Introduction

Becoming an entrepreneur seems to be an endless topic in entrepreneurship research. In other words the question posed (often implicitly, but sometimes explicitly (e.g. Burns, 2005) is: can one become an entrepreneur, or are we born to be entrepreneurs? This is the story line that seems to have imbued the entrepreneurship discourse as one of the basic assumptions that works as a back-drop in writings on entrepreneurship, and is consequently often generally taken for granted. Moving away from the idea of the “born-to-become” entrepreneur there is a claim for other epistemological standpoints (e.g. Jennings et al., Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009). As well there has been some interest regarding how entrepreneurs are socially constructed (e.g. Goss, 2005), by different discourses in society (Berglund, 2006), a process that can be described as both complex and multi-faceted, going beyond notions from ‘entrepreneurial’ discourses (Watson, 2000), and which not always construct the heroic figure that is depicted by the entrepreneurship discourse (Kets de Vries, 1986, Shepard and Haynie, 2009).

In this paper we aim to develop knowledge on the discursive construction of identity when it comes to an entrepreneurial setting that is multi-faceted. From following an entrepreneur on her journey in developing a business that could both be described as traditional (commercial) entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship (fair trade) it is obvious that becoming an entrepreneur does not come from any prescribed recipe. On the contrary, entering an entrepreneurial route is followed by a number of identity dilemmas. Thus, we will elaborate on some examples considering how the CEO of Oria is challenged by different dilemmas when she combines the social part and the commercial part of her entrepreneurship in constructing an entrepreneurial identity. First we will discuss entrepreneurship from different logics.

Entrepreneurship a field of different logics

Entrepreneurship has during the last decade become a conceptual attractor for theorizing on organizing “newness” and bringing about change processes in organizational settings, not least in Scandinavia (Johannisson et.al). In this vein Steyaert and Katz (2004) argue that
entrepreneurship must be reconsidered from a broader societal perspective in contemporary society. Acknowledging that the space of entrepreneurship is part of human conduct, as a phenomenon of change, and not connected to a specific ideology it becomes simultaneously obvious that entrepreneurship is a concept that today is claimed from different discursive standpoints (Berglund, 2007). This notion is further developed by Berglund and Wigren (2011) who followed a project in which societal entrepreneurship was in focus. They conclude that while the traditional story of entrepreneurship consists of the heroic entrepreneur who creates a kingdom, by way of establishing a company on the market, in order to make a profit and contribute to growth, the story on societal entrepreneurship make up an ante narrative. The stories on societal entrepreneurship thus stands in sharp contrast emphasizing how untitled entrepreneurs and organizations, in cooperation, initiate changes in public arenas by way of projects, aiming to contribute to a better society. Taking a point in the empirical case two logics of entrepreneurship seem important, the first we label the economic entrepreneurship logic and the second the social entrepreneurship logic. The first relates to the more traditional view of entrepreneurship while the second relates to the broader view of societal entrepreneurship.

The social entrepreneur could be seen as either an individual or collective actor who focuses on social, environmental and economical purposes. In that sense social entrepreneurship could be seen as value creation beyond the economical where social and environmental issues are in focus. (e.g. Gawell, Johannisson and Lundqvist, 2009). In this paper societal entrepreneurship for the studied entrepreneur is to act with responsibility for social and environmental issues through the idea of Fair Trade in order to develop local societies in India. With an anglo-american view social entrepreneurship and social enterprise relate to a societal perspective where the aim is to change the world through creating a sector of social companies which are hybrids of activism and business (Palmås, 2007). In the European perspective, however, which originates from the word social economy the focus is to upgrade and develop the role of civil society and NGOs in the social economy (Palmås, 2007). The Fair Trade market could be seen in both perspectives where Fair Trade companies combine activism with business and also interact with NGOs in their mission of the Fair Trade idea.

Some definitions of social entrepreneurship focus that social work could be run commercially with private interests or philanthropy activities by companies (Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Stillen, 2006) or by non-profit organizations or in a mix of for-profit and non-profit activities (Dees, 1998; Peredo and McLean, 2006). Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern (2006) state that social entrepreneurship can be found within or can spam the nonprofit, business, or governmental sectors. Thompson (2002) also stresses that the main world of the social entrepreneur is the voluntary sector.

The central driver for social entrepreneurship is the social problem being addressed (Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern, 2006). The social entrepreneur is a change agent and creates and sustains social value without being limited to resources currently in hand (Sharir and Lerner, 2006). This definition relate to Schumpeter (1934) who defines the entrepreneur as a change agent who brings innovations to the market which will change until the next equilibrium. The later Schumpeter (1942) thus diminished the importance of the individual in favor of the large
organization as a system of innovation development. Entrepreneurship can also be related to innovations constructed in relation to other actors and social contexts. By focusing on the social setting it becomes evident that entrepreneurial ideas do not flourish because they are “inherently more ‘enterprising’ or ‘innovative’ than others, but because a number of actors uninterruptedly seek to construct and maintain a network around their idea” (Whittle and Mueller, 2008). Thus, processes of legitimization and power are vital, and they are formed in a social context which has implications for identity processes. This discussion also relate to institutional entrepreneurship where entrepreneurs are seen to infuse society with new regenerative and innovative values and practices (Khan, Munir and Wilmott, 2007).

To sum up, there are many definitions of entrepreneurship as well as social entrepreneurship that emphasize organizations acting with a responsibility for social issues and environmental concerns. In relation to the traditional understanding of entrepreneurship tensions are stressed (Berglund and Wigren, 2011). These conflicting versions could be described as de-coupling (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) in the frame of institutional entrepreneurship when norms and values related to different logics are challenged:

…it would be beneficial for social entrepreneurship researchers to explore the skills with which these entrepreneurs decouple their dual missions and identities (Dacin, Dacin Matear, 2010).

Inspired by Dacin et al. (2010) we will develop knowledge about the gap between “other” forms of entrepreneurship and business-as-usual, in addressing the conflict of negotiating among conflicting dilemmas. The dilemmas shown in the paper emphasize that the economic entrepreneurship logic is based on the commercial part of the business when market related activities are in focus meanwhile the social entrepreneurship logic is based on the mission to change the business society regarding to human rights and environmental issues in relation to NGO activities. In the next section we develop this understanding of dilemmas from an identity perspective.

**Discursive identity construction**

Departing from a social constructionist understanding, the epithet “entrepreneur” is an identity created at each and every turn of life; ‘it is from the myriad forms of language exchange between people that the person emerges’, writes Burr (1995: 53). Self-identity is continuity, across time and space, as interpreted reflectively by the agent (Giddens, 1991). Identities are thus not “fixed” entities but are always in process, and discourses constitute our common linguistic resources from which we draw in order to represent ourselves in a certain way; or to resist such representations, and which simultaneously put us in certain positions (e.g. Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

In everyday life we are caught up in a flow of discourses and the identities in which we are positioned is seldom called into question. Since no such thing as one fixed self exists we constantly relate to different identities; sometimes we are men or women, mothers or fathers,
and brothers or sisters. But identity construction goes beyond these basic epithets and in our working life we usually identify with what we do, but we also tend to identify with our private interests and tastes. Nevertheless, ‘one is not totally free to fashion one’s identity since some discourses combine better than others’ states Ahl (2002: 59), and demonstrates how well the identities “white”, “man”, “father”, “entrepreneur” and “industrial leader” are combined. The entrepreneurship discourse is gender-biased, which have its implication for constructing an identity as an entrepreneur and a woman (e.g. Berglund, 2006; Lindgren, 2002). But, the entrepreneurship discourse is also imbued with other taken for granted assumptions; as the one about profit-maximizing, which emphasize homo economic in contrast to homo ludens (ref).

If we are about to become entrepreneurs then this is an identity that not only must fit our set of existing identities, but it depends also on what kind of “logics” that we relate to in certain time in history, in a particular place, and in a particular social situation. Constructing an entrepreneurial identity is depending on what other kind of “logics” that is available. As discussed here, the logic of NGOs versus the market/management logic are important features in promoting as well as hindering the development of social entrepreneurship endeavors.

Smith, Knapp, Barr, Stevens and Cannatelli (2010) argue that nonprofit organizations that engage in social enterprises can have difficulty reconciling the social service and business identities of their organization. From an exploratory qualitative interview study they conclude that identity tension varied dependent upon the timing of conception of social enterprise. Nonprofit leaders used different approaches to identity management and identity marketing for social enterprises: after conception and social enterprises: at conception.

As is stressed by Watson (2009) entrepreneurial identities should be paid attention to in a more multi-faceted ways that moves beyond notions of mainstream/grand entrepreneurial discourses. In this article we focus on “dilemmas” in order to create an understanding of how entrepreneurial identities are negotiated, in shifting and creative matters, depending on the situation and context. In this vein, Shepard and Haynie (2009) argue that there are other versions of the entrepreneurial identity that is suppressed by the mainstream discourse, resulting in the questions concerning how knowledge on entrepreneurial identities can be achieved from life stories by way of searching into the more dysfunctional aspects of entrepreneurial identities. To position oneself as an entrepreneur in different logics may bring about opportunities for change. But, as will be illustrated, there is also a risk of being squeezed by contrasting logics, which create an identity dilemma.

**On method**

The paper is based on an empirical study made by one of the authors, Birgitta Schwartz, where she studies the development of a Fair Trade market as a way to diffuse and translate sustainable development such as social and environmental responsibility between different contexts as Sweden and India. The study is based on a qualitative method where data for this paper is collected by four longer personal interviews, one shorter telephone interview and
twelve observations from September 2009 to June 2010 with the CEO of the textile company Oria, Sandhya Randberg. Each personal interview was one to two hours long and was recorded and afterwards transcribed. The participating observations were made as following the Sandhya to five fairs, one conference and six business meetings.

The analysis was made together with Karin Berglund and was focusing how Sandhya Randberg describe her way of becoming an entrepreneur and acting as a social entrepreneur in her engagement for human rights issues and Fair Trade. The identity process is analyzed in her way of solving the dilemmas between being caught in the market and economic entrepreneurship logic and in the NGO and social entrepreneurship logic at the same time. This research cooperation – with one researcher “inside” in the empirical field and one “outside” – create a move between distance and closeness from the empirical material, which has enhanced the process of analysis.

From an identity perspective following a person over time gives a more complex view of how a Self is constructed. During one research interview, a life narrative is often presented that is well-integrated, but in an ethnographic study the narrative is interwoven with other narratives as well as altered in different situations. Following Sandhya in different contexts (fair trade conferences, business meetings, and business fairs) reveal how she positions herself according to the different logics that prevail, as well as how she is positioned differently – sometimes as a social entrepreneur and other times as an economic entrepreneur.

Dealing with dilemmas – the story of Oria

Oria is a Swedish company selling organic and fair trade produced cotton bags to large retail companies, cotton clothes for children and profile clothes such as t-shirts to adults, cotton bedclothes for children and cotton towels. The products are produced by organic GOTS\(^1\)-certified and Fair Trade\(^2\)-certified cotton and produced by Indian companies which are registered as Fair Trade producers at the Fair Trade certification organization. Oria was established in 2006 and the CEO, Sandhya Randberg, is the only employed, but since 2009 she now and then has help with temporary employees.

Sandhya was born in India and until she was 5 years old she lived at one of Mother Theresa’s orphanage. She was adopted by a Swedish family and has lived in Sweden since then. She has also herself adopted a girl from India. One reason for her to produce Oria’s products in India is related to her own back ground. She thus has a personal engagement in environmental and human rights issues and is also a member of Amnesty International and other NGOs related to human right issues. Since 1995 she has worked with Fair Trade issues. At first she worked for the teachers union in their international engagement during her occupation as a teacher. Later

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\(^1\) Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is a standard for organic products.

\(^2\) The Fairtrade criteria are: premium for products sold, minimum price for products, minimum wages at same level or higher as the national law, the right to organize in labour unions, democratic organizational structure, health and security, environmental awareness, no child labour (www.rattvisemarkt.se)
on she voluntarily started a World Shop\(^3\) in the Swedish town Västerås in order to push the Fair Trade issues but she felt that there was not enough force in the World Shop concept. She wanted to continue to work for human rights issues, but started ponder over what kind of platform that would suit her:

“I have been working for these questions since 1995; for fair trade issues. But I felt that there was not enough of force in the World Shop concept. They didn’t want to move forward. So, then I started my own business instead. As I wanted to have an alignment towards clothing industry, well I haven’t got the heart for fashion really, but is more interested in sewing. I have always been fond of that. And then it started with a proposal for 1000 t-shirts from the Blood central. I told them that I would fix that [laughing].”

(Interview, 2009-10-06; our translation).

The interest in sewing seems to be important for Sandhya’s identity creation process. This can be traced back to her time at Mother Theresa’s orphanage where she practices sewing. The connection to the clothing industry was close for her to make. Making these kinds of connections, Sarasvathy (2001) proposed, is to follow the logic of effectuation. Instead of applying to the “causation logic”, taught in business schools with its call for business plans and detailed strategies that seem logical from a management point of view, the effectuation logic is more about asking oneself questions in line with “Who I am”, “What I know” and “Whom I know” (Ibid., 253). Other important connection points are the nation India, as well as her interest in children:

Researcher: “What are the reasons for working with India?”

Sandhya: “Because I originate from India, as well as my daughter. It has been a journey back in many ways. And it has been very exciting.”

(Interview, 2009-10-06; our translation)

When the above connections points coincided with a proposal from the Blood central, an opening occurred where Sandhya could start acting as an entrepreneur, building her own business. The vision was still to create social change, but the platform changed. The laughter, when she talked about how she accepted the order, we interpret as surprising herself when she retrospectively thinks back at this occasion.

The time/life situation dilemma

Before Sandhya started the company she was working full time as a teacher and she had no time left over for her family. Not least considering the engagement in the World Shop:

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\(^3\) The Swedish World Shops’ Association was mainly supported by the Swedish Church when it started in 1969. The aim is to sell craft and food products from small-scale producers in developing countries that have been produced regarding to specific Fair Trade criteria based on WFTO’s Fair Trade principles. The association also works with information and campaign activities (www.varldsbutikerna.org).
… I arranged activities. It takes much organization and all of that was done during my spare time. So much energy I put into that made me think; why should I do this for others account? (Interview, 2009-10-06; our translation)

The engagement in the World Shop demanded more and more time from her, which brought up issues whether this was the best platform to initiate change from. When Sandhya decided to start her own business and leave her engagement in the World Shop as well as her position as a teacher we could in the worlds of economic entrepreneurship logic, say that a window of opportunity opened for Sandhya. But in another perspective, Sandhya faced a dilemma, in which it was difficult to find enough of time for both family, work, and besides; also her engagement in the World Shop. She thus decided to realize her social ideas about human rights and environmental responsibility through a business initiative (cmp. Sundin, 2009).

Creating the platform with the aim to bring about social change - in terms of starting up an own business – can as much as a window of opportunity be seen as a way to solve a dilemma in the terms of getting a grip of one’s life situation.

The voluntary dilemma vs. the market dilemma

The World Shops build on the idea of NGOs working together for a good cause, but in practice someone – in this case Sandhya – was the person arranging shop activities and other trade events. As we understand, Sandhya felt exploited in the Swedish context as these organizations themselves are dealing with combining the traditional market logic with NGO logic. These NGOs have, for instance, besides volunteers also employees who get their salary every month, as well as buying products and services from other organizations, not expecting them to give it for free. But, in the case of Sandhya, she was expected to work voluntarily.

The dilemma between the two logics Sandhya wanted to solve, by starting her own business, but soon she found herself caught by the same dilemmas she thought she had left behind her.

As a Fair Trade company, Oria is member of the Fair Trade Network where different NGOs such as the Red Cross, The Fair Trade certification organization, The World Shops, Diakonia and The Swedish Church and a few Fair Trade companies are members. The organization arranges Fair Trade fairs and seminars etc. Sandhya has been a member since her time in the World Shop and now her company Oria is one of the member organizations. But, according to her, she still works voluntarily in the network which is a dilemma for her when she now is an entrepreneur.

“Most of the persons can make it (network meetings etc.) on their working time. It is only us who are entrepreneurs that do the work voluntarily. The others can travel (to meetings) on paid working time…so there is a difference when the Swedish Church do it, when the organization Diakonia do it, when the organizations do it there is someone who pays them…They can do it on their working time and this is the difference in my engagement and the others. That’s why I feel it is a difference how you use your time.” (Interview; 2009-11-03, our translation).

There is a dilemma between commitment, in relation to time and money. It seems as Sandhya as an entrepreneur needs to value her time in accordance with what the company needs. Time
is money for Sandhya, in contrast to being a wage-earner (or paid activist). The latter’s work assignments consist of participating at these meetings to create public opinion, while Sandhya takes part at these occasions on “borrowed time”. Even though both parties have the same goals – to initiate social change – Sandhya also need to use her time to sell her products for her living, which forces her into the market logic. She is not sure how the network is contributing to her business and has doubts about the member fee of 3,000 SEK every year and what the company gets for the fee. She also pays an additional 2,000 SEK when she participate in a Fair Trade fair to sell Oria’s products directly to consumers, but it is the same fee as other companies pay even if they are not members in the network.

The moral dilemma versus the market dilemma

But, there is also a moral dilemma according to Sandhya. Being a Fair Trade company in Sweden there is a moral limit for how large profit you can make on the Fair Trade products since the workers in India will still have a low wage and the gap between Oria’s profit on each product and the workers’ salary should not be too large.

“Can I make a profit? I must make profit but there is a limit for how large it could be in comparison with how much the workers get if I earn more, if the argument is Fair Trade. If the argument is not Fair Trade and instead quality, then I can take any marginal I want. But, I can’t take too much if it is Fair Trade, because the workers who should benefit get such a small proportion anyway and I so much more.” (Telephone interview, 2010-03-15; our translation).

At the same time she finds it troublesome to get profit from selling for example t-shirts and cotton bags since the Swedish customers will not pay for the higher production costs she has for Fair Trade and organic products. Sometimes she needs to sell to a lower price and her profit will be too low.

Researcher: “So sometimes you need to sell to a lower price even if you shouldn’t?”

Sandhya: “Yes, sometimes I need to do that. Cotton bags, which I sell, are actually a loss. To sell 100 bags, it is almost the same work to make a cotton bag as making a t-shirt. And people will buy a cotton bag for 5-10 SEK and you don’t make a profit on that. It is not possible to get so much profit.”

(Interview, 2009-10-06; our translation).

She still works voluntarily with her social engagement however in her membership of the network for Fair Trade. As well she has started a home page where companies could give money to children in India. Moreover, she arranged a Children’s Fair in Västerås 2009 with entertainment for children and where also other Fair Trade companies could sell their products. She did no profit from these activities however, but solved this dilemma by reconstructing the occasion as a marketing activity, instead of a sales opportunity.
Conclusions

During Sandhyas entrepreneurial journey in developing Oria a number of dilemmas have been brought up; the time/life situation dilemma, the voluntary dilemma vs. the market dilemma, and the moral dilemma vs. the market dilemma. These dilemmas arise from moving on with her ideas of creating social change in India, by way of developing a fair trade business. In these situations she finds herself to be in a dead-lock position between two entrepreneurial identities. Either way she chooses to go, she perceives a possible move both as an opportunity and a failure, according to the different logics inscribed in economic entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.

Dissolving these dilemmas, by constructing them differently seems to be an identity practice that opens up for movement and entrepreneurial action. In one way, to fail in one logic means to win in the other logic. This was the case regarding the result from the children fair she arranged in Västerås. This was also recognized in the case when Sandhya sometimes need to sell cotton bags with a loss, but she still contributes to Indian workers. As well, some activities, as for instance the fair trade network meetings, take time that is at the expense of her possibilities to sell her fair trade products. Being an entrepreneur within this fair trade context Sandhya thus uses her time to contribute to both social change and her own living.

This paper shows that solving identity dilemmas, constructed by dead-lock positions in-between different entrepreneurship logics is an important aspect of creating an entrepreneur identity. This is especially the case in a multi-faceted entrepreneurial setting, as shown n this paper. Developing a business which tries to combine social change and commercial efforts raises a dilemma between an economic and a social entrepreneurship logic. Travelling in-between these logics create opportunities as well as dilemmas. When the dilemmas arise they appear as a no-win situation in which she both wins and loose, depending on the logic that the situation is interpreted from. Choosing one of the logics, in which the dilemma is reconstructed as an opportunity, seems to be a way to move on. Until another dilemma arise.

Hence, becoming an entrepreneur involves a process of negotiating one’s Self from the different expectations and making identity adjustments in relation to the different logics.
References


