It is not exactly a risk but it is certainly a disadvantage that it takes time to build trust and to find common grounds. The social capital dimension of a professional community shares the risks posed through the other ones.

Figure 1 that will be seen on the next page is a very simplified visualization of ”the three dimensions” theme explained above. As explained earlier in the literature review, the concept of social capital is considered as a type of resource. Also in *Figure 1,* the social capital is a third dimension that stiches the two other dimensions together in the organizational/institutional context, through bridging ties and bonding ties. Thus, it is also the way of individuals and individual organizations to understand and to navigate the other two dimensions. This theme – and the figure below – can help an SSP to contextualize start-ups’ statuses, needs and problems. Also an SSP can develop this theme over time, based on its empirical experiences (there can be better visuals produced, as well, as the one used here is produced with very basic technical knowledge).

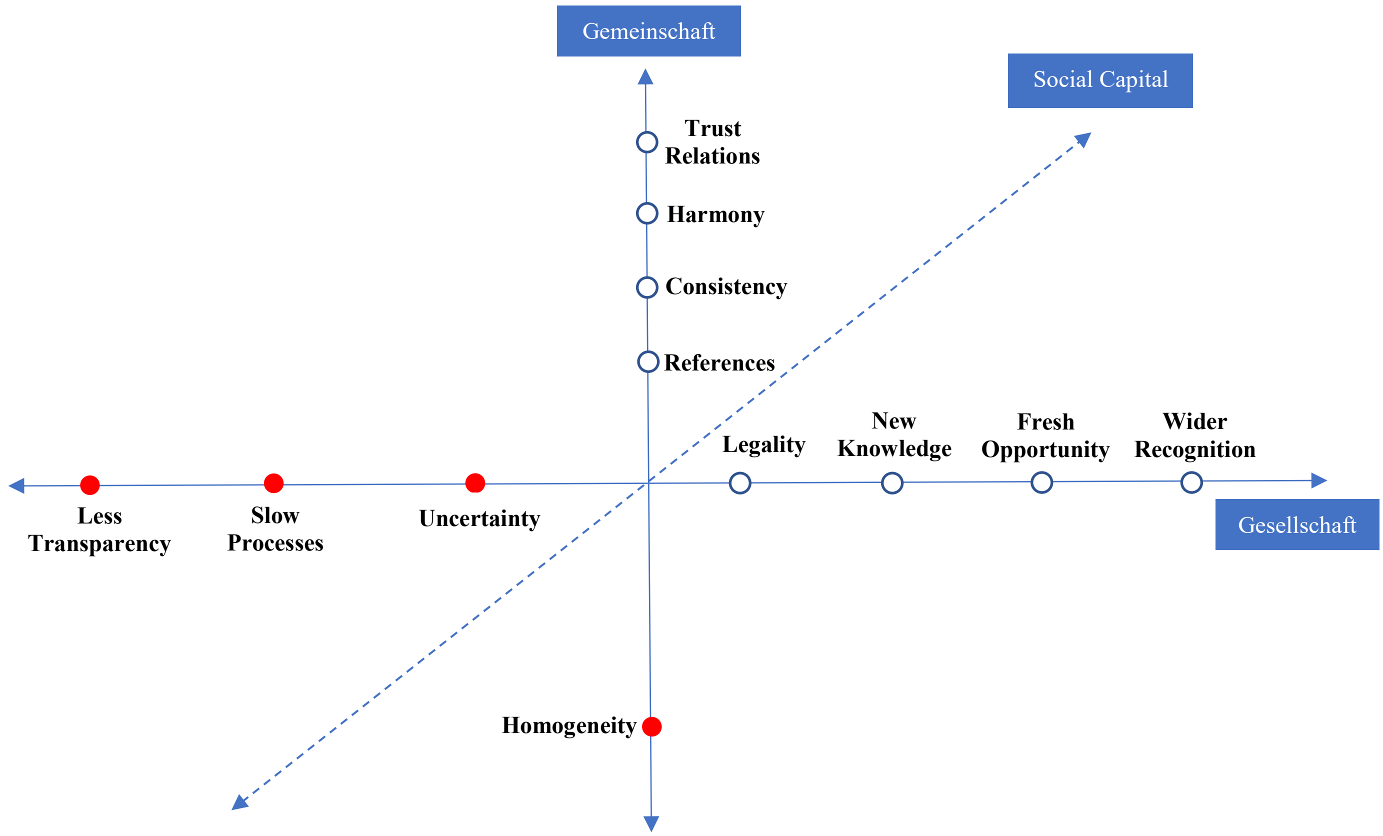

Figure 1: Visualization of "The Three Dimensions" Theme

5.2 Suggestions for The Ground

"Head of Community and Operations" is the only staff position at The Ground and its job description is somewhat unclear. Although, this position is the closest thing to an SSP. Community building and running daily operations are different responsibilities that require different skills. Having background in both social sciences and computer sciences, while dealing with the daily operations, in multiple languages (doing all in one job) sounds too much to expect from an individual. Also, an SSP can be imagined as a sort of "middle-management" service for the community (not for The Ground as an organization): instead of building "behemoths of middle-managements" as traditional organizations do, multiple small organizations can receive management support service from co-working spaces, at once. However, the SSP should be competent and authorized for fulfilling such a task.

The Ground may aim to create and install an SSP in the form of a team: besides “Head of Community”, the board might consider opening a separate position of “Head of Operations” and a position that requires background in computer science and/or tech-industry. These three positions together may form an SSP which ensures that daily operations are carried on smoothly, that the community is tight and developing, and that The Ground is aware of its community’s business needs and potential. In cases that hiring new staff is not affordable or feasible, SSP can be formed based on volunteering, as well: members of the community may volunteer to form an SSP. Ultimately, it is up to The Ground board and the community to decide in which form the SSP should be established.

An SSP does not have to be called “SSP”, but the community can decide what to call it. For instance, having community volunteers on the team, having the community name the team and/or having a clear job description may help legitimizing the SSP’s place in the community. Nevertheless, for the SSP to be well-integrated in the community, The Ground’s goals should be parallel to the community’s goals, if they are not common. So, besides fulfilling its functions as an institutional tool, the SSP can contribute also by being an element of the community culture.

Establishing an SSP team would strengthen The Ground’s position as a facilitator, compared to incubator co-working spaces. However, The Ground should clarify its role as a facilitator, in the first place. Just like the community defines itself as a sort of meritocracy, The Ground (or its community) can produce more rational myths, some of which are related to its “facilitator” role. Besides “facilitating”, for instance, the “crafting” myth is not well-translated, as mentioned earlier. This myth can be something to work on for the community builder. Producing/reproducing such rational myths are to help consolidating the community identity and to clarify The Ground’s goals. Rational myths can be mobilized in order to keep those goals alive and they motivate the community towards them.

In order to make the meritocratic myth more realistic, the community should put more effort to overcome the gender issues. As a community with “work” as its core value, gender stereotyping and hierarchies of sexual identities should be treated the same as “suits”: reproduction of traditional hierarchies will not help a transparent community consisting of flat organizations.

The Ground should provide a productive and generous working environment for its community. Thus, it should keep a balance between the individualist culture and the enclave culture. This balance depends on the social capital as a resource shared by the community: by "tracking" this resource an SSP may introduce new networks, new talents, community events, meetings etc. if needed, for preventing "depletion" of social capital. Attributing value to social capital by treating it as a resource is for making it sure that it becomes the third dimension that stiches Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft dimension. In theory, managing social capital is also an SSP responsibility – which, if fulfilled well, would enable the community to better navigate through both other dimensions and to find higher aspirations.

As a final suggestion for an SSP's responsibilities, the community's suggestions and warnings should also be heard and considered. Some of the participants' made suggestions for improving collaborative capacity, such as:

- creating "an idea bank" where anyone can add any ideas that worth collaborating (Kemal has this in his own organization)
- creating "a problem bank" where current problems of the community members are shared to find solutions or support from the community (Fredrik's suggestion)
- creating "a talent pool" as a network of new talent (interns, students, new graduates etc.), for also establishing bridging ties with universities and other organizations, for the community's benefit (Ronald's suggestion)

The participants also warned that "over-structuring" would become a problem. If these structures are too demanding and/or complicated, they will not "take hold". In order to prevent that, they can be managed by SSP, which should be responsible of keeping the community in a certain balance. The suggestions above can become institutional tools of The Ground, for facilitating collaborations: if they are established in a "translatable" way, they also may become practices that add to The Ground's "personality" and that contribute to the community identity.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

This research was focused on a single co-working space whereas there are cases in the literature that cover several co-working spaces (e.g. Parrino, 2015; Bouncken et al., 2019; Jarvenpaa & Wernick, 2012). It is possible to include more co-working spaces in Malmo in further research plans. This would be beneficial because Malmo is a rich town in terms of start-up scene: there are many co-working spaces in different concepts, and there a many start-ups and entrepreneurs for a relatively small town.

This research suggests that an SSP would be beneficial for The Ground. Further research may focus on the process of establishing an SSP, and/or, impacts of an SSP, if The Ground ever decides to form one. If it does not, including other co-working spaces (or even professional communities that are not bound to a particular space) in further research may lead to finding different forms of SSPs in other contexts. Different forms of SSPs can be discovered, compared and analyzed as a further-research aim.

The analytical concepts that are adopted, interpreted and/or developed in this research, such as the grid-group theory, rational myths, the "translation" analogy for institutionalization, the double-bind theory, guilt culture and shame culture, the three dimensions theme, can be applied to organizational and institutional contexts other than start-ups and co-working spaces, as well. This could bring new themes and perspectives into organizational culture studies and management studies.

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