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Explorative issues in connecting human being and economy

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Essays on Experience and Economy

Explorative issues in connecting human being and economy

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Preface and Acknowledgements

The following is a result of an industrial PhD-project conducted from August 2010 – October 2013 at the Department of Agroecology, Faculty of Science and Technology, Aarhus University, and in the company Randers Rainforest. Part of the PhD was carried out during a research stay at Georgetown University, Department of Psychology, under the tutelage of Prof. Rom Harré.

At the beginning of a research project three years seems like forever. After a year and a half, a gradual sense of the possibility of never being able to actually finish what you originally planned creeps in on you. The last 6 months could probably best be described as the effort of realising a *Real Utopia*, to use Erik Olin Wright's phrase, getting as many things done as much as possible. Such a project is never ones own, it is a product of numerous talks, mailings, readings, writings and rewritings, lectures on you-tube, etc. etc, including an enormous amount of people, both knowing and not-knowing their influence.

I want, first of all, to thank my family, especially my wife, Rikke, for granting me a lot of space in the last 6 months of the phd. Special thanks goes to our son, Carter, as well – if it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be able to get up around 6 o'clock in the morning, each morning, having such a lovely long day of work ahead of me. A special thanks goes to my supervisors, Egon Noe, Chris Kjeldsen and Steen Brock, I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. Thanks to colleagues and friends at Foulum, especially all the fellow phd's, and in particular my primary co-phd-time-travellers Mads, Anne Mette, Ben, Mette and Martin, for sharing experiences, laughs, frustrations and the like. A special thanks goes to Ole Sommer Bach, my supervisor at Randers Regnskov, for not picking the obvious choice as the first industrial PhD-student, and Kristian Kindtler for many informative talks. Last but not least, thanks to those who made my stay at Georgetown University memorable: Rom, Toby, and Jacquie, and co-visitors Diane Proudfoot and Jack Copeland.

Gustavo, a former phd at Foulum, was kind enough to allow me to use a picture he took in Glasgow as the front page. It shows a statue of Adam Smith in the wake of the financial crisis. What the scarf is supposed to mean, is for the reader to figure out – clues could both be the alleged blindness of Smith's economics, but it could also allude to *Jusitia*, the goddess of justice, saying some part of Smith's thinking has been forgotten.

Summary

This thesis revolves around the possibility of connecting the concepts of experience and economy. Within the last 15 years experiences have become increasingly important in structuring the concrete economical reality. Businesses are not only selling coffee, they have to differentiate themselves from other businesses, coffee-selling or not, by staging experiences around the product within the economic transaction. Recently, experiences can be purchased in small boxes placed on shelves in supermarkets, displaying the total commodification of experiential offerings ranging from cruises to parachute jumping. Different understandings of what characterises consumers as human experiential beings are implicitly assumed here. The term experience economy is often used of the marketing discipline claiming to be capable of securing the differentiation of companies by creating experiences around the products of these companies. From a philosophical point of view, however, the whole the idea of linking economy with human experience is based on a very tenuous understanding, since the conceptual frameworks comprising the concepts experience and economics are very restricted.

Through various analyzes this dissertation tries to delineate how the concepts of experience and economy can be put together in a philosophical significant sense. First, it describes three important conditions for experience economy to be developed: namely, traits of the history of marketing, the devaluation of experience as a historical informed and vital form of living, and the characterisation of modern Western society as a society consisting of people craving for aesthetic pleasing and joyous experiences. Second, three interpretations of experience economy are analysed, and criticized for presenting an incomplete and very narrow understanding of the possible relevance and implications of connecting experience and economy. Since this PhD is an Industrial PhD, the inadequacy of the three interpretations of experience economy is sought rectified by outlining a space in which the connection between experience and the economy can be disclosed as meaningful and part of the company's developing activities. Four desiderata, which the previous experience economy cannot accommodate, are claimed essential and necessary for any putative understanding of a connection between experience and economy. These are: operating with a sense of embeddedness on which experiencing takes place; without loosing the particularity of the experiencing; understanding transactions as ranging from the self-interested maximising of utility to the possibility of altruism; and understanding experiential economical occurrences as involving a relation to the world, other people and oneself.

Using a triangulation strategy, i.e. the use of more than one methodology in conjunction, the space for connecting experience and economy is explored and concretised through eight articles. On the one hand, this is done by characterising the ontology these relevant methods must share for it to be meaningful to put them together. On the other hand these methods are used in concrete analyses of experience and economy. One method is the social psychological/discursive positioning theory, enabling the description of the complexity involved in the process of experiencing, the other is the capability approach presenting a number of criteria for expanding the informational basis for understanding economical agency.

The results of these eight articles are significant for both the company the PhD-project was associated with, and as research-based knowledge of how to understand the experiential economical human. Regarding the company two different models are indicated, one for actualising a more complete view of experiential economical human being. i.e. including and engaging multiple aspects of both and experience, and one for how the company to develop its economic competencies. The most important research result is the disclosing of a specific normative structure associated with the concept of experience, a structure, which needs to be deliberated on in economy, in so far as economy wants to retain a relation to human being.

Sammenfatning

Denne afhandling vedrører begreberne om oplevelse og erfaring, og hvordan det er muligt at forbinde disse med begrebet økonomi. Indenfor de sidste 15 år er vigtigheden af oplevelser blevet en større og større del af økonomiske virkelighed. Forretninger skal ikke kun sælge kaffe, de skal også differentiere sig fra andre forretninger, både dem der sælger og ikke sælger kaffe, ved at iscenesætte en oplevelse omkring den økonomiske transaktion. Man kan også købe oplevelser på hylderne i supermarkederne, gennem små æsker der tilbyder alt fra krydstogtsejladser til faldskærmsudspring. Ordet oplevelsesøkonomi bliver ofte brugt om den marketingsdisciplin eller -strategi, der skal sikre virksomheders differentiering i forhold til andre virksomheder ved at præsentere et særligt fokus på oplevelser. Bag alle disse tiltag gemmer der sig forskellige perspektiver på, hvad der karakteriserer forbrugere som de menneskelige og oplevende væsener de er. Fra en filosofisk optik er det dog en noget naiv forståelse der gemmer sig bag hele ideen om at forbinde økonomi med noget så menneskeligt som oplevelse (og erfaring, for ordet oplevelse i oplevelsesøkonomi kommer af det engelske experience, der kan betyde begge dele), fordi det er yderst indskrænkede forståelsesrammer for begreberne oplevelse/erfaring og økonomi der forudsættes.

Gennem forskellige analyser søger denne ph.d.-afhandling at indkredse, hvad der filosofisk kan forstås ved det at sætte begreberne om oplevelse/erfaring og økonomi sammen. Først beskrives tre vigtige idehistoriske betingelser for at oplevelsesøkonomien kunne opstå: nemlig marketingsteoriens historie, devalueringen af erfaring som en historisk formidlet livsduelighed, og karakteristikken af det moderne vestlige samfund som oplevelsesorienteret. Dernæst beskrives tre fortolkninger af oplevelsesøkonomi, og disse kritiseres for en mangelfuld og meget snæver forståelse for, hvad oplevelse/erfaring og økonomi har af betydning som begreber. Da denne ph.d. er en erhvervsphd, søges denne mangelfuldhed udbedret i forhold til den virksomhed ph.d.'en er tilknyttet ved at skitsere det rum, hvori forbindelsen mellem oplevelse/erfaring og økonomi kan komme til sin ret. Fire faktorer hævdes som væsentlige og nødvendige for at forstå en mulig forbindelse mellem oplevelse/erfaring og økonomi, som den hidtidige oplevelsesøkonomi ikke kan begrebsliggøre meningsfuldt.

Gennem en triangulering, dvs. brug af forskellige metoder, søges rummet for at knytte en forbindelse mellem oplevelse/erfaring og økonomi konkretiseret gennem otte artikler. Dette gøres ved, på den ene side, at karakterisere den ontologi som de pågældende metoder må dele for at det kan siges at være meningsfuldt at sætte dem samme. På den anden side bruges disse metoder helt konkret til at forstå en mulig forbindelse mellem oplevelse/erfaring og

økonomi. Den ene metode er den social psykologiske/diskursive positionerings teori, der formår at beskrive kompleksiteten i oplevelses-/erfaringsprocessen, og den anden er capability tilgangen, der opstiller en række kriterier for at udvide den forståelse vi lægger til grund for økonomisk handling.

Resultaterne fra disse otte artikler har forskellig betydning for henholdsvis virksomheden som ph.d. en er tilknyttet til, og den forskningsmæssige forståelse for, hvordan menneskesyn og økonomi kan bindes sammen. For virksomheden peges der på to forskellige modeller, en for hvordan man aktualisere et menneskesyn der omfatter mangfoldige aspekter af både oplevelse og erfaring, og en for hvordan virksomheden kan udvikle dens økonomiske kompetencer i en innovativ forstand. For det forskningsmæssige er det væsentligste resultat det, at der er blevet fremanalyseret en særlig normativ struktur der knytter sig til begrebet om oplevelse/erfaring, og som man derfor med nødvendighed må besinde sig på i økonomien, for så vidt den vil være menneskerelateret.

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The Articles

1. Callonistics – a possible charitable reading. (Paper presented at a session at the 2010 meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, London)
2. On the Road to Nowhere. Some thoughts on the ideas of innovation and ideology. (Published in International Journal of Zizek studies, 2012, vol. 6(1))
3. Connecting experience and economy. Aspects of disguised positioning. (Published in Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science, 2013, 47: 77-94)
4. Why do we care about Post-humanism? A critical note. (Accepted for Geografiska Annaler, B-series, Human Geography)
5. Evaluating the economy in eco-economy. (To be submitted with a possible rejoinder by Marsden and Kitchen)
6. Revisiting the experience machine, does it really matter? A brief note on what could. (Submitted to Marketing Theory)
7. Rational and Emotional Fools. (Submitted to Cultural Analysis)
8. Capabilities, Situations, Positionings (Work in progress)

Introduction

We feel as if we had to *penetrate* phenomena: our investigation, however, is directed not towards phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the “*possibilities*” of phenomena. We remind ourselves, that is to say, of the *kind of statement* we make about phenomena.
Wittgenstein, PI §90

This dissertation revolves around the concept of experience and how this is connectable to the concept of economy. Within the last 15 years or so, more and more emphasis has been put on the experiential side of economical transactions. It is not enough to just buy a new phone, appealing to how it will make you feel, its user-friendliness and its aesthetic appearance – experience for short – are part of the transaction as well. One famous coffee company even takes it so far, and claims that buying their coffee is buying into a coffee ethics as well. Hence, design and appearances are, everywhere we go, part of our everyday economical dealings. These designs and appearances are made for the purpose of enticing us, the consumers, into buying the products, using experience economical strategies. Behind these strategies, then, a number of different perspectives on what characterises us consumers as humans are implicitly committed to. Hence, the economy and the perspective(s) of what humans are seem to relate in an interdependent way, but quite often (if not mostly) with the economical side as having the most influential say.

Experience economy is, as a marketing economical strategy, a recent invention. It aired in 1999, with the book *The Experience Economy* by Pine and Gilmore, claiming the next stage in economical evolution was designing and selling experiences either connected to products, or as products themselves. From a philosophical perspective this was pretty lightweight, the notion of experience was reduced to joyful experiencing only, despite its broad semantic implications for hardship and inertia throughout western history of ideas as well. The idea of economy was somewhat primitive as well, different kinds of economies were not discussed, nor the general normative implications of economy. Nevertheless, it made a forceful entry within a European context, especially in Denmark where the neo-liberal government from 2001-2011 used the book as a strategic proposal for creating innovation, and thereby economical growth, by trying to forge alliances between universities, the creative sectors and the other industrial sectors. Needless to say, after the financial crisis the optimism of directing money towards the production of airy “things” like experiences has decreased. Nevertheless, certain entrepreneurs are, from alternative perspectives, reconsidering this connection between experience and economy, one of which will supply us with the prime information. Putting it this way, the objective of this dissertation is making these different perspectives explicit. Furthermore, it is trying to understand, philosophically, the nature of the different alliances forged between these anthropological and the

economical perspectives and their practical relevance in a concrete experience economical project, which this PhD project was part of.

The aims of the dissertation

The dissertation is a result of three years work as an industrial PhD, being part time at Aarhus University and part time in a company. The formal goal of doing an industrial PhD is addressing a topic from within a company, like developing a new drug, designing new and better aerodynamic wings, or new coaching methods, and using research based methodology for exploring/solving this topic. The company dealt with here is a Zoo, Randers Regnskov (Randers Rainforest), and the topic is their development of what a future zoo would look like.

Addressing this topic, two key notions were important, which will make the relevance of experience and economy clear. The first revolved around what new kinds of experiences should be offered to people visiting the zoo, the second, probably unsurprisingly, was what would a future economy look like for a zoo trying to renew it self. The predominant experience economical strategies were, in this case, insufficient to establish a satisfying connection between the two key notions, since the zoo adopted a strategy containing natural, social and economical sustainability. Nature, for example, should not only be experienced, people should be able to participate in sustainable nature conservation projects as well. Furthermore, economy should be thought of as sustainable, both in the plain sense of being economical self-sufficient, but also in the sense of reducing environmental strain by being energy-efficient, using fair trade, developing new business areas conserving nature instead of exploiting it, and innovate by forging alliances with companies not usually connected to zoos.

Now, speaking to, wondering about, asking stupid questions, confronting people, observing interactions and questioning the taken for granted assumptions in the development section of this zoo, informed the philosophical analysis put forth here. Unlike most other industrial PhDs the result is neither a tangible product (except for this dissertation, of course), nor parts usable in the company's value-chain, rather the result has more to do with clarification of concepts and explorative reflecting on the uncharted territory the zoo was and is about to enter. In this sense, the industrial PhD, coming from the arts or humanities, exemplifies what Ernst Boyer has termed an engaged scholarship. This is characterised by the collaboration between academics and parties outside the academy focusing on the mutual and beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. Furthermore, a scholarship of engagement seeks to encourage non-academics, including companies, of participating in efforts enhancing and broadening engagement and deliberation about major social issues. So, engaging philosophical issues concerning experience and economy by partaking in two different cultures, one academic the other a business culture, informs the research, the company's way of acting and what scholarship in this sense amounts to.

So, the aim here is exploring what are ways forward when thinking, philosophically, about the implicit connections between human being and economy, and practically how this can inform future decisions made by the company. The following describes, first, the setting of the PhD. What are the challenges in the company, and within the literature concerning a possible connection between experience and economy? Next, some methodological considerations are put forth, connecting triangulation in an ontological manner with different investigative strategies. Third, the results of the 8 articles are summed up pertaining to the three research topics indicated above: the philosophical research, for the company and for the notion of scholarship. Furthermore, some perspectives will be put forth regarding following up on the results presented here.

1. The setting

This section will sketch the frames for the PhD by focusing on three interrelated areas serving as points of coordination for the continuous interaction, or perhaps better, the reciprocal influence, between the practical setting in the company and the theoretical/philosophical understanding used therein. The first area consists of a description the formal requirements of doing an industrial PhD combined with a description of the PhD as a focal point for a number of interests, showing a tension in what would otherwise be described as engaged scholarship. Together these two descriptions delineate a first sketch of what it is like to be a humanistic oriented industrial PhD in a complex age of both productivist (production based economical growth is all we need) and post-productivist (economical growth is one among many kinds of development perspectives to be reckoned with) interests. The second and third areas consist of the object studied within this PhD, the concepts of experience and economy, and how these concepts are used within the company and in the literature of experience economy, respectively. This, then, will serve as the background for the problems, of which the eight articles serve as theoretical reflections on.

1.1 Doing an industrial PhD: scientific life in a knowledge society

Engaged Scholarship

According to the Danish Government (2012) the industrial PhD program was established in 1970 and is recognised for its combination of academic research and industrial experience. Furthermore, since 2002 it has “...been part of the Danish Council for Technology and Innovation’s umbrella of innovation promotion initiatives, and has been run on behalf of the council by the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation.” (Danish Government 2012, 1) Traditionally, industrial PhD’s have carried out technological and medical oriented research, but recently every fourth PhD comes from, what the Government terms the “soft” sciences (Danish Government 2012, 2), viz. from the humanities and social sciences. The overall purpose of the industrial PhD program is establishing a number of research projects to be carried out across two different environments, the university and the company, solving the stated research objective, and thereby indirectly serving as a promoter of relations between universities, private and public

sectors (other than universities)¹. One important part of the training, which we will return to below, is an obligatory government induced PhD course strengthening the student's insight into knowledge creation, knowledge management and the socio-economical aspects of research, thereby advancing knowledge of cooperation between external and internal partners of company and university, and the valuation of research.

On the face of it, then, doing an industrial PhD is part of what has recently been termed engaged scholarship. As Van de Ven (2011; 2007, 265) describes it, engaged scholarship is a process in which scholars participate with other scholars, non-academic stakeholders and practitioners, all having different points of view. The point is that by stepping out "...of the realm in which we reside, we can gain a much deeper understanding of a phenomenon than we ever could by ourselves." (Van de Ven 2011, 43) As an expression of engagement, this kind of scholarship moves within the vicinity of triangulation, the recognition of different perspectives as all contributing, not on equal footing though, to an enhanced understanding of a complex shared ontology and the phenomena inhabiting this ontology. Triangulation as an ontological and methodological condition will be discussed further in the section of methodological considerations below.

Several models of engaged scholarship exists, from the business-school oriented one by Van de Ven (2007), over ethnographical ones made by Holland *et all* (2010) to the juridical informed one by Mackinnon (2010; see also Alvarez 2010-2011). However, the aim here is not a precise categorisation, nor the establishing of a new model for engaged scholarship. Rather, the aim is to describe the general thoughts behind and the practical frame of interests within which the engaged scholarship serving as background for this dissertation was situated. For this purpose Boyer's classical article, Boyer (1996), referring to the scholarship of engagement for the first time, will serve as a general point of departure, supplemented with a description of how the PhD is an example of engaged scholarship in practice. For the purpose of the last description, Van de Ven (2007) will supply useful models for description.

In Boyer's vision of engaged scholarship, the universities ought to sharpen their interest for what constitutes a public good, viz. "...connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems" (Boyer 1996, 31) As might be expected, this is not a new vision. Referring to Bronkowski (1956), Boyer uses the examples of Newton and Faraday as scholars uniting their personal interest with the interest of society, at times challenging the established order acting as social critics, and at times reinforcing the order through technical enhancements. Newton, for example, combined his interest for astronomy with a societal need of learning to navigate in increasingly better ways. In this sense, Boyer claims, knowledge stemming from universities is useful for building better bridges *and* better lives (Boyer 1996, 28). The usefulness here, as Boyer stresses by referring to Bronowski again, is not a question of the

¹ As such, the industrial PhD format is a concrete example of the increasing use of triple helix models as ways of forging the relation between universities, government and private sectors.

applicability of knowledge, it is a question of whether “...the work of scholars will be directed toward humane ends.” (Boyer 1996, 28) So, part of doing engaged scholarship is connecting the researcher’s particular research interest with the “bigger picture” of a common good. That is, seeing the research not as enhancing private benefits, but as a response, in collaboration with other responses, to societal needs and necessities. It is, we might say, an institutionalised codification of what we later will term triangulation. Furthermore, the usefulness is not necessarily pertaining to direct problem solving, but might serve as disclosing and enhancing the understanding of these problems, or challenges, instead.

This kind of understanding served as the basis of how this PhD-project aspired to be an example of engaged scholarship, to be carried out in a concrete fashion. The overall aim was a combination of conceptual clarification and strategic development, exploring a possible normative understanding of connecting experience and economy within the overall vision of the bio-planet project, a project described in more detail below. For a first description, however, bio-planet seeks to use the idea of conservation of biodiversity as a normative platform whereby empowering experiences and sustainable economical projects can be created. Contributing, from a philosophical and social scientific point of view, to the exploring of the implications of this conservation of biodiversity, will serve as the humane end the scholarly work of this dissertation is directed at. Van de Ven (2007, 268ff) proposes a number of characteristics for describing concrete forms of engaged scholarship, some of which will help understanding the concrete setting of this PhD.

Engaged scholarship as a practical endeavour

At the beginning of the PhD-project the general idea was conducting research as part of a collaborative effort involving the development team connected to the bioplanet project. Some obstacles, however, appeared, making this an impossible objective. First, the PhD wasn’t provided any office space within the company the first year, making the initiation of research difficult. Hence, the first year consisted mainly of desk research conducted at the university, with weekly meetings with the company supervisor at the company. After a year an office space was supplied, first in the common meeting room, and afterwards as sharing an office with the company supervisor. This teething trouble, as we might call it, was mainly a result of no previous experience with hosting a PhD-project within the company, and it necessitated the taking control, by the PhD-student over research objectives and aims to be developed and decided, to ensure the proper progress in the project. Second, the company has a highly hierarchical structure, where control of development follows the management structure top down. Furthermore, two different perspectives regarding development exist within the management structure, one highly proactive of the new bioplanet project, the other predominantly reactive. This gave the incessant impression that no, or little, concord served as basis for any decisions made regarding the bio-planet project, and on many occasions no decisions was made at all. Instead a frequent scenario consisted in renegotiating whether the bioplanet project was to be carried out at all, leaving the impression that

this negotiating was functioning as a way of confirming the established power relations within the company. Furthermore, when the negotiation resulted in acceptance, it was primarily parts of the project and not the project as a whole, which was accepted. Parts are, of course, more easily controllable by functioning as instruments capable of pushing forward or stalling a specific agenda.

So, the research project was transformed, then, from what was originally thought of as a collaborative research form with active participation within the development activities of the company thereby co-producing knowledge and assisting in designing the project, to a more advisory based relationship with the stakeholders in the company. This makes the research project a kind of *informed basic research* perspective in Van de Ven's terms, where the "Researcher

conducts and controls study activities with the advice of stakeholders." (Van de Ven 2007, 272)

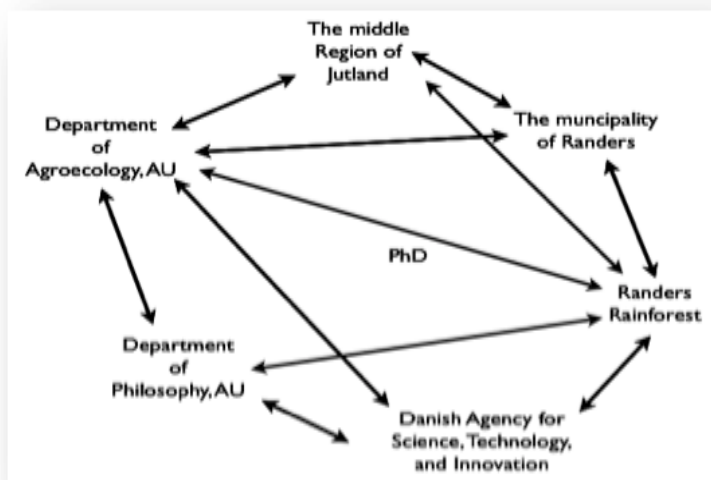


Fig. 1

The picture above (Fig. 1) presents the main stakeholders within the PhD-project, and the relationships between them. Of interest for the description here is the company, Randers Rainforest, and the municipality. A close relationship between the company and the municipality exist, created by the interdependence of the different stakeholders in securing the eventual success of the project. The municipality's interest springs from envisioning the bioplanet project as a major future place of employment and providing an additional brand of the city besides the one already procured by the Zoo. The company's interest in collaborating with the municipality springs from securing additional developmental aid, access to the relevant public areas necessary for expanding the exhibition and ensuring a broad based public legitimacy and support in establishing the project.

Stakeholders within the company comprised the secretariat established in the beginning of the second year of the PhD-project for administering the bioplanet project. Besides the PhD's company supervisor and the manager of the company, the stakeholders consisted of a civil servant working part time implementing the bioplanet project, due to its size and effect on the

local area, within the strategy of the municipality. Weekly meetings were conducted informing and discussing issues pertaining to the bioplanet project. The researcher perspective, then, was characterised partly as the detached/outsider perspective Van de Ven connects with informed basic research. Detached in the sense of not influencing directly, but soliciting “...advice and feedback from key stakeholders and inside informants...” (Van de Ven 2007, 271) However, an indirect influence on the company strategy was exercised by the PhD, primarily due to the exchange of advice during dialogues with the company supervisor. So, part of the research perspective related to what Van de Ven (2007, 278) terms an evaluation research perspective as well, evaluating bits and pieces of the company’s strategic/policy practices. One example of this was the collaboration on designing and introducing a catalogue of ongoing and future research projects pertaining to the company, and to be used in negotiating a co-operative agreement between the company and a Danish university.

So, the research conducted and the strategy invented influenced each other in a reciprocal manner during the PhD. To give another example, a presentation was made on the annual meeting of the Danish Aquarium and Zoo Association, where the specific reason for doing a philosophical/social scientific PhD was stated. The following diagram (Fig. 2) was used in describing the company’s concern and attention directed towards itself or outwards, and the objects of this concern ranging, loosely, from natural kinds towards cultural kinds:

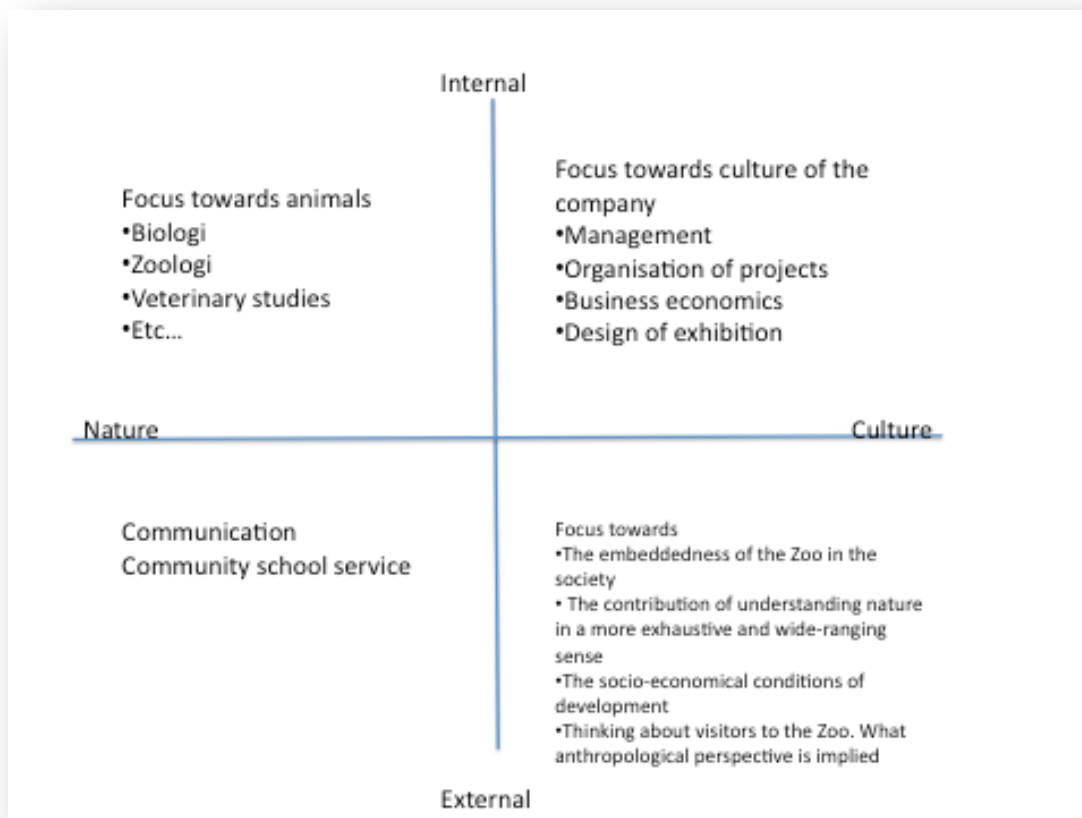


Fig. 2

The focus area of the PhD-research was, unsurprisingly, the lower square to the right. But the precision with which this could be described was unimaginable without engaging in discussions with stakeholders within the company and learning about the structure, the daily workings and history of the zoo (and zoo's in Denmark). Furthermore, from the feedback given at the meeting, it was clear that this presented a challenge of transforming the reflection on and presentation of the zoos from a matter of branding only, to thinking more in line of collaborative projects with other socio-economical actors, public or private. The engaged scholarship part came out in the following last slide (Fig. 3) of the presentation made at the meeting, which also might be taken as one strand of reasoning within the PhD-project:

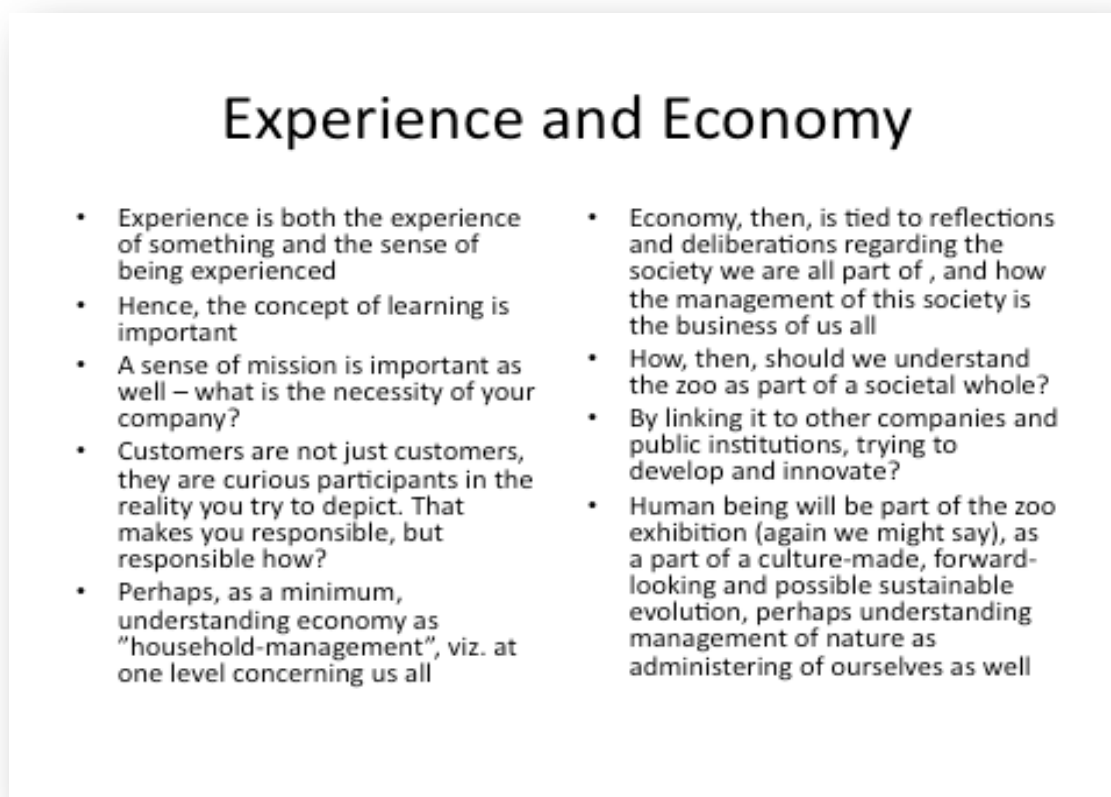


Fig. 3

People at the meeting, was still positive, but now looked somewhat puzzled as well, because this addressed a theme of whether something could matter in a way not bypassing the interest of the company, but placing this interest within a bigger perspective, or at least combining the local perspective of the company with a socio-economical perspective of a wider observance. Hopefully these few examples have indicated how the idea of engaged scholarship was used as practical research comportment within the company. Additional explicit examples could have been provided. A predominant part of the engagement, however, occurred in the daily dialogues where ideas suddenly appeared, were discussed and somehow left their marks.

But trying to present a perspective addressing the common good, or building better lives, old-fashioned, and/or romantic as it might sound, as part of the PhD-education, was no easy task. The next and last part of this section will describe how the idea of disengaged scholarship was somehow in opposition to the official industrial PhD education.

However, a reiteration of the research purpose and perspective from a general perspective is in place. The purpose of the research undertaken in collaboration with the company was exploring and clarifying possible connections between the concepts of experience and economy. Hence, to fulfil the purpose a description of what is understood by these concepts and how they have been used, and an explanation of why the predominant ways of thinking about experience economy have been misguided (described below in the section involving problem formulation) was undertaken. The results, then, was twofold in the sense that, first, certain new connections was explored on the theoretical level between the concepts of experience and economy, and, second, the practical implications of these connections was sketched as well. Hence, the prime objective within this PhD-project was the building of a research based theory capable of working, or less ambitious aspiring to work, both as a theoretical novelty in its own right, but also supplying the company with research based knowledge empowering the justification of the decision-making processes regarding the bio-planet project. The research perspective, however, was a bit more complex to pin down. Due to the participation in regular planning meetings, and conducting the research as a, in the end, natural part of the company's "daily grind", the research perspective was not outside, which is normal within an informed basic research setting. However, it was a detached perspective in the sense that it was conducted in a highly reflective manner, but always with the aim of trying to relate it to the practical situations and informing these at the company as well. So, the research perspective, we might say, was more a case of a continuous movement of reflecting in and on practice, than it was a perspective from the outside. The research purpose and perspective now described, the more theoretical research design will be covered in the section on methodological considerations.

(Dis-)Engaged Scholarship, A Tension?

As claimed above, one part of the industrial PhD programme was an obligatory PhD business course strengthening the student's insight into knowledge creation, knowledge management and socio-economical aspects of their research, thereby advancing cooperation between external and internal partners of company and university, and the overall valuation of research. One might be led to think that this was a kind of training in engaged scholarship, providing an understanding of connecting the particular research interest with a more general perspective as described above. Despite the fact that the course was designed to introduce the PhD-students to a number of concepts involving innovation² (for example Chesbrough 2003) and

² The article *On the road to Nowhere*, tries to analyse one new innovation management practice, and its implications.

related areas like innovation management (Laursen and Salter 2006; O’connor and Deemartino 2006; Stringer 2000), niche-productions and organisation (Immelt *et all* 2009; Moore 1965; Schot and Geels, 2008) and, furthermore, interesting new areas like management within the changing academy (Jacob and Hellström 2003; Sousa and Hendriks 2008; Tjosvold 2008), not a single part of the literature or education, was directed at understanding how and why research, and perhaps in particular technical directed research, ought to be connected to some humane ends as well (see British Academy 2010 for a nuanced analysis of the impacts of humanities and arts on economy as a societal concern).

The course of fall of 2011, i.e. this author’s class, took place at The Technical University of Denmark and was attended by app. 50-60 future PhDs with circa 15% coming from the “humanities”/arts, and the rest from science and technology studies. Besides this unequal dispersion of both research interest and objects, the course was very much indeed levelled at scientists working within regular, not to be confused with simple, production value chains. In many cases these research projects originated entirely from the needs of the companies connected to the participating PhDs, and consisted in either doing research on problems regarding existing products, regular product development, the creation of knowledge in the start-up phases of the production of a new product or, the least of them, inventing something totally new, which could range from a new enzyme to the development of a new innovation tool. In this sense, then, the future of these PhDs to be, looks a lot like the world described by Shapin (2010) as a late modernity vocation: the industrial scientist, conducting research within the narrow confines of industrial defined frames of development and rationality.

Now, the tension mentioned in the headline of this section, amounts to the following impression: despite being presented as the “new” PhD format, engaged in knowledge-transfer and knowledge-management, thereby bridging the gap between universities and the surrounding society, no understanding for the wider societal implications of doing research was ever presented. No historical cases, as presented above, for connecting research with societal problems was discussed, or deemed important. Thus, a historical consciousness, or the dawning of one, for understanding the role of science in society was dismantled. So, by excluding a notion of the surrounding society from any reflections on and deliberations concerning research and, furthermore, focusing on the relation to the industrial sector as the only significant relation, the impression was made that a disengaged scholarship was, more or less, the educational goal of this course. Partly confirming this was the required reading for taking the course, most of which is referred to above, since none of it addressed the, at the time, dominating economical crisis and hence didn’t address any, for lack of better words, value concerns, or effects, of the economical system the PhDs were to be part of. Another part confirming this impression was speaking with other liberal arts PhD students at the course, some expressing a puzzlement concerning the sheer lack of reflection and questioning, at a course at the level of PhD, of the role of the industrial PhD

in reproducing a particular production regime and concomitant economical system, expressed through the (in)famous economical growth imperative.

Overall, then, the industrial PhD frame, as a partial public funded scholarship, is strikingly similar in spirit to what Sen (1988, 4) terms the economical engineering rationality, which

“...is characterised by being concerned with primarily logistic issues rather than with ultimate ends and such questions as what may foster the ‘good of man’ or ‘how should one live’. The ends are taken as fairly straightforwardly given, and the object of the exercise is to find the appropriate means to serve them. Human behaviour is typically seen as being based on simple and easily characterizable motives.”

By being disengaged from considering the common good, or at least not obligated to, and Sen claims deliberations concerning common good to be at the heart of economical reasoning, the industrial PhD is predominantly seen as a research frame for serving the end of the company only, picturing research as an endeavour in the end based on fulfilling narrow conceived economical motives. Now, as Sen also observes the idea is not choosing between either the economical engineering rationality, or normative economical considerations regarding the common good of society, but to see these as either supplying each other, or stronger, as actually internally connected. To repeat Boyer above, knowledge emanating from research is for building better bridges and lives. One can only wonder why a governmental induced educational frame is subjected to a disavowal of the history of research practices and the experiences brought forth, for good or bad, for society as a whole. Perhaps it is connected to disregarding parts of experience, as will be touched upon below, thereby not feeling any obligation to be informed by, or contributing to (historical) experience. The idea of engaged scholarship will be left for now, but it will be returned to below in the section containing the results.

1.2 Experience and Economy

In this section the concept of the experience economy will be described. The focus will primarily be on the concept of experience, and which aspects of this concept are emphasised within experience economy. We will thereby get a first impression of the anthropological frame presupposed within experience economy, viz. presuppositions pertaining to what about a human being is important in an (experience) economical sense. First, some historical and sociological traits effecting the development of experience economy as a discipline, and how the notion of experience is understood, will be touched upon. Second, this will serve as the background against which the *locus classicus* of experience economy Pine and Gilmore (1999) will be described in an overall fashion. Third and last, the focus of this dissertation, the concepts of experience and economy, will be described as these are construed within the experience economical examples chosen in this

dissertation, which are Boswijk *et al* (2007) and Jantzen and Rasmussen (2007). Both examples are chosen because they present, as the only examples within the experience economical literature after Pine and Gilmore, thoughts on what kind of economical human being actually does the experiencing. Furthermore, this last section will end with some general observations as to the economical and experience ideas used within experience economy.

1.2.1 Conditions of experience economy

The development of marketing theory

Speaking about experience as an important part of economy, understood widely as comprising both economical transactions, retail and conditions of production and consumption, is part of the sub-division of marketing theory connected with consumer research. One, if not *the*, important historical trajectory leading up to experience economy entering the scene, then, has to do with a widening of the business focus, a focus covering the whole value-chain and increasingly emphasising the consumer in a more direct fashion. As Østergaard (2007, 52) describes it, a general shift in focus occurred after the Wall Street collapse in 1929, from optimising the conditions for production of goods towards a focus on sales, thereby attaching more importance to the consumer (consumer can here be taken to involve other businesses as well). An increase in the importance, perhaps even understanding the importance for the first time, of company sections focusing on the sales of products and on the preferences of consumers – what do they like about our products in comparison to our competitors and what would they like to be developed etc. – occurred. The culmination of this has been termed the marketing revolution (Keith 1959-1960), a term promising, historically, more than it can deliver, according to recent research. Shaw and Jones (2005) and especially Jones and Richardson (2007), Ellis *et al* (2010), have all alluded to Keith's description as expressing more of a personal recollection than a historical fact. Keith used the history of the company in which he was CEO as an example of how marketing evolved through four stages. At first the company focused on optimising production. Increasingly making the production more streamlined necessitated, second, a focus on selling due to the obvious need of people buying the goods produced. Third, after the Wall street collapse the focus on marketing started as described above, leading to, fourth, a reconceptualising of companies as marketing companies and not predominantly as production companies. Needless to say, as a general historical thesis described in just four pages, Keith's perspective was not supported by an overwhelming amount of evidence or indications. Nevertheless, as Jones and Richardson (2007, 15) claims, these four stages apparently found their way into most marketing textbooks, constructing a historical fact of its own. Be that as it may, Jones and Richardson locates the preoccupation with sales as developing alongside the focus on the efficiency of production, hence not denying that a predominant focus on the consumer, as the buyer of products, was initiated as well.

Now in connection with an increased focus on marketing, the development of tools for understanding the impact of products, both produced and in development, was commenced (Østergaard 2007, 53) Surveys becoming part of markets research found its way into the specialised brand called consumer research, as parts of the overall product strategies within companies. As companies found themselves in need of these kinds of competences, business schools adopted these as part of the curriculum as well. In 1959, however, two reports seriously questioned the scientific credibility of the methodology behind doing surveys (Østergaard 2007, 54; Pierson 1959; Gordon and Howell 1959) The reaction was modelling the surveys on natural scientific methods, putting statistics and mathematics at the front, viz. valuating quantitative methods over qualitative methods, even in cases where both were used in conjunction. As a marketing *theory*, then, an increasingly decoupling from people's experience of products happened. The number of people valuing the products in a positive fashion was significant, at the expense of *how* this valuation was procured or enacted.

In 1980/1981 a conference on symbolic consumer behaviour at Ann Arbor hosted by the American association of consumer behaviour research, ignited the efforts of understanding consumer behaviour as based on cultural mediated use of symbols (Hirschman and Holbrook 1981). Outweighing the quantitative focus, the experience, symbolic and semiotic, of consuming and related items like products, places, people and contexts etc., was becoming the focus of increased interest as well. As Holbrook and Hirschman (1982, 132) explains, the study of consumer behaviour developed from a rational choice theoretical frame for understanding decision-making in consumption practices, towards an "informational processing model" understanding the "...the consumer as a logical thinker who solves problems to make purchasing decisions." Increasingly a growing consciousness was established that the rational choice approach ignored highly relevant phenomena for understanding consumers' behaviour. These phenomena included "...various playful leisure activities, sensory pleasures, daydreams, esthetic enjoyment, and emotional responses. Consumption has begun to be seen as involving a steady flow of fantasies, feelings, and fun encompassed by what we call the "experiential view." (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, 132) Behaviour, then, was actually becoming the wrong term to use since it connoted behaviourism as the dominant (positivistic) research methodology, reducing human beings to what was observable. By focusing on this experiential view, however, a space for conducting research including the first person descriptions of consumers, and connecting this with the phenomenological-hermeneutic and a host of other methods, like symbolic interactionism or ethnomethodology, was now possible (Thompson *et all*, 1989). Following Arnould and Thompson (2005) the research space opened up can be called a consumer culture theory, referring not to a grand theory but "... to a family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings." (Arnould and Thompson 2005, 868). The goal of consumer culture theory, then, is exploring the

“... heterogeneous distribution of meanings and the multiplicity of overlapping cultural groupings that exist within the broader sociohistoric frame of globalization and market capitalism. Thus, consumer culture denotes a social arrangement in which the relations between lived culture and social resources, and between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, are mediated through markets.” (Arnould and Thompson 2005, 869)

Studying the relations between consumers, culture and market, then, is a result of the development described briefly above. As a highly theoretical informed perspective, it is different from the applied form of experience economy connected with the “fathers” of experience economy, Pine and Gilmore. One thing these two perspectives have in common, however, is the focus on how consumers’ perspectives, as expressing meaningful ways of living, are mediated through the market. But where consumer culture theory tries to develop theories making this complex relationship understandable on a theoretical level, Pine and Gilmore are more interested in using the connection between consumer and culture as a way of enforcing market transactions. Put bluntly, Pine and Gilmore are interested in “culture” as an experiential means of selling goods, of using culture as a vast resource of boosting consumer’s willingness to pay.

To reiterate, the development of marketing and marketing theory created an increased focus on the relationship between consumers and the culture in which they are embedded, and how this relationship is mediated through the market. Peoples’ experience of economical transactions and the setting of these came into focus as a highly relevant way of understanding the appeal of some goods instead of others, designing the physical environment of retail and anticipating large movements in consumer preferences etc. The knowledge produced served both to enhance the theoretical understanding of why consumers act like they do, and practically as helping create the optimal conditions for economical transactions to take place. Overall, this indicates, first, a close connection between how consumers are understood as human beings and economy, viz. what are taken to be ontological significant about humans within the medium where economical transactions takes place. Furthermore, everyday economical transactions are simply assumed without reflecting on the general ideas of economy these transactions are supposed to re-enact. Second, using cultural studies as a means for designing economical practices faces a possibly serious feedback problem. What one studies is potentially a consequence of a previous research practice. Hence, certain conditions might be reproduced within the research, because the research faces an unacknowledged mediation through the market as well. This might be a consequence of what Ben Fine terms economical imperialism³.

³ Both these indications are discussed further in the articles *On the Road to Nowhere* and *Rational and Emotional Fools* below.

The Apparent Loss of Experience as a modern condition: Benjamin as example

Before moving on to Pine and Gilmore, two socio-historical indications in the development of experience economy need to be touched upon. Both indications concern the overall societal development of an increasing focus on experiences, what the German sociologist Gerhard Schulze (1992) terms the experience society. The first condition, exemplified by Walter Benjamin, presents a societal diagnosis with the more or less negative outcome that a certain kind of experience is lost, or less tragic, that it has been downplayed in such a manner that it is hard but not impossible to see the potential for its reinstatement. Benjamin's classic essay experience and poverty (Benjamin 1933) combined with two other related essays of his, will serve as a first indicator of this societal diagnosis. However, an etymological digression is in place first, especially since it is troublesome to translate experience from German till English. The reason is, simply, that two different meanings exist in German, but are merged in the English concept and word experience. These are *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*, both nouns derived from the verbs *erleben* and *erfahren*. According to the digital dictionary of the German language (DWDS)⁴, *Erlebnis* means an event somebody experiences, leaving a strong impression as well. It is connected to the word *leben*, meaning life and living, and connotes a sense of life as consisting of animated and joyous events as well. *Erfahrung*, on the other hand, means the knowledge, or insight, achieved by repeated effort, spanning both the knowledge of an experienced carpenter, and when we say of somebody that this person is wise, viz. being experienced in life. The verb *erfahren*, connotes both the process of going through something and the experience achieved thereby. Now, translating Schulze's book as *The Experience Society* misses a decisive point, namely that the German word used is *Erlebnis*. So a more correct but less dapper translation would probably be the animated and joyous society. Furthermore, when Benjamin speaks of the poverty of experience, just like Agamben (1978) speaks of the destruction of experience, both imply that the *Erfahrung* aspect of experience has been denigrated to the point of not being a genuine possibility anymore. Of course, it is possible to learn something like the craftsmanship of carpentry, what is missing is something else and this is what Benjamin's essay tries to delineate.

Benjamin's essay, written 1933 in exile and in fearful anticipation of the coming war, claims that a devaluation of experience has happened, a devaluation resulting in a poverty not merely "...on the personal level, but poverty of human experience in general." (Benjamin 1933, 732) The sense of *Erfahrung*, which is lost according to Benjamin, is the possibility of communicating a sense of meaningful duration as it pertains to human existence in general. It is the knowledge epitomised when saying, "Still wet behind the ears, and he wants to tell us what's what" "You'll find out [*erfahren*] soon enough!" Moreover, everyone knew exactly what experience was: older people had passed it one to younger ones." (Benjamin 1933, 731) Referring to the silence of the soldiers

⁴ Accessed 07.09.2013

coming back from the First World War having witnessed a range of monstrous atrocities, this indicated, for Benjamin, a breakdown in the possibility of communicating experience,

“For never has experience been contradicted more thoroughly: strategic experience has been contravened by positional warfare; economic experience, by the inflation; physical experience, by hunger; moral experiences, by the ruling powers.” (Benjamin 1933, 732)

This radical and impoverishing experience of impotence in the face of modernity, this loss of innocence leaving people amid a landscape in which nothing was the same as before, introduced a new kind of barbarism. A barbarism indicating gambling with experience more than learning from it (Benjamin 1931/1932, 553) People no longer yearn “...for new experience. No, they long to free themselves from experience; they long for a world in which they can make such pure and decided use of their poverty...that it will lead to something respectable.” (Benjamin 1933, 734) This longing for world takes the form of installing a dream, a flow of *Erlebnisse*, making up “...for the sadness and discouragement of the day – a dream that shows us in its realised form the simple but magnificent existence for which the energy is lacking in reality.” (Benjamin 1933, 734) One example of this dream materialising, Benjamin finds in the figure and films of Mickey Mouse. As he claims in a fragment written in 1931,

“In these films, mankind makes preparation for surviving civilization. Mickey Mouse proves that a creature can still survive even when it has thrown off all resemblance to a human being. . .These films disavows experience more radically than before. In such a world, it is not worthwhile having experiences...So the explanation for the huge popularisation of these films is not mechanization, their form; nor is it a misunderstanding. It is simply the fact that the public recognizes its own life in them.”

One interesting part here is, of course, that if we consider *selling* this dream, we are not far from a first glimpse of notion of the culture industry, made famous by Adorno and Horkheimer approximately ten years later. However, the important part is what Benjamin points to as disclosed in Mickey Mouse as a figure, viz. the projected possibility of living without worrying about *Erfahrung*. There is, simply, no need for *Erfahrungen* if you succeed in recognising your life in “...a way of life in which everything is solved in the simplest and most comfortable way, in which a car is no heavier than a straw hat and the fruit on the tree becomes round as quickly as a hot air-ballon.” (Benjamin 1933, 735) Poverty of experience, then, means surviving civilisation by tilling barbarism, what Agamben later expressed as the lack of possibility of experiencing the banalities of everyday living, they can only be undergone, they are *Erlebnisse*. So what is not recognised as important

anymore is not just Erfahrung as the holding on to the past, tradition or even modernity. It is the actual understanding of the past and present, as committing to the possibility of realising a future in a better way, what Jay (2005, 336) sums up nicely using Benjamin's notion of an experienced collector "...who juxtaposes elements from the past, bringing together what has been scattered in new constellations." The events of First World War, Benjamin is perhaps indirectly saying, never brought about an experience as a future obligation in which the dawning catastrophic situation in 1933 could be reflected.

Indicated in Benjamin's analysis of experience are, with a little goodwill, predominant theme(s) *in spe* of what follows in the wake of the widespread thesis of a loss of one overall societal meaning connecting people: the transcending of tradition as a dominant horizon of meaning, later termed post-traditionalism; recognising one's life in cultural produced "dreams", amounts to both cultural pluralism, each person recognises the dream their own way and the beginning of an aesthetisation of the everyday life, making up for the sadness and discouragement⁵. One study picking up these two features without mentioning Benjamin, however, is the aforementioned book by Schulze, which made an impact within experience economical protagonists (Boswijk *et al* 2007; Jantzen and Andersen 2007), and which we will close this section with.

However, importantly and to be fair to the description of Benjamin, it should be emphasised, as does Jay (2005, 312-342), that despite the poverty of experience, certain positive ways of reconnecting with Erfahrung was conceived possible, at least for the later Benjamin. Benjamin's diagnosis, then, is not tantamount to a history of total social decline, or deroute. However, mainly based on a dogmatic belief in the Absolute manifesting itself in mundane experience, Benjamin's notion of authentic experience was highly utopian. Furthermore, claiming to find residues of this Absolute in practices such as astrology and graphology, made it both counter-factual and the object of scepticism (Jay 2005, 342), and naïve it could be added. Therefore, if a sense of Erfahrung is to be restored, or attained, it cannot be by a restoration of some Absolute nor some experiential innocence (like arguing that "true" experience consist in experiencing some deeper layers of reality), since part of experience is recognising the loss of this. Rather, it would implicate a search for indications and even practices creating the possibility of a meaningful duration, an "...undergoing through an encounter with the new and the other, which moves us beyond where we, as subjects, were before the experience began." in Jay's phrase (2005, 359) The key part in this is, of course, that the meaningful duration, and not the fleeting moment of joy, is what allows appending the experience of the other and new in such a way that a change has happened. Obviously, a felt need of mastering this other would need to be pacified here, placing a special kind of responsibility on our responses in going through this encounter, allowing what

⁵ Other themes could be listed as well, all in the vicinity of themes presupposing a post-, or late-, something as a prefix to society.

Benjamin called the ability of the object (the other) to return our gaze⁶. Let us close this section with a description of how the “dream”, in Benjamin’s words, is interpreted after the Second World War.

Life in the last fane: Schulze’s Erlebnis-society

What is important to consider here from Schulze’s long and immensely detailed book, is two connected points: first, where Benjamin’s description of experience delineated some of the important traits up till the Second World War, Schulze describes the overall development towards the Erlebnis society after the Second World War, second, Schulze describes this development as moving from an economical semantics towards the appearance of a special psychophysical semantics functioning as the main organiser of the common space of significance.

Schulze’s investigation is based on a cultural-sociological and empirical study of developments in (the federal republic of) Germany after the Second World War⁷. The development towards the Erlebnis-society happens, according to Schulze, in three overlapping stages: first, a restoration of the industrial society immediately after the Second World War, second, a period of cultural conflicts concentrated in the period from the mid-sixties to the middle/late seventies, and third, beginning in the eighties, a society oriented towards Erlebnisse and the immediate satisfaction of needs as the predominant frame for social action (Schulze 1993, 550-551). The society immediately succeeding the Second World War was a society of scarcities more akin to the industrial societies of the late nineteenth century, than the “rebellious” years of the late sixties. Life, here, was tantamount to survival, in the sense that the prime existential modus of orientation revolved around finding and acquiring resources to uphold ones life. The semantics of this economics of scarcity was expressed through a sensuous pattern, a schema of having more or having less, with the repression and postponing of basic needs and urges being a predominant part of the existential comportment. Corresponding to this sensuous pattern, a social pattern was expressed and perceptible as well, based on high and low, or, we might say, captured nicely by the title of a famous British TV-show, “upstairs” and “downstairs”. As a revival of the industrial society, then, any social status corresponded to the position in the line of production, or, in other words, corresponded to the possible positions and relations to other positions within industrial society. Put simply, a worker was below in the production hierarchy compared to the manager, but as a gaffer higher in the hierarchy than the other workers (Schulze 1993, 532). Hence, the standards of

⁶ The articles *Why do we care about post-humanism?* and *Revisiting the Experience Machine* tries to develop this point, albeit from two different approaches. Both claiming, however, that part of experiencing is learning how things matters in ways exceeding the experience of them, and this requires a responsive responsibility on our part.

⁷ To meet a couple of caveats from the start, even though Schulze’s investigation is based on Germany only, he is not claiming that it is a thesis of the overall and necessary similar development of all countries. Hence, traits of this Erlebnis-society can be found in other countries without being an exact replica. However, a certain tension exists within Schulze’s description, because even though he claims that Erlebnisse achieve a dominant position in modern society, this is not tantamount to claiming them as the most significant trait in all areas of modern life. He, therefore, tends to reduce all other areas to the functioning of Erlebnisse.

living were correlated with the hierarchical division of society into different classes, as were the aesthetic schemas connected with the everyday. Art and kitsch, cultivated versus primitive, classical music versus pop, were the aesthetic equivalents of the social pattern of high and low, hence "The restored ranking of the everyday aesthetics was continuous with the hierarchy of the social milieu" (Schulze 1993, 533) Consuming was, in this period, primarily oriented at acquiring the necessary goods, and attention was, therefore, externally focused, viz. directed at the surroundings for achieving these goods. Since scarcity was predominant, the experiential pleasures engaged in, at the time, were primitive according to our present standards. "Nylon stockings, ground coffee, cigarettes, the first car, the first journey to the mountains...was set apart as isolated aesthetic events from the gray normality." (Schulze 1993, 534)

From the middle of the sixties the effects of increasing affluence and overall education started to show among the new generation, understanding the world in a perspective where age became important, viz. a schema of young and old. In the eyes of this generation, the traditional scheme of above and below, the hierarchy, was ambivalent, since it tended to correlate and value the schemas high and low with old and young, in a wrong fashion. "One learned, in very short time, that perspectives existed from where the establishment looked old." (Schulze 1993, 536) The cultural conflicts between keepers of the traditions and the plurality of new movements fighting against the social and cultural hierarchy began to flourish. The existential problems started to centre on experience and not so much upon survival, with experience as a way of transgressing the old hierarchy (Schulze uses the contrast between life, leben, in überleben (survival) and erleben). Hence, a very critical general attitude towards limits and social control evolved, leading, through experiences of conflicts on different levels from student-revolts to family-clashes, more and more to a dissolution of the hierarchical structures with a profusion of cultural modes of existence in its wake. According to Schulze (1993, 536), the contours of the psychophysical semantics are reflected in the withering of the economical semantics in this period, and are expressed in the social codification of the category of spontaneity. Being spontaneous was now a legitimate way of showing non-conformism and freedom from ossified social structures and patterns. What was replacing the old hierarchy, then, amounted to a split verticality (Schulze 1993, 537) consisting of a number of differentiated groups each with their own lifestyles and aesthetic tastes⁸. Questions of what characterised just or unjust conditions of living began to incorporate areas of subjectivity at the expense of objective and material conditions, making cultural conflicts about, for example, questions of style or opinions more important than conflicts over distributions of goods (and social justice, equal opportunities and raising the overall living standards). Instead of the hierarchical structure of society, the "upstairs" and "downstairs" schema was relocated within the different aesthetic based groupings with an incipient indifference between them as a result,

⁸ Schulze identifies five different groups, or environments: a high level group, an integration group, a harmony group, a self-realisation group and an entertainment group. The differentiation of these groups is based, not on socio-economical or class based factors, but, and this is Schulze's thesis, on age and education.

since the important hierarchical structure was now internal to the group(s). At the same time people could join several groups, thereby increasing the possibilities of combining different aesthetic schemas through subjective choice. With an increased material affluence consumption changed to a more internal directed form, where choices functioned as an expression of surplus and prestige within and between these different lifestyles (Schulze 1993, 539) The result was that at the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties, the Erlebnis-society entered the stage, according to Schulze (Schulze 1993, 541).

With the Erlebnis-society the development resulting in a differentiation of experiential conceived communities is accomplished. Each community is based on aesthetic needs and tastes, expressed as lifestyles, serving, on the one hand, as a reduction of the complexity following in the wake of the dissolution of the old hierarchical structures, and, on the other hand, thereby functioning as collective models providing each individual with places of orientation for transforming life to an experiential living. The psychophysical semantics replacing the economical semantics functions according to what Schulze (1993, 736) terms Erlebnis-orientation: a situation-overlapping tendency by any individual, to arrange their actions so they aim, by themselves, at procuring psychophysical processes of a positive valence. Erlebnis-orientations, then, are adjusted by individual Erlebnis-preferences; preferences, however, pre-structured by the different groups, or environments, the individual are embedded in. Corresponding to the economical semantic categories of more/less and high/low, the psychophysical semantic categories are simplicity/complexity, where reduction of complexity is preferred, and orderly/spontaneous, allowing a range of different subjectively chosen actions carrying a positive outcome (Schulze 1993, 743) Even though the individual preferences are in some sense pre-structured, any demarcation, or choice, made within the public sphere is a result of the aesthetic preferences and tastes of an individual. Hence, aiming at positive psychophysical states becomes the guiding motive, and any choice, whether it is picking an ice-cream, the election of a political figure, a job, having children or not, or your partner in life, all of this is measured by its experiential value contributing to this positive state (Schulze 1993, 13) Choosing goods, or buying stuff, depends less on the use-value anymore, due to the affluence, but on the experiential value, i.e. the positive value the buyer manages to connect to the product.

So, Benjamin's "dream" is, so to speak, dispersed within different aesthetic communities each defining and legitimising the proper space for redeeming the craving for experiences, by internally created standards. Unlike the case of Benjamin, and the immediate post-Second World War period, the dream in the Erlebnis-society has less to do with compensating for the repression and postponing of basic needs, but is an expression of a surplus due to material affluence and is based on aesthetic and sensuous preferences for joyful living. So, in this hedonic Erlebnis-society the individual search for positive experiences and the immediate satisfaction of needs are the basic goals of action. The aesthetic Erlebnis-orientation has, thus, become a totalising principle within modern society, according to Schulze. Furthermore, due to the segregation into

different communities of taste, each with their own hierarchical standards, no basis for an overall societal hierarchical order exists, each community considers themselves superior in comparison to the other groups. Hence, in Schulze's depiction, the relation between the different communities is one of indifference, or perhaps even contempt. No possibility exists, as it still did by Benjamin, of *Erfahrung*, i.e. experiencing the other in a way which brought about a change. Not a superficial change, which would react to the other in such a way that the experience is adapted to the already hierarchical order, but a change which moves, viz. changing the understanding of the surrounding world and oneself. Within Schulze's description of the *Erlebnis*-society there are no space possible for discussing questions about the equal opportunities, the justification of distributing goods, or the possibility of an ethical informed community, between these communities. Where Benjamin expressed this loss of *Erfahrung* as the poverty of experience, the only kind of experience similar to *Erfahrung* in the *Erlebnis*-society is the knowledge of how to gain prestige and joy internal to the different communities. This is Schulze's diagnosis which is basically assumed without questioning in the experience economical literature, thereby inheriting one problematic feature with Schulze's description: by emphasising the *Erlebnis* character of experience, the possibilities of connecting with, or even understanding examples of *Erfahrung*, whether these examples are based in actually existing communities other than Schulze's aesthetic based ones, or consist in a forward-looking historical interpretations ala Benjamin, has more or less disappeared since they cannot be identified by the internal criteria of the communities.

1.2.2 Experience Economy

Now, in the last section three indicators for understanding the development of experience economy was presented. First, a development in marketing theory moving towards a focus on consumers, and the importance of their experiences of products. Second, a development consisting of the incipient fading out of certain *Erfahrung*-like aspects of experience, accentuating the dream-like *Erlebnis*-character of experience instead. Third, the development of the experience society as depicted by Schulze, with a differentiation of *Erlebnis*-communities and with individuals directed at achieving positive and joyous experiences. What has been left out, mostly, is the conception of economics attached to this development, and this will be touched on here by using Pine and Gilmore as a departure. It should be emphasised, in continuation of the general focus of this dissertation, that it is the anthropological import, which is important here. Hence, the different uses of experience economy within disciplines like experience design (e.g. Jantzen and Vetner, 2007), experience and event management (e.g. Bærenholdt and Sundboe, 2007; Lorenzen and Hansen, 2012), tourism-studies (e.g. O'Dell and Billing 2005) and studies of innovation (e.g. Sundbo and Darmer, 2008; Hjort and Kostera, 2008), will not be touched upon. Rather, a conceptual clarification of the conditions for connecting experience and economy, i.e. what characterises the human being as an experiential economical being, can disclose unseen presuppositions in use of experience economical thinking within these disciplines.

The Progression of Economic Value According to Experience Economy

According to Pine and Gilmore (1998; 1999, 2) experiences have always been around [sic] but have largely gone unnoticed as a separate economical offering. Two examples are worth mentioning, according to Pine and Gilmore, since they provide an innovative perspective on procuring this reified economical value. First, a return to Mickey Mouse, or rather his “father” Walt Disney. Disney provided the first experience expansion by transporting the Disney experience from the (cinematic/television) screen out into the “real” world in Disney world. He thereby created the first theme park, transforming the plain selling of Disney films or merchandise into a business-platform staging a plenitude of experiences for visitors, with employees working as actors within an overall Disney narrative functioning as stage for the Disney business (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 3).

The presumed magnitude of economical earnings for the experience provider is illustrated by the second example. Here, Pine and Gilmore asks us to consider the price of coffee offerings. Companies harvesting the commodity, the coffee bean, received in 1999 around \$1 per pound, corresponding to 1-2 cents per cup. “When a manufacturer grinds, packages, and sells those same beans in a grocery store, turning them into a good, the price to a consumer jumps to between 5 and 25 cents a cup...Brew the ground beans in a run-of-the-mill diner, corner coffee shop, or bodega and that service now sells 50 cents to a dollar per cup.” (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 1). Pine and Gilmore’s “discovery”, then, is that if you serve the cup of coffee in a five-star restaurant, espresso bar or some other place with a heightened sense of ambience, consumers would gladly pay \$2 to \$5 per cup. The progression from commodities to goods over services till experiences, constitutes, according to Pine and Gilmore, the historical progression of economical value (Fig. 4)

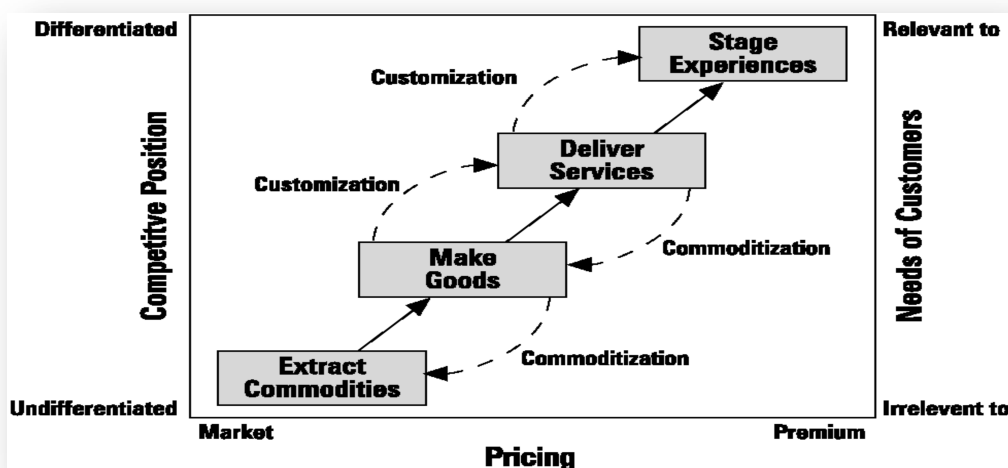


Fig. 4⁹

⁹ Reproduction of picture from Pine and Gilmore (1999, 72)

Corresponding to each of these stages are the overall development in economy, moving from the agrarian through the industrial and the service economy thereby ending in the experience economy. The development of the overall economical functions progresses from the extracting of commodities, viz. fungible materials from the natural world, through the making of goods and delivering services, to finally staging experiences. Now, as shown on the picture, two processes between the stages are in play as well. Moving up towards the experience economy is customisation, meaning “...efficiently serving the customers uniquely, combining coequal imperatives for both low cost and individual customization...” (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 72) Due to the increasing competitive environment between companies, a commoditization exists as well. The production of a new good or delivering a new service, faces, over time, the competition from other companies producing a similar good, or service. Commoditization, then, means the lack of differentiation, from a consumers’ point of view, between products and services, leading to a competition on price only. Customisation is the countermove to this, according to Pine and Gilmore, increasingly designing products to meet the consumers’ personal experiential needs.

Historically, Pine and Gilmore (1999, 6-15) described the economical process like the following. Connected with the extracting of commodities was the agrarian economy, culminating in the eighteenth century United States with 80 percent of the working force employed on farms, compared to a 3 percent in 1999. The industrial revolution changed this, automating craft jobs beginning on the farm and extending into the factory. The high-cost of producing goods and the time it took to extract commodities resulted in changes of the systems of production, because companies learned, through mass production like Ford’s assembly line production, to standardize goods for scaling the economy. As a result of the continued innovation of production processes, fewer workers were required to produce a given output, with a decrease of the need for workers working in manufacturing as one important consequence. Simultaneously, “...the vast wealth generated by the manufacturing sector, as well as the sheer number of physical goods accumulated, drove a greatly increased demand for services and, as a result, service workers.” (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 8) Services are intangible activities performed for a particular client, like haircuts or eye exams. Clients generally value services higher than the goods needed to provide these services. Hence, goods supply the means, where services accomplish specific tasks using these means. Within this service-orientated economy, “...*individuals desire service.*” (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 9) Consumers saving on goods to purchase services, led to the commoditization of goods with a lack of differentiation between goods existing in the mind of the consumers. Manufactures, then, were forced to deliver services wrapped around their core goods; automakers, for example, increased the length of the warranties and offered leasing cars as part of their service. Eventually, then, the manufacturers changed their focus from producing goods only, towards becoming service providers as well. Increasingly, competing by using services as a means of differentiating oneself from other companies, led to a commoditization of the services as well. This, according to Pine and Gilmore, was aided by the creation of, first, the Internet, because of its capability for friction-free

transactions allowing customers to benefit from time as well as cost savings. Second, a disintermediation occurred, resulting in companies bypassing the retail, distribution and agent parts in value-chains, trying to connect directly with the end-buyers. Third, automation of service jobs, e.g. bank jobs being replaced with Internet banking, resulted in a curtailing of the service sector and led to the new offering of experiences occurring, "...whenever a company intentionally uses services as the stage and goods as props to engage an individual." (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 11)

So, in this new experience economy the company no longer offers goods and services alone,

"...but the resulting experience, rich with sensations, created within the customer. All prior economic offerings remain at arms-length, outside the buyer, while experiences are inherently personal. They actually occur within any individual who has been engaged on an emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level. The result? No two people can have the same experience – period. Each experience derives from the interaction between the staged event and the individuals prior state of mind and being." (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 12)

A number of important points are described here, which are developed further in the experience economy discussed in the articles below. First, notice that the development noted within marketing theory towards an increasingly personalised and customer-driven focus is expressed here as well. The focus has shifted from the good towards the experience created around it, and how people experience this in their own separate ways. Furthermore, the experiences rich with sensations comes in 4 realms according to Pine and Gilmore (1999, 30-36): the entertainment realm, consisting of amusements passively absorbed by people like watching TV; the educational realm, a business-led education, or edutainment, with the focus shifting from provider to user, from educators to learners, and the educational act residing "...increasingly in the active learner, rather than the teacher-manager. " (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 32, citing Davis and Botkin) knowledge, here, is solely dependent upon the demand for it; the escapist realm, containing experiences, in which the guest is completely immersed, like theme-parks or casinos; and last, the esthetic realm, with passive and immersed consumers having no effect on the setting of the experiences, like viewing the Grand Canyon or going to a museum, "While guests partaking of an educational experience may want to *learn*, of an escapist experience to *do*, of an entertainment want to – well, *sense* might be the best term – those partaking of an esthetic experience just want to *be* there." (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 35). The richest experiences consist, according to Pine and Gilmore (1998, 102), of elements from all four realms. Since these realms contains opposite and conflicting aspects of experiences, Pine and Gilmore presumably mean that the richest experiences appeal to all aspects from the four realms, but not at the same time. Companies capable of capturing this experiential

economical value, “...will not only earn a place in the hearts of consumers, they will capture their dollars.” (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 13)

Second, the experience is a result of the engagement of the consumer. This engaging spans a spectrum of passive observing, like watching a movie, to an active participating in creating the experience, like doing a bungy jump, or paint ball. This means, overall, drawing the “...customer into the process of designing, producing, packaging and/or delivering the item. Customers often value the way in which they obtain something as much as the good itself...” (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 20) Engaging the consumer this way, comes very close to what Boswijk *et al* (2007, 7) terms co-creation between the company and the consumer. Co-creation is the highly personalised contact between consumers and companies interacting for the creation of values meaningful to and specific for the individual consumer. In Boswijk *et al* (2007, 10) this belongs to the second stage in the development of experience economy, moving from the staging of experiences, which they take Pine and Gilmore as the prime example of, over the co-creation of experiences to a third stage where self-direction, or autonomy is the main aim¹⁰. Despite being delegated to the first stage by Boswijk *et al*, then, Pine and Gilmore contain elements, *in spe*, of the other stages as well, including the stage of self-direction, which Pine and Gilmore describes as a transformation economy, where, in an interesting choice of words, the customer becomes the product (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 163-185) With Pine and Gilmore, then, we have a parallel description to the development of Schulze’s Erlebnis-society but from the perspective of marketing and commercial management. Instead of five cultural-sociological defined groups, Pine and Gilmore operates with four types of experiential consumerism, depending on preferences, i.e. internal criteria in Schulze’s sense, for absorption versus immersion and activity versus passivity. These types of consumerism express an overall aesthetisation of the human being in Schulze’s sense, as an internal oriented consuming, procuring psychophysical processes of a positive valence. Since these types propose to capture any potential consumer, Pine and Gilmore’s type of economy is also dominated by the Erlebnis-character of experience as an anthropological presupposition (the sense of learning spoken about, which could have contained a sense of *Erfahrung*, is subsumed under entertainment and dependent upon demand – the game trivial pursuit would probably be the role model for this kind of learning). With this description of Pine and Gilmore’s understanding of the economy behind experience economy, let us move on to the last section describing the notions of experience and economy as they are developed in two versions of experience economy following Pine and Gilmore.

¹⁰ The article Connecting experience and economy – cases of disguised positioning, analyses and discusses this idea of self-directing. It might look like this self-direction express a sense of experience as *Erfahrung* but, the article argues, this is not entirely the case. It is basically, a very “guided” self-direction.

Critique of Pine and Gilmore

Experience economy in Pine and Gilmore's version has primarily been criticised for the notion of experience contained therein. Two criticisms will be described here, the first, by Boswijk *et al* (2007), tries to incorporate a sense of *Erfahrung* within the notion of experience economy, and the second, Jantzen and Rasmussen (2007), tries to stress, in a naturalistic vein, the role of emotions and inclinations. The reason these two examples are chosen is both try to develop the concept of experience beyond Pine and Gilmore and towards a more comprehensive understanding of the human being in terms of experience and economy. Since parts of this description are overlapping with discussions and analyses in two of the articles below¹¹, the following description will be kept at a general level.

The overall critique of Pine and Gilmore, by Boswijk *et al* (2007) and Jantzen and Rasmussen (2007), is that Pine and Gilmore conceive the consumer as too passive, since it is the company which creates the conditions under which consumers experience. Hence, Pine and Gilmore does not recognise, it is claimed, the importance tied to the consumer's participation in and creation of the conditions for the experiencing process. According to Boswijk *et al* (2007, 13) the first generation of experience economy, including Schulze and Pine and Gilmore, interpreted the direction of the economy correctly, "...that in a period of abundance, needs of a material nature become less important in terms of giving meaning to your life – these nevertheless seem to be shaping 'experiences' in the classical, supply-driven manner". However, gradually replacing this supply-driven view within this period of abundance, and *pace* Pine and Gilmore, is a perspective of communicative self-direction. Instead of being driven by rules dictated from the outside, just as companies attempt to steer their customers towards buying their products, the consumer and the company now, "...get the opportunity to direct themselves and to communicate with each other..." (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 7). Instead of companies determining what will happen, cooperation, or co-creation, between company and individual occurs, each party directing themselves from the 'inside', i.e. according to their wishes and preferences. The consumers' ability to achieve this self-directing is a result of an increase in information available, supplying the consumers with tools for better-informed decision-making. Through access to "...information in different locales around the world..." they are "...discovering what is ideal, what is most desirable and what is directly available and presently at hand." (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 7) The notion of experience presupposed within this communicative self-direction, then, is one in which "...the meaningful experiences we have, and the value we attach to them, give meaning to our lives." (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 11) Within this highly individualist perspective, persons are taken to determine the course of their own lives, based on the preferences they have and the choices they make. In contrast to the sense of experience coming from being skilful, the communicative self-direction emphasises experience as a sensation or feeling, the act of encountering or undergoing something (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 11). So, the notion of

¹¹ These are *Rational and Emotional Fools* and *Connecting Experience and Economy – Aspects of Disguised Positioning*.

experience put forth here encompasses, according to Boswijk *et al* (2007, 19-27), a sensory process whereby we form impressions of the world round us and emotions as a way of processing the information supplied by this sensory process. Experience, then, occurs in the sense of *Erlebnis* as a complex of these emotions, and *Erfahrung*, containing a learning component as a result of reflecting on the different *Erlebnisse*, becomes the meaningful experiences preserved as preferences, including knowing how to get the things you want. Experiencing as a whole, then, is defined as “...a continuously interactive process of doing and undergoing, of action and reflection, of cause and effect, which has meaning for the individual in more than one context of his life. A meaningful experience gives the individual a different outlook on the world and/or himself.” (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 24) This sounds like the description given by Jay above, and one important task below is determining whether this actually is so¹². The contexts in which these experiences are meaningful for the individuals are the personal, socio-cultural and physical contexts. So, basically “People find themselves in situations in which their senses are stimulated, where emotions are triggered and a meaningful experience takes place.” (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 24) Compared to Pine and Gilmore’s concept of experience, the individual is here, allegedly, the sole point of departure, and not the experience as staged by the companies. The experiential aim, furthermore, is the personalised unique value that the individual strives to attain (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 43) The three contexts within which the experiencing takes place, develops, as a whole, through time and can be characterised, according to (Boswijk *et al* 2007, 44), by overall dominant traits in post World War Second as “...the freedom of the fifties, the optimism of the sixties, the collective reaction to the prevailing fear of the seventies, the individualism of the eighties, the vitality of the nineties, and the hedonistic enjoyment of the current era.” So, by Boswijk *et al* (2007) we have the elements characterised above as traits of the experience economy. We have the intensified focus on the consumer, with the act of consuming functioning as part of establishing a communicative self-direction, or freedom, it is claimed, of the consumer to pursue whatever this consumer wants. Incorporating of (some) *Erfahrung* dimension within the concept of experience is attempted, but within a characterisation of the current society as predominantly hedonic in orientation. Hence, *Erfahrung* seems to amount to a reflection on the *Erlebnisse*, learning how to achieve the personalised values the individual strives after, in increasingly better ways. This *Erfahrung* was, however, downgraded as a skill in comparison to the joyful feeling of experiencing something. Thus, communicative self-direction is primarily the freedom of pursuing the joyful experiences one values, with *Erfahrung* as the means to maximise the number of joyous experiences. The sense of meaningful duration, then, amounts to a succession of joyful experiences in time. Furthermore, a full-blown version of Schulze’s aesthetisation is nearly accomplished here, with choices functioning as an expression of surplus and prestige, as signs of self-direction, within and between different lifestyles.

¹² See Connecting experience and economy – aspects of Disguised positioning.

Moving on to the next critique, Jantzen and Rasmussen (2007, 42-43) state that Pine and Gilmore's claims rest on two wrong hypostatisations. First, Pine and Gilmore treats, all experiences alike, as if these were "...able to shake us to the core and perhaps bring about a change in our identity." (Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007, 43) Second, Pine and Gilmore treats experiences as if they were an entirely new business opportunity, but "Creating experiences as part of consuming and even creating a whole experience industry, is as old as Metusalem." (Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007, 43) So, according to Jantzen and Rasmussen, Pine and Gilmore's concept of experience, amounts to nothing more than the effort of trying to commoditise the excitations created by staging joyful experiences around a product. These wrong hypostatisations are a result of an erroneous psychological view on human experience presupposed by Pine and Gilmore. Like Boswijk *et al*, Jantzen and Rasmussen claim that experiences cannot be created, or staged, solely by companies, they are instead created, primarily, by the activity of the consumer, "Experiences emanate from the ability of the organism to produce enjoyment and by using its subjective will to connect with objects or representations in a real or imaginary sense." (Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007, 43)

This view on experiences takes it departure from hedonic psychology (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 241), where "Experiences concern the whole process whereby sensory perceptions are processed receiving a subjective meaning, and thereby creates experiences functioning as directories for preferences and habits of consuming." (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 241) Experiences are based on the organism's neurophysiologic construction creating pleasure through subconscious stimulations and sensory perceptions of the surrounding environment. These pleasurable experiences are then evaluated and lastly anchored, if positive, in the preferences and automatic responses towards the world of objects (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 246). Different kinds of experiences, or pleasures, can be distinguished here: physio-experiences, connected directly with the sensory capacities of the body; socio-experiences, originating in social interactions; psycho-experiences, addressing the cognitive and emotional responses on the stimuli; ideo-experiences, evaluating the ideological content of the stimuli (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 242) The role of experience economy, then, is especially "...to produce positive experiences: i.e. experiences resulting in pleasure, or preparing for joy, hence receiving a positive evaluation and forming the basis for future preferences." (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 243)

The society within which this experience economy works and the experiencing individual is embedded is described through Schulze's notion of the Erlebnis-society (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 254). First, the authors emphasise that both a *hedonic schema*, with enjoyment, excitement, variety and emotionality and an *individualistic schema*, emphasising the consumers ability to act in a creative, spontaneous, self-realising and autonomous way, constitutes the decision-making foundation for consumerism and nourishes the societal orientation towards

experiences¹³. As claimed by Schulze this results in an aesthetisation of the human being, since the “The characteristic of the Erlebnis-society is an everyday aesthetic approach towards the possibilities life (at work, at home, in the family, in the spare time) offers.” (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 256) Second, it is claimed that historically, experience economy is also a reaction, on a political and societal part, of the altered marked behaviour of consumers. This altered behaviour is a result, as also Schulze emphasised, of the increased material affluence post World War Two. (Jantzen and Vetner 2006, 250)

Common to these two critiques, then, are the following characteristics providing us with a model of the behaviour of the experience economical human being. A certain kind of individualism is supposed, with individuals and their preferences as the main economical agents. Despite operating with different contexts which the individual is related to, the description of these contexts is made from a first person point of view, as something the individual chooses to connect to and not finding it self in. In other words, these contexts seems to be made up of separate individuals more than the individuals being made up by the contexts in which they are embedded. Furthermore, a predominant empiricist epistemology serves as a simplistic frame for understanding how the individual connects with the surrounding world. Simplistic, since any questions pertaining to how the individual’s sensations (the connection points between individuals and the world), in the first place, are recognised by the individual as what they are, or are not, are not addressed. The experiencing individual apparently has immediate access to both her- or himself and the surrounding world. This world appears as plainly given through the senses which are working as epistemic intermediaries. This experience economical individual is mainly interested in the creation of personalised values, through consistent and informed choosing and consuming of the positive experiences that economical life offers. An orientation towards Erlebnisse is the chief economical comportment, with Erlebnisse understood as hedonic states of mind. Erfahrung is downplayed, and denotes merely the ability, or skill, needed to achieve the hedonic experiences. Hedonic society, then, consist of an aggregation of these individuals, each striving after positive experiences sometimes interacting with other fellow hedonist in the pursuit.

What Experience and what Economy?

Now, do these accounts present a viable understanding of how experience and economy are connected as part of human being? Well, first of all, the concept of experience is presented as if it is the Erlebnis character, which matters predominantly. Hence, the different historical developments the concept has gone through, *pace* its Erlebnis character, with the different uses within traditions of philosophy, or psychology, described, for example, by Jay (2005), are not touched upon. Furthermore, the epistemological subtleties the concept is called

¹³ A third schema exists as well. This is an idealistic, critical schema emphasising values like authority, equal rights, participation and public spirit as conditions for buying. But since the experiential consumption is made up by a combination of the hedonic and the individualistic schemas, this third critical schema is not really part of experience economy, which is probably why Jantzen and Vetner have nothing to say about it.

upon to either clarify, or discard, as described, for example, by Janack (2012), are lacking as well. Also, the concept of Schulze's Erlebnis-society is adopted uncritically as a characteristic of societies in general, and therefore fails to address the problems connected with this description. Both the simple problem of asking whether Schulze's analysis is transferable to other countries, but also the more interesting, philosophically, problem of whether the characteristic of Erlebnis can supply an adequate experiential frame for understanding the complexities involved in connecting experience and economy as part of human being.

The use of Erlebnis, then, as *the* important concept of experience is somewhat lacking, when it comes to justification, and seems more like a Procrustean bed where all kinds of human experience both are and must be cut to the same length. At least for a first impression. This impression is even stronger when it comes to the concept of economy. No discussion takes place of what kind of economics is best suitable for connecting with a concept of experience. Different kinds of economical disciplines, or programmes, could potentially emphasise different important aspects of experience. One example would be the increased focus on heterodox economics (Lawson 2006), viz. alternatives to neo-classical economics, focusing among other things on how intentionality and experience works in a collective, or intersubjective, sense. The lack of discussion of economics is, furthermore, somewhat surprising since the concepts employed in describing the economical human being above, like individualism, preference or hedonism, are highly value-laden within economical history. This last point is important because it indicates that a particular conception of the economical human being, or traits of this conception, is presupposed across all three descriptions of experience economy. The next section will try to identify the contours of this presupposed conception of economical human being based on the descriptions above. It will do so by proposing some minimal requirements for understanding the experience economical human being, brought forth by analysing recent key economical texts, and then evaluate if and how experience economy as described above incorporates these minimal requirements.

1.2.3 Problems of connecting experience and economy

The experience economical human being

As Davis (2003, 5; Davis 2011) has emphasised, economics – understood broadly, i.e. including marketing, sale, retail-design etc. – is always based on an understanding of human economical behaviour. Adopting this emphasis, but describing it a bit differently than Davis, any such particular understanding of the human being is not necessarily grounded in an explicit theory of what it means to be a human being. However, disclosing the presupposed, or implicit, conception of human being ought to be one of the primary aims of understanding human economical behaviour, since this conception might be wrong, or present a skewed picture. Such a disclosing cannot be exhaustive, though, since human beings are historical creatures. But it must, at the least, presuppose some distinct characteristics about human beings to be able to recognise

these as such, thus recognising human behaviour as human. These characteristics, we might say, are necessary but not sufficient traits of being human. I will here, first, present some minimal requirements for these characteristics, and then evaluate whether the conception of the experiential human being described above is adequate in light of these. In laying out these requirements, I will use Davis (2003b; 2011) as prime inspiration, but with the following proviso. Davis is interested in how identification and re-identification is connected with individuality as constituted in different economics, whereas the focus here is on the presupposed conceptions of human being in economics mediated through the concept of experience. What, then, could such reasonable desiderata for what characterises an experiential human being be?

Understanding a conception of human being involves two separate issues, together outlining what these desiderata could be. On the one hand, human being denotes the economical actor, the person or subject presupposed in a theory of economics. This is the kind of understanding we implicitly express when we speak of a particular being, like this dog, or this cat. Since the question here involves a focus on the human kind of being, it expresses an implicit anthropological understanding in terms of what is emphasised and what is left out about humans and their experiences as relevant to economics. For example, what would be relevant for understanding a consumer? For the above description of experience economy the notion of hedonism is obviously very central, but one could easily imagine some idea of reasoning as being central as well. On the other hand, human being also denotes the conditions, which has to be in place for it to be meaningful to speak about human being in the first sense. Being, here, has to do with ontology presupposed in the first sense, consisting of conditions surpassing each particular human being, and without which human being *qua* being cannot be said to be understandable. A first indication might be that some social, physical and personal conditions must be involved in understanding and recognising human being as such. But we have to be careful here, because if we consider an individual as a social individual, it is easy to succumb to the mistake of understanding this notion of the social as an appendix attached to the individual. Considered this way, we are still moving within the first and not the second sense of human being, with the social denoting one relevant trait of being human. Even if this is rightly so, viz. being social as a trait of the individual, inquiring about being denotes something prior to speaking about this particular social individual, some sense of being which this individual already is related to, or embedded in, for the understanding of this individual to be social to take place. Pressing the point, then, we might say that understanding an individual as social, presupposes a sense of socialised *being* this individual is engaged in¹⁴. Overall, then, any desiderata would have to present the possibility of an adequate understanding of human being *qua* being, in terms of the two issues just sketched, in connection with experience economy.

Structurally, this resembles the sociological discussion of how to understand the notion of embeddedness, how human beings are conditioned by the social circumstances (the

¹⁴ The article 'Why do we care about post-humanism?', presents a more detailed account of this.

being) in which they are embedded. However, the difference is that in terms of the understanding of being asked about here, it cannot be claimed that a social dimension is the only relevant condition for understanding human being *qua* being. As already indicated other conditions, natural or psychological, might be equally important. Nevertheless, we can use Granovetter (1985) as a first delineation of two important requirements. As Granovetter explains (1985, 481-482) the problem of embeddedness is a question of how we are to understand the connection between an individual and a dimension of the social. The understanding of this connection has been shaped by two different traditions. On the one hand, we have a tradition, including classical and neoclassical economics, which "...assumes rational, self-interested behaviour affected minimally by social relations..." (Granovetter 1985, 481), and on the other hand, a tradition understanding institutions, like companies or the market, and behaviour in a way to be analysed as "...constrained by ongoing social relations..." where understanding behaviour as "...independent is a grievous misunderstanding." (Granovetter 1985, 482) In Granovetter's terms, understanding human being *qua* being, then, means understanding individuals, whether persons or institutions, and the behaviour of these, in terms of the social relations in which they are embedded. We might picture these two traditions as the ideas of individualism versus collectivism, and a very short historical digression is appropriate here describing the origins of both ideas as they pertain especially to economics.

Individualism and Collectivism; Atomism and Holism

Without going into much detail (but accepting Davis' description 2003b, 2-6, 23-38, 107-114; see also Taylor 1989, which is Davis' main source) the first idea, individualism/atomism, arose in connection with the rise of modern natural science by Descartes, Locke and Newton, where the human (scientific) being was pictured as disengaged and inward-oriented, as standing apart from the surrounding world. Here is Davis' (2003b, 3) description:

"Descartes' image of the self as a disengaged subject identifies the self with the power of reason by virtue of the self not being "in" the material world. Locke carries this image further in ascribing a power to the self to objectify the world. As not being in space - as an extensionless point - the "punctual" self, as Taylor puts it, has the power to set aside the influences that opinion, custom, and desire can have upon us, so as continually to remake itself in a manner that magnifies its own happiness. "

Adam Smith is often quoted, from '*An inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*', saying "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own self-interest." This describes very well, bearing in mind that Smith's view is a bit more nuanced, the idea that people have the power and expect everybody else to have the same power, of rising above desire and custom to consider acting

in terms of self-interest alone. In Davis' words, "Individuals brought their private subjectivities to bear upon one another in competition and exchange, but only at a distance in the form of their actions in buying and selling." (Davis 2003b, 24) This distance, the result of the inwardness and power of abstraction, created the problem of how individuals were able to actually connect with the world. Smith's proposal, according to Davis, was that the market worked as if an invisible hand controlled it. He could thereby treat the market as something natural and separate from individuals, working through the 'natural' laws of equilibrium and causality, and nonetheless operate with these individuals' private and subjective self-interest as well, since this self-interest explained the sense of competition within this market. However, despite claiming that people did show sympathy as part of their economical behaviour besides self-interest, Smith never got around to explain how a fully developed human psychology was part of the natural account of the market. "Rather, what Smith really provided was an account of competitive behaviour loosely linked to an underlying psychology." (Davis 2003b, 25) The neo-classical critics of Smith (Jevons, and Walras for example) at the end of the 19th century tried a new strategy for linking the subjective sense of self-interest with the objective natural sense of the market, namely via a theory of the individual's choice behaviour. This, often described as the marginalist revolution, explained choice by reference to individuals' inner states, viz. private tastes and desires, because this served as the basis on which individuals could discriminate among different options through the use of marginal utility, viz. the potential gain or loss through consumption of a good, or a service (and perhaps experience). Connecting choice with a psychology of wants and desires had, of course, its precursors. Bentham's hedonic calculus of pain and pleasure was an obvious influence, whereby these "... early marginalists understood utility as usefulness, satisfaction, or happiness, but still saw it as a psychological quantity that was measurable in principle just like an individual's weight and height." (Davis 2003b, 27) Where Smith showed that individual interests were at work in the market, the marginalists showed how they were materialised through individual demands for goods. What the individual wanted, served now as the explanatory basis of what the individual did, hence the objective world was accounted for in terms of the subjective world of preferences. "This linkage later found powerful expression in the notion that choice could be formalized as "rational" choice." (Davis 2003b, 26) This neoclassic conception of the individual, explaining behaviour in terms of a preferential calculus, came under attack in the beginning of the 20th century with the development of positivism suspicious of establishing any scientific facts on the basis of human psychology. The Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto showed that one could analyse utility as ordinal instead of cardinal utility, thereby disregarding any reference to human psychology. Individuals still preferred goods and combination of goods, but preferences now meant that these combinations could be rank ordered, and rank ordering was "...a relation that has nothing in particular to do with human psychology. It can be applied to individuals, but it can also be applied to agents of any kind that can be claimed to discriminate options, whether these agents be individuals or groups." (Davis 2003b, 28) After Pareto, then, individual preferences were only nominally subjective. From here

on the road to mainstream rational choice theory in the 20th century was paved, replacing the neoclassic conception of the individual with an entirely de-psychologised conception of the individual, whose choices and preferences were seen as conforming to different ways of ranking orders (utility-functions). Either way, though, an atomised individual involved in maximising self-interest was presupposed, the first with choices serving as instruments in achieving the psychological wants of this individual, the second a highly abstract individual conforming rationally to certain law-like ways for ranking preferred bundles of goods. Hence, both actualise, albeit in two different ways, cf. the difference between cardinal and ordinal utility above, what Davis (2003, 8) defines as the standard conception of the human being in economics, consisting of “... fixed preferences over goods and their characteristics and by ascribing certain properties to these preferences (so that they may be said to be ‘well defined’) these preferences and the individual are represented in terms of a single utility function.” Furthermore, a specific methodological approach for conducting economical investigations was established as well, claiming that any investigation, first, ought to begin with the behaviour of individuals without addressing any factors forming this behaviour, and, second, any social phenomena could be explained through individuals and their properties, goals and beliefs (Davis 2003b, 36) Not too surprising, a critique of this individualism came from more sociological oriented scientists, which brings us to the other side of the story.

Davis (2003b, 107-111) uses Marx and Durkheim as examples of this other tradition, collectivism/holism, which

“...rejects the idea that individuals are defined atomistically apart from their relations to one another, rejects the idea that individuals are defined subjectively in terms of their own mental states, and rejects the idea that the world should be seen dualistically in terms of inner subjective and outer objective realms. Rather, individuals are to be understood and explained in terms of how they are embedded in historical social relationships.” (Davis 2003b, 107)

Now, just like the evolution of the idea of a human ‘atom’ revolved around the challenge of connecting the individual with (a sense of) the independent world, the notion of embeddedness faced the challenge of not letting the individual disappear into socio-historical relationships, whether these consists of groups, classes, movements, or any other category denoting some collectivity. According to a widespread understanding of Marx, society consists of two classes, one producing and working thereby supporting both classes, the other, consisting of a class dependent upon the first but also managing the labour of the first. The widespread view, then, claims that it is these classes, which functions as the historical agents developing society, with individuals subsumed within these classes and not capable of agency themselves. Thus, the class to which they belong determines human beings and their behaviour. However, as Davis (2003b, 110) rightly

observes, another, probably more precise interpretation of Marx, counters this class-determinism, understanding classes as limiting individual behaviour without determining it. Hence, “Individuals occupy positions, and this biases their behaviour but does not constitute it.” (Davis 2003b, 110)¹⁵ However, Marx is often seen as propagating this view of human beings as determined by social relationships, as if he was echoing Durkheim claiming the opposite of the atomism above, that if “... we begin with the individual, we shall be able to understand nothing of what takes place in the group.” (Davis 2003b, 110) This methodological holism, as opposed to the methodological atomism above, was Durkheim’s way of criticising the (neo-)classical economists, claiming that humans are by nature social beings, formed by society and should be studied this way. Hence, a focus on phenomena external to individuals laid the foundation for this tradition of sociology, and in time with different emphases on what these phenomena in which individuals were embedded and influenced by were. The 20th century saw a manifold of approaches within social theory, broadly investigating “...power, social organization, agency, rationality, identity, culture, modernism/postmodernism, technology, and politics.” (Davis 2003b, 111) as categories for these different phenomena of collectives. Now, as Davis observes no social theorists, or relatively few of them, ever claimed that social phenomena determined the individual to such a degree that the individual was obliterated. Though methodologically starting with holistic structures, one sought to understand embeddedness in such a way that individuals were influenced but not determined by these structures. A frequent strategy for understanding the individual as embedded without being obliterated was claiming that individuals had a capability of influencing the social phenomena as well. Hence, group membership both formed and was formed by an individual. As an example Davis (2003b, 112) uses Giddens’s well-known structuration theory, treating “... individuals and social structures as interdependent and “inseparable,” or as a “duality of structure,” in that each is understood to constitute and determine the other through recursive social practices.“ Giddens thereby abandoned any conception of structures expressed, for example, by static social roles. Instead a continuous production and reproduction of meaning by individuals in different social practices, even though these individuals also find these practices structured by past, more or less ossified productions of meaning, replaced the static roles. Davis might as well have used the French sociologist, Michel Callon, working with implementing actor network theory in economics. For Callon one cannot separate science from the multiplicity of different economic markets (Barry and Slater 2002, 287). Hence, economics is not a theoretical representation of separate economical facts or structures, but is part of the process constituting these structures and facts, and are constituted in this process as well. Translating the idea of actor-network into economics Callon uses the idea of hybrid forums, claiming that human and non-human actors, like goods, together make up different localised markets. These are forums “...because they are public spaces, the specific structuring of which is yet to be defined.” (Callon et al 2002, 195) Accordingly, any sense

¹⁵ This notion of position will play an important role later on, as it is the central concept within the social-psychological theory called positioning theory.

of micro-macro structure is to be abandoned. As Callon claims “...I would say that we no longer have macro-structures.” (Barry and Slater 2002, 295), describing instead the local making of these hybrid forums and the connections between them. Furthermore, since no general structures exist, no political economy claiming to be able to delineate a structure of capitalism, for example, is possible. Capitalism, then, is created within these hybrid forums for a number of reasons, and is “... an invention of anti-capitalists” (Barry and Slater 2002, 297), as well as the protagonists of capitalism. So, according to Callon we should give up the idea of a political economy, and instead follow the actors, as Latour claims, describing how these are structured and structures the different markets in the making. Risking a description where the differences between Callon and Giddens are downplayed, both, however, stress a fragmentation of the human being in the sense that no essence, or atom, is to be found across the different structurations, or networks, in the making. Instead human beings (for Callon, non-human actors as well) *are* the connections between different contexts, i.e. the networks these human beings participate in and are trying to structure as meaningful. With this short historical digression of economical individualism and collectivism, let us return to Granovetter and through him describe the reasonable desiderata for understanding the experience economical human being.

Requirements for connecting experience and economy

Granovetter pictures something like the above historical development as one between potentially over- and under-socialised understandings of human beings in economics and sociology, with classical and neoclassical economics operating with an atomised, under-socialised conception of human being in continuation of the utilitarian tradition (Granovetter 1983, 483). The over-socialised conception Granovetter sees as “...a conception of people as overwhelmingly sensitive to the opinions of others and hence obedient to the dictates of consensually developed systems of norms and values, internalized through socialisation, so that obedience is not perceived as a burden.” (1983, 483) From a theoretical point of view the over-socialised conception entails that once we know the individual’s social affiliations, or the role occupied, we have everything we need to know about their behaviour. Once relations between people have been determined, then “...relations are not assumed to have individualized content beyond given by the named roles.” (Granovetter 1983, 486) The solution, which Giddens and Callon were supposed to be examples of, is to conceive the individual as neither an atom existing outside the social context, nor as reproducing the dictates of the pre-given social category the individual accidentally belongs to.

Now, notice here that the over-socialised conception is connected with a peculiar irony as Haugeland (2004) has called attention to. It will be suggested that regular intersubjective theories (perhaps including extended versions like Callon’s) emphasising that human beings “... are constitutionally interdependent, that, as unique human personalities, we form and reform ourselves, not in isolation, but rather in relation to and under the influence of other human subjects and institutions.” Fulbrook (2004, 403), are part of this as well. Even though our

understanding of individuals has, so to speak, shown these individuals to be part of and influenced by a public sphere, viz. part of a shared or collective system of norms and values, the irony is, Haugeland claims, that the world itself is not allowed any role in this partaking and influencing. Despite the intention of transgressing the Cartesian barrier to the world by stressing the social character of individuals, these approaches "...do not so much demolish the Cartesian barrier as merely shift it "outward" a notch." (Haugeland 2004, 258) Moving from atomism, with private thoughts and feelings as foundation, to collectivism, with language and social norms, "...still excludes the real things and happenings that those thoughts and conversations are primarily about." (Haugeland 2004, 258) In other words, replacing subjectivism (the atomised individual) with inter-subjectivism (understood as an over-socialised conception) might be prone to replace the regular atomistic Cartesianism with a social Cartesianism. Neither Granovetter nor Davis expresses this point, but I take it as a simple consequence of thinking through the idea of an over-socialised approach. The solution to this, and I am following Haugeland here, is to consider human being *qua* being, as already connected with both the material and social world. As Haugeland (2004, 259) claims "That means that individual people, everyday social living (including talking), and the everyday world are first intelligible as a unity – that is, as an integrated whole. Only on the basis of that prior whole can those three respective moments be singled out for even relatively focused attention."

Granted it is a simple example, nevertheless, buying a piece of cheese from the local cheesemonger, displays all three relations in action. I am in the cheese store, because I want to buy some cheese. This cheese is not necessarily for myself. I might be buying it because I want my wife to try this particular cheese because she never tasted it before, or it might be for a gift basket for a friend's birthday. My relation to myself involved in going to the cheese store is, therefore, not necessarily one of desiring, or craving cheese, other purposes might be involved as well. It might not even be one of my preferences either, since I might not fancy the particular cheese I am buying, but I know that my friend has expressed a wish for this cheese. Being in the store, I know how to wait in line until it is my turn, I recognise an old university chum and exchange the 'usual' courtesies as old mates do. Finally, it is my turn and the shop assistant asks me how he can help me. I reply by naming the cheese I want, pointing towards it in the refrigerated counter. Apparently, I got the cheese wrong, and the shop assistant, knowing which cheese I was talking about, picks up another piece saying that this is what I want. Realising my mistake I comply with the assistant, trusting that this assistant is superior in terms of knowledge of this particular cheese, and I buy this other piece of cheese. Retelling the story of my lack of knowledge of the cheese to my birthday friend, he knows immediately what I am talking about and even proposes to identify which cheese I wrongly pointed to, since he once made the same mistake.

This example, ordinary as it is, shows how individual people, social living and the everyday world are interwoven from the outset. There is no question of how an individual, as if from a Cartesian perspective, relates to other people. The individuals must be understood as

already being embedded within different settings, and as knowing how to manage themselves within these settings. In the cheese example above, a coordination between the norms for waiting in line and how to greet an old school friend were carried out. The individuals greeting each other while waiting in line, were influenced by the norms for waiting in line, but the specific greeting practices of old school friends positioned them in their own separate way for doing this social action. Hence, it is first by presupposing some kind of embeddedness, any distanced perspective upon what one is doing is both possible and meaningful. Understood this way, we might say, the problem for the (social-) Cartesian perspective as stated by Davis, of relating to the world once the individual(s) is conceived primarily as apart from it, is only an apparent problem created by abstracting and reifying individuals from their concrete interactions with each other and the world. By seeing people as already embedded in the world, we can understand the sense of distance, or reflection, towards what it is one is doing, not as a kind of non-involvement but simply as a comportment adopted from another embedded position. Nor, is there any question of whether, as if from a social Cartesian perspective, the shop assistant and I were unrelated to the world. We both knew what we were talking about when talking about this particular cheese, even though I pointed toward the wrong cheese. The mistake, or error, of my believing this to be the right cheese was simply realised due to my relation to the world (cheese) in relation to the shop assistant's relation to the world and me. Understanding people as already embedded in the world, present a frame for understanding how errors between what people believe and whether these beliefs are right occurs, as possible discrepancies between people and the world. Thus, by paying attention to how transactions between people and the world actually takes place, we realise that the under- and over-socialised conceptions are results of exaggerating one of the relations to the detriment of the others. This inflating of one relation happens, of course, in some situations, think about sports with individuals and teams competing, but they can never function as a general description of human being.

Hence, what Granovetter, Davis and Haugeland directs our attention at, is a requirement of staying clear of these under- and over-socialised conceptions of human being *qua* being. Let us rephrase this, then, in terms of four desiderata for the conception of the experience economical human being.

- Experience and experiencing must be understood as taking place among entities including other experiencing beings, within settings containing public criteria (facts, norms and values) for how these entities are understood, and which the experiencing continuously measure its understanding against. Without these criteria, telling the entities apart is impossible, and the entities would be unable to appear as the particular entities they are as part of the experiencing. We learn to tell things apart, tell about what happened, or to tell whether things are done correctly, first, by partaking in practices with people guiding us, and afterwards in (a not necessarily harmonious) conjunction with people and other entities. Relations to other people and relations to

entities other than people, forms a necessary basis of understanding the experiencing human being *qua* being.

- A consequence of this is that the apparent choice between a methodological individualism and a methodological holism is a ‘false’ choice. Investigating individuals and social domains is possible only if we assume a first intersection of these within the world, i.e. we cannot start with reified understandings of individuals, or social structures, since this will, eventually, lead to the wrong, or misunderstood, question of how these, then, are related. Epistemologically this means that knowledge of our selves, knowledge of each other and knowledge of the world are interwoven. One way of describing this is using the sense of telling apart above. If we want to investigate something about how we, as individual persons, act in a given economical situation, our means of understanding us as individual persons, depends both on our being able to tell us apart from other entities, human or not, and tell about the relations to these entities. Hence, as Haugeland claimed above, to focus attention on one part within this *triangulating* whole, we must assume a sense of prior relatedness to the other parts of this triangulating whole as well. Thus, knowing our selves, knowing the world and knowing each other goes together.

- Experience must also be understood as being part of genuine actions. As a general capability, experiencing is neither the passive reproduction of social or natural conditions, nor is it part of the expression of a will of pure self-interest forcing it self through. As a connection between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*, experience is tied both to an active responding conceived in a wider fashion than the instrumental rationality of just knowing the means to reach a given end. As interpreted within Benjamin’s notion of *Erfahrung*, there is a sense of taking care of, connected with it as well. Within economical situations these caring acts range from altruistic acts, like given up your own interest for someone else’s wellbeing to plainly being honest when doing a deal. This kind of agency forms an important part of the intelligibility of human economical agency. The shop assistant at the local cheesemonger could have chosen to just give me the cheese I pointed at, in order to maximise the economical benefit of the store by quickly serving more customers, but he did not. The reason is, of course, that he is service-minded, but, and hopefully without this sounding perhaps odd, part of it might also be because he want to see to it that I am supplied with the right experience of this particular cheese. In his experience he is thereby responding to me, and actually also to the cheese, in a responsible fashion. This ‘caring’, of course, happens on many different levels, but a common trait is that the responding is responsible to the entities dealt with, in accordance with criteria for what these entities are by themselves. Hence, the shop assistant treats me responsibly as an ignorant customer, because that is what I am in this situation, and he treats the cheese as this particular cheese – implying it has this history, needs to be handled this and not that way – and not that other cheese.

- And last, when the relation to the world is interwoven with the relation to other people and the relation to the self, then the particular human being cannot be characterised by only one of these relations. Any relation to one self already implies a relation to the world and other

people. Another way of putting this would be to deny the methodological simplicity that once we have explained one of the relations, the other can be described that way as well. For example, if we accept atomism we might make room for a social dimension by claiming that a central category of this social dimension, like a group, functions like an aggregated set of individuals, and can thereby be explained by the same explanans as one individual. In this sense, the methodological simplicity implies a reduction to the explanatory procedures of one of the relations only. But whether the social dimension actually functions that way is not questioned, it is just assumed. In other words, reductionism is not a usable strategy since it ducks the issue of why this explanans is all-explaining in the first place. Human beings, then, are individuated, beings embedded in their own right, through their relations to other people and the world.

Let us name these requirements: the criteria of being embedded in the world as the basis on which our understanding of others, our selves and the world is possible; the criteria of triangulation, i.e. knowledge of our selves, each other and the world are interwoven; the criteria of normative agency, i.e. that acting involves a dimension of caring; and last the criteria of embedded being. Let us, furthermore, end this section with a return to the examples of experience economy described above, and briefly indicate whether these meet the requirements.

Common to both experience economical perspectives described above is stressing the contributions of the individual human being within the experiencing process. This allows both perspectives to adopt what is seemingly close to methodological individualism, basing their accounts on the individuals 'communicative self-direction' and the hedonic make up of the individual, respectively. Both perspectives operate with several contexts the individual is related to. These contexts, however, seems more like circumstances the individual, described as separate, chooses to relate to, rather than contexts in which the individual are also embedded, i.e. contexts in which the individual learns to tell things apart and tries to understand and navigate within. Reinforcing this impression is the predominant empiricist epistemology behind both perspectives; the human being is basically seen as an organised cluster of cognitive mechanisms with an immediate access to the surrounding world through the senses. But how people thereby tell things apart, or might be wrong in what they believe to be the case is not touched upon.

Both perspectives describe experience as containing aspects of both *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. *Erlebnis*, as a sensation or feeling, and the act of undergoing something, is the significant trait of the experience economical human being. *Erfahrung* is predominantly characterised as professional skills, or when a new outlook is acquired, as the creation of new preferences, hence denoting the means for achieving *Erlebnisse*. Is the constellation *Erlebnis/Erfahrung* enough, then, to individuate each experience economical human being, and supply a frame for understanding economical agency as genuine, i.e. consisting of an independent response from this individuated human being? Well, since no criteria for telling apart, of understanding the difference between what is the case and what is believed to be the case, is

claimed important, the preferences the individual contains, it seems, might actually be induced, or enforced, from the outside, despite picturing the individual as directed from the inside. The genuineness of the individuals' actions within the experience economical perspectives above, seems to be manifested in each individual's particular pursuing of wants, as a maximising of the self-interests. But what the putative experience economical human being takes to be the case of genuine pursuing and wanting, thereby expressing the peculiarity of this individual, is not distinguishable from what this individual believes to be the case. Valuing Erlebnis, i.e. the sense of undergoing something, as the prime object of maximising self-interest, might be self-defeating, because, first, it might actually not be in your self-interest to pursue Erlebnisse in general, but there is no way of telling whether some Erlebnis is, or is just believed to be, in your best interest.

Furthermore, the society as a whole seems to be no more than an aggregation of hedonic individuals, with the social (and natural) dimension as meaningful only as part of each individuals interest. It seems, then, that the two experience economical perspectives have taken a point of departure having more in common with the neo-classical kind of economics emphasising cardinal utility, methodological individualism, claiming hedonism as the primary interest of humans and conceives society as made up individuals (atoms), than meeting the reasonable requirements proposed above. This, of course, present us with a challenge of working out, in closer detail, whether this first indication is actually sound, and if it is, how experience and economy could be connected by meeting the requirements. The methodological considerations below present an analytical frame for exploring how this connection between experience and economy could be reasonably established, and the articles presents more detailed explorations of how the thematic requirements could be met. Before that we need to reconnect with the Zoo, to see how the problematic might be relevant here.

1.3 The Future of Zoo's

The Role of Zoos in the 21st Century

To get a sense of why Randers Rainforest wants to develop the Bioplanet project, we need to describe the history of zoos very briefly. For this purpose Fig. 5 can serve as illustration.

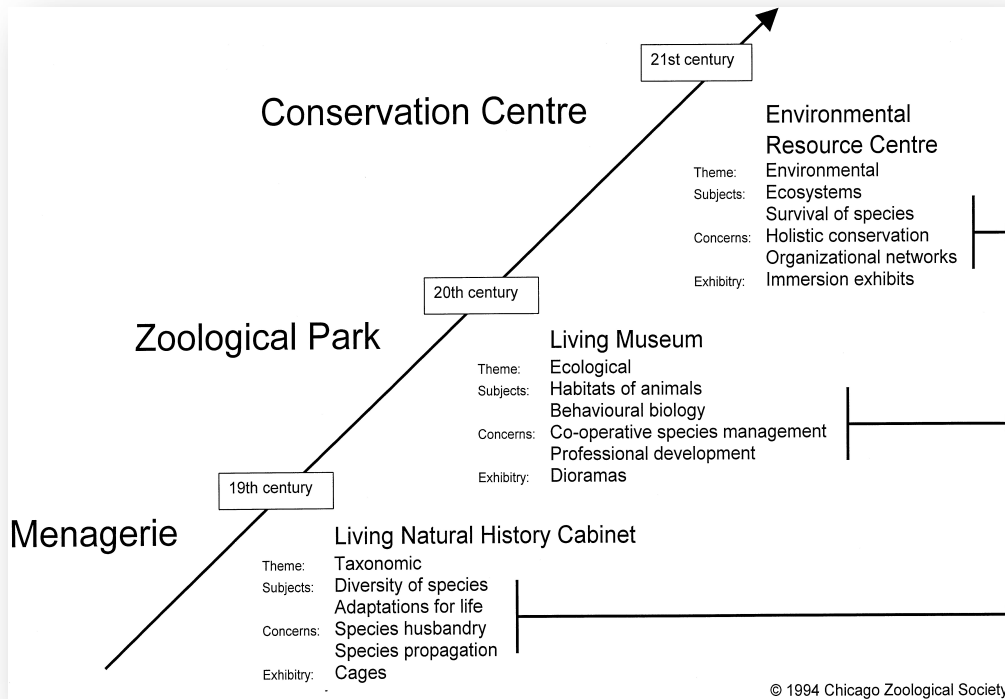


Fig. 5¹⁶

The idea is not to give an in-depth overview (see Rothfels, 2002; Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier 2004), but to give some indicators of where some zoos, in their understanding of the role they play and should play in society, are headed, and in particular one of the prime challenges they presently face. It should be noted that the picture is an expression of the strategy for the modern zoo, which the World Acquarian and Zoo Association was proposing in 1993. Despite this vision-like appearance, viz. the trajectory is not that unequivocal, it is still exact enough to give some focal points regarding the historical development of zoos. Especially, if it is kept in mind that many overlaps between these periods exist, and the historical developments of zoos, when histories of colonisation of the countries in which these zoos are located are taken into account, differ from country to country.

The earliest records of animal collections, or menageries, go back to ancient Egypt, the Assyrian kingdom and China starting as early as 3500 B.C. We do not know much about these menageries, except religious institutions used them for religious purposes (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 88). However, exotic animals were used throughout history in a variety of settings, for example in the roman games, or as touring shows of animals performing on markets and fairs. Menageries also existed as princes' and kings' private collections, functioning both as symbols of their wealth and, more pragmatically, for hunting (Nyhart 2009, 84). In the 19th century with the advances in natural science, the interest regarding these exotic animals changed. Studying and categorising different species was commenced with the idea of taxonomies reflecting the

¹⁶ Taken from Rabb and Suanders (2005, 2). Originally part of the World Conservation Strategy (Wheater 1995)

construction of collections, thereby turning the zoo into a kind of miniature world. Unlike the natural history museums, however, a complete representation of the animals of the world was not achievable for the zoos; hence they housed together similar taxonomic animals in a “living museum” (Nyhart 2009, 88). One special focus was the adaptation of animals to the new climates. This focus of acclimatisation presented a challenge both to the zookeepers wanting to keep the exotic animals alive during winter, thereby learning about the reactions of animals towards their new habitats, and for zoo managers often having a tight budget for purchasing new animals. One especially important Zookeeper in the beginning of the 20th century was, as Rothfels (2002) has shown, Carl Hagenbeck. Hagenbeck is famous for introducing the idea of designing zoos with animals living in what resembled their natural habitats as much as possible, thereby moving the larger animals from small cages to open space areas. However, the scientific taxonomic impulse was still informed by a specific understanding of evolution, putting one species, the human, on top of things, and more specifically, the white western human male. Hagenbeck both trained animals for participating in different events like the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904, and inspired the human zoo exhibitions (see Chamley 2012) of the Jardin d’Acclimatation in Paris, by “importing” exotic human races for exhibitions in the 1870’s (see Fig. 6 below).



Fig 6¹⁷.

Increasingly during the 20th century ecological issues became more and more important. A societal focus on animal welfare influenced the zoos, transforming them from entertainment sites to educational sites as well. Focus changed, therefore, from training animals to entertain, which was seen as a left over from an ideological conceived evolutionary theory claiming mankind as master of nature (what is termed speciesism today). Instead animals were presented in what resembled their natural habitats as close as possible, with the intention of educating visitors thereby. Furthermore, it was realised that a global threat of more and more species becoming extinct

¹⁷ This picture is from the Danish Zoo in Copenhagen, taken 1901 and shows the exhibition of the Indian Village. (Information 2009, September 21).

existed.

Hence, conservation programs were started, keeping track on the on the different species both within and outside of the Zoos, with the aim of facilitating breeding programs securing the survival of nearly extinct species. Now, even though Bayma (2012) has shown that this, in the beginning, probably amounted to no more than a rational myth in the self-understanding of zoos and in the understanding of the public, it proved to be a forceful identity for zoos through the 1970s and 1980s, with the increasing realisation that *ex situ* conservation needed more and more *in situ* conservation as well. In the words of Terry Maple, president of the American Zoo Association, “We just flat-out aren’t going to save these animals in zoos, and I think everyone’s finally coming around to understanding that.” (Bayma 2012, 133, citing Croke 1997) This is complicated by the fact that different countries have different laws for governmental approval of the zoos. In Denmark, for example, a total of fifty zoos and aquaria exist, but only eight of these are approved by the state¹⁸, hence obligated to participate in conservation programs. The tendencies we are describing here, then, apply only to those zoos, which are members of the national and international organisations¹⁹.

Despite this focus on environmental issues, a certain tension existed and continues to exist in zoos as well. A tension expressed by Beardsworth and Bryman (2001, 90) as the contrast between the increasing sensibility for the animals and their natural habitats, and the reasons why animals are still kept in zoos, namely for visitors to enjoy and experience. In other words, a tension exists in the modern zoo described by Fraser and Wharton (2007, 44-45) as “The challenge of trying to compete with benchmarks set by tourist attractions such as theme parks...” which possibly “...diverts an organization from finding the social relevance of the mission.” Furthermore, Fraser and Wharton suggest that this has undermined the moral values of many zoo operators who are succumbing to the temptation of creating fantastic visions of nature, what Beardsworth and Bryman (2001) terms Disneyization. This is not to be confused with Disneyfication, which, according to these authors, denotes some sort of infantilization and vulgarization of some cultural artefact. “By contrast, Disneyization is a more neutral term employed to describe the impact of Disney theme park principles on a range of organizations and institutional settings.” (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 90) This appears in both a transferred sense, in which some sphere, say an amusement park, is inspired by the Disney theme parks, and a structural sense reflecting a complex of underlying changes of which the Disney parks themselves are examples. According to Beardsworth and Bryman, then, the modern zoo is a prime example of an institution increasingly subjected to structural Disneyization. Disneyization, then, consists of four principles, theming, dedifferentiation of consumption, merchandising and emotional labour. Let us go through these,

¹⁸ According to <http://www.kulturstyrelsen.dk/institutioner/oevrige-institutioner/zoologiske-anlaeg/> accessed 08.02.2013.

¹⁹ See The European Acquirian and Zoo Association, EAZA, for how the conservation programs are coordinated by different EEP’s (European Endangered Species), species coordinators, keeping track on the animals they are in charge of, by collecting information, producing a studbook and doing demographical and genetic analyses. <http://www.eaza.net/activities/cp/Pages/EEPs.aspx>

briefly, to show how widespread this Disneyization is.

Theming is a kind of master narrative appended to institutions and exhibits (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 91), like Randers Rainforest having three domes each with their own geographical theme, related to the kind of rainforest they are presented as containing: South America, Africa, and Asia. Relating directly to the exhibition, the zoo as an institution is also thereby positioning it self, like almost any other zoo, by using the theme of conservation and education. So, a master narrative is used both regarding the specific exhibitions and as a legitimation of the existence of the zoo. By dedifferentiation of consumption is meant "...the general trend whereby the forms of consumption associated with different institutional spheres become interlocked with each other and increasingly difficult to distinguish" (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 94). One example of this is the interlocking of theme parks and shopping malls. In smaller scale, restaurants and shops in zoos exemplify this as well. In the Bioplanet project by Randers Rainforest, the part of the zoo complex called Bioplanet World is to have hotels, shopping malls and wellness facilities besides the exhibition²⁰. The growing commercialisation of zoos is, according to Beardsworth and Bryman likely to increase the range of merchandise on offer. Many zoos use "iconic" animals as symbolic representations on merchandise, thereby allowing the presentation of animals and animal performances within Zoos to be transferred to the generation of commoditized images having considerable commercial potential (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 96). In the case of Randers Rainforest, the iconic symbol of the three domes is so powerful it is sometimes misrecognised as the town arms of the city Randers. The last part, emotional labour, "...refers to the individual worker's control of the self, a control which is geared to expressing socially desired emotions in the course of service transactions." (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 96). This is the sense of keeping a positive attitude of smiling and being helpful as a part of work. However, in the Zoo it can take a more distinct form:

"... particularly in relation to environmentalist ethics and conservationist appeals. On the one hand, emotional labour may be used to induce a sense of guilt (in relation to environmental degradation, species extinction, etc.). On the other hand, it may be used to induce a 'feel good factor' in the minds of visitors, predicated on the proposition that by visiting the zoo and buying its merchandise, they are participating, however indirectly, in the lofty ideals of species and habitat protection." (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 97)

And, of course, the animals in the zoo can be called upon to do emotional labour as well. As an interesting connection, Pine and Gilmore (1999), as we have seen, uses Disney as a prime example as well. The subtitle of their book is *work is theatre and every business a stage*, thereby suggesting, using the live Disney figures as models, that working should be seen as performing on a

²⁰ See <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/cetest-firstpage/world/>

stage with visitors functioning as audience. Keeping up appearances, then, becomes the main workplace compartment, sometimes at the expense of the educational information presented.

These four parts of Disneyization pose a potential “threat” to the mission of a zoo, creating a tension between what the overall objective of the zoo is, and what is done to achieve this. One example is, as (Beardsworth and Bryman 2001, 96) observes, that “... the commodification of wild animals is ironic in that they are invariably depicted as symbols of pristine nature and therefore as beyond the clutches of a commoditized world.” Buying goods using a symbolic representation of “wild” nature, might not be the best way to convey a sense of protection, since it might give the impression that all it takes is willingness to pay. Another potential tension is how the focus of the master narrative on conservation and education appears in obvious contrast to entertaining actions between the animals and the guides within the zoo, creating puzzlement as to whether this is actually serving the animals. A third and last example is what Beardsworth and Bryman (2001, 87) terms quasification, “It entails the creation of ‘fakes’, but not of fakes which are intended to deceive the beholder into believing they are ‘real’. Rather, the intention is that the viewer should be ‘in on the joke’, and hence be diverted, entertained and impressed by the skill, scope or scale of the artifice.” The prime example connected with animals is, of course, the stuffed animals in natural history museums, where the success of the exhibitions depends upon the visitors’ ability to pretend that the animals are alive. An example from Randers Rainforest is the overall slogan “it is like being there in person” suggesting that the experiences obtained by walking around in the domes resembles being in the actual geographical jungle represented.

Now, countering this Disneyization, or at least trying to balance it, is part of the self-understanding of the 21st century Zoo (Conway 2003; Fraser and Wharton 2007; Rabb and Saunders 2005), including the future Bioplanet project. Describing how catastrophic the conditions for preserving biodiversity are, Conway (2003, 7) is expressing a perspective on the role of zoos, which is common to this anti-Disneyization tendency, “To survive and fulfil their obligations to society, zoos must become proactive conservation organizations, not living museums, and they must do it now”. It is, of course, this sense of pro-activism which is challenging, because how and what, exactly, is to be done? Part of this anti-Disneyization tendency probably comes from realising that the overall zoo involvement in conservation program has been, judging by the effect, to low. Conway, for example, claims that many more zoos ought to be involved in *in situ* conservation projects as well. Furthermore, Conway (2003, 9) observes that zoos have focused too much on broad educational activities, which, of course, are important, but an increasingly important audience for the educational impetus ought to be the people with power and means to present the vision of preserving biodiversity within influential forums, namely the policy makers. This necessitates some considerations on the zoos’ part, of how they are to reconceive their roles in society. For Fraser and Wharton this means “...that zoos have the potential to become more effective cultural change agents if zoo personnel can become more attentive to the process by which their values, as wildlife-care professionals and conservationists, are replicated in society.” (Fraser

and Wharton 2007, 42) Besides species conservation, then, zoos' role in the 21st century comprises "...crafting a new vision for how society can live in a productive relationship with the world's remaining biodiversity" (Fraser and Wharton 2007, 44). Productive here, is taken to express a social concern involving communities, including companies, in sustaining nature, and not in an old exploiting nature sense. Hence, scientific knowledge is important as well, because "...scholarship that is the basis for their community's future relationship to the natural world." (Fraser and Wharton 2007, 44) Because conservation is intrinsically tied to human behaviour, this scholarship moves beyond traditional uses of sciences within zoos, "Real conservation action will require a blending of the traditional natural sciences with the social sciences to result in a new institution that can help an increasingly urbanized world develop a common moral code toward nature." (Fraser and Wharton 2007, 52) Hence, the model of new zoos is, or should be benchmarked as, similar to Holocaust or human rights museums. The reason is that these kinds of museums serve both an educational purpose but are also advocating for courses of action benefiting the public good, "It is one thing to learn about the systems of nature; it is another altogether to think about zoos and aquariums as the place where we establish our moral responsibility to the natural world on which we, and all life, depend." (Fraser and Wharton 2007, 48)

To reiterate, then, the new role for the zoos of 21st century is moving beyond both a reactive approach just educating visitors coming to the zoo, and purely *ex situ* conservation projects. Instead the surrounding community is sought engaged, community understood in a wide sense including policy makers, scientists, citizens and companies, *ex* and *in situ*, in supporting a vision of creating a more sustainable compartment towards nature. The main question is, of course, how is this to be done?

Bioplanet as example

Randers Rainforest's new project Bioplanet is an example of an attempt to develop a modern zoo in accordance with many of the trajectories described above. If we look at the familiar picture below (Fig. 7), taken from the world zoo organisation (Wheater 1995, 547) we see the historical development of zoos around the world plus an added extended arrow.

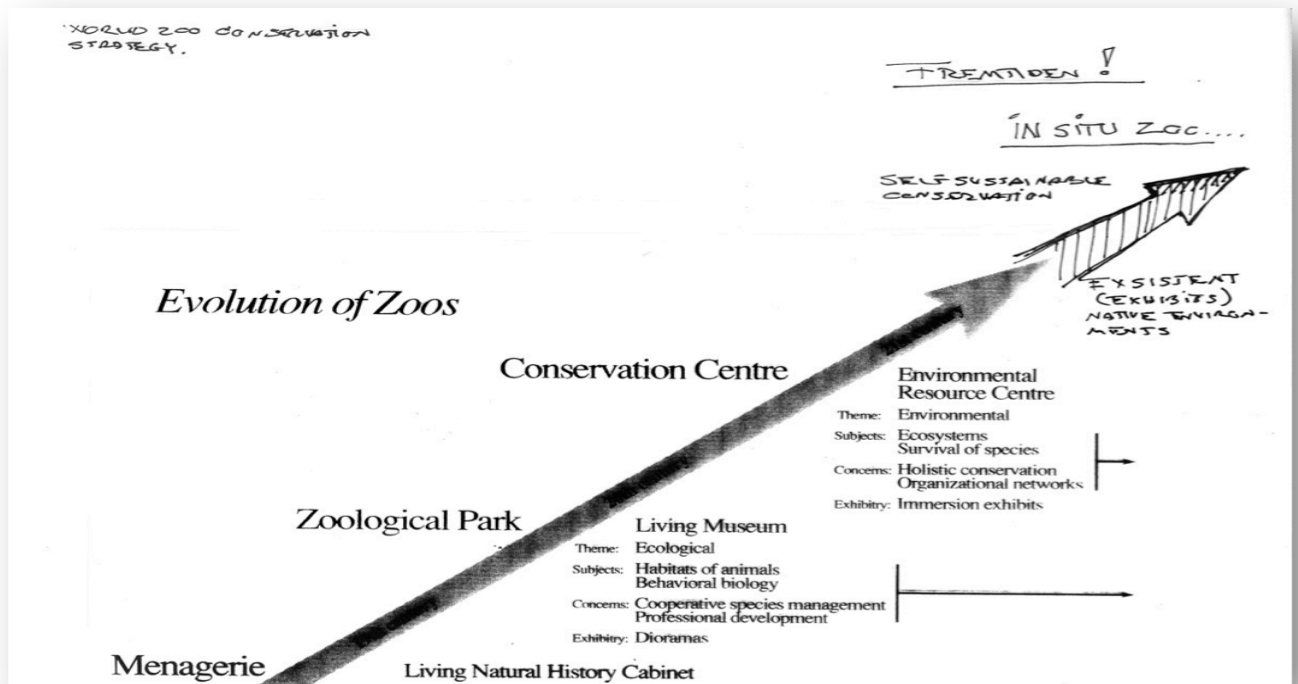


Fig 7.

The addition (the headline) says ‘The Future (Fremtiden) – *in situ* zoo’. On the left side of the extended arrow, ‘self-sustainable development’ is written, and on the right side it says ‘existent (exhibits) native environment’. The idea of *in situ* zoo is here interpreted in a more extended way than usual. *In situ* usually denotes conservation activities taking place in the animals’ natural habitats, for example helping macaws from the South American jungle survive within the actual jungle, and not within the zoos. Here, the idea is also used in an attempt to enhance the biodiversity in and around the zoo, viz. within the municipality of Randers, by focusing proactively on sustaining old Danish crops and livestock. Hence, the idea of focusing on the biodiversity of the world implicates not only the exotic animals of the world but contains an imperative to focus on biodiversity within the natural environment and community in which the zoo is embedded as well. Self-sustainability, furthermore, is supposed to capture the result of this “culture-created preservation of biodiversity” in a two-fold sense. First, in the sense that the biological systems can, with time, be sustainable in their own right, i.e. restoring the natural habitats as much as possible. Second, in the sense that human activities, and specifically activities relating to the socio-economical conditions for preserving the biodiversity, can become sustainable as well.

The following is a translation of the entry²¹ from the website of Randers Rainforest stating the overall reasons for developing the new project Bioplanet:

Biological diversity is a prerequisite for the survival of humanity. Nevertheless, over the past 200

²¹ Taken from <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/hvorfor-bioplanet/hvorfor-bioplanet/>

years we have seen a dramatic reduction in biodiversity. Unlike previous natural disasters causing mass extinctions in the history of the earth, today's decline in biodiversity is largely man-made. Hence, as landscapes in many parts of the globe are regulated and limited by culture-made barriers, nature will not be able to recreate itself as before. The paradoxical conclusion is, therefore, that today nature and its biodiversity is dependent on the humanity, which, at the same time, constitutes the ultimate threat to it.

Bioplanet is the working title of the further development of Randers Rainforest. The mission is still to preserve and promote biodiversity, but the vision now is to create a platform for a new worldwide effort potentially involving millions of people who, through personal commitment and concrete everyday actions, can help meeting this common challenge of conserving global biodiversity.

Bioplanet will have its concrete location in Randers, where conservation activities will be connected to world-class experience economy, new forms of sustainable landscaping and commercial collaborations promoting biodiversity through production and consumption.

With Bioplanet we want to create:

- A mega-attraction where visitors, through experiencing the many forms and functions of life, are inspired to take part in the conservation of biodiversity*
- A local nature theme park where new frameworks for experiences go hand in hand with nature conservation, research and innovation*
- A commercial network seeking to enhance sustainable production by exploiting market potential for the promotion of biodiversity*
- A virtual space providing opportunity for direct involvement in Bioplanet's facilitation of conservation and dissemination of biological diversity*

Bioplanet is a development of Randers Rainforest, which after 15 years of remarkable success continues to innovate and challenge the framework for zoo construction work. With 750 hectares of nature reserve framing a giant indoor exhibition complex, Bioplanet is not only becoming one of the world's largest zoological centres of experience, but also an experiential beacon with international reach. Bioplanet is destined, with its cutting edge holistic concept, to revolutionize the experience of a zoo.

It should be fairly easy to recognise the traits describing the role of the Zoo in the 21st century put forth above in the overall vision here. The zoo is conceiving itself as an active agent in promoting and preserving of biodiversity, involving *in situ* conservation of the natural environmental surroundings of the zoo, including the local municipalities, scientific experts and citizens as collaborators. The four projected parts of Bioplanet can be pictured in Fig. 8,

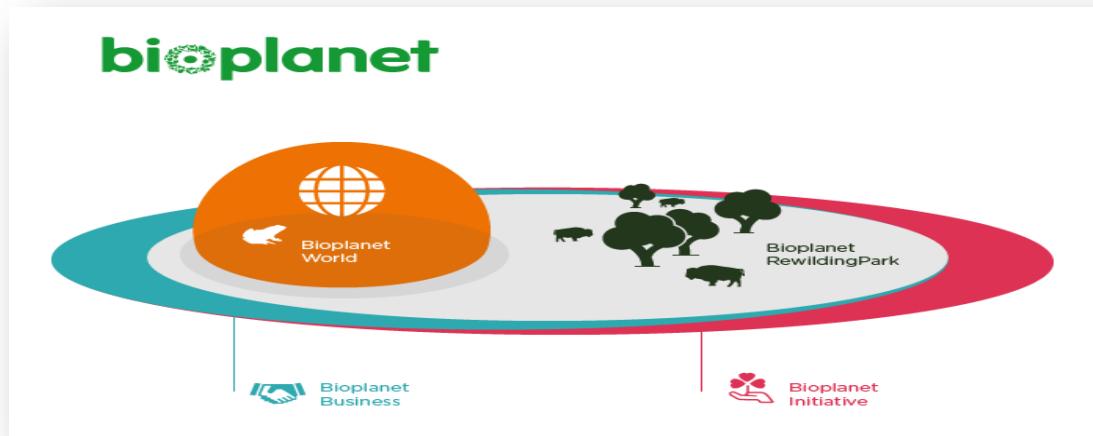


Fig 8²²

and described, using the webpage of Bioplanet again, as in the following. In *Bioplanet World*²³ the intention is to depict the biodiversity of the world holistically within a sustainable building. Visitors can here ‘travel’ around the world, experiencing different animals, plants and cultures belonging to the different geographical areas of the world. Furthermore, the intention is that Bioplanet World will consist of hotels for overnight visitors, and adventure activities as part of the experience of nature. In addition a media based connection between Randers Rainforest’s existing *in situ* conservation activities in progress within Ecuador and Uganda, and the Bioplanet World will be established using the latest information technology.

The *rewilding park*²⁴ becomes the future zoo, where experiments using big fauna in maintaining the countryside will be conducted. Since 2002 an area of 120-hectare wetlands surrounding the zoo has been used for grazing by old Danish farm animals, some breeds even thought to be extinct. Additional milestones in this rewilding concept occurred in 2010 with the introduction of European bison, and in 2012 with domesticated water buffalo, both functioning as “exotic substitutes” of the original extinct European buffalo, and used in grazing. The zoo conducts guided tours in the areas with a special focus on the conservation of old Danish farm animals by using them for grazing, and the cultural history of the area as well. The goal is to use this nature management in combination with experience economy, for developing sustainable high quality products.

*Bioplanet Business*²⁵ is a new way of conserving the endangered flora and fauna, the genetic resources, of Denmark. Focus is on the species used in Denmark throughout history but replaced due to the industrialisation of the farms importing higher yielding animals and crops. Few of these “original” crops and animals exist anymore, but the worldwide focus on and demand for quality and sustainable foods will present an opportunity for using these old genetic resources

²² Picture taken from <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/cetest-firstpage/cetest-firstpageo/>

²³ <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/cetest-firstpage/world/>

²⁴ <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/cetest-firstpage/rewildingpark/>

²⁵ <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/cetest-firstpage/business/>

within sustainable production systems. The goal of Bioplanet Business is, therefore, to establish a network, with NGO's, local municipalities, companies and research institutions participating, revolving around the sustainable use of genetic resources. The commercial potential in biodiversity is vast, it is claimed, and Bioplanet Business will participate in projects where conservation of nature is not just seen as a burden, but as a possibility of a new kind of experience economy.

With *Bioplanet Initiative*²⁶ a paradigm shift for zoos occurs, it is claimed. Even though nobody seriously question the value of global biodiversity, most people feel disempowered in face of possibilities for actual preserving the biodiversity within their daily lives. Bioplanet Initiative seeks to redeem this, by providing a forum for people interested in participating actively in conservation programs. A primary activity will be a dispersion of clones of rare old Danish utility plants among a network of Danish citizens, with the intention of forming a living gene bank. Other activities will be acquisition of Rainforest, forming of grazing guilds, or thematic projects like the establishing of 100 insect hotels within the municipality of Randers already occurring. By incorporating citizens in the conservation of biodiversity, including local biodiversity, Bioplanet Initiative expands the scope of the conservation program on both a social and geographical scale.

The four parts of the Bioplanet project is supposed to form a reciprocal strengthening whole. For example, any high quality products developed as part of the Rewilding Park, or the Bioplanet Initiative, can be used as part of dining experiences in the Bioplanet World. Furthermore, the development of these products can help forcing new connections between companies in different sectors within the municipality, and even across many municipalities. Besides this, a high innovation potential exists, as technological inventions are likely to be part of the development of the Bioplanet World building. Exhibiting live representations of both the South Pole and Sahara present innovative challenges for the sustainable use of energy in terms of design, building materials, the exact geographical location, including potential use of water levels and wind, etc. Forming networks including the surrounding communities, research institutions and policy makers, has the potential to strengthen the project by including different layers of engagement and knowledge, ranging from nursing homes, public schools, hospitals, to universities and public innovation units.

Hence, the Bioplanet Project is one example of how a 21st century zoo could look like. It is, however, not without its own challenges, which we will turn to now, especially when experience economy is supposed to form such a significant part of the vision as it is. Furthermore, the prime challenge relates to the potential tension, as described in section 1.1 above between what could be termed the protagonist of Disneyisation and the protagonist of a more moral oriented outlook within the organisational structure of Randers Rainforest it self. This challenge is not for the PhD project to proclaim anything about except the platitude of recommending a broad agreement when it comes to the establishing and implementing of a strategy for developing the Bioplanet project.

²⁶ <http://www.bioplanet.org/dk/cetest-firstpage/initiative/>

Challenging experience economy

Now, for a charitable interpretation the use of experience economy within the Bioplanet project is not meant as implementing a new kind of Disneyisation. Even though a potential tension between the Bioplanet world, resembling a kind of Disneyisation with its supposed hotels and adventure activities, and the rest of the Bioplanet projects exist, it is clear that the innovative part of the project as a whole is the overall connection with biodiversity. So, Bioplanet World will be interpreted as a tool for promoting biodiversity alongside a focus on sustainable production and consumption, educational activities and empowering people's capabilities for preserving biodiversity in their everyday lives. This is not downplaying the idea of having hotels or adventurous activities, merely presenting a challenge for developing the parts of the Bioplanet project with the objective of a more sustainable implementation. In terms of the new role for zoos in the 21st century described by Fraser and Wharton above, then, the moral responsibility to the natural world is the bridgehead connecting the separate parts of the Bioplanet project. The sense of experience economy connected with this project is, therefore, normative in intention. A stronger claim would be that this normativity is a necessity, otherwise the tension described above between the activities of entertainment and conservation might pose a threat to the proclaimed identity of the zoo as a caretaker of biodiversity. Either way, however, the question is whether the hitherto established conceptions of experience economy can accommodate this need for a new normative experience economy? To answer this question, a discussion in two steps will be needed. First, it will be asked whether the kind of human being presupposed in the 'past' experience economy can accommodate the new kind of human being which is a potential customer in the Bioplanet project? Second, it will be asked whether the economy presented in the 'past' experience economy is suitable for the kind of sustainable economy the Bioplanet project pictures itself as part of?

Now, recall the dominant traits of the human being within the experience economy described above. It is conceived as an atomistic being, living in a hedonic society, wanting experiences as a way of either expressing its autonomy, understood as a freedom of doing what one wants, or reaching the optimal state in the arousal paradigm. The primary sense of experience is *Erlebnisse*, joyous experiences, with *Erfahrungs* serving as either the instrumental skills for achieving these *Erlebnisse*, or as preferences. First of all, remember that in Schulze's description of *Erlebnis*-society, the segregation of different communities has occurred to such a degree that no perspective could possibly unite them (not to be confused with rectifying them). Hence, saying 'we' across the different communities is just not possible anymore. Now, as a description of society and the inhabitants of this society, this is not matching the kind of description the zoo seems to presuppose. Appealing to personal commitment in preserving nature, and sustainable production and consumption seems to presuppose a community of human beings with goals, interests and capacities far more complex than the craving for *Erlebnisse*. It is claimed, furthermore, that the

commitment is supposed to be part of a worldwide effort, responding to a natural condition affecting all, namely the reducing of biodiversity. The diversity of people's possible commitments are reckoned with, thereby accepting the different kinds of constraining factors of people through their embeddedness, and the particularity of their responses based on their distinct capabilities (consider the difference between biodiversity conservation efforts in a high school and a nursing home, for example). Customers are not just guests in the zoo anymore; they are participants helping to carry out the vision of preserving biodiversity. Possible costumers, then, range from participants actually visiting the zoo to participants collaborating in realising the vision due to a number of reasons but without necessarily visiting the zoo regularly (or, taking the worldwide effort seriously, not visiting the zoo at all). Common to the range of consumers, though, are an understanding of human beings, when committing to the preservation of biodiversity, as including a sense of being responsible as well. But it is a responsibility dependent on their particular capability for understanding and doing. This presents another picture of experience, or another accentuation of experience, than the one used by 'regular' experience economy. It is more akin to the *Erfahrung* dimension connected with a sense of caring, viz. acting towards entities (including familiar and unfamiliar others) in such a way that their being *qua* being is responded to in a responsible fashion (they are allowed to return the gaze, as Benjamin says). It allows, therefore, an understanding of multiple ways of responding, and for a number of reasons, due to the complex and multifarious relations between individuals, people and the surrounding world. To sum up, then, Bioplanet appeals to human beings supposed to realise the vision of preserving the biodiversity of the world, as embedded in various relationships involving both social and natural dimensions, but not necessarily relating to the actual geographical located zoo. Furthermore, these human beings are comprised of many different interests, and capabilities for pursuing these interests in accordance with a reasoned doing and thinking about a life consisting of the values they appreciate. The vision of preserving the biodiversity, then, is one of the values people have, and the goal for the Bioplanet project is, of course, to convince people that this particular value should be primary by appealing both to people's sense of a reasoned scrutiny and a sensible engagement. Put simply, there is a seriousness connected with the whole of human beings, not detectable in a characterisation of human beings as determined by arousals, or just doing what one wants.

Now, let us turn to the second question of the adequacy of the experience *economy* for Bioplanet as a socio-economical project. Emphasis is made within the description of the Bioplanet project of creating sustainable production systems using biodiversity both within the Zoo's own rewilding park and in projects involving a network of NGO's, companies, local municipalities and research institutions as described in Bioplanet Business. This reintroduces values as a significant part of different markets for production and sales, and appeals to entrepreneurship as well. The idea is, we could say, to create the space for seizing the opportunities existing in the regional vicinity. One example of this is the recent collaboration between Overgaard Estate, Randers Rainforest and the municipality of Randers, using what was thought to be extinct

old Danish dairy cattle, and an old Danish barley in developing new exclusive products²⁷. Establishing an active partnership with Overgaard Estate, Bioplanet Business thereby seized an opportunity of preserving the old Danish dairy cattle and perhaps selling local brewed beer, within Bioplanet world, in the long term. Now, collaborations like this is, of course, still business, but the values sought implemented, nature conservation and not exploitation, and the possible collaboration between different industries are not, *per se*, reducible to a regular market approach. It contains, at least, some challenges regarding the putative evaluation of nature in terms of conservation vis-à-vis monetary value, and of modelling how different industrial sectors can work together within a value frame such as the one proposed by Bioplanet. Hence, like the embedding of the human being in different contexts, a perspective embedding the Zoo within a broader societal frame seems to be needed to create the necessary network for realising the vision of preserving biodiversity. This, furthermore, broadens the concept of sustainability from a pure nature-based to involving social sustainability as well, viz. to support the possibility of a healthy and liveable community now and to come.

To sum up, it seems problematic to understand the frame of the ‘regular’ experience economy in connection with the Bioplanet project. First, the conception of the human being contained in the regular experience economy is too simple to be a match for the complexity of implications of the Bioplanet vision. Second, the increasing connections with public institutions and companies from other industrial sectors, necessitates some models for economical acting incorporating entrepreneurial and innovative elements, not supplied by the simple market based model in regular experience economy. The experience economy in its present guise seems both too simple and nebulous to deal with the complexities in a project like Bioplanet.

2. Methodological Considerations: Triangulation

In the last section (1.2.3) four desiderata were described all of which were necessary, it was claimed, for a minimal description of how to connect experience and economy. Together, these four desiderata constitute the integrated whole for understanding the experience economical human being. Now, different investigative perspectives, the capability approach, positioning theory, and a participant-observant perspective are taken up within this dissertation as ways of exploring the actual and possible connections between experience and economy. Overall, this places the investigation within what is termed, by Denzin (1970), as approaches of triangulation. Denzin defines triangulation as “...the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon.” (cited after Jick (1979, 602) Used as a term for employing plural methods the basic principle is, simply, that more viewpoints allow for greater accuracy in describing and explaining the object(s) scrutinised. Hence, in the study conducted here, triangulation denotes the adoption of more than one perspective with the purpose of exploring and understanding the space opened up

²⁷ See <http://www.randers.dk/News.aspx?id=129250>

by connecting experience and economy through accommodating the four desiderata. We have already dealt with the relevant aspects of participant-observation in the section on engaged scholarship. Hence, we will here address the more theoretical side of understanding capability approach and positioning theory as part of triangulation.

According to *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (online), triangulation is a technique used within in navigation, surveying, and civil engineering, for the precise determination of a ship or aircraft's position, or the precise direction of roads, tunnels, or other structures under construction. It is based on the laws of plane trigonometry, which state that if one side and two angles of a triangle are known, the other two sides and angle can be readily calculated. In trigonometry, we should note, an inferential dependency within the triangulation process is present, i.e. when knowing the angles and one side *then* we can know the other part of the triangle. The philosophical concept of triangulation, which will be the object of scrutiny below, departs from this geometrical kind, since it is, as Malpas (2011b, 270) claims, not about calculating. However, common to both kinds of triangulation, we might say, is a certain dependency on already knowing something to be the case. In the geometrical case, this knowledge takes the form of knowing how to handle different instruments, like the numerical system, for measuring and calculating. In the case of a pluralism of methods, this kind of knowledge amounts to the knowledge of the different methods, the ontology they address and how these are practised, but not necessarily any knowledge about how these different methods or their respective ontologies are connectable. Hence, it is relevant to ask what must already be the case, if anything, when combining different methods? What must, by necessity, already be established, for the combination of different methodologies to make sense? In case of discrepancies between different methodologies, how do we rank these, then, and by what criteria? Questions like these makes inquiring about this kind of dependency fundamental, since it invites us, or even compels us, to address the ontology, or ontologies, presupposed by different kinds of methods. But how are we to address this further?

We will address this in two steps. First, we will use Donald Davidson's later thinking about triangulation as a model for laying out an ontological basic structure capable of uniting the different methodological perspectives used here. The reason Davidson is chosen is, first, that his description of triangulation is framed as an ontological discussion, hence suitable for addressing the questions asked above. Furthermore, Davidson's position is not tied to a specific scientific tradition like positioning theory and the capability approach are. Second, the methodological perspectives used within this dissertation will be described, as sharing the same ontological presuppositions as Davidson's notion of triangulation. This description, however, will be on a general level only, since the details will come out in the articles to follow. The notion of triangulation as described by Davidson can, therefore, serve as the link tying the different methodological perspectives together, for addressing the four desiderata.

2.1 Triangulation: the setting

Offhand, a number of problems can be identified in a methodological pluralism, not least the combination and ranking of qualitative and quantitative methods (Denzin 2012). This particular problem will be bypassed here, since no quantitative method has been used. Nevertheless, investigating the ontological presuppositions could potentially illuminate and perhaps even solve this problem, it should be noted. However, within the frame of a qualitative methodology the combination of different (qualitative) methods, or research perspectives, might not be a frictionless endeavour either. One strategy for coping with this, and, not surprisingly the one used here, attempts to establish a common “ground” across the different perspectives; common enough for these research perspectives to be connected, but without losing their respective characters. Or, inspired by Davidson (1997, 129) we could claim that the aim is not so much the creation of a consensus but the opening up of a common space allowing for the differences of these perspectives, and their meaningful application alongside each other. In what follows, I will try to sketch this common space by interpreting Donald Davidson’s idea of triangulation in such a way that it, through its ontology, makes the capability approach and positioning theory connectable. I will be following a now well-established interpretative tradition (recent authors include Malpas 2011, 2011a, 2013; Braver, 2006, 2011; Nulty 2006 among others) understanding Davidson as implicitly rejecting, or bypassing, a continental-analytical divide (in philosophy), by underscoring the similarity to notable hermeneuticians like Gadamer and Heidegger. It should be noted that direct students of Heidegger and Gadamer like Wellmer (2004) and Tugendhat (1976) have noticed this as well.

Furthermore, as part of the tradition of interpreting Davidson’s concept of triangulation, a number of authors try to compare Davidson’s conception of triangulation with Heidegger’s thinking, and evaluate which notion of triangulation is superior (Okrent 1990; Braver 2006), or less competitive, what strengths and weaknesses the conceptual contrasts and similarities obtaining between these two thinkers show (see Nulty 2006, 443 for a summary of what he terms the standard interpretation). By itself, this would require a book-length study and will, therefore, not be attempted here. But the reason it is mentioned is that Heidegger’s understanding of human being plays a significant, though sometimes indirect, part in both the descriptions above and in the articles below. Therefore it will be assumed that whatever obstacles or differences exist within the complex conceptual relationship between Davidson and Heidegger, these are not insurmountable for a closer scrutiny and interpretation, and will, therefore, be left for another time and place (unless stated otherwise).

Before moving on, a couple of general points regarding Davidson’s thinking is in place. These will serve as clues for understanding what is involved and at stake in the notion of triangulation. First, as claimed above, emphasis is here laid on the later Davidson, and by later Davidson is meant the increasing focus on the notion of triangulation developed by Davidson from app. 1982 (Davidson 1982) and onwards. Continuity is present between early and late Davidson in

the sense that the overall question, ‘what does it take to understand each other?’ is central in both periods, but the answer becomes increasingly more complex in the later writings. This complexity, which culminates in the different formulations of triangulation, can be described as a development from his early thinking about radical interpretation, which is a development of Quine’s idea of radical translation. It is, we could say, a movement gradually proceeding from a focus on working out the idea of a theory of meaning towards a broader ontological basis for answering the question of the possibility of our mutual understanding. This development has been documented in detail by Ramberg (1989) and Malpas (2013), and will not be rehearsed here. However, two presuppositions for understanding the concept of triangulation are important.

The first of these is holism, i.e. the idea that concepts and beliefs, as Davidson (1997, 124) claims, do not come one at a time, rather they come in packages. What identifies a belief, or a concept, from other beliefs and concepts, is the relation to these other beliefs and concepts. The reason is simple; take, for example, the belief that I am seeing a dog chasing a cat up an oak tree. Does it make sense here to say that I am having one separate belief, a tree, which I then connect to two other separate beliefs, a cat and a dog chasing it? Not really, according to Davidson, to know either of these beliefs I must know a whole bunch of other beliefs and concepts, and how these are connected and different from each other. Furthermore, most of these beliefs and concepts must be true, as well. For example, I must know both what the act of seeing is, and that cats and dogs are animals with legs. I must know that trees don’t have legs but leaves, which fall off after turning in the autumn. I must know that one can fall off a tree and hurt oneself, if one intends to climb in it. Now, as Davidson (1982, 98) claims “There is no fixed list of things someone with the concept of tree must believe, but without many general beliefs, there would be no reason to identify a belief as a belief about a tree, much less an oak tree.” As can be imagined, with a little goodwill, one consequence is that just as there are no beliefs without many beliefs, so there is no beliefs without desires (for example, after this particular apple in this tree) and vice versa, and no intentions (of getting the apple) without beliefs and desires as well (Davidson 1997, 126). Entertaining a belief, or a desire, then, is adopting what is called a propositional attitude, i.e. it contains a belief, or desire, *that* (there is a tree with an apple there, for example), and these attitudes are related inferentially to each other like beliefs. “We act intentionally for reasons, and our reasons always include both values and beliefs.” (Davidson 1997, 125) Two more points are important regarding this holism. First, to identify a given belief, i.e. to know the propositional content in a sentence following the *that* clause one needs concepts. This is what separates humans from other animals according to Davidson, since other animals do not form judgements like we do, because they have no concepts. They can discriminate between things and other animals within the environment, but this is not tantamount to having a concept of the thing, or animal, told apart. To have a concept we need to be able to make sense of the idea of “...*misapplying* the concept...” (Davidson 1997, 124), of believing, or judging of something, which we afterwards then realise is mistaken – like in the cheese example above. Having concepts makes room for mistakes and failures in a sense, which animals cannot

realise, i.e. a dog can tell a cat apart from a mouse, but it cannot understand the cat as a cat, or the mouse as a mouse. Second, when beliefs come in packages they tend to support and give each other content. “As a result, unless one’s beliefs are roughly consistent with each other, there is no identifying the contents of beliefs. A degree of rationality or consistency is therefore a condition for having beliefs.” (Davidson 1997, 124) The point here is not that everybody are perfect rational beings. Being committed to two incompatible beliefs is perfectly consistent, what is inconsistent is claiming that one is entitled to both. And even this inconsistency is possible only within “...the space of reasons; inconsistencies are perturbations of rationality, not mere absence of rationality.” (Davidson 1997, 125) Furthermore, in understanding each other by ascribing beliefs, concepts and propositional attitudes, a degree of consistency is presupposed as well. I see a man at the top of the stairs; I ascribe to him the intention of walking down these stairs. I believe he descends in a normally fashion, forward-looking using one foot at a time, and not by walking backwards. If the man were drunk, I would probably ascribe to him the same intention, but most likely believe he would descend with less consistency. For Davidson this corresponds to one of the parts implied by the principle of charity, namely the principle of coherence, which “...prompts the interpreter to discover a degree of logical consistency in the thought of the speaker.” (Davidson 1991, 211) Just like it is impossible to have one belief without a host of other beliefs, it is a condition for our understanding of each other that we attribute a consistent structure of mostly true beliefs and concepts to each other. Now, this is not a matter of sharing of a worldview, or being in fundamental agreement with each other from the outset. On the contrary, it is to be understood as being part of coming to an understanding; we are not *in* an agreement but are working towards it, and charity is its possibility. As Malpas (2011a, 262) claims, charity “...provides an initial specification of beliefs that is intended to enable the interpretive process rather than complete it.” This, of course, also applies to the second part of the principle of charity, the principle of correspondence, which “...prompts the interpreter to take the speaker to be responding to the same features of the world that he (the interpreter) would be responding to under similar circumstances.” (Davidson 1991, 211) That is, something *external* to the interpreter and the speaker somehow connects their responses within similar circumstances, which brings us to the next presupposition besides holism, namely externalism.

Externalism can overall be described as the conditioning of beliefs, desires and other propositional attitudes, by the physical and social contexts in which individuals having these propositional attitudes are embedded. For Davidson, externalism is the only alternative to empiricism, when empiricism construes our relation to the world by positing epistemic intermediaries, like sense data, sense impressions, ideas or feelings, between the mind and the world. The point is not whether these ‘things’ exist, but whether they are taken as basic in our relation to the world, i.e. as the screen through which the ‘news’ of the world is projected. If they are basic, then a subjectivism seems to be the result, since we never really know what is behind the

materials supplied by these epistemic intermediaries within our consciousness²⁸. Externalism, as the solution not to end up in a subjectivism bordering on not being able to explain our relation to the world in a meaningful objective way, is “...a view that makes the connection between thought and world intrinsic rather than extrinsic – a connection not inferred, constructed, or discovered, but rather there from the start.” (Davidson 2001a, 2)²⁹ This, we might note, is very similar to Haugeland’s point above, that we need to consider the relations to the world as consisting of a pregiven integrated whole, working as a condition for our speaking of either of these relations independently. Now, Davidson considers externalism in several places, for example Davidson (1990; 2001a), and often by pointing to the subtle differences between him and some of his close externalist allies. In Davidson (2001a, 2) he presents his view on externalism by discussing the flaws of two varieties, “...*social externalism*, which maintains that the contents of our thoughts depend, in one way or another, on interaction with other thinkers; and *perceptual externalism*, which holds that there is a necessary connection between the contents of certain thoughts and the features of the world that make them true.” The problem with both forms of externalism, according to Davidson, is, that they cannot account, in a meaningful way, for the objectivity of our beliefs. Our beliefs, thought and attitudes are objective, not in “...being unprejudiced and formed in the light of all the evidence, but in the sense that they are true and false, and that, with a few exceptions, their truth depends on matters independent of us.” (Davidson 2001a, 1) It is an objective question whether my wanting that apple is fulfilled or not, or whether our wishes are accommodated, or our anticipations met. The two forms of externalism are not capable of conceiving objectivity as depending upon something transgressing our beliefs, attitudes or thoughts. Our believing something, and the possibility of this belief being incorrect is what, in the end, provide our beliefs with their objectivity. Now, according to the social externalism Davidson discusses, the truth of a spoken sentence depends upon the same sentence possibly being uttered

²⁸ In Davidson (2001, xvi) this is qualified further, when he claims that his judging of epistemic intermediaries as a mistake didn’t indicate, “...repudiating all serious commerce between world and mind. In truth my thesis...is that the connection is causal and, in the case of perception, direct.” These epistemic intermediaries, then, play a role but not as supplying evidence for any putative belief. What role might these play then? Well, probably as that by which we know, explore or believe that something is the case. I know by looking, or feeling, that it is snowing, but it is the snowing it self, which induces me to believe it is actually snowing. So, they might be facilitators more than intermediaries. Direct perception, as claimed in the quote, would here be close to Gibson’s ecological approach to perception.

²⁹ Here a description of a possible connection to Heidegger could take its departure, since Heidegger stresses our intentionality, i.e. our comportments towards the world, as occurring meaningfully only on the background of our already being in the world, i.e. the relation are there from the start as Davidson claims. Now, thought through, our relation towards the world, as instantiations of already being in the world, actually makes the distinction between externalism and internalism superfluous, bordering on nonsensical, except in a derivative manner. These terms cannot be defined as standing in opposition to each other anymore, but denotes precipitative aspects of being in the world. I suspect, but will not press the point further here, that some of the confusions regarding Davidson’s concept of triangulation which has been noted (see especialt work by Peter Pagin and Kathrine Glüer-Pagin), is a result of not embracing this point, thereby seeing externalism as excluding all kinds of internalism which is clearly not the case by Davidson. I take it that Davidson’s anomalous monism substantiates this, when interpreted as Malpas (2013, 71ff) does, combining an ontological monism (our already being related to the world) with a descriptive pluralism (certain aspects of this monism can be disclosed by emphasising externalist or internalist descriptions).

by other speakers in situations similar to the situation where the sentence was uttered originally. Hence, the correctness of the sentence is here determined by the speaker's social affiliation, or in Davidson's words "...correctness is defined as going with the crowd." (Davidson 2001a, 3) Objectivity, or correctness, is here defined solely by intersubjectivity. But, Davidson asks, the fact that two or more people do the same thing, is that enough for allowing the objectivity, the correctness, or incorrectness, of an uttered sentence? Not so, because just adopting social, or common, standards, or norms, for correct behaviour, such social conditions cannot, by *themselves*, establish any incorrectness, other than some people perhaps not liking what I do, when what I do deviates from what they are doing. What social conditions do establish, when thought of as establishing norms by themselves, is a kind of conformity, which is obviously not to be confused with objectivity. Thus, "...divergence, even when combined with sanctions to encourage conformity, does not introduce the sort of norm needed to explain meaning or conceptualization." (Davidson 2001a, 4), i.e. explain the objectivity of our beliefs, attitudes or thoughts when expressed. Nevertheless, the social context is necessary, but not sufficient, for explaining objectivity, since it is by engaging with others, through upbringing at first and conversation later, that the possibility of a difference in understanding the same thing is disclosed. So, even though social conditions cannot explain objectivity, or the possibility of error, they "...*make space* for something that can be called error: room for error is created by cases in which one individual deviates from a course of action when the crowd does not." (Davidson 2001a, 5)

Perceptual externalism holds the promise of supplying the one element missing in the social externalist account, namely, how content can be assigned to our beliefs, and thereby how thought and language are connected, truthfully, to the world. Davidson discusses this in terms of how perceptual beliefs are established by being connected causally to the world. Now, recall that epistemic intermediaries must be bypassed, hence, my perceptual belief of seeing *that* red apple in the tree, consist somehow in a causal connection between me and the environment in which the tree and apple are placed, and my reacting to the apple as a stimulus by reaching for it, or pointing at it, for example. To put it another way, when we have a perceptual belief, and this belief amounts to knowledge, the content of this belief must somehow be determined by the cause of this belief. Think about it in terms of learning a language. The child's uttering of 'mama' must, to be correct, be determined by what in the world causes this child to believe that its mother is present. If the mother is not present, or the child utters the word in company of some other human being, the child is carefully corrected, usually by ostension, i.e. by pointing towards the mother of the child, saying 'look, there is your mother'. Hence, simple relations like this "...between two people in the presence of stimuli from a shared world contain the kernel of ostensive learning, and it is only in the context of such interactions that we come to grasp the propositional contents of beliefs, desires, intentions, and speech." (Davidson 1998, 86) Thus, as Davidson says, in an almost poetic sentence, the possibility of thought comes with company, that is, the company of fellow human beings and the world. For mature language users, things are, of course, different than for a child learning a

language for the first time, since they know that a difference between what is believed and what is the case exist. Ostension works much easier here, since the language users know the drill due to shared habits of generalisation, of classifying things the same way. When my wife asks me where her glasses are, I point to the table, or shrug my shoulders, thereby conveying different kinds of contents, like desires, of wanting to help, or intentions, of ignoring because it is the fifth time she asks.

Now, claiming that the world somehow conditions our beliefs through the cause of the belief presents us with two possible problems, or challenges. First, what in the causal nexus is actually the decisive factor? Our common sense might say the usual, or normal, cause. But this is not very helpful in figuring out whether it is a distal, or proximal stimuli, we are referring to. Is it the stimulation of nerve endings, a vibration created by the molecules in the air, or perhaps some third thing, which is meant by normal? In other words, the content of the perceptual beliefs stays un-determined, because the causal relation, by itself, cannot disclose the specific objects or features of the world constituting this content. Second, if we cannot be sure what the actual cause of our beliefs is, then how are we to know whether we are making a mistake? Davidson (2001a, 4) puts it this way:

“Fake cows are in one way relevantly similar to real cows – that’s why we make mistakes. But in another way, fake cows aren’t at all like cows – they don’t fall under the concept cow. It is because we occasionally mistake fakes for the real thing that we can be said to have concepts, to classify things, and so sometimes classify them wrong . . . What is difficult is to explain what is going on when someone *thinks* a fake cow is a cow, for that requires having the *concept* of a cow“

The causal relation to cows cannot, by itself, determine which cows are fakes and which cows are real, we need concepts to do that. Furthermore, as claimed above, our common behaviour in applying the concept of cow in similar circumstances, is also not enough to explain the possibility of why we error, i.e. mistakenly thinks the fake cow is a real cow. “What must be added in order to give an account of error is something that can count as recognition or awareness, on the part of those who share reactions, of each other’s reactions.” (Davidson 2001a, 5) Here, the notion of triangulation enters, because what facilitates this recognition is the possibility of triangulating each other’s responses with stimuli of a shared world, and finding these responses similar. In our classifying things, or applying concepts, we correlate our responses to the world, “...we group together the causes of someone’s responses, verbal or otherwise, because we find the responses similar.” (Davidson 1990, 202) The relevance of these similarities, then, comes from the simple fact that it is us who hold these for relevant, because otherwise “...we would have no reason to claim that others were responding to the same objects and events (i.e. causes) that we are.” (Davidson 1990, 202) So, the objectivity, or truth-aptness, of our beliefs, has, as a necessary condition, this

triangular arrangement. Coming to an understanding, then, is figuring out, by triangulation, what serves as content providers to our beliefs. According to Davidson it is difficult to imagine what could make these necessary conditions sufficient as well, and, furthermore, he warns us, since “It is hard to think what would satisfy us which did not amount to a reduction of the intentional to the extensional, and this, in my mind is not to be expected. What further progress we can make will be in the direction of theory building within the realm of the rational, not reduction of this to something else.” (Davidson 2001a, 13)

Any putative theory building on Davidson’s notion of triangulation would have to accept this non-reductionism, and, furthermore, develop what other necessary traits of triangulation that might exist. Davidson himself, points to one important non-reductive trait, which must be present in triangulation as well, language. Our ability to communicate with each other is a necessity, because unless creatures can “...engage in the exchange of propositional contents, there is no way they can take cognitive advantage of their ability to triangulate their shared world.” (Davidson 2001a, 13)² In the section after the next, two different but related perspectives will be described, both of them are based, it will be claimed, on a triangulatory ontology. These perspectives are not appendices to Davidson but develop and emphasise, in their own non-reductive manner, aspects of triangulation. The first describes the complexity involved in the coordination between creatures *positioned* at the intersections between relations to each other and the world. The second describes how the dynamic process between the participants involved in triangulation, is a question of understanding the capability of these participants for positioning themselves, i.e. realising a being and doing, in what they take to be a valuable and reasonable way.

2.2 Triangulatory Ontology

Now, above was presented the two conditions for understanding Davidson’s concept of triangulation. We can recapitulate these two conditions by thinking about the relationship between batter, pitcher and catcher in a play in baseball. Each person holds a number of interconnected beliefs, thoughts and intentions. The batter looks at the pitcher and tries to figure out where he will throw the ball. At the same time he knows on what bases his teammates are placed, and in what formation the opponents are placed in the field, so he calculates the different risks according to the different pitches and hits, which could occur. Obviously, any belief the batter may have in this particular situation is connected to a whole bunch of other beliefs, thoughts and intentions, some more implicit than explicit. Hitting a baseball, then, is a holistic endeavour. The same holistic

² Now, this seems to install a circularity in that triangulation and language seems to presuppose each other, since triangulation is necessary for language to work, and language somehow seems to be needed for triangulation to make sense. But not so, according to Davidson, the key to bypass this conundrum lies in the notion of language learning (Davidson 2001a, 14-15), and acceptance that evolution is part of it as well (Davidson 1990, 202). Evolution understood in the non-reductive sense that we, human beings, are constructed in such a way that our responses and classification of things also depends, necessarily not sufficiently, on our natural make-up. Language and our specific natural ways of being human, then, are two necessary aspects in connecting the ontological monism with descriptive pluralism, we might say.

condition applies to the batter, knowing which intentions and beliefs are conveyed through the particular gesticulations used for communicating the pitching strategy. Furthermore, the batter correlates their responses to each other by responding to the same stimuli, the batter. The batter is the central external cause of what beliefs and intentions they entertain in this particular situation. The meaning of the pitch, why the pitcher throws this particular curve ball, is not something made within the pitcher's mind, it is the result of the interaction between pitcher and catcher both responding to the batter. The meaning of baseball, then, just isn't in(ternal to) the heads of the players.

This illustrates very well, what Davidson (2001a, 5) terms a basic situation of triangulation, involving "...a minimum of three elements: two creatures and a world of objects, properties and events the creatures can discriminate in perception." The triangulation, then, denotes how these elements interact in a dynamical fashion, thereby constituting shifting relations between the creatures, and the world. Now, Davidson uses triangulation to emphasise different specific points, for example to illustrate learning situations (Davidson 1998, 88-89), or as arguing against the possibility of a private language (Davidson 1992, 115-117). Nevertheless, some general points can be made across these different uses. First of all, the creatures involved in a triangulation occupy the different shifting places, where the different relations intersect. "It is the result of a threefold interaction, an interaction which is twofold from the point of view of each of the two agents: each is interacting simultaneously with the world and the other agent...each creature learns to correlate the reactions of other creatures with changes or objects in the world to which it reacts." (Davidson 1997, 128) The pitcher is related to the catcher, this relation creates a social basis for understanding each other's responses and communication about what to do. The catcher and the pitcher are, furthermore, in their relation to each other, also related to the batter, as the "object" in the world. The identification of their respective beliefs is a result, then, of these two interacting with each other and the common environment, which has their immediate attention. So, the pitcher is related to the catcher, and the catcher is related to the pitcher, and both are related to the "world", and this dynamic process constitutes the possibility of the truth, or objectivity, of their beliefs and intentions, i.e. whether their particular plan succeeds. The possibility of error, then, "...is the occasional failure of the expectation; the reactions do not correlate." (Davidson 1997, 129) Here the difference between holding a belief, thought, or intention and what is the case is manifested, and the possible space for correcting the error also. To reiterate, the consensus between the pitcher and the catcher, their correlation of their understandings of their respective relations to the world, do not determine the outcome of their endeavour (the truth of their beliefs). But it creates the space for the desired outcome to possibly happen (for truth to be applied to the endeavour). Within this process, of course, there is another relation present as well, which is each creature's relation to it self. Each creature is, in the relation to the world and each other, also in a personal state, "But what individuates that state at the same time makes it accessible to others, for the state is individuated by causal interplay among three elements: the thinker, others with whom

he communicates, and an objective they know they share.” (Davidson 1990, 204) I know you are you, not from considering you in isolation from everything, but by experiencing you through reacting to the world and me. So, basically, the monism mentioned above has a triangulatory nature consisting, ontologically, of the interplay between three elements: subjectivity, intersubjectivity and objectivity, or the personal, the social and the world (as more than the two first put together). These three elements, we might say, are ontological basic phenomena to use Cassirer’s (1998) phrase³⁰.

Second, as already stated Davidson argues against reduction of any of these three elements to one of the others. This is, we might say, a natural development of holism. When beliefs are constituted by their relations to other beliefs, then neither of these beliefs can be separated from the interconnections in which they arise. Each belief is irreducible to the others without losing its particularity. The same interconnectedness applies to the three kinds of knowledge connected with the basic phenomena: knowledge of my self, knowledge of the world and knowledge of other people. This interconnectedness, however, is considered especially strong since without one of the three kinds of knowledge, the others wouldn’t be what they are. Davidson (1991, 220) uses the picture of the three kinds of knowledge forming a tripod, where all of the legs are needed for the tripod to be able to stand. Furthermore, “...all three varieties of knowledge are concerned with aspects of the same reality; where they differ is in the mode of access to reality.” (Davidson 1991, 205) In the case of a learning situation, all the three kinds of knowledge are, of course, not present. The child begins to understand the world, its parents and its sense of self, by gradually learning words and concepts through ostension. It thereby learns to express wishes and rejections and forming a self, but as precipitating from situations involving the teachers of language, and their responses to important objects within the world³¹. As Davidson (1998, 87) claims having one of these kinds of knowledge the other two must be had as well, “...since the basic triangle is a condition of thought, but none [of the three kinds of knowledge] is conceptually or temporally prior to the others.” Recall that the basic situation is “...one that involves two or more creatures simultaneously in interaction with each other and with the world they share...” (Davidson 1997, 128) In a learning situation, of course, the knowledge of others and the world as expressed in language, is both conceptually and temporarily prior, otherwise the teacher would have nothing to teach and no language to teach in. What Davidson had in mind, was probably that for a competent language user, each of these kinds of knowledge presupposes the others as well. Hence, knowing

³⁰ It would be interesting for a future investigation, to look into the different kinds of triangulations Cassirer puts forth by interpreting Goethe. Some of these models might be useful for understanding different spheres of triangulation. For example, the aesthetic sphere, with music perhaps characterisable as I – action – work, but from each of the musician’s point of view. The work here, i.e. the song played, is the objective sphere since it has been released from the musicians playing, as Cassirer terms it. It has, so to speak, been put forth for others, the audience to interpret, and has, as independent piece of work, become in-determinate, since it now consists of a surplus of meaning. Concerning Davidson, Cassirer would probably describe this triangulation as I – You – It, as denoting the minimal relation between two creatures and the world.

³¹ Hobson (2002) consists of an experimental study of language acquisition substantiating some of Davidsons ideas regarding this.

the world presupposes knowledge of other people in the sense of being able to correlate their responses towards the world with ones own. “Without this sharing of reactions to common stimuli, thought and speech would have no particular content – that is, no content at all. It takes two points of view to give a location to the cause of thought, and thus to define its content” (Davidson (1991, 212-213) Furthermore, without other people, then, no possibility of telling the difference between what I believe, and what is the case, could exist. To correlate the responses, I must, necessarily, also know how to distinguish my response from your response, especially if I want to understand whether both our responses are towards the same object in the world. So, my response is also individuated, perhaps through the words I use which nobody else use. Our thoughts are, as Davidson (1991, 218) claims, subjective, “...in that we know what they are in a way no one else can. But though possession of a thought is necessarily individual, its content is not.” Being subjective is not tantamount to being arbitrary, because even though my judgements are clearly mine, they are formed in a social nexus, which establishes the correctness of the content of these judgements. “Intersubjectivity is the root of objectivity, not because what people agree on is necessarily true, but because intersubjectivity depends on interaction with the world.” (Davidson 1998, 91) So, for Davidson, none of the three kinds of knowledge is reducible to one, or two, of the others. Instead, to understand one of kind of knowledge, its particularity, we need to understand how it is dependent upon the other two kinds of knowledge as well.

With Davidson, then, we can claim that studying one part within the triangulatory ontology, like different research perspectives do, is not a problem as long as these research perspectives recognise, first, that knowledge of the other parts are not only presupposed but necessary in their own endeavour (for example, one needs language and trust in first person reporting to check whether some brain-scans actually show what they are supposed to show), second, the non-reducible character of knowledge of each of these parts³². We will now turn to the two perspectives used within this dissertation. Both claim the non-reducible character of different kinds of knowledge, and claim that objectivity, subjectivity and intersubjectivity are related.

2.3 Investigating in a triangulatory manner

Each of the two perspectives used here, are, to a large extent, congruent with the overall picture of triangulation in Davidson’s version. Both concentrate, due to their research interest and focus, on

³² Much more could be said, generally, about the relation between triangulation and scientific methodology. First, with an ontological argument like Davidson’s, the different kinds of methods might be dependent upon each other more thoroughly than usually conceived, because it supplies different methods with an explanation of *why* knowledge of the other aspects are implicitly presupposed: they are needed to make sense of this particular knowledge. Second, every scientific endeavour is, in some sense, a continuation of how triangulation is presupposed and used in our everyday life. But it is a very refined and rigorous continuation, with very demanding requirements for the correlation between peers and the object of study when establishing the possible value of a result, or truth of a claim. If Davidson is correct, both positivism with its separation of facts from values trying to secure the objectivity and truth of its claims by erasing (inter-)subjective traits, and forms of social constructivism, claiming for example that scientific practice constructs the truth of it all, are throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

one of the legs in the tripod, but without denigrating the others. Hence, positioning theory focus primarily on the social dimension but without claiming that knowledge of the world, or persons, can be reduced to this social dimension. The capability approach, on the other hand, takes as its point of departure the choices made and freedom manifested by individuals, but claiming the social and natural contexts as necessary conditions for this to happen. Both, then, describes some of the more complex issues within the triangulatory tripod, like the intentional and unintentional positioning of one self and others, and therefore possibilities of triangulation between people, in a manner which Davidson never addressed. Hence, the two perspectives help opening a more broad but complex space where the connection between experience and economy can be understood through accommodating the four desiderata. Here the perspectives will be described on a general level, to show their triangulatory basis and, hence, their capability to incorporate the desideratas. The more specific details of the two perspectives will be addressed within the articles to follow.

Positioning theory

Speaking about knowledge of other minds, Davidson (1991, 213) claims this is possible only, "...if one has knowledge of the world, for the triangulation which is essential to thought requires that those in communication recognize that they occupy positions in a shared world." The positioning theory propounded by Rom Harré and others (classics are Harré and Langehove 1998; Harré and Moghaddam 2003) revolves around understanding the complexity concerning how different positions are established and recognised within a shared world. No references are made to Davidson, though; instead the theory is a development from within the traditions of social psychology and discursive psychology. We will leave the overall development within the discipline of psychology here, and instead focus upon the presuppositions within Harré's development of positioning theory. This will clarify the sense of being positioned, or embedded, within a shared world consisting of normative and causal orders, and how this is individuated as well.

As Bhaskar (1990a, 1) claims two significant strands in Harré's thought are made up by, first, his investigations into the realism of natural science, specifically physics and chemistry, and, second, "...explicating the philosophical foundations and presuppositions of (social) psychology..." Harré himself conceives these strands as part of exploring the human *umwelt*, as his commentary to the articles within Bhaskar (1990) so aptly is called. As intersubjectivity described by Davidson above, depends on interacting with the world for manifesting some sort of objectivity, so Harré conceives of the relation between *umwelt*, i.e. the world made available to us by our perceptual, cognitive and manipulative capacities, and *welt* (world) as basically fulfilling the same function. The world "...is a totality of unknown extent in content, from which diverse *Umwelten* are appropriated by various species of animals and plants—and people." (Harré 2012, 26) As Davidson, Harré claims that no epistemic intermediaries are necessary for understanding our actual human experience, i.e. the perceptual and causal relation to the world, instead we must accept "...a residue

of common experience as genuine disclosures of the natural world.” (Harré 1986, 146) Harré (1986, 156ff) substantiates this idea of a common experience by referring to J. J. Gibson’s theory of ecological perception. Davidson himself does not refer to Gibson anywhere in his writings, but he could have used Gibson’s idea of perceptions as active explorations and not passive receptions of the surrounding world. Active explorations denote the sense of perceiving things in terms of what they afford to us by way of being possibilities for action. Seeing that there with an apple affords me the possibility of various ways of exercising my ability of getting the apple, just like a pavement affords me a way of exercising my ability to move. We will not dive into Gibson’s theory here (see Nöe 2004 for a recent discussion), but only use an example described by Harré (1986, 158), an experiment Gibson made, emphasising the active character of perception as a causal relation between human beings and the world: “An immobilised hand on to which variously shaped cookie cutters are pressed is unable to feel their distinctive shapes. But if a person is allowed actively to explore the surface of the cutters with the same palm of the hand the shapes of the cutters are easily distinguished.” Implied here is that the active exploration enhances our discriminatory capabilities and possibilities of acting.

Now, Harré has developed his description of the different *umwelten* pertaining to humans, throughout the years. My conjecture is, that a line of development can be described proceeding from the early expounding of the ethogenic view on humans (Harré and Secord 1972), over Harré’s three being books (Harré 1979/1993; 1983; 1991) and towards the idea of positioning, in the end combinable with thoughts on triangulation as a mixed methods approach (Moghaddam, F.M.; Walker, B.R.; Harré, R. 2002). We will, briefly, sketch the important general points within this development.

The ethogenic view arose in England, in the beginning of the 1970s, as a reaction against incorporating methods and theories from mainstream American psychology, presupposing a highly mechanistic and deterministic view of human being (Harré 2007, 335). Instead of treating persons as passive sites for stimulus-response patterns, the ethogenic perspective, saw them as “...active agents engaged with others in carrying out projects according to local rules and conventions.” (Harré 2007, 335) As a research program, the emphasis was placed on the dynamics of social interactions, how actual episodes of social interaction was seen “...as unfolding sequential structures of meanings, ordered in accordance with local rules, conventions, and customs of correct conduct.” (Harré 2007, 335) Psychological analysis, therefore, turned its attention from experimental methods of empirical research towards the study of real-life episodes, focusing on how the participants of these episodes justified and interpreted the social phenomena as meaningful.

In 1979, Harré published *Social Being*, a follow up to Harré and Secord (1972). This sequel dwelled more on the concept of the social and its connection with time and change. Furthermore, a very central notion for Harré, the Wittgensteinian notion of rule, was more carefully described. Rules, according to Harré’s Wittgenstein, “...express norms of intelligible and

warrantable conduct. They are not the causes of regularities in behaviour. According to Wittgenstein this regulative use of rules depends on there already being regularities in human conduct. These could be either natural regularities the predispositions for which we inherit along the rest of our biological nature. Or they could be the patterns of regular action into which we have been trained as infants.” (Harré 2004, 240). The book was also the first in a planned trilogy comprising Harré (1983; 1991) as well, with the overall aim of exploring three main human ways of being. Harré’s thesis was, and still is, that the human being is best understood as “...coming into existence in the enormously variable discursive or symbolic interactions of persons, grounded in a common biological inheritance.” (Harré 1979/1993, 1) As individuals, we each have a personal and social being, and are connected to the surroundings by our physical being. The physical being is primarily made up of our embodiment, and its interaction with the material universe. In a recent formulation, Harré (2012, 26) writes “... the material Umwelt comprises those regions of the Welt that are available to human perception and manipulation, enhanced by “engineering” advances.” Hence, the World, as existing independently of us, is partially available, i.e. in its material guise, through the human capacities of perception and manipulation (Harré 1990, 350) These three ways of being cannot be reduced to each other, they “...are mutually supportive and closely interrelated, but they are coincident nodes in different networks.” (Harré 1979/1993, 1)

Now to exist in each of these modes of being requires knowledge plus discursive and practical skills. Like Davidson, Harré claims that these skills “...must be learned from others and they can be employed more or less expertly.” (Harré 1979/1993, 2) And like Davidson, Harré assumes that some general traits of animate being, or evolutionary native endowments, must be in place for this to happen. For the infant then, the acquisition of symbolic and practical skills happens in “...symbiosis with more competent members of the infant’s immediate circle.” (Harré 1979/1993, 6) This acquisition includes learning how to be a person as well. Persons are artefacts, products of all sorts of processes and procedures of people making, processes and procedures we can apply to ourselves as well. The sense of self, then, Harré (1979/1993, 4) claims, is a location and not a substance or an attribute, it is having “...a sense of being located at a point in space, of having a perspective in time and of having a variety of positions in local moral orders.” Now, this seems like a reduction of personal being to social being, which would be rather odd considering Harré claims, explicitly, that none of the three kinds of being can be reduced to one another. Reducing personal being to social being would entail that people’s actions were socially caused. According to Harré (1979/1993, 3) this cannot be the case, since people are “...built to be capable of autonomous action, to engage, usually with others, in reflective discourse on possible courses of action, and to be competent in the discursive presentation of and taking up of personal responsibility.” So one can represent, or realise, one’s sense of location in a number of ways. Each mom represents the aboutness of being a mom, as a mixture of inheritance and originality, in her own way. But she individuates this motherhood in a way, which makes it possible for others to recognise.

The formulation of what I take to express Harré's similarity to triangulation as developed within the frame of the being books, and presupposed in positioning theory, is presented in Harré (1990, 353). Here Harré claims that there are three ways in which one lives as a human being:

“One had a *social mode of being* defined through one's relation to others in all sorts of activities. Then one had a *personal mode of being* defined by one's relation to oneself, through which one existed for oneself as an individual. Finally, one had a *physical or material mode of being* defined by one's relationship, as embodied, to the material world and to others as embodied beings.”

Furthermore, Harré also supports the social constructionist thesis that the personal and the material mode of being are subtypes of the social mode of being, hence, that the concept of oneself and one's body are social constructions. In a similar fashion to the claim about personal being above, what Harré means is, of course, not that the materials making up our bodies are, or can be reduced to, a social construction, but that our understanding of the body, our ability to speak and understand symbols denoting the body, or our self, also depends upon our use of language, of our engaging in what Harré terms conversations of mankind. Also as claimed above, the focus within the ethogenic view changed from experimental methods towards the real life episodes, and therefore conversations between humans became one the prime objects of study. Conversation are defined as “...any flow of interactions brought about through the use of a public semiotic system, such as that involved in the meaningful flying of flags, the wearing of uniforms...People and their modes of talk are made by and for social orders, and social orders are people in conversation.” (Harré 1983, 65) Harré even claims the existence of a “...species-wide and history-long Conversation, only partially available to individual beings, as their social *Umwelten*.” (Harré 1990, 350), functioning as a (social) realist correlate to the independent existing world of the natural sciences. By investigating the language-games, which are transparent to any one of us, we eventually arrive at “...the open set of possibilities that are the affordances of the Conversation.” (Harré 1990, 351) What Harré exactly means here, is a good question, I will suggest that the affordances of the great Conversation provides us with possibilities of conceptualising and actualising new models for living a human life. That is, the realism hinges on the affordances being offered, as amenable to individual partakers in the conversation. However, Harré also claims that the natural sciences”... are themselves part of the Conservation. As such its community of speakers and writers carry on their activities within a moral order.” (Harré 1990, 351) So, similar to Davidson, communities of speakers, intersubjectivities, or instantiations of social being, are necessary for objectivity, of the independent natural world, or the Conversation, to obtain. Not, however, because what these intersubjectivities do, or say, are true, *per se*, but because intersubjectivities depend, for being what they are, on interactions with the entities of the world.

Even though these interactions are modelled differently in the natural and social sciences, since they are different ways of exploring umwelts, a structural similarity in terms of the availability of entities, as objects of human inquiry, exist. Where the different Umwelts, and the scientific investigations of these, present different vertical explorations of the Umwelt, a horizontal level exists as well. Harré operates, almost in a Popperian fashion, with three realms. These realms are, first, the empirical relation to the world, consisting of objects of our direct experience. Theories addressing this realm are often predicting and classifying of observable phenomena vis-à-vis descriptions of social episodes and peoples understanding of these. The second realm, consist of cognitive entities observable with the right equipment, like setting up an experiment in physics, or doing a Lévi-Straussian structuralist analysis of complexes of myth. Realm three, consist of entities, which are, in principle, unobservable, like mathematical functions, quantum fields or social structures, which demand refinements of, or novel theories to be disclosed (see Harré and Langehove 1998, 110-113 for a description and comparison). The important point to emphasise here is that this availability of entities, our possible relation to them, still presupposes the three modes of human being: a perceptual and manipulable relation, a relation established through language, and the possibility of understanding this relation as individuated by persons. As Harré (1979/1993, 2) states explicitly, we are to think of his explorations into the human umwelt as developing a philosophical anthropology.

The three modes of being, then, are presuppositions for the human umwelt(s), and these umwelts are, to reiterate, appropriated from the World as the totality of unknown extent in content. Putting it this way is deliberately close, perhaps even too close, to Davidson, in the sense that our human modes of being, are presuppositions for the plural descriptions (the umwelts) to disclose aspects of the World (Davidson's ontological monism). Now, science denotes specific ways of appropriating the World, and the point of investigating, of doing research, or exploring the human umwelt, then, is to learn not only "...what is the case but what should be so." (Harré 1990, 352) In other words, research is not only a question of testing for verisimilitude, but also what should be, i.e. assessing it "...with respect to the kinds of lives belief in it enables people to live." (Harré 1983, 284) How does this match up with Davidson's suggestion that a fundamental difference between a belief and what is the case is necessary? I would suggest that this, actually, presents two sides of the same coin. Learning the difference between a belief and what is the case in a given situation, is instructing in the sense of learning how to relate differently to the same case in a new situation. Relating differently, then, presents a possibility of a more proper comportment towards what is the case, thus enabling how one should relate to the case. Archer (2000, 92), therefore, misunderstands Harré when she claims that for Harré normativity covers the entire causal sphere to the point of obliterating it. In the interpretation put forth here, Harré is understood as claiming that you cannot have one without the other. Claiming of a law that it is natural is, at the same time, claiming that it ought to obtain in the future, and testing for verisimilitude is, at the same time, connected with considerations regarding how this will and

ought to affect the future of what is tested. Presenting a socio-theoretical analysis, then, for example a positioning analysis, is contributing to the ongoing conversation of the people concerned, enabling people to qualify the being and doing of life that matters to them (see Brock and Christensen 2012, for an analysis of work in this regard).

Now, Harré began, with others, to publish on positioning theory around 1990/1991 (Harré and Davies 1990; Harré and Langehove 1991), aiming at replacing the static concept of role with the dynamic concept of position (Harré and Langehove 1998, 14), the dynamics of which takes place in "...local moral orders of ever-shifting patterns of mutual and contestable rights and obligations of speaking and acting..." (Harré and Langehove 1998, 1) A position, as Harré and Gillett (1994, 35) claims, "...highlights the importance of "making something of a situation" as one participates in it and according to one's perceptions of it." Positioning *theory*, then, is addressing how this participating within a situation, involving several persons, indicates, discursively, the reciprocity between personal, physical and social being, and, furthermore, how this can be elaborated through social scientific modelling. Harré and Langehove (1991) presents an elaborate taxonomy of this modelling of how people are positioned, deliberately and forced, by themselves and others, which is unfolded and used in the article 'Connecting experience and economy' below. However, central to the positioning theory is modelling by using the positioning triangle (Harré and Moghaddam 2003, 5-6) First, positions are scrutinised how they, as a set of loose set of rights and duties, limits the possibilities of action. While the acts one has access to, when positioned, are limited, each position still comes with a range of possible actions as well. Someone's actions might be termed fight for freedom by the people performing these actions, but they might also, as acts, be termed sabotage by those positioned as oppressors. While actions, then, "...are intended performances, something one does deliberately, acts are what such actions mean socially." (Harré and Moghaddam 2003, 5) Second, speech and other acts are emphasised and analysed. All significant actions, be they intended movements or plain talk, must be understood and interpreted as a socially meaningful performances. Third, story lines, or narratives, are important as that by which social episodes unfold. Some episodes tend to follow already established patterns, which is why they are called story lines.

Let us return to the "mixed method" issue, which is part of triangulation as well. Conventional wisdom has (or ought to) that restrictions in methodology limits understanding what you are studying, i.e. the ontology one gets access to. Positioning theory, as presented here, presuppose a very complex and nuanced ontology of the interaction between peoples, and peoples and the world, and, as will be seen in the article 'Connecting experience and economy' below, its methodology is capable of addressing new phenomena, like new kinds of positionings, within this ontology as well. Furthermore, as reducing one mode of being to another was warned against, so the unreflective categorisation of quantitative methods as more valuable than qualitative methods should be warned against as well. Moghaddam *et all* (2002) supplies one indicative example of this, emphasising that "Paradoxically, the most advanced natural science methodology, brain

scanning, depends absolutely on the verisimilitude of participant's reports of their personal experiences." (Moghaddam *et al* 2002, 112) The reason is that using scanning techniques presupposes the participants performing certain tasks defined in terms of these participants skills or experiences. Hence, "If someone is doing a PET scan to try to find a lesion that is suspected to exist, the participant will be asked to try to perform the task or think the thoughts that are thought to be related activities in characteristic regions of the brain." (Moghaddam *et al* 2002, 132) One, therefore, cannot understand what a brain scan shows without understanding what a first person experience is, and how it obtains. Hence, a phenomenological perspective addressing the first person reports about experience and a neuroscientific methodology are in need of each other, it is claimed, not just as a matter of technique, but also as a matter of logic, since "The identification of relevant brain states and processes depends on the ability of participants to identify their subjectively presented mental states and processes efficiently and adequately." (Moghaddam *et al* 2002, 132) Besides being an example of how different methods supply and are in need of each other, it also shows, first, how the use of a restricted methodology, for example just using the brain scans without inquiring about how people come to identify the relevant mental states, disregards important ontological issues, in this case what Harré terms the personal being. Second, it underlines Davidson's point about the interrelatedness of the different kinds of knowledge, in this case explicitly the connection between knowledge of nature and knowledge of first person reports.

Now, the above description has presented positioning theory as being ontological triangular and similar, in many ways to Davidson. One importance difference is, of course, that Harré substantiates many of his philosophical claims by referring to natural and social scientific studies, whereas Davidson, predominantly, keeps his discussions on a philosophical level (which is not to say that no natural and social scientific studies informs his discussions, he just doesn't mention them). Furthermore, positioning theory is highly suitable to accommodate the four desiderata claimed as necessary for understanding the experience economical human being. It understands human beings as embedded in different realms, personal, social, physical, with these realms non-reducible to each other, and it individuates persons as the beings embedded. One thing not addressed in positioning theory, is how we are to understand the sense of properness obtaining between the different local moral orders? How do we evaluate and compare different moral orders? This, of course, also relates to what makes an act genuine compared to others, and, hence, in our case, what makes economical agency a genuine agency. This we will turn to now, by briefly describing Amartya Sen's capability approach, and to use Robeyns (1995, 94) widespread characterisation:

"The capability approach is a broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies, and proposals about social change in society. It can be used to evaluate

several aspects of people's well-being, such as inequality, poverty, the well-being of an individual or the average well-being of the members of a group.”

The capability approach

Now, for a first impression it might seem somewhat peculiar to put what appear to be two very different perspectives and subject matters, i.e. Amartya Sen's capability approach concerning economics and Davidson's triangulation concerning the ontological conditions for knowledge, together. Sen, it should be said, refers to Davidson in a number of places, mostly, however, involving Davidson's work on decision theory, including social choice theory, and not Davidson's notion of triangulation. We will not delve into Sen's development of social choice here, the article *Rational and Emotional Fools* touches on that, only claim that it leads Sen to adopt a broader informational basis for understanding the reasons for which people act. This broader informational basis, then, Sen tries to incorporate into the capability approach, and it is here triangulation serves as an ontological background. As with the description of positioning theory above, the intention is not to present a general introduction to the capability approach, but to justify the use of the approach within the frames of exploring the connection between economy and experience. To justify the collocation of Sen and Davidson, however, I need to present Sen's capability approach from a different angle than usual. By usual, I mean all the excellent introductions to the capability approach, which, more or less, starts out by defining the same key terms, i.e. functioning, capability and freedom, and unfold Sen's position in economics thereby (for example Alkire 2002; Robeyns 2005, 2006; Gasper 2007; Davis 2011) Instead Sen's considerations on positional objectivity (Sen 1993) will be used as point of departure. Sen's aim with these considerations is not primarily to discuss the ontological conditions of knowledge, but addressing, epistemologically, the social scientific agenda of aligning the positional nature of actions, beliefs and observations, i.e. that they are place-bound, with scientific knowledge as objective, i.e. transgressing the place somehow. However that might be, the two concepts, objectivity and its dependency on position, still strike a familiar note to what has been covered above, since one can ask, ontologically, to where the position is placed, and what this objectivity is about. I will, first, interpret these in a way, which makes it justifiable to connect them with triangulation, and, second, on that basis describe what is important in Sen's thinking for exploring the four desiderata.

Sen (1993, 126) claims that “What we can observe depends on our position vis-a-vis the objects of observation. What we decide to believe is influenced by what we observe. How we decide to act relates to our beliefs. Positionally dependent observations, beliefs, and actions are central to our knowledge and practical reason.” Any depiction of objectivity needs therefore, according to Sen, to take what he terms the parametric dependence of observation and inference on a given position into account. Sen contrast this with Nagel's famous “view from nowhere” as a view “delineated from somewhere”. The positional parameters tied to this somewhere are not entirely a matter of delineating the spatial location only, but involve anything capable of

influencing people's decisions about beliefs and actions, as well as observations. Sen (1993, 127) mentions, as examples, "...being myopic or color-blind or having normal eyesight; knowing or not knowing a specific language; having or not having knowledge of particular concepts; being able or not able to count." I take these to be determinate distinctions, hence knowing or not knowing a *specific* language is not tantamount to knowing no language at all. Hence I also take it, that Sen assumes some degree of language, some kind of skills and a 'normal' physical makeup of human beings must be in place to understand objectivity.

If we consider the claim "The sun and the moon look similar in size", it is definitely position-dependent. From the position of a possible astronaut in space, for example, the two astronomical bodies are not similar in size. However, "Another person observing the sun and the moon from roughly the same place (to wit, the Earth), and having the same concept of size, should be able to confirm that claim." Sen (1993, 128) One consequence is, according to Sen, that confirming the claim does not depend upon the inner mental operations of persons, but is an external matter like being able to understand, "From *here* the sun and the moon look similar in size" and "From *there* the sun and the moon look similar in size." That is, being able to understand by relating different positions observing the same subject matter. Understood this way, positional objectivity requires some sort of interpersonal invariance when the observational positions are fixed, with this invariance allowing variations of what is seen from different positions (Sen 2009,156). This installs, implicitly, the possibility of distinguishing between what is the case, and what is believed, i.e. determining whether the sun and moon actually are of the same size. Now, regarding observational statements, Sen (1993, 129) therefore claims, "Different persons can occupy the same position and confirm the same observation; and the same person can occupy different positions and make dissimilar observations." Observational claims, then, function within a spectrum depending on some sort of interpersonal invariance, as well as being tied to the specific location from where the observations are made, i.e. some sort of position-relativity. Objectivity within this spectrum is, according to Sen (1993, 129) "...not so much a 'view from nowhere,' but a 'view of no one in particular.'" This is similar to Davidson's claim that a sense of interdependency between objectivity, as the interpersonal invariance, and intersubjectivity, that a range of positions can be taken regarding this invariance, exists. I build this on the fact that Sen, furthermore, discuss whether this interpersonal invariance vs. positional relativity possibly installs a distinction between what is and what appears behind our backs, and, therefore, the possibility that observational claims supply us with knowledge of what appears, only. But, as Sen (1993, 129) claims, "Observational occurrences are also part of the world in which we live." Why does he emphasise that?

Well, first of all, it means, probably, that the observer and the observed, and the connection between them, are understandable only by assuming the world in which we live as a background. Referring to one of Putnam's famous quotes, the mind and the world jointly make up the mind and the world, Sen (1993, 130n5) implicitly denounces the separation of the world from the reflecting observer as a point of departure. "Our very understanding of the external world is so

moored in our experiences and thinking, that the possibility of going entirely beyond them may be rather limited.” (Sen 2009, 170) A comparative broadening of many perspectives (including perspectives from far away, as Adam Smith claims), thereby broadening the informational basis for evaluations is the way forward, according to Sen (2009, 169). In other words, people are embedded in the world, and taking up different positions therein is the root of objectivity because being objective depends on interaction with the world, as Davidson claims. The metaphor of the view of no one in particular serves as this background, as the meaningful condition from where the observer and observed can emanate, i.e. establish a relation to each other. We can, assuming this view of no one as background, understand what it would mean to adopt a position *here* as well as *there* towards something observed, i.e. how being embedded is individualised in each occasion, as well. We can, furthermore, even understand why the astronaut would not confirm the claim in space, but probably on earth, without considering him inconsistent. Hence, second, when some sort of invariance is claimed as a condition of possibility for objectivity, then this “...relates to the fact that it is possible to check whether such an observation could be reproduced by others if placed in a similar position.” Sen (1993, 129) How do people check this? By correlating what they observe with what was previously observed, i.e. correlating the concept of size towards this object with what others claimed of this object’s size. A familiar word for this is, of course, triangulation. Now, Sen doesn’t use the word triangulation, but talking about the possibility of taking similar and dissimilar positions, and checking whether an observation can be reproduced, only make sense if the people involved correlate their positions towards each other and the thing checked. So, some kind of triangulation process seems to be one natural consequence of considering positional objectivity, even if it is an implicit consequence only.

Now, the correlating of different observations, i.e. comparative broadening by drawing on different observational positions, Sen (1993, 130) also terms a ‘trans-positional’ assessment. He claims that it can lead to a broader analytical understanding of positional observations by synthesising the different views obtained, even from the different scientific positions. Putting these views together entails abandoning each view’s initial claim to objectivity for a more comprehensive view of the coherence between these synthesised views, it presents what we colloquially terms ‘the bigger picture’:

“For example, in the simple example of the relative appearances of the sun and the moon, we may have no great difficulty in distinguishing between (1) how large the sun and the moon appear to us, and (2) how large we think they "really are" (defined in some way that we can comprehend, e.g., in terms of our understanding of how long it would take us to go around it if we were to move at a specified speed). We can make some coherent sense of the different observations because we know something about optics and projections, about our distances to the sun and the moon, and about

possible correspondences between different ways of estimating the sizes of the sun and the moon.” (Sen 1993, 130)

Now the distinction between claims (1) and (2) in the quote presents us, again, with a similarity to Davidson’s distinction between what is believed and what is the case, which, recall, served as the condition for *not* reducing objectivity to what was either subjectively, or intersubjectively believed. In Sen’s case, it installs the possibility of distinguishing between the objectivity of the claims, or beliefs, connected with a given position, and the truths of these claims, or beliefs (Sen 1993, 132) As a consequence the possibility of error, and the possibility of understanding something in a better way than previously is established as well. Sen imagines a person not having astronomical (scientific) knowledge of any kind. He could actually believe that the sun and the moon were of the same size. Furthermore, a person sharing this position, i.e. lacking the same kind of knowledge, could confirm this claim. Hence, despite the beliefs of these two persons being wrong, they are not entirely subjective either; “...they have some claim to being objective within their own terms.” (Sen 1993, 133) But, and this is Sen’s main point, *within their own terms* means their claim regarding the sun and the moon is based on a too limited understanding of what parameters are significant. It is, like Davidson claimed above, not enough for a claim to be intersubjectively established, to be correct, some thing more is needed as well. Widening the parameters, i.e. broadening the informational basis for understanding the claim, and the beliefs and reasoning behind it, by bringing in advanced astronomical theoretical and practical knowledge, we get a trans-positional assessment. This will help us, not reducing one to the other, but understanding why it seems, objectively, that from this position the sun and moon seems similar in size even when the claim is false. Ideally, we thereby preserve the idea of different positions, each claiming to be objective due to parameters picked out from the spectrum of interpersonal invariance to position-relative ones, while retaining a sense of reasoned scrutiny by making trans-positional assessments capable of reinforcing the difference between what appears and what is the case. Putting a stick in the water, it looks, objectively, like it breaks or bends, and no matter how many people you call upon it will look the same to all of them. With the increase of knowledge in optics, an additional perspective can be added, showing that it only seems like the stick breaks in the water, thus making our observations less objective, but not subjective. This illustrates Sen’s repeated claims that the informational basis one allows for evaluating is extremely important. Sen uses the following example, which illustrates the importance of considering positional objectivity and will serve as transition to the capability approach.

The example Sen uses concerns the self-perception of morbidity, which is important when studying health issues in developing economies (please recall that Sen’s article is from 1993, hence the example could very well be more illustrative than factual correct). Comparing states of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh in India, Sen claims that Kerala has the longest life expectancy by birth in India, which gives evidence to the health transition occurring, but nevertheless also the highest rate

of self-perceived morbidity. Uttar Pradesh on the other hand, has a very low life expectancy, no evidence of any health transition, but very low rates of self-assessed morbidity. Hence, “ If the medical evidence and the testimony of mortality rates are accepted (and there are no particularly good reasons to rule them out), then the picture of relative morbidity rates as given by self-assessment must be taken to be erroneous.” (Sen 1993, 134) But, Sen claims, it would be wrong to just dismiss these claims of self-assessed morbidity as accidental errors, or as indicating a pure subjectivism. Widening the informational basis, i.e. the parameters used, helps us understand why. The literacy of Kerala is higher and the public health services are better than anywhere else in India. Thus in Kerala “...there is a much greater awareness of possible illnesses and of the need to seek medical remedies and to undertake preventive measures. These very ideas and actions that help to reduce actual morbidity and mortality in Kerala also heighten the awareness of ailments.” (Sen 1993, 134) Uttar Pradesh, on the other hand, has a more illiterate population, undersupplied health services, and lacks understanding of possible illnesses and what can be done to prevent or cure these. Hence, and this is Sen’s point, the awareness of morbidity is, because of these parameters, generally much more restricted in Uttar Pradesh than in Kerala. So, the self-assessments of morbidity in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh do have a positional objective basis, even if one seems to underestimate and the other seems to overestimate the sense of morbidity attached to their respective positions.

For Sen, this entails, on the one hand, that one cannot simply dismiss these views, as the expressions of pure subjectivism. Instead these views demand attention especially regarding the parameters needed for a positional specification. On the other hand, the self-assessments of morbidity, when part of a trans-positional understanding, are not accurate and objective reflections pertaining to the relative morbidity of living in each area as a geographical parameter, since other parameters, like literacy and the possibility of public health service, should be used to correlate as well. Whatever parameters are used in comparative, national or international, medical and health statistics, they call for a critical scrutiny by taking note of the positional perspectives (Sen 1993, 135). Furthermore, it should be noted that the assessment of the different positions within the example could be done by more than one method. Assessing the individual well-being in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh statistics were used, but other quantitative methods (Kuklys 2005) as well as more qualitative methods could be used (Alkire 2002). Hence, as a framework for assessing welfare-economics, Sen’s capability approach opens up a space for using mixed methods. To reiterate briefly, different positional perspectives, and the relation between these can be understood as objective, but not necessarily true, by depending on different parameters, ranging from interpersonal invariance to position-relative ones. Within a trans-positional assessment, the parameters taken to infuse the different positions with objectivity are correlated with what these positions are about, so as to determine, within the bigger picture, which positions might be more objective, possible true, than the other. Trans-positional assessment, or Sen’s kind of triangulation

we might say, consist of a unifying reasoned scrutiny of the conditions making up different perspectives correlated with what these perspectives claim to be about.

Turning now to the capability approach, recall Robeyns (2005) characterisation above, that the capability approach is a broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies, and proposals about social change in society. Even though we are here moving from a specific social scientific discussion of objectivity to the normative implication of economics, two related aspects of the positional objectivity should be kept in mind. First, Sen's effort of understanding the objectivity of a plurality of perspectives, or positions, without reducing these to one common denominator, is part of his stressing and accepting the heterogeneity of human being. As he claims, "The capability perspective is inescapably pluralist." (Sen 1999, 76) Furthermore, we should respect this heterogeneity by understanding how individual well-being should be assessed in terms of the freedom to pursue a life one has reason to value (Sen 1999). This puts Sen's thinking within the liberal school of thought in political philosophy, as valuing individual freedom (Robeyns 2005, 95), but a freedom with constraints, as we will see. Second, Sen's focus on the different parameters conditioning the different positions is, within the capability approach, operationalised as an analytical framework for evaluating economic policies impact on peoples lives. "Human beings are thoroughly diverse." (Sen 1992, 1), and policies might have unanticipated consequences. Sen rejects approaches using too narrow a frame for evaluation, because he thinks these are normatively inadequate. One approach Sen often criticises in this regard is utilitarianism (see for example Sen 1999, 58ff), evaluating economical agency, i.e. its positional objectivity, in terms of achieving utility, i.e. pleasure, happiness or desire fulfilments, as the only parameter. The idea of broadening the informational basis counters this narrowness, and this broadening is operationalised by describing the relation between people's functionings, what they are able to do and be, and their capabilities, what is realisable of these doings and beings. These two points, the issue of freedom and the issue of rationality, see Sen (2002), will be used to describe the general relevance of the capability approach here.

First, however, why the focus on freedom, and not just a focus on wealth when speaking about economics? Sen (1999, 14; 1987, 2) notes that two traditions for considering economics exist; one focusing exclusively on opulence and wealth, the other containing a broader focus on the lives we lead. The first is more akin to an engineering approach dealing with logistic issues of finding the best means, the most efficient ones, to reach the end of wealth. The second, a more normative approach focus on the end(s) in a broader fashion, i.e. for what societal greater good is the economy a means to achieve. Both are related, since we can ask what the reasons are for acquiring wealth, and as Sen (1999, 14) claims we usually have excellent reasons for wanting more income or wealth, "...not because income and wealth are desirable for their own sake, but because, typically, they are admirable general-purpose means for having more freedom to lead the lives we have reason to value." In other words, the value of wealth lies in the freedoms, substantive

freedoms, it helps to achieve. Economical development, then, is development as freedom. But as Sen (1999,14) also notes, the relation between wealth and freedom here, “...is neither exclusive (since there are significant influences on our lives other than wealth) nor uniform (since the impact of wealth on our lives varies with other influences.” Hence, as Davis (2003, 152) claims, it is freedom, which ties the entire capability approach together, and renders it without any “...real equivalent in neoclassical and mainstream economics.” Accepting the heterogeneity of human beings and the diversity of different goals, Sen (1993a, 35) makes two distinctions for capturing the complexity involved in understanding the concept of freedom.

“ Assessing well-being may take us in one direction; judging achievement in terms of the person's *overall* goals may take us in a somewhat different direction, since a person can have objectives other than the pursuit of his or her own well-being. Judging achievement of either kind may also differ from the evaluation of the *freedom* to achieve, since a person can be advantaged in having more freedom and still end up achieving less.“

The first distinction, between well-being and a persons overall goals, Sen also terms this agency goals, seeks to capture the many reasons people have, and can have, for doing what it is they are doing, or trying to do. Well-being in economics has primarily been associated with a narrow view of people doing what they do for the sake of their own well-being, i.e. understanding well-being in terms of utility. Sen’s emphasis on agency-goals broadens the space for the understanding of people’s objectives, “...recognizing and respecting his or her ability to form goals, commitments, values, etc...” (Sen 1987, 41) other than those relating to the well-being of this person, only. Both concepts are closely connected, however. For example, a person might often feel happier when achieving what she wanted to achieve for her family, friends, community etc. as well as “being less well-off”, when failing to achieve something as an agent, even when this something had nothing to do her well-being (Sen 1987, 43) The second distinction, between freedom to achieve and achievement, is applied to the first, and denotes the difference between “...one’s freedom to bring about the achievements one values and which on attempts to produce, while the latter is one’s freedom to achieve those things that are constitutive of one’s well-being.” (Sen 1992, 57) Sen, then, operates with four interrelated³³ but not overlapping concepts of advantage, ‘well-being achievement’, ‘agency achievement’, ‘well-being freedom’, and ‘agency freedom’, and Davis (2003, 153) states the difference between these spot on:

“The first represents the traditional concern of neoclassical economics in individuals’ interest in satisfying their own preferences. The second, concerns

³³ The last two are switched here to achieve consistency with the enumeration in the following quote.

individuals' ability to achieve goals that need not involve their own well-being. The third concerns individuals having the freedom to pursue their own well-being. The fourth concerns individuals simply having the freedom to pursue all their goals, whether or not they are successful in achieving them.”

This, then, supply us with a first conceptual apparatus for understanding the complexity involved in evaluating individual wellbeing, social arrangements, policies and proposals for development. To give a couple of examples, to determine the deprivation of a person and this person's possible need of assistance, one might value a person's wellbeing more than the agency freedom. Cases of hunger strike illustrate the difficulty in evaluating this, since one (normally) respect people's right, or freedom, to protest, but not when severe consequences for the wellbeing of the person involved is a possible result. Often a trans-positional assessment is reached, keeping the person alive but respecting the agency manifested as well. Another example, taken from Davis (2003, 154), is the case of governmental policies regarding old-age pension. Here the government might want to use the wellbeing achievement as a better parameter of assessment than wellbeing freedom, because one might want to guarantee certain kinds of outcomes for the people involved.

Sen, then, is not depreciating the neoclassical view on individuals as satisfying their preferences, clearly that is also part of living of a human life, as much as he tries to locate it within a much broader view on what human economical agency amounts to. In Sen (1999, 18-19) he explicitly claims that his broader conception of agency is not the one of principal-agent, which assumes a utility-maximising view on persons only, but in the sense of “...someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well.” Now, the distinction between wellbeing and agency above was also subsumed under the concept of achievement. Sen claims that we can evaluate human economical agency in terms of achievements only, but it often yields a too one-sided result. One simple example he often uses, is the case of supplying of foods to areas of famine. If we evaluate this in terms of well-being or agency achievement only, we risk missing serious issues concerning the distribution of the foods. This is important because the freedom to achieve these foods, what Sen terms the capability, i.e. the substantial freedom to achieve something, might not be dispersed equally. For example, if the area is controlled by one group of people distributing most of the foods internally within this group, and bypassing other groups. Sen (1992, 4) claims that it is the mark of his capability approach to focus on the freedom to achieve as well. In the capability approach, then, the contrast between achievements and freedoms to achieve is renamed the relationship between capabilities and functionings. Arguing against seeing well-being in terms of utility, Sen (1985, 203) is “...for seeing well-being in terms of functioning vectors and the capability to achieve them.” This is sometimes confused in the literature on Sen, but the reason he renames them is simple. The four concepts of advantage/freedom presented above, serves to delineate the different kinds of perspectives (with

appertaining parameters) within the different scientific analysis' of freedom, and the capability approach presents Sen's own way of analysing freedom by criticising the other perspectives. The relationship between functionings and capabilities is described in much more detail in the article *Evaluating economy in eco-economy* below, and we will not dwell more on this here, except for one point. This will complete the justification of placing the capability approach within the triangulation literature, by conceiving it as more than just a mixed method approach.

Above was claimed that freedom was connected with some kind of constraint, we can now characterise this a little more precisely. In the example of food supply above, the group bypassed cannot convert their freedom to achieve into an actual achievement. They are constrained by the other group controlling the distribution, thereby hindering their access actually achieve the food. This we might term a social conditioning factor for the conversion to take place, and Sen operates with natural and more personal factors as well (Robeyns 2005, 98). The natural/materialistic being, social being and the personal being comprise the contexts from where significant parameters can be taken to evaluate the well-being of individuals or social arrangements. The evaluation, then, assumes a view on human economical agency in terms of a person's acting and bringing about change, i.e. being and doing what this person has reason to value. This, of course, comes with constraints, that is why broadening the informational basis was important, providing us with frames for understanding the conversion of capabilities into achieved functionings, or, we might say, for converting possible realities into real possibilities. Now, recall the desiderata we termed the criteria of normative agency above. Experience must also be understood as being part of genuine actions. The idea was that this kind of agency was neither passive, nor naively active, but more of an active responding, constrained by different aspects of the embeddedness, but still responding with a sense of taking care of, oneself as well as others. Sen's conception of economical agency seems very well suited to capture the complexity involved in this kind of caring.

Now, this ends our description of Sen's capability approach. A brief reiteration of it before moving on is in place. From the description of positional objectivity we saw that observer and observed only makes sense from within the world, which is another way of saying that human beings are embedded in the world. Furthermore, stressing the position-dependency of objectivity is claiming that while they are embedded, human beings also instantiate a unique perspective as well. By focusing on the concept of freedom, the capability approach established a broader concept of economical agency, with the human being acting for reasons other than self-interest. To evaluate whether a person realises the life this person has reasons to value, the embeddedness of this person had to be taken into account, especially by focusing on the parametric factors from natural, social and personal contexts. So, as positioning theory above, the capability approach initially meet the criteria we claimed above for exploring the connection between experience and economy. However, some differences exist as well. On a theoretical level Sen seems primarily to take the individual as a point of departure, with intersubjectivity more as something the individual comes across, than

condition of possibility for the individual to be, at all. However, when Sen uses many of the examples as a point of departure, social conditions are part of the conditioning process for individuals. Hence Sen is, probably, in many ways more on the individual than the embedded side of economics. But as Davis (2003, 152) claims Sen's work is sufficiently at odds with neoclassical and mainstream economics to be valuable, and especially as providing the space we need for exploring the criteria of normative agency.

Closing

A framework for addressing the four desiderata has now been put forth, using the concept of triangulation as indicator. The intention has not been to claim that no differences exist between Davidson's version of triangulation and the versions by positioning theory and the capability approach. Some of these differences have already been touched upon, and more are readily to be found, but the interpretation of positioning theory and the capability approach made it plausible that more overlaps, or convergences, exist than differences of a critical nature. Furthermore, and to reiterate, the aim with these methodological considerations was not to provide an unassailable method, or methodology, but sketching the space in which the four desiderata can be explored in a meaningful way. Connecting positioning theory and the capability approach with Davidson's notion of triangulation, then, not only provides us with a strong frame for addressing the four desiderata, it helps widening the informational basis for understanding triangulation itself, as well.

2.4 A Note on the Essay as Genre

Accepting triangulation in the sense described above, as using intersubjective language to convey a personalised understanding of some subject-matter, is, if we follow Atkins (2005), one definition of what characterises the essay as a genre. And to clear one misunderstanding right away, the articles below are not essays in the formal sense, viz. as a literary genre, and the dissertation is, obviously, not revolving around a literary subject. So it seems appropriate to elaborate on, in what sense essay is used here. Naming them essays, then, amounts more to claiming they are essayistic in spirit, which this brief note will try to elaborate on.

First of all, the essay as a genre is very suitable for describing explorations, including research endeavours, and it is this sense, which will be delineated here. The essay is connected with a number of different traits, and different periods in history have emphasised some traits more than others. As a whole, then, the essay probably defies any precise definition; we might even say that it is in the nature of the essay not being definable as a whole. Since Montaigne one of the emphasised traits of the essay is the justified use of personal experiences, ones own and other peoples as well, in literary descriptions (Atkins 2005). The essay in this sense is intentionally personal and subjective, but never irrelevant, or just private like a diary. Here, traditionally the

essay is connected with the expression of a well-informed personal opinion put forth within the public sphere.

Another trait of the essay connotes a reflective reasoning regarding some problematic issue, but approached from different perspectives. Hence, even though the description, or presentation, has an acknowledged personal trait, it, at the same time, expresses relevance in a wider common sense – when successful. The success, then, depends upon balancing the subjective perspective with a perspective of the common good. The essay here, we might say, tries to delineate and occupy a space between I and we, by employing a surplus of observations and detailed descriptions. It is often open-ended, and therefore suited to the task of interpretation and exploration. Hence, the observations made by an author, the I, of the essay are often collocated by quotes, examples, arguments, etc. from the wider public sphere.

In terms of language then, the essay can appropriate different kinds of stylistic features, from the use of pictures, graphs, metaphors to approximations, as long as it helps emphasising and bringing out the importance of the subject matter, or the aboutness of the essay. As Adorno claimed in his famous *Essay as Form* (Adorno 1984), it is a characteristic of the essay not to separate, in a positivistic vein, form from content, but always take its departure, critically, in content, as something already given. The essay, hence, procures a place from within the surroundings of which its author is embedded and departs from there. It is, with a reference to Hegel, late, as Minerva's owl taking off in the dusk. Etymologically essay comes from latin "exagium", investigation, underscoring the explorative impulse as one of the motivating forces of the essay. Essay is, etymologically, also connected with exam, i.e. a sense of trial. Hence, for the essayist the investigation, or exploration, is, at the same time, a tribulation where something bigger is at stake. Adorno, therefore, determines the essay as allegorical, as a part denoting a larger meaningful whole, "... the essay insists that a matter be considered, from the very first, in its whole complexity..." (Adorno 1984, 162), and "The essay must let the totality light up in one of its chosen or haphazard features but without asserting that the whole is present." (Adorno 1984, 164) Asserting that the whole is present would, as Adorno claims a few sentences before the one just quoted, misrecognise the joint realisation of "thought's utopia of hitting bulls eyes", i.e. actually describing something true, with the awareness of fallible and provisional nature of our thinking.

One further signature of the essay, besides its stylistic diversity and critical explorative impulse, is important here. It is the ability to describe something in such a manner that a response is wrested from the reader upon understanding the description. The response thought about here, is, of course, not any response. It is an evaluative response, located somewhere among human beings and doings between the possibility of rational deliberation and a contextual induced sensitivity. It might take many forms, from a simple evaluative exercise like going this instead of that way (when reading a sign, for example), to cases where a description displays such as vividness "...that it makes it impossible to ignore some vital fact, and this rich and telling description elicits from us a moral judgement, sometimes against our wishes" (Walsh 2000, 9). I am here drawing

attention to an aspect of the essay, which Amartya Sen should be credited for emphasising, particularly when brought upon such supposedly a non-literary subject as economy (McCloskey, of course, should be mentioned for emphasising the rhetoric character of economy, see McCloskey 1983). Sen himself (1992, 118) claims Dobb (1937) as predecessor in using descriptive richness within economic descriptions. We will use Putnam (1989) and Walsh (2000) as providing the setting, and then describe, briefly, the essayistic character of Sen's thinking which is important here.

Putnam and Walsh (and Davidson would agree with them) has, in the last fifteen years, or so, ceaselessly brought our attention to the entanglement of facts and values, and the residual positivistic traits of economical and philosophical positions not embracing this entanglement whole-heartedly. The point that should be emphasised is, first, that following in the wake of the critique of positivism, and its division of facts and values, the impossibility of dividing language use into two components, a descriptive and an evaluative, was realised. The reason, as Putnam (1989, 6) and Walsh (2000, 8) claims, is that it is impossible to say what the descriptive meaning of a word like "cruel" is, without using the same word, or some synonym, in the process. Second, as Putnam (1989, 6), drawing on Iris Murdoch's notion of thick ethical concepts, explains

“...Murdoch emphasized that when we are actually confronted with situations requiring ethical evaluation, whether or not they also require some action on our part, the sorts of descriptions that we need - descriptions of the motives and character of human beings, above all - are descriptions in the language of a "sensitive novelist", not in scientific or bureaucratic jargon. When a situation or a person or a motive is appropriately described, the decision as to whether something is "good" or "bad" or "right" or "wrong" frequently follows automatically.”

Our ordinary world, consisting of many different situations, does not come neatly divided into matters of facts and matters of values. But why is this important? It is important because Sen spend most of his formative years in economics, in the 1950's, with the spell of positivism still lurking around, epitomised by Lord Robbins who claimed that matters of values ought(!) to be dispelled from economics, since these were matters of “thy blood or mine – or live and let live”, hence based entirely on subjective preferences, and not objective facts (Putnam 2002, 54). Now, the aim of Sen's notion of descriptive richness is to counter this, emphasising the possibility that evaluative descriptions might contain more objectivity and correctness than mere factual statements. As Sen (1980, 353) claims, any description is not the plain observing, or reporting, of something “...it involves the exercise – possibly difficult – of selection.” To give an example Sen (1980, 355) uses, a future mass murder ask directions of you, and you – obviously – chooses to give him the wrong directions, and thereafter runs as fast as you can. In one very narrow sense, this is a

bad description of the direction the serial killer wants to move, in another more important sense this is a very correct description. Hence, choosing to describe something, involves an evaluative interest, what Sen terms selection, of picking out these and not these words to make the intended correct description. As Sen (1980, 355) puts it, one needs to make a distinction between "a description that is good and a good description of something", with a good description of something reflecting the reality about that thing in some straightforward sense, rather than distorting it. For Sen it is this last part which makes up the narrow sense of describing, because it fails to comprehend the many different purposes a description can be put to a correct use, "A description of something can be a good one to give without being a good description of that thing." (Sen 1980, 368) It is important to realise that not any description is thereby sanctioned. In specific situations, some descriptions are better than others (Putnam 1989, 25), and it is this, which elicits a response. Sen's work is full of examples of this, and it will suffice here to repeat two of these examples. The first is an example of how the word poverty is avoided in communication, since using the word poverty is tantamount to making a value judgement. Here is Sen's description,

"In Indian official documents—including planning papers—the words "poor" and "unemployed" have been replaced fairly uniformly by the expression: "the weaker section of the Indian population". This may have been morally well-motivated, but it has not been descriptively very illuminating. As it happens, people drawn from this "weaker section of the Indian population" do the heavy work in India, varying from breaking stones and bending iron to carrying heavy loads on their heads. However, it has been possible to avoid being constantly reminded of the facts of overwhelming poverty in India by the peculiar terminology." (Sen 1980, 367)

Dehumanising persons doing the inhumane labour, thereby avoiding facts about the magnitude of poverty, and a host of other related unjust issues, is the result of rephrasing the poor as a weak section of Indian population. The second example, is taken from Walsh (2000, 10) quoting Sen claiming that "...in the Bengal famine of 1943 the people who died in front of well-stocked food shops protected by the state were denied food because of lack of legal entitlement, and not because their entitlements were violated." This usually comes as a shock for people, since they are used to think about starvation as not occurring in countries flowing with milk and honey. Sen's description thereby forces people to consider "...the falsity of an age-old popular evasion of responsibility: that people die in famine because there is not enough food in the region where they live." (Walsh 2000, 9) What Sen accomplishes in these minimal but rich essayistic descriptions, surpasses any factual statements devoid of any value-imbued terms. Rather, it makes it possible to relate to what these descriptions are about in a way that matters.

Now the articles, or essays, below, while not claiming the ability to depict matters in the same way as Sen, tries to enforce the explorative investigation into connecting experience and

economy through the use of descriptive richness. The different methodological, or triangulatory, vocabularies above, all serve this purpose of supplying the tools for the task of doing a rich description, thereby, hopefully, delineating what could matter in connecting experience and economy. So, to sum up, the reason why these articles are claimed to be essayistic in spirit, has less to do with stylistic diversity, than the attempt to capture a critical explorative impulse through a descriptive richness.

3. Recap and description of articles

We started out by describing the conditions for doing an industrial PhD, both within the company and as an educational endeavour subjected to governmental induced criteria. Certain start up hurdles within the company changed the scholarly engagement from one of direct involvement in the development activities, to a more reflective based and indirect involvement. Still the overall conception of the PhD as an example of research practice was one of engaged scholarship, i.e. expressing the effort of connecting some idea of the societal common good with the specific goals of the company. The educational setting of the industrial PhD was described through the obligatory government arranged course for industrial PhD students. A tension between the goals and knowledge conveyed at this course and the overall idea of engaged scholarship was presented, a tension claimed to be a consequence of a conception of the societal role of research marked by bigotry.

We then moved on to describe three conditions, or traits, significant for the development of experience economy. The first condition came from marketing theory, with its focus on the consumer, and how the consumer's understandings and experiences of products were mediated by cultural symbolic and semiotic systems. The second was the apparent loss of certain forms of experience analysed in the work of Walter Benjamin. For Benjamin the experience lost, *Erfahrung* as opposed to *Erlebnis*, was the possibility of understanding historical experience to be a commitment for and to the future. Despite the claim of a loss, Benjamin saw the possibility of reviving some kind of experience in certain practices and aspects of our everyday lives. *Part of the PhD is exploring whether connecting the concept of experience with aspects of the economical tradition can reclaim a kind of experience, of Erfahrung, similar in certain aspects to the one Benjamin speaks about.* The loss of experience played a part in the third trait as well, the interpretation of modern western society by the German sociologist Gerhard Schulze. Schulze saw modern society as a society characterised by a fundamental *Erlebnis*-orientation, manifested in separate aesthetic communities each containing internal standards for what serves as the right and proper experiences. The loss of experience here amounted to the lack of possibility of any kind of experience of connecting, or standard crossing, the many communities.

All three traits are part of the experience economical tradition initiated by Pine and Gilmore in their book on experience economy, and the ensuing critiques of Pine and Gilmore

culminating in the new developments of experience economies, of which two significant examples are discussed here. The relevance of the two examples is due to their presentations of comprehensive interpretations of how the concepts of experience and economy can be connected. Both examples, however, like in the case of Pine and Gilmore, *lacked any understanding of the complexities involved in the use of the concepts of experience and economy*. For example, no significant informed historical understanding was expressed, as if corroborating Benjamin's point about the loss of experience. Furthermore, a specific view on the experience economical agent/agency was presented; an agency characterising the economical behaviour of our present age in an entirely new way, it was claimed. Since the concepts employed in describing this 'new' experience economical human being, i.e. individualism, preference or hedonism, all are highly value-laden within economical history, this experience economical agent/agency was criticised for neglecting any discussion of alternative contemporary views regarding the concepts of economy and experience. Moreover it was claimed that some implicit and unarticulated view of experience and economical agency was indicated in the experience economical descriptions, and by analysing recent economical key texts four significant traits for understanding experience economical human being was brought forth. This served as the background of which the contours of the implicit experience economical view could be seen, and criticised for being too narrow. These four traits, or desiderata, furthermore, delineated the minimal requirements for exploring the possibility of connecting a concept of experience and economy. *Hence, another part of the PhD, then, served as exploring the space for connecting experience and economy in accordance with these desiderata*. This was the goal of the articles to follow.

Subsequently the role of the zoo in the 21st century was described, and the crucial dilemma between succumbing to the creation of theme park zoos, due to the competition from other non-zoo theme parks, or choosing to uphold an overall responsibility of nature conservation, and possibly losing income due to a declining number of visitors. One example of dissolving the dilemma by trying to unite its two horns is the Bioplanet project, used as research object within this industrial PhD. This project was described and the aims and goals of this project made it clear that the regular experience economical frame was too myopic to be used here. The Bioplanet project instead presupposed a wider conception of the human being, incorporating what looked like an *Erfahrung* dimension involving a sense of caring towards entities, and also a sense of economy where all values are not reducible to a regular market approach. Hence, delineating the space for connecting experience and economy will at the same time serve as the space in which the Bioplanet project subsequently could use as a frame for a different understanding of experiential human being and a more innovative economy.

Now, if the four desiderata are minimal requirements for conceiving the experience economical human being, how are we to explore the possible connections between experience and economy further? In the articles below two perspectives are predominantly used, namely positioning theory and the capability approach. Using plural methods, or mixed methods, is

commonly known as triangulation after the geometrical practice, stating that if one side and two angles of a triangle are known, the other two sides and angle can be readily calculated. Implied in this is the idea that combining two methods illuminates a certain subject matter in a way neither of the methods would be capable of doing alone. However, just mixing different methods without considering any deeper congruence, or possible incongruence, would be naïve. Hence, inquiring into the ontology, which these methods share was a necessity. It was proposed to use the late Donald Davidson's idea of triangulation as supplying the ontological frame which positioning theory and the capability approach share. Davidson's concept of triangulation, conceiving the subjective, intersubjective and objective dimensions as interdependent, is broad enough to encompass the four desiderata, and hence also as supplying a frame in which particular explorations into the connection between experience and economy can be carried out.

The explorations consist of eight different papers, appearing in chronological order. Some are already published or accepted, one is under consideration for a possible publication with a rejoinder, two are dispatched to the relevant journals, and one is a working paper. And last, the first of the papers below was made within the first month of the PhD and as such it also bears the mark of that. Still it is included here because it indicates some first thoughts on the subject. Below I have indicated how the different papers explore issues concerning experience and economy. The papers are:

1. Callonistics – a possible charitable reading. (Paper presented at a session at the 2010 meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, London)

This paper analyses the discussion between Michel Callon and Ben Fine regarding the possibility of and need for posing political economical considerations. It is claimed that Callon's acceptance of the entanglement of facts and values, commits him, contrary to his wishes, to more general normative, or political economical, considerations. This is elaborated on by combining his notion of hybrid forums, as just ways of reorganising the markets, with Habermas' ideas of the democratic potential of the dialogue.

2. On the Road to Nowhere. Some thoughts on the ideas of innovation and ideology. (Published in International Journal of Zizek studies, 2012, vol. 6(1))

This paper analyses one practice of innovation, the focus or method of moving from a best practice to the next practice, as presented by two public innovation units, a Danish and a British. It criticises the concept-use within this practice for being ideological, in the sense that its future-orientated focus inhibits the possibility of experience and learning from previous and current practices. Next practice, then, is a perspective disclaiming history, and thereby actually conserving it for better or worse, since it never really engages the historicity it leaves from.

3. Connecting experience and economy. Aspects of disguised positioning. (Published in Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science, 2013, 47: 77-94)

This paper analyses in more detail the experience economical framework put forth by one of the critics of Pine and Gilmore, namely by Boswijk et al. These authors describe the experience economical interactions as actions manifesting the freedom of consumers, because

these consumers can use experiences as tools for realising their respective lives. Described through positioning theory, however, this seems more like a case of positioning consumers as if they are free.

4. Why do we care about Post-humanism? A critical note. (Accepted for Geografiska Annaler, B-series, Human Geography)

As claimed in the desiderata above understanding human being as precipitating from the different circumstances the human being is involved with in the world, but at the same conceiving the human being in its particularity, was part of understanding experience economical human being. This paper addresses the question of how to understand this human being in a more detailed fashion by analysing the recent idea of post-humanism. By juxtaposing the idea of post-humanism with Heidegger's questioning of being in his work Being and Time, a space for conceiving the human being in a non-substantialist fashion, but not as a defaultist post-human is sketched.

5. Evaluating the economy in eco-economy. (For publishing with a rejoinder by Terry Marsden and Lawrence Kitchen)

This paper addresses the question of how we should conceive large experience economical agents, like companies (Zoos), within a space of responsive responsibility. It does so by analysing one very advanced proposal for conceiving regional development, namely eco-economy. It claims that a tension within the eco-economy exists, i.e. not embracing the entanglement between facts and values, a tension dissolvable by connecting eco-economy with the capability approach.

6. Revisiting the experience machine, does it really matter? A brief note on what could. (Submitted for Marketing Theory)

This paper proposes an experiment by asking what would be the result if Robert Nozick's discussion of an experience machine were interpreted as expressing a relationship between the experience industry and its consumers; with the machine as the ultimate experiential product consumers could choose. Not surprisingly, both the common understanding of consumers and companies are challenged since the process of experiencing cannot be understood within narrow understandings of consumers.

7. Rational and Emotional Fools. (Submitted for Cultural Analysis)

This paper analyses the Aalborg interpretation in more detail, by addressing two issues. First, the historical explanation leading to a hedonic society, and second whether the picture presented of the experience economical human being is viable. The analysis concludes that the historical explanation is tendentious since no counter historical explanations are discussed, and the picture of the human being is nebulous since the concept of experience used, is confused.

8. Capabilities, Situations, Positionings (Work in progress)

This paper develops the connection between positioning theory and the capability approach further. It starts out by defending Sen's conception of the capability approach against Martha Nussbaum's understanding of capabilities as sorts of a-historical virtues securing the freedom and rights of people. It does so by claiming that positioning theory presents a possible specification of the capability approach which is superior when it comes to understanding the subtle normative grid of human life. To this end, a further vocabulary for sharpening the understanding of normativity in different situations and the relations between them is introduced, namely situational logic.

4. Results and Perspectives

We will in this section present the results from the investigations made in the articles in relation to the problematic posed above, i.e. concerning engaged scholarship, experience economy in the zoo and the overall requirements for connecting experience and economy in the first place. First, however, the main argument of this thesis will be presented.

4.1 The Main Argument

Now, one main idea in this study is claiming that experiences and experiencing are predominantly intentional in nature. This is fairly unsurprising, since intentionality is, basically, defined as the experience of something as something. The *of* something is not exhausted by conceiving this something as the set of actualised beings only, one can experience, i.e. be intentional directed to, thoughts, emotions and ideas like unicorns, spaceships, love and justice, as well. The *as* something, then, makes the experience meaningful and occurrent, due to our understanding this something in its difference to other entities. This corresponds to the two aspects of experience explored, namely *Erlebnis* as the sense of undergoing, or experiencing something, and *Erfahrung*, as the understanding of this something. What is surprising, however, is that none of the experience economical positions discussed within this dissertation has taken the second part seriously. Instead, downplaying the *Erfahrung* part has been a predominant mark instead, to the effect of dehumanising the whole act of experiencing. If intentionality is taken seriously, then the space opened up through the act of experiencing consist both of a dimension of responsibility, since we can ask why of it, and it involves a dimension of being experienced as well, since the responses are directed at something as something. Together this responsive responsibility, as the experiential intentionality, comprises the connection point at which a sense of economy can be attached. However, the experience economical positions scrutinised here, adopt a strategy of excluding these dimensions. The reason why is that a particular economical view on what the experiential human being consists in is enforced on the connection between experience and economy. This serves the interest of reproducing particular economical points of view, leaving out traits not congruent with this economical view.

So, the two cases investigated here (connecting experience and economy/rational and emotional fools), the Aalborg interpretation and the interpretation from the European Centre for Experience Economy (ECEE), both adopt strategies, different however, for limiting the space opened up within the intentional character of experiencing. Thus, the strategy of the Aalborg interpretation works by reducing the experience to a naturalistic induced well-being dimension, making the act of experiencing a question of reaching a state of the right hedonic pleasure. The ECEE interpretation works by limiting any sense of *erfahrung* not conducive for the buying of the experience economical products, but positioning the buyer as exercising a sense of autonomy. Both

work with specific economical perspectives, a utilitarian and a neo-liberal, respectively, without making these either explicit, or discussing whether these are suitable for connecting experience and economy. As an addendum, the exploration of the innovative method of next practice showed this to presuppose a specific economical perspective as well, limiting its innovative character.

At the other end of the spectrum of connecting experience and economy, a sense of leaving human being behind can be detected. In the articles below the main examples of this are the cases of post-humanism and Callon's actor-network inspired focus on economy. Economical human being is here taken to be non-substantial, in a radical fashion as a pure effect of the circumstances in which this being is embedded, and without the possibility of any general understanding of the implications of this. Callon's refusal of a political economical level is a refusal of understanding and engaging in discussing the normative character of the space opened up by connecting human being and economy. That is, it is a refusal of allowing a discussion of what could matter at a general level across different enacting economical situations, by attending to particular situations only.

The non-substantial character of human being, as an entity conceived in separation from its surroundings, was discussed by analysing the recent discussion of post-humanism taking place in human geography. Retracing the idea of non-substantialism back to one of its main inspirations, the thinking of Heidegger, post-humanism was analysed from the perspective of Heidegger's questioning of being. The analysis showed a spectrum for thinking human being as non-substantialist and historical but still human, by acknowledging a sense of agency connected to human being in the world. At one part of the spectrum a defaultism was manifested, conceiving the human being as an effect of the circumstances only, at the other end of the spectrum human being was conceived as more-than-human, allowing for other entities to matter within the space opened up by the specific human active, viz. projecting, way of being in the world.

Moving on to the effort of revising how experience and economy could be put together in light of the difficulties just sketched, the conditions could be put as follows. First, the sense of economy connectable with human being must respect the normative space opened up by experiencing in a non-excluding manner. Second, this means accepting the non-substantialist view of human being without ending in a defaultist conception of human being. The economical view most conducive for incorporating these insights is the capability approach as defended by Amartya Sen. The articles *Evaluating the Economy in Eco-economy* and *Capabilities, Situations, Positionings* tries to interpret the capability approach as opening up different spaces where experiencing can take place as a meaningful intentional action.

The capability approach works on a very general level and needs, so to speak, some suitable frames to be actualised within different contexts. It is not obvious, *per se*, how Sen's focus on freedom as development is applicable within developmental frames not characterised by the extreme situations of poverty Sen frequently uses for his analysis. Two different, but connected, contexts are the objects of attention in this dissertation. On one hand, the human experiential

being is manifested in how people are positioned within different situations. This is shown both in the article using disguised positioning as a concept and the work in progress addressing the theoretical justification of conjoining the capability approach and positioning theory, but also in the part of the business report incorporated within the results for the company below. Here the idea was using positioning as a means for the possibility of delineating a space with a focus on customers capabilities in a normative sense, viz. equipping customers with possibilities of managing a sense of sustainability within their everyday lives. On the other hand, a context is needed for embedding larger economical agents within the normative space opened up as well, otherwise the general character of political economical considerations is excluded, limiting the responsibilities to a micro-level only. The justification for this is manifest in the interpretation of Nozick's experience machine, if we picture companies, in our case the zoo, as the suppliers of experience machines. The interpretation not only puts severe (logical) strains on how customers within this culture industry will behave, we might interpret it as putting severe strains on the culture industry it self. Specifically when the notion of what could matter is interpreted as transcending the narrow economical interests of a company, making the company responding in a responsible fashion regarding the socio-natural structures within which it is embedded and is dependent upon. This will go against the dominant idea in the Aalborg interpretation that if an experience goes wrong it is primarily the consumer and not the company, which is responsible, making the responsibility towards matters a common duty. One way of addressing this, on the level of companies/industrial sectors, is using the eco-economical model, made by Marsden and Kitchen, providing a sophisticated way of addressing sustainability as the normative space which matters by transcending the narrowly conceived economical sustainability. Connecting the capability approach and the eco-economical model provided an opportunity for conceiving economical agency as being responsible to matters of a socio-natural kind.

4.2 Engaged Scholarship revisited

We will here address the implication of engaged scholarship by presenting some thoughts on why the format for doing an industrial PhD seems to be characterised more by disengagement than engagement towards the surrounding society.

Recall, that a tension was claimed in conceiving the industrial PhD format as a kind of engaged scholarship. On the one hand, it was presented as a format bridging the gap between universities and the industrial sector, thereby enabling a perspective transgressing the interest of either of the two. On the other hand, no thoughts, or considerations, regarding the wider societal implications of this, were part of the format. That is, no considerations of how this perspective was managed and what it implied both historically and in comparison to the present were made. Furthermore, it was suggested that this was probably connected to disregarding parts of experience (in the educational sense), resulting from the absence of a form of obligation to be informed by, or

contributing to, this particular part of experience. Finally, Sen was referred to, noting the similarity between the frame of the industrial PhD and an engineering sense of rationality, disregarding any questions of the common good for issues of logistics, i.e. of optimising the means for reaching pre-given ends.

Now, what sense of learning is conveyed through the governmental obligatory course we touched upon in the beginning, in the light of the articles? It is obviously claimed to revolve around the notion of innovation as one important part of the educational experience. In the article *The Road to Nowhere*, one primary sense of innovation was analysed, i.e. the sense of next practice containing a future oriented focus trying to innovate by focusing on what comes next. Many innovation methodologies, including those taught at the course, seems to serve as means to secure this end of creating something new, which will invigorate the value-chains in which these innovative methodologies are applied to. As depicted in the article through Leadbetter's slide, innovation is pictured as adaptive rather than adoptive, with adoptive characterising the best practice as focusing on the current. This will be taken to suggest one aspect of what is implied *experientially* in the PhD format. It is not a new aspect but one we have disclosed in some of the articles below, namely considering experience as a means to something else, and not as an end in itself.

The sense of being adaptive indicates something distinctive, as analysed by Thompson (2006), regarding how experience can have a sense of educational significance. Experience in an educational sense has, of course, been connected with the tradition of *Bildung* as espoused in Humboldt's classical educational theory. As Thompson (2006, 83) claims "Classical Bildung suggests that I can enrich myself through my engagement with the world. I have to put myself at risk in the world in order to return to myself as an individual (in a fuller sense than before)." Without sounding too heroic, it is exactly this risk, which has disappeared, according to Thompson, within the institutional setting of the university as prime provider of educational experiences. Universities are expected to provide a service, in competition with one another, and with their educational programmes seen as promising investments for future employments by the students. According to Thompson (2006, 73) this means, "...the experience of Bildung or learning does not predominantly change the students and their points of view anymore. Rather, the prospective experiences are intended to enhance the students' spectrum of assets." The objects of learning the students encounter then, their engaging in becoming experienced, "...are from the very beginning integrated into a system of beliefs that is determined by instrumental rationality." (Thompson 2006, 74) The risks and freedom of education, of engaging with the world, has, furthermore, become severely restricted by one kind of economy, our western late-capitalism, becoming more and more significant in the cultural and public sphere. Being experienced, then, serves a purpose of being an asset for the students to manage themselves economically within this economy. As Wimmer (2003, 168) puts it, being experienced through education "...is thereby seen as a social and economy-political local criterion, and the colonialisation of the discourse on

Bildung through an economic mode of thought is aimed at by describing the productivity of *Bildung* preferably as enabling individuals to adapt...” That is why adaptation is a key word.

Innovation, then, is teaching people to be flexible and adaptable to the actual changed and possibly changeable circumstances of society, and not so much asking questions about the ends, not of innovation, but of the society of which we are to adapt to. What is bypassed here, then, and again from within an educational perspective on experience, is, in the words of Wimmer (2003, 167) “... a justified answer to these transformational processes: what will be our tasks in the future, what kind of world do we have to prepare future generations for?” Before leaving this educational sense of being experienced one question must be addressed, whether this, if one prefer, critical engaged scholarship perspective then wants to revive a classical sense of experience as in Humboldt? The answer to this is no, and we will return briefly to Thompson (2006) to clarify why.

Classic educational experience, in Thompson’s quote above, is based on an endless series of possible self-determinations, making up a sense of *Erfahrung*. It is this kind of *Erfahrung* we have seen Benjamin claiming as not possible anymore, since the soldiers returning from war were incapable of “processing” the experience, thereby reconciling themselves with what they experienced. One could say that they actually adapted to rather than adopting the changed circumstances. Thompson contrasts this classical view with Adorno’s view, that individuals are incapable of fully determining their relations to the surrounding world, as this world cannot fully determine them. Our experience, according to Thompson’s interpretation of Adorno, is instead confronted with the *non-identical*, i.e. with a difference between our possible experience and the indeterminacy of the meaning of the object(s) of our experience (Thompson 2006, 77). The non-identical, we might say, is Adorno’s term for the difference between what we believe and what is the case, as Davidson puts it, with what is the case always exceeding what we believe it to be. This is obvious in the case of relating to a social context where what is the case turns out to be different than we believed. This difference might, in certain cases, also be of such a character that we cannot relate to it, and hence that we are incapable of relating to our own experience of it as well, like the soldiers above. According to Thompson, then, Adorno’s concept of experience holds a promise by not reviving the old *Bildung* kind of experience, nor ending up in a defeatist position either, because the indeterminacy presents us with a possibility of critical reflection. The non-identical, Thompson (2006, 86) claims, “...keeps the ‘future’ open.” It does so, because individuals are not able to establish themselves as the *sole* determiners of their meaningful relations to each other, the world and themselves. They are, instead, confronted with the borders of what their understanding of these relations amounts to. The difference, the non-identification, between what is the case and what is believed to be the case, we might say, is distributed between individuals, and the benefit of experience lies in the critical insight that this difference exists. To underscore how much this looks like an educational variant of Davidson’s triangulation, then, a quote from Thompson (2006, 86) suffices showing how educational experience “... has something to do with our insight into the limits of grasping or identifying the world and others. We are confronted with questions of validity

regarding our knowledge and with the problem of representing our knowledge.“ Recall that for Davidson the tripartite knowledge of the subjective, intersubjective and objective was limited by the dynamic triangulation process occurring between people and the world. This, then, clearly presents a critique of the instrumental kind of experiential rationality addressed above, and a critique of the classical view on *Bildung*, since being experienced equals understanding that the relation to the world and our selves might be otherwise. Let us end this section with Thompson (2006, 86) quoting Adorno from *Negative Dialectics*, “ By revealing these limits, *Bildung* keeps open the possibility that “what is, is not everything there is” (ND, 398/391), and part of the educational experience is precisely to consider this.

4.3 Zoocio-economics

Recall, first, that the challenge for the modern zoo was moving beyond both a reactive approach just educating visitors coming to the zoo, and pure *ex situ* conservation projects. Instead the surrounding community was to be engaged, community understood in a wide sense including policy makers, scientists, citizens and companies, *ex* and *in situ*, all supporting a vision of creating a more sustainable compartment towards nature. Second, it was asked whether the kind of human being presupposed in the ‘past’ experience economy could accommodate the potential customer in the Bioplanet project, and whether the economy presented in the ‘past’ experience economy was suitable for the kind of sustainable economy the Bioplanet project pictures itself as part of? Third, answering these questions it was claimed that the conception of the human being contained in the regular experience economy was too simple to be a match for the complexity of implications of the Bioplanet vision. Furthermore, the connections with public institutions and companies from other industrial sectors searched for, necessitated some models for economical agency incorporating entrepreneurial and innovative elements, which was not supplied by the simple market based model in regular experience economy. Hence, the experience economy was claimed to be too simple and nebulous to deal with the complexities in a project like Bioplanet. The articles, then, try to delineate a conception of experience economy, which could, in a general fashion, accommodate these two challenges. The overall results will therefore be presented here as pointing in the directions of these two challenges.

One the one hand, the use of positioning theory and the capability approach present a frame for modelling, evaluating and understanding the design of experiences within the zoo. This would be based on a more broad conception of the experiential human being, engaged in other interests and goals than securing amusements and arousals. It provides a platform for conceiving and evaluating experiences as both *Erlebnisse* and *Erfahrungen* in relation to and across different situations, and in accordance with the zoo’s overall objective. Furthermore, this model enables a focus, or emphasis, on the possible connections between the experiences done within the company and experiences within the surrounding society. However, recall that one teething problem was a

tension within the management of the development activities between a hedonic and a normative understanding of the goal of the zoo. One consequence of this was that the model combining positioning theory and the capability approach as understanding and evaluating experiences in accordance with the overall vision of preserving biodiversity, was, in Rouse's terms, more of a possible actuality, than an actual possibility. That is, so far more of a possibility which might obtain, than an orientation toward a definite but not fully determinate way for the company to consider evaluating experiences. Hence, the following remarks will be on a theoretical level only, sketching how positioning theory and capability approach can help understand and evaluate the experiential elements being part of the bioplanet project. The important thing to keep in mind, then, is that positioning theory and the capability approach are used because they delineate the possibility of a concrete space where the experiential human being can be conceived in accordance with the four desiderata posed above. As such, then, they present tools for reflecting on how both the experiencing person, the customer *in spe*, and the circumstances and surroundings in which this experience takes place, could be understood. On the other hand, at the level of the company it self, if this was presented as a regular company within the regular market, i.e. as an experience machine, then difficulties for understanding and realising the vision of preserving biodiversity as something that really matters would be present. Hence, a model, as pictured within the article *Evaluating the economy in eco-economy*, for meeting the challenge of engaging the community by conceiving, in an economical sense, the company's capability of relating to its surroundings, would be needed. In both cases, the idea of responsible responsibility, as presented in the article *Why Do We Care about Post-humanism*, is important as a way of suggesting how a focus upon capabilities can be combined with recognising the responsibility towards matters exceeding our experience.

The Zoociology of experiences: positionings and capabilities

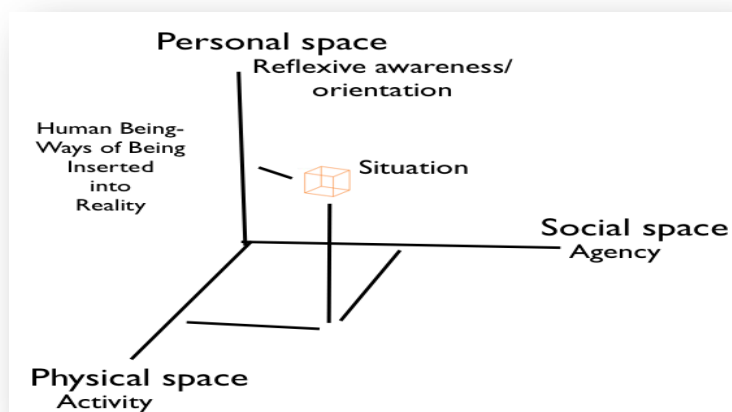


Fig. 9

The preceding figure (Fig.9) taken from the article *Capabilities, Situations, Positionings* presents one way of modelling the concept of experiencing by using a combination of positioning theory and situational logic. The figure represents a frame for modelling, evaluating and understanding the range of actions in the bioplanet project as limited by the positioning spaces, i.e. they function as constraints, but at the same time presenting a space for the possibility of acting. The potential customers, i.e. the experiential economical human beings, are to be understood as experiencing within and across different and related situations. The spaces thereby determine *parts* of the experiencing person's relations (to himself, others and the surroundings) in the given situation, but how these spaces are actually limiting the experience, can only be disclosed in the person's specific response. Being in the snake pit without any walls, or netting, between you and snakes, even though they are non-poisonous, presents a limit for your experience. But how it actually limits comes out in how you respond to it. Hence, two persons might be positioned the same way, but take up the positioning in different ways, within a range of being more or less proper. Thus, we might say that experience takes place, it occupies a place in space, and it occurs, as an experience of something, on the background of this place. Some points for evaluating and understanding the connection between experience and space follow from this.

First, the customers pictured through this model are neither passive observers, like in a regular zoo, nor hedonists relentlessly maximising their own self-interest. They are more like explorers investigating the territory in the company of others, hence observing both one another and the surroundings in a process being surprised, becoming emotionally attached, withdrawing from some things, and attracted to others, etc., thereby achieving knowledge (learning something) of themselves, and the world around them. This is not a stepping stone for claiming to be able to produce a "total" experience for the customer, appealing, like Pine and Gilmore, to what they took to be all aspects of positive experiencing, since experiences are underdetermined and therefore not controllable. It is, instead, understanding and evaluating what is involved in supplying people with a platform, a situation or a place, from where they can become experienced. It is, then, a platform from where responding to nature by preserving biodiversity might be experienced in a responsible fashion. Second, becoming experienced presupposes that the different spaces can be "translated", or enacted, in different situations by asking how people's imagination can be engaged (through the guide's story-telling), their physical behaviour activated (making them climb, shooting with a bow, milking a cow), and challenging their sense of relationship with other people and nature (help feeding the animals; speaking to the stranger next to you about that particular animal; understanding what biodiversity and sustainability is about in an active sense). The limits of people's understandings could thereby be disclosed, possibly planting a seed for realising that something matters in a way transgressing their immediate experience of them. Third, the different situations within the zoo can be modelled as connected by different overlaps and splits. This amounts to, we could say, how triangulation in a dynamic sense could be concretised. It presents people with the possibility of creating their own story-line as part of their experience through the

relation to others and the surroundings, and possibly in congruence with the zoo's overall strategy for conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity can then become a platform for people's understanding of themselves, as part of their identities. Fourth, despite the underdetermination of experiences claimed in the first point above, an evaluation and understanding of the possible relationship between the positioning of the visitors and the visitors self-positioning on different levels would be necessary. This could be pictured as a sense of guidance, ranging from the practical putting up signs telling the visitors where they can go, to the more empowering of guiding people in how to preserving biodiversity on different levels, ranging from the everyday to how the workplace, or public institutions could be involved as well. This guidance, then, addresses people as agents and not patients in the sense of Sen, i.e. supplying possibilities for people to act on, in accordance with how their ability to orchestra their lives. It therefore leads to the last point. Fifth, the experiences made within the zoo have to be evaluated as part of a bigger whole of how the zoo understands it self, and its customers, in relation to the surrounding world. This means, first, that the zoo's narrative of preserving biodiversity has to be understood as presenting an entry-condition, a possible connection point to people. That is, a connection point for understanding the possible and mutual positionings between the company and its surroundings. Questions of how the zoo wants to be understood are important here, like reflecting on what the necessity of the company is and what kind of responsibility towards the customers, in light of the vision for preserving biodiversity, is depicted. Furthermore, the narrative contains an exit-condition as well, relating to how people will administer the knowledge obtained in the zoo, and on what levels. This permits the projects of *in situ* conservation by incorporating people's everyday life, making the conserving of biodiversity a common project, and positions the zoo visitors as responsible beings. Second, this present the zoo with the responsibility of being informed, in a scientific fashion, on social and natural conditions for what is involved in preserving biodiversity as a plausible vision.

Overall, then, the points above presents the possibility of using positioning theory and the capability approach for understanding how customers are to be understood as different than the experiential human beings depicted in the traditional experience economy. Though described in a cursory fashion, triangulation, positioning, situations, and capabilities can all be used in delineating a space where experiencing involves other facets of human being *qua* being, than self-interest and joy.

Now the last point above, we could say, indicates the rethinking of how the zoo conceives its relationship to its surroundings on different levels. That is, preserving biodiversity in a sustainable manner presents some challenges for understanding the zoos economical relationship to the surrounding world as well. This indicates the other part of the results, namely how to model the potential economical relationships to other companies and institutions, in an innovative way. It furthermore involves a reconsidering of what kind of economical institution the zoo is, is it a pure provider of experiences, and therefore should be benchmarked against institutions supplying joyous experiences only, or should it be benchmarked against more

normative institutions like some museums, or innovative sustainable companies displaying a high level of entrepreneurship.

Zoocio-economics

Now, using conservation of biodiversity as an economical platform reintroduces values as a significant part of different markets for production and sales, which the experience economy could not account for in a reasonable fashion, i.e. it is not evaluable in terms of utility. A model was therefore needed for conceiving the bioplanet project as connecting with the relevant surroundings in an innovative way. To this purpose, Kitchen and Marsden's eco-economy was proposed, since it contains different economical methodologies valuing nature, but it was interpreted through Sen's capability approach thereby enhancing the informational basis for evaluating economics. This pictures Randers Rainforest, by being engaged in the bioplanet project, as an ecological entrepreneur, i.e. developing new business-possibilities based on the sustainable use of biodiversity. The bioplanet project, then, is an example of how local innovation and non-conventional thinking aim at possible sustainable economic, environmental and social development.

As criticised above, the sense of value-capturing connected with the eco-economy tends to depict entrepreneurial initiatives in a passive way, and it was proposed that the creation of the space for value-capturing to take place was more in the entrepreneurial spirit. Sustainable value-creation in this sense is committed to preserving cultural, ecological and environmental integrity and finding new pragmatic ways of creating sustainable economic benefits in the local community. To have any possibility of identifying these pragmatic ways, a richer model of the rural was needed, proposed by Kitchen and Marsden as an interaction of a plurality of sectors as the basis of rural development (Fig. 10). This presents a model for conceiving innovative relations between different economical sectors, not necessarily involving all sectors and possible incorporating others. Understanding the bioplanet project as part of this rural model is reconfiguring what the idea of a zoo is and can in a highly innovative way. Recall, that the focus of eco-economy is the "...recalibration of micro-economic behavior and practices that, added together, can potentially realign production-consumption chains and capture local and regional value between rural and urban spaces." (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 275)

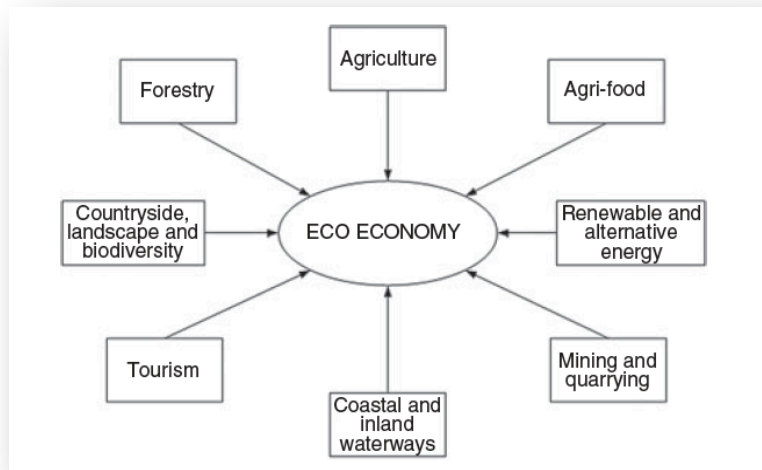


Fig. 10

Our analysis above agrees with this, but emphasises the creation of a space for these values to be captured. The bioplanet business tries to capture this, by establishing a network, with NGO's, local municipalities, companies and research institutions participating, revolving around the sustainable use of genetic resources. In this sense the bioplanet project adopts a perspective focusing on the possibilities, viz. activities and capabilities resulting from opening up a new space for action. In other words, there is innovation to be found in the *creation* of new connections between what was considered disparate areas and integrating these with broader questions of economic development.

Eco-economy was, furthermore, the joining of three central ideas in rural development: ecological economics, eco-system services and ecological modernization. Ecological modernization is a joint venture of policy concerns aiming for more normative approaches within sustainable development through reform and transformation of social structures, governments, businesses and markets. In the case of the bioplanet project this perspective could be used in the challenge of not only engaging visitors in the educational activities of the zoo, but also central actors in the economical and public sphere. Ecological modernization tries to bypass the dead end of a binary choice between economical development and environmental protection, by aiming at ecological consistency between material flows, resource use and consumption.

Ecological economics conceives economies as constrained by the finite biophysical world by embedding economies as functioning in and depending upon the ecosystem. Hence, ecological economics seeks to influence the economical process in the direction of enhancing the ecosystem instead of damaging it. The overall vision of preserving biodiversity in the bioplanet project, is meant for enhancing the ecosystem both through the bioplanet initiative, with different social actors involved, and these perhaps indirectly influencing economical processes by using this effort of conservation as an informational basis, in Sen's sense, when engaging in economical transactions.

Eco-system service seeks to assign value to services provided from and by nature, hence biodiversity is crucial as conceptualizing a support for life on earth. Parts of eco-system services is valuation of non-commodity outputs from multifunctional agriculture taking into account “...both positive and negative environmental, economic and social functions of multifunctional agriculture, and use willingness to pay and willingness to accept compensation as proxies to evaluate the benefits of non-commodity outputs of agriculture such as hedgerows, open landscape, water quality and biodiversity.” (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 279) This was criticised above for reducing nature/material conditions to means or instruments evaluated by market standards only. A more broad conception of ecosystem services, basing it on ecological characteristics was instead suggested. Eco-system services could thereby be understood as the conditions and processes through which natural ecosystems help sustain and fulfil life in general and human well-being in particular. Ecosystems would then be valuable by other criteria than the monetary, including functional roles as well as aesthetic and cultural aspects. The service of nature, then, should not be modelled on the market, we might say, but in a more broad sense as supplying experiences we have reasons to value. These reasons, then, should be understood in accordance with Sen’s conception of economical freedom, i.e. the freedom to live the economical life one has reason to value, without evaluating this life in terms of utility, income or happiness, only. This is in concordance with the bioplanet project, then, presenting ecosystems as providing different experiences, and thereby valuable by other criteria than monetary.

Hence, an additional eco-economical model for understanding and evaluating the possibility of creating a space for capturing values, will picture the bioplanet project as engaged in a rural eco-economy (Fig. 11.)

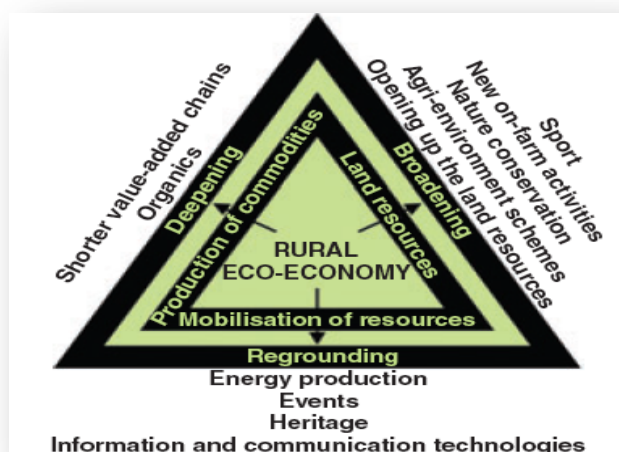


Fig. 11.

The inner triangle describes the traditional economy consisting of regular production; maintaining or changing the local ecology by social, cultural and ecological interaction with land resources; and mobilization and use of resources, i.e. creating value from the natural resources. Recall, that

through the rural development these three aspects “...are being socially reproduced and transformed by new attempts by rural actors to revalue and define their economic and resource structures.” (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 280) In the case of bioplanet this is done by deepening, for example organic farming in the Gudenå-area and creating shorter linkages between producers and consumers by selling local organic products in the outdoor exhibition area, or world-dome; broadening, for example nature conservation, rewilding, edutainment and biotourism as all-round aspects of bioplanet; and regrounding, using new resources, for example establishing a food-cluster based on genetic resources, establishing projects bridging private and public institutions and using the latest tech in creating the first low-energy Zoo.

In this way Randers Rainforest is, through the bioplanet project, an example of an innovative company, possibly contributing to the incipient rural eco-economy. What is new compared to other entrepreneurs within this new economy is the broad focus contained in the bioplanet project and that it probably is the first zoo in the world with such far-reaching ambitions. Now the two models proposed above, presents some results for the company of the overall explorations into the connection of experience and economy. As such the spaces for the application of these models are only sketched here, and many other fields of knowledge should be brought to bear on the bioplanet project. Not least additional analysis of the industrial sectors within the region for widening the informational base for creating the spaces for the capturing of values, and exploring the use of different interaction designs and sustainable technologies for the creation of experiences. The point worth emphasising, however, is that the critique of experience economy above, and the four desiderata sketching a more broad space for connecting experience and economy, presents a suitable basis for the future development of the bioplanet project.

4.4 Research

Now, each of the articles above presents separate results of exploring issues of connecting experience and economy within the delineated space characterised by the four desiderata. This section will try to sum up some of the main general theoretical results for the conception of an experiential economical human being, along with further perspectives to be investigated.

Recall, that the advancing of the four desiderata was the result of analysing and querying the concepts of experience and economy as depicted within marketing theory, the loss of *Erfahrung* in the *Erlebnis*-society and the experience economical tradition. It was deemed problematical that the wide range of significance developed within the use of these concepts through history was not addressed, nor was the exclusion of any of these significances seriously argued for either. The four desiderata were meant for conceiving a space wherein the connection between experience and economy could be delineated in different ways, and revolving around different issues. As such this space presents a novel attempt at connecting an understanding of

human being with economy. From within this space the two examples of post-Pine and Gilmore experience economy was analysed, and it was found, first, that the proposed economical freedom proclaimed by engaging in experience economical transactions, had more to do with a pretending to be free, what was termed a disguised positioning. This was a result of reducing any sense of *Erfahrung* to the instrumental ability of achieving *Erlebnisse* only, and ignoring the agency aspect of human experiential living due to the methodological individualist premise, i.e. thereby misrecognising that experiencing occurs in a communal context with others and the world. Second, despite holding a promise, initially, of moving past the overly rational picture of human being in rational choice theory by incorporating emotions as a part, the stricture posed by claiming hedonism as the overall experiential frame, actually resulted in an expanded version of the “economical man” with emotions now working as premises within this unilateral picture of experiential human being, rather than a discovery of a new kind of economical foundation. Both, we might say, misrecognise, or misunderstand, the intentionality of experience, i.e. that experience is always experience of something as something, where this *as something* has the ontology of triangulation as its condition of possibility.

On the other hand, accepting triangulation as a condition is not tantamount to claiming the individual as a pure effect of the circumstances it is involved in, as certain kinds of (defeatist) post-humanisms seems to suggest. Nor, that no general considerations are needed for understanding the normative implications of accepting the fact-value entanglement and its consequences for economy, as in Callon’s ANT inspired network economy. The defeatist would have a hard time understanding how a sense of continuity and concrete identification can possibly obtain, and therefore also how being in the world involves acting, including acting responsibly, towards future possibilities of being and doing, when human being is just an effect. On the other hand, it is difficult to see how the network economy can operate with the participating in and experience of different networks, without justifying its claims about how this ought to be described by recourse to some sort of space of reasons exceeding the different instances of particular networks, i.e. how to evaluate the different justificatory orders in conjunction with each other. This space of reasons can, of course, be considered in many ways, but eventually it would need to consider its own condition of possibility as based on the difference between what is the case and what seems to be the case.

So, the theoretical frames explored here emphasise parts of the four desiderata to the detriment of others with ensuing problems as a consequence. What is needed besides these critical explorations is a sketch of the contours of the kind of experiential economical human being, which could actually accommodate the four desiderata. As might be expected, this would involve the idea of responsive responsibility as presented in the article *Why Do We Care for Post-humanism?* Responsive responsibility grew out of considering Heidegger’s notion of *caring* as a specific kind of responding on the background of being in the world engaged with other entities, human and non-human alike, and with these entities partially determining the given situations one finds and

understands oneself in. Disclosing entities of the world implied a self-disclosing as well. The possibilities disclosed in certain economical situations, for example, matters for how I understand myself within this situation, disclosing that I have apparently forgotten my money at home, I at first might feel embarrassed, then stupid. Remember furthermore, that caring amounted to a certain kind of modality that as embedded beings, partly determined by where and how they find themselves, humans projects meaning onto their possible beings and doings. As Heidegger claims “As understanding, Dasein projects its Being upon possibilities” (1927, 148) The forgotten money situation trace out the possibilities on the background of which I see my self acting, I might go home picking up the money and head back to the store, or I might borrow some money of the person I am with etc. The accountability of this kind of response, that the projected being matters to us as future ways of being and doing, then, is what makes up the responsibility in question. If I borrow the money, then I am held accountable to repay the money, if I want to be considered as a decent money borrower. What exactly establishes this accountability, however, is where Haugeland and Rouse departs from each other. We will touch upon this as the last point below, because it will present us with some perspectives from where to move on.

The overall claim is, then, that responsive responsibility is a key element in intentionality, hence within experiencing something as something, and this is the best suitable point of connection with economy. Recall that the sense of economy adopted here is one that takes the entanglement of facts and values at face value, and thereby conceives economy as inherently normative, or what Nida Rumelin (2011) terms a human economy, i.e. that economy depends on norms and normative structures involving, *inter alia*, trust and dependability, as in the money lending situation above. To make this plausible, on the conditions established here, we need to establish a connection between the sense of modality claimed a part of responsive responsibility, and Sen’s capability approach, which we will turn to next. As an additional point, responsive responsibility also indicates a possibility for reclaiming a sense of experience, i.e. Erfahrung, not in the romantic classical Bildung sense, but in the more critical sense.

Now, for Rouse the scientific endeavour amounted to understanding the phenomena disclosed and which we are part of, i.e. disclosing parts of the life in the messy we world we *inevitable* inhabit, as he quotes Nancy Cartwright for saying (Rouse 2002, 331). Furthermore, our disclosing of the circumstances in which we are part, i.e. circumstances in which we are embedded concretely, is a self-disclosing as well, i.e. we understand things about ourselves by understanding the circumstances we are part of. What is disclosed, then, is the possibilities for acting on the phenomena we are disclosed as part of, and Rouse conceived this possibility in a specific sense, namely as an actual, or real possibility. This idea of possibility denoted an orientation towards definite but not fully determinate ways for us to be and do, unlike a possible actuality, which stops short of considering what is *at stake* in realising possibilities. What is at stake, then, is that the things disclosed *matters* to us, as possibly binding upon us, but in an ongoing concrete fashion. Hence to put the distinction another way, the normative accountability of our acting on, is not only

accountability to something already there, so to speak, but also as a “...practical configuration of those circumstances as a field of *intelligible* possibilities that *matter* to us.” (Rouse 2002, 337) The stakes, as Rouse (2002, 340) claims in relation to natural scientific practice, “...are not what nature is, but what it is to be nature.” Disclosing, then, is not just a matter of inquiring whether something discovered is correct, it raises the “bigger” question of what it means when we are part of the phenomena as well. So, disclosing “opens the future” in the sense that what it is, for us, to be part of the phenomenon nature, is not entirely up to us, nevertheless we are held accountable to the disclosed phenomena because it binds us in definite, but not fully determinate, ways-to-be. To take a simple example, disclosing what was eventually termed copernicium (112 in the periodic table) as a new element, changed the experiential understanding of the scientists, of compounds and the practices they can now possibly engage in, and installs proper ways of responding and being held accountable to this new phenomena. The responsibility implied when responding, amounts to more than just a responsibility for the scientists themselves, because what matters extends beyond accountability to their immediate agency and involves the overall phenomena in which they take part. This responsibility, as Rouse (2002, 359) claims, involves both holding themselves responsible and being held responsible by other scientists, for example evaluating whether this qualified as a new element in the first place. It matters, we might say, for all the scientists involved, hence what is at stake now, in the future dealings with the element, is binding on everyone. Now, Rouse’s subtle considerations regarding modality contain further perspectives to be explored in connection with economy, but it still suggest the following as a matter of connecting it with experience economy.

First, what, then, is at stake in economy as a practice? Alluding to Rouse’s distinction above, we might say that it has more to do with disclosing what it is to be part of economical endeavour, than determining the factual objective correctness of an economical reality considered apart. Sen’s work, it could be said, reinvigorates the question of what is at stake within economy, by disclosing the importance of normative and ethical issues. He is not discovering these issues, because they were present within the history of economics, but he is bringing them into prominence by asking how these inform our understanding of ourselves as researchers and as engaging in economical phenomena. Sen, to paraphrase Rouse, insists not on upholding constitutive standards that establishes the authority of objects (like mathematical models *for* establishing the correctness of a piece of economical planning), instead it is “...the normative authority of what is already at stake in one’s practices that governs insistence upon standards.” (Rouse 2002, 346) It is the entanglement of facts and values in a given situation which matters for whatever standards we use in economical evaluation. Sen’s widening of the informational basis for doing economical evaluation is supposed to supply us with the edge for understanding what is at stake. Recall also Sen’s distinction between “a description that is good and a good description of something”. The good description of something reflects the reality about that thing, as a form of accountability towards something already there. But as Sen claims, an exclusive focus on this

objective correctness of the description, risk failing to comprehend the many different purposes for which a description can be used correctly. Hence, a description of something can be a good one to give without being a good description of that thing.

Second, what matters then about this disclosing of economy, where the stakes involves entanglements of facts and values in practice, is how to act in a responsible fashion. That is, how to act, economically, in a accountable way, when both factual and normative issues are part of the field of not fully determinate possibilities. Sen's capability approach presents one way of responding responsibly towards this; Nussbaum's capability approach is another. The difference being that Nussbaum's list of capabilities, with the words of Rouse (2002, 26), blocks the normativity arising from "...practical involvement *in* a situation whose subsequent development is not yet determined..." The list of capabilities, then, amounts to no more than a possible actuality, and, furthermore, risks blocking the making of "...a (significant) difference in how things *subsequently* turn out." (Rouse 2002, 26) Though Nussbaum's capability approach still is responding and presents a frame for evaluating normativity, hence is a responsible practice, it contains no real binding power upon subjects because it is not really engaging with what is at stake *in* different situations. We might put it this way that Nussbaum's perspective is more a perspective *of* a situation in light of the list, and hence is focusing, in a modal sense, on what is impossible, i.e. not possible due to the lack of what the list contains. Sen's perspective, in contradistinction to Nussbaum, is aiming at understanding and evaluating how the possibility of living a life in accordance with what one has reasons to believe is right, can actually happen, i.e. being a *real* possibility. Recall, that Sen's approach is characterised as a *broad* normative framework for evaluating wellbeing and social arrangements. It is meant for bringing out, explicating, what is concretely at stake in a given situation as a relationship between capabilities and functionings (and as claimed above this explicating needs further tools, like positioning theory and situational logic). The possibility of acting on the phenomena we are disclosed as being part of is, therefore, understood as presenting a real possibility of realising a (economical) being and doing based on reasoned scrutiny. That is the "subtly articulated normativity of scientific research" (Rouse 2002, 346) coming out of Sen's work, which should be of an overall importance in economics, and should matter to all economical investigators.

Third, Rouse's distinction between possible actualities and actual possibilities, it should be obvious, supply us with a modal understanding of Sen's distinction between capabilities and functionings. Sen's distinction supplies us, conversely, with a very concrete and sophisticated evaluative tool for understanding economical phenomena, which might be informative for our understanding of experiential modality, as well. Sen's distinction implies that no matter how many possibilities are presented to people, if these people have no capabilities for realising these possibilities then these possibilities stay at the level of possible realities, only. Take Nussbaum's list of capabilities again, a poor country might want to abide by this otherwise excellent list, but still lacking the means for executing it, or a dictator might sign the human rights declaration, but still

disregard it effectively. By themselves, such possibilities, then, cannot exert a binding force without considering how something already in place helps realise, or oppose them. To quote Rouse (2002, 26) again, “The world already has a (normative) grip upon us, through our belonging to a situation, understood as a field of possibilities.”³⁴ That the world already has a grip upon us is not tantamount to claiming that it is fully determining. Both the natural and social regularities analysed in *Rational and Emotional Fools* were deemed insufficient for capturing the normative grip the world has on us. Instead as we have claimed this should be understood as supplying us with the possibility of understanding that *what is, is not everything there is*. Returning to Sen, then, if we want to know about the achieved functionings, which functionings are real possibilities, then we need to look into the set of capabilities from which people can actually choose to live their lives. A person’s set of capabilities, then, discloses the real freedom to achieve functionings. This then, evokes the particularity of different people, because the real freedom is a matter for each person in conjunction with other people and the world. The complex methodology, recapitulated by Robeyns, for analysing the relationship between capabilities and achieved functionings described in *Evaluating the economy in Eco-economy*, presents a concrete understanding, a responsible economical response, of how the relationship between possible actualities and actual possibilities can be modelled and used, but within another scientific discipline than natural science. These three points, however, are enough to indicate and make plausible that responsive responsibility, as part of experiential intentionality, is connectable and relevant to economy. This, of course, calls for future investigations between the different interpretations of modalities and concrete instantiations of economical practices, not least involving the different senses and models of forecasting used in economy and the modal significance they embody.

Above it was also claimed, that the sense of responsive responsibility potentially delineates an experience in the sense of *Erfahrung*. Recall, when discussing Benjamin above, that a possible concept of *Erfahrung* would have to move us, through an encounter with the new and the other, beyond the beginning of an experience. Obviously, a felt need of mastering this other would need to be pacified here, because this kind of appropriating would seem too much like the old kind of *Bildung* touched upon above, or, as Waldenfels (1999, 28) claims, not being able to understand the other as the actual other. It therefore places a special kind of responsibility on our responses going through this encounter, allowing what Benjamin called the ability of the object (the other) to return our gaze, and what in *Rational and Emotional Fools* was called a sense of self-correcting enterprise. By invoking the concept of responsive responsibility this comes out as two sides of the same coin. The ability of the other to return the gaze is, following Haugeland and Rouse, the responsibility towards what is disclosed through our experience of the other, in the sense that it

³⁴ Note, first, that field of possibilities and situation opens up for connecting with positioning theory and situational logic as well, provided they are interpreted as helping us understand what is at stake, i.e. for making a real difference. In *Situations, Positionings, Capabilities*, this interpretation was put forth supplying us with the tools for the task of understanding the subtle normative grid involved in situations and connections of situations.

must have an independent criterial status capable of exerting a normative authority upon our doings and beings. It *matters* to us in such a way that it becomes a part of how the world has a normative grip upon us, i.e. beyond our influence (recall the copernicium example above). Now, the self-correcting enters by *allowing* the world to exert this grip upon us, and not refusing it (this probably sounds farfetched in the example of copernicium, but imagine instead what it amounted for Copernicus to be the advocate of the heliocentric world view). Hence, by allowing is meant the awareness that there is a difference between what is taken to be the case and what this will actually turn out to be, the recognition of which supplies us with the critical condition of becoming experienced. Unlike the classical Bildung, then, this is realising that individuals are not able to establish themselves as the *sole* determiners of their meaningful relations to each other, the world and themselves. The possibility of experience we might say then depends on recognising triangulation as an ontological condition. With that let us move on to the last point, namely the subtle difference between Haugeland and Rouse on what actually is binding us and holding us accountable when we are already being in the world among other entities, i.e. part of a triangular ontology.

Putting it this way is indicating that an interpretation of Davidson might be conducive, for understanding the difference between Haugeland and Rouse. What will be suggested, and only tentatively, is that where Haugeland seems to emphasise the force of accountability as originating from subjectivity, and Rouse seems to emphasise its origination from the intersubjective practices in which we engage, then Davidson would, in a reinterpretation, take this as delineating aspects of how accountability is distributed within the ontological triangulatory situation.

In the view of Haugeland accountability is expressed in the disclosing of being as Dasein's acceptance of its ontological heritage, "It [Dasein] reawakens the question of being—as its ownmost and sometimes most urgent question. In other words, it holds itself free for taking it back" (Haugeland 1999, 72). Haugeland exemplifies this by discussing what is involved in the responsible responding to the eventual renouncing of or adherence to a scientific paradigm in the face of recalcitrant problems with this paradigm. At the outset, then, being free to take it back could mean both affirming the paradigm by ignoring the problems, as well as giving it up by withdrawing one's commitment to it. For Haugeland withdrawing the commitment is facing up to the issue of Dasein's being by Dasein taking responsibility for it, while ignoring the problems, and sticking to the paradigm is "...bullheadedly refusing even to see—blinding oneself. Existentially, that kind of refusal—running away and hiding—is irresponsible" (Haugeland 1999, 73–74). The irresponsible responding here means not acting on the possibility the problems, the intransigent impossibilities as Haugeland terms them, presents, whereas the responsible response imposes on it self to act in accordance with these impossibilities, i.e. giving up on the scientific paradigm if necessary. To underscore the complexity of what is involved in deciding the accountability, sticking to the paradigm might actually be more responsible because many problems are apparent only,

hence giving the paradigm up *too soon* might turn to be the irresponsible thing to do. Either way, I will agree with Rouse (2002, 21) that Haugeland's depiction here is too voluntarist, that it lays too much emphasis on the freedom of a self-imposed commitment which cannot actually be binding, since I can always take it back. In other words, holding oneself free to take it back is not really binding as in binding by others to take it back. Rouse, of course, expands this binding towards others holding one accountable as well. That is why the field of possibilities matters to us, "We are responsible for our choices not because we constitute them, but because we are involved in them with stakes to which we are accountable, epistemically and politically." (Rouse 2002, 347) The important point here is, of course, that the stakes to which we are accountable, are not *holding* us accountable, hence the accountability in which we are involved, we can also back out of, as Rouse (2002, 76) claims "...what we are accountable to is inseparable from the practical process of holding ourselves accountable to it." Is this substituting Haugeland's individualist account of taking it back with an intersubjective account? Well, it depends on whether Rouse is capable of articulating the right balance between holding ourselves accountable to something, and this something's holding us accountable to it. This takes us back to the issue of triangulation, and the complex relations between the subjective, intersubjective and the objective. Perhaps we can claim, keeping Davidson in mind, that Haugeland and Rouse have delineated aspects of how a sense of accountability is distributed here. But whether that is accountability enough, is a matter for future investigations.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this PhD project has been to explore, first, the connection between the concepts of experience and economy as presented in modern marketing theory, cultural theory and philosophy, and evaluate how these serve as indications of how the connection between human being and economical practices are and can be understood in general. Second, this is related to the practical circumstances in which this PhD was carried out, which was the company of a zoo, Randers Rainforest, and its project of establishing a future sustainable zoo. Three different factors, all being influential, directly and indirectly, in the creation of experience economy, were analysed. First, the marketing theoretical history leading up to a focus on peoples experiences of products, or just the experiences, obtaining a more significant role than the concrete products themselves. Second, the apparent loss of one particular understanding of experience, a sense of *Erfahrung*, was characterised as resulting in the emphasis of experience as a dream-like, or a joyous undergoing. Third, the characterisation of modern western post-World War II society as predominantly characterised by an aesthetic orientation of life, with experiential pleasures as the main goal of this orientation.

We then moved on to characterise how these three elements were part of the three kinds of experience economy analysed in this dissertation. All three kinds of experience economy

were picked because they presented some theoretical and overall considerations on what connecting human being and economy means. First, the view of the instigators of experience economy, Pine and Gilmore, was put forth focusing on what was involved in the progression of economical value towards the creation and selling of positive experiences. The two critiques of Pine and Gilmore, then, found that Pine and Gilmore's version of experience economy was flawed due both to the lack of focus on the consumers role in creating experiences, and a deficient psychology for explaining the experiential process. It was found by analysing these three versions of experience economy that the understanding of the concepts of experience and economy therein was unjustified, due to a lack of understanding of the historical developments the concepts has gone through, and uncritically accepting a unilateral view on experience. As an overall characteristic of the economical experiential human being, then, these versions were myopic.

Subsequently, delineating the significant factors for connecting experience and economy was attempted, by following Davis in emphasising how economics always is based on an understanding of human economical behaviour. Furthermore, this behaviour is always understood in a tension between emphasising the particularity of the individual agent and this agent being determined by the collectives within which the agent moves and behaves. By presenting a short history of economical behaviour and experience as moving between senses of individualism and collectivism, it was found that four desiderata was needed for presenting a minimal understanding of how experience and economy can be connected in a meaningful sense. These were (a) understanding the embeddedness of economical experiential human beings without erasing their (b) particularity. Allowing a diversity of goals as being part of economical actions (c), and placing this agency within a triangular structure of persons, people and the world as interacting (d).

Moving on to the setting of the PhD in the company Randers Rainforest, a short history was delineated leading up to the overall tension in the self-understanding of modern zoos, between being a theme park kind of business, supplying happy and funny experiences or customers, and being more of a museum kind of institution, with a mission engaging customers in a common project. The new project of Randers Rainforest, Bioplanet, leans more to the mission side, by wanting to create a world-class experience economical project based on preserving biodiversity. By asking how the experience economy as exemplified in the three versions suits this project, it was found these theories of experience economy were not conducive to the project due to their myopic understanding of experiential economical human being.

To concretise possible connections between experience and economy based on the four desiderata, some methodological considerations was put forth justifying the use of positioning theory and the capability approach. Triangulation is the term used for employing plural methods in one investigation, and it was found that to work as a methodological strategy, triangulation must be interpreted in an ontological fashion. Using Donald Davidson's understanding of triangulation an ontological frame was established for connecting positioning theory and the capability approach

while preserving their particularity. This, then, served as the overall frame within which the eight articles explored different point of contacts between experiential and economical issues.

The results of the articles were, first, the characterisation of a different notion of experience different from both a primary focus on hedonic experiences, and from a classical model of being experienced as enriching myself by engaging the world. Instead understanding the limits of knowledge, that individuals are not fully determined by the world in which they are embedded, nor capable of fully determining this world a well, was the possible kind experience. Second, two models for use in the company were established, one for understanding and evaluating, philosophically, how the design and development of experiences can use the triangulation, capabilities and positionings as tools, the second, how, the company can relate to the surrounding world in a new economical way by using the mission of preserving biodiversity as an innovation driver. Third, by considering economy as inherently normative and experience as normative in an intentional fashion, a particular trait was found to characterise the experiential economical human being, namely responsive responsibility, i.e. acting as being accountable towards matters disclosed in situations, matters transgressing our experience of them and which are at stake in our future dealings with them.

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1.

An Essay on Callonistics – a possible charitable reading

An Essay on Callonistics – a charitable reading

Bo Allesøe Christensen

The reform of consciousness consists only in making the world aware of its own consciousness, in awakening it out of its dream about itself, in explaining to it the meaning of its own actions.

Marx to Ruge, September 1843

Abstract:

The paper presents some thoughts on the normative implications of the idea of an economy of qualities. A fairly old distinction within economy is the distinction between positive and normative economy. The positive resembling the positivistic idea of science as neutral practice concerned with “facts”, whereas the normative dimension concerns the way economical issues may bear on people’s lives, that is what “values” economic thinking presupposes and tries to reinforce. In recent years this distinction has come under attack for failing to acknowledge, what Putnam terms the entanglement between facts and values. Michel Callon, the instigator of the economy of qualities, makes what appears to be a structural similar argument in the context of the restructuring of markets. The entanglement here is between researchers and economic agents in a shared concern for the reorganizing the markets in what he calls hybrid forums. Forums because the restructuring takes place in public spaces, hybrid because, first, there is a variety of actors involved – economy isn’t monopolized by economists any longer. Sociologists, anthropologists, and economic actors, including products and goods, are all part of the ongoing discussion of and questioning of the restructuring of the markets. Second, hybrid in the sense that this questioning concerns the relations between economy and politics, ethics, law and science. This faces the challenge of one (among several possible others) question: on what basis (argumentative, ethical, political) can we make the best (for whom, for what) of these entanglements?

Keywords: Qualitative Economy, hybrid forums, Michel Callon, Ben Fine, Jürgen Habermas

Introduction

Reading Callon’s article “The economy of qualities” (Callon, Méadel et al. 2002) caused a certain bafflement at first. Partly, his was probably due to my unfamiliarity with Callon’s overall work, and partly because Callon uses a different theoretical language coming from a different theoretical tradition, than the mainstream philosophical-economical tradition normally used for addressing issues of values in economics. Regardless of that, the idea of the

hybrid forum was very interesting, and is probably a reframing of the ANT idea of the supposed symmetry of the human and the non-human. Supposed because it is hard to imagine any relation between the human and the non-human, even a theoretical comportment claiming its attention as equally dispersed between the relata, not being of an asymmetrical kind. It is an interesting idea, I think, because it contains a possible critical potential: a possibility of pointing out the inadequate thinking of certain economic perspectives, i.e. those perspectives not paying enough attention to the activism/agens (as opposed to being purely passive) of non-human economic actors.

However, after reading Ben Fine's articles on Callon's economic thinking, Callonistics as Fine calls it – this might be more of a charitable interpretation. Charitable not understood in any patronizing way, but in the Davidsonian/Gadamerian way of interpreting by maximising the inherent rational coherence of a position. Or, in other words, perhaps simply a rational reconstruction conducted within a positive spirit. The reason for this is that I think Fine's critique of Callon cuts straight to the bone with the following conclusion: there is a need to emphasise the importance of a critical political economy against Callon. Against Fine, however, I would suggest that the notion of hybrid forums could actually contribute to this critical political economy, if we consider qualitative economy as part of a general normative political economy.

Now, what I'm going to do is, first, to consider some of Ben Fine's criticism of Callon. Fine's critique is predominantly correct, but fails to acknowledge the critical (democratic) potential of Callon's position. Furthermore, we will question whether or not Callon's acceptance of the entanglement of facts and values commits him to some general normative considerations. If this commitment is denied, some untenable relativism seems to be the case. Second, I'm going to focus on the notion of hybrid forums in the light of this criticism, and try to connect this notion with more normative political economical considerations. To this end, I will use some Habermasian considerations as inspiration for how these hybrid forums can be modelled.

Fine and Callon

Neither Fine nor Callon would probably object to characterizing them as positioned within some sort of normative economical context, especially if we think about the normative as some kind of contribution to the explication or articulation of a political space

and its connection to the market. As Callon (Barry and Slater 2002, 287) puts it in an interview:

“...if you want to solve the question of the democratic treatment of science and technology, you have also to solve the question of the relations between economic markets and democracy because of this interaction between scientific and technological developments, on the one hand, and economic developments, in the other. You can't separate technology and science from economic markets”

I think Fine would agree with Callon here, viz. when it comes to the relation between science, politics and economy, there is no possibility of a neutral or positivistic way of thinking, or illustrating, the relation. Any science of economics is linked to the market in some sense or other, i.e. that the same science of economics already presupposes some sort of market-based values and interests which it expresses more or less in the scientific process and in the results of this process. Any scientific judgment regarding the relation carries some sort of normative weight, because of the interaction, as Callon says, between science and economic development.

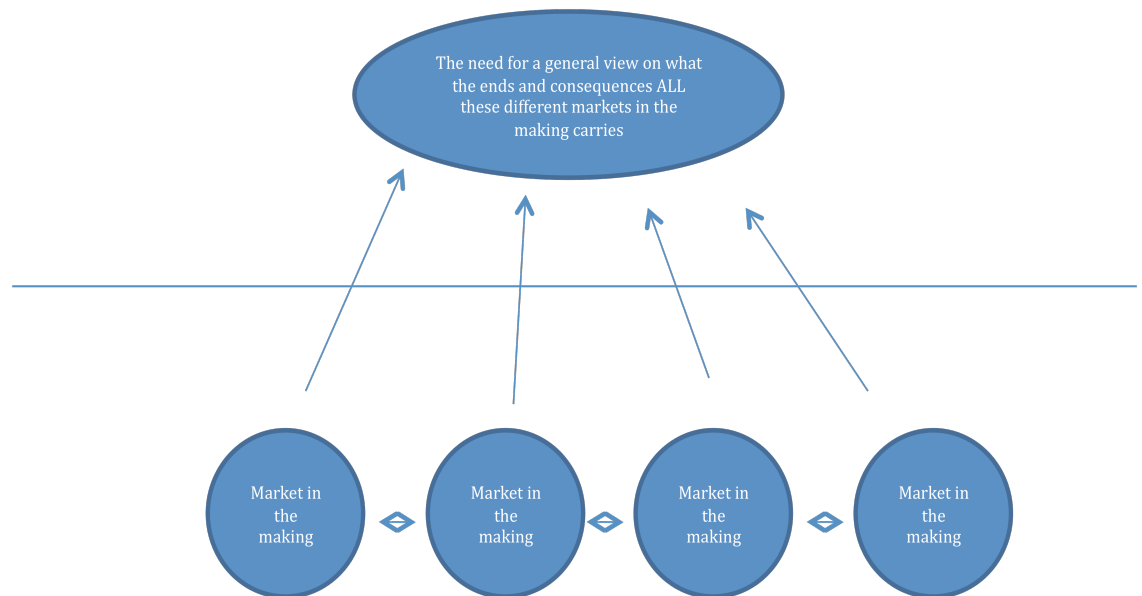
This could be interpreted as a consequence of what the American philosopher Hilary Putnam terms the entanglement of facts and values, i.e. that there is no clear demarcation between the languages we use when we speak about facts and values, respectively (Putnam 2002). Hence, in the end we are, as a consequence of this entanglement, committed in a normative way both to some kind of truth and to some kind of correctness. Now, for Putnam this, of course, is a general thesis about the connection between fact and value, and some of the entanglements would carry more general importance than others. What I would suspect is that Fine and Callon would disagree on how much general validity the lack of separation between science and the markets carries. Fine would probably say, that different kinds of contextual entanglements between facts and values are connected to each other in the sense that what would be taken as fact in one context could be taken as a value in a different context. Furthermore, in the end, this comes down to how these entanglements expresses different kinds of general ends and views, i.e. one kind of entanglement would show an obvious capitalist end whereas another entanglement would carry a different end, but both expressing and serving the need for further general political-economical and critical reflection. Fine would probably also be willing to discuss the possibility of ranking these

different general political economical views on different scales by comparing them and the different ends they carry.

Callon, on the other hand, would probably deny any relevance whatsoever of any general perspective on some kind of entanglement, as when he dismisses capitalism as a pure illusory product of economists' invention. He would advise us to get rid of the distinction between economics as a discipline and economy, as if economics could ever stand outside the economy making general theoretical observations about this economy without influencing it at the same time. Instead Callon would probably say that there are only different kinds of entanglements in different kinds of microstructures, and descriptions of facts and values are relevant only in so far they are connected to these micro-structures. Any comparison between the different microstructures within the interest of expressing the ends and consequences of these on a more general level is, therefore, obsolete. As Callon claims in an interview, "There is no moral in capitalism..." (Barry and Slater 2002, 298) meaning there is no point in connecting an idea of moral rightness to capitalism, because it is so diverse a concept that no single way of understanding it could possibly span all this diversity. There are only the local forms of rightness in the reorganizing of markets.

So, Callon aims at forming a description by observing how these localized "micro" networks, and connections between them, consisting of both human – including scientific experts and non-experts - and non-human actors, constitutes different markets. Following the ANT conceptual frame, he claims that there are no structures behind these networks and so no kind of embeddedness of which a general theory could be made to determine and explain these networks. Hence, there is no need for thinking along the lines of a political economy; there are only the structuring processes of localised markets in the making. Something like this makes the difference:

Fine



Callon

Fine (2003) puts his finger on several points in relation to Callon's translation of ANT to a descriptive study of economy: first, Callon's kind of description is supposed to engage in the debates on different and highly fragmented markets and cooperate with the different social actors within these markets. But, as Fine puts it, how do we choose these markets and actors without any prior general reflection on our conceptual and explanatory apparatus, and some interpretation of this apparatus as an analytical tool? Second, if, as Callon (Barry and Slater 2002, 291) claims, "the idea of the market as a unified category and institution is progressively disappearing" with an overwhelming fragmentation replacing it, then as Fine claims, this is a both a theoretical claim with an universal validity and an empirical statement about contemporary markets.

I'm not going to dwell on the empirical status of the statement, but only note that Fine thinks Callon's empirical treatment is cursory. The idea, however, of a statement's universal validity combined with a lack of reflection on any prior conceptual prejudice (again in Gadamer's sense, as the pre-judgemental foundation enabling the use of concepts in the first place) on the theorists' part, is a somewhat shaky and questionable position. And to clarify, when I say lack of reflection on the theorists' part, I'm well aware that a reflection on the impact of conceptual distinctions on the result of any given theory is one of ANT's forces. The point I'm after is, however, 1) that by excluding both the relevance of any general political-economical concepts and the idea of any structures, micro or macro, as carrying any influence

on people in the networks, and 2) insisting that the concept of embeddedness is of no theoretical value, you 3) cut yourself off from any tools which could support reflection on your own embeddedness, and hence exposes yourself to reproducing what is taken as some general economical-political views or a possible dire consequences of these¹. Or, in other words, you disavow a reflective space for considering how concrete economical practices, and the actors engaged within these practices, including scientists, also reproduce general economic conditions. Putnam would probably claim that this comes close to indicating a refusal of taking the normativity of the entanglement serious, i.e. that the entanglement does not entail that all economical practices are equally good, and comes with an obligation to justify why this is so. But let me first of all elaborate on Fine's point with a three step argument:

First, in a very simple and straightforward case anyone who claims: "there are different fragmented markets only" and "it's impossible to say anything general of these", actually says something general about these, and furthermore wants to say something true about these.

Second, bracketing, i.e. choosing to disregard, some prior conceptual apparatus comes very close to what is called an emic description, that is, by default using only descriptions taken to be meaningful and faithful to the object of description – in our case the highly differentiated markets and the actors within them. Emic is, of course, the opposite of an etic description, that is, a description carried out from a non-emic position, using general political-economical terms with general validity, like concepts of embeddedness and micro-macro.

Third, as is probably obvious, the consequence is: due to a concern of not relying on any unknown a priori distinction, which could interfere with the object of description – the nature-society distinction is ANT's master example - one comes very close of affirming one. By denying the etic description as a possibility, you actually confirm it by giving your own emic description a general validity and hence an etic status.

Now, Callon would, of course, claim 1) that the emic/etic distinction is one of the old dualisms (a priori distinctions), which he aims to transcend, or bypass, and, as a result, his position cannot be described using it. 2) If there is a glow of generality about this, it is simply

¹ After this essay was written, I found out that Roberts (2012) made the same point

the validity attached to ANT as a method. No more generality is needed, but this emic description. But even if we drop the emic/etic distinction and understand the glow of general validity as Callon's reflective use of ANT in the reorganizing of the markets, then I still think Callon – through his aim at a faithful description - ends up in a position where a non-descriptive normative intent, (i.e. general validity) and content (i.e. using general terms in describing it) is presupposed, but without explicating, thoroughly enough, what this normative implication aims at, and why this is so. Thoroughly because it is questionable whether it is possible for Callon to explicate this without presupposing some more general considerations of a political-economical character on what this normativity amounts to.

If Callon claims his position as valid, wouldn't this validity need some kind of general justification, and is this not impossible without subscribing to some kind of embeddedness (also as a negative compartment) in the history of political-economical thought? In other words, some general presuppositions (of a historical-conceptual kind) is needed just to make sense and without explicating some of them and their consequences in the process, who is to say what might be reproduced in the reorganizing of the markets? So bringing matters to a head, Callon ends up in this somewhat un-clarified position that he expresses some general validity in what he says, but without explicating what this amounts to. This might be a theme for Callon's later work, but we will leave this issue aside here. However, this unsettledness might also explain his remark in the interview (Barry and Slater 2002, 295), that he is thinking about "What could replace the vision of a society marked by class conflict", and this replacement must, of course, in some sense be more valid. But what is this validity and how is it justified?

Now, one consequence of the above is that Callon would need some kind of normative political economical thinking to back his vision of society up. Hence, asking whether any conceptual-historical considerations, or starting points, could back this vision up seems like a natural next step. To explore this, let us start with how we should address these normative and general considerations, and to narrow it further down, by focusing on Callon's concept of hybrid forums, only.

Hybrid Forums – a charitable reading

So what are hybrid forums? Basically, they are the different entanglements between researchers and economic agents in shared concerns for reorganizing different

markets. They are termed forums because the restructuring takes place in public spaces, and hybrid because, first, there are a variety of actors involved, i.e. economy is not monopolized by economists any longer. Sociologists, anthropologists, and economic actors, including products and goods, are all part of the ongoing discussion and questioning of, and thereby restructuring of, different markets. Connected with this, and second, they are hybrid in the sense that the questions, and the consequences of raising these questions, concern economy and politics, ethics, law and science.

Callon's vision for the reorganizing of the markets by the means of hybrid forums is:

“... that we have to try, as a first step, to co-operate with the social actors who are willing to co-operate with us, and are able to understand what is at stake. In the second phase, using these first studies as examples, we could extend this new conception of the relation between social scientists and social actors” (Barry and Slater 2002, 305)

If this reorganizing of the different markets, and the production of specialized knowledge following in its wake, is taken to imply a process of democratization, then it is sympathetic. Even the demonopolising of the economists with the result of letting other scientist in on the production of knowledge, as well as letting non-scientific actors participating in the production is welcomed.

However, this reorganising still need to address issues concerning the weighting of, first, the different kinds of interests, and, second, arguments and priorities for and against these interests, when different economic actors are endowed with the capacity to partake in experiments with different forms of market organization. This doesn't make much sense until we figure out, for what good we are reorganizing in the first place, and how to organize debates actualising the strength of these different arguments as well. Hence, the point above that some general normative consideration of a political-economical kind, broad enough to incorporate the plurality of interests and strong enough to evaluate between these, is still needed.

Here in the end I'm going to concentrate on the last point, but a short but important note about endowing people with a capacity to partake in experiments involving different organisations of markets. The importance amounts to understanding this capacity as a way of connecting with Amartya Sen's capability approach. First, by reminding us that any evaluation of economics is at the same time a way of thinking about the economic wellbeing of

people which of course calls for some sense of general normative consideration. Second, by emphasising that for this possibility of partaking to work, it is not enough just supplying it to the participants, they should be able to act on it as well. In Sen's way of thinking this is tantamount to being able to transform the possible reality this reorganising of the market promises, into a real possibility for the participants to act on. And this can only take place if we have some general economical sense of what this development is for. So, with this short note expressed, we come to the last point: how are we going to organize the debates, or dialogues between the different economic actors in a fair and just way? Habermas has some important suggestions regarding these matters, and we will end by touching upon these.

Habermas is, of course, famous for formulating the idea of a power free discourse, though not for disregarding power relations as some critics have claimed. On the contrary, it functions as a regulative ideal making sure that any perspective claiming, seriously, that it is relevant for it to partake in the dialogue, can actually take part of the dialogue despite any power relation. Habermas would therefore agree with those of his critics claiming that if it ever came to a complete realization of a power free discourse, then there would be absolutely nothing to talk about. Hence, the power free discourse is reminding us of a condition for discourse to be initiated, and is not the end goal of discourse. So, what is interesting here is more the different kinds of speech used in social networks and the normative political implications these carry. Thus, it is more Habermas' formal pragmatic theory and how this theory could point to different kinds of political-economical organizations, which could provide some platform for thinking about the normative considerations of a general character, thereby supplementing Callon's thinking.

Needless to say, Habermas presents a difficult and complex theory and we will have to assume some of his premises. Hence, we will just accept without further ado, first, that the formal pragmatic approach is a way of explicating (some of) the unavoidable presuppositions that guide linguistic exchanges between hearers and speakers in everyday language, which are the validity claims: a) a claim to truth of what is said b) the normative rightness of the speech act c) the truthfulness of the speaker. Second, this is a reconstruction of what it takes for social actors to interact with the aim of achieving mutual understanding or what he calls communicative action, the exchange of speech acts in dialogue as raising and responding to validity claims, typically one of them explicit while the other two remaining implicit. Third, because of the in-built connection with validity claims, particular conceptions

of the social order are reproduced through communicative action. This counts for the opposite of communicative action, strategic communicative action, as well, the difference being that in strategic action you are not aiming at mutual understanding but only the success of your own endeavour.

All this usually works fine in everyday communication; participants undertake to behave in certain ways, and the success of the cooperation depends, of course, on the cooperation of both parties. Some minimal rational dimension is inherent here in the sense that one accepts that people have valid reasons for what they say and do, and if asked people are under an obligation to explicate these reasons, as well as they can. For the most part, however, we simply act towards other people assuming that the reasons supporting the validity claims are good ones. If – or when – this breaks down three options are available to the participants. First, they can switch to strategic action, second, they can break the communication off, and third they can recommence their communicative activity on a more reflective level, what Habermas calls discourse. On this level the presuppositions already operative in everyday communication takes a formalized turn (idealized as counterfactual and unavoidable in the sense they are conditions of possibility as to what it means to take part in argumentation). Habermas claims that participants are here presupposing, first, the common aim of reaching agreement with regard to the validity of the disputed claim, second, no force except that of the better argument is exerted, third that no competent parties have been excluded from the discussions, and fourth that no relevant argument has knowingly been suppressed.

The main point here is, of course, that these presuppositions, based in everyday communication and the ideas of justice and truth, are not reducible to any local or contextual validity, but instead provide standards for criticizing local practices of justification and the outcomes of agreements reached, standards which applies to economy as well. Hence, if, as we have shown, Callon presupposes some general but unsettled normative perspective, it might give him an advantage using Habermas' theory as a way of making this explicit. Furthermore, and it might provide the frames for meeting Callon's aim of endowing people with the capacity of experimenting with different kinds of organizations. According to Habermas, economy has achieved such independence in modern society that it is best described as a systemic form of governance, which relieves communication and takes a minimum of argumentation to work. As such, the economic space of action is limited and

defined both by legal rules and moral rules. For example, it is both legitimate to criticize the idea of competition from a strategic communicative perspective questioning the efficiency from within means-end rationality and from a more communicative perspective, whether it is fair in a moral sense. Basically, then, the reorganizing of markets as some kind of social order would need to address these matters. Both internally in the debates of how to reorganize the markets, and externally in what consequences these have for the relationships with other ways of reorganizing the markets, i.e. is this relationship based on strategic or communicative ways of acting. I want to end this with an attempt to model the reorganizing of markets on how Habermas pictures three normative models of democracy. An advantage of this is that it addresses the implication of the reorganizing of markets as reinforcing a democratic process, and takes the general normative considerations in the form of presupposed validity claims into account as well.

The challenge of reorganizing the market, when we accept that reorganizing is connected to validity claims and the way these are presupposed in communicative or strategic action, is the classic dilemma of liberal vs. republican model of democracy, i.e. how to mediate between a respect for the rights of the individual, and, on the other hand, a respect for the will of the majority. Habermas seeks to synthesize these two models by preserving the best from each. Where the classic liberal model focuses too much on the individual and the protection of this individual's interests and rights, the republican is connected with an "ethical overload" as the political discourse serves as a clarification of the collective ethical self-understanding, through which the individual becomes aware of her or his co-membership in a collective form of life. Habermas, on the contrary, emphasises how the making of norms, in our case through the making of the market, is primarily a justificatory issue and is gauged by principles that state what is equally good for all. So, the process of reorganising the markets should be understood as a communicative interaction exchanging complex validity claims securing this equality, which means "...on the one hand, to comprise competing interests in a manner compatible with the common good, and on the other hand, to bring universalistic principles of justice into the horizon of the specific form of life of a particular community." (Habermas 1994, 5) Understood this way, the making of markets depends on a network of fairly regulated bargaining processes and of various forms of argumentation, each of which relies on different communicative presuppositions and procedures. Ensuring that the making of markets is a form of deliberative politics, which has stronger normative connotations than the

liberal model, but not as strong as the republican model, an institutionalization of the corresponding procedures and conditions of communication is needed. This institutionalization is only possible for Habermas as an institutionalization of democratic rule of law, which presupposes the state.

So to wrap it all up, if Callon wants to conceptualize the making of markets in hybrid forums as a fair and just process – and he should do that because of the generalized normative presuppositions his position carries - he might want to think about how Habermas construes different models of democratic processes and how an institutionalization of this will work.

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2.

On the Road to Nowhere?
Some thoughts on the ideas of innovation and ideology

On the Road to Nowhere?

Some thoughts on the ideas of innovation and ideology

*We're on a road to nowhere
Come on inside
Takin' that ride to nowhere
We'll take that ride
Talking Heads*

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Introduction

The complexity of the entanglement between economic and socio-cultural areas of our lives manifests itself in a number of different ways. This paper revolves around one aspect of this manifestation, namely the idea of innovation. The concept of innovation implies a demand of newness, for example the creation of new products to ensure a company's market advantage or the creation of new processes to ensure a higher degree of efficiency at a hospital. Furthermore, innovation is connected with the idea of a methodology ensuring that the result

of any innovative endeavour always comes out as something new. As a methodology, innovation is supposedly capable of incorporating all sorts of inputs as means to the end of this newness. User-driven innovation would be an example of this. Imagine a production of wheelchairs with the innovative process being done by engineers and designers only. The methodology of user-driven innovation, then, would incorporate the users of wheelchairs in the development as well, both the direct and indirect users.

The demand of newness and the methodological ability to incorporate a diversity of resources is connected to wider currents within this complex entanglement. These currents has been described in a number of ways, three of which we will indicate here. First, there is the current described as *cognitive capitalism*. The French economist Yann Moulier-Boutang (2001) describes this current as a system of accumulation primarily founded upon knowledge, where the externalities – the resources originally outside of the economic sphere – are integrated into the economic sphere. Knowledge both is and becomes the main resource in *the process* of creating value as part of this accumulation. Hence, different kinds of knowledge have become increasingly important in creating new products, technologies, organisations, marketing, processes and so on, with the aim of creating more growth whether for private companies or at the societal level. Second, this incorporating of knowledge can also be seen as some kind of imperialism – as the English economist Ben Fine (2000) terms it – the increasing colonization of social sciences by economics: replacing previous assumptions of an overly rational individual as the point of departure of economics with the category of the social, highly specialized scientific knowledge is used as a analytical tool helping the economy creating new innovative value as part of this system of accumulation.

Third and last, the two first points can be summarized by the concept of a new spirit of capitalism analysed by Boltansky and Chiapello (2005). The capacity of incorporating and capitalise areas external to the economy, including areas *critical* of capitalist economy, is a mark of capitalism in its third spirit¹. Within this spirit, or regime of accumulation, creativity, knowledge and innovation are sources of new economical value and objects of capitalist accumulation and exploitation. The reason is, according to Boltansky and Chiapello, that production becomes pull-oriented, i.e. its focus revolves around the structures of demand within the market, and hence creates the need for adjusting *innovatively* to new demands.

Hence, the complexity we took as our point of departure is connected to innovation in the sense that innovation becomes a methodology for helping *incorporating* external resources, *subsuming* them under an economic system of accumulation and creating the best flexible conditions for doing this again and again.

As indicated by the current financial crisis, a continuous capitalist development in the guise of a never-ending accumulation of values is not an easy task to accomplish. It is, as Žižek echoing Marx has put it, probably doomed to failure. It is the claim of this paper that the example of innovation which we will analyse, the method of creating a next practice, functions as an attention-diverter to this assumed ever-present threat of failure. It does so by continuously projecting the success of the innovative effort into a future never to be realised. In this way, capitalism keeps reproducing itself not only by incorporating new knowledge into its system of accumulation, but also by methodologically escaping into the future, as we will see. Whether it actually will fail or not is not our concern here, but the technique of diverting the attention from the possibility of failure is.

The critique of ideology will be the primary perspective in arguing for this claim. Ideology is understood here in the Žizekian sense as an inescapable condition for all thinking and not something we are able to overcome. However, it will emerge from the following that this condition manifests itself in the shape of a distorted use of concepts, and the connections between them. Demonstrating a critique of practice of concept use, it is claimed, is one of the prime tasks of a critique of ideology. Criticizing the use of concepts and connections made between them, which connections hold under further scrutiny, and which express only pretence is compatible with a critique of ideology. However, this is always facing the uncertainty, though, that the critique itself needs further correction. This will be demonstrated through an ideology-critical analysis, juxtaposing Žižek's notion of ideology and Gilbert Ryle's critique of concept-use using the idea of correctness/truth as unfolding on the method of next practice.

The article will proceed in the following manner. First, one new form of innovative thinking, described as a method of proceeding from the best practice to the next practice, is presented. Subsequently, engaging Žižek's thinking on ideology and describing this through stages of economic imperialism, a concept of practical correctness is developed, which is

used in criticizing the concepts of best and next practice. Finally, some suggestions on the implication of establishing a possible connection between the two concepts are presented.

Next Practice: two examples

Let us start with the innovation discourse and the two examples of the use of concept of next practice as a methodology. Both examples originate from two development divisions in the public sectors of Denmark and Britain, respectively. Firstly, the entry *next practice* on the homepage of the British Innovation Unit², and secondly, an example from a Danish book titled *Principles of public innovation. From Best Practice to the Next Practice* (Bendix *et al.* 2008). Implied in both examples is the idea of developing a tool or method for continuously improving and making the different practices (both economical and non-economical) in the public sector more economical efficient. The demand for newness enters here, because any practice which works is the best practice – but only so far. Hence, it is claimed, we need to look for something new – the next practice, and reaching this practice in a methodological way is the aim. As we will see this method bears the marks of something ideological, and in the next section we will discuss how a Zizekian informed view on ideology can help us understand this.

In the next practice entry, the Innovation Unit explains next practice as a focus on the tomorrow: it is the room for realized improvements which is there, but never here. In a certain sense what *is* here, then, is the conventional good or best practice that this *next practice* tries to revolutionize or evolve. The entry cites an interview with the late, innovation-guru C.K. Prahalad as a way of example:

“There is a lot of research focused on best practice, but I focus on next practice. Next practice by definition has three problems: firstly, it is future-oriented; secondly, no single institution or company is an exemplar of everything that you think will happen; and thirdly, next practice is about amplifying weak signals, connecting the dots. Next practice is disciplined imagination.” (Prahalad, C.K., 2004. Interview posted on The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid)”

Furthermore, Charles Leadbeater – one of Britain’s leading authorities on innovation and

creativity – describes next practice as emergent innovations initiating new ways of working, where such innovations are most likely to come from thoughtful, experienced, self-confident practitioners trying to find new and more effective solutions to intractable problems. The power point slide (*fig. 1*), depicting the difference between best and *next practice* at the bottom of the homepage, highlights the disciplined imagination of these practitioners: best practice is dominated by current focus and is adoptive, whereas *next practice* is dominated by a future focus and is adaptive.

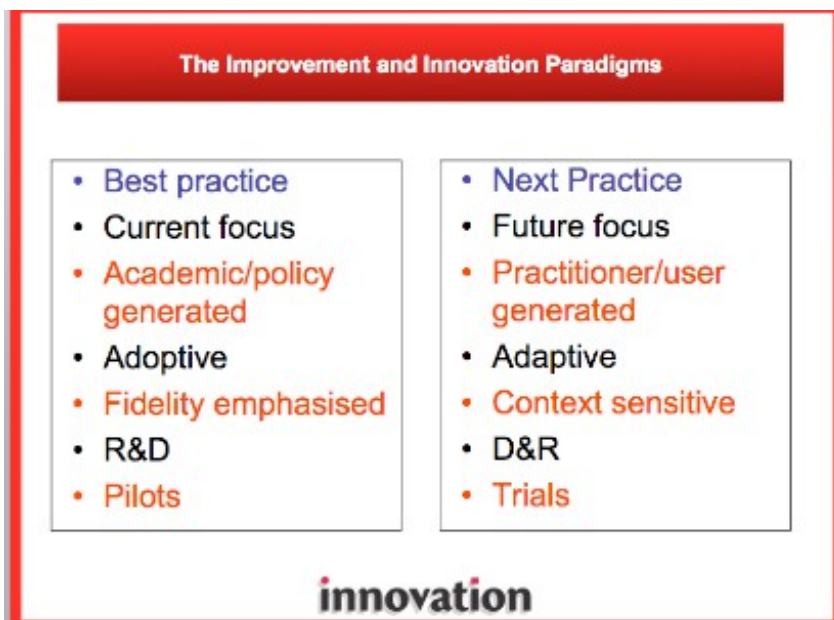


Fig. 1

Thus, next practice as a method implies a change in perspective from the best practice to the *next practice*; a change aimed at controlling thinking to effectuate a different way of doing things. Let this set the stage for the next example, the Danish book mentioned earlier, and which ‘incidentally’ has *from best practice to the next practice* as a subtitle.

The basic perspective in this book is the function of the short phrase *What if* as an eye-opener for things to happen - *What if* is the germ of all innovation:

What if our work is based not only on what we know works, but also opens

our eyes to what could work better? *What if* this opening gaze was integrated into all our work processes, and not only parked in parallel and time limited development projects? (Bendix *et al.* 2008: 17 – my translation)

By using our imagination as tool in this questioning process, we are capable of solving difficulties we don't know the solution to yet. The imagination process supposedly gives us the freedom of foreseeing, imagining what could happen *and* the ability to act in such a way that our idea of what could happen, actually happens. In this way:

What if opens up new ways of thinking and the possibility of transgressing the usual ways of doing things. This questioning is always forward-facing and proactive. It is not about what has already been done, but about what is next, the *next practice*. (Bendix *et al.* 2008: 18 – my translation)

What if as a method of disciplining our imagination is a practice aimed at controlling our thinking of innovation. This means monitoring our usual ways of doing things, which, of course, is the best practice *so far*. Due to the fact that innovation is more an answer to challenges changing continuously, best practice is like yesterday's news, part of an ongoing process, a stepping stone on the way to the next deadline: "*Best practice* – whether it is real or defined – is a picture of a success, but a success of the past - the conditions of this practice have most likely changed since it was pronounced as the best" (Bendix *et al.* 2008: 23). The best practice, then, is a practice in need of being replaced by ever-newer *practices*. So next practice is not about rejecting best practice(s), but, it is claimed, about making a change of perspective:

The idea is, then, not to reject *best practice*, for the target of innovation is a better practice, but the perspective should be focused much more on *next practice*. Innovation is directed forward and develops as a consequence of the conditions of, and the work and engagement being applied to the task. (Bendix *et al.* 2008: 24 – my translation)

This change of perspective, the practice of *What if* as a method, implies a different way of relating to both the more positive tasks and the negative difficulties we encounter in our usual *best practice*. It is a continuous reworking, or refining, of our practice, good (because it is the best practice so far) or bad (compared to the next practice), creating a better practice instead.

Moreover, this process continues without end, because "...one solution achieved, opens up for new challenges to be solved." (Bendix *et al.*2008: 25).

Consequently, both the British Innovation Unit and the Danish authors share the conviction that there is always room for improvement, and, hence, that we should never settle for the best practice. Next practice is placed in a timeframe of the future; it is what is possible, in contrast to the past or present, which is the already established best practice. Words like *revolutionize, evolve, renewal, open up, without end* and *what if* all seem to indicate an unfinished task of changing what has already been done. The permanent change that Boltansky and Chiapello claim is one of the signs of innovation in the third spirit of capitalism, is obvious. Besides, we should note the explicit guidance of evaluation (discriminating best from the next), guidance of action (*what if* as a method), power over cognition (the disciplined imagination) and logical coherence (*from best to next practice*) as well, all indicators of ideology according to Mullins (1972). These four characteristics are to be implied in the use of the concepts of best practice and next practice, which we will discuss below.

It is Žižek's insight that any critique of this kind of ideology is part of some sort of ideology as well. In what sense, then, if any, a critique of ideology can function as a disclosing of ideology and what the consequences of this are for the critique of innovation as ideology, we will turn to in the next couple of sections.

Economic imperialism, Žižek and the Ideological

Now there is a certain undertone of imperialism, in Ben Fine's sense, connected to the ideological indicators we ended the last section with. First, presenting innovation as a method creates the sense of neutrality, of being able to be used, for example in collaboration with the social sciences. Second, the method of next practice is clearly meant as a tool for controlling how to discriminate and think about any given or new practice's possible economical development. So the capability of both incorporating and subsuming we presented in the introduction, are implied here. Hence, it will be appropriate to start by elaborating a little on Ben Fine's (Fine & Milonakis 2008, 2009) concept of economical imperialism as a way into discussing Žižek's's notion of ideology. The main idea is hardly new; it has been on the

agenda of philosophy, social science and economics for most of the 20th century. According to Fine, both the protection of the life-world from an economical-instrumental takeover we find in Habermas' thinking and, to some extent, in Honneth's as well, and the opposite neoliberal economical effort in pushing this take-over forward belongs to what he calls first phase economic imperialism. Even the subtle analysis' done by the incipient figures of ideology-critique, such as Lukacs or the early Frankfurt school, trying to "enlighten" people by disclosing their distorted representations of a pre-given reality, is part of this first phase economical imperialism. Fine contrasts this with second phase economic imperialism, which is the take-over of the *social sciences* by different "alternative" economical methods of analysis. Fine (2010; 2010a) considers two examples – globalization and the idea of social capital(s) – and shows, in both cases, that social scientists believe they are using methodological neutral concepts in describing and analyzing new socio-economical configurations, when they are actually advancing already established economical structures (like the agenda of the world bank) or creating new markets.

Both phases will here be interpreted as corresponding to two distinct but inherently connected ways of conceptualizing the ideological, as Žižek (1994) has shown in his excellent essay *The Spectre of Ideology*: as ideology in-itself and ideology for-itself. The first being the immanent notion of ideology as doctrine, "...destined to convince us of its 'truth', yet actually serving some unavowed particular power interest." (Žižek 1994: 10); whereas the latter is ideology in its otherness-externalization, that is, "...the material existence of ideology in ideological practices, rituals and institutions." (Žižek 1994: 12). It is fairly simple to see first phase economic imperialism as ideology in-itself: innovation is a tool for addressing our problems with development, whether private or public. It serves some economic doctrine carrying a 'truth' potential – "it worked in our company, we developed new products – why should this approach not be transferable to the public sector". Furthermore, it can be used for serving some unavowed power interest, i.e. development as a rationalization of the public sector, thereby keeping taxes down, *and* serving as an argument for privatization of parts of the public sector in case the rationalization diminishes the level of public service. Now indicating all of this with the intention of unveiling what is really happening is, according to Žižek's definition of ideology in-itself, part of ideology too. He calls it the regression into

ideology by the critique of ideology. Hence, trying to *convince* people that they are actually reproducing suspect socio-economic structures is part of the first economic imperialism as well. Likewise, an implicit truth claim is at work here: “This kind of innovation is not transferable from the private to the public sector”, as well as an unavowed power interest, i.e. there is another specific kind of innovation, which *ought* to be used in the public sector.

To see how ideology for-it-self corresponds to second phase economic imperialism, let me quote Ben Fine (2010) on social capital at some length:

Social capital has come to occupy, even to displace, more traditional notions of community and civil society. Its proponents tend to avoid anything to do with those other great structures of modern society, the state and the market, although performance within and across these is deemed to be enhanced by higher levels of social capital. This is itself indicative of the extent to which social capital has come to be perceived as a cure-all, both for personal well-being and for the wider society. And this can lead to some dangerous assumptions. For example, the World Bank has heavily promoted social capital as the “missing link” in development, drawing on a study of Tanzanian villages which purported to show that joining a burial society was six times more important for poverty alleviation than female education.

Whereas the first part of this quote can be seen as enforcing social capital as a new kind of truth, with the exclusion of the state and the market as a consequence, and therefore as an example of ideology-in-it-self, the interesting point is the *use* of the concept of social capital by the World Bank. Social capital is used here as an externality, besides money, by the World Bank and its associated researchers. The idea behind this is one of cultivating connections between people assuming that the more people you know the happier your life will be. Hundreds of variables have been used to define and *measure* social capital, from the two-parent family over sports club memberships to what Fine rightly terms bizarre, the imaginary social capital you have with characters in soap operas. The motive behind the World Bank’s interest is, of course, practical, as Fine (2010) explains:

Despite all the hype and government-sponsored research to measure social capital, I know of no example of the concerted and successful use of social capital in creating policies. Instead, something much more sinister is at work. Governments who have already more or less decided what policy is to be implemented will use social capital to legitimise their aims. This has been true, for example, of World Bank policy in removing indigenous populations to

allow for mining projects. And large-scale mining companies have been deliberately and selectively building what they themselves call social capital with communities in order to be able to gain resource extraction permissions more fully and more quickly.

In this way, the highly immaterial substance, social capital, is double-externalized: firstly, by creating a standard compared to which these measured indigenous people are destined to lose and secondly, the indigenous people are actually moved, and probably to a place where the chances are that their social capital, according to the same imposed standard, will increase. Fine's two phases and Žižek's concept of ideology complements each other here. But what Fine misses and Žižek has realised is the internal connection between the two ideological concepts vis-à-vis phases.

For Žižek, then, a third ideological concept constitutes the realization that the first two phases are connected from the start: "...all of a sudden we become aware of a For-itself of ideology at work in the very In-itself of extra-ideological actuality." (Žižek 1994: 15). We suddenly realize that the standard we have created and externalized is not a neutral standard, but an expression of "...the elusive network of implicit, quasi-´spontaneous´ presuppositions and attitudes that form an irreducible moment of the reproduction of the ´non-ideological ´(economic, legal, political, sexual...) practices" (Žižek 1994: 15). In other words, we realize that the reversal of the supposed non-ideological into ideology has happened again, and that the critics of The World Bank, who also use the notion of social capital as a non-ideological tool, but argue against The World Bank, are succumbing to the ideological as well (but not necessarily the same as The World Bank). In summary, any "...direct reference to extra-ideological coercion (of the market, for example) is an ideological gesture *par excellence*..." (Žižek 1994: 15). This could easily be seen as a bow to some sort of postmodernism: that there is no extra-ideological reality, and all we are ever dealing with is a plurality of interconnected ideological infected discursive universes. However, when Žižek (1994: 17) emphasizes the importance of preserving the critique of ideology, even though ideology is already present whenever we experience "reality" and no clear line of demarcation separates ideology from reality, then what is interesting for our purposes are his efforts in identifying a position from which the critique of ideology is possible.

The possibilities of a critique of ideology

So far we have presented the method of next practice and indicated its ideological character by connecting it with Fine and Žižek's ideas of imperialism and ideology respectively. Any critique of ideology, however, was bound to be ideological itself. Our challenge, then, is working out a position legitimizing the critique as critique, in the wake of a possible postmodern resignation and negative cynicism. Hence, this and the following section will try to establish a platform of critical engagement supplying the critique of ideology with a critique of linguistic praxis.

Following Kant, Žižek (1994: 17) designates the relationship between ideology and the criticism of ideology, an 'antinomy of critico-ideological reason', and claims the possibility of assuming a place enabling us to maintain a distance from ideology, however, this place "*...from which one can denounce ideology must remain empty, it cannot be occupied by any positively determined reality* – the moment we yield to this temptation, we are back in ideology". Now, I read this as emphasizing the non-existence of a line of separation between ideology and reality³: where the first two phases of critique of ideology – in their own different ways – point to ideology's misrepresentation of reality, hence, still working with a distinction between ideology and reality, Žižek wants to show that this whole idea of moving past ideology is in itself ideology "*...ideology is always, by definition, 'ideology of ideology'*" (Žižek 1994: 19). There is no comprehensible reality behind ideological reality; our socially constructed and symbolically structured ideological, not necessarily harmonious, reality is all there is.

The emptiness of the place for denouncing ideology, then, is a way of saying that we can only proceed in a negative fashion pointing to instances of *failed* apprehension. Thus, the only positive gesture we can make, is confirming this lack (of being). Now this is a rather sceptical and pessimistic view when it comes to the possibility of pointing to some sort of positively determined reality: *either* denouncing ideology substantially but still being ideology, hence, paradoxically, actually denouncing the denunciation, *or* not. The last part of this either/or consisting, as Žižek suggests, of continuously calling attention to a lack in being, in which case, we are left with either proceeding negatively or 'suspect' cases of reality⁴. However,

there might be a case for pointing to conditions for a positive determination of reality without the dead-end of an either-or logic, and Žižek has actually pointed to the way out of this impasse. When Žižek notes (1994: 7) that ideology has nothing to do with illusion or a distorted representation of 'reality', and hence that *ideology can be true (correct)*, that is, the objective content represented is actually correct, he is right in emphasizing the need for disengaging the concept of ideology and our symbolizing activity from a representationalist paradigm. We have to leave the idea some kind of correspondence between reality and some kind of correct or true representation of it, as it commits us to some type of un-ideological/not-symbolized idea of reality, which is untenable. However, this leaves us with the question of how correctness or truth is capable of showing⁵ itself through a critique of ideology (being itself of an ideological character)? How can correctness manifest itself when ideology is a condition and is disconnected to a representationalist paradigm? If we can delineate the conditions for this manifestation to occur, we will have a slightly more critical place for denouncing, substantially, the concept of next practice as ideology. As claimed in the introduction this is connected to analysing and criticising language as concept-use. The next section will outline the broad contours of a critique of the practice of language serving as the framework for how a correctness of concept-use can be explored. This will, at the same time, be our general framework for critically assessing the language and ideology of the method of next practice.

Critique of practice, correctness and truth as correcting of practice

The critique of ideology is a critique of our language- and symbol-using practice. It is the correct (and incorrect) use of concepts, words, language or symbols, in a given practice, which constitutes the background on which truth (and falseness) can appear in ideology. In other words, I would suggest the possibility of a critique which opens up a room for replacing Žižek's empty position with the idea of making an experience, and hence of learning something (correct/true) – of experiencing as (practical) *correcting*. Two considerations are needed here: firstly, connecting the idea of using concepts with correctness, incorrectness and truth, is both a delicate and profound matter, and due to the limitations of this paper, I can

only make some general introductory remarks on this in the following. Secondly, in the next paragraph, I am going to carry out an investigation into the use of the concepts of next, best and practice, which will show how these concepts are used ideologically in the innovation discourse. This is to be understood as part of an incipient explicating of a more general understanding of how these concepts are supposed to be used correctly. Hence, the point is not replacing one theory (the representationalist) of truth with another. Instead, I take this to be in line with Cora Diamond's thinking on the unfolding of truth that we should replace a quest for defining the concept of truth, and connected notions like correctness, incorrectness and so on, with the idea "...of clarifying, unfolding, the notion of truth, not through a theory but through explicating (a word which itself means *unfolding*) the normative constraints on judging..." (Diamond 2003: 25). Inspired by the German philosopher Martin Seel (2002), I want to show how these constraints are connected to correcting our concept-using practice. This will then serve as the general background on which the critique of the use of concepts in the innovation discourse should be seen.

Firstly, we should notice, that concept-use is, at the outset, connected to language as a medium of 'world'-disclosure and hence to truth and correctness. Even if we, as Žižek claims, are capable of denouncing ideology negatively only, this is still a case of disclosure – an opening of a place *of/for* understanding through the use of language. Disclosing is in this sense somewhere between finding something new and the uncovering *in the sense of appearing* of something – not something hidden but previously un-manifested. Secondly, at the outset it is *not* divergent to speak about correctness or truth *and* linguistic productivity as a disclosing or determining power. An idea of practical correctness can capture the concept-use as meeting the established criteria for correct use, *and* revise these criteria in case of their failing to provide the orientation for the concept-use they are supposed to. Correctness renders the fulfilment of the aim of a given concept-use possible, *but* does not entail it – just like asking the right question does not necessarily imply the right answer. So, correctness is tantamount to proper use combined with an uncertainty of the result, and can be considered as an expression of an opening up of an understanding of balancing or harmonizing the conceptual-use with the situation. Thus the dimension of correctness relates to – according to Seel (2002: 50) - the appropriateness of such a place-opening understanding of things in a

context of action⁶. Thirdly, truth is a special, robust kind of correctness. Robust in the sense that *true* means something to be considered further, something to be reckoned with in an ongoing fashion. For any correct concept-use to be truth-capable, a certain meaning supplied by the context must be implied. Truth and falseness is, then, the *capacity to transcend* this context connected to this meaning – that is, truth obtains when things are as the concept-use claims them to be: a *right* capturing of an instance of a positive determined reality. Falseness, then, is the fallible condition that things can always appear otherwise. Even if it is impossible to recognise it at the time of the actual concept-use – as long as the proper use is an expression of the opening understanding, mentioned above, it is always possible to grasp what it means for the concept-use to be true. Fourthly, and lastly, correctness is then a condition for truth, and truth is a corrective for correctness. Truth is dependent on correctness in the sense that truth can only be disclosed where language, and hence concepts, are used correctly. However, truth transcends correctness in the sense that even the most correct concept-use is incapable of determining the truth – transcendence indicates instead, the continuous possibility of correcting correctness. Or, as Cora Diamond might put it: the continuous unfolding of truth.

Correction, then, is a process of analysing the correctness of a given concept-use with the aim of establishing the possibility of disclosing truth – in the sense of unfolding something new and appearing. Returning to the transforming of the critique of ideology into a critique of linguistic practice mentioned above, the idea of truth showing itself in ideology depends on our *correcting* a given concept-use, but with the awareness of this enterprises' uncertainty, and hence of ideology as a possible permanent condition. With that in mind let us turn to correcting the use of the concepts of best and next practice.

Gilbert Ryle and category mistakes

Let us recapitulate. We have established that that there is an ideological glow involved in the idea of next practice. Hence, a critique of ideology was adopted as perspective, accepting Žižek's claim that any critique of ideology stays ideological itself. Using the idea of the last section, i.e. truth as unfolding, however, a possibility was created, in principle, for accepting

ideology as a condition, but *pace* Žižek, denouncing ideology in a substantial manner. In this section we will put the critique of practice to the test, using Gilbert Ryle's concept of category mistake as an example of how a critique of concept-use could be executed, and the next section will try to capture the substance of it.

In the piece of innovation discourse we have presented above, a certain *necessity* of connecting the two concepts of best practice and next practice as a progression from the former to the latter was claimed. The concept of next practice was used of something there but not here, of something not yet realised and as an improvement of the already realised best practice. The imagination is trained or disciplined with the aim of discriminating the best from the next practice, making a future directed focus the right focus for the progression of capitalist growth. Žižek (1997: xv) gives us the reason why this discrimination is so important:

...its [capitalism, BAC] dynamics of perpetual self-revolutionizing relies on the endless postponing of its point of impossibility (final crisis, collapse). What is for other, earlier, modes of production a dangerous exception is for capitalism normality: crisis is in capitalism *internalized*, taken into account, as the point of impossibility which pushes it to continuous activity. Capitalism is structurally always in crisis – this is why it is expanding all the time: it can only reproduce itself by way of 'borrowing from the future'; by way of escaping into the future.

By being posited as a tool for reaching the new, that is, as a supplier of continuous development to the new capitalism, the method of next practice helps concealing the possibility of changing or the collapse of capitalism's mode of production (a mode geared towards a limitless growth) by literally looking the other way, forward. The result, then, is the *reproduction* of the same mode of production, instead of actually innovating it. It hides the impossibility of actually changing its mode of production by looking to a future, which must stay empty. The reason it is bound to stay empty is, firstly, that at the point of realisation of a next practice, a new next practice can be pictured (the escape into the future), exceeding the former and making this a best practice only (borrowing from the future). Secondly, this makes the actual difference between the next practice and the best practice somewhat obscure, because any next practice will always be the next *best* practice as well. This is where our critique of concept-use will set in. If Žižek provides the reason why the method of next

practice is important for capitalism, then Ryle provides us with *how* it becomes important.

First of all, best practice and next practice, constitute two different categorical assessments of practice. The former expresses a valorisation and indicates an appreciative stance towards some practice as the best, whereas the latter expresses a temporality, a future event, which comes next. Second, these two categorical assessments are put together with the use of *from...to*, creating a necessity of progressing from one practice to the other practice, using next practice as a method. Both points indicate that our example of a practice of innovation is involved with what Gilbert Ryle (1949) terms a *category mistake*, i.e. tying two different ontological categories together in a mistaken manner. A category mistake is a misunderstanding of the logical geography of certain concepts. Ryle (1949: 8) expresses it this way:

To determine the logical geography of concepts is to reveal the logic of the propositions in which they are wielded, that is to say, to show with what other propositions they are consistent and inconsistent, what propositions follow from them and from what propositions they follow. The logical type or category to which a concept belongs is the set of ways in which it is logically legitimate to operate with it.

A mistake, then, consists in confusing the category to which a concept belongs with another category, thus using the concept in an erroneously logical way. Ryle's prime example (Ryle 1949: 20) is how the concept of mind came to be depicted as a ghost in the machine, or, more accurately, as a spectral machine from Descartes and onward. Faced with Galileo and Hobbes' mechanical universe, Descartes – according to Ryle - could not cope with the fact that the mind was just something mechanical as well. To safeguard the peculiarity of the mind and its workings, then, a split into the physical and the mental was proclaimed, the first being subject to mechanical causes and the second to non-mechanical causes (the famous ghost in the machine). The differences between the physical and the mental were then, according to Ryle (1949: 19):

...represented as differences inside the common framework of categories 'things', 'stuff', 'attribute', 'state', 'process', 'change', 'cause', 'effect'. Minds are things, but different sorts of things from bodies; mental processes are

causes and effects, but different sorts of causes and effects from bodily movements. And so on.

The mistake, of course, was Descartes' interpreting mind as subsumed under the same categories as matter. Hence, Ryle's point is not denying the existence of either mental or physical processes. Rather his point is both conceptual in the sense that "...the phrase 'there occur mental processes' does not mean the same as 'there occur physical processes'..." and practical in the sense that it impinges upon the use of the categories "...therefore, it makes no sense to conjoin or disjoin the two." (Ryle 1949: 22) So, does a best practice mean the same as the next practice when they are subsumed under the category of progression, *from...to*? Or, using one of the categories Ryle employs in the quote above: since the *from...to* can be seen as a process, is any given process involving best practice and any given process involving the next practice the same? To sum up, if two concepts belong to the same category, it is right to construct conjoining or disjoining propositions embodying them. If you conjoin two concepts not belonging to the same category, however, chances are that you will be deceived by a connection not actually there even though it seems so. So returning to the concepts of best and next, the simple point is that connecting these two concepts together with the inferential string of *from...to* creates a glow of necessity between them, a necessity of leaving one for the other. Hence, the categorical mistake does not consist in denying that it is possible to connect best practice and next practice, only that there is a sense of necessity between them.

So the ideological import of the method of next practice consists in the following: the effect of subsuming both practices under one category, the process of *from...to*, creates the borrowing from the future. Furthermore, it conceals the fact of its own impossibility by escaping into the future through the lack of ever realising the next practice. The continuous discrimination between best and next, the disciplined imagination using *what if* as a method, and the logical coherence of a claimed proceeding from...to, all serve as a road to nowhere⁷. Innovation, then, is like a methodological *perpetuum mobile* serving capitalism's endless demand for growth disguised as a continuous development. Actually arriving at a next practice, though, would entail a stopping of what you are doing; facing the impossibility of the endeavour of perpetual expanding activity, hence, questioning what this demand for growth is

actually for.

A possible connection between best and next?

Criticising the practice of using a connection of necessity between best and next practice exemplified in the analysis above, is a case of learning something, of making an experience. It is, therefore, an example of the establishment of an opening understanding for a correct concept-use and the possibility of capturing truth as well: correctness, it was claimed, renders the fulfilment of the aim of a given concept-use possible, *but* does not entail it. Wishing to establish the conditions for a correct connection based on the above analysis, then, we should be mindful that what is certain is the uncertainty of possible further corrections. So the following conditions can be seen as a simple plaidoyer for preserving the possibility of pointing to some substantiality within the denouncing of ideology, by considering how the connection between the concept-use of best practice and next practice can actually make sense, if we want to continue connecting best with next.

First of all, we might disconnect the use of next practice from the emptiness implied in the context of capitalism as Žižek claims. Where the emptiness of the next is supposed to be a mark of a continuous development it is probably the opposite. By not actualizing any practice you occlude the possibility of learning from any practice, and hence block any real development. One way to counter this is by realizing we are not leaving the best practice for the next, but approaching the next practice as the best: that is, realizing that lessons from previous good, wrong, bad, useful, extreme, monstrous attempts at establishing *next practices* are part of the progression from the best to the next. Second, this implies considering for whom this next practice is the best and in what situation. Since there is no way of knowing this in advance, the upholding of an open understanding for the correct concept-use could be reinforced by using the following principle as a modus of orientation: *make sure that any anticipation of next practice does not prove to be the anti-participation of all those who want a word on what next practice could be.* Third, let Adorno who, in his *Minima Moralia*, aphorism 150 entitled Extra Edition, caught the first glimpse of how ideology and innovation are connected, have the last word:

The new evolves into the merely evil first through totalitarian guidance, wherein the tension of the individuals to society, which once realized the category of the new, is nullified. Today the appeal to the new – regardless of what kind, provided only it is archaic enough – has become universal, the ubiquitous medium of false mimesis. The decomposition of the subject is completed by handing itself over to a constantly differing, unchanging uniformity [*Immergleichheit*]. (My translation)

Here this false mimesis is connected to economy: innovation as next practice both borrows from and escapes into the future and clouds this as development when in fact it is stagnation made methodological. The totalitarian guidance Adorno speaks of becomes the method of a continuous realization of the new, which fails the moment it is realized. Innovation in this sense is thus a road to nowhere, a never-ending story, leaving the innovative subject with nothing but the condition of ever changing, renewable processes, which proves empty when realized.

Adorno, further, in the same quotation, says: 'The new, a blank place in consciousness, awaited as if with closed eyes, seems to be the formula by means of which a stimulus is extracted from horror and despair. It makes evil into flowers'. We should take this as a reminder of the blindness of an endeavour searching for the new, and for the sake of the new, only. Without any ethically informed decision or at least normative guidance of some sort, any monstrosity can be installed as a next practice as long it is new. Adorno's rephrasing of Kant's categorical imperative as act so the terror of Auschwitz cannot happen again is an example of making us see the normative import of establishing a new practice. Converted to the idea of practical correctness the corresponding point is, that there is a dimension in the use of language which is connected to some idea of responsibility, perhaps language as a mode of retaining a responsibility for both the *what* and the *who* of language.

Conclusion

In this paper we have tried to use of Žižek's insights on ideology and capitalism in an analysis of the discourse of innovation. Firstly, the discourse surrounding the innovation method of next practice and the ideological import of the concepts within this discourse was described. Secondly, Žižek's rethinking of ideology was described and two things were emphasised in this connection. First, doing critique of ideology is not an unmasking of "how things really are". On the contrary, any search determined on this unmasking is ideological itself. Second, *pace* Žižek this was not interpreted as the inevitable emptiness of the space of any critique of ideology. Thirdly, a more substantial space for critique of ideology was sketched using two contemporary philosophers ideas of a critique of concept-use. This pictures the critique as an *unfolding* of how the concept-use is correct or not, thereby supplying the critique ala Žižek, with the possibility of a concrete space where truth and correctness can occur. Fourthly, a critique of the concept-use of the innovation discourse was made, within the frames sketched by this more substantial space of critique, by using Gilbert Ryle's concept of a category mistake. The ideology connected to the methodology of innovation was described as claiming a *necessity* in progressing from the best to the next practice. A necessity diverting the attention from the possible failure of actually innovating capitalism's mode of production by escaping and borrowing from the future. Lastly, we ended with some suggestions of what direction a use of the concepts of the best and the next practice could take as a more substantial correction, inspired by one of Adorno's aphorisms in his *Minima Moralia*. Critique of ideology as a critique of our concept-use appears as a kind of *anamnesis*, a learning from and remembrance of our previous practices of concept-use, and in this re-collection creating the opening space for something new to be established.

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¹ Not being able to do justice to the subtleties of their work, though, the following division indicates the difference between the first and the second spirit. The first spirit consists of the early developments of capitalism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in close connection with both a religious and utilitarian mind set and the incipient industrialism. The second phase, or spirit, from ca. 1930 – 1960 consists of the distribution of Taylorism, the efficiency improvement of companies through calculation and rationality – the assembly line would be the symbol for this.

² <http://www.innovationunit.org/next-practice/what-is-next-practice.html> Accessed October 2010.

³ Or more accurately: like the antinomies by Kant is a systematic expression of (theoretical) reason gone astray, that is, not staying within the boundaries of its *proper* exercise, so Žižek wants to point to critico-ideological reason going astray, when it claims to unmask ideology and out pops reality.

⁴ Of being a case of ideology but presenting itself as not-ideology, of being a case of ideology even if it is a critique of ideology or the defeatist attitude of not caring whether it is ideology or not.

⁵ Henrik Jøker Bjerre (2007: 63) has drawn attention to a possible shift (around 1995) in Žižek's thinking from conceptualising truth as a lack of totality of true sentences, and hence stressing the absence of the Real, to truth as a happening or illumination, and hence stressing the presence of the Real. As emphasised (Bjerre 2007: 64) these two phases should be emerged as critique of ideology and staging of truth respectively. The following analysis could be understood as a concrete example of *practicing critique of ideology as staging truth* in this way, i.e. the analysis, a critique of a given conceptual practice, functions as a stepping stone in the continuously unfolding of a possible truth within this practice.

⁶ In German "...der Angemessenheit eines solchen bereichsöffnenden *Verständnisses* von Dingen, um die es im jeweiligen Handlungszusammenhang geht..."

⁷ Coming to my knowledge too late for incorporating in this article, Huebner (2005) seems to point in the same direction.

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3.

Connecting Experience and Economy – Aspects of Disguised
Positioning

Connecting Experience and Economy—Aspects of Disguised Positioning

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Abstract The focus of this article is the use of experience made within the literature of the “new” economical discipline of experience economy. By combining a methodological individualism with a causal and dehumanising picture of the process of experience, this discipline conceives economic interactions as acts of autonomy. These acts, it is claimed, are part of economical instrumental reason restructuring itself by using experiences as tools in convincing consumers that they are free to pursue their respective paths of lives. Described through the use of positioning theory, however, this turns out to be a result of an effort of equipping consumers with a new economic norm of forced positioning disguised as deliberate self-positioning.

Keywords Positioning theory · Experience economy · Rom Harré · Consumerism · Disguised positioning

Introduction

In the introduction to his excellent book, *Songs of Experience*, Professor Martin Jay (2005, p. 6) observes a paradox inherent in the use of most concepts but particularly explicit when it comes to the concept of experience, “...experience is both a collective linguistic concept, a signifier that yokes together a class of heterogeneous signifieds located in a diacritical force field, and a reminder that such concepts always leave a remainder that escapes their homogenizing grasp.” Hence, no meta-narrative is possible when it comes to writing a history of the idea of experience, i.e. no single point from where or towards which this history unfolds or can be unfolded. As a consequence Jay (2005, p. 3) aims at uncovering and exploring the “...multiple, often contradictory meanings...” of all the songs historically sung about experience, instead of presenting yet an account of *what* experience really is. This article,

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essayistic in spirit, explores one remainder, to iterate Professor Jay's wording, in need of being reminded: the connection between experience and economy. Specifically, how experience is conceived when it is connected with the allegedly new experience-economy, a marketing theoretical economy focusing on how experiences are conducive in the buying and selling of things.

Now even though Professor Jay did not explore the connection between experience and economy in the aforementioned book, in a later interview (Goodman 2003) he suggests how this theme should be explored. Asked by the interviewer what the growing commoditization of experience signifies, Jay gives the following answer. Intrinsic to the concept of experience is a distinction, explicitly made in German, between *erlebnis*, an intense, subjective experience, and *erfahrung*, both the experience handed down in cultural traditions and the creating of new experiences able to be handed down. An example of this distinction would be the difference between the intense experience of driving a car for the first time (the *erlebnis*), and the skills, norms and rules in play when driving, plus the experience coming from the continuous practice of driving (the *erfahrung*). Jay suggests, upon accepting this distinction as a meaningful categorization, experience, when connected to consumption, is predominantly emphasized as *erlebnis* putting "...intensity in the place of meaningful duration." (Goodman 2003, p. 117). The same conceptual pair is used in the literature, Boswijk et al. (2007), of the new experience economy, which will be the object of our study. This will show us how, from this economical perspective, experience is conceptualized and related to human being and doing. Particularly, these authors (see also Jantzen and Jensen 2006; Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007a; Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007b) emphasize the continuous role of the consumer in the creation of experiences, with the intention of describing a more complete picture of the experiencing individual. Contrary to Jay's claim, then, *erfahrung* is initially included in the concept of experience within this economy (see also Zwick et al. 2008). But, as will be seen, part of it is still downplayed strategically when it comes to positioning the consumer as an experiencing individual. Only those *erfahrungs* conducive to facilitating a purchase by the consumer are emphasised. To give an example, one slogan of a famous coffee selling company goes, "It is not just what you're buying, it is what you're buying into", where this into is more than not just a service, it is the experience (see Žižek 2009, p.53 for the full text of the advertisement). It is comprised of "good coffee ethics", "good coffee karma", plus nice surroundings with comfortable chairs, good music, free online access and so on, "to dream, work and chat in". Consuming in this place is partaking in a staged setting involving certain experiences like the intense smell of fresh grinded coffee beans, or having a good conscience doing something right through consuming. It excludes certain experiences as well, like leaving your everyday obstacles outside the door, forgetting a bad smell or questioning in what sense the horizon under which the consuming act is subsumed is actually ethical. Hence, a joint process of exclusion and inclusion is part of the creation of experiences in experience economy, including those experiences capable of working as instruments in achieving the goal of this economic rationality, only.

Now this sounds like old news, since capitalist economical systems are based on optimising the conditions for reproducing themselves either by excluding or incorporating anything opposite to them (see Boltanski and Chiapello 1999 for a recent

analysis of this). So where is the pertinence in highlighting this, then? First of all, it indicates a reconfiguration of parts of those socio-economic processes dealing with the daily consumption practices by using some *new* instruments, the *erlebnis* and *erfahrung* just described, for achieving the economical goal of selling. As Žižek (2009, p. 35) claims, the basic ideological *dispositif* of capitalism "...call it "instrumental reason," "technological exploitation," "individualist greed," or whatever we like—is separated from its concrete socio-economic conditions (capitalist relations of production) and conceived of as an autonomous life..." thereby leaving these relations of production intact. Experience economy is part of this *dispositif*, it will be argued, since it produces means for this "instrumental reason" to separate itself from certain socio-economic conditions (see Sato 2011 for another critique of de-contextualising economical transactions, which, however, does not discuss the economical strategic point in doing so). Second, through this process, norms for understanding this separation as a process of increasing autonomy of the consumer are introduced. Hence, the autonomous life spoken about in the quote above is supposedly manifested through the consumer expressing his or her capability of self-steering or being autonomous through acts of experiential consumption *staged* by companies. Experiences, both *erlebnisse* and *erfahrungen*, become the instruments by which the consumer manifests this (economical) autonomy. The socio-economic conditions, then, are deliberately separated from the consumers through excluding certain parts of the experiences, and this vacuum of exclusion—a dehumanisation—is then filled up with the "new" norm of self-steering or autonomy through consuming.

This process of mutual exclusion/inclusion will be analysed, using positioning theory, within a philosophical informed setting of how experience should be conceived. Positioning theory is here understood in the sense given to it by Rom Harré and others, as a tool within the broad theoretical frame of discursive psychology (Harré and van Langenhove 1998; Harré and Moghaddam 2003) or more recently, hybrid psychology (Brinkmann 2011; Harré 2012). The concept of positioning is a strong alternative to the more static concept of role, where the relationship salesman-customer, for example, is predetermined. Hence, the concept of role fails to describe how these roles are experienced and enacted by the participants dynamically *in their own way*. Instead positioning theory draws explicitly on an emergent ontology of social entities dispersed between different generic orderings of a spatial, time-related, material and normative character (see Martin and Gillespie 2010, for similar insights within the broad framework of a neo-Meadian approach). Within this ontology, social acts, including speech acts, physical acts of sitting or driving, for example, and other expressions of *experiencing*, are seen as the 'matter' of social reality—expressing how different positions are enacted in different dynamical ways. An early precursor of connecting psychology and economy in studying human being and doing is Simon's classical articles (1955; 1956). In contrast to Simon's predominantly individualistic methodology, positioning theory, however, furthers the awareness of the complexities, the boundedness of economic rationality as Simon terms it, involved in and across different related situations of both economical and non-economical character.

So in the following an explorative analysis is made from a joint philosophical and discursive psychological perspective. Explorative in the sense that it is in congruence with the positive valuation of scientific indeterminacy (Clegg 2010; Elstrup 2010;

Kohler 2010), where the purpose of the analysis is not determining some causal model or representation of a part of human life, but recognizing agency and genuine possibilities of acting. Hence, the aim is more critical in showing how experience is used as an instrument instituting the new economic norm of seeing consumption as an expression of freedom. Conditioning this instituting is a certain methodology deployed by experience economy for setting up the process of allowing only some experiences and constraining the effect these experiences could have. This methodology starts by emphasising the consumer's role in creating experiences and proceeds from the experiencing individual to the social embeddings of this individual. The social, then, becomes a category for describing the addition of these experiencing individuals only—confirming the initial separation from the socio-economic conditions described above. Hence, experiencing is primarily an individual endeavour with the obvious over-individual elements (the surrounding world) involved in all experiencing denigrated to a secondary influencing factor. One important assumption underpinning this methodological individualism is the appeal to a “causal picture of human life”, as Rom Harré terms it. This picture is implicit in the epistemology of creating experiences, as we will see, and serves the economy in the guise of instrumental reason well. The parts comprising the epistemology can namely be incorporated as means to the specific experience economic end of reaching the freedom of the consumer by staging the process of exclusion/inclusion. Using positioning theory, however, this process can be described more as a *forced positioning* disguised as a *deliberate self-positioning*. Learning to pretend expressing freedom by engaging in consumption practices is the norm, which the experience economy tries to teach the consumer. For example, in a consuming situation, I am supposedly free to choose between different things. But staging the situation, making my choice an experiential act, positions me with a duty of imagining this choosing as my free choice, not the company's, regardless of the socio-economic conditions involved.

The article proceeds in the following manner: first, an example of experiencing is presented and will be used throughout the article. This example introduces some initial considerations as to what is implied in the concept of experience and serves as a contrast to how experience is conceived within the experience economy. Second, a short description of the development within experience economy will be presented. Third, this will set the stage for presenting, how experiencing and experience is conceived within one of the newest presentations of experience economy. Assuming the discipline of experience economy is fairly unknown, this description will be fairly detailed. Finally, the general characteristic of experience and experiencing, as it is presented within the economical perspective, is presented using positioning theory and exemplified by the author's own experience of buying a car. Hopefully the contours of a new positioning of the consumer, as part of the reconfiguration of the aforementioned *dispositif*, will appear.

Experiencing: One Famous Example

Let us start with a very famous description of experiencing, Marcel's experience of eating a madeleine cake in Proust's *In search of lost time* (Proust 2000). It runs

through several pages in the end of the part called Combray in the first book, and the following is an excerpt:

No sooner had the warm liquid mixed with the crumbs touched my palate than a shudder ran through me and I stopped intent upon the extraordinary thing that was happening to me. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses, something isolated, detached, with no suggestion of its origin... Whence did it come? What did it mean? How could I seize and apprehend it? ... And suddenly the memory revealed itself. The taste was that of the little piece of madeleine which on Sunday mornings at Combray (because on those mornings I did not go out before mass), when I went to say good morning to her in her bedroom, my aunt Léonie used to give me, dipping it first in her own cup of tea or tisane. The sight of the little madeleine had recalled nothing to my mind before I tasted it. And all from my cup of tea . . . as soon as I had recognised the taste of the piece of madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime-blossom which my aunt used to give me.

The case of Marcel's childhood memories starting to flow when he tastes this madeleine cake dipped in linden tea has been the object of plenty of literary investigations. What is interesting here is Proust's description of experiencing in both its aspects. That is, as an intense, subjective experience, *erlebnis*, and as an experience based on pre-given social practices, creating new experiences of learning in its aftermath, *erfahrung*. Now, even though Proust's description is done from a first person perspective it is a common experience—we can all understand how this experience actually takes place (it is a realistic description) and how this experience would unfold if it were our experience (how I would shudder, smell the tea or taste the cookie or describe the experience). Hence, there is something general, philosophically, about this description, in the sense in which Tugendhat (2010) interprets Kant's anthropological question "What is man?" Tugendhat observes that the concomitant questions Kant poses (in his *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view*) are asked from a first person perspective (What can *I* know, what should *I* do and so on), but the answer is presented from the third person perspective. The reason for this is, according to Tugendhat, that Kant implicitly articulates a general tension between the world conceived from a subjective perspective and the possible general validity of this subjective perspective. Hence, as a characteristic of human understanding there exists:

a tension between a subjective and a common perspective; it is this tension which forces us to enlightenment, and makes it inevitable that every act of self-understanding is to be seen in the widest horizon of how we understand ourselves as humans. Because of this dynamic, everything I judge to be so and so is directed at a We and this We is directed at the widest understanding of us as human beings. (Tugendhat 2010, p. 39)(Translation, BAC)

Now, even though Tugendhat's way of putting it, that my understanding is in some way ours as well, is correct, the conception of We as a general validity of my perspective is too close to an enlarged I. That is, pretending that the subjective conviction is universally binding for all of us. This denigrates the sense in which understanding and experience is connected to *participating* concretely in different practices, particularly how different language-uses makes understanding of experience possible, replacing it with a sense of being spectator to the practice instead, as

Pippin (2010) puts it. This philosophical concept of a spectator view of experience must be kept in mind, though, since it will return later as part of the implicit background of the causal explanation of how experience works—what Harré calls the Cartesian view of mind. Connecting experience and understanding to a given practice and, furthermore, agreeing with Tugendhat's intention that it transgresses a pure personal understanding, we can use Pippin (2008; 2010) as inspiration. Hence, the first thing to stress is that understanding and experiencing are activities. Understanding and experiencing are characteristics of agency connected to participating in and not to a side-ways watching of these practices. Agency, then "...is much more like a socially status instituted and sustained by relevant social attitudes shared in a community at a time than it is like being a unique sort of entity, one either exempt from causal laws of the spatio-temporal universe or possessed of a distinct psychological structure and mode of causation..." (Pippin 2010). The widest understanding of us as human beings, then, is connected to how our participating in a given practice involves both self-relations *and* relations to others, and not just a rootedness in a singular perspective. Second, the mutual recognition of this by the participants in a given practice, presupposes that I am able to identify with my activities and projects within this practice in such a way that they can be experienced and understood as being mine *but* from the other participants perspectives. Understanding and experiencing, then, is shared between participants in concrete practices, by holding one another accountable in accordance with the right criteria for expressing this understanding and experiencing.

Implicit in both points is, of course, that language—made explicit in different language-uses—is a major condition in bringing this mutual experience and understanding about. In this way the given practice embodies both the first person (my wording) and the third person plural perspective (in our language) through an "...achieved form of individual and collective mindedness, and institutionally embodied cognitive relations..." (Pippin 2008, p. 39). Agency, then, embody a sense of autonomy or self-steering only *within* these cognitive relations, that is, as a transaction between different participants in shared practices. Hence, my autonomy and independence is dependent upon others recognising this and vice versa. This mutual recognition is, of course, never without tensions, and a "harmonious" balancing between the participants, therefore, is a possible but not a necessary outcome. The tension will, furthermore, express it self qualitatively in different ways, ranging from the uneasiness accompanying a pretence to the dire consequences of a full-blown quarrel. This philosophical description of the dependence of experience and understanding on mutual recognition in shared practices, complies with the general tenor of developmental psychology in terms of cognition and language-use acquisition (for example Martin and Gillespie 2010; Tomasello 1999; 2005). To put it bluntly, only by learning to use and by using symbolic resources first through emphatic identification with primary caretakers, and later through additional participation in different social practices and institutional settings, is the development of human agency as self-determining fostered.

Opposing this cognitive basis of human agency would be excluding certain socio-economic conditions, thereby inhibiting the possibility of establishing the inherent cognitive relations of a given practice. Furthermore, it would transform the status of agency from cognitive to instrumental, replacing transaction between

the participants with interaction between spectators as isolated entities, thereby conceiving experiences as means to reach pre-given ends. This instrumental character of agency will be understood as a dehumanising of the connection between agency, practice and experience in the following. As we will see in the next couple of sections, the connection between experience and the practice of consumption as emphasised by experience economical literature, has, in general, these characteristics.

First and Second Generation of Experience Economy: From Product to Self-Development

Even though preceding attempts to accentuate the importance of experiences in our society exists (see Boswijk et al. 2007, p. 2; Schulze 2007; Toffler 1973), the idea of a “mature” experience economy is usually considered the result of a growing awareness, through the 1990s, of the limits to a continuous growth in the service sector within organizational and management fields. The experience economy books we will be referring to here, gives the impression that they function as guides in helping companies adjust to this new post-service economy. Joseph Pine and Gilmore (1999), the *locus classicus* of the first generation of experience economy, was the first expression of this awareness. As Boswijk et al. (2007, p. 2) explains,

Their [Pine & Gilmore, BAC] thesis is that as soon as a country has reached a certain level of affluence, the attention shifts from goods and services to experiences. The abundant supply of material goods and services will continue to grow, and this will set off a pattern of cost reduction and commoditisation, there will be more and more competition in terms of price, and this will in turn force companies to look for new ways of bringing goods and services to the attention of customers.

Pine and Gilmore terms this dialectic between commoditization and the creative invention of new experiences, a natural progression of economic value. This progression traverses extracting commodities, producing and selling goods from these commodities, delivering services in connection with selling the goods, staging special experiences around the goods to differentiate it from other manufacturers producing the same kind of good and, last, the special case of guiding an experience process as a transformation of the customer.

The second generation of experience economy, including Boswijk et al. (see also Jantzen and Jensen 2006; Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007a; Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007b), claims that in the perspective of the 1st generation, “...the initiative lies with the supplier and hardly at all with the customer. The latter is consistently viewed as a more or less passive target for the company.” (Boswijk et al., p. 6). Instead the second generation of experience economy contends that a societal tendency to move from a system of social rules to what is termed communicative self-direction exists. In the first generation the company decided the rules in the sense of determining what the customer can buy and what he will experience. The customer is here directed from the (social) outside it is claimed. But with the new logic of communicative self-direction people are not directed from the outside, they “...communicate with companies about what they would like to experience, and companies would do well to take heed and act on the basis of this information.” (Boswijk et al., p. 7) So, a shift to a condition disengaged

from the social and interpreted as ‘autonomous’ or self-steering, seems to be the desired experiential consumerist attitude, “Here, things are not fixed in rigid rules determined from on high, but a dialogue arises between the parties: communication. This obviously also implies that the parties are on the same level; there is no longer a party that determines the rules and gives commands and a party that obeys them unquestioningly;” (Boswijk et al., p. 7) Even though this, arguably, could be interpreted as opening up a way for full-fledged egoism and assumes rather than shows that the parties are on the same level, the authors’ intentions are different. Their intention is to picture the consumers as a necessary element within the relations of production, “... instead there would be a kind of cooperation between the individual and the company. In fact it is precisely this development that one can see taking place within the field of organizational dynamics and the economy.” (Boswijk et al., p. 7) This new self-directed form of personalised economy is the basis of the co-creation between the company and the customer, of either personalized value or meaningful experiences, as the authors claim. Hence, the focus upon creating value for the customer “...leads to fundamental shifts in the value chain. Value creation no longer takes place within the company’s value chain, but with the customer and in the networks centring on the customer.” (Boswijk et al., p. 10). The company is now more of a guide in creating personalised value than a supplier—because the consumer now is the primary supplier to herself. One consequence of this is, as Jantzen and Rasmussen (2007b p. 41) explains, that in cases of unsuccessful selling “...the blame is not just on the good or the supplier. The experiencing person’s lack of abilities bears just as much blame.” (Translation, BAC). Besides unrealistic expectations the primary ability lacking, then, is the consumer’s capability of understanding consuming as an expression of autonomy or self-steering. Hence, the move from 1st to 2nd generation of experience economy is interpreted as an increase in the consumer’s capability of creating experiences to the point of complete independence (see Fig. 1.)

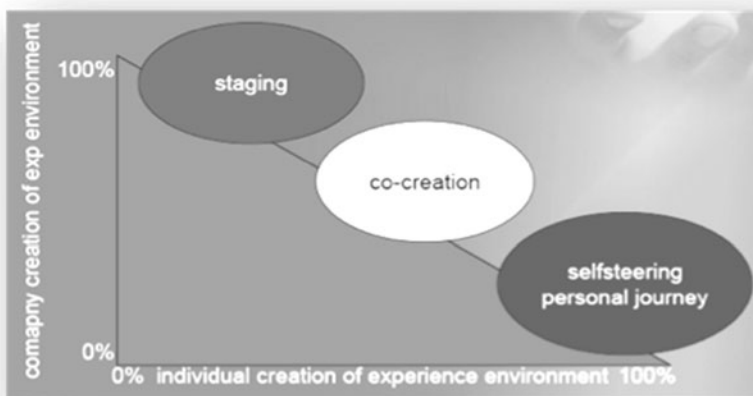


Fig. 1 This picture is reproduced with permission from a powerpoint presentation uploaded on the homepage of European Centre of Experience Economy. The same pictures occur in Boswijk et al. (2007, p. 10) as well

The authors propose a twofold definition of experience behind this experiential based autonomous self-directing. Experience consists both of professional skills, like a pilot's experience in doing his job, and the sensation or feeling released through the act of encountering or undergoing something. This corresponds roughly to the distinction presented in the introduction between *erfahrung* and *erlebnis* and it is the latter definition, the process of undergoing something, which is primarily emphasised: "A simple example is letting a potential customer test-drive a car. Cars are rarely sold anymore without the purchaser making a test-drive. The rational choice for the car (the brand) is supported by the emotional experience of driving it." (Boswijk et al., p. 11) The idea is simple, letting the potential buyer experience the car by driving it supplies her with the primary premise (the experience of undergoing something) in the argument of reaching the conclusion of buying (the rational choice) the car. The "genuine" choice this self-steering and autonomous buyer has is sought shrouded in experiential positive emotions with feelings of self-steering and self-invention understood as the most authentic. Buying a car is not an investment for life, as the car salesman told this article's author when he bought a car - it is an investment in life. The logic of buying and selling of cars, then, encourage "...not only the idea of consumer choice but also the ideology of the self-made man, which allowed the individual to start seeing his own life as a series of options and possible transformations." (Salecl 2010, p. 19) Choosing the car then, is a visible expression of the self-made woman or man, a very tangible expression of freedom and transformation.

The expertise or "worldly wisdom" we normally think of as *erfahrung*, also a result and part of recognitive processes in different societal contexts, is more or less denounced. In its place—as we will see in the next section—is put a process of emphasising only certain parts of the *erfahrung*, those conducive for engaging the consumer in what is perceived as a freedom-evolving and self-transforming process of joyful consumerism. This seems to confirm Salecl's (2010, p. 24) claim that "The more isolated we become from a real engagement with the social and political sphere, the more we are propelled towards self-mastery." That is, consumerist self-mastery is duty-free, free from any duties and consequences involving the social and political spheres. This devaluating or reducing of *erfahrung*, the bypassing of the recognitive processes occurring in and across different contexts, is part of the de-humanizing of the experiencing subject we characterized as the process of exclusion above.

Creating Meaningful Experiences: A Causal Epistemology

Denouncing the social context at the outset is, furthermore, reflected in the epistemological considerations the authors put forth by going "...deeper into the matter and from an individual psychological perspective to investigate and discover what meaningful experiences are and how they form an inextricable component of our lives." (Boswijk et al., p.19). The strategy behind their investigation, is *methodologically* to start with a description of the experience process seen from an *individual* perspective, and from thereon move towards the different contexts, personal, socio-cultural and physical, within which the experiencing individual is acting. Despite the fact that the individual is not the only category carrying any explanative force here, the social is only used as a category for describing the adding up of individuals. Hence, this

methodological individualism (Arrow 1994, p. 1) still implies that all accounts of economic interaction should fundamentally be based on individual behaviour. Hence, one result is a partial description of the agency involved (Warde 2005, p. 132), leaving the recognitive relations and agency as transacting behind. The authors fail, therefore, in engaging with the significance of, first, how social relations are influencing our choices, for example how a social class aspiration potentially influence our (consumerist) choices. Second, of how the individual perspective is intertwined with common meaningful practices. As in our interpretation of Marcel's cookie-experience the possibility of understanding the experience lies not in the individual mind, but through the participation in public practices and foremost among these is language. Furthermore, abstracting the individual from the different situations in which the individual always finds herself embedded in, is reflected in the depiction of the experience process as seen in Fig. 2. The contrast to the recognitive basis of experience and understanding, as described above, is here revealed in the spectator view of experience and understanding, starting with individual (empiricist-causal) sensing triggering the epistemological process, instead of the common recognitive practices rendering this process meaningful in the first place.

The experience process and the shortcomings just touched upon could be described by interpreting Marcel's experience employing Fig. 2. Experiencing the cake, Marcel's senses enable him "...to take cognizance of that part of physical reality that forms *our* world." (Boswijk et al., p. 20). In contradistinction to a purely receptive process, perception is an active form of giving meaning, albeit unconsciously, to the world around us, it is claimed. The madeleine cake, in this sense, reveals to Marcel his intentions, expectations and his personal history (Boswijk et al., p. 21). This triggers an emotional response, containing both an affective and a cognitive component, which determine any possible change on the individual's part. Furthermore, these emotions manifest themselves "...in four ways: through feelings, expressive behavior, motivated behavior and physiological changes." (Boswijk et al., p. 22) In the case of Marcel, the sensory perception of tasting the cake soaked in tea causes a pleasure and a shudder running through his body, making him ponder the effect of the sensation. The whole cake-experience qualifies as an *erlebnis* defined as "An immediate, relatively isolated occurrence with a complex of emotions that make an impression and represent a certain value for the individual within the context of a specific situation." (Boswijk et al., p. 22) Recalling past situations, as when Marcel

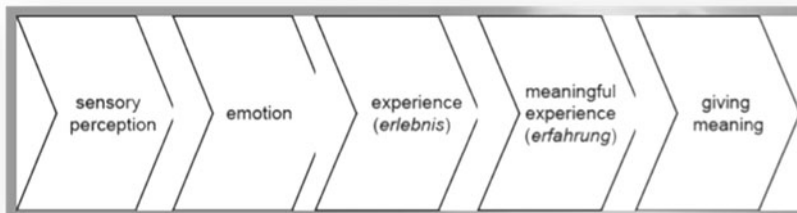


Fig. 2 This picture is reproduced with permission from a powerpoint presentation uploaded on the homepage of European Centre of Experience Economy. The same pictures occur in Boswijk et al. (2007, p. 10) as well

realizes that his sensation is connected to his childhood experiences, is part of *erfahrung*. Included here is the possibility of both the fulfilment and non-fulfilment of expectations as well. Hence, “The meaningful experience in the sense of *erfahrung* involves an important learning component—an aspect of awareness—and differs in that regard from an experience in the sense of *erlebnis*.” (Boswijk et al., p. 24) The learning component derives from the subject questioning what a particular *erlebnis* means for him. This reflecting on specific *erlebnisse* constitutes the experiencing subject’s route to insight of himself, and the way in which he “...might want to change or transform himself.” (Boswijk et al., p. 24) Hence *erfahrung*, as a learning process of action and reflection, of cause and effect “...gives the individual a different outlook on the world and/or himself.” (Boswijk et al., p. 24) The last stage in the process—of giving meaning—concerns the role of the individual’s needs and motives expressing the self-directedness in different situations. The self-steering individual is here conceived as directing herself through attribution of meaning and looking for meaning, and *choosing* to enter into meaningful and flexible social contexts. Here, however, Marcel’s cake-experience doesn’t make sense within the perspective of Boswijk et al. anymore, because Marcel is not looking for the possibility of exercising his will. The cake experience is just one of a series of involuntary memories leading up to Marcel’s *recognition* of the different histories the characters in the novel have, making his own history and memory a *transaction* with these characters in and through time. Opposite to this is the experiential epistemology of Boswijk et al., where “...people, social connections and organisations attempt to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances. The individual adapts himself, adapts his social and economic networks and strives to provide for himself in a way that makes sense to him.” (Boswijk et al., p. 43) This comes close to what Salecl (2010, p. 38) sees as consumerism in denial, that the unrestrained and free consumer lives under the impression that their allegedly free consumption has no painful consequences. The experience economical consumer does not adapt to the economic conditions in a recognitive fashion. It is the other way around—s/he strives to provide for her- or himself in such a way that they, as instruments, adapt to her or him (A recent example of this is the magnitude of TV-shows exhibiting indebted people for whom the painful consequences of such an excessive “free” consumerism becomes a reality). *Erlebnis* as emotion becomes an instrument, a means, within the reflective learning process of *erfahrung* - of making the circumstances adapt - to the end of making my choices appear as choices made by a self-steering free-floating individual.

This, then, is very close to a picture, which we will turn to next, “...of human life as the sum of interactions of individual ‘mechanisms’ with each other and with the environment, the behaviour of each of which can be explained in cause-effect terms.” (Harré 1999, p. 43) A quote which already indicates some of the problematic assumptions behind the picture of experiencing we have just described.

Causal Versus Agential Pictures of Human Life

Readers familiar with positioning theory would probably recognise the picture of the experiencing individual described above as very close to Harré’s (1999, p. 43) description of theories presupposing a causal picture of human life. Here human

beings "...are conceived as hierarchically organised clusters of cognitive mechanisms of most of the workings of which people are unaware." Opposed to this is Harré's (ibid.) own view, a picture of human life as "...a collective activity, in which individuals work with others to fulfil their intentions and achieve their projects according to local rules and norms." The opposition between these two views can be specified by a short description of those central assumptions of positioning theory relevant for our evaluation of the notion of experience. This will show positioning theory as assuming the same recognitive basis of experiencing as sketched above.

First, behind the causal picture looms the idea of the mental consisting of different processes carried out by the mind in response to external stimuli. This is very similar to what Harré (1999, p. 46) describes as the "...Cartesian picture of "the mind" as some kind of diaphanous mechanism, a mechanism which operated upon such non-material stuff as "information". Remember, emotions as described in the experience process above where the first modes of processing information as a result of sensory inputs. Hence, the mind, as the inner space in which the process of experiencing unfolds, becomes a processing mechanism common to all people independent of the content and context of its operations. In contrast, Vygotsky's famous credo that any function in the cultural development occurs twice, first between people and second inside the mind, and Wittgenstein's focus on the normative function of rules, norms and conventions within 'language games' serve as the basis for positioning theory's social concept of mind (Howie and Peters 1996). From this point of view, Harré (1999, p. 52) claims that

...beliefs, attitudes, memories, emotions, ratiocination of all kinds are not mental states and processes; they are not entities of any sort, mental or otherwise. They are phenomena which have their being as attributes of public and private activities, in which people put local symbolic systems to work for all sorts of purposes.

Hence, experiencing is not a mental process occurring inside the heads of particular individuals. Instead it is part of a symbolic process rooted in particular constellations of public practices, "...consisting of a system of rights, duties, obligations and evaluative conventions which determine...the *positions* speakers adopt or relinquish in a particular society." (Howie and Peters 1996, p. 54) Even if the concept of determining in this quote is too strong a description of the connection between public practices and persons, as will be clear below, the idea is vindicated. If we are to speak of a privatized individual experience process then we should realize that it grows out of transactions with other people and the world we share (Harré and Gillett 1994, p. 45) To put it in another way, private and public cognition are "...of the same kind, symbolic procedures, according to certain norms..." (Harré 1992a, p. 6) Hence, the mind is *discursive* precipitating from symbolic mediated transactions, discursive practices involving rights and duties, engaging with other people and the world. Speaking of the experiencing mind as something independent and separate from the context in which the experiencing occurs and as capable of being abstracted in separation from content of the experiencing is simply an illusion. But it is a useful illusion nevertheless, laying the first stepping-stone on the road to the dehumanizing of experience. Second, in outlining the different positions individuals adopt, the notion of person is of prime importance (Harré 1992b) as the connecting link between

the different cultural practices and the rules, norms and conventions guiding these. Persons engage in and with practices, with rules and norms serving more as guides than as strict determinants in accomplishing tasks and performing acts. Hence, persons are the locations for social acts where discursive positioning by persons engaging in conversations with each other is the most basic in the social realm (Harré and van Langehove 1991, p. 394) Returning once again to Marcel's cookie experience, this experience is not captured using the causal picture of the mind as a description, then, since the meaning of the experience is not something created within Marcel's mind. Instead it grows out of the particular transactions with other people and the world within public practices providing Marcel with symbolic procedures for understanding the cookie experience. A description of these transactions will show how Marcel positions himself and others through the experience by calling attention to the discursive practices out of which the story-line or narrative of the book emerges. The agential picture of human life is opposite to the causal picture of human life, then, because the latter conceives experiencing as a *privatized* individual inner process, where any connection with other people or the world is of a secondary importance only. Furthermore, any connection to other people or the world is conceived as interactions rather than transactions, since these connections are based, firstly, on causal exchanges between the mind and the world and, secondly, on causal processing between the different stages within the experience process. These two steps describe the conditions for the excluding process we have named de-humanizing. De-humanizing in the sense of methodological "forgetting" the different public dimensions involved in experiencing, creating the idea of an experiencing individual as first standing apart from the social context and then interacting with this context in a mechanistic manner. As we will see next, this use of a causal picture of mind also serves the purpose of positioning me as if I am positioning myself.

Intentional Positioning

As indicated by Davies and Harré (1990) positioning myself as a person, as well as being positioned by others, is a non-predictable result of ongoing discursive processes and participating in different practices. This, furthermore, enables experiences of contradictory positionings, for example in cases where tensions or even discrepancies between self-positioning and others positioning me occurs. This was described in a philosophical manner as part of the process of mutual recognition above. *Disguised positioning*, which we will return to below, is an example of one such tension between the experiencing individual (the consumer) and the setting of the experience (through the experience economical aspects discussed). Commencing a description of this aspect we need to pay attention to what Harré and van Langehove (1991, p. 399) describes as intentional positioning, the positioning of self and others as either deliberately or forced.

Deliberate self-positioning occurs whenever one expresses a personal and social identity either by stressing one's/our agency or unique point of view or by referring to events in one's biography/our common history. As in the example of buying a car above, a situation is produced allowing the buyer to involve only parts of his or hers former experiences with cars, thus setting the stage for realizing the car's significance

for his or hers unique point of view, and in the end describing the purchase as an expression of the deliberate agency of the buyer. Hence, presenting yourself through the act of buying, positions you as capable of offering explanations of your personal behaviour as well (Harré and van Langehove 1991, p. 400), by referring to your experiences (of riding this car compared to other cars), to your biography (I never owned such a car before) or by referring to your powers and the right to exercise them (I have the right to own this car just as much as you). As explanatory forms these can be of use to the buyer justifying his or her social identity, for example by explaining his or her act as a result of wishing to join the club of owners of this particular car or belonging to this social class, thereby expressing different kinds of rights and duties.

The prime example of *forced positioning* is how the defendant is positioned in a criminal trial. “In appearing before court a defendant is being positioned by several persons each representing specific powers (lawyers, prosecutor, witnesses for the defence, and for the prosecution, psychiatrists, social workers and so on).” (Harré and van Langehove 1991, p. 404) Each party will try to force the defendant into a specific position by using different explanations as justifications or excuses of the defendant’s guilt or innocence. On the basis of the juridical process the judge and the jury will deliver a judgement understood as yet another positioning of the defendant. Notice that the defendant’s testimony here is not a case of deliberate self-positioning, he or she *is made* to testify by the institution of law demanding an account, which makes it a case of *forced self-positioning*. The last possibility is the *deliberate positioning of someone else*, either absent or present. In case the person is absent, the positioning comes close to gossiping. When the person is present, the positioning creates a place “...in the speaker’s story-line which may or may not be taken up by the person positioned.” (Harré and van Langehove 1991, p. 403)

Recapitulating we have established that experience economy uses a process of dehumanising in characterising the process of experiencing, and behind this lurks a causal picture of human life with objects and processes used instrumentally for an end called self-steering—the ultimate personalized authentic (bought) value. Let us use the example of the car above and combine it with this author’s own experience in buying a car, and describe it using the conceptual apparatus of positioning theory.

Disguised Positioning or How to Pretend to be Free When Buying

Strolling around among the cars on display I am approached by the car salesman who, in addition to his politeness, of course is interested in positioning me, the customer, as a possible new car-owner. Nothing new is going on here. Furthermore, I am interested in purchasing a car within the nearest future as well, since I have taken the time and made the effort of going to the car dealer. Initially, then, our mutual positioning each other involves his duty to convince me of buying a car, and my right of being reluctant to his persuasion. So I position the car dealer deliberately, starting the story-line of ‘I might be looking for a new car to buy’, which the car salesman will be picking up. But he will be picking up the story-line with the aim of positioning the customer, me, in a manner which leaves me with the primary choice of buying a car. He will do so by supplying or excluding the premises needed for me to arrive at the, for him, right conclusion. In this process he will be appealing to the experience

process as described above; making sure both that I make the purchase and understand myself to be positioned in a self-deliberate manner through this purchase (it is, after all, an investment in *my* life as he will say).

Taking the car for a ride then, initiates my experiential process by appealing to my emotionality through the sensations I have of driving the car. This isolated occurrence is supposed to make an impression and represent a certain value for me within the context of this specific situation, as the definition of *erlebnis* above claims. Note the wording of the situation as isolated and specific, as described by Boswijk et al. (2007, p. 22). The process of experiencing is reduced to a focus on *this* situation, how does *this* car make me feel. Returning from the test-drive the car dealer tried to intensify the experience of *this* situation with my driving *this* car, by continuing the story-line asking, “How was it? Probably not like any car you have driven before, right”. He thereby tries to make me emphasize all the positive qualities of exactly *this* car, in contradistinction to all other cars I have driven. The picture of this *erfahrung* as a causal and internal informational processing, and hence as the effect of my reflection of the experience of the car, serves as a further reduction of the experience process by excluding reflections not relevant for this particular *erlebnis*. Hence, a causal chain is sought created leading from the experience of driving the car to the customer’s reflection on this and, in the end, supplying the customer with the exclusive premises for ‘deliberately’ buying the car. By going through the *erfahrung* part of the experience process I am positioned as reflecting on the importance of *this Erlebnis* to me and—again in the words of experience-economy—how it has the potential to transform my life by supplying me with a different outlook on myself and the world. Hence, creating a sense of “duty-to-myself” to buy exactly *this* car. In the last stage of this process, then, the customer is choosing to buy the car or not (I actually did), but the choice involves more than just the car. My sense of autonomy as a self-steering individual is supposed to be implied as well—it was at this point the car dealer told me that it was an investment in life. The very act of buying the car then, is presented as an expression of me in pursuit of a meaningful experience with which I am supposed to construct *my* own existence. It is supposed to be my choice alone, even my duty, without any obvious forced positioning on the car-dealers part.

When we sat down in his booth going over the terms for the sale and the loan I paused at one time, hence expressing some visual doubts. He looked at me and said something like, “It is your choice. I am only trying to help you”. So I started implicitly to appeal to the forms of justification characterising the deliberate self-positioning described above, *pretending* that I was about to make one of the most serious choices in my life and that the guy in front of me was just helping me, the best way possible, with my new investment in life. In my mind, I went through my experiences (of riding this car compared to other cars), and my biography (I never owned such a car before), even imagined I had a right to exercise something like my own autonomous power (which I of course have, but I was afraid others might buy it since it was on sale), so I bought it (to my wife’s astonishment, apparently I always consider buying stuff at least thrice). Now, this was a case of pretending, because I knew very well that buying this car, my alleged power of self-steering, actually involved a lot of other conditions influencing the purchase. So returning home, my supposed sense of self-empowerment was somehow undermined by a growing sense of uneasiness, of how this new financial situation would influence my life (or actually, ours).

Now, there might be other and better examples than this, but it still indicates parts of the characterisation of the economy put forward in the introduction. First of all, it was presented like an act of autonomy performed by me, the self-steering individual, and not just a simple car-deal, which it actually was. The experience process was still reduced in the effort of using it instrumentally as a premise, or cause, in the argument leading to the conclusion, or effect, of me buying the car, and picturing this as a genuine choice of my own as a life-changing experience. So the regular consumption situation of buying and selling is clothed in the guise of freedom, the car-dealer is “only” helping me in making me feel like I am making a decision all by my self. So the situation is more or less intentionally disguised (by the dehumanising) as a deliberate self-positioning on my part. Furthermore, it is this process which indicates the restructuring of the economy by its teaching us to see consumption as a kind of freedom in action. If we accept this, we can then see more clearly how the causal picture of human life works as an assumption in the making of this quasi-*forced positioning disguised as deliberate self-positioning*. The appeal to the causal picture of life, exemplified through the cause/effect character of the experience process, creates the impression that the self-steering individual chooses from a range of options in a deliberate linear fashion. What makes it a quasi-forced position is the excluding of factors not “directly” influencing the purchase, that is, factors not taking directly part in the constructed cause/effect relation. This excluding creates the space in which the car salesman can position the individual as a surmised self-steering and autonomous human being. What makes it disguised, then, is a presenting of the choice as a conclusion in an argument consisting of few and simple premises, and what gives it the glow of a deliberate self-positioning is the individual reaching this conclusion “by herself”. The idea behind this new experiential capitalism, and its restructuring through teaching us a picture of consuming as freedom, seems to be what Salecl (2010, p. 8) had in mind when she wrote, “Life choices are described in the same terms as consumer choices: we set out to find the ‘right’ life as we would find the right kind of wallpaper or hair conditioner.” Or, at least, pretending that it is so.

As a token that this is not a one-off affair, let us end with a concise comment on the coffee example from the introduction, an example showing signs of disguised positioning as well. First of all, remember that the act of buying a cup of coffee is presented as the same as an ethical act. For Joseph Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.3) this is a prime example of experience economy, proceeding from a pure service economy to selling experiences, even transforming ones, i.e. of an ethical kind. This is what one is supposed to buy into, an ethical experience. Buying the cup of coffee, then, redeems more than what is in the buying. Hence, the consumer supposedly positions him- or herself as an ethical consumer expressing a personal and social identity through the buying.

Now a kind of forced positioning follows from the “fact” that the ethical and the consuming act are or can be the same, by excluding (at least) two socio-economical conditions. Firstly, it is not clear in exactly what sense the consuming act is ethical. Is it the intention of the buyer or the company that makes it an ethical act? Or is it, perhaps, the consequences of the buyer’s or the company’s acting? If one of these is the desired interpretation, how are possible non-consumerist intentions or consequences with a more altruistic content or profound ethical effects valued in comparison? Secondly, if there is a need for ethics refining this economical system of buying and selling, in this case terminating the possible exploitation of coffee workers, will the

same kind of act(ions), i.e. consuming, effecting the exploitation in the first place, be able to erase it as well? In other words, there might be injustices of a systematic nature inherent in the economical system, which any consuming act can do nothing to alleviate but only reproduce. Excluding these two dimensions of *erfahrung*, then, makes the supposed ethical act seem more like an expression of making the circumstances adapt to the consumer. He or she (or the company, who can stop the ethical investment if the profit diminishes) can choose instrumentally to act “ethical”, rather than *recognising* the need for and the responsibilities connected with the common experience and practices of acting ethical.

Hence, like the car buying example above, this case indicates a sense of disguised positioning as well. The consumer supposedly acts ethical through buying, but without really knowing either what kind of ethics is “bought into” or what the consequences and responsibilities of this ethics actually are.

Closing Remarks

In this article the connection between experience and economy has been our concern. By analysing the way experience is conceived within the second generation of experience economy, a number of characteristics have been indicated. By drawing on a causal picture of the mind experiencing and excluding any parts of experiencing not conducive to establishing an economic transaction, a dehumanized picture of the experiencing individual is established. This picture is then utilized in positioning the potential customer as reaching the conclusion of making a purchase as an act of deliberate self-positioning and possessing a world-transforming actuality. This, however, turned out to be more of a (quasi-) forced positioning than deliberate self-positioning, since the setting for the experience of buying was created by a process of excluding of factors and pretending that this expressed a new norm of consuming as freedom. Taken together, then, these characteristics indicate a reconfiguration of some of the socio-economic processes dealing with daily consumption practices by using the contents of experience as *new* instruments in instituting this norm of consuming as freedom.

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4.

Why Do We Care about Post-humanism?
A critical note

Why Do We Care about Post-Humanism?

A critical note

Die Philosophie ist eigentlich Heimweh, ein
Trieb überall zu Hause zu sein.

Novalis

Abstract: What is disclosed in the questioning of the human being in post-humanism? Addressing this question in congruence with Heidegger's questioning of being in Being and Time, we end up with two discoveries: first, that the characteristic of Dasein, as the being of the questioning, already carries the same implications as the post-human figure, and second, that questioning in this sense is indicative of the effort of realizing a new scientific space for conceptualizing the human being as not characterised by any substance. Conceived of in this way, however, post-humanism is a result of a very human effort indeed.

Keywords: post-humanism, Martin Heidegger, question of being, responsive responsibility.

1. Introduction*

The post-human figure figures prominently in contemporary human geography, and has done so for a while. It is also 'a fraught entity, for we seek to fix it even as we dissolve it' (Braun 2004a, p. 269). Be it in the form of a search for 'the figure of the human' itself – 'its fixing and bounding' – or 'the emergence of the human, the human as project and practice, the body as an outcome of the "infecting" of the world', or something that 'extends far beyond us, and that is not of our making alone' (Braun 2004a, p. 273, italics in the original), the anthropocentrism of our time and the hubris of humanism have been challenged by the emergence of non-representational theory, actor-network theory and other influential bodies of thought. The question is, however, how post human this figure actually is?

In a sense, this goes to the very heart of the discipline, addressing as it does the human in human geography. Yet, putting the human in its place by downsizing or dethroning it is not a straightforward affair. As Cadman (2009, p. 136) has suggested by referring to Castree and Nash (2006), the positing of the idea of post-humanity as a historical condition, faces the fear of actually reinstalling what it seeks to overcome, namely the human as a stable and coherent category. This annoying dialectic can be

specified as follows (see Braun 2004a, p. 271). "We", the post-humans, are now, finally, in a historical position capable of understanding human being as fundamentally entangled with non-human being. Humans subjected to xenotransplantation, or living with technology as part of their bodies exemplify different human–non-human assemblages. As Braun (2004a, p. 271) claims, both the figure of and the making of the human are challenged here, the former by questioning where the line between the human and the non-human is drawn, the latter by challenging an ontology where being human is defined by sharing some core substance. Instead our "humanness" is continuously changing in conjunction with our immediate surroundings, leaving no clear defined human figure or essence to be found. Post-humanism, hence, implies non-anthropocentrism (Braun 2004a, p. 272), that the world studied, and particularly the social one, is comprised of non-human entities and agents as well, giving no pride of place, no exception, to human being.

Being in a post-human age, in distinction from a previous age with boundaries between human and non-human sustained, creates, dialectically, a problem. Distinguishing between a post-human and a human age requires of the post-human age that it defines itself up against the previous age. Post-humanism thereby reinstalls the necessity of what it questions the existence of, namely the human. Cadman's (2009, p. 137) study shows, then, through analysing, 'the historical conditions of existence for the very questioning of the human and the non-human distinction itself' that an idea of the human is not, contrary to what post-humanists seems to think, as easily dispensed with.

Another example of questioning post-humanism is the disquiet thought that post-human thinking exaggerates the denouncing of the human being. Here are some excerpts from a recent conference including a session entitled Human Remains: The Place of the Human in a Post-Human World (Harrison and Wylie 2011):

This session asks: what remains of the human after successive waves of anti- and post-humanist thinking? What has been lost and what, if anything, is worth saving? Is it possible or indeed desirable to offer a defence of the human? ... from Freud's suspicions and Marx's materialism at the start of the twentieth century, to Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of the Enlightenment, Foucault's and Barthes' death of the author ... the figure of the human has been subject to de-centring and displacement, dethroning and flattening; its outline fading; its gestures magnetised and its consciousness little more than a synaptic symptom. Perhaps now it is time to move on, to find different ways of framing and thinking about (and organising and cultivating) subjectivity, sociality, politics and responsibility?

Finding a new way of framing and thinking about the human way of being might involve saving, or at least retrieving some possibility of being human otherwise lost in post-humanism. Questioning the idea of post-humanism, then, is expressing a concern for whether the post-human ontology is capable of incorporating some remains worth saving (whatever they are) of our understanding of human being. Both Cadman and the session proposal seems to be questioning the post-human ontology, without claiming the necessity of reinstating any “good old days and ways” of the human on top of things. Instead they are expressing a sense of unsettledness regarding the remains of some human way of being, hence a concern for conceiving humans as part of this allegedly new ontology.

This article is a small contribution to this questioning of post-human ontology, albeit with a slightly different point of departure. First, the above two examples could be interpreted as disclosing a connection between the questioning of any ontology and our self-understanding as querying human beings. Correspondingly, a scientific endeavour of inquiring, or investigating, is a process expressing the understanding of scientists as well. The concern expressed in the examples above might then be characterized as querying about the possibilities of understanding ourselves as scientists and as human beings within a post-human ontology. What this self-understanding could amount to, then, will be one object of scrutiny below. The importance of clarifying this self-understanding by reinvigorating a somewhat old discussion of the post-human (Castree et al, 2004) might seem superfluous, but, as already claimed, it is highly relevant since a post-human condition is presupposed in many current theoretical trends, like non-representational theory (Thrift 2008, p. 222, for example, speaks of a post-human agenda, where the entanglements between human and non-human beings is the primary interest). Hence, analysing what the consequences of this, perhaps uncritically adopted, general presupposition of post-humanity amounts to, is both a legitimate and necessary part of scientific reflection. Second, to unravel this presupposition of post-humanity we will turn to one of the prime inspirators, perhaps instigator, of post-humanism, namely Heidegger, and interpret his early (*Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger’s 1927 work) thinking as a significant perspective for understanding post-humanism. This will be productive for several reasons. Firstly, Heidegger captures, by posing the question of what “being” means

anew, the connection between questioning ontology and understanding human ways of being in all their complexity. Thus, Heidegger's thinking can help advance the understanding of what is involved in questioning the post-human ontology as a scientific endeavour. This is in line with recent interpretations of Heidegger (Haugeland 1999, 2013; Rouse 1999, 2002, 2005; Carman 2003) emphasizing his contribution to both a general understanding of scientific practices, and to human geography in particular (e.g., Paddock 2004; Elden 2005; Malpas 2006; Sayer 2011; Simonsen 2013; still more recent writings include e.g. Hannah 2013 and Olwig 2013 in this journal). The practical import of an entity like the post-human, then, is expressed in scientific debating of this entity, and the concern for understanding the concomitant ontology.

Secondly, Heidegger's overall goal is, as Grondin (2005, p. 15) claims, 'always to call thought and existence back to their essential question, the question of Being.' Part of this calling back is Heidegger's questioning the received opinion of what a human being is. One thematic focus uniting early and late Heidegger, then, is the critique of anthropocentrism, or anthropologism as Dastur (2007) expresses it. This is a critique 'aimed at showing that the traditional conception of man as a separate being cannot allow the being-question to be raised' (Dastur 2007, p. 126). So, instead of conceiving the human being – or Dasein as Heidegger terms it – as a separate entity, or substance, it is understood as the place, the Da, for (where) being, sein, to (could) disclose itself¹. Conceiving the human being in terms of a separate substance, then, presupposes a concept of the human as detached from the surroundings, blocking an inquiry into whether this actually is so. So, Heidegger was a precursor to and, as Rae (2010, p. 25) puts it, played a significant part in laying 'the foundation for the so-called "anti"-humanism of structuralist, post-structuralist and deconstructionist thought, and, more contemporarily of debates relating to the posthuman'.

As a consequence it can be argued that both historical and thematic reasons exist for justifying a juxtaposing of these Heideggerian topics (questioning ontology and a critique of a substantialist perspective of human being) with the post-humanist themes already addressed, and with the case-study of this article, the debate between Badmington, Braun, Murdoch and Whatmore (Castree et al 2004). The specific focus, however, will be the implications of Heidegger's questioning the meaning of being, and

not the detailed analysis's he conducts², and this will show two things. First, a generous interpretation of Heidegger's concept of being in the world seriously questions the novelty of post-humanism. Heidegger's understanding of questioning being as implying an understanding of entities already embedded in the world (including ourselves), establishes a primary entanglement between human and non-human entities conceived in a non-substantialist and non-exceptionalist fashion. Furthermore, this entanglement serves as a meaningful basis for the possible conceptual differentiating and identifying of human, post-human and non-human entities. Second, scientific practices, including research on the notion of post-humanism, are, within the processes of understanding new aspects of the ontology, disclosing some sense of responsible responding towards these new aspects. This responding, then, denotes a very human concern or caring for a proper understanding of the ontology of which researchers are part as well.

2. Questioning essences and identities: modalities of post-humanism

Castree and Nash's (2004) description of three, more or less, connected modalities of post-humanism, is useful as a general characteristic. The first modality sees post-humanism as an incipient historical condition, where 'post' signifies a decisive temporal break from an exclusively human-centred history. As claimed in the introduction this is not, in the prevailing description, *post* human at all. Thus, the remaining two is of more interest. The second modality sees post-humanism as identifying "...a set of *ontological theses* about the human that never was and will never be." (Castree and Nash 2004, p. 1342) Unlike the first modality no historical break is assumed here, instead it is recognized that the concept 'human' is an idea never to be realized. Using the headline of one modern book, this idea could be expressed as we have never been human - no a-historical 'substance' satisfying the criteria of being human either exists, or will ever exist. Under this heading the different critiques of a substantialist and self-transparent human subject connected with *post-structuralism* and *post-modernism* is subsumed. Haraway's cyborgs, or the actants of ANT could exemplify the non-substantialist character of being human here. Related is the third modality unfolding a "...ceaseless scepticism about the claims made in the name of

either the human or its notional transcendence.” (Castree and Nash 2004, p. 1342) Under this heading fall two aspects. First, what Appleby (2010) denotes a critical stance towards anthropocentrism like human exceptionalism, thereby denouncing the alleged superiority of the human in comparison to other entities. Second, criticising any defining of the human being, or its Other, like nature, animals, technology etc., in terms of a *difference* between the two. Defining identities this way presupposes in the end, it is claimed, a reliance on some clearly defined binary opposition, like nature/culture, human/animal or inner/outer, all losing their definitional certainty and clarity when scrutinised further.

The two last modalities express, in the words of Castree and Nash, an analytical-philosophical position based on an ‘expanded’ ontology as point of departure. Expanded in the sense of Whatmore’s expression of the “messy heterogeneity of being-in-the-world” (quoted after Badmington 2004, p. 1345), following the dissolution of previously secure and fixed distinctions between human and non-human, and replacing substances with a sense of becoming instead. As Castree and Nash (2004, p. 1342) recapitulate, “In all this, whether there is anything specific about *the human* to be defended, supplemented, or erased is an open question.” The importance of addressing post-humanism, then, depends upon a commitment making scientific practices like “...human geography less resolutely human.” (Castree and Nash 2004, p. 1343), or, implying this is an open question, not.

Notice here, that defending, supplementing or erasing, presupposes – probably not intentionally - the *same* object of attention: the human. However different, even antithetical, these attitudes are, their explorations seem to agree on what to behold, hence, seems to be sharing the same, or parts of the same, ontology. So, the concept of the post-human or post-humanity, it seems, possess a significant relation to the human, as that which is not primarily human or what comes after the human. As Murdoch (2004, p. 1357) notes, then, the more distinguishing humanism from post-humanism is insisted on, the more they seem to become entangled. Whatmore (2004), in an argument similar to the one stated by Cadman and Braun in the introduction, makes the same observation. For Whatmore, *exceeding* the human rather than post-human is a more accurate description of a ‘more-than-human’ ontology. Disconnecting any time-relation like before and after the human within this ontology, “...one never

arrives at a time/place when the human was not a work in progress.” (Whatmore 2004, p. 1361), she claims.

These characterisations of post-humanism, including the more-than-humanness, are all expressions of attitudes in an investigative mode like reckoning, beholding or pondering what post-human being is or is not, more than an *understanding* of what it means. Hence, the scientific comportment towards the object of scrutiny is, in Heidegger’s terminology (SuZ, pp. 11; BaT, pp. 31), more of an ontic than an ontological kind. An ontic investigation studies entities and their categories, concentrating on how to characterise these entities or not³. The ontological investigation, on the other hand, asks about these entities’ ways of being, how entities are understood as entities, like understanding post-human being *as* post-human. So, inquiring ontologically is connected to a mode of being where some kind of understanding is presupposed, before any ontic characterisation and conceptual determination can take place. As Heidegger claims, “An understanding of Being is already included in conceiving anything which one apprehends in entities” (SuZ, p. 3; BaT, p. 22) As opening a car-door is usually just done, i.e. understood meaningfully without pondering the existence of or “substance” of the door-handle, so the concept of the post-human presuppose an understanding on the basis of which researchers, already somehow engage with the world.

A critique of a specific cognitive way of conceiving the relation between the human subject and the world is implicit here. Understanding something is not primarily an effect of a relation of detachment between an observer and something observed. Rather, it is the significance disclosed in the practical circumstances where the observer and observed are engaged with each other. This, however, is not tantamount to understanding the practical and theoretical, or engaged and detached, as “...two separate and distinct ways of being-there [Dasein, BAC], but that being-there is itself such as to support different possible modes of disclosure, and that those modes are always underlain by a more basic gatheredness of being-there and world.” (Malpas 2006, p. 141) Understanding what the significance of a door-handle is, is not, in the first place, achieved by “looking” at it. Rather, the understanding is reached by using it to open a door as part of the overall significance (of the practical circumstance) of entering a car, doing what one does with cars (Malpas’ gatheredness as the

entanglement of Dasein and the car disclosing the world (significance) of driving). Subsequently, a pondering or theoretical inquiring into what this door-handle is made of, how it could look etc., can be made by Dasein. But the ostensible world-constituting capacities and generative achievements connected to this objectifying ontic attitude, is always underlain by the practical "...situated life-projection of a factual being that finds itself in the world – Dasein." (Habermas 1989, p. 437) And it is this connection between the projecting of meaning and finding one self in the world, which is disclosed in Heidegger's questioning of being. Furthermore, the connection is crucial for understanding both Heidegger's non-substantialist understanding of human being, and the concern expressed in the research of the post-human, or more-than-human, figure.

3. Questioning post-humanism: Heidegger's questioning of being

According to Heidegger, compartments (scientific, theoretical, practical, etc.) towards understanding the surrounding world, including people, has, predominantly, been characterised by a focus on entities and the presumed substances of these entities, instead of the being of these entities. The proposed questioning of being introduced in the beginning of *Being and Time*, is supposed to remedy this predicament, by "reawakening" this forgotten question (SuZ, p. 2; BaT, p. 21)⁴ Furthermore, it is a theme running through all of Heidegger's thinking, early and late, albeit with different accentuations of the implications of this questioning. Three premises are important for understanding the importance of Heidegger's questioning of being. First of all, Heidegger claims that an analysis of Dasein is needed as part of this questioning. This, however, is not entailing that *Being and Time* is a work of anthropology. On the contrary, Heidegger notes that any questioning presupposes some understanding of what is being questioned; otherwise the direction of the questioning will be blind. Hence, questioning being must start with some previous understanding, however vague or un-thematic it turns out to be, and Dasein is the only being who has some kind of understanding in this initial sense. Dasein's understanding should be accepted as a point of departure, then, but without implying, a priori, any substantial claims about Dasein. Second, being is not an entity (SuZ, p. 6; BaT, p. 26) There is a difference between an entity, like a hammer, and its being, hammering, which can be done for a number of different purposes. This means that even though

entities exist independently of Dasein, in disclosing these entities' being Dasein is somehow involved, what Malpas in the quote above termed the support of Dasein (see Cerbone 1995 for a discussion of this realism and idealism by Heidegger) Third, being is always the being of an entity (SuZ, p. 9; BaT, p. 29) This might sound odd due to the first premise, but there is nothing peculiar about it. The being of the hammer is not given by some transcendent entity, say a "hammer god" upholding the existence of hammers, or by reducing the hammer to its material compounds. Where the former borders on superstition, to say the least, the latter may be accepted, but it really says nothing about the being of the hammer, only what it is made of – the hammer could be made of glass, which obviously makes it much less suitable for being a hammer.

According to Heidegger (SuZ, p. 42; BaT, p. 68), then, Dasein is the only entity for whom being, including its own being, can be of a concern; therefore "...sciences have the manner of Being which this entity – man himself – possesses. This entity we denote by the term *Dasein*" (SuZ, p. 12; BaT p. 32) Uncovering what is involved in questioning and understanding the meaning of being, then, attention to how this *matters* within the scientific practice would be needed, i.e. how a post-human ontology is of Dasein's concern, for example through the debating or exploring of new research agendas. Furthermore, both a highly theoretical entity like this "post-human" figure and the practical engagement of researching this entity is somehow disclosed through explicating Dasein's being.

As claimed in the last section, research on post-humanism is predominantly of an ontic concern. To investigate the post-human being, then, is to determine what it is, or is not, like the negative determination Badmington proposes (2004, p. 1345):

"As I understand it, humanism is a discourse which claims that the figure of 'Man' (sic) naturally stands at the centre of things; is entirely distinct from animals, machines, and other nonhuman entities; is absolutely known and knowable to 'himself'; is the origin of meaning and history; and shares with all other human beings a universal essence. Its absolutist assumptions, moreover, mean that anthropocentric discourse relies upon a set of binary oppositions, such as human/inhuman, self/other, natural/cultural, inside/outside, subject/object, us/them, here/there, active/passive, and wild/tame."

What would be missing here is, according to Heidegger, the ontological understanding presupposed by this conceptual determination. This entails a shift in perspective from determining what this post-human being *is not*, to how this is

expressing the understanding of something that matters in scientists' ways of being. As Heidegger puts it, "In the question which we are to work out, *what is asked about* is Being – that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which entities are already understood..." (SuZ, p. 6; BaT, pp. 25-26) The unsettledness noted in the introduction, and Whatmore's uneasiness about using the concept of the post-human instead of *more than human*, are responses to and indications of this presupposed understanding of being. They indicate the ontological significance presupposed by the discovery of an ontic phenomenon like the post-human, where the condition of possibility of this significance is, as Haugeland (1999, p. 47) claims, not the disclosing of a specific entity but *disclosing the being of this entity*.

So, as claimed in the introduction, Heidegger's *Seinsfrage* is worth exploring here and inspired by Haugeland (1999) and Rouse (2002; 2005), the process of questioning will be described in two steps. The first will address why discovering (like the ontic attitude of reckoning) presupposes disclosing (an already given understanding of being), and the second will address why any disclosing of entities cannot be separated from the self-disclosing of Dasein. The first step amounts to asking how the understanding of this discovered post-human figure occurred. The second asks what is thereby disclosed about the scientific practices researching and questioning the post-human ontology.

4. Disclosing entities

Part of why discovery presupposes disclosing has already been registered claiming the intrinsic connection to the primary entanglement between Dasein and the world of the scientific theoretical and practical understandings respectively. Heidegger addresses this by describing how Dasein's comportments towards entities emanate from the "background" of already *being in the world* (SuZ, p. 53; BaT, p. 78)⁵. Heidegger thereby emphasises Dasein's practical and theoretical comportment towards entities as embedded and depending upon different settings or contexts. Disclosing, then, is, generally speaking, Dasein's *making sense of* those entities, within these settings. As illustration take the game of chess. Understanding, or making sense of, the different pieces in the game, like discovering which piece is relevant to move, is intelligible only

on the basis of the chess game as a whole, it's overall significance. This idea is implied by the already stated claim that being is not in itself an entity, like chess pieces having a being predicated on them, instead of being disclosed in their actual and possible use⁶. The individual pieces of the chess game make sense, i.e. can be understood as the chess-pieces they are, only within the functional context of playing chess. A context implying both *what* the chess game is for, winning or teaching for example, the *setting* of the game, perhaps a tournament in front of an opponent with an audience watching, and *what is used* to carry out the activity, a board, the pieces, a clock. Hence, the situated environment of a chess-player, beginner as advanced, and the possibilities this environment affords, "...incorporate the activities of other agents as partially reconfiguring their shared surroundings." (Rouse 2002, 21) Implicit is, of course, that this reconfiguring happens differently depending on the various agents involved, like beginners, experts, clocks, missing pieces, etc.

People being taught how to play chess, then, have initially more of an ontic understanding of chess. They are learning to use the bishop as bishop within the functional "world" of chess⁷. In this sense, the chess-beginner's manner of playing is more characterised by *discovering* (the being of) chess by learning the rules for moving each individual chess piece, first as separate from the actual game-playing (perhaps a trial game), and then, gradually, as direct moves within the game. The expert chess player, however, responds fluently to the playing by understanding possible kinds of moves, telling which move is the best, thereby *disclosing* what chess is and can be all about⁸. Furthermore, the moves can be analysed by other chess-experts taking up a theoretical comportment towards this particular chess-game. Generally, though, there is no analysing, reckoning, learning or discovering what these individualised and thing-like objects called chess-pieces are as chess-pieces, apart from understanding their being as disclosed in the game of chess. They can, of course, be used for other activities, but then their meaning is disclosed as something else, not as chess-pieces – compare throwing a chess-piece to moving it on a chessboard even within a chess game. So, discovering what chess-pieces are, depends in the end on disclosing and understanding the possible ways the chess-pieces can be used within a game of chess. Already being in the world (of chess), means being with other entities (humans, pieces, clocks, boards), responding to these doing what one does (playing this game,

anticipating other possible games, clocks stopping, pieces tipping). Bluntly put, then, there is no essence to chess, but different ways of enacting chess-games.

Appropriating Heidegger's claims, then, means understanding the ontic discovery of the post-human has, as a condition, the disclosing of scientific practices as enacted within a world, among other entities, with a pre-given relationship between humans and non-humans. To use the hammer example again, in a significant context of hammering the relationship between the hammer and the arm is such, that there basically is no telling whether the arm functions as an enhanced hammer or the hammer functions like an extended arm. So, although the post-human figure is not an entity like a chess-piece, its discovery – the ontic comportment towards the post-human figure - still presupposes a meaningful context, an entanglement between human and non-human, wherein using the concept of post-human makes sense. A meaningful context making it available for use and supplying this use with a role, viz. describing a condition wherein a use of the concept human is inadequate.

As the expression of an ontic understanding, however, the post-human is also just a discovery of the other side of being human. The side where humans are not at the centre, have no control or substances and are not separate from other (non-human) entities in practice, rather than the disclosing of ontology without any significance tied to human being at all. Dasein is, as being in the world, already among and related to other entities, before any conceptual determinations, such as human/post-human etc., makes sense, and hence before any practical or theoretical comportments toward the post-human figure can be instituted. Similar to the chess-beginner, then, discovering the post-human also indicates learning how to navigate in a scientific practice enacted among other entities. The worry and uneasiness already touched upon are responses to this being in the world, as if post-human ontology meant without any human being, or without the support of Dasein at all. However, any ontology, including the post-human, depends, for its disclosing, upon Dasein as being in the world occupying a specific place where this disclosing makes sense⁹.

So, the first conclusion, viz. the post-human figure only makes sense on the background of Dasein already being in the world, may sound trivial, but for two reasons it is not. First, it is a result of interpreting the post-human by connecting it to Heidegger's questioning of being thereby explicating what was previously understood

only implicit. As Heidegger puts it, “In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself.” (SuZ, p. 148; BaT, p. 188). In German, interpreting is called *aus-legen* - literally laying out or putting forth – and as Caputo (1982, 358) claims, interpreting “...provides this prior understanding with the words with which to come into language, in so doing, it brings us to stand in the place which we already occupy.” Questioning the meaning of the post-human figure articulates the implicit understanding of already being in the world, entangled with non-human beings. Secondly, this implies that the idea of post-humanism is not that innovative in comparison with Heidegger’s concept of being in the world. Thought through, the implication of conceiving Dasein as being in the world is the inability to understand Dasein by any substantialist *modus* primarily, since the entanglement makes any identification problematic (i.e. the hammer-arm example above). Any distinctions are meaningful as distinctions only on this background of being entangled, and this – as will be seen in the next section- is connected to a laying out of possible ways of being and not a reproducing of the already given.

Furthermore, when Heidegger claims that Dasein’s essence is its existence, Dasein has no substantial essence, like a core of being, but exists as a possible way of being and acting. So, just like a transformation of the meaning of the chess-pieces occurs, from an object-like mode of being in learning their significance towards their being used (SuZ, p. 61; BaT, pp. 88-89), the chess-player’s mode of being is transformed from a human being for whom the correct use of the separate chess-pieces is an issue, towards being a player playing the game. Hence, the disclosing of something is at the same time a disclosing of Dasein. So what is disclosed about the scientific practice when questioning the post-human?

5. Dasein – disclosing as self-disclosing.

In questioning being a primary practical ontological understanding has been disclosed so far, an understanding *before* any objectifying or other derivative ontic understanding occurs. Now, from the previous section it should be clear that being in the world, as Dasein, is not being a kind of substance understood as “...an entity which is in such a way that it needs no other entity in order to *be*.” (SuZ, p. 92; BaT, p. 125). Dasein *is* already being in the world, engaging in different meaningful practices with

entities (SuZ, pp. 56-57; BaT, p. 83). Heidegger captures this further by claiming that the essence of Dasein consists in its existence (SuZ, p. 117; BaT, p. 152), and that Dasein understands itself in terms of this existence (SuZ, p. 12; BaT, p. 33). So, by engaging in different practices Dasein forms an understanding of what it means for it to be engaged in these practices. This may sound obvious, but it involves a very important sense of *modality*, “As understanding, Dasein projects its Being upon possibilities” (SuZ, p. 148, BaT, p. 188) The possibilities disclosed through the chess-player’s game, at the same time discloses the possibilities this particular chess-player has for continuing being a chess-player. Loosing, winning or a drawn game each discloses possibilities for understanding future ways of being, as laying out possible action-space(s) for this chess-player’s way of being in the chess-world and understanding hereof.

However, as Rouse (2005, p. 4) claims, when it comes to scientific practices it is important to recognise that the idea of possibility is not one of possible actualities, i.e. possibilities in the form of objects, relations etc. which might have obtained but actually do not, but “...actual possibilities (an orientation toward definite but not fully determinate ways for us to be).” What distinguishes possible actualities from actual possibilities, is that actual possibilities *matter*, “They express a practical configuration of a situation such that there is something at stake in whether and how these possibilities are to be realised.” (Rouse 2002, p. 25) What is at stake in our scientific practice of debating post-humanism, then, is the responsibility of getting “things” right, of disclosing the most adequate ontology, and this is tied to how “Science discloses not objects or laws independent of us and our concerns, but phenomena that we are part of.” (Rouse 2002, p. 331) Hence, the scientific endeavour is dependent on a concern and responsibility for this disclosing; disclosing as self-disclosing is being responsible, that it *matters* to us.

The meaningful possibilities which Dasein projects its being onto, its thematisations, are possible ways for it to be and act. For example, doing research involves diverse compartments towards different entities like students, lessons, power-points, research-questions or administrative project-managers. Thus, sciences are “...contextually integrated in multiple ways...” as Rouse (2002, p.165) claims. Being a researcher means knowing how to deal with all of these entities as part of one’s

work. So, Dasein's understanding of its own being presupposes an understanding of the entities among which it works. As a consequence, then, it is part of Dasein's projecting of possibilities that it is capable of projecting the possibilities of these as well. So, "...neither self-understanding nor understanding of being is possible except insofar as they are integrated with one another." (Haugeland 1999, p. 59)

This understanding, or apprehensiveness, Heidegger (SuZ, p. 192; BaT, p. 236) sums up by characterising the being of Dasein as *caring*, i.e. "... (living) ahead of itself as always already being in the world as being with (entities within this world)"¹⁰. This characterization is Heidegger's "formula" for answering why the disclosing of entities is at the same time a disclosing of Dasein. It is termed caring, because it describes the fundamental openness of Dasein's comportments towards entities as being in the world. As *existing*, Dasein's lives ahead in the sense of projecting meaning onto its future¹¹ possibilities of being and doing. This projection, on the one hand, is not tantamount to a voluntarism or decisionism, i.e. a pure exercise of Dasein's will (Dastur 2000, p. 123; Thomson 2004, p. 466), since it presupposes the *facticity* of already being within the world among other entities, "Existentiality is essentially determined by facticity." (SuZ, p. 192; BaT, p. 236)¹² This determination, on the other hand, is not tantamount to claiming that Dasein as such is just an effect caused by its being in the world, either. Rather, it is claiming that the accountability attached to Dasein's projections of meaning is, as expressed by Rouse above, something at stake within the scientific practice, something "bigger" is going on in Dasein's engaging in and with the world. At stake in the sense that what is disclosed constitute something authoritative, something that *matters*, over the scientific sayings and doings of which Dasein is accountable. The self-disclosing of Dasein, within a scientific practice, then, is characterised as an "...ongoing resilient adaption of scientists' understanding to account for newly discovered phenomena, entities, or features that characterizes their disclosure of the world." (Rouse 2002, p. 337) This adaption, Rouse (2002, pp. 342-343) also terms a responsible responsiveness. It is responsive in the sense of being open to what emerges in the disclosing, and it is responsible in the sense that it matters for the actual possibilities of future doings and sayings in the scientific practice.

However, caring or responsible responsiveness is, as a relation between being in and projecting, not a harmonious alignment *per se*. As Capobianco (2005) claims, Dasein exists in a gap between actuality and possibility, viz. between facticity and projectivity, and Heidegger expresses this by saying that Dasein is not feeling at home in the world (SuZ, p. 188; BaT.), Dasein is primarily unsettled. The possibility of feeling at home genuinely exists, but there is no guarantee that settledness will be reached, or if it does, this settledness is permanent. The lack of guarantee is a result of Dasein's incomplete control when it comes to projecting a future space of being and doing, since it depends, in the end, on the world in which it finds it self embedded as well. The unsettledness, then, shows Dasein as anxious about being in the world as such, worrying whether the aims and understandings will be met through the anticipated possible way of being and doing, or losing the "world" will be the outcome instead.

Put less poetically, this might be recognised as a sense of uncertainty also part of engaging in a scientific process (Clegg 2010), and indicated in the conference proposal referred to in the introduction, as something lost. If this is plausible then as Thomson (2004, pp. 456-457) claims, responsible responsiveness indicates a movement where the uncertainty, or unsettledness, becomes certainty directed. The broken grip the world had upon us is, therefore, responded to in such a way that it restores our grip upon the world in a responsibly fashion. In other words, the "world" lost by being disclosed as unlike Dasein's anticipation (for example, research results showing something completely different than anticipated), is regained by responsible responding to what matters for the future doings and saying of Dasein, as being in the world (accepting upon double or triple check that the results are genuine, and planning/projecting new research upon this). The uncertainty, of course, accompanies the certainty as new unsettling questions present themselves in the same process where other questions are settled.

After these excursions let us return to the post-human debate and use Heidegger's thoughts to give a different interpretation on what is involved, viz. a concern for restoring a place for understanding what it means to be human within a post-human ontology.

6. Post-humanism as an expression of human concern

But first, let us recapitulate. First, beneath the apparent reification of the post-human figure, a picture of Dasein as being in the world was disclosed. A picture claiming that the human being is, first of all, fundamentally entangled, in a non-substantialist fashion, with the world, and, second, the place where a meaningful understanding of being can appear. One consequence was that as conceptual determinations, human and post-human being expressed different, albeit connected, ontic understandings of this fundamental being in the world. Already being in the world is the necessary condition for determining and identifying entities as different from human beings, which is, furthermore, connected to projecting possible ways of being and not a reproducing of the already given. Second, disclosing is always a kind of self-disclosing as well. Being in the world as entanglement shows it self in our understanding as caring, how a connection between facticity and possibility is continuously enacted through Dasein, within a world not of Dasein's control.

Now, the participants in the post-human debate in our case can, roughly, be seen as expressing two different kinds of self-understandings connected to the disclosing of the post-human figure as depending on a being in the world. They are expressed, on the ontic level, as the negative and positive conceptual determination of what is implied in the post-human ontology, respectively, and as an ontological response, a self-disclosing, in the reaction to the post-human ontology as consisting in different understandings of what being in the world means. Besides the already quoted negative conceptual determination of post-humanism, Badmington (2004, p. 1349) claims that the "...anthropocentric discourse both holds sway...and sways wildly from itself, with which a 'critical posthumanism' ...must now endlessly engage." Eradicating or negating any element of humanism seems to be the sole objective for post-humanist thinking. In much the same vein is Braun's (2004a, p. 1354) claims, "The human was post from the beginning" and should be understood, not as consisting of some capacity of transcendence or as an object of recovery, but "...as in the middle of multiple becomings, always an *effect* of politics, rather than that which *grounds* politics." Being in the world is understood here as being an effect of rather than partaker of the disclosing of being. Hence, for both Badmington and Braun being in the world as a post-human "figure" is predominantly understood as a negative determination by

denying any activity on part of the human being. What matters is that the human being is not in control. Both express a denial, then, a denial of the responsibility disclosed above as part of the human caring. Their response to the questioning of the post-human ontology, then, comes very close to a full-blown defeatism regarding possible active human participation in any ontology. A further consequence is the refusal of letting the disclosed being in the world be a part of Dasein's future support of the disclosing of being, or, to put it in other words, a declining of understanding the possibility of a future space of researching post-humanism as connected to a human concern and responsibility.

Murdoch and Whatmore, on the other hand, both express a cautious but still positive determination of the human being. In Murdoch's (2004, p. 1357) words, "...the posthumanist condition can best be understood by *working through* humanist discourse", and in the same page he ends up addressing the difficulty in articulating the entanglement between humanism and post-humanism by assuming a "we" for which which he speaks. This "we" develop forms of critical reflection "...as we seek to navigate our way through the complex relations that comprise our posthuman world." (Murdoch 2004, p. 1359) Murdoch's claim of the interrelatedness of the human and the post-human, then, comes close to conceiving the implications of being in the world, and working through the humanist discourse using a critical reflection sounds close to a responsible responding towards phenomena of which "we" are part, but not always in control. As already stated Whatmore (2004, p. 1361) prefers "... 'more-than-human' to the 'posthuman'; a signature that conjures a different kind of historicity" and demonstrates that "...one never arrives at a time/place when the human was not a work in progress." A work in progress developing how humans understand themselves and their surroundings, accepts uncertainty as a continuous working towards being at home, trying to restore a grip on the world and our selves in a responsible fashion. A different kind of historicity can perhaps be disclosed here, one in which Dasein partakes but is not in control of. Both Murdoch and Whatmore, then, express a concern for the place of the human in the post-human ontology while accepting that this human and this place are dynamically related. The dawning responsive responsibility appears in the effort of or caring for understanding the implications of what is disclosed in post-humanity as an expression of being in the world. *That* the disclosed matters

comes out in the uncertainty of a research practice trying to project a new space for carrying on research as a critical reflection or a new kind of historicity.

To sum up, what is disclosed here, then, is that the questioning of the human being in post-humanism indicates more of a culmination of humanism, in the sense of *humanism's questioning of itself*, than a break. Furthermore, the answers given reflect two distinct ways of responding to the sense of not being at home in the world, of coping with the uncertainty. The first was a defeatist refusal to recognise any active human partaking in the disclosing of being, thus accepting no particular place for the human being other than what is given. The second, a more positive but cautious questioning of the place left for the human as a non-substantial and entangled being in and with the world. Because of the expressed cautiousness, a humbleness was disclosed through the articulation, or telling, of an acceptance of the entanglement within a more than human, but still human, ontology. Overall, then, the participants in the debate are concerned, in Heidegger's words they express a caring, by asking for the place of a non-substantialist and entangled human being, like Dasein, in a post-human ontology and answering it in a negative and positive fashion, respectively.

7. Closing

Accepting that post-humanism is a matter of questioning of ontology and, furthermore, that this makes an interpretation appropriating Heidegger's posing of the question of being highly relevant, this article has indicated two things. First, if the generous interpretation of Heidegger is allowed, then most of what is implied in post-humanism – the human being not in control, a non-essentialist conception of human being and a primary entanglement with other entities in the world – is already described and thought through by Heidegger in *Being and Time*. Human, post-human or non-human as discovered entities and conceptual determinations, whether positive or negative, are meaningful or becomes meaningful on the background of a more fundamental disclosing, only. Second, this disclosing is a self-disclosing as well, in the sense that we as researchers are part of the phenomena disclosed. Indications of this, it was claimed, was expressed in the sense of not being at home in the post-human ontology by claiming – or say, perhaps, responding responsibly – a place for the human as more than human, or recovering, or saving something human.

But where does that leave us, then? I will end with a brief indication of possible answers to this question, not intended as conclusive answers but as opening up further discussion. First, it leaves us with the condition of accepting the possibility of continuously correcting our scientific practices as part of disclosing being. Furthermore, it should be recognised that the value of the phenomena disclosed through our scientific practices exists in their theoretical and practical import, that is, how these phenomena matters for us and informs our future dealings with the objects of our attention (including our selves). Hence, instead of denigrating the human, even if the, most likely correct, critique of the predominance of the “human” at the expense of other entities is accepted, the value of the disclosed phenomena is still of a *human* concern, of *clarifying*, *intervening* or *showing* some directions in different situations, as part of our understanding of being. Focusing on the sense of questioning as the main feature, then, the debate of post-humanism appears more as an expression of a (human) concern for understanding being, including human being, than leaving *the* human conception behind.

Second, additional debate on what post-humanism can mean for us is important. Post-humanism is, as the debate and the analysis of it shows, an occasion for initiating a discussion of what it means to be human and what kind of future we will be part of instigating, as Kompridis (2009, p. 23) claims, and, furthermore, how a responsible responding can inform our part. Conceiving the human being in a negative fashion or as a pure effect as some post-human protagonists have done, faces the fear of succumbing to impotence and despair debarring any effort in claiming a place for the human being as a matter of human concern. As Kompridis (2009, p. 25) claims, then, the importance is tied to “...how to redisclose the rich field of connections between persons and things, showing their mutual interdependence and imbrication.” Even though Kompridis’ context, here, is the Kantian distinction between persons and things, it can safely be assumed that this rich field pertains to entities other than things, as an important part of the post-human context as well. Rediscovering this field, however, presuppose a certain humbleness on humans part. A humbleness demanding openness to the diversity of these connections, caring for what and how being(s) matters within the world we live. So, yes, we care (or should care) about post-humanism, as disclosing an understanding of ourselves as human beings and as part of

a bigger whole, viz. being in the world. And, to reiterate, because it is a very human thing to do.

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¹ In this sense, as Haugeland (1999, p. 48) claims, Dasein is not individual persons like each geographer-scientists, nor something they all share as a group, but the different engagements, theoretical and practical deliberations developed and realised through and by these scientists' practices of engaging with whatever it is they are engaging with.

² No Heidegger exegesis is pretended here, merely a suggestion that Heidegger's thinking about being will have a bearing on the debate on post-human ontology and what this bearing could be. Hence, most of Heidegger's innovative and thoughtful terminology will, to avoid what might seem like a terminological esotericism for readers unfamiliar with Heidegger, not be used in the following. Despite this, readers familiar with Heidegger will, hopefully, recognize his thinking behind the following descriptions.

³ Another example of a preoccupation with categorisations is Wolfe's geometrical schema showing a motley crew of mixed human and post-human figures (Wolfe 2009,125). Despite not being exhaustive, Wolfe's schema comes really close to being instructive in laying out the frame in which post-humanism is meaningful. Hence, he ends up non-intentionally making a representation of how the world is supposed to be conceived, rather than exploring possible ways of being which is his original aim.

⁴ See von Hermann (1987) for a very thorough commentary and exposition of the chapter on the question on the meaning of being in *Being and Time*.

⁵ It should be noted that being in the world is not pictured as some kind of containment, where one container, the world, keeps something, the human, in it. This would, implicitly, posit both the world and the human as two separate and already given realms that are subsequently related, whereas Heidegger's notion is the opposite. Any conceptualisation of a world or a human as separate from each other grows out of a previous entanglement between these. Hence, being in, is more like being in motion or being in love. A human being in love experiences the world as attuned to this being in love and not as a world apart. The related notion of entanglement, though, might wrongly be seen as reinforcing a sense of two separate entities being co-joined. Hence, a better term might be *in-tanglement*, emphasising the entanglement as part of being in the world it self. Entanglement will be used the rest of the article, however, but in the *in-tangled* sense.

⁶ Being is, of course, predicated on them, as when it is said, "This bishop is red". Heidegger's point is, however, that this predicating (along with the two other meanings of "to be" – as existence, and identity) only makes sense within a previous understanding of which bishop is talked about, what red is, and so on.

⁷ World is used generically here, as denoting the ontological structure of the "...practical intelligibility of things, in virtue of which we can find our way about in any particular world, make use of things, and act in a way that has both purpose and point." (Carman 2003, p. 133). Being able to play chess might have a bearing on engaging in other practices and worlds than chess related kinds, just like engaging in other kinds of activities (game-like or not, like military strategy), might help understanding the world of chess.

⁸ Heidegger, of course, has a lot more to say about responding, or sofindingness (*Befindlichkeit* by Heidegger) as Haugeland calls it, and telling (*Rede* by Heidegger) (see Haugeland 1999, p. 52) It should be noted that responding does not exclude physical responding *per se*, as developed by Merleau-Ponty for example, but Heidegger does not unfold this. The same applies for telling, since telling apart might be exemplified by the physical gesture of pointing to something, or picking something up, as well as determining conceptually what is

what. Sofindingness and telling, are both connected to Dasein's making of distinctions as being in the world (for example, moving this piece since it feels right). These distinctions express both participation, as entanglement, in factual modes of being, and an anticipation of possible modes of being, as we will see later.

⁹ The German philosopher Walter Schulz claims, in a now classical article (Schulz 1994), that this idea of Dasein's support in the disclosing of being, Heidegger never leaves. Schulz emphasises that it is very easy to (mis-)interpret this in a wrong subjectivist fashion, as if the being is dependent upon Dasein only. If this were the case, the result would be a re-establishing of some sort of exceptionalist idea of a subject/substance on the basis of which another substance, being, could then be explained. Again, that is not the case! The point is, rather, that the disclosing of being is of a human concern, in the sense that disclosing is connected to the openness of Dasein's way of comporting it self towards the world. Schulz (1954, p. 106), furthermore, notes that some interpreters of the late Heidegger's philosophy "...understand Being as it appears in the late writings, as if it is separate from Dasein, and then pronounce as subjectivism the view that this precedence of Being, as a capacity of being in itself, is not acknowledged." The interpretation of Being and Time put forth in this article, is carried out in the "spirit" of Schulz' interpretation, expressing Dasein's role, among other entities, in disclosing being, but without identifying this role as either subjectivist, humanistic or post-humanistic beforehand. That would be bypassing the fundamental entanglement of Dasein and the world, transforming an ontological condition (of Dasein's role) into an ontic fact (of being exactly likes this, or this).

¹⁰ Translation, BAC.

¹¹ The Heidegger expert will have realised by now, that this article will be fairly silent on the time-aspect of Being and Time. That is on purpose, both because it will increase the length of this article considerably and because it would not affect the main argument, but only supply it. Temporality is, in the end, what brings unity to the structure of caring – responsive responsibility.

¹² One example from within the post-humanist's context is Haraway's discussion (Gane 2006, p. 142, see also Haraway 2007) of how Derrida's cat discloses to Derrida that he is naked, the import being that the disclosing is not instigated by Derrida, thus not of his control, but nevertheless still significant. However plain this example might be, it still shows that disclosing and self-disclosing through the caring of Dasein is not a question of Dasein being in control. Rather, it is more like Rouse's reconfiguration of a situation as a disclosure through the exchanges between different participants in this situation. But as Haraway also says in the interview (ibid.), she is not quite sure whether the cat *cares* about Derrida's nakedness. Hence, she is also indirectly saying that caring, in the sense we are speaking about here, pertains primarily to the human being, as the support needed for disclosing being.

5.

Evaluating the economy in eco-economy – connecting the
eco-economy and the capability approach

Evaluating economy in eco-economy – connecting eco-economy and the capability approach

...it is evident that the best political arrangement is that according to which anyone whatsoever might do best and live a flourishing life (zoie makarios)" Aristotle (Politics, VII.2)

Abstract: *This article will analyse Marsden and Kitchen's eco-economy by asking whether it manages to dissolve the dualism of normative and positive economy by incorporate the fact-value entanglement. The analysis shows that a tension within eco-economy exists between incorporating normative considerations and yet still operating with certain welfare-economical assumptions not embracing the entanglement. The tension is sought dissolved by connecting eco-economy with Amartya Sen's capability approach.*

Keywords: eco-economy, Terry Marsden, Lawrence Kitchen, capability approach, Amartya Sen, entanglement

1. Introduction

In a recent paper Lawrence Kitchen and Terry Marsden (2009) called for reconsidering the concept of rural economy. The basis for this call is the eco-economic paradox characterising plenty rural areas, "...that both hold potentially high ecological value and show persistently low levels of economic activity and welfare." (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 274) Aligning the high value and the low activity stated within this paradox is described as an emergence of a new rural development paradigm. Kitchen and Marsden employ a novel theoretical creation in describing this developing paradigm, viz. the establishing of a relation between three different methodologies: ecological economics, eco-system services and ecological modernisation. Naming this methodological motley crew eco-economy, the authors hope eco-economy will form a descriptive framework wide enough to sustain a focus "...upon how and by what means new and revised production-consumption chains, networks and relationships can become established both within rural areas and between them and their urban neighbours." (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 274) A key initiator in this paradigm, it will

be claimed, is the rural agent, which is best described in terms of Marsden and Smith's ecological entrepreneur (Marsden and Smith 2005). Against the backdrop of local economical changes, the entrepreneur reinforces new connections between producing and consuming sectors, seizing opportunities for aligning the high value and low activity.

There seems to be an increasingly growing awareness of the need for thinking along these lines (for example Whatmore *et al* 2003 for alternative food-networks; or Callon *et al* 2002 for the idea of a qualitative economy replacing the traditional bulk-oriented production). This article seeks to make a modest contribution to this development thinking by, first, addressing a theoretical tension within the concept of eco-economy appearing in the disappreciation of the entanglement of facts and values. Second, dissolving this tension, it will be claimed, means embracing an inherent evaluative framework of economy. The analysis made and the arguments proposed here, will take its departure from recent developments in philosophy of economics (Putnam and Walsh 2012; Hausman and McPherson 2006; Walsh 1996). Although this might give the ensuing analysis a glow of pure theory, the result is actually the opposite. Embracing the inherent evaluative framework for economics means opposing a detached comportment towards the object of economical scrutiny, replacing this with an enhanced understanding of the entanglement between practical engagement and rational deliberations. As will be seen, the economist Amartya Sen plays a significant role in doing this.

Returning to the tension, then, it appears when the economical framework of this eco-economy is scrutinised. To put it simply, the main part of the solution to the paradox, according to eco-economy, is being attentive to how the numerous ways facts and values can be brought into play by establishing new connections between different sections of the economy. Despite this intention, Kitchen and Marsden cannot adopt their own solution, since one of their methodological premises blocks embracing the entanglement of facts and values from the outset.

Putnam and Walsh have been in the forefront in recent years for arguing against any dichotomies between facts and values in sciences including economy. Instead an entanglement between these must be assumed, thereby dissolving any attempt at reinforcing certain categorical differences in the sciences, for example an essential difference between an ethical based and a "scientific" factual based predictive (positive) economy. As Hausman and McPherson (2006, 60) describes the difference, "Positive economics is concerned with the

explanation and prediction of economic phenomena, while normative economics is concerned with evaluating economic policies, practices, and states of affairs from a moral standpoint.” Accordingly, for Putnam and Walsh, any considerations pertaining to economy must be developed within a perspective realising the original normative and ethical import of this economy as well. This is particularly important when addressing the low economical activity described as part of the paradox above, since it must be addressed through an *evaluation* of what constraints the economical activity faces of both a factual, normative and valuing character. The eco-economy is, in its current stage, still accompanied by an effort of trying to keep facts and values apart, most conspicuously by its assimilating of certain aspects of eco-system services.

Hence, it will be argued below, the tension in Kitchen and Marsden’s notion of eco-economy results from not embracing the normative and valuing dimension of economical thinking completely; a lack which also has been a characteristic trait of a large proportion of 20th century economical thinking. One key economical figure countering this is Amartya Sen and his capability approach. It will be argued, in analogy to the introduction of Sen’s thinking in other disciplines focusing on sustainable development (see for example Ballet *et all* 2011; Burger and Christen 2011; Rauschmayer and Lessmann 2011), that Marsden and Kitchen’s approach will benefit from adopting principal aspects of Sen’s approach, since it is characterised as a “...broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual wellbeing and social arrangements, the design of policies and proposals about social change in society.” (Robeyns 2005, 94) Accordingly, this article will end with some suggestions regarding the resolution of the tension in eco-economy by incorporating certain economical-philosophical insights derived from Sen’s capability approach. Within the limits of a paper of this kind, connecting Sen’s capability approach to the eco-economy will, as a first approximation, supply the latter with an expanded evaluative framework within which further practical and theoretical investigations can be carried out.

The article proceeds in the following way. The first two parts will present eco-economy. First, one line of development will be presented, connecting Marsden and Smith’s focus on the importance of the localised ecological entrepreneurs, with Kitchen and Marsden’s idea of eco-economy. This sets the stage for the contextualisation of economical thinking within a wider conceptualisation of rurality. Second, this rich concept of rurality *in spe* will at the same time set the stage for Kitchen and Marsden’s modelling of the eco-economical

approach through expanding network-initiatives captured in the metaphors of regrounding, deepening and broadening. As a bridgehead to the next two parts, the tension in eco-economy will be described. The next parts will, first, elaborate on the tension by analysing how it is manifest in scientific comportment towards the object of scrutiny and transferred to the idea of the ecological entrepreneur. Second, Amartya Sen's capability approach will be sketched as a framework within which the tension in eco-economy can be dissolved. Lastly, some policy-implications of the capability approach for eco-economy will be touched upon, putting the recapitulation into perspective.

2. Local rural development – ecological entrepreneurs is what matters

Establishing a local induced development capable of restraining the stagnation of economical activities makes sense, primarily, as a bottom up process – with local knowledge and perspectives of innovative possibilities as points of departure. In Marsden and Smith (2005) this point of departure is framed as an “ecological entrepreneur”, the ideal type for local innovation and non-conventional thinking aiming at seizing opportunities for sustainable economic, environmental and social development. The non-conventional part, here, is ‘value-capturing’: merging social and entrepreneurial initiatives with “...respect for ecological, human, social and manufactured capital.” (Marsden and Smith 2005, 441). Sustainable wealth-creation in this sense is committed to preserving cultural, ecological and environmental integrity *and* discovering new pragmatic ways of creating economic benefits in and for the local community. Underlying Marsden and Smith's claim that sustainable development demands a localised bottom-up approach (ibid. 440), is a certain diagnostics. First, globalisation in their view tends to distribute costs and benefits unevenly across different spatial, temporal and social domains. Communities not located on the benefit side of globalisation, risk facing an experience of economic, political and social marginalisation. This marginalisation might even be reinforced during the present financial crisis. Hence, local economic development can be a counterforce, not in a ‘defensive localism’ sense, though, but as a forging of new social organisations and networks linking, for example, producers and consumers within and across local spaces in new ways. This is important especially since one challenge, for food-networks for example, is the increasing de-coupling of consumers from any knowledge of the systems of production and, hence, of possibilities of acting in

accordance with this knowledge. Second, a rural economy is not equivalent with an agrarian economy. As Marsden and Smith (ibid. 442) puts it, the agrarian modernisation process:

“...involves scale-enlargement and cost-price reduction in the producer sector, further intensification of the production unit, specialisation and a drastic reconstruction of the rural area so as to create the most favourable production conditions for maximising agricultural (and standardised) production volume. In addition, while this process holds considerable crisis tendencies, it has been further encouraged by logistical retailer- supply chains and standardised quality regulation.”

This dead end needs to be countered by exploring a rich concept of rurality, which we will turn to next, proposed by Marsden and Kitchen (2009) as an interaction of a plurality of sectors forming the basis of rural development – eco-economy. The ecological entrepreneur, then, constitutes the main economical agency within this rich concept of rurality, taking part in sustainable development by seizing innovative opportunities through value-capturing.

3. Eco-economy and the need for considering Capabilities

The focus of eco-economy is the “...recalibration of micro-economic behavior and practices that, added together, can potentially realign production-consumption chains and capture local and regional value between rural and urban spaces.” (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 275) In other words, the forging of new connections between disparate areas and aligning these with questions of economic development, is at the heart of eco-economy.

The concept of the ecological entrepreneur described above fits well into the picture of eco-economy (fig.1.) connecting and trying to connect, as rural economic agent, several of the boxes by forging connections through connecting economical values and facts.

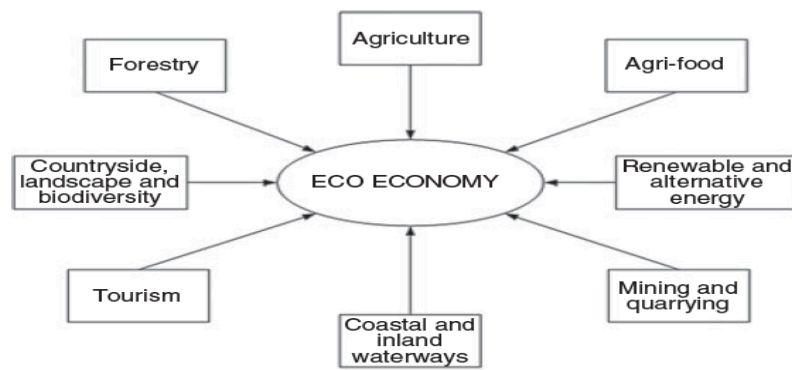


Fig. 1¹

Furthermore, eco-economy is conceived as joining and applying three central approaches in rural development: ecological economics, eco-system services and ecological modernization. In Marsden’s view (Marsden 2004) *ecological modernization* is a joint venture of policy concerns aiming for more normative approaches within sustainable development through reform and transformation of social structures, governments, businesses and markets. In the same vein, ecological modernization tries to bypass the dead end of a binary choice between either economical development or environmental protection, by aiming at ecological consistency between material flows, resource use and consumption (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 277).

Ecological economics conceives economies as constrained by the finite biophysical world by embedding economies in and making them depend upon the ecosystem. Picturing economy as part of overarching natural processes reinforces the possibility of economic growth as endangering as well as enhancing nature and human life. Systems of production, then, ought to be supporting rather than exploiting nature. Hence, ecological economics seeks to influence the economical process in the direction of enhancing the ecosystem, instead of damaging it (see Røpke 2005). One present example of an ecological economics could be the focus upon cradle-to-cradle within different sectors of production, redesigning the way things are manufactured so they, when not viable any more, can be used in other production-processes.

Eco-system service seeks to assign value to services provided from and by nature, hence biodiversity is crucial as conceptualizing a support for life on earth. Parts of eco-system services is valuation of non-commodity outputs from multifunctional agriculture taking into account “...both positive and negative environmental, economic and social functions of

¹ Taken from Kitchen and Marsden (2009, 276)

multifunctional agriculture, and use willingness to pay and willingness to accept compensation as proxies to evaluate the benefits of non-commodity outputs of agriculture such as hedgerows, open landscape, water quality and biodiversity.” (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 279) Connecting these three “methodologies” establishes the basis for a new rural eco-economy (see fig.2)

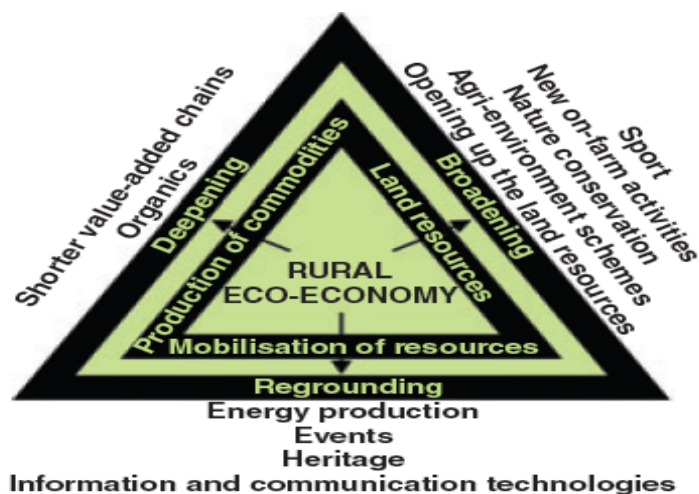


Fig.2²

The inner triangle describes the traditional economy consisting of regular production; maintaining or changing the local ecology by social, cultural and ecological interaction with land resources; and mobilization and use of resources, i.e., exploiting and creating value from the natural resources. Through the rural development these three aspects “...are being socially reproduced and transformed by new attempts by rural actors to revalue and define their economic and resource structures.” (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 280)

4. The essential tension

Now, the above description of eco-economy and the ecological entrepreneurs presents eco-economy, and rightly so, as recognising the entanglement of facts and values, and normativity as part of its overall perspective. It shows, furthermore, that as an overall economical development the eco-economy is, basically, part of what Walsh (2000, 5) terms the second phase of classical economy. That is, after a “dry” period of an almost pure (logical) positivist based economy, characterised by a separation of facts from non-cognitivist values

² Reproduced from Kitchen and Marsden (2009, 281)

and norms, the waters of normativity began to float again in the middle of the last century with the criticism, by Sen and others (see for example Putnam 2000; Putnam and Walsh 2012; Sen 1988), of positivist assumptions in economy³. The second classical phase, then, is not so much a new phase, as it is bringing the normative assumptions of the classical phase out into the open. However, one problem persisted in this incipient reincorporating of normative considerations into positive economy, namely leaving bits of the old positive economy untouched by normativity. In other words, a picture of reincorporating creates the impression that two separate and independent dimensions, the normative and the factual, are just put together without considering their original entanglement⁴ (Putnam and Walsh 2009). One result is making it appear, as if one can decide how much these dimensions should be conjoined, leaving room for economy untouched by normativity and the other way around, thereby preserving the original dualism but under changed circumstances.

One example of how this inherited dualism between facts and values creates a manifest tension is described by Putnam and Walsh (2009, 210), “Economists who assert the existence of a dichotomy between ‘welfare economics’ and ‘predictive economics’ are assuming the truth of a separation theorem they have never attempted to prove.” The point being, as Sen (1988, 29) claims, that predictive economics increasingly was allowed to influence welfare economical considerations, but not the other way around. The reason was, simply, the expulsion of broadly conceived ethical and valuational considerations from the economical analysis, since economy was pictured, as a matter of fact, as a self-organising unit, like the market, or in terms of agency as based on the maximisation of utility, only (see also Hausman and McPherson 2006)

The distinction is, furthermore, sometimes reinterpreted as making epistemological but not ontological sense. It is then possible to believe in an ontological entanglement of facts and values, but keeping (or at least trying to keep) these apart when it

³ Without attempting a thorough listing of the history of 20th century economics, see Fine & Milonakis; Hausman and MacPherson 2006; Putnam 2002; Walsh 1996, for very informative descriptions.

⁴ This is, furthermore, the reasoning behind Sen’s repeated attempts to understand Adam Smith as economist *and* moral philosopher, hence Smith’s perspective as an infusion of economical (facts) and ethical considerations (values) (Sen 1988). As Putnam (2002, 48-49) puts it, Sen’s introduction of ethical concerns and concepts into economics is more of “...a reintroduction of something that was everywhere present in the writings of Adam Smith...” Sen, then, defends Adam Smith against the marginalist revolution’s one-sided focus on his importance as an economist only, viz. cutting off any social dimension and its moral implications (Fine 2004, 100), but criticises Smith’s description of the social dimension as being founded upon too narrow a conception of the goal of economical agency as pure self-interest or sympathy.

comes to doing economics as a knowledge enhancing enterprise. Obviously, methodology becomes very important, then, in conjunction with the positivist idea of establishing criteria for separating facts from values. One example of this, described by Gasper (2008, 236), was the classical textbook in economics from the sixties – Richard Lipsey’s *An Introduction to Positive Economics* – apparently still widely used. As Gasper (ibid.) puts it, “The book sought to distance itself from the normative and yet also to engage in policy analysis. The values it used in evaluation were, in the fashion of the contemporary welfare economics and orthodox treatment of economic policy, largely hidden within its methodology, or taken as self-evident and consensual and thus as not really values.” Accordingly, the methodology supposed to establish the right positive approach to economics turned out to incorporate unacknowledged, or ignored epistemic values as well. Contrary to this is, in the words of Walsh (2003, 389) that “...the philosophically rigorous defense of entanglement is exactly what is needed to build a development theory black with the dire facts of the...world, white with economic analysis, and red with a humane moral appraisal of the fragility of human attainments.” So, does the eco-economy embrace this entanglement, or is there some kind of unacknowledged if not a dualist residue then tension involved?

It will be argued that there is a tension and it creeps in, unintentionally, at two connected places in eco-economy. First, in what could be characterised as Kitchen and Marsden’s predominantly descriptive, or somewhat detached scientific comportment when addressing economy in eco-economy. As Putnam (2003, 112) puts it, the entanglement between facts, values and conventions within welfare economics “...requires that we be able to make, and meaningfully discuss, precisely claims about ‘the morality’ ...about the priorities that *should* be assigned to education, to reducing levels of disease, to reducing levels of malnutrition, and...a host of other value-laden issues.” Leaving Putnam’s examples aside, the point is that any description *requires* a certain evaluation as well, since any use of descriptive terms and the concomitant allegedly “neutral” scientific comportment towards its study object, are already tied up with evaluative terms and a value-laden intentionality from the outset. This evaluative comportment, then, is governed by some sense of rational linguistic control containing the required evaluative standards appropriate in an objective sense to the evaluation’s “...particular functions and contexts.” (Putnam 2002, 33) Hence, evaluation, as part of a *reasoned* doing and thinking about economy, entails recognising the diverse reasons to value things other than just income and wealth, and relates to the “...real opportunities to

lead the kind of life we would value living.” (Drezé and Sen, cited after Walsh 2000, 5) To counter one possible objection, a diminished sense of (scientific) objectivity is *not* a consequence of this, that is, bringing evaluation to the fore is not replacing objectivity with relativist subjective preferences. Assuming this, then, would presuppose the positivist claim that the dividing line created by the distinction between the objective and the subjective is the same as the one created by facts and values. Which is exactly one of the dichotomies the idea of entanglement tries to bypass. Claiming, “murder is wrong” is not less objective than claiming, “The universe is app. 5 billion years old”. Both express two, albeit different, kinds of reasoned evaluation involving objective import as well.

Now, Kitchen and Marsden, of course, use evaluative terms in their descriptions, which a quick glance at the description of the eco-economical paradox shows. However, they fail to consider, in a broader sense, what the normative import of their proposed model is. For example, how is income redistribution part of rural development? What kind of priorities should be made and between what when we discuss how to boost a rural economy? What kind of consequences would an eco-economical modelling and implementation have for the citizens in the implemented area? What economical picture of human being and doing is implied by eco-economy? What is the relationship between the rural industries and the public sector in general, and what should and could it be? Should it be different in relation to different delineations of public spaces? What are the basic commodities needed for people to uphold a life they find satisfactory, and how do we secure that? These, and other relevant questions, of course, are questions expressing and addressing the inherent evaluative space in economy, explicating how this space could be approached without claiming the answers beforehand.

Second, the tension appears in the possible discrepancy regarding the conditions for working out the connection between the different models proposed within the eco-economy. On one hand, eco-economy focus on the normative conditions, especially when sustainability concerning nature is advocated. On the other hand, the economy in eco-economy is mainly modelled on the market as the space for economic transactions. Any notion of value, then, is basically a value determined by the market exchange only (Gowdy 1997, 38). Speaking about willingness to pay, contingent valuation, maximisation of utilisation or pure production-consumption chains, as Kitchen and Marsden (2009, 279) do, presuppose specific welfare-economic considerations, viz., the connection between utilitarianism and

maximisation of utility, the cost-benefit analysis behind contingent valuation or how willingness to pay is modelled on satisfaction of preferences. Furthermore, the last aspect, the satisfaction of preferences, presupposes some sense of self-interest as an economical concept, which is the basic idea in the development of rational choice theory (see Walsh 1996; Orr 2007), and suggests understanding nature, or eco-systems (biotic and abiotic factors included), in terms of commodifications (Peterson *et al* 2010). Failing to discuss the normative conditions and consequences of these welfare-economic presuppositions, then, creates a possible tension between a normative framework directed at enhancing sustainability in nature and a more market-reducing welfare economical framework valuing nature in terms of its contribution to this market, only. Overall, then, the tension could be described as result of not recognising that the space of possible determination of values is not coinciding or converging with the space of possible determination by pricing. In a minimal sense, then, this tension will, eventually, force us to reason and evaluate the connection between modern day imperatives of economic growth versus the conservative impulse connected with the sustainability of nature. So, contrary to their intentions, Kitchen and Marsden come very close to reinforcing the dead end of a binary choice between sustainable nature and economical growth within ecological modernisation they set out to avoid. To sum up, Kitchen and Marsden's descriptions of eco-economy bypasses the evaluative framework already implied by their use of evaluative terms, which creates a tension between their employing of different economical models without discussing the normative import of these models. It creates a refuge, or safe haven, for leaving normative values and questions out of consideration, and for using the conception of the market as the master concept under which everything else can and eventually must be subsumed.

Now, overcoming this inherent tension, it will be suggested, connecting eco-economy with the economist Amartya Sen's capability approach will be fruitful. But before turning to this, the idea of entrepreneurship will be touched upon. This will expose some further presuppositions behind the tension, especially how it appears in the conception of economic agency. As was claimed above the tension was expressed in a detached scientific compartment towards the object of its study, economical developmental activity. This wanting evaluation of the normative import of eco-economy, it will be claimed next, spills over, so to speak, into the conception of entrepreneurship, producing an inadequate sense of economical agency. Removing this detachment by pointing to a specific kind of practice

sensitivity connected with rational evaluative deliberations will clear the way for widening the focus of eco-economy by connecting it with the capability approach. Spinosa *et all* (1997) is important here because they express an acute sense for conceiving economical activity as practice-engaging, hence the entrepreneur as an *agens* instead of *patiens* as Sen (2004, 4) puts it, viz. actively engaging instead of a detached controlling.

5. Entrepreneurism: value-capturing vs. disclosing

The scientific comportment Marsden and Smith (2005, 441) adopts in their examination revolves around "...problem-solving aspects of local and regional network building; i.e. how networks function and evolve to shape knowledge and create a collective willingness to innovate to achieve mutually beneficial goals..." Key actors in this problem-solving process are the entrepreneurs who, as value-captures, play a "...decisive role in enrolling and mobilising other actors into the network; create and sustain its structures, and innovate in developing new interfaces between producers and consumers." (Marsden and Smith 2005, 450) Hence, entrepreneurism is, as Marsden and Smith conclude their examination, all about capturing spaces and creating opportunities.

Now, even though their suggestions are innovative, their conclusion, it will be claimed in this section, gets it "upside down". Following Spinosa *et all* (1997) the proper focus is more on creating spaces and thereby capturing opportunities instead, it could be said. To see why this is so, a return to the scientific theoretical comportment and its characterisation is needed. Recall that the aim for Kitchen and Marsden (2009, 274) is a conceptual rebuilding of the three theoretical systems, ecological economics, ecosystem services and ecological modernisation, into a wider sociological and ecological framework, (explaining) with implications for "...how and by what means new and revised production-consumption chains, networks and relationships can become established both within rural areas and between them and their urban neighbours." Even though a kind of context-sensitivity is expressed here, as a need for a conceptual and practical integration of the interconnections of rural eco-economy, the explanatory pattern moves from a *theoretical* adjustment towards "...case studies that begin to show the ways in which these new interconnections are being reconstructed and practiced." (Kitchen and Marsden 2009, 274) Hence, the theoretical comportment precedes, or is, at first, detached from, the practical

engagement with the case-studies. The same goes for characterising the entrepreneur as value-capturing by Marsden and Smith. Capturing denoted a seizing of opportunities establishing the proper basis for developing new networks, or production-consumption chains, as a problem-solving response to societal changes. The entrepreneur is characterised here as a discoverer (Alvarez, S. A.; Barney, J. A., 2007; Alvarez, S. A.; Barney, J. A.; Young, S. L. 2010), in the sense of being “... responsive to external circumstances, and the entrepreneurial process is aimed at resolving an external deficiency...” (Korsgaard 2011, 268) more than being a process of creation. So, despite Marsden and Smith’s actual use of the phrase creating opportunities, the sense conveyed by their use of the entrepreneurship is more of a seizing of already given opportunities (capturing pre-given values) in response to external problematic circumstances. Now, there is nothing wrong with either entrepreneurial problem-solving, or confirming reconstructed theories, *per se*. But the scientific comportment and the entrepreneurial responsiveness, however, both connote a sense of passivity and detachment. This might seem as an insignificant point to stress but as will be seen below, it has implications for how the economical agency and the role of eco-economy are conceived. If Spinoza *et al* (1997) are right, then some Cartesian presuppositions are at work here, and these presuppositions are counter-productive for the conditions of development.

According to Spinoza *et al* (1997, 6) Cartesianism is characterised by an abstract, as opposed to situated, understanding of people, expressed by different kinds of detachments, exemplified – roughly speaking - by the detached emotionality of a surgeon operating, or a judge ruling. First, a distanced and wider view on things, like the judge ruling, is attempted by “...extracting ourselves from the immediate pressures of the moment, and to see what is before us in terms of its relationship to other matters.” (Spinoza *et al* 1997, 6) Second, a sense of non-involvement and being composed as connoted by our understanding of being objective is attached. A strategic attitude maximizing economical income when sealing the deal, or the composure of the surgeon would be examples here. Third, these two senses combine into a third detachment from our embeddedness in and involvement with meaningful everyday practices. Adopting a certain instrumentalist view on things is one consequence, “...we can detach ourselves from the things we encounter and begin noting only the features of the things that most clearly serve the instrumental purpose at hand.” (Spinoza *et al* 1997, 7) Combined with the non-involvement and composed attitude, instrumentalism is efficient in maximising utility or engaging in technical problem-solving practices. The reducing of the

value of nature to its potential market value, as described above (as commodification), creates a conception of nature as instrumental in developing markets, detaching the conception of nature from the everyday practices where the value of nature is different from the market value. Cartesianism as just described, then, could be understood as supplying some of the (historical-) conceptual conditions for what Sen (1987) termed the engineering aspect of economy, focusing on logistic issues rather than ends, and where “...the object of exercise is to find the appropriate means to serve them.” (Sen 1987, 4)

The sense of capturing, as in value-capturing, as well as the scientific perspective, are compartments expressing a sense of detachment, or a modus of engineering approach, as just depicted. First, value-capturing as a problem solving activity is seizing the opportunity before you, of enrolling people into an *already given* network and sustaining its structures. Furthermore, developing new interfaces between producers and consumers means rearranging a pre-given value-chain, or instrumentalising it to develop a new interface, not evaluating whether the overall production system within which this value-chain is embedded is appropriate. The ecological entrepreneur is, as a value-capturer, more of a jigsaw puzzle maker connecting pre-given pieces than the creator or initiator of the puzzle. Second, Smith, Kitchen and Marsden’s scientific compartment is detached in the sense of starting with problem-solving as the main scientific activity, using the methodology of eco-economy as a problem-solving tool without discussing the normative implications, or ends, of this methodology. It is this compartment, which spills over into the ecological entrepreneurs, who are depicted as if they are logistical entrepreneurs reconnecting already given value-chain elements.

The essential tension expressed above can, on the background of Cartesianism, be described as an effort of controlling development by holding on to logistic issues, efficiency as rearranging producer-consumer relations or using methodology as problem-solving, thereby creating a somewhat detached relation to the (ends of) economical practices studied. The interesting question, then, is whether this detachment is the proper scientific compartment when dealing with development and entrepreneurship. For Spinoza *et al* (1997, 24) the answer is no, since the detached compartment is not strong enough to engage with the change needed, instead a compartment characterised not “...by detached deliberation but by involved experimentation.” (Spinoza *et al* 1997, 24), describes the proper entrepreneurial compartment.

If Spinoza *et al* are correct in their descriptions of Cartesianism, and if economy presupposes some of its conditions, then involvement should be stressed, as a creating of spaces in which possibilities can be tried out. Even though Spinoza *et al* (1997) is not an economical treatise, the basis of their concept of entrepreneurship can function as a transition to Sen's capability approach. First of all, entrepreneurship is at the outset connected to democratic action and the cultivating of solidarity. The entanglement between facts and values claimed as crucial for the right conception of economy, according to Putnam and Walsh (2012), is embraced here as a point of departure. The unifying spot embracing these elements is the conviction that the web of everyday practices are crucial for the understanding of our selves, each other and the things around us. Things and people are disclosed as meaningful and not (just) instrumentally effective through our practices for dealings with them (Spinoza *et al* 1997, 19).

Second, what matters in developing these practices are capabilities enforcing this development as a change of the space disclosed. Hence, it is, again, not about value-capturing as much as it is about value-creating, it might be said. One example Spinoza *et al* uses, illustrates the difference. Imagine an entrepreneur developing a new fabric that keeps people warm, seeing the need for this fabric in the increasing number of old people, and the fact that old people are more easily chilled. This is not genuine entrepreneurship, according to Spinoza *et al*, since it does not "...open a new space for human action. The entrepreneur is the person who develops a cold weather activity that elderly people subsequently seek out and that changes the way the elderly see themselves, their bodies, and their lives." (Spinoza *et al* 1997, 37) Even though this might not be the best example, it still illustrates the change of focus from a detached perspective to a perspective focusing on the possibilities, viz. activities and capabilities resulting from opening up a new space for action.

Third and last, similar to Kitchen and Marsden's concepts of deepening, broadening and regrounding, Spinoza *et al* (1997, 24) propose three (let us term these entrepreneurial) capabilities as pivotal for disclosing new spaces: articulation, reconfiguration and cross-appropriation. Articulation is a result of bringing particular aspects of a practice into sharper focus. It might be retrieving old techniques from some craftsmanship to address a particular problem, or establishing a local food network making the possibilities for buying organics explicit. Reconfiguration is, according to Spinoza *et al* (1997, 25), a more substantial way a practice can change by bringing into dominance previous

marginal aspects of this practice. Within the practice of transportation, for example, driving a car is a matter of controlling it, whereas horseback riding is a matter of governing. The change from an aspect of governing to controlling reconfigured the whole idea and practice of transportation. Generally, one has a sense of gaining wider horizons in reconfiguration (ibid. 26), not unlike the sense of broadening by Kitchen and Marsden. The last capability is cross-appropriation, “...when one disclosive space takes over from another disclosive space a practice that it could not generate on its own but that it finds useful.” (ibid. 27) This aspect of change happens on all levels within the web of practises, from a cultural or a societal level, to industries, professions and even families. As an example, imagine how the use of mobile phones has changed our understanding of each other, our selves and things around us, regrounding – as Kitchen and Marsden terms it – different practices, including economical practices, differently on all these levels.

Now, the difference compared to Kitchen and Marsden is, of course, the predominant focus on practical involvement, of emphasising disclosing rather than a detached (scientific) comportment towards the surroundings. Engaging in involved experimentation, then, requires a “Special sensitivity to marginal, neighboring, or occluded practices...” which is “...at the core of entrepreneurship, citizen virtue, and drawing people together into a community.” (Spinoza *et all* 1997, 30) Now, one can hardly do anything but approve of the appeal to this sensitivity. But denigrating any reflective comportment, since it will involve, as a minimum, some sort of extraction from the moment, and, hence, a certain distance to a given practice, entails that Spinoza *et all* lacks an ability to operate with a stronger sense of rational deliberation. Their appeal to sensitivity faces the danger of solely reproducing an emotional understanding, precluding any possibility of critique. Hence, they lack a sense of what Sen (1985, 183-184) terms authorship invariance that certain evaluations of aspects of practices “...must not vary with the person making the judgement, even though it can vary with the *position from which* the valuation is made.”. Even though this might be too weak a claim to dismiss Spinoza *et all* on, they will still need to show how a rational deliberation is part of disclosing possible spaces of action. The same thing applies to the sense of entrepreneurship as value-creating, since without rational deliberation how do we determine whether the values are right or wrong, or good or bad. Embracing the entanglement of facts, values and conventions, then, it seems we need to steer a course between the sensible engaging *in* practices (of disclosing possible spaces of action or creating

values) and the composed rational deliberation *of* these practices, associated with Spinoza *et al* and Kitchen, Marsden and Smith, respectively. Combining a sense of practical involvement with rational deliberations, and using this combination as a capability for evaluating and disclosing new spaces for action, is the position of Amartya Sen, which we will turn to next.

6. Sen's capability approach

If the above "diagnosis" of the eco-economy is right, dissolving the tension means embracing the entanglement of facts and values on two levels. On the one hand, the overall implications of this embracing for economy should be described. This will be dealt with in this section, describing Sen's capability approach as a framework for embracing the entanglement. On the other hand, the implications for carrying out an enhanced eco-economical analysis in practice should be indicated. In the next section, then, what an eco-economical evaluative framework could signify within this frame will be described. In both cases Robeyns' (2005; 2006; 2011) excellent introductions to Sen will serve as an inspiration for describing the capability approach.

Briefly put, in Robeyn's excellent phrase, the capability approach is a broad normative framework creating an evaluative space for assessing well-being and the social arrangements, design of policies and conceptions of societal change needed for this well-being to be established and developed. As an evaluative space it is not explaining well-being (or poverty, or inequality), but helps "...to *conceptualize* and *evaluate* these phenomena." (Robeyns 2006, 352) Main inspirations for Sen are such diverse thinkers as Aristotle, Adam Smith and Karl Marx (see Sen 1988), all stressing, in Sen's interpretations, the importance of people's capabilities and possibilities of determining their lives, including the economical aspects of these lives, in accordance with reasoned conceptions of what a good life is. One consequence is the centrality of an overall recognizing of human diversity, with the widening of the informational basis for assessing whether the diverse conceptions of well-being are actually realised, as a result. Here, Sen's repeated claims of not reducing any economical evaluation to income, utility or happiness (often discussed together as well-being understood as well-fare) *only* has its *raison d'être*, since this will lead to a narrowing of the informational basis for carrying out the evaluation, with a misrecognition the diversity and injustice as a result. Income, utility and happiness, however, can be used as *parts* of an overall evaluation,

involving multiple factors implied in describing and evaluating people's well-being. The sole end of economy, then, is making sure that the freedom of realising these diverse conceptions of well-being is achievable, hence, development as the title of Sen (1999) claims, is development as enhancing and realising of freedoms as a rational deliberative process.

In evaluating whether this human flourishing is taking place, Sen deploys a number of concepts tying the context-sensitivity and rational deliberation, we described above, together. The strength of Sen's capability approach then, is, as Robeyns (2006, 353) describes, that it "...in practice comes in a variety of forms, in part because of the wide scope of the approach, but also because the approach is radically underspecified..." Underspecified in the sense that corresponding to recognizing the diverse conceptions of well-being, a wide space of interpreting Sen's evaluative concepts is possible. Furthermore, each of these concepts is value-imbued, expressing the entanglement of facts and values needed for dissolving the tension above. The concepts relevant here are Sen's notion of agency and the related notions of capability and functioning, all helping to describe and evaluate a possible space of freedom.

As Sen (1999, 18) puts it, part of the focus on freedom means understanding how freedom is a "...principal determinant of individual initiative and social effectiveness." Hence, a given society's success is evaluated by focusing on the number of substantial freedoms its members actually have. Agency, to put it a bit crudely, means the ability of people to help themselves and be influential, which is central to any process of development. Opposite to an agent – as a person acting – is, in Sen's terminology (Sen 2004, 1) *patients*, or a patient. Overall, a patient is passive and in need of attention, whereas an agent actively exercises the freedom to choose what to value. We have already seen an example of this above, namely the focus on responding on external circumstances, facing the danger of picturing entrepreneurs as passive, as in *need* of opportunities to act on, and not as agents. To put the matter slightly different, the agent chooses to choose, and it is this choosing which is the object for Sen's notion of freedom. This agency, then, is not an unconstrained freedom to act done by separate individuals, but is constrained by social and natural factors (Sen 1988a, 17). Sen captures this by differentiating between well-being and agency (Gries and Naudé 2011, 106), where well-being, first, is understood as each individual seeking to maximise his or her utility. Well-being, in this sense, is usually seen as tantamount to the ability of a person to control or command goods and services. This usually leads to a focus on income and happiness (pleasure,

enjoyment or desire), because income determines how much a person can consume, and happiness express a parameter of how well a person fares (Basu and López-Calva 2011, 154). Contrary to this Sen (1992, 56) claims “...a person can – and typically does – also have goals and values other than the pursuit of one’s own well-being.” Implying, then, that agency, hence a person’s well-being, is a more complex orchestrating of people’s possible beings and doings within social and natural orders. For example, if a person aims at the prosperity of her community, then we would need to evaluate her agency, and whether she achieves her goal, supported by a number of other evaluative criteria, hence, requiring the expansion of the informational basis other than whether her achievement contributes to her own well-being, only. Hence, a sense of means-ends rationality is connected with agency, but in a wider sense than normal, because for Sen, freedom is both the end and the means of development (Sen 1999, 36).

This perhaps peculiar claim arises because, first, as Gasper (2000, 992) emphasises, very different people have reasons to value freedom as an end in it self, ranging from a political prisoner to people in rural districts wishing for a possibility of connecting to the market as a place for exercising their free choice. Second, freedom has instrumental importance as a means to reach other ends people have reasons to value. A simple example is the use of democratic elections allowing people to exercise their freedom to choose whatever candidate they have reasons to value. This, furthermore, shows freedom as carrying a constructive role as well, since it enhances the free exchange of views, which “...influences and modifies opinions and social values. For example specifications of needs should arise from democratic debate as statements of community priorities...” (Gasper 2000, 993) So, to put it in Sen’s words, “Whereas well-being freedom is freedom to achieve something in particular, viz. wellbeing, the idea of agency freedom is more general, since it is not tied to any type of aim.” (Sen 1985, 221) Sen, then, is not leaving the perspective of well-being for the perspective of agency here, rather, he is emphasising well-being as understandable within a broader notion of agency, only. The two notions of functionings and capabilities, then, are employed in describing this broader sense of agency.

Now, the focus on agency emphasises peoples ability to do certain things and to achieve certain types of beings, as Sen (1988a, 15) claims, such as being well nourished, being able to move about as desired, and so on. And it is these "doings" and "beings", which Sen terms the functionings of a person. A functioning can be contrasted with a good or a

commodity as “...what a person manages to do or to be. A *good* can *enable* a functioning but is distinct from it.” (Basu and López-Calva 2011, 154) A car is a good, and being able to drive the car is a functioning. However, two people both owning a car, might not be able to achieve the same functioning, in case one of them has lost the driver license. This presents a first indication of why the broadening of the informational base for evaluating is important and what this broadening implies, since if the focus is on goods only, no knowledge about the individual besides the fact of owning a car is needed. Hence, which functionings individuals are capable of achieving is paramount knowledge. First, knowledge about how the social, personal and natural contexts in which people are embedded, are factors either constraining or facilitating the achievements. Second, knowledge about peoples’ ability to convert these factors of embeddedness into a significant value within their lives is important. This qualifies the distinction between patients and agents above, since it is not enough to supply people with opportunities if they lack the possibility of acting on these. Initially then, the functionings achieved by a person indicates this person’s quality of life, i.e. the degree to which this person lives in accordance with what this person has reason to value. But this is not sufficient either, since there might be certain functionings this person could have achieved or realised and have reasons to value as well, and these are what Sen terms capabilities.

A person’s capability, then, is “...the various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that the person can achieve. Capability is, thus, a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person’s freedom to lead one type of life or another.” (Sen 1992, 40) To describe the difference between functionings and capabilities take an example Sen often uses. A person fasting is clearly starving, but fasting as a functioning includes the choice of stopping and hence not starving. But a person “...who has no option but to starve (because, say, of his extreme poverty) cannot be said to be fasting. In assessing the achievements of the persons and of the society, the distinction between fasting and willy-nilly starving may well be very important.” (Sen 1988, 18) So, if we want to know about the achieved functionings, which functionings are real possibilities, we need to look into the set of capabilities from which people can choose to live their lives. A person’s set of capabilities expresses the real freedom to achieve functionings, or, in other words, the actual possibility of choosing to choose. The distinction between functionings and capabilities, then, is between the realised and the effectively possible (Robeyns 2011), thus while working is a functioning, the real possibility of having a job is the corresponding capability. Figure three below shows a schematic

representation of the relation between contexts, capabilities and functionings.

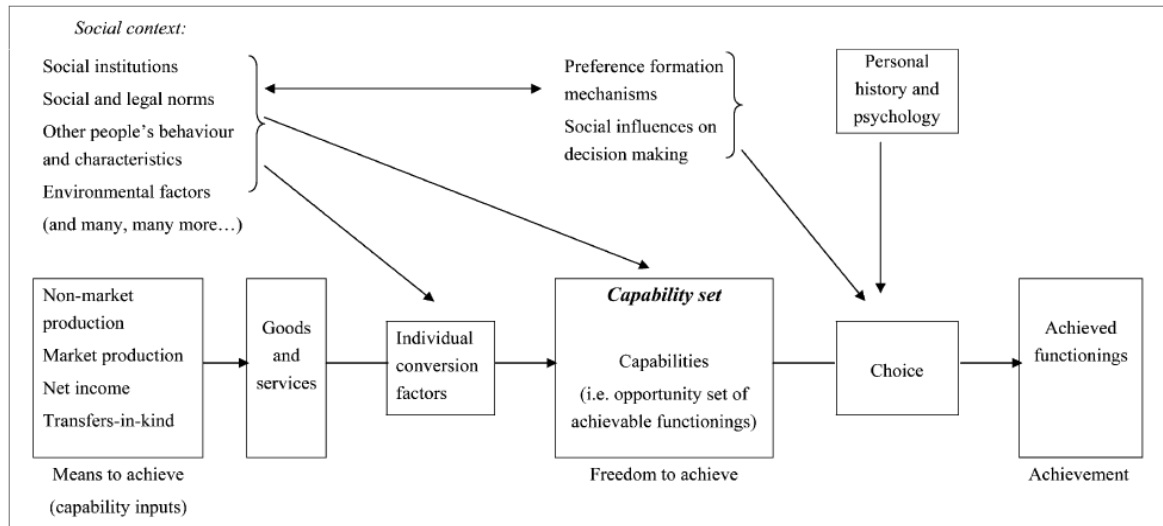


fig. 3⁵

Economical agents are depicted here as engaging different facts and values within different contexts, consisting of the broad informational spectrum for converting a freedom to achieve into actual achievement. Sen's capability approach, as an evaluative framework, reinforces sensitivity towards different contexts, and their constraining or enhancing the relation between capabilities and functionings. This sensitivity, however, is accompanied by a reasoned scrutiny, in the sense that "...valuation is to be a reflective informed exercise, not simply assertion of whatever one currently directly feels; it is to be value judgment in the true sense." (Gasper 2007, 343) Hence, reasoned scrutiny is a public affair, carried out in public discourse and neither a reproducing of pure subjective preferences nor, at the opposite end, to be measured by a priory axiomatic rational structures. To see how this combining of context-sensitivity and reasoned scrutiny is possible, without reproducing subjective feelings or pre-given rational structures, we will use an example taken from Walsh (2007, 68-69). Picture a poor mother and her daughter, with the household fruit bowl, on one occasion, containing three apples, x, y and z, all decreasing in size. On another

⁵ Taken from Robeyns (2005, 98). This picture, unlike the actual process of choosing to choose, presents a non-dynamical understanding of the relationship between functionings and capabilities within social and personal contexts. What is left implicit here, is the natural context, ranging from the environmental factors to the individual physique involved in conversion factors, and more broadly conceived, nature both as capability input, food for eating for example, and as a value in itself, the aesthetic value of a landscape.

occasion, apples equivalent to y (medium) and z (small) is in the bowl. If the bowl contains all three apples, the mother will, of course, pick y, but if there are only two apples in the bowl, she will pick z. The small apple was, of course, available on both occasions, yet she picks it at one and rejects it at another occasion. On a too rational understanding of this example the mother would be deemed inconsistent regarding her choices. But evaluating her choices, viz. contextually relating them to capabilities and functionings, then saving the biggest apple for her daughter, are more rational than the allegedly 'transitive law' her choice could be measured by. Furthermore, although there are, of course, feelings involved, the mother's display of preferences comes out as very objective, since lacking a whole bunch of treats for her daughter, she unfailingly provides those of which she is capable. Her choices, then, are examples of reflective informed exercises as Gasper (2007, 343) claims, and due to the authorship invariance we understand why the mother did what she did. With this brief introduction, it is possible to indicate how Sen's capability approach can provide the necessary frame to dissolve the tension we claimed existed in eco-economy.

7. Relaxing the tension

But first, recapitulating the argument is appropriate. The basic premise of this article is accepting Walsh and Putnam's claim that economy is, from the outset, a practice, or discipline defined by the entanglement of facts and values. Central economical concepts, like agency, or Sen's notion of capability, express this entanglement, rather than denying, or oppressing the significance of either facts, or values. The question we have sought to answer is, then, how is this entanglement expressed in the concept of eco-economy?

Eco-economy was presented as a broad framework for modelling rural development by interrelating the three methodologies: ecosystem services, ecological modernisation and ecological economics. Furthermore, the central economical agency within this rural development was the ecological entrepreneur, seizing opportunities and forging new networks. As a first approximation it was claimed that eco-economy failed to embrace the entanglement. First, through the somewhat detached scientific comportment reinforced by not asking fundamental normative questions, second, by failing to address certain welfare assumptions within the juxtaposing of different methodologies thereby creating a tension between the aims of overall sustainability and economical growth. Using Spinoza *et all* the

tension was characterised further as depending upon a Cartesian framework, defined by detachment from the practices studied, and an instrumentalisation of things by using these for some other ends, for example the market. This Cartesian framework, furthermore, shaped the notion of entrepreneurship, as an observer more than a participant, discovering rather than creating. We ended by claiming that Spinoza *et al* was too prone to disavow the rational deliberation connected with an authorship invariance related to the practices we engage in, and proposed Sen's capability approach as an optimal choice for combining a sense of engaging in practices with the rational deliberation of practices. Sen's capability approach was described, then, focusing on the key entanglement terms for dissolving the tension, viz. agency, functioning and capability. Now, let us reinterpret the eco-economy using Sen's approach, starting with broadening the informational basis. The focus on freedom in Sen's perspective clears the ground for asking the important questions left out in the eco-economy, by not assuming certain parameters or evaluative structures as more significant than others beforehand.

First, it should be noted that both ecological modernisation and ecological economics could be incorporated, theoretically, fairly easily within the capability approach. Recall that ecological economics aims at enhancing the eco-system instead of damaging it, which is compatible with Sen's view of development as an expansion of freedom. Furthermore, ecological modernisation emphasises normative approaches, hence incorporating values within the perspective, and tries to bypass the binary choice of either economy or ecology. Both, however, are in need of tools for incorporating a wider informational basis into their conceptualising and evaluating of economical systems, which Sen's capability approach can supply.

Second, In Kitchen and Marsden's version of eco-system services certain welfare assumptions were left implicit, reducing nature/material conditions to means or instruments in the developing of markets, only. Hence, one obvious starting point for relaxing the tension between facts and values, is developing a richer perspective of the societal relationship towards nature as entangled, and not opposed, or based on an instrumental relationship. Polischuk and Rauschmeyer (2012, 104) have suggested a more broad conception of ecosystem services, basing it on ecological characteristics. In this way, eco-system services can be understood as the conditions and processes through which natural ecosystems help sustain and fulfil life in general and human well-being in particular. This would go against a

pure economical view on eco-systems as means through which we obtain benefits valuable by monetary criteria only. Instead sustaining life, means broadening valuation including goods (e.g. timber, biomass fuel), functions (e.g. water purification systems, ecological networks), as well as cultural and aesthetic aspects (e.g. landscapes) as part of ecosystems services. This broader basis, then, can function "... as elements of the environmental context affecting personal and social conversion factors over time." (Polischuk and Rauschmeyer 2012, 110)

In the vicinity of ecosystem services, Sen (2002a, 2004) addresses the theme of contingent valuation but with an argument directed at the social consequences. In Sen's perspective the problem with contingent valuation is, that it bypasses a genuine possibility of adopting a social perspective from where well-being, as a relationship between capabilities and functionings, can be evaluated. It understands, so to speak, individuals as operators on the market only, and not as citizens capable of adopting perspectives not concerning their own well-being. When an environmental good is seen as a commodity, as something purchasable and consumable by operators on the market, the determination of value becomes random, according to Sen, because it is dependent on the market only. If we accept that economical evaluation is a matter of broadening the informational basis of understanding choices, hence the relationship between capabilities and functionings matters, then what actual alternative sets of capabilities can the market supply for people to choose from? In other words, what are the actual freedoms the market can supply? As Sen (2002a, 541) claims, the market fails to specify any social states from which the individuals can choose, hence, each individual would choose a basket of commodities for themselves only, without considering each other. Sen's capability approach, on the other hand, "...is concerned with getting the information that would make it possible to identify – and then obtain – that social choice which would correspond to the people's actual valuations of the relevant alternatives." (Sen 2002a, 542) Hence, the reason why the spotted owl should be preserved (Sen 2004) is not because it might meet our needs, or supply us with (aesthetic) pleasure, or utility, in the future. Rather, it should be preserved so future people have the freedom to experience this owl, hence modelling peoples agency on what they have reasons to value, and not on the framework supplied by the market. Development, then, is about the expansion of people's freedoms. Ballet *et all* (2011, 1832) suggests, as a critique of anthropocentrism against Sen, that this still makes nature a supply to human only, in broader terms than market related ones though, hence without any inherent value. Sen, however, could argue that this critique

actually confirms his way of saying it, since Ballet *et all* have a reason to value nature's inherent value. Preserving the spotted owl, then, is expanding their freedom, as well as other people's freedoms having other reasons to preserve the spotted owl, and this might be the minimal anthropocentrism needed for doing this kind of reasoned scrutiny.

This applies to the notion of entrepreneurship as well, as the capability approach provides a framework for linking entrepreneurship with human development (Gries and Naudè 2011, 217), and not the development of the market, only. The entrepreneurial capabilities addressed above should, here, be understood as reinforcing this aspect of development. Hence, the aim of the exercise of these capabilities is enhancing the freedom to live the economical life one has reason to value, without evaluating this life in terms of utility, income or happiness, only. As already claimed economical agency should be seen as displaying a lot of different aims for a lot of different factual/valuational reasons, all expressing a sense of fundamental freedom, or the lack of it. Gries and Naudè, furthermore, argue that entrepreneurship is part of capability sets, and through appropriate policy can become an achieved functioning. Agency, of course, is very important here, "...in the sense in which it allows an entrepreneur to spot an opportunity and utilise it." (Gries and Naudè 2011, 218) Notice that entrepreneurship is here connected to what was termed the discovery dimension above, viz. entrepreneurs responding to pre-given circumstances more than creating spaces for opportunities to present themselves. In some circumstances this might be the best way, using policy to support the creation of achieved functionings. However, as Gries and Naudè also observes, policies "...that aim merely to create a higher rate of new firm start-ups may be welfare-reducing if entrepreneurs do not value it in themselves." (2011, 218) Again, this reinforces the point above that supplying people with possibilities is sometimes not enough. The capability to convert these possibilities into something for which one has reason to value is just as central. In the end, then, entrepreneurship should not be interpreted as an aspect of economical agency for developing the market only, it is more the capability to discover and create opportunities, and being able to *convert* these as part of enhancing the economical freedom of people. Policy-making plays a significant part in this within the social context, among other social significant factors, as helping facilitating the discovery and enhancing the creation of opportunities for people to act on and with, as part of their reasoned scrutiny. Entrepreneurism has, in this sense, and as Kitchen, Smith and Marsden's examples shows, everything to do with the economical agency unfolded in everyday life,

seizing and creating opportunities as a relationship between a practical contextual sensitivity and a reasoned scrutiny. Entrepreneurism is, then, combining the sensibility of how different practical circumstances are connected by Spinoza *et all*, with Sen's rigorous and reasoned valuing of freedoms.

By using and discussing other efforts trying to make sense of Sen's capability approach within the three methodologies comprising the eco-economy, we have tried to relax the tension within Kitchen and Marsden's eco-economy. On one hand, connecting the eco-economy with the capability approach reconfigures the informational basis for understanding (eco-) economy within a much broader frame, allowing the entanglement between facts and values as part of economical evaluation. On the other hand, entrepreneurism, as the primary economical agency, is the complex relationship between discovering opportunities, an aspect of Sen's *patiens* structure, and creating opportunities, Sen's *agens* structure, as a display of the sensible moving between different practical circumstances of deepening, broadening and regrounding as Kitchen and Marsden terms it, or articulation, reconfiguration and cross-appropriation as Spinoza *et all* terms it. Even though these entrepreneurial capabilities might have been interpreted as being too close, or equal, to one another, they all presuppose freedom and some sense of reasoned scrutiny, as a necessary condition for exercising their possibility.

8. Closing remarks

First, a brief reiteration capturing the main argument is in place. Placing the eco-economy within framework of the capability approach serves as a space needed for reinterpreting the collocation of the three methodologies as development tools for expanding freedoms. Focusing on freedom as the main economical goal, unlike the conformist goal of growth, an acute context-sensitivity coupled with a broadly conceived reasoned scrutiny is claimed. Using Sen's notions of capability and functioning as the evaluative framework, thereby served to dissolve the inherent tension within the eco-economy...(mere udførligt)

We will end this already too long paper, by pointing to some important considerations concerning the implications of Sen's approach for policy-making. This is returning to Putnam and Walsh's significant understanding of the entanglement of facts and values as an inherent part of economy. As Putnam (2003) claims, Sen's understanding of

economy is implicitly directed at laying out the practical implications of economical thinking, that is, as guided by humanist and not anti-humanist values. Furthermore, as Gasper (2008, 235) claims "It brings a focus on core human realities, not on slices of experience selected according to commercial significance and/or convenience for measurement." Basically, then, Sen's proposal for economical evaluation is "...guided by human development values rather than just the values of the market." This is increasingly important within public policy making, since it is under attack of losing the guidance by humanist values, being replaced with the commercial significance, or neo-liberal efficiency, as the only criteria of evaluation (see for example Harvey 2005; Wright 2010) Sen supplies us with two core reasons for taking values seriously. First, since people use ethical values as part of their orientation in life, economics ought to pay attention to these as well. Second, people argue about, identify and evaluate these values, as part of their everyday life, unlike any textbook economical argument will ever achieve. If policy-making wants to be reality-based, and not a reproduction of an abstract methodology, like willingness to pay, then taking values seriously as part of the analytical basis informing policy-making is a necessity.

If we accept our proposal above, i.e. to incorporate eco-economy within the framework of capability approach, then, as Gasper (2008) claims, there are six points where Sen's thinking might provide us with a suitable frame for reclaiming the practical dimension, i.e. reincorporating values and the arguing of them within public policy making, see fig. 4⁶ below. We have in our description of Sen's approach pretty much covered the general concerns. The important part is how Sen's focus on widening the informational basis is used within policymaking as analysis of a wider range of values, what in Gasper's scheme is called implications. Analysis's has been made using both quantitative (eg. Kuklys 2005) and qualitative (eg. Alkire 2002) methodologies in relation to operationalising the concepts of functionings and capabilities (Robeyns 2006, 359f). Notice that all the implications reinforce the notion of context-sensitivity claimed as important above, and the general concerns establish a wide range of reasoned scrutiny allowing the entanglement of facts and values to be expressed in concordance with people's differences. This transgresses any narrow focus on disciplinary biases, like abstract categories such as food-supply, willingness to pay or income, to focus on real people dealing with real issues in their everyday lives.

⁶ Reproduced from Gasper (2008, 249)

| GENERAL CONCERNS | | | IMPLICATIONS |
|---|--|---|--|
| A BACKGROUND PHILOSOPHY on: - <i>wide range of relevant information sources</i> - <i>partial orderings</i> - <i>'positional objectivity'</i> - <i>reasoned freedoms, &c.</i> | HUMAN & SOCIAL VALUES - wide range, plus - <i>Central focus on basic human capabilities:</i> life quantity, life quality, etc., and their security | | Values and their implications (rather than a timeless or methods-driven disciplinary agenda) guide choice of topic: education, hunger,... |
| | | | Values affect concept formation: - disaggregated view of entitlement/ /vulnerability groups |
| | | | Priority to respecting, promoting and engaging persons' <i>agency</i> |
| EPISTEMIC VALUES - e.g. constrained roles of quantification, deduction, formalization, statistics - e.g. realism above elegance/simplicity | ROLES OF VALUES IN POLICY ANALYSIS – Focus on and guidance by ends, not a presumption of particular policy means | → | - <i>Public action is more than state action</i> - <i>Many public means are relevant</i> - <i>'Both/and' not 'either/or'</i> |
| | | | Promotion of political commitment and <i>public spirit</i> for public action |
| ORGANIZATION OF INQUIRY - Inter and transdisciplinary communities of inquiry - <i>Democratic/participatory public reason</i> | COMPLEXITY AND INTERCONNECTION - <i>Entitlements analysis;</i> tracing the determinants of effective command over goods/things and in turn of effective access to valued freedoms | | Focus and boundaries of analysis are reality-based not discipline-based: focused on persons' lives not on abstracted general categories like income or aggregate food supply |

fig. 4.

This transgression, however, leaves nothing out in terms of qualifying any reasoned scrutiny, but opens up a combining of an acute attention to peoples lives with advanced reflection from philosophical, social scientific and natural scientific contexts as well. We will take this to suggest that when it comes to policy-making, framing the eco-economy within the capability-approach, the success of establishing regional developmental projects using eco-economy should be evaluated in terms of capability-enhancing and not in standard cost-benefit terms, where pricing are used to aggregate all benefits and costs including willingness to pay. This will open up a host of implications for policy-making by using eco-economy by connecting it with different capability applications, as listed by Robeyns (2006, 360ff): general assessments of the human development of a country; the assessment of small scale development projects; identification of the poor in developing countries; poverty and

well-being assessments in advanced economies; an analysis of deprivation of disabled people; the assessment of gender inequalities; theoretical and empirical analyses of policies; critiques on social norms, practices and discourses; and finally, the use of functionings and capabilities as concepts in non-normative research.

This, of course, calls for more complex analysis' and discussions, but in the words of Paul Streeten, here quoted from Gasper (2008, 234), "Values are not something to be discarded, nor even something to be made explicit in order to be separated from empirical matter, but are ever-present and permeate empirical analysis through and through." Hence, there is no other way.

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6.

Revisiting the experience machine, a note on what could matter for marketing theory

Revisiting the experience machine, a note on what could matter for marketing theory.

...just as scepticism overcomes itself by bringing the standpoint of doubting into doubt, so does hedonism overcome itself in that the hedonistic reflection looks at itself and questions whether we really feel our best when we are concerned with nothing besides feeling good. The answer to this question is no.

Robert Spaemann, Happiness and Benevolence

Abstract: This article will suggest interpreting Nozick's experience machine as a challenge to the design and understanding of consumption experiences in recent marketing theory. Nozick's experience machine will be interpreted as showing that the models of consumers as hedonic beings are at worst misleading, and at best describing only one aspect of the complex consuming experience. Recent interpretations of the experience machine will be taken as points of departure claiming that Nozick is making us realise that what matters to us, is something exceeding our rational and emotional experience. This will, furthermore, be brought out by pointing to a similarity with Haugeland's concepts of deontic and existential commitments.

Keywords: servicescapes, experience economy, experience machine, Robert Nozick, existential commitment, John Haugeland

1. Introduction

Nozick's example of the experience machine is probably one the most discussed thought-experiments in the history of 20th century philosophy. It is a small section in a chapter named Moral constraint and the State in Nozick (1974: 42-3) suggesting:

Suppose there was an experience machine that would give you any experience you desired. Superduper neuropsychologists could stimulate your brain so that you would think and feel you were writing a great novel, or making a friend, or reading an interesting book. All the time you would be floating in a tank, with electrodes attached to your brain. Should you plug into this machine for life, preprogramming your life's experiences? If you are worried about missing out on desirable experiences, we can suppose that business enterprises have researched thoroughly the lives of many others. You can pick and choose from their large library or smorgasbord of such experiences, selecting your life's experiences for, say, the next two years. After two years have passed, you would have ten minutes or ten hours out of the tank, to select the experiences of your next two years. Of course, while in the tank you won't know that you're there; you'll think it's actually happening. Others can also plug

in to have the experiences they want, so there is no need to stay unplugged to serve them. (Ignore problems such as who will service the machines if everybody plugs in). Would you plug in?

Now, is this not basically the dream scenario for business enterprises selling and marketing experiences? Or, for modern marketing theoretical interpretations of how experiences and hedonism goes together, in the sense that experiential "...pleasure points towards a universe of eternal meaningfulness, intimacy and joy beyond the routines of quotidian life." (Jantzen *et al* 2012: 150) Downplay, imaginatively, the perhaps scary futuristic elements of a tank to float in and electrodes all over the body, and think instead of the promise of creating holistic experiences for people concerned with achieving pleasurable experiences. Disregard the putative scary feeling of being alone, because when plugged in your life is experienced exactly as if it was happening outside, and you don't have to worry about your family because they can be plugged in as well, having their own customised experiential life as well. Think, then, about modern experiential marketing (for example Schmitt 1999; Sally and McKechnie 2009), experience economy (for example Pine and Gilmore 1999; Jantzen *et al* 2012), or even neuromarketing (for example Loewenstein *et al* 2008), and ask whether the dream, or goal, of these disciplines is similar? That is, designing, or modelling the best experiential setting for rational and emotional consumers to reach their goal of achieving pleasurable, hedonic experiences.

Farfetched? Not if we take a couple of examples into account. Take neuromarketing the goal of which is "...to identify and reduce negative feelings such as fear, insecurity, danger, and risk among customers, and thus promote customers' willingness to buy." (Suomala, 2012: 20) The idea is to create or design the best conditions for economical transactions, thereby optimising, in a neurophysiologic sense, the experiential wellbeing of the people involved, even without these people knowing it. The research conducted on the notion of servicescapes, would be a natural partner here. Building an environment for consumption settings, of both a physical (Bitner 1992) and symbolic (Rosenbaum 2005) character, enhancing the approach behaviour in consumers, in contradistinction to the avoidance behaviour, thereby testing and understanding which conditions are most fertile for achieving marketing goals. Or, in other words, which conditions are most fertile for designing an experience machine irresistible for customers not to log into. Furthermore, take Schmitt's classic article on experiential marketing, claiming that consumers are understood as rational

and emotional human beings concerned with achieving pleasurable experiences, and "The ultimate goal of experiential marketing is to create holistic experiences that integrate individual experiences into a holistic Gestalt." (Schmitt 1999: 53) Co-creation would be a part of it as well, since the smorgasbord of experiences makes room for collaboration between the consumer and the company in designing potential new and custom-made experiences as well. Staying in the tank for two years, then, is an analogue to a promise of a consuming life with successive custom-made pleasurable experiences. No doubt, service and experience providers would want it that way, but, as Nozick asks, would consumers choose this as well? Nozick, in his example, claims no, and if his argument is valid, then it forces us to give up the idea of characterising, or insisting that experiential consumption is characterised by one goal like the procurement of hedonic experiences. The experience machine, then, is a brilliant model, or experimental setting, for understanding and testing the assumptions behind providing a service- or experiencescape securing the consumers' goal of obtaining some sort pleasurable or hedonic outcome.

This article will suggest that by interpreting the implications of Nozick's experience machine, one common assumption of this marketing oriented, both industrial and academic, focus on experience will be challenged. The common assumption is that if we supply experiences, which are both holistic and custom-made, i.e. appealing to all aspects of the rational and emotional human being, we then succeed in creating the best pleasurable experiences¹. What will be underscored by understanding consuming experience through Nozick's experience machine is that an important part of the intentional structure of experiencing², not recognised within marketing theory, concerns the recognition of matters

¹ A bunch of references could be put in here, but I take it as an accepted premise, that marketing theory, including experience economy, has moved, and is moving, towards a more and more inclusive understanding and use of different elements of experiencing. Three points seems to confirm this, first, Holbrook and Hirschman's (1982) emphasis of the experiential aspects on consumption, that consumers are rational and emotional users of symbolic systems and the development towards consumer culture theory. Second, Pine and Gilmore's (1999) focus on the staging of experiences, and the developments towards methods addressing the co-creation of experiences, and, third, Schulze (1992) which claims experience as primarily subjective and aesthetic. The issue addressed here, however, is whether this captures our understanding of experience.

² Intentionality concerns the 'aboutness' of our comportments, how these can be about anything. Take for example the sentence 'I believe that the door is closed', believing here implies the intentionality of acting towards this door as closed. Experiencing then, express an intentional structure as the experience of something as something. I have an experience of the door as a door, which is closed. Put generally, the experience of something is not exhausted by everything there is, fantasies (as in Holbrook and Hirschmann's fun, feeling and fantasies) might be part of experiential intentionality as well. That something is experienced as something, means that the experience of this something is occurrent and meaningful, my acting towards the door (how it occurs) is meaningful in light of how I understand the door, namely as closed.

transgressing the experience (see for example Parfit, 2011; Rouse, 2003; Sayer, 2011) Hence, proposing more and more inclusive/holistic experiences will always be half the truth about experience only, leaving aspects of the 'aboutness' of experiences out. That is, if we picture human beings' ability to experience, in all its complexity, as done primarily for a hedonic or pleasurable, purpose, then, in the succinct words of Scheffler in (Parfit, 2011: xxiii), the implication is '...that we have no reasons for action at all and, more fundamentally, that nothing really matters, in the sense that we have no reason to care about any of the things we do care about.' That may sound as an overkill, but hopefully it will become more reasonable in a little while. The point is, first, that if we only focus on experience without understanding what this experience is about, then a very important aspect of experiencing is bypassed, and second, this aspect concerns the normative space opened up, by focusing on experience, which carries certain kinds of responsibilities for the parties involved.

Now to make it plausible further that Nozick's experience machine can imply anything for the idea of experiential marketing or experience economy, we will have to interpret the experience machine in accordance with new interpretations. These new interpretations argue against previous interpretations oscillating between the pros and cons of hedonism, and therefore allow more complex purposes in experiencing (hence consuming) (2.). We will then briefly indicate Nozick's point by putting forth the experience machine example, namely that understanding (consuming) behaviour as self-interested and choosing pleasurable experiences only, is a deficient model of human experiencing (3.) Nozick states three logical binding arguments for this, concluding that experiencing depends on matters different from and transgressing any putative experience. Hence, as claimed above, modelling holistic experiences are not enough to capture the whole range of human experiencing, including experiential consuming (4.) To capture further what these matters are, we will use Haugeland's distinction between deontic and existential commitment (5.), and return to the three arguments claiming that these should be seen as constraints, i.e. as existential committing, on any putative model of experiencing (6.), before closing (7.). The purpose, then, is to argue philosophically scrutinising one implicit assumption across certain positions within marketing theory. The means of this article, then, is experimental in a theoretical fashion, and the article should, therefore, be taken as nothing more than a proposal

2. Interpretations of the experience machine

The experience machine argument has traditionally been interpreted, De Brigard claims, as successful and going against hedonism, or unsuccessful and not affecting the question of hedonism. On one side, are those (for example Silverstein, 2000; Tänsjö, 2007) claiming that Nozick's argument doesn't necessarily undermine hedonism, 'They usually offer some account as to why people's alleged preference for reality ends up supporting, rather than conflicting with, their favoured version of hedonism.' (De Brigard, 2010: 44) On the other side, are those (for example Kymlica, 1990; Lemos, 2002; 2004; Hausman, 2010) who believe Nozick's argument is spot on – hedonism is flawed and if people were to choose between pleasurable experiences and reality they will definitely choose the latter.

Against both interpretations, De Brigard suggests that what is missing is a discussion of the idea behind Nozick's claim that people would prefer being in touch with reality. Using experimental evidence he claims that '...the intuition elicited by the experience machine thought-experiment may be explainable by the fact that people are averse to abandon the life they have been experiencing so far, regardless of whether such life is virtual or real.' (De Brigard, 2010: 44) De Brigard's experiment was based on the idea of a backward experience machine, with people being asked whether or not they would disconnect had they learned they were living a virtual life. If Nozick's intuition were correct, we would expect most people to be motivated for disconnecting and returning to their real lives. Contrary to Nozick's intuition, however, people involved in De Brigard's experiment, preferred to stay connected. De Brigard concluded, then, people prefer to stay within their usual experience of life, regardless whether this experience is taking place in the machine or not, and especially in comparison to the possibility of choosing, or experiencing, something new. In other words people are conformist, what De Brigard explains by using the well-known economical decision making thesis of a status quo bias. As Williamson and Zeckhauser (1988: 8) puts it, "Faced with new options, decision makers often stick with the status quo alternative, for example, to follow customary company policy, to elect an incumbent to still another term in office, to purchase the same product brands, or to stay in the same job." Hence, De Brigard argued against Nozick's intuition, people are not preoccupied with being more or less in touch with reality.

3. Learning that something matters in addition to experience

However, there is another way of interpreting the experience machine suggesting that Nozick's argument is neither predominantly for nor against a simple choice of hedonism, nor is it designed to conclude that people prefer living in contact with reality. Instead this interpretation will claim that Nozick is reminding us that instances of pleasure cannot be all that matter to people, across different situations of their experiential life. Hence, if this is correct we cannot interpret experiential consumption as predominantly hedonic. In this sense, the entry on Hedonism on SEP (Moore, 2004) is correct to place Nozick in the 'not only' department of objections against hedonism, due to people's valuing of many things besides pleasure. Contrary to what one might expect, this is not a 'being in touch with reality' argument, but underscoring the *practical manner* in which living a life matters to people. In terms of servicescape, the approach/avoidance is too simple to capture how this practical manner is disclosed. Furthermore, and without claiming that Nozick would actually describe it this way, it will be suggested that this practical manner in which something matters, could be depicted as a sort of existential commitment, in the late Haugeland's sense (Haugeland, 1998).

In support of the argument is, first of all, De Brigard's (2010: 53) claim that how the experience machine has been understood, viz. pertaining to hedonism or not, thereby enforcing a sort of dualism between pleasure and reality, is not the way forward. However, experimental "testing" of Nozick's thought-experiment, as in De Brigard's case, is probably not the sole way forward either. Barilan (2009), for example, proposes what could be interpreted as the opposite result of De Brigard, albeit within a different setting, namely one of Bitner's examples of the interpersonal servicescape, the hospital (Bitner 1992: 59). Barilan's experimental results are based on the observation that many terminal patients do not wish, despite suffering terribly, for terminal sedation or euthanasia. The reason is these terminal ill persons insist on '...the "right to die", linking death itself, not merely the absence of suffering, to the values of human dignity and self-determination.' (Barilan, 2009: 403) In a practical manner, and almost as some sort of ethical guidance, Barilan suggests, 'The ultimate goal of palliative care is expected not to be limited to dealings with physical suffering (to avoidant hedonic goals), but to sustain a vision of good death in respect for persons and their autonomy.' (Barilan, 2009: 406) So, in some experiential cases, living a dignified life matters more than the absence of discomfort, a choice obviously affecting the behaviour and service towards the patient of hospital personnel as well .

Now, serious misgivings, of course, can exist when extracting some viable information comparing two different experimental tests and results of the same thesis. Nevertheless, it will be claimed that the different results are actually confirming what Nozick wants to emphasise, that in different experiential (here experimental) situations different things seem to matter, which *might* involve a craving for pleasure, the possibility of choosing a dignified ending of one's life, or a longing for touching reality. Thus Nozick (1974: 45) says, "*Perhaps* [my italics] what we desire is to live (an active verb) ourselves, in contact with reality. (And this, machines cannot do *for* us.)" He is not, thereby, confirming *that* living in contact with reality is the sole purpose, or desire, as De Brigard seems to suggest. However, *if* it turns out that this is an explicit and important purpose in one particular situation, then machines cannot do this, i.e. living our lives, for us. Imagine a situation where a patient is in so much pain that it necessitates a fair dose of painkillers. This person would probably, in this particular situation, prefer not to be in contact with the part of reality made up by the pains. On the other hand, the patient would probably not entertain any wish to be so sedated that understanding medical staff, or relatives, is impossible. Here the issues of pleasure (as no-pain) vs. no-pleasure, or being "in touch with reality" are difficult to entangle, and it is Nozick's reminder to us that these things *are* difficult and matter differently according to the situations and people involved.

So, imagining machines, and Nozick (1974: 44) imagines, heuristically, making several of these models of the experiencing human being, is basically learning that "...something matters to us in addition to experience..." (Nozick, 1974: 44) We cannot use *one* of them, as he describes their deployment, as the one significant description of *the* experience that could matter to us in our life. Even imagining additional machine(s), which could be used indefinitely, describing, perhaps in an aggregated manner, *the* experience better than the previous machine, would not do. What would be disturbing in such cases, he claims, is the picturing of one of these machines as if it was, to repeat, "...living our lives for us." (Nozick, 1974: 44) This is not just some platitude about people being irreplaceable. Rather, something about living matters in such a way that without this something, it wouldn't be our life, that is, us humans. But what is this something?

To answer this, it is important to recall that the experience machine section is placed within the part of the book, where Nozick tries, initially, to present what is involved in connecting human morality with a sense of constraining. Hence, an important feature of living

a human life is that a moment of concern is involved and what would/could constrain this. This is one reason why machines cannot live our lives, or why models have difficulties in understanding the whole of human life. It is probably for a similar reason why Nozick, at the end of the chapter (Nozick, 1974: 45), claims, that the experience machine, as an example, have a bearing of how we understand the relation between conceptions of, respectively, free will and the causal determination of people. If we understand human experiential behaviour as a means determined, causally, by the end of pleasure-seeking only, then the models (machines) would be able to explain and predict every possible experiential action, supply every imaginable experience possible. This, however, would be very close to an extended rational choice understanding of experiential agency.

Three years after the publication of Nozick (1974), Nozick's colleague, Amartya Sen, published an article, *Rational Fools*, questioning the possibility of defining "...a person's interest in such a way that no matter what he does he can be seen to be furthering his own interest in every isolated act of choice." (Sen, 1977: 322) As a parallel to the experience machine example, Sen questions one particular way of explaining the rationality of people's choices, viz. reducing the informational basis for understanding why people choose to a motive of maximising their utilities (utility traditionally includes pleasure, joy or happiness), only. If all choices are explained on the basis of this machine-like behaviour, like consuming choices defined by pleasure seeking only, "... then no matter whether you are a single-minded egoist, a raving altruist or a class conscious militant, you will appear to be maximizing your own utility..." (Sen, 1977: 323) Claiming that humans are rational *and* emotional beings, as Schmitt (1999: 53), Tynan and McKechnie (2009: 509), Jantzen *et al* (2012: 138) do, but still understanding and explaining their behaviour through a causal modelling, amounts to no more than claiming that these humans are rational and emotional fools, in the sense of Sen. Talking about free will, then, amounts to understanding experiential economical agency having other goals than just pleasure seeking, and models should reflect other relevant matters than pleasure.

To give one example, would it make sense to claim of a mother's protection of her child that it is a matter of self-interest only, i.e. seeking the pleasure of continued company, or affectionate compassion from the child? Or, would it be fair to say that the mother's action and the experiences she and the child are going through, are characterised as a result of a deliberate effort of doing the best she can for her child in that particular situation? The child

matters to her in a way not describable by claiming pleasure seeking as determining her action. Or, we might say following Sen (1977: 324) that her choice of caring for the child at least involves a compromise among a variety of considerations, where her own wellbeing is just one. To take another but related example, would it matter to you if, instead of being part of your concern, a bought machine acted on your behalf when it comes to your children? You might when it comes to certain aspects, for example changing diapers, but as a whole would you want the instrumental behaviour of a machine determining whatever relation you have to your children? I think this is the implicit incentive behind De Brigard's claim, that '... many things we value we just don't value as commodities.' (De Brigard, 2012: 54) Things and people matter, then, in ways indescribable though causal behaviour, at least for a first impression. So, this something or someone that matters is part of a concern expressed in the experiential way we live our lives. So, people experience not just for the sake of pleasure, even experiences bought are not always just for the sake of pleasure. Sometimes people are conformist; they buy the stuff they want because that is the stuff they usually buy, despite knowing that some new stuff might give them more pleasure. Using the experience machine in different situations we realise, first, that something matters in addition to our experience as Nozick claims. Second, machines cannot live our lives for us, i.e. that any experiential marketing modelling, like Schmitt's (1999: 60ff) SEMS and ExPros, or Tynan and McKechnie's (2009: 507) use of service-dominant logic, or Jantzen *et al's* (2012) emotional regime, cannot capture the whole of peoples experiential life. But what are there matters important besides different experiences?

4. What matters are...

Now, in several places when discussing the experience machine Nozick uses the term matters, which this interpretation claims is highly significant, as does Silverstein (2000: 286). One sense in which Nozick uses it is rhetorically as in "*What else can matter to us, other than how our lives feel from the inside?*" (Nozick, 1974: 43) More substantially, however, matters draw our attention towards examples where something, or someone, forces us to recognize the limits of our experience. To reiterate "...something matters to us in addition to experience..." (Nozick, 1974: 44) What could this mean? Well, a suggestion is that situations where the intentional structure of our experiencing this something occur, but cannot consist in our responding for reasons of pleasure only. It is recognised, through experiencing, that

something or someone matters more than just complying with one's pleasurable experience. Nozick gives us three philosophical arguments of this, which we will call: the argument from acting, the argument from being somebody and the self-defeating argument.

First, in most cases we want to do things and not just experience the doing of them (Nozick, 1974: 43). Although this is a difficult distinction, since it is hard to do anything without experiencing it at some level, Nozick's idea is that the promise of the machine, total happiness, might be harder to get than one thinks it is. Experience does not make you experienced, but *experiencing* does. When involved in activities, and not just highly special kinds of activities, most people take pride in, or at least they are concerned about, doing it right. This correctness, then, involves other criteria than the experience, or pleasure, of just doing it, making the activity matter in a way, which eclipses the experience. In this sense, the old saying "learning by doing" is not only correct, but turns out to be imperative. You cannot be experienced unless you have tried and hopefully learned something – rules, conventions, criteria, or simply the right matters – from what it is you are doing, and thereby telling it apart from other doings. The same goes for happiness, plugging into the machine how can you tell, without relying on your ability to tell the difference between the machine and the world (which is impossible since you are not aware you are in the machine)?

Second, plugging into the machine you are not really anybody. "There is no answer to the question of what a person is like..." when that person has been plugged into the machine a long time. Hence, "...plugging into the machine is a kind of suicide." (Nozick, 1974: 43) Presumably, what Nozick is claiming here, is that what makes a person a person, cannot be confined to how this person experiences him- or herself. How a person matter, then, depends upon the actual interaction with the world, and hence of being recognised as the specific person this person is. Personhood, as such, therefore depends upon other people *telling* and *answering* (for) who you are. Now, one can picture a whole bunch of people for whom one matters when plugged into the machine, but they are a result of one's experience only, i.e. picked from the smorgasbord of experiences, in Nozick's memorable phrase. But part of being a person is experiencing a non-conformism, whether one likes it or not, regarding other things and persons, viz., they do not behave the way one would expect, or like to experience them to behave – they are not controllable in an instrumentally fashion. Pre-programming the machine to some sort of randomisation of other peoples' behaviour wouldn't do either, because the randomisation is still supposed to make you happy, hence it is

conforming to your experiences. So, the suicide Nozick speaks about amounts to not even being able to recognise oneself within the machine, because all the differences needed to recognise oneself as apart, are just your own (chosen) experiences. On a marketing theoretical level is conceiving people as hedonic consumers the right way to understand the psychological implications in consumption? Renunciation is a real part of very many people's experience of consuming. Furthermore, reconciling themselves to the current situations they come to terms with their predicaments, as Sen has claimed. These people are, then, if assessed by objective hedonic standards, satisfied with their lives even though they actually are not (Sen 1985: 21).

Third, plugging into the machine limits us to a man-made reality, "...to a world no deeper or more important than that which people can construct" (Nozick, 1974: 43) We will divide this argument into two. First, it amounts to a certain dilemma. At some point you would realise that the reality you are about to choose (in the machine) is made by your own picking, but how can you actually be sure that what experiences you pick would supply you with the most happiness (the purpose of choosing)? The chosen experiences are supposed to determine your happiness in the machine, but this seems to presuppose that your future happiness in the machine is determined by past choices, and your predilections stay unchanged throughout the period you stay in the machine. It is, however, possible that by plugging into the machine, you actually cut yourself off from obtaining sublime happiness outside the machine, either by chance, by forgetting or simply not knowing of something or someone, which could make you happier outside the machine. The important being, of course, that your happiness is dependent upon a world not of your making, and what you actually choose could be self-defeating. Second, it could be questioned whether a man-made reality would be in the choosing person's self-interest. This argument questions what actually matters, when the rational thing to do is acting in one's self-interest. Hence, the question of whether you would or would not plug in, can be seen as asking whether it would be in your self-interest or not. Looked upon in this sense, it is akin to Parfit's (1984: 1-54) examples of choices, which are "directly individually self-defeating". Rephrasing Parfit's description (1984: 5) we might say, that a Choice (C) is indirectly individually self-defeating when it is true that, if someone tries to achieve his aims by doing C, these aims will be, on the whole, worse achieved. The aim of plugging into the machine is, obviously, to be permanently happy. Could I actually be worse off by doing that? If shown, then plugging into the machine would be self-

defeating, or less drastically, it would be self-denying. Here is an example: suppose you are standing in front of the smorgasbord of experiences, picking all the experiences you desire. You are meticulously making sure that all the things you know will make you happy will be part of the experiences. You cannot pick any experience too unfamiliar, because you cannot be sure it will make you happy. So, you only pick experiences in the vicinity of what you already know make you happy. Hence, your happiness is, in a certain sense limited by your present experience of which experiences actually makes you happy. There is, then, the possibility of one or more experiences from the set of experiences making you happy but unknown to you actually surpassing the experiences in the machine all together. Hence, plugging into the machine would not be in your self-interest, because you face the risk of actually being worse off than not choosing to plug in.

These arguments suggest that things matter in such a way they cannot be accommodated by the commitment made by plugging into the machine, i.e. it cannot be understood as an instrumental kind of rationality having the goal of pleasure only. To put it another way if we assume, when focusing on experiences in economics or marketing, i.e. designing possible experience machines, that consumers are mainly hedonic self-interested beings then this would be potentially self-defeating, because the experiences supplied through the machine, or claimed relevant through the model, might not be conducive for the well being of people over time, even when these experiences are co-created. Things matter, then, in such a way they cannot be accommodated by the commitment made by plugging into the machine. The next sections will try to outline this commitment, suggesting that the examples above, parenting (the mother and her child) plus the terminal ill patient, are expressing a connection between being committed and something mattering, in the sense of transgressing the self-centeredness of the commitment.

5. Existential commitment

First, however, let us recapitulate. It was claimed that there was a significant way of interpreting Nozick's experience machine, without claiming it as a simple argument against hedonism, nor as an argument designed to show that people somehow wants to stay in contact with reality, as opposed to the reality of the machine. Both De Brigard and Barilan's respective experiments showed, despite their different results, an important point about what it is Nozick wants to convey through the experience machine example, viz. that things,

persons or circumstances could matter in such a way that their importance exceeds our possible pleasure in and self-interest of them. Nozick's arguments from acting, from being somebody and the self-defeating argument(s), were taken to show this, albeit in different ways. Nozick's experience machine, therefore, is a reminder of what in a given situation could be important, not as subjected to experience but as somehow precipitating from the transaction between people's experiences and the world, or the meaningful situation in which this experience takes place.

It will, in the following, be suggested that the results of the arguments above can be elucidated by a resemblance to Haugeland's (1998: 340-3) distinction between deontic and existential commitments. To make it clear, it is not maintained that this is in congruence with Nozick's overall political-philosophical position, nor is it a matter of concern for subject of this article. However, despite this reservation it is difficult *not* to keep in mind that Nozick's argument, as an argument involving a perspective on hedonism, is part of an overall critique of utilitarianism. Nozick adheres to Kant's claim of treating people not as means but as ends in themselves, thus implicitly stating that the concept of autonomy is somehow important. What kind of autonomy could be in display in the chapter on the experience machine? Well, it is not just the political autonomy, which the main part of Nozick's book revolves around. Rather, a less abstract conceived autonomy is implied as well. One more related to practical matters happening in our everyday lives, like the example of the terminal ill patients above, viz. claiming for the right to a dignified life, thereby emphasising both the conditions of and the ability to choose to die or live with dignity. This is similar to Haugeland's conception of existential commitment, which we will turn to now. What is proposed, then, is that Haugeland's conception can illuminate the exact way in which the experience machine make us realise that things and people matter in practical ways exceeding our experience.

Haugeland (1998: 341) divides commitments in two, deontic and existential, and illustrates this by playing chess as an example. A deontic commitment is an obligation or duty, a way one is supposed to behave, 'Making a commitment to the rules of the game means, in this sense, undertaking an obligation to play by the rules – say, by entering into (or implying) an agreement. Someone who fails to abide by such a commitment is corrected, or, if incorrigible, rejected as a player.' (Haugeland, 1998: 341) In contradistinction, the existential commitment is not just some sort of obligation, but is more a dedicated way of living, '...a determination to maintain and carry on.' (Haugeland, 1998: 341) This is a resolute first-

personal stance, a commitment, ‘...not “to” other players or people, or even to oneself, but rather to an ongoing, concrete game, project, or life...a way that relies and is prepared to insist on that which is constitutive of its own possibility, the conditions of its intelligibility.’ (Haugeland, 1998: 341) This is not an obligation in the sense of just doing ones duty. Since resoluteness is involved, being existential committed entails that what one is committed to has a bearing on one’s life as a whole, viz. it turns out to be an important matter for living the life one would like to live. This might involve the same kind of practice, for example the chess-amateur not thinking more about chess when going home from Tuesday night practice, compared to the devoted chess-player working as both a referee and teacher. Deontic vs. existential commitment as applied to consumption, then, implies the difference between doing what one always does, including both being conform and always choosing something new, and relating the consumption to ones life as a whole, like worrying about the impact of different kinds of production-systems as providing a condition of possibility for our common way of life.

According to Haugeland, however, corresponding to the two kinds of commitments are two kinds of responsibilities. Notice that there is nothing peculiar about this, since every commitment entails some kind of responsibility. Being a single-child parent, for example, entails a responsibility to take care of the child’s well being, just like the medical staff is responsible for taking care of the patients. To be responsible in a deontic sense, however, is being responsible for the character and consequences of ones *own* behaviour only. Thus, the responsibility entailed by the action of plugging into the experience machine, viz. what a person is committing to by being in the machine, revolves around no other than this person. Transferred to the parenting case, this would be tantamount to taking care of the child as a mean serving some end for the parents primarily. To indicate how regular, or everyday-like, this is, one could imagine a whole range of different parenting cases characterised by deontic responsibilities. For example, all parents know of cases where one acquiesce a specific demand by the child, due to the lack of strength of facing a possible quarrel. Or, take cases where branded goods for children, for example expensive children’s clothes, are obvious signs conveying some social information about the parents for other parents to read. In both cases, the responsibilities are tied to the character of and consequence for the parent’s ways of acting, as a lack of surplus energy or social acceptance, respectively.

By contrast, the existential responsibility is a responsibility encompassing the conditions for which a given commitment depends. It, therefore, entails, ‘...responsiveness to the constituted phenomena, in particular with regard to their compliance with the standards in accord with which they are constituted.’ (Haugeland, 1998: 342) To take the chess example again, a chess player is committed not only to following the rules, but also to observing whether the opponent is playing by the rules. This, however, is not tantamount to ‘...an agreement to play by the rules, on pain of being rejected, but rather an involved insistent way of responding and playing, so of finding things and dealing with them, on pain of ‘giving up the game.’” (Haugeland, 1998: 342) Hence, the commitment to the chess game makes certain moves unacceptable, just like committing to being a parent makes certain actions unacceptable. Furthermore, the responsiveness to the constituted phenomena in the quote above also entails the possibility of these phenomena resisting our commitments towards them. We therefore need to recognize the possibility that what we think are the right entailments of our commitments can be wrong, that *what* or *who* we are committed towards resists *how* we are committed. Now in the case of science this entails either revising incorrect results, or changing the scientific practice so incompatibilities do not show up again (Haugeland, 1998: 342) In the case of more mundane practices, like being a parent, it amounts more to this: in committing to being a parent, the what of this commitment, parenthood as a shared practice, and the who, the child as the most significant entity within this practice, are necessarily being acknowledged as authoritative. Authoritative in the sense that *if* the entailments of our commitments turn out to be wrong, *then* the shared practice and the child are both authoritative regarding how we proceed to correct these commitments to change the entailments. In the case of consumption, then, if a child starves, for example, the parent disregards itself and supplies the child with more food. In case the child does not starve, the supply of food is bought, if possible, bearing this food’s possible influence of the child’s future in mind. You don’t buy food, as you don’t produce food, which is actually or potentially damaging to the child, or the future of the child. Now, the radical nature of this authority is, of course, different according to what it is, one is engaged in. Hence, within the scientific enterprise it is often the enterprise itself, which is called into question due to the objects encountered, thereby underscoring the possibility of continuous improvement as part of the scientific idea. In chess, as in parenthood, this wouldn’t make sense; here, the enterprises themselves cannot be called into question, either one plays chess or not, just like one is, or is

not the father of a child. However, certain rules can be changed in chess, as the inappropriateness of certain upbringing practices can be understood and changed in parenting. For all three, however, the responsibility in question amounts to embracing the new conditions upon which the commitments now depends, viz. changing the foundation of a scientific practice, complying with the new rules in chess, or giving up the old didactic practice for some new. In this sense, the existential commitment is resolute, it is determinate to carry on in the face of change, and to recognise that the authority of the constitutive conditions of its own intelligibility is not all of its own making. Things and people matter in a significant way, without being subject to any rigid model of experience of them. This means, then, that both consumers and the suppliers of objects of consumption, when considered as engaged in existential commitments, would have to recognise certain conditions not of their own making as important and authoritative as well. Furthermore, hedonism can never be all there is to consumption, then, and is simply mistaken when pictured as *the* model of consumers.

6. The three arguments as constraints on modelling experiential consumption

Now, let us return to the experience machine for the last time and see what Haugeland's distinction can illustrate. As the act of plugging into the machine can be seen as an example of a deontic commitment, so the three arguments Nozick gives for not plugging into it are all meant for showing the necessity of a space where some kind of existential commitment can be a possibility. In analogy to experiential consumption this means that consumers' choices cannot be modelled on a compliance with hedonic impulses only. Recall that the three arguments are the argument from acting, the argument from being somebody and the self-defeating argument. All three were interpreted as disclosing aspects of why the object of plugging into the machine cannot succeed, because they argue for the necessity of a space which matters in a way transgressing any putative self-interested experience. To take the analogy further this means that experiential consumption is committing in three ways. As an agency it express a commitment more complex than just being self-interested. Furthermore, it means that consumers in their understanding of themselves are involved in matters not reducible to their experience, and, lastly, it means that consumers commit themselves in ways transgressing any immediate gratification.

Furthermore, responsibilities were connected with commitments as well, and the existential responsibility contained a responsibility exceeding the responsibility one has for one's behaviour only. Haugeland's notion of existential responsibility moves past Nozick's three arguments, which, using Haugeland's concepts, only serves the purpose of delineating existential commitment as a necessity besides the deontic commitment. Nevertheless, the idea of this existential responsibility can be seen as an additional, i.e. besides seeing experiential consumption as committing, constraint on any putative model of experiential consumption. Recall that the responsibility overall concerned a '...responsiveness to the constituted phenomena, in particular with regard to their compliance with the standards in accord with which they are constituted.' (Haugeland, 1998: 342) Hence, the responsible responsiveness entails a concern for the constituted phenomena as respecting these phenomena's own standards, i.e. not only understanding these matters as non-reducible to our experience of them, but also acting towards these as such. Nozick's three arguments, then, would imply responding in a responsible fashion towards the "aboutness" of our experiences, i.e. for the conditions on which our commitments depend. Experiential consumption, then, is constrained by a commitment that insists on that which is constitutive of its own possibility, or the conditions of its intelligibility, as Haugeland says. Nozick's three arguments delineate this condition of intelligibility, by claiming that hedonism is self-defeating when taken as the primary objective of experience. If we want to speak about connecting *experience* and consumption then we must recognise that things and people matter in a way not complying with our experience of them. Experience implies commitment exceeding our self-interest, and a responsibility towards the constituted phenomena within all the aspects of the consumption process, i.e. responsibilities are tied to all the parties connected with the consumption process. Now, what this responsibility implies in a concrete fashion is beyond this article, but it implies understanding economy, including micro-economical processes like consuming and marketing, as intrinsically connected with normative considerations, constraining hedonism or self-interest.

7. Closing

The aim of this article was suggesting Nozick's experience machine as having a bearing on hedonic interpretations of consumer experience. The interpretation of Nozick's experience machine bypassed a pro or con perspective on hedonism, and was more in the

vicinity of the 'not only' objections to hedonism. Furthermore, compatibility between two different experimental results of using Nozick's experience machine was emphasised, stressing that what matters differ according to different situations. Described thus, Nozick's experience machine directs our attention to the limits of (consumption) experience, and the importance of things and people as exceeding a possible self-interested experience of them. Nozick's three arguments show, according to this interpretation, that what matters to people, in their experiences, is something the import of which at the same time transgress their given or imagined experiencing. So, even if you could choose to live a complete hedonic life you could not do it, because matters are such that the supposed experience of life in total happiness are dependent upon other things which are not up to you. Hence Nozick is, by using the example of the experience machine reminding us what makes a life including economical transactions worth living, i.e. matter to ourselves and others. Our experience of life, as pleasurable, is only part of this mattering which involves commitments and responsibilities exceeding our self-interest. Which is to say again, that Nozick reminds us that our experience takes place *in* life, as part of our living and not only *of* life, as if life could be captured in the descriptions of one of our experiences, only. The sense of experience taking place in life was captured in Haugeland's notion of existential commitment, where commitment and responsibility disclosed a space where things and people matter according to their own standards, instead of being reduced to a mean of reaching experiential pleasure, only.

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7.

Rational and Emotional fools?

Rational and Emotional Fools?

*Have we not noticed that experiences have
made themselves independent of people?
Musil – The man without qualities (v.1, 158)*

This article analyses the phenomenon of connecting the idea of experience with economy, as done within modern marketing theories. This, initially, held a promise of moving past rational choice theory by incorporating experiential aspects of emotionality, thus claiming to be a new kind of economy, with new kinds of production and consumption. One academic example of this experience economy will be analysed from a hermeneutical and analytical philosophical perspective, and questioned whether it presents a viable description of experience, and actually presents a new understanding of economy. In conclusion it will be claimed that it fails on both issues, presenting us with a resuscitation of classic hedonic utilitarianism, but in the guise of a neurophysiologic explanation of experiential intentionality.

Keywords: experience, intentionality, economics, Kulturindustrie

1. Introduction

When Sen made his famous article 'Rational Fools', in 1977, the critique of rational choice theory was well under way (for example Hollis and Nell 1975; see Walsh 1996 for a historical overview) making the under-determination of theory by the plurality of conditions for human agency one of its overall targets. Sen argued that failing to meet the conditions of rational choice theory was not due to humans' limited strategic sophistication. On the contrary, it was the lack of sophistication on part of theory instead. Sen placed the notion of commitment at the heart of humans' capabilities to act, and drove, thereby, a wedge in between rational choice's identification of personal choice and personal welfare, i.e. that any choice is based on a rationality of maximizing the gains for the personal welfare. Commitments indicated the presence of non-gains-maximizing factors as an important part of human *rational* behaviour, which wasn't *theorisable* in the context of rational choice theory.

Sen, therefore, named the anthropological figure presumed in rational choice theory, a rational fool. The figure was a social moron, Sen (1977, 336) claimed, because no person act as if self-interested gains-maximizing is the sole preference ordering. Otherwise this person is most likely lacking the competences needed to act in a social way. Beside the important critique of rational choice made in this classical article, a general aspect behind Sen's argument should be emphasised. This concerns the intertwinedness of economical agency and how human beings are understood. Sen's critique of rational choice theory could be rephrased as asking about the relevant information pertaining to the whole of human being and experience, for understanding economical agency. Implicitly in Sen's critique, then, is a critique of the perspective on human being informing the rational choice theory for being too narrow-minded in a rationalistic fashion. Thus, the general import of Sen's critique is underscoring some sense of human (economical) agency as influencing any description of (human) economical agency, with the extent of this influence possibly being contested.

This article will, keeping Sen's critique in mind, address one allegedly new economical phenomenon, experience economy, and its focus on human economical agency. This economy, while not being part of mainstream economics but more of a business- or marketing oriented economics (Østergård 2007), tries to incorporate non-economical factors as parts of the informational basis for understanding economics. Instigated by Pine and Gilmore (1999) as the next level within the evolution of economy, experience economy is, it is claimed, the frame and experiences the best tools for understanding and conducting economical transactions. Experiences are diverse ranging from a visit to Disney world over the local coffee bar to participating in creative design or art events. Furthermore, all sorts of values and interests by consumers and producers are taken to be part of its experiential uptake and economical rationality. One example would be the slogan of a famous coffee franchise ("It's not just what you're buying, it is what you're buying into"), indicating that through the buying of (their) coffee, a coffee ethics is somehow bought into as well. Experience economy, then, is part what Löfgren (2003, 239) has termed "the new economy", incorporating, besides new modes of production (the creating of experiences in conjunction with the product – coffee *and* ethics), "...novel forms of consumption and organisation of everyday life, horizons of planning, logistics of mobility, new forms of materialities and sensibilities." In the words of two experience economical protagonists, "Designing experience economical offerings revolves around manufacturing products the consumer wasn't aware of

needing beforehand, but afterwards fails to understand how living without was ever possible.” (Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007d, 44) Needless to say, this kind of thinking tries to affect us all in our everyday economical transactions, making it imperative to analyse, critically, the relation between human and economical agency which we, as consumers, are exposed to and supposed to conform to. Especially when stated so unabashedly that the intention is to create needs in customers, and supply the fulfilment of these, as well.

This kind of critique might strike more than a note of similarity with the critique connected with concept of *Kulturindustrie*. Familiar notions like psychotechniques for influencing customers, the infantilisation of subjects, or barbarism, as the simplification of life, are all, despite being called something else, part of experience economy and sought justified with a positive valour, as containing the inner core of modern society. Despite this similarity, as Hullot-Kentor (2008, 138) notes, understanding and using the concept *Kulturindustrie* is possible in a very special sense only, since the *noued vital* of the concept, as Adorno and Horkheimer used it, has gone. Nevertheless it “lives”; it is used, but in the almost exact opposite sense of how it was originally conceived, e.g. as an industry manufacturing culture products thereby contributing positively to the overall growth of society. But what is this culture industry, then? As Hullot-Kentor (2008, 145) claims, “The manufacture of culture as the production of barbarism is the culture industry.” Barbarism, then, is similar to Sen’s description of foolish rationality in the sense that it connotes a primitivization of life, viz. the reducing of life to few variables, like conforming to a set of idealistic conceived economical laws. The case study below, a scientific justification of experience economy, displays this power of primitivization by reducing humans to pleasure-seeking individuals only. It may appear to concur with Sen’s critique of rational choice theory by stressing the emotionality and sensibility of human beings, but in the end this simply adds a premise to the overall rationality of maximizing the gains for the personal welfare. Furthermore, it thereby wraps itself in a selective and simplified understanding of the history of modern society, supplying the importance attached to this experience economy with a glow of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Our case study, henceforth the Aalborg interpretation¹ (Jantzen and Jensen 2006; Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007a; 2007b), is distinctive in taking a biological/neurophysiologic explanation² of experiences as point of departure, and combining this with a socio-historical explanation of experiences as well. Furthermore, these explanations are used to justify a new version, it is claimed, of economical hedonism, arguing

that human economical agency intentionally seeks experiences to achieve the optimal homeostatic and joyous well-being. The aim of this article, then, is to critically question this connection between experience and economy by inquiring whether this particular interpretation can deliver what is promised, viz. present a suitable and new frame for understanding economy and experience as connected. Hence, as Sen might put it, does it present a viable picture of human economical agency? And, is it actually as new as it claims to be? Addressing these questions, critical and theoretical inspiration is found within the argumentative rigour of both the analytical and the hermeneutical philosophical tradition.

First, the biological/neurophysiologic and socio-historical explanations of the intentionality of the experiential economical agency will be presented. Second, a description of the concept of experience as intentional will be presented, using both a hermeneutical and analytical-philosophical framework. This will disclose some important traits necessary for understanding experience as a whole, and how experience, as part of human agency, can be about something. Initially, intentionality and experience are connected in the following ways. First, people crave experiences, viz. they want to experience because experiencing releases some sense of pleasure or excitement. In this sense, experiences are comportments, i.e. intentional stances, having a positive state as the object of the comportment. Second, experiencing is a comportment in the sense that one cannot crave something without understanding something about this something. These two connected senses correspond basically to the two meanings in German of *erlebnis* and *erfahrung*, the first connoting a sense of "lived experience", or eventful intensity, the other a sense of being "experienced", of living as carrying a sense of ordinary meaningful, not necessarily happy or joyous, duration, as Martin Jay describes it (Goodman 2003, 117). Third, it will be inquired whether the Aalborg interpretation can accommodate these necessary traits within its own description of experiences as intentional, and the answer will be that it cannot. Hence, fourth, and concluding, it will be claimed that the interpretation ultimately characterises the human being in a reduced fashion, as an emotional fool, making the alleged new economy a reawakening of an old combination of hedonism and utilitarianism – a resuscitation of Bentham within a supposed neurophysiologic frame of reference. In other words, the experience economy in this hedonic guise reproduces the plain rational choice theory's emphasis on self-maximising behaviour as the prime human indicator, but with the difference that an appeal to emotions are now used in the informational base beside an idealised rationality.

2. Hedonic Experience Economy

First, however, a two-part description of experience economy will be given. The first part describes how a socio-historical development of the western society made the hedonic part of consumers' intentional behaviour predominant. Furthermore, and described in the second part, the individuals of this hedonic society are craving experiences due to certain biological inclinations describable in neurophysiologic terms. Hence, according to Jantzen and Rasmussen (2007d, 37-38) the first part establish how individuals, through their hedonic behaviour, intentionally comport themselves towards specific objects of preference. The second part explains, within a neurophysiologic perspective, why they do so, taking its point of departure in biological intentionality as "...the motivation of the organism regarding the world of objects." (Jantzen and Rasmussen 2007d, 38)

A historical justification for the joining of experience and economy: the hedonic society

According to our case study, present-day society is characterised by a predominance of certain collective hedonic dispositions, serving as the basis for modern economy. The conditioning force of these dispositions, it is claimed, is the result of a specific historical development implied in the idea of modernity. In particular "...structural conditions of late modernity was a requisite for experience to function as an acceptable, and perhaps even dominating, motivational reason for many people." (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 89) The relationship between the hedonic dispositions and these structural conditions is synergic in the sense, "...that a modern form of hedonism, one the one hand, was promoted by particular circumstances of modernity and, on the other hand, it promoted these particular circumstances as well." (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 89) The particular circumstances of modernity emphasized here are, firstly, a change in the overall extent of market-supply offering more experiences for the individual(s) to purchase, secondly, a change in mentality causing more individuals to be oriented towards experiences than before. Hence, a certain kind of dialectic between the extent of market-supply and the historical conditions of the collective hedonic consciousness is established, where each somehow presupposes and promotes the other.

According to the authors this dialectic can be described thus. Following the increase in production of goods in the last century an aesthetisation of goods occurred,

endowing these with both expressive and impressive functions (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 92). The former endow goods with a certain style and makes them recognizable within the social space. It becomes a brand and shows something for and, primarily, *of* those who buy it. The latter appeals to the senses of people. The sensuousness of goods entices consumers, appeals to their imagination and makes the act of consumption private and difficult to communicate to others. Both these functions are most clearly at work in advertising “...emphasizing the pleasure the use of goods can produce, and appealing to emotions and the wish for meaningful experiences.” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 93) However, according to the authors, commercials only work when the consumers picture themselves as partial hedonists and acknowledge the implicit values behind advertising. Enjoyment, feelings and experiences must function as the implicit values of a commercially constructed “good life”, supplying consumers with sufficient reasons to consume. Hence, the aesthetisation of products from the supply-side is only working if a certain demand exists, and this demand presupposes a certain attitude on the consumers’ part approving the above set of values. These values, then, functions as instrumental reasons for the craving of experiences, “The hedonist is orientated towards pleasure, and acts calculative with the aim of obtaining as much pleasure as possible.” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 86) The presupposed attitude of approving the values is, according to the authors, the result of the historical development of the mentality of hedonic behaviour oriented at experiences, creating a new *preference-order* based on what is exciting (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 104), by connecting enjoyment with *calculation* (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 107). Notice the italicised words, the first originating within neo-classical economical theory, connected with utility maximisation and revealed preference theory (see Walsh 1996), underlining a connection between revealing ones preferences and the imperative of enjoying the experiences, no matter what (the headline of Jantzen and Østergård 2007 is ENJOY IT! ENJOY IT!) The second, echoing Bentham (1789/1987, 111) “Passion calculates, more or less, in every man: in different men, according to the warmth or coolness of their dispositions: according to the firmness or irritability of their minds: according to the nature of the motives by which they are acted upon.” Dispositions, emotions and excitements are here connected with a calculation directed at (promoting/avoiding) what Bentham claims are man’s two masters, viz. pain and pleasure.

The authors present four additional features within the historical development of this hedonic mentality. First, experience craving presupposes post-World War II increase in

income, education, spare time and age. This increased societal wealth in western societies was, according to the authors, transformed into individual welfare and wellbeing through the multitude of goods and reasons to choose them (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 94). Second, according to the authors, the “rebellion of 68” against controlled corporeal and mental feelings through fixed norms, rehabilitated feelings, emotions and experiences as authentic evaluations and judgements for what you (can) do and, hence, buy. Expressions like “This is cool”, “This is so me” or “I like that” are all emotional expressions of the *justified* consumption act, “...not for the *outer* recognition but for the *inner* enjoyment.” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 94) Hence, the authors claim, a democratization of enjoyment was the result, since most people could now afford to buy what *they* wanted. Needless to say, since it is so blatant, this can appear as democratization only, if issues of poverty and distributive justice are disregarded from any understanding of economics. Third, justified enjoyment, or modern hedonism, has its basis in protestantism and its connection with capitalism. Drawing on Campbell’s (1987) interpretation of Weber’s *locus classicus* of the connection between the protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, the authors want to show that the effort in controlling the emotions in the protestant ethics produced an acute sensitivity as well. Alongside the prohibition of enjoying the fruits of labour, and the resulting ethics of production, a consumption-ethics developed, apparently redirecting drives and wants in a sensuous direction. The result was enjoyment not as a satisfaction of innate needs, but as the redemption of desires caused by the consumers’ fantasies. Hence, “The roots of the modern orientation towards experiences lie in the puritan renunciation of secular nonsense and foolishness.” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 98), paving the way for:

“The modern hedonist, a capable manipulator of sense impressions and the turning up and down for the fantasy, and has a larger and more differentiated register of experiential and joyous possibilities than the biggest potentate. He or she has become a dream-artist, controlling the object-world and the modulation of his or her feelings by a ‘controlled decontrol of emotions’. And this is everything else but irrational.” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 99)

Notice here that this rationally controlled decontrol of emotions is the core output of this new hedonism, manifesting the new preference-order above. Fourth, a certain therapeutic praxis was legitimized helping people experiencing trouble with this new sensuousness. “Growth, spontaneity, sensitivity and self-realisation. These are positive words, contributing to the sanctioning of enjoyment” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 102). The authors conclude that:

“The modern hedonism is conditioned by a marketing economic enterprise creating a sensual world of ideas around the product and consumption. On the other hand, the experience orientation is a consequence of protracted mentality-historical changes, emphasizing how sensuality and sensitivity promotes the individuals’ quest for meaning in life. These two sides encourage each other.” (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 107)

To recapitulate, then, the basis and justification of this view on the modern consumer and modern hedonic society, relies on a proclaimed historical explanation of the predominance of the hedonic experience orientation based on, firstly, a change in mentality causing people to be oriented towards experiences, and, secondly, the extent of the market supplying goods appealing to the sensitivity of possible customers.

Hence, the authors seem to base their explanation on a reciprocal influencing (a dialectic) between the two factors, the supply of the market both influenced by and influencing the demand structure of the collective hedonic consciousness of consumers. However, failing to discuss both contradictory historical descriptions of how experience as a concept has been used, and criticisms of Weber’s classical study (and Campbells)³, the argument seems tendentious and a case of *apriorism* (Hutchinson *et all* 2009, 3), i.e. “...to be committed to something – a method or the relevant explanatory factors in one’s explanation of social action – prior to ones investigation.” Thus, it is assumed that the hedonic society is preponderant now and the history of mentality is the right method explaining the development leading up to this society. No wonder, then, that experiences turn out to be pretty much what the theory claims it to be, viz. hedonic and describable in mentalistic terms, like sense impression, fantasy and sensitivity. The picture of human experiential agency, then, presupposes a picture of economical agency, where human beings are primarily embedded in an (quasi-)equilibrrious supply-demand structure, choosing to buy experiences as a way of maximizing pleasure and justifying these choices by appeal to internal emotions, created by being embedded in the same supply-demand structure. Our case study, then, presupposes a specific connection between economical ideas of hedonism, preference-orderings and utility-maximisation, as the sole basis for human (economical) experiential agency. So even though the authors claim (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 89) they are not arguing that hedonism is the only way modern consumers relate to goods, they fail to follow up on this point making their argument both *non sequitur* and nothing more than a legitimisation of a sort of emotional capitalism (Illouz 2007).

However, this reduced picture of experiential human agency will be disregarded for now, but will be returned to in the last section. Instead it will be claimed that the hedonic trait of our society, a regime in the words of Jantzen *et al* (2012), could be significant due to its naturalistic basis. There might be a natural necessity, then, effectuating this hedonic regime, explaining its predominance. Hence, the historical explanation above, describes a social norm-regulating adjustment pattern, justifying the right way(s) to want and procure hedonic experiences and denouncing others, hence legitimising the naturalistic account of experience, which we will turn to next, on a social level. The novelty consists, then, of this combination of a naturalistic explanation with a social-regulatory account of experiential economical agency.

Experience naturalised

Emphasizing emotionality (as sensitivity and sensuality) as the primary human trait when it comes to experiencing, makes a connection with naturalistic and cognitive ways of explaining the experiential process straightforward. Jantzen (2007, 139) claims, however, that consumer-studies, or microeconomy, have conceived experiences primarily as a non-economical side-effect of consumerism, understood as a satisfaction of needs (called the needs-paradigm). Moving experiences to the centre of microeconomy, however, means dealing with three problems within this needs-paradigm for Jantzen. Firstly, people are controlled by other motives than pure satisfaction of needs. Some people, Jantzen exemplifies, continue eating even though they are full, hence a wider model of the satisfaction is called for. Secondly, microeconomy has failed to conceptualize the process after needs are satisfied, and particularly the evaluation of the consumption act from the perspective of the consumer. A consumer's disappointment with a product can be explained as product failure, or as a result of misleading marketing, "...but the reason is frequently, that the consumer was not capable of bringing himself into the right mood leading up to the anticipated moment." (Jantzen 2007, 140) A strong responsibility is placed on the consumer here, and the fear of disappointment when buying a product is probably what creates the connection between the revealed preference and imperative of enjoying noted above⁴ (see Christensen 2013 for how this connection manifests itself as pretending). Thirdly, there is a "lack of the lack of needs" as the author claims; people eat, not because they are hungry and uncomfortable anymore, but to

keep the hunger from manifesting itself in the first place. Hence, the satisfaction of needs is anticipatory.

These three problems show, according to Jantzen, that the experience process is not a pure side-effect of consumerism and that “...experiences as goods need another calculus and another theoretical basis than the need-paradigm of microeconomy.” (Jantzen 2007, 141) This calculus, according to Jantzen, consists of expectations, bodily and emotional reactions during the consumption, affective evaluation and reflexive cultivation after the consumption act. These elements comprise the new *calculus of the rationality of the consumer behaviour* (Jantzen 2007, 141), creating the frame for explaining the justified emotionality (the controlled decontrol) described above. Jantzen proposes a three-levelled biological explanation of this new calculus, naturalizing the experience process, claiming that instead of

“...considering experiences as an organism’s inner response to an outer stimuli, the intentionality of the organism towards outer stimuli with the aim of reaching an inner response must be investigated. The organism, however, is not motivated by scarcities or lacks, in need of satisfaction, only, but also by a constant neurophysiologic activity creating experiences – even when scarcity is not present.” (Jantzen 2007, 145)

The first level consists of neurophysiologic activity and is explained through an *arousal*-paradigm instead of the need-paradigm described above (Jantzen 2007, 147). The basic assumption in this paradigm is that the biological organism is not only motivated by situations of scarcity or lack, which the need-paradigm assumed. The organism is instead motivated by an inner biological urge for homeostasis, i.e. aiming at the optimal level of wellbeing between higher and lower neurophysiologic arousal levels. This idea can be captured in *fig. 1*, a reproduction of the same figure in Jantzen (2007, 149)

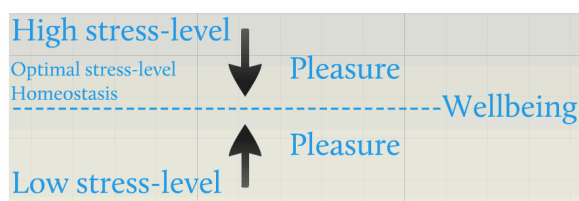


Fig.1.

The organism has a continuous readiness to react intentionally towards the exciting surrounding world, balancing the level of activity approximating it to the optimal

homeostasis. The process leading to the optimal homeostasis, balancing out either the high or low stress-level is experienced as pleasurable. The difference between pleasure and wellbeing makes it understandable why different people create different preference-orderings for themselves, "...for introverted people pleasure comes from relaxing, whereas extrovert people wants pleasures motivated by stimulating experiences." (Jantzen 2007, 150) Wellbeing, then, is absence of the unpleasant, and the unpleasant is a condition for pleasure since pleasure is diminishing of unpleasantness. Due to the abundance of modern (western) society the overall degree of unpleasantness is low, hence, "Pleasure needs to be induced in another way: by trying something new, surprising as it is with other sense-impressions than the usual ones." (Jantzen 2007, 152) Hence, *how* and *what* you experience is important, it must be intense and eventful, a range of enlivened experiences (Jantzen 2007, 142).

At the next biological level a certain emotional evaluation commences. Both trying and evaluating something new, creates an emotional involvement causing behavioural adjustment. "Emotions act as anticipating or annulling in behavioural dispositions." (Jantzen and Vetner 2007a, 208), hence influencing the promotion or prohibiting of certain complexes of actions. Does it feel good, do I want to continue and will I do it again, these evaluations serve as an emotional basis for creating preferences culminating in habits and routines, minimizing the risk for disappointments, but also limiting the chance of experiencing something excitingly new (Jantzen 2007, 154). At the third level, individual preference schemes, or orderings, are created and adjusted in accordance with the social environment in which the consumers move. These three levels, the neurophysiologic, the evaluative and the habitual, "...constitutes the biological level of experiences, where the organism receives, cultivates and pursues impulses without the necessary involvement of the consciousness." (Jantzen and Vetner 2007a, 210) All three levels make up the biological intentionality of the experiencing⁵ and pleasure seeking individual, responding to the exciting world through balancing the homeostatic stress-level. This creates behavioural adjustments through the promoting and prohibiting of certain dispositions culminating in individual preference orderings, needing some sort of further adjustment of social kind.

As an addendum to these levels, a fourth socio-cultural level exists. At this reflexive and conscious level a meaningful connection between past, present and future experiences and behaviour is created within the experiencing individual. This creation of meaning "...consists of interpretations and explanations of impulses informed by the

individual's picture of him- or herself and his or her social identity." (Jantzen and Vetner 2007a, 210) A sense of continuum, or meaningful duration, which the individual experiences in relation to the surrounding world, supplies this individual with a narrative of personal history for use in the social milieu. Experiences are here communicable and meaningful in an intersubjective sense, enabling the individual to justify the planned experience-causing actions within a social setting. Hence, instructions in where, how and why (Jantzen and Østergård 2007, 108) enjoyment should be pursued, are necessary regulations of experience economical agency within the hedonic society. These necessary regulations are, of course, made up by the justified emotionality, justifying each individual's intentional wanting and procuring of hedonic experiences.

The next section will take a step back and bring out some necessary implications of connecting experience and intentionality. The succeeding section will return to the two descriptions of experience, biological and social-historical, and ask, in the light of these necessary implications, whether they present a coherent description of experiential agency. As will be seen, neither the biological nor the socio-cultural account of experiential agency are convincing, due to serious shortcomings in the description of the concept of experience. The result, it will be claimed in the conclusion, is an emotional counterpart to Sen's rational fool, seriously questioning the overall novelty of (human) economical agency as understood in the Aalborg interpretation.

3. Experience as intentionality I

Now, the experiential compartment described in the case study above consists of two aspects. A biological account of intentionality, directed towards the optimal state of wellbeing, and an individualist account (since it is described from the singular person point of view), describing the regulation of where, how and why this biological intentionality is appropriate in a social setting. This section will try to delineate a more precise characteristic of experience as part of intentional agency, by emphasising certain necessary aspects of intentionality taken from hermeneutical and analytical philosophy.

First, as Stoller (2009, 709) has convincingly argued, it is possibly to understand the concept of experience as connected to intentionality without foreshortening the concept empirically. I take this foreshortening in the sense of Malpas (1999, 16) understanding

experience as a whole “...to refer to human existence as it comprise capacities to think, to feel, to grasp, to act and so on...” Furthermore, Stoller defends the concept of experience against different accusations, two of which are important here, viz. of being immediate and uninterpreted. These two characterisations are connected, since at base the accusations are levelled at experience as being a pure, viz. unmediated and uninterpreted, access to whatever the experience is directed. As Stoller (2009, 716) claims, however, it is exactly the intentionality of experience which makes this interpretation impossible, since “... intentionality refers to the fact that a given *something* is always experienced *as something*.” Hence, for Stoller this (old) hermeneutic idea indicates that what is given in experience is always connected to how it is given. Being directed at something in experience is intimately connected to how the directedness between that something and the experience is conditioned. Being comported towards cookies is not, in this particular cookie-craving situation, a matter of two separate things, the cookies and the intentional comportment, being conjoined. Both are conditioned by number of factors, influencing the experience of this situation, for example things blocking the way to the cookie-jar, the space between the jar and me, the light in the room, some other person wanting the same cookies, the time it will take for me to get to the jar before this person etc, etc. One consequence is that experiential intentionality is not something internal to the mind, but describes the practical conditions for this particular cookie-intentionality to take place (see Carman 2003, 44-52). This is not denying any possible importance of the cognitive, or the mental, regarding experience (Schear 2013 contains a recent discussion in the wake of a famous debate regarding this between Hubert Dreyfus and John McDowell); it is just not the primary in understanding experiential intentionality. In the words of Malpas (1999, 95) “...rather than viewing intentionality as some sort of occult relation between mental states and their objects, we can see intentionality as always grounded in the sort of spatial orientation and causal involvement that is characteristically a feature of engagement with objects in action.” Experiential intentionality, then, happens within and not besides different agencies and situations, as entanglements between persons and things, effectuated for a number of different purposes. On the basis of this (mediated/interpreted) experiential agency the understanding of something/someone is possible. Hence, different settings of engaged involvement with entities serves as the (back-) grounds on which these entities can become object for particular instances of experiential intentionality, hence understanding something *as something*. These cases of experiential

intentionality are, furthermore, transforming. As Jay (2006, 7) claims, experiencing happens “...through an encounter with otherness, whether human or not. That is, an experience, however we define it, cannot simply duplicate the prior reality of the one who undergoes it, leaving him or her precisely as before; something must be altered, something new must happen, to make the term meaningful.” Experiential agency, then, is connected with change in the sense that experiencing opens up a space having a transforming character. *Erlebnis* and *erfahrung*, then, goes together because to experience implies the possibility of being more experienced. One is possibly altered through experiencing, for example denouncing previous ways of doing things and embracing others. Experiencing, then, equals some sort of self-correcting, making experiential agency part of self-correcting enterprises. People with children knows how that particular experience changed their ways of life, renouncing certain behaviours and gaining others, in a specific justifiable way – which brings us to the second point.

Second, Anscombe (1957) describes a further characteristic of intentional agency, important for our understanding of experience. Anscombe describes (1957, 9) what distinguishes intentional actions from regular actions, namely “...that they are actions to which a certain sense of the question ‘Why?’ is given application...” This description, of course, faces some serious question begging if the putative answer involved something remotely in the vicinity of being interpretable as “being intentional”. Hence, Anscombe proceeds by calling attention to the much-discussed (see the essays in Ford *et al* 2011) category of things *known without observation* (1957, 13), which can be described without using notions like “willed”, “voluntary”, or “intentional”. To give the reader an example, think about a situation of reaching for the coffee cup on the table, while reading the news on the computer screen. When reaching for it, one knows where the cup is without looking⁶. Anscombe concludes, through analysing this particular kind of knowledge that intentional actions are known in a special sense, viz. in answering the question why, no evidences nor mental causes will serve as reasons (1957, 24). Instead reasons comprising past history, an interpretation of the action, or the mentioning of something future, serve as reasons for (intentional) actions. For example, answers like “I know from past experience...”, “I think he did it, because in his experience...” or “I would like to experience this...”, would comply with Anscombe’s criteria for intentional actions. Answers like “I was not aware I was doing that”, or “I *observed* that I was doing that” (1957, 25) wouldn’t work, though, because they refuse the application of why.

The answer “For no particular reason”, however, would work, since “The question is not refused application because the answer to it says that there is *no* reason, any more than the question how much money I have in my pocket is refused application by the answer ‘None.’” (1957, 25) Connected to intentional actions, then, is the joint possibility and necessity of reason-giving, possible in the sense that what the answer is, is not given beforehand, but if the action is intentional then not refusing the application of why is a necessity. So, ignoring whether this reason-giving is a species of either practical or theoretical reasoning, or both, intentional action opens up a space in which one is accountable to this action in a variety of ways.

Now, Anscombe ends her discussion by addressing the perhaps most important question, viz. why it is the question *why* that distinguishes intentional actions? The reason is, according to Anscombe, that the description of intentional actions we are looking for is one which could not exist, if ‘Why’ wasn’t applicable to it. Just like a description of something like a sentence could not occur prior to sentences carrying meaning at all, “So the description of something as human action could not occur prior to the question ‘Why?’, simply as a kind of utterance by which we were *then* obscurely prompted to address the question.” (1957, 83) Hence, *describing* something as human action and asking *why* of it are closely entwined marking human action as intentional. In other words, describing an action as intentional is, at the same time, placing it within a space of reasons, of being accountable. Anscombe (1957, 84) gives the example of ‘offending someone’, which makes perfectly sense as an unintentional action, but is, as such, clearly dependent upon there being a description of it as an intentional action. Offending by mistake would be an unintentional action, but we would not understand the offended and the (non-intentionally) offender’s different points of view, their arguments and potential disagreement, without the description of offending as an intentional action. So, some action will always turn out as intentional, whereas others will only turn out as such in certain circumstances (Anscombe 1957, 85), but all actions are described, or understood, and possibly contested, within a space of intentionality connected with some sort of accountability.

As a whole, then, experience has at least these three characteristics. It is part of an overall intentional human agency, denoting activity and changeability. Furthermore, experience is always experience of something *as* something, the understanding of which presupposes involvements and engagements with objects and persons in different situations,

leaving none of these unchanged in the process. Lastly, and in parallel to the experiencing of something *as* something, this is *describing* intentionality in such a way that it opens up a space within which a certain sense of accountability is part of intentional agency. Any putative experience economy would have to address these important aspects of experience, to hold any credibility. The next section will question whether our case study can seriously accommodate these aspects.

4. Experience and intentionality II

Now, the last section indicated how experiencing should be characterised as an intentional action. It is possible to ask why anyone wants to have a particular experience, or go through the process of experiencing, and frame an answer within a description of the experience either from the person experiencing (or about to), or the inquirer's point of view. Hence, intentionality is conceived more broadly than just stating the specific intentions of an agent; it concerns the directedness or aboutness of experience as such, from within specific agencies in different situations. What role, then, can arousals play within this intentional agency? One very likely answer will picture these as bio-causal elements influencing the experiencing person, whose intentional agency is directed at achieving well-being as a perfect homeostatic equilibrium. In this section this answer will be questioned, especially whether the arousal paradigm can actually accommodate, in the light of the characterisation of experience as intentional above, the experiential tasks assigned to it by the Aalborg interpretation – serving as a biological explanation with a social-individualist explanation on top. The discussion will be framed within Haugeland's (1998) and Rouse's (2009) respective modes of discussing biological and social intentionality.

Rouse (2009, 3-6) pictures existing theories of intentionality along two axes. One consisting of the difference between descriptive⁷ and normative theories, the other containing the difference between empty and fulfilled intentional relations as a point of departure. A descriptive approach to intentionality, "... seeks to articulate those features of intentional compartments that are operative in producing their directedness toward their objects." whereas a normative approach "... identifies the domain as those performances and capacities that can be held normatively accountable in the right way." (Rouse 2009, 3) Framed within Rouse's picture, the arousal paradigm is, first of all, descriptive in identifying the

homeostatic process as the prime operative function in establishing directedness towards objects and culminating in well-being. Responding to something as part of the experiencing process, then, is not held to be normatively accountable, but is just part of the natural process of reaching an optimal stress-level. The other, probably somewhat odd sounding, distinction divides the line between approaches starting with the actual relation to things, the fulfilled, or starting with intentionality as aboutness, even though the entity, which the intentionality is directed at, might be non-existing or non-present, viz. the empty. Put simply, how is intentionality for example possible when directed at non-existing objects, i.e. how do we make sense of non-referring intentional states? The arousal paradigm is clearly a case of fulfilled intentionality, since it starts with the actual relation to things through a causal conceived stimulus-response relation. This does not exclude a sense of empty intentionality like desiring, or dreaming of something not present, but the significance of this empty intentionality is, first of all, tied to how this desire or dream is expressed in the causal interaction with the surroundings. So, as a characterisation of intentionality, the arousal paradigm is explanatory and assumes the primacy of fulfilled intentionality as point of departure. Notice, that the evaluation described as part of the arousal paradigm, does not qualify this interpretation as a normative approach, since the evaluation revolves around whether the directedness or aboutness, e.g. the object desired, maintains the optimal homeostatic stress-level or not. That is why the evaluation is placed in the biological level, and concerns the establishing of dispositions becoming ossified as habits at the last level.

Now, experiences are, through exhibiting intentionality, expressing accountability within the normative space they help open up. I am not just going through an experience; part of my experiencing is committing to some sort of accountability (pictured within a frame of asking 'why?') For instance, being trained as a carpenter makes me accountable, both to the people hiring me after the education is finished (questioning my doings, the appeal to past experiences is one form of accountability), and towards getting the job done in the right way (in Anscombe's way of putting it, the right interpretation of the action). However, if experiences are describable in causal terms, as it is in the arousal paradigm, any normativity must be related, or even reduced, to the pure causal exchange of cause and effect, and the causal space opened up by the experiences, would, as a matter of fact, have to be the same all along. Hence, it might even be wrong to speak of any kind of normative space being opened up, because experience is, in the words of Luntley (1999, 197),

in this case just inert. The following will present an argument questioning whether experience, since it is exhibiting a normative saturated intentionality, can be reduced in this way to a matter of pure causality. The argument is a species of a genus of a plentitude of arguments against proclaimed naturalist explanations of intentionality in this way (see for example, Sellars 1953; McDowell 1984; Haugeland 1998, 305-361, Rouse 2002, Brandom 1994, Luntley 1999; Janack 2012), and main inspirations for the argument here are Luntley and Haugeland. The argument proceeds in two steps, first, the reduction of experience to the neurophysiologic description in terms of the arousal paradigm will be questioned. Can it account for the inherent normative intentional element within experience, viz. being accountable as discriminating right from wrong? Second, it will be claimed that it cannot, by default, account for this normativity and a possible alternative strategy for accommodating this insight, viz. retreating to a social level for construing this normativity, will be put forth. The Aalborg interpretation could be pictured as using, tentatively, one example of this strategy through sanctioning the pursuing of hedonistic experiences at the social level. Hence, at base we have a biological explanation of inert experiences, which are, then, regulated at this top level, supposedly through structures ranging from everyday inducing of norms for correct (experiential) behaviour, to, one could imagine, punishing for severe violation of these norms. This alternative strategy will also be questioned and claimed unsuitable as a description of experiential normativity.

Now, does it make sense to claim, upon accepting the inertness of experience, that experience is connected to experiencing something, which *has* to be the case? Well, probably in a minimal sense, as being biologically “normal”, i.e. as displaying a proper functioning within an overall biological whole. The arousals within the arousal paradigm described above, function as kinds of dispositional properties. As objects of a neurophysiologic description and explanation of what goes on, the arousals work as causal mechanisms of a plain stimulus-response regulation type within the homeostasis as a functional whole. Hence, the arousal-paradigm, we might say, aims to describe “...the mechanism by which the proper functioning has been rendered typical in the current population.” (Haugeland 1998, 309) As dispositions we expect these causal mechanisms to work properly, as something that has to be the case, just like we expect metabolism to work, or our hearts to keep pumping blood around our bodies. They might stop to work, but then

we speak about a malfunctioning on their part, not that the heart, for example, is not accountable – the heart works as a property and not as a propriety.

Now, Haugeland claims that there is a normative distinction this biological perspective cannot accommodate, viz. the distinction between being “...functionally right but factually wrong, so to speak.” (Haugeland 1998, 310) If any normativity is to be connected with experience, then it has to be accountable to some matter making an imposition *upon* experience, we might say. I take it, that Haugeland’s example of birds refraining from eating yellow butterflies, is showing this. Here is Haugeland’s description (Haugeland 1998, 310):

“Imagine an insectivorous species of bird that evolved in an environment where most of the yellow butterflies are poisonous, and most others not; and suppose it has developed a mechanism for detecting and avoiding yellow butterflies. Then the point can be put this way: if a bird in good working order (with plenty light, and so on) detects and rejects a (rare) non-poisonous yellow butterfly, there can be no grounds for suggesting that it *mistook* that butterfly for a poisonous one; and similarly, if it detects and accepts a (rare) poisonous orange butterfly. . . For there is nothing that the response can “mean” other than whatever *actually* elicits it in normal birds in normal conditions.”

In other words, it makes no sense of answering the ‘why’ of the bird’s behaviour with anything else than it just did. If, however, we claim it mistook the butterfly (a claim not hard to imagine), then our description of this bird’s allegedly intentional behaviour is a case of projecting, *we* recognise it, because it is part of our intentionality to recognise something like that as mistaken. However, picture this setting as applied to the arousal paradigm, the function of which works so as to avoid things not eliciting any joy, and pursue things, which does. As a responsive disposition can it be held accountable to anything besides doing what it always does? Can the response mean anything else than fulfilling its disposition, as Haugeland claims? No, it cannot be wrong since there is no way for it to exhibit intentional content, i.e. be wrong in a factual sense. Rouse (2009, 11) puts it nicely when he claims, “Haugeland does not spell out the underlying principle here, but the point is clear enough: intentional directedness must introduce a possible gap between what is meant and what is actually encountered, such that there is a possibility of error.” If claiming the bird as mistaken was a case of projecting, then the arousal-paradigm, as a description, is a case of not recognising the character of human intentionality. Haugeland (1998, 308) claims that the problem with the birds/arousal paradigm is that it makes no sense to claim that they are *supposed* to respond to something besides what they actually *do* respond to, because there is only one kind of functioning

normativity, viz. the biological one controlling their responses. In the arousal paradigm, what one wants, viz. stuff (things, people) that brings pleasurable experiences, cannot matter in such a way that I am accountable to this stuff. It cannot have any independent determining and normative status, but functions as part of my biological responsive disposition only. Failing to account for the possibility of error, thereby disregarding intentionality as human intentionality, the experiential agency modelled on the arousal paradigm has a glow of infantile behaviour about it: doing what one's dispositions tell you to do for reaching pleasure. And here the other part of the argument comes in, because this, of course, cannot work as a proper description of human society, a sort of reciprocal "contractual connection" (Luntley 1999, 197), regulating this behaviour is needed. Which is to say, we need some sort of social regulation binding the different experiences together, making us accountable to what is binding, viz. social norms. So, on top of the inertness of experiences, a social regulatory mechanism is placed. Within the Aalborg interpretation, it is the historical institution of hedonic society, legitimizing the *correct* and orderly way of pursuing of hedonic experiences.

This, however, faces the same problem as the biological intentionality, according to Haugeland, just the other way around. In the social regulatory version, the normativity connected with experiences is socially instituted⁸, regulating behaviours and circumstances for experiencing, viz. matching the proper experiential agency with the appropriate circumstances. Take the example of waiting in line for riding the rollercoaster. This is a circumstance for which a whole range of behaviours is both appropriate and not appropriate. It is ok to show excitement as part of the anticipation of what is to come, but it is not ok to be so excited you try to bend the rules for waiting in line. Different statuses and roles are exhibited, connected with different authorities: the parent and a "first timer" child; two youngsters, one an "experienced" rider, the other a rookie; the usher and the customers etc. Haugeland (1998, 313) asks, then, whether this kind of social normativity is able to account for the distinction above? Is the possibility of error an actual possibility here, equipping intentionality with the capability of self-correcting, or, as we might say, with the status of being experienced?

Not so, according to Haugeland, because a parallel to the problem with biological intentionality exists here, but in the guise of social conformist form. Common to both of Haugeland's critiques is indicating the incapacity of intentionality, to demonstrate a sense of openness. That is, none of the accounts are capable of showing accountability towards

matters being authoritative in a way not instituted by the intentionality in question, whether this is made up of biological functions or social institutions. Take the example of waiting in line above. As a social institution it institutes both the norms for behaving proper when waiting in line, and the conditions for recognising a situation where waiting in line is realised. So, part of behaving properly when waiting in line is being able to tell when queuing conditions obtain. Are there any room for behaving properly when waiting in line, and yet misunderstanding the conditions, viz. getting these the wrong way? Not really, because the status of these conditions are dependent upon their involvement in the norm for proper behaving while waiting in line, hence, “There is really only one type of norm at work: the instituted conditions themselves have no *independent* criterial status at all.” (Haugeland 1998, 314) We might even make room for individuals failing to conform to the norms, even groups of people, but “What cannot happen is that all or most of the community members systematically respond wrongly to a certain class of instituted conditions – for their common systematic responses define the very conditions in question. Thus, the “independence” of instituted conditions can extend no farther than the usual consensus.” (Haugeland 1998, 315) This is a strong argument. If we want to understand intentionality and experience as opening a space in which we are held normatively accountable, then what our intentionality is directed at, the aboutness of our experience, must have an independent criterial status capable of exerting a normative authority upon us. It must be capable of mattering to us in a way beyond our influence. Otherwise the genuine possibility of being wrong, hence of self-correcting, viz. being experienced, is non-existent.

What can be inferred about the case study’s depiction of experience from these excursions into Haugeland’s thinking? Well, it was claimed that a sense of change, a mediating role and opening up a space of normativity were important traits of experiencing as a whole, and the question was whether the Aalborg interpretation could accommodate these traits within its description of the biological/neurophysiologic foundation of experiencing in hedonic society. The neurophysiologic explanation cannot, according to its premises, describe the experiential agency as normative, since arousals as biological agency is just part of a functional whole, of which it is nonsensical to claim any accountability. It is just adaptable. Describing human agency this way is too simplistic, viz. it reduces agency to regressive and familiar reactions, without any possibility of maturing or developing, i.e. becoming experienced. Of course, it makes sense to claim that a process of adaptability displays some

kind of development, evolution is like that, but this is not tantamount to ascribing accountability to this development, except as a case of gerrymandering. However, recourse to the social level of hedonic society instituting regulating norms for how, when and where the pursuit of pleasurable experiences is allowable, might be taken to instantiate the normative space opened up by the experiential agency. Here the experiential agency in the Aalborg interpretation is accountable, but in a conformist sense. Accountable means conforming to the pre-given norms by recognising the conditions under which it is right to act properly in an experience economical sense. Furthermore, these norms and the conditions for recognising these norms are instituted by the experience economical logic legitimised by the hedonic society, viz. it dictates both the needs (the pleasurable experiences we never knew we could live without) and the proper way to redeem these needs. This seriously limits the sense of experiencing as change, mediation and transformation connected to any idea of a self-correcting enterprise, *erfahrung*, making any change a matter of conforming to the established consensus. Thus, being experienced amounts to nothing but having learnt how to redeem the dictated needs in a better or new way, culminating in an understanding of *erlebnisse* as the aggregated ends for which new or better means are procured. A primitivisation of life by reducing it to a conforming to the needs and, furthermore, never questioning these, is the result. Neither the biological nor the social account of experiential intentionality in the case study have any room for the important aspects of experience claimed a necessary part of experiential intentionality. So, the human (economical) agency described by the Aalborg interpretation through experiential intentionality is a reduced human agency, incapable of engaging in any self-correcting enterprise besides adapting to the biological circumstances and conforming to the pre-given and experience economical established norms. All in all, clear signs of a replay of an old *Kulturindustrie* song using a combination of naturalism and social conformism as instruments, with social science as lead singer. Furthermore, signs presenting a strong indication of a hedonic society, as depicted in the Aalborg interpretation, as a society incapable of being wrong except by its own consensual hedonic standards. It is, we might say, a society made of emotional but nevertheless foolish members.

5. Closing: what's new, you silly Benthamite?

Let us recapitulate before ending this article. The main objective was inquiring about the viability of this new economy, experience economy. Initially this held a promise of moving past a too rational conceived economical agency by incorporating experiences, hence sensualities and sensibilities, as a further informational basis for understanding this agency. Some resemblance to *Kulturindustrie* was noted, though, the probability of which could question the self-proclaimed novelty of experience economy. As an example of experience economy the Aalborg interpretation was described, consisting of a two-level theory, appealing to a biological basis of experiential intentionality with a description of social-individualist intentionality on top, within what was claimed a modern hedonic society. This called for an inquiry into experiential intentionality and what characterised this intentionality as a whole, viz. a sense of changeability, mediation and opening a space where people are accountable to what is disclosed in their experiences, i.e. what these are about. A question was asked then, whether the example of experience economy scrutinised could accommodate these necessary characteristics of experience. In the section above, it was claimed that within the premises for a two-level account of experience this experience economy establishes for it self, a coherent description is not possible. It fails to account for the normative status of experiences, making the naturalistic explanation more about biological responses than experiences, and the social-regulatory account as inherently incapable of correcting it self in a non-conformist manner. The result was a somewhat confused and reduced description of human (economical) agency. What remains to be seen, then, is what this discloses of (human) economical agency. Can the promise of establishing a *new* "economy", using this bio-social agency be redeemed? Let us end with a perhaps not surprising answer to these questions that the narrow view of human agency is connected to a very simple form of utilitarianism as economical agency.

First, this economical agency is not different in spirit from Bentham's hedonic utilitarianism where agency is based on choosing pleasure and avoiding pain. The difference being, obviously, that Bentham's conceiving of pain and pleasure as psychological dispositions is now reconceived as biological dispositions instead. Hence, pain in the arousal paradigm is not necessarily being avoided, since painful activity can release a sense of pleasure as well. Bentham would probably agree with this, since this makes the painful activity a mean for the end of pleasure, hence a calculated passion. Bentham's idea of a calculated passion is termed a controlled decontrol of emotions within the arousal-paradigm. The objective of both is pleasurable wellbeing, with the controlled decontrol making up the new calculus for

explaining the rationality of consumer behaviour. In other words, emotions serve, when controlled, and beside affective evaluation and reflexive cultivation, as premises in the rationality of maximizing the utility, the well-being, of the consumer

Following Sen and Williams (1982, 3) this is characterisable as utilitarianism in the guise of *welfarist consequentialism*. This is, first, tantamount to assessing any given state of affairs on the basis of pleasure, satisfaction, or people getting what they want, viz. welfarism or wellbeing. Second, it implies an idea of correct agency since actions are chosen on the basis of their consequences, hence consequentialism. Utilitarianism, then, "...recommends a choice of actions on the basis of consequences, and an assessment of consequences in terms of welfare." (Sen and Williams 1982, 4) The experience economical agency falls, obviously, within this categorisation since welfare, or wellbeing in the arousal paradigm, is the sole criteria of evaluating whether a given state of affairs means people getting what they prefer – that is, the satisfaction of the preferences. Which actions to choose, then, depend on the consequences in terms of pleasure: balancing the stress levels approaching the optimal stress level. Furthermore, it should be noted that experience economy has its own version of the welfarist concept of sum ranking. Sum ranking is an aggregated principle of utilitarianism, claiming that one consequence is better than another if and only if it contains a greater total sum of well-being. Hence, individual welfares, or utilities, are simply added up to assess the outcome. As claimed above, the only notion of being experienced, *erfahrung*, connected to Aalborg experience economy, was an aggregated sense of *erlebnisse*, joyful experiences, which constitutes a sense of sum ranking. Being experienced means knowing how to evaluate which experiences causes the most pleasure, and knowing how to get them. There is, however, no room for a person's experience actually affecting what this person desires, which Elster (1982) has indicated as a problem with this kind of utilitarianism, and was argued above using Haugeland as well. This impotence in picturing agency as a self-correcting enterprise presents us, again, with a very narrow view of being a person and engaging in economical agency. Human economical agencies are, namely, defined by their utilities only, i.e. the sites where activities such as desiring and having pleasure and pain take place (Sen and Williams 1982,4). "Once note has been taken of the person's utility, utilitarianism has no further direct interest in any information about him." and Sen and Williams sums this up in the following memorable phrase, "Persons do not count as individuals in this any more than individual petrol tanks do in the analysis of the national consumption of petroleum." (1982, 4) This,

again, points towards human economical agency as depicted within the experience economy, as rational and emotional foolish behaviour. The experiencing human being is represented as a pleasure-maximizing individualist, making experienced behaviour inexplicable unless it is understood as effectuating pleasure (actions within the vicinity of renouncing pleasure are not options). Furthermore, once note has been taken of how the person's pleasure is obtained and described within the arousal paradigm, no additional information is needed but the coordination with others seeking pleasure as well.

So, the experience economy in the Aalborg interpretation is hardly a new economy, it is classic Bentham-like hedonism and utilitarianism, but sought legitimised through biological explanations. With this let us return to and end with the problem noted in the historical explanation of modern hedonic society. What was left aside was the question begging character of this explanation. Sen and Williams (1982, 2) might have the best description of why this is so. In a theory of human economical agency:

“...no large question is being begged if one merely assumes the individual agent to be deciding, quite often, what is the right thing to do, and deciding it, at least sometimes, in the light of moral considerations. A large question is being begged, however, if one assumes that the agent is required in rationality to subject all all those decisions to one criterion of decision, and it is still being begged if one assumes that rationality requires that any other criteria of decision must themselves be justified by one over-riding principle.”

Arguments are in dire need of showing why people ought not make decisions based on their experience, i.e. as a result of a self-correcting behaviour different from biological adaptionism or social conformism, but expressing the accountability connected with experiencing we saw above. The reason these arguments are lacking is, simply, that the experience economy, aka *Kulturindustrie*, cannot handle a “mature” human economical agency without undermining its own livelihood.

Notes

¹ After its place of origin, the University of Aalborg, Denmark. Any translations are made by the author.

² This naturalistic explanation places the interpretation within the vicinity of the recent growing body of literature concerning neuroeconomics/neuromarketing (see for example

Loewenstein *et al* 2008; Suomal *et al* 2012; Zurawicki 2012 and Berker 2009 for an overall critique of neuroscience)

³ See Jay (2005) for the multifarious uses of experience through the ages, leading to opposite claims of the function of, and appeal to, experience within different theories of epistemology, politics, history, post-structuralism, aesthetics and pragmatism. Furthermore, see Gay's monumental historical description of the bourgeois experience from Victorianism onwards, denigrating the supposed "mental" and "bodily" rigidity usually attached to conceptions of Victorianism. This questions the connection between a protestant ethics and a capitalist spirit as an overall thesis and not, it should be emphasised, the eventual existence of particular examples of this connection. However, it thereby also questions the explanatory power Campbell and these authors attach to Weber's thesis and their development of it, that an overburdened control necessarily led to a decontrol. For another critique of Campbell and his reply, see Boden and Williams (2002), and Campbell's reply (2003)

⁴ A new hedonic imperative logic might be at work here as well. Combined with the idea that the consumer is partly, if not mostly, to blame for any possible disappointment of the consumption act, this hedonism, as Zizek (2009, 58) points out, "...resides in the way permitted *jouissance* necessarily turns into obligatory *jouissance*." The imperative, "enjoy it!" functions as a reversal of the Kantian imperative "You can, because you must", instead becoming "You must, because you can" (Ibid.). Zizek (2009, 58) provides the following example of how this works, "On the information sheet in a New York hotel, I recently read: Dear Guest! To guarantee that you will fully enjoy your stay with us, this hotel is totally smokefree. For any infringement of this regulation, you will be charged \$200." As Zizek (Ibid.) explains "The beauty of this formulation, taken literally, is that you are to be punished for refusing to fully enjoy your stay". Sen's fool is no longer only rationally obliged (in theory) to act in a certain way he is emotionally obliged as well.

⁵ Interestingly, but not surprisingly, Jantzen (2007, 142) emphasizes *experiencing* and not *experienced* as the concept of experience *par excellence*. The devaluation of *erfahrung* is, following Campbell, sought justified in the (almost usual) romantic rebellion against enlightenment predominance of reason over feelings. Furthermore, the only room for being experienced consist of the evaluation of the experiencing; hence it is an instrumental kind of rationality seeking the best means for experiencing. As will be seen in the next sections this leaves no room for experiencing as a self-correcting enterprise, making the experiencing individual a conformist and emotional fool.

⁶ The reader might retort that this is due to the fact that the same person very *observantly* placed the cup in its position. Hence, picking up the cup is an action based on knowing upon previous observation and not without observation *per se*. Anscombe would agree but claim that this, in a justificatory sense, belongs, in a more wide sense, to past experiences and that this knowledge does not function as some sort of mental cause making the person pick up the cup.

⁷ Not to be confused with Anscombe's descriptions, which would belong with the normative theories.

⁸ For Haugeland this institution is understood in a broad sense of training and learning, comprising both the possibility of norms, or rules, induced by parents or chess-teachers and, I take it, learning to be a consumer with market induced norms, as the why, when and where of experiential consuming.

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8.

Capabilities, Situations, Positionings

Capabilities, Situations, Positionings.

One common trait between Sen and Nussbaum's different versions of the capability approach is criticising utilitarianism for not leaving any room for a real sense of freedom and rights. However they differ when it comes to understanding what this real sense of freedom implies. This article will defend Sen's version of freedom against Nussbaum's virtue like focus on a priori capabilities securing peoples freedom by connecting Sen's capabilities with situational semantics and positioning theory. This will supply Sen with a complex tool for specifying how freedoms and rights are dispersed in different situations, and actually consist in a capability in its own right.

Keywords: positioning theory, capability approach, Rom Harré, Amartya Sen, situational semantics

1. Introduction

In this paper, a way to supplement the capability approach of Amartya Sen with positioning theory in the sense of Rom Harré and his colleagues is proposed. The brief reason for suggesting this supplement is dissolving the connection between the capability approach and a specific form of virtue ethics. Adding to the critique of neo-classical economical theory done by the capability approach is, therefore, one goal of this paper. According to this critique, neo-classical economical theory has worked within too narrow a moral-philosophical outlook. The result is that the factors of moral-political significance integrated into the classical framework, are answering to, or constrained by, criteria matching models of preference utilitarianism only. Releasing economical theory from this restricting constraint, however, is not tantamount to adopting a neo-Aristotelian outlook of virtue ethics, *per se*. The very notion of capabilities could and should instead be disconnected from a pre-given moral outlook, and associated with a more developing and dynamic notion of normativity as found in positioning theory.

One important point in arguing for this, it will be claimed, hinges on invoking a certain notion of "situation", where persons can be seen as being positioned as well as expressing capabilities. Connecting positionings and capabilities via situations, then, serves as an enlargement, or enrichment of our conceptions of the *kind of* capabilities as well as the *kind*

of freedoms, in Sen's understanding of those terms, instantiated in these situations. In short, the moral universe of the capability approach is thereby broadened in order to expand its field of applicability. This is, of course, in a trivial sense just a broadening of the scope of economic theory, but with the following emphasis: supplementing the capability approach with positioning theory provides us with a means for analyzing, how the understanding of human situations in *economic terms* adds to our understanding of those situations in political and moral terms. Instead of imposing a pre-given moral outlook on economy, the capability approach is employed to open up a space for new possible forms of moral and political considerations. In other words, the capability approach, when connected to positioning theory, might help us *sharpen* our moral and political considerations additionally.

In the following we will start out (2) by sketching the main points in the capability approach's "diagnosis" of utilitarianism. Nussbaum's "cure", consisting of an appeal to virtue-like capabilities, will be criticized for moving too far in the opposite direction. Sen's notion of freedom, it is claimed, is a better point of departure but in dire need of being specified (Walsh 2007) We will then (3) focus directly on Sen's capability approach, discussing certain critiques of Sen for adopting a methodological individualistic approach arguing that this critique is misplaced. Instead a critique of Sen should emphasize the undeveloped character of his thinking, when it comes to conceiving how the relationship between being and doing is enacted in practice. This will be the point of departure for a second specification of Sen's notion of freedom connecting it with situational semantics (4), the notions of expression and understanding (5), and positioning theory (6). We will end with a summary (7).

2. Utilitas, virtuitas and libertas

In developing the capability approach Sen has countered a specific theory, which has been an immense influence on economy, namely utilitarianism and especially in the guise of preference-utilitarianism (see especially Sen 1987). We will not rehearse Sen's well-known arguments here but cite Walsh (Putnam and Walsh 2012, 180f) summing up of the difficult historical trajectories:

"Since the 1870's, one moral philosophy has been deeply embedded in neoclassical economics - utilitarianism. Until the 1930s, neoclassical economics acknowledged this, and some

(A. C. Pigou, Lord Dalton and Sir Alan Peacock) even used it to support humane policies...It was then mistakenly thought that abandoning cardinality during the 1930s removed all vestiges of utilitarianism.”

Behind this abandoning lurked the distinction between a positive and a normative economics, with the idea of positivity excluding any ethical or morally informed evaluation of economy because it was un-scientific. Leaving cardinal utility for ordinal utility, then, was thought to remove any traces of subjectivity impeding the objectivity of understanding rational economical behaviour. As Sen (1987, 30-31) states, referring to Lionel Robbins as the main example, any sense of interpersonal comparisons of utility was doomed, then, because it was deemed ethical. However as Walsh (Putnam and Walsh 2012, 181) continues:

“But a low-octane utilitarianism has led a second life in the formal structure of neoclassical theory. Modern philosophers...recognized preference utilitarianism as providing a structure in which they could set up housekeeping...But as Sen knew for many years, and even demonstrated, any utilitarianism fails by riding roughshod over rights and therefore over freedoms. Insofar as neoclassicism still has a covert moral philosophy, this moral position disempowers it from doing justice to rights and freedoms.”

Readers should consult the writings of Putnam and Walsh (2012) for this interesting and complex historical trajectory in 20th century economic development.

However, one result of the challenge of utilitarianism above is the version of the capability approach expounded by Sen’s close collaborator, Martha Nussbaum (for reasons of simplicity and her most recent presentation we will use Nussbaum 2011, only). Nussbaum claims, as does Sen, that utilitarianism cannot do justice to freedom as the most significant value of economics. She identifies four problems with utilitarianism (Nussbaum 2011, 51ff), all variants of a single problem, that utilitarianism’s commitment to a single metric, whether ‘satisfaction’ or ‘pleasure’ “...effaces a great deal about how people seek and find value in their lives.” (Nussbaum 2011, 53) Reducing the implicit morality within economics to the preferences of people and the satisfaction of these, and codifying this morality in the basic axioms of rationality, disregards both the complexity of the situations in which people act and, hence, fails to do justice to the many different reasons for which these people act. For example, a well-known basic axiom is the completeness theorem, stating that a complete

ranking of alternatives must be known for an agent to choose. Human beings, however, more often than not, find themselves in situations where choosing involves a fundamental uncertainty regarding the knowledge of how and what to choose. Hence, as exemplifying a moral understanding this axiom would not work, because our moral understanding is not complete. As Walsh (Putnam and Walsh 2012, 65) puts it, “The completeness axiom, however, is assuming that there are no moral conflicts we are *unable* to resolve – no tragic choices where, whichever action we choose, we feel a terrible moral loss.” Using a picture of completeness of knowledge is, besides being impossible, not the right way of understanding people’s choices as containing an implicit moral or normative dimension within tragic or other economical related situations. What is then? Well, first of all, understanding the idea of freedom as involved is important. Even in a situation where uncertainty is a condition, what matters are people capable of assuming a position where having a choice is possible, viz. the freedom to choose and act, as an end in it self.

So, as Nussbaum (2011, 55) claims, the utilitarian approach misunderstands and mischaracterizes freedom by conceiving it instrumentally as a means to reaching the end of satisfaction of preferences. Sen (1999, 62) agrees, “The utilitarian approach attaches no intrinsic importance to claims of rights and freedoms (they are valued only indirectly and only to the extent they influence utilities).” The moral philosophical implications Nussbaum wants to stress, in opposition to utilitarianism, are, however, different than Sen’s. Nussbaum (2011, 33) emphasizes the virtuous import of people capable of acting, by pointing to some ten basic capabilities influencing each person’s possibility of acting freely securing a life of human dignity. In a very accurate description of the primary difference between Sen and herself, Nussbaum (2011, 70) writes:

“...Sen sometimes speaks as if all the capabilities were valuable zones of freedom and as if the overall social task might be to maximize freedom. He speaks of a “perspective of freedom” – as if freedom were a general, all-purpose social good of which the valued capabilities were simply instances. The Nussbaum version of the approach does not proceed in this way. It makes commitments as to content, using the list of ten Central Capabilities as a basis for the idea of fundamental entitlements and constitutional law.”

In the following it will be argued that Sen is right in speaking of a perspective of freedom in contradistinction to Nussbaum’s list of *a priori* definable capabilities, or neo-Aristotelian

virtues. Capabilities only make sense *as* capabilities if they are conceived as zones within a very specific sense of freedom. Sen (2004, 78) states the same point this way:

“What I am against is the fixing of a cemented list of capabilities, which is absolutely complete (nothing could be added to it) and totally fixed (it could not respond to public reasoning and to the formation of social values). I am a great believer in theory.”

It is this sense of freedom we will defend, theoretically, in contrast to Nussbaum’s neo-Aristotelian turn of the capability approach. However, Nussbaum is correct in judging Sen’s “perspective of freedom” as a very general conception, bordering on losing any capacity for understanding the different nuances and positions instantiated dynamically within different normative situations. This lack of commitment to content, as Nussbaum implicitly criticises Sen for in the quote above, is in line with other authors criticising Sen for lacking a sense of “operationalisation” of his approach (for example, Gasper, 2007, 2008; Robeyns 2005, 2006; Walsh, 2007).

The combination of positioning theory and situational logic proposed below will be presented as one proper development of the capability approach. Instead of capabilities as kinds of virtues, or essential natural dispositions in need being protected, we will follow Harré in conceiving these as specific positions occupied within normative or moral orders, understood as “...ever-shifting patterns of mutual and contestable rights and obligations of speaking and acting...” (Harré and Langenhove 1999, 1). Hence, *pace* Nussbaum being “virtuous” is not a question of any essential dispositions pictured as a priori capabilities, but is a matter of the duties and responsibilities connected with being positioned and positioning oneself within shifting moral orders. A position, then, is defined by Harré and Langenhove (1999, 1) as a complex cluster of “...generic personal attributes, structured in various ways, which impinges on the possibilities of interpersonal, intergroup and even intrapersonal action though some assignment of such rights, duties and obligations to an individual as are sustained by the cluster.” We need to underscore a Wittgensteinian point here, a point we think Sen would concur (see Sen 2003). Connecting the capability approach with positioning theory is not, a matter of viewing positioning theory as a suitable frame for applying the capability approach. Hence, positioning theory is not used for operationalising the capability

approach in the sense addressed by Sen's critics above; the connection is actually much stronger. It is a matter of realising that speaking about capabilities *altogether* is only understandable within a normative order, instantiated through and across different situations. Connecting positioning theory and the capability approach, then, sharpens the understanding of conditions both conducive and challenging for capabilities in question.

3. The Capability Approach: evaluation and context

One overall focus in Sen's development of CA has centred on the unequal distribution among human beings of the possibility of achieving some sort of wellbeing in accordance with a conception of what a good form of life is. Reducing wellbeing to conceptions of utility, desire or happiness has been one of Sen's foremost targets (for example Sen 1985; 1987). *Not* that these play no role in the human life, only they should not be confused with all there is to say about wellbeing (see Clark 2005, for a development of the consequences for CA). In other words, utility, desire and happiness could be means of achieving wellbeing but should not be confused with the goal – the possibility and actuality of leading a good decent form of life - itself. Obviously, then, disregarding the content of one of these three concepts at some point in your life, or better, having the *possibility* of disregarding them, might actually increase the level of well-being. Smoking is a good example, quitting even if it makes you happy right now, will increase your overall wellbeing. But in case you are 95 years old, on the brink of life's end, craving for one last cigarette, then, could smoking not actually increase the level of well-being?

Evaluating the entanglement between "being and doing" in Sen's concept of capability, is a very complex thing. Pursuing a form of life in terms of one of the three concepts above is ok in one situation, but it might not be in another situation. According to Sen, then, our focus must be on the possibility of acting in accordance with our concepts of a good form of life and achieving this as well. This, we might say, underlines the etymological connection between the word *well* in wellbeing and the concept of *will*, latin derivatives of *volo*, the present active of the infinitive *velle*, connecting *well* with some sense of volition or intention, that is, both the possibility and actuality of carrying something out. Different kinds of constraints, of course, both are and will be affecting a capability to act in different ways, ranging from obstructing to facilitating. For example, getting up in front of an audience (a social setting as a constraint) might be a case of overcoming fear, and any delusion might be

the biggest obstacle in doing this (a personal condition might be a constraint). However, it is also possible for the speaker to realise afterwards that the audience actually helped the speaker relax during the speech, by repeated smiling, nodding and laughing at the right places, even though the speaker, several times, tried to hide behind the desk.

Sen has been criticised for not paying enough attention to how different constraints, viz. natural, subjective and institutional and social structures (Rauschmayer and Lessman 2011; Burger and Christen 2011; Ballet et al 2011; Gore 1997; Deneulin and Stewart 2002), condition the individuals acting. Hence, it is claimed, Sen adopts a too individualistic approach. However, Sen's response, i.e. the interpretation given here, will lead directly to the core issue in understanding the capability approach. First, as Drèze and Sen (2002, 6) stresses, CA is a 'people-centered' approach which emphasises *human agency rather* than organisations like markets or governments. Robeyns (2007,107) has taken this to imply that Sen operates with an ethical but not an ontological, or methodological individualism, i.e. individuals are the sole unit of moral and evaluative concern. However, stressing human agency rather than organisations does not necessarily imply individualism, ethical or otherwise. On the contrary, as Drèze and Sen continue in the above quote, it is important to keep in mind that the notion of social "... is a useful reminder not to view individuals and their opportunities in isolated terms." Viewing the evaluative space as consisting of the individual *plus* the effects the social has on this individual, is still seeing the individual and the social in isolated terms, instead of transacting, or mutually affecting, through the entangling of natural and social aspects of human agency. As Sen (2002, 81) claims "...The presence of individuals who think, choose, and act does not make an approach methodologically individualist; rather, the postulation that the individuals are separated and detached from each other would do that." Thinking, choosing and acting individuals are not social atoms interacting, they are transacting in shared, but questioned¹, social and physical orderings. To put it in other words, for individuals to think, choose and act, this *thinking*, *choosing* and *acting* must both be understood and expressed as meaningful. This, then, depends upon, first, some sort of meaningful ordering(s) must already be in place, and second, a previous learning of how to act, choose and think within these orderings as an unfolding of meaningful agency. In Sen's terms, *being* embedded in these orderings and *doing* something is, albeit in different ways,

¹ Imagine, for instance, the difference between agreeing with, questioning and contesting different social and natural orderings, and how these as cases of *acting*, *trans*-form the parties involved.

necessary characteristics of *human* development – of meaningful development dependent upon human capabilities or understanding and expressing. Thus we might say that when Sen speaks of individuals it is always individuals understanding and expressing a sense of a good form of life on the basis of pre-given common orderings. Sen, however, has never done anything to stress the importance of this point, which requires some elaborations concerning how these orderings influence human agency and, inversely, how these orderings are influenced by human agency. These elaborations will guard Sen against this widespread misunderstanding of a methodological individualism. This will be the theme for the next two sections.

Recapitulating, then, while the criticism of Sen for adopting an approach too individualistic is simply wrong, the somewhat underdeveloped aspects of Sen's thinking of *how* individual capabilities are dependent upon *how* common constraints are understood and expressed, needs to be reinforced. Hence, we will emphasise introducing, first, the idea of attending to positioning in situations and, second, the semantic tools for the task of expressing and understanding these situations. Both steps will help accommodate this criticism by modelling the conditions for acting or not.

Before turning to situational and positioning theory, however, another important distinction needs to be considered, viz. the entanglement between being capable and being able. It is a distinction Sen makes as the distinction between capabilities and achieved functionings. Whereas the former expresses the sense in which acting is dependent upon certain conditions, or constraining factors for its possibility – without saying exactly what these conditions are beforehand – the latter expresses the realised acting, that is, how the constraining factors functions in an enabling sense. This connects the concept of capability with themes in philosophy of thinking about freedom and related concepts like will and actuality (see Brock 2002) Particularly important, we will implicitly assume here, is the proceeding from mere formal considerations of being capable to possible kinds of realised abilities as well. Defining *what* kinds of freedom matters, as in Nussbaum's list, or defining what kind of individualism matters, as in Robeyn's ethical individualism, before attending to any particular situation, faces the danger of turning the question of capabilities into a question of primarily addressing the epistemic conditions for possible acting. *That* we know this and this matters for our being capable, is not enough for a sense of realised ability – because even though we know what being capable amounts to, *realising* it depends on our

doing something about it. To countenance any misunderstandings, this is not denigrating or bypassing that knowledge *is* involved in being capable of doing something. It is a move from (epistemo-)logical possibility to realised possibility, philosophically speaking, moving from an axiomatic-deduction-like list, like Nussbaum's, presenting the possible space of what capabilities matter, to what is possible in a situational actual sense as well. Hence, development as freedom revolves around the possibility of our adjusting "stuff" and ourselves to this "stuff" in a continuous dynamic interplay between different situations of what is taken to be a good form of life. Stuff is here understood metaphorically in the wide sense of for example stones, cars, wives, dinner-parties and windows. Being capable, then, is the possibility of acting on something and being able expresses the idea that there is a possibility of a realised acting. Hence, the capability approach, in the interpretation put forth here, has a modal touch to it and Sen might even agree with this. If he does, it will reinforce the following point: we need some further tools for expressing and understanding the situations, as the extension of the capability approach as an evaluative space, in which being capable is possible and being able can be realised. So, when the next sections introduce the theory of being positioned in situations, this model, as it were, should be understood as not just presenting a logical possibility but contributing to a realised possibility as well. Modelling is, in this sense, an empowering of the people involved in understanding and expressing situations, by providing a tool for the task of realising the possibility of a good form of life within these situations. (See Rothbart 2004)

4. Positioning theory I – situating CA

Now the short example above, getting up in front of an audience, makes it easy to imagine the complexity involved in thinking about the possibilities and realities of acting and the constraints involved - subjective (mental, bodily), objective (factual, physical), intersubjective (institutional, social structures, groups). Furthermore, it exhibits how hard it is to express something general about the connection between being and doing across different situations, i.e. it might be much easier for you to get up in front of your colleagues in a working situation but harder in front of family in a private situation. Hence, analysing capabilities express more of an evaluative space connected with different situations as complexes of being and doings, than a space totally explicable before its connection with situations. Combining this with last sections emphasis on the modality between being and

doing, i.e. the ideas capable/able/constraint revolve around actuality/necessity/possibility, a focus on situations connects the capability approach with a certain partiality (see Barwise and Perry 1985, 107) A situation, then, is a model of a limited part of the reality we reason about, perceive and live in, and the capability approach will provide evaluative answers to some of the central issues in a given situation. In Devlin's words "Situations are parts of the world and the information an agent has about a given situation at any moment will be just a part of all the information that is theoretically available." (Devlin 2004, 60)

Two other points need to be stressed besides this partiality. First, even though situations are partial, they are connected with a realism of objects, people, values, relations and properties etc. creating a kind of uniformity across different situations. (Barwise and Perry 1983) The same desk the speaker stood behind will be used in a new situation with a new speaker. This speaker will perhaps stand on the side when speaking, thereby creating another kind of relation between him and the same audience. How some sort of uniformity (desk, roles of speaker and audience, technical equipment etc.) is instantiated across different situations is captured in what Devlin (2008, 603) calls a *scheme of individuation*. This scheme expresses how objects, people, relations, types of situations, properties, spatial and temporal locations are all individuated within the horizon of different people's understanding and contesting of a particular situation. Hence, the scheme supplies people in a particular situation with a semantic model and the tools for understanding and expressing it, as well as its difference to other situations². To emphasise, all situations are not alike, nor understood alike, but uniformity across situations when it comes to certain objects exists, and this uniformity makes potentially a difference between the situations as well. Hence, and in keeping with the partial character of situations, the understandings and expressions will also both differ and overlap according to the people involved in these situations. The primary importance, though, is connected to the possibility of expressing this understanding through the use of a scheme of individuation, due to the impossibility of knowing all of a given situation's import. *That* a semantic of this kind is possible, is more important than *what* the precise elements of this semantics are, for a reason parallel to the one presented by Sen above

² Here, of course, the possibility of formalising situations arise, which was part of the original idea in Barwise's and Perry's project of working out a situational semantics and its development in Devlin 1995. A recent example is provided in Addis and Brock's introduction of situational semantics to the works of Wittgenstein through the use of OWL (short for WebOntologyLanguage), hence empowering people's access to and understanding of ontological themes across Wittgenstein's works through the program Philospace.

against reducing questions of wellbeing to either utility, desire or happiness. For a semantic to have a truth-relevance, i.e. the possibility of determining what is right in situations where the understanding of people differ, the relevance must be connected to the possibility of expressing the difference between what is and what is merely taken to be the case.

Second, and this is where the connection with Rom Harré's positioning theory enters, identifying the elements in a scheme of individuation and their uniformity across situations, presupposes a familiarity with the setting of these elements, i.e. with the different orderings serving as the background for this identifying to take place. Using the word patient chart (an object) during the doctors round (a type of situation) possibly means different things to the patient and the nurse, because different parts of their background (their embeddedness in other situations) informs the situation – but they both still know which patient chart the doctor speaks about. Attending to situations in terms of a schemes of individuation provide us with the analytical tools, capabilities as well, for the task of understanding, evaluating and expressing these situations.

5. Understanding and expression

Before moving on to a description of positioning theory, we should dwell a little on how the notions of understanding and expression are connected. What characterises human understanding? Without diving into this very complicated area in detail, we would express it the following way (inspired by Belnap *et al* 2001): animals and humans both have the ability *to see to it that*, i.e. manifesting a goal-oriented behaviour, sometimes adequate sometimes not, in and with the environment. Humans, however, furthermore have the ability of understanding this goal-oriented behaviour *as* goal-oriented behaviour, that is, the ability to take an informed stance on how things can and would make a difference (understanding what a realised possibility means). However, making distinctions – expressing this difference - does *not* amount to taking an external perspective on what you are doing. It is taking a normative stance from within your different situational doings, and expressing this stance in ways involving an understanding of the difference between the way things are and how they are experienced. Or to put it in other words, it is the *positioning* of you, by your wife or yourself, by commitment to something, for example making a new cup of coffee for her or discussing the taste of the coffee with her, and knowing what it is involved in carrying this out in the right way (seeing to it that it happens). Understanding goals as goals, or reasons as

reasons as Aristotle expressed it, means understanding what is involved in being committed and entitled across and in different situations. This is humans “second” nature, and involves understanding how commitments and entitlements are connected to different positions, and informed by different generic orderings of social, natural and personal character. Positioning theory, as we will describe in the next section, presents a broad picture of how we should conceive this normativity and its connection with human agency.

Now the ability to make distinctions depends upon using different tools, of which language is the primary, for expressing these distinctions. In this sense the articulation of situations and its elements, helps expressing a human orientation in and between situations. Furthermore, the tools provide us with an analytics in the sense that it increases our capability to, first, analyse and express our understanding of situations as made up of different but related elements. Second, it helps our evaluation of the situation by bringing out different understandings and expressions of what is involved. Hence, there is a kind of systematic sense involved as well, to the effect that we are aiming at a certain kind of wholeness when we are evaluating situations. A systematic, not to be confused with an axiomatic-deductive kind of system, but in the words of Stekeler-Weithofer (2006, 82) as “...an ordered representation of different realms of knowledge and objects, aiming at a kind of conceptual overview.” Hence, even though we never achieve a complete overview of what is, in theory, involved in and between given situations, (remember we have only partial information available) we might achieve an overview, a conceptual clarification, empowering us for further actions. To use the simple example above, it would present a scheme of individuation (an ordered representation) of the nurse and the patients respective understanding of the doctor round (the different realms of knowledge) aiming at understanding, why and what the patient (or nurse, or doctor) misunderstands (the conceptual overview), in case anything is misunderstood, of course. What was presented above as parts of situations is a minimally conceived analytic for expressing and distinguishing what is going on in situations. There are and will be many other ways of supplying this with other distinctions, including what might seem opposites. The gist of it, however, is remembering the purpose. i.e. enhancing the capability of the agents involved, of understanding and expressing the relation between the situation and their conception of what a good form of life would look like. Hence, making a situation understandable and expressible

means making its place in life explicit, making the relevance of truth appear. We therefore need to situate situations in the flow of (the generic orderings making up) life.

6. Positioning theory II – situating situations

When it is part of human “second” nature to take up positions, i.e. committing to something, then how should we understand these positions? Are they given before humans enact them? For example, as different roles people can position themselves and others in? No, according to Rom Harré and others working within positioning theory (a few important references in this huge area of research: Harré and Langehove 1991; 1998; Harré and Gillett 1994; Harre and Moghaddam 2003) As a general description, the concept of positioning is a strong alternative to the more static concept of role, where relationships like patient-doctor, for example, is there before people filling them out, so to speak. Hence, the concept of role, according to positioning theory, fails to describe how these roles are experienced and enacted by the participants dynamically. Instead positioning theory draws explicitly on an emergent ontology of social entities dispersed between different generic orderings of a spatial, time-related, material and normative character. Within this ontology, social acts, including speech acts, physical acts of winking, sitting or lying down, and other expressions of experiencing, are seen as the ‘matter’ of social reality – expressing how different positions are enacted in different dynamical ways.

This enactment depends upon the embeddedness in, first, practices or spaces where social and natural aspects of these elements are being taught through upbringing and learning to speak a language. Hence, these orderings are normative to the effect that understanding the difference between natural and social aspects of situations is connected to the expression of this difference through the right use of interrelated symbolic systems like language and physical articulation, in terms of voice or facial expressions etc. (compare two situations with the mistaken identification of the patient chart with a chopping board, by an adult and a child patient respectively) Second, and to paraphrase one of the main influences within positioning theory, Vygotsky, who claims that any function in the cultural development occurs twice, first between people and second inside the mind, this connects with positioning theory’s social concept of mind. Here, the mind is discursive precipitating from symbolic mediated transactions and discursive practices involving rights and duties, by engaging with other people and the world. From this perspective, identifying the uniformity across

situations (and the difference between specific situations) is connected to a personal space in the sense of involving awareness and reflections for the managing of interests, beliefs, attitudes etc., as well. But as Harré (1999, p. 52) claims these

...beliefs, attitudes, memories, emotions, ratiocination of all kinds are not mental states and processes; they are not entities of any sort, mental or otherwise. They are phenomena which have their being as attributes of public and private activities, in which people put local symbolic systems to work for all sorts of purposes.

Any scheme of individuation, then, as an expression and understanding of a particular situation, evolves from the background of three different normative orderings: a social, natural/physical and personal space. We can picture this (fig.1.) in the following way:

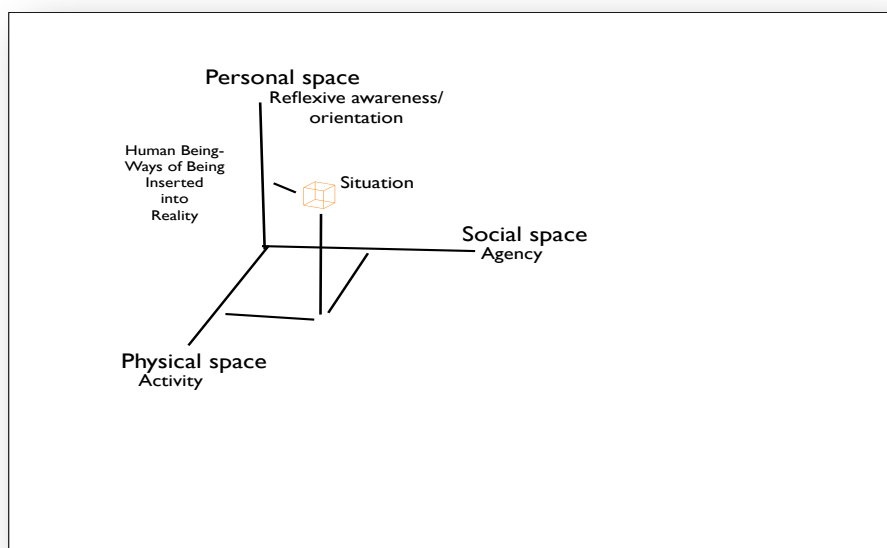


Fig.1³.

These orderings are proto-types for any given situation's possible relations to the surrounding world as a connection between intersubjective, subjective and objective space. As orderings they provide a frame for describing the constraints inherent in any connection between being and doing, central to CA, in different situations. Furthermore, it depicts the possibility of understanding the relation between being and doing in a dynamic sense, i.e. as a

³ Reproduced, with permission, from Brock, S. & Christensen, B.A. (2012).

movement between different situations involving different and overlapping understandings and expressions (particular schemes of individuations) of what is involved in these situations. Last, we can point to different positionings within situations as relations between *concrete-physical positions*, like I am *in* our kitchen, *moving towards* the coffee-machine. *Positions in social space*, I am *in our* kitchen, with different commitments and entitlements connected to how we position each other in this kitchen, deliberately or forced, depending upon whether you are my wife, a friend, my daughters friend, my mother in law etc. A *self-positioning*, understood in the sense that being positioned, either by myself or by others, is dependent upon my being capable and able to appear (or not) as who I am (and take my self to be) in different situations. This is not to be mistaken for some sort of methodological or ethical individualism; first of all, because it is a necessary consequence of proceeding to a dynamic concept of role where, say, being a dad can be actualised in a number of different ways dependent upon different persons and situations. Second, it is in compliance with the partiality of situations we described above. Expressing an understanding of a given situation is selective in the sense that other authors would probably use other words and sentences in describing, even contesting, the same subject matter. Hence, how, specifically, our minds precipitated from symbolic mediated practices is reflected in articulating our understanding and expressing compared to others.

Let us end with a small example, a trial, the evaluative space *par excellence*. The setting is a courtroom, the physical setting of the room reflects the social space and vice versa. The prosecutor, the defendant and the parties they represent are sitting in front of the judge (depending on size, jury as well), with the back to any audience (unless a closed trial), court police standing at the sides. The judge is usually “up there” on a raised platform, representing the law as above all of us as individuals. Each person knows, or is told beforehand, the way around the courtroom as a physical and social space, where to move from where, and do or say, at precisely this time in the process. Each person is positioned during the process, as a combination of forced and deliberate positioning of themselves and others. The judge acts on behalf of certain prescribed rules; she is forced into a position from where she must judge, but how leaves room for her self-positioning deliberately. Furthermore, she can position others forcefully – for example using the hammer shouting “silence”, and she will position the parties when the conviction is made (some losers, and some winners). The two, or more, attorneys try to position the opponent forcefully as not arguing his or her case while positioning

themselves as arguing the case. Lastly, the defendant in the witness stand must testify by the institution of law, hence it is not a case of deliberate self-positioning but a forced self-positioning. Each positioning express an understanding of what is going on, involving one or more elements from the scheme of individuation we referred to above. Previous situations are invoked, "I was there, she saw me...", involving other persons, objects, relations, facts and values, "You say you remember, because it was cold and raining that night, and you looked at the church clock when the bells chimed at 11 o'clock." As the trial moves on, the schemes of individuation becomes more and more complex, involving more objects, persons, relations etc. The parties involved position themselves and others by contesting and evaluating each expression and understanding of the scheme, but always on the basis of what a reasonable contesting and evaluating is (contesting the difference between how things "really" are and some witness' experience of them, often invoked in court cases, must be done, rightly, at the right time and place, and not just when the attorney thinks so). So, all the different positions and their mutual relations within the courtroom situation are placed within a normative ordering, with the three settings, or spaces, the personal, the social and the physical, functioning as constraints on how the different positionings can be enacted. The attention to the specific situation shows that persons are mutual engaged agents carrying out their respective projects and plans according to what is right in the courtroom. Furthermore, the trial itself is an example of an evolving social episode, consisting of a sequence of meaningful social actions.

7. Closing

Let us recapitulate. Connecting capability approach with positioning theory as done above, provides a space for evaluating in a very specific sense. The freedom to pursue, central in the capability approach, is now supplied with a tool for picturing oneself (or us) as capable in different situations, and thereby supplying us with the possibility of understanding and expressing how freedoms and rights are dispersed in a given situation. Connecting situational and positioning theory with the capability approach helps, then, picturing different situations as furthering possible and actual ways of acting, i.e. being capable and being able. So, instead of falling back on an apriori list of capabilities as Nussbaum does, a sharpening the context sensitivity for how freedom, rights and obligations are tied to different positions

within and across situations is established. The analytic provided by positioning theory and situational semantics is capability enhancing in the sense of supplying clarity, a conceptual overview, of what is realisable in a given situation.

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