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What kind of place is taking space? Studying intersections as production of place(s)

Abstract

This paper aims at contributing to the study of intersections by focusing on the simultaneous accomplishment of gender, ethnicity and able bodiness. While such enterprise in organization studies often draws on the concept of identity, I propose to bring the concepts of space and place into the discussion. Space is seen as “the sphere of a multiplicity of trajectories”. Hence, space does not exist prior to identities or entities and their relations, space is relationally constituted, space unfolds in interactions and is continuously being made. And space allows for thinking of coexisting heterogeneity, of a plurality of trajectories contemporaneously existing, the simultaneity of stories-so-far. Drawing on human geography, and in particular the work of Doreen Massey, and on a strong process perspective in organization studies, I thus focus on the production of specific places as important to organizing in the outdoors industry. The idea of place as the local, genuine, “real”, closed, coherent is also challenged by such a take on space. It thus becomes interesting studying how places are produced and reproduced, made coherent (or contested), in connections and disconnections, while organizing unfolds – and what kind of configurations of relations are thus achieved, configurations producing and reproducing gender, ethnicity and able bodiness.

Keywords

Space, place, intersectionality, entrepreneuring, ethnicity, gender, body ableness, simultaneity.
Introduction

The ‘turn to space’ in organization studies (cf Clegg & Kornberger, 2006; Kornberger & Clegg, 2004; S. Taylor & Spicer, 2007; Vásquez & Cooren, 2013; Yanow, 1998) has meant shedding new light on a number of phenomena, as for instance processes of diffusion and translation (Dobers & Strannegård, 2004) how collectivities are transported in/through space and time (Vásquez and Cooren, 2013) or meaning making in organisations (Yanow, 1998), to just mention some examples. The call for this conference, and in particular for this sub-theme, invites us to further such lines of inquiry. In particular, by focusing on the doings, on practices (Nicolini, 2012), on organizational becoming (Tsoukas and Chia, 2002), we can pose questions as ‘what is taking space?’ and abandon the idea of place as ‘already there’, as a bounded and neutral entity. In this paper I want to argue that when adopting such a position, we can increase our understanding of ‘powerful’ processes in which gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness are simultaneously enacted by studying the production of place(s). This is possible by starting in a process ontology in which space and place are also seen as relationally constituted. This paper aims therefore at contributing to the study of intersections (cf. Crenshaw, 1991, Eriksson-Zetterquist & Styhre, 2007) by focusing on the simultaneous accomplishment of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. While such enterprise in organization studies often draws on the concept of identity, I propose to bring the concepts of space and place into the discussion. The contribution is that the focus of investigation is moved from individuals to practices.

Drawing on human geography, and in particular the work of Doreen Massey (2005), and on a strong process perspective in organization studies (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Van De Ven, 2013), I thus treat space as “the sphere of a multiplicity of trajectories”. Hence, space does not exist prior to identities or entities and their relations, space is relationally constituted, space unfolds in interactions and is continuously being made. And space allows for thinking of coexisting heterogeneity, of a plurality of trajectories contemporaneously existing: the simultaneity of stories-so-far. Also place is a relational achievement. A place is a bounded (but contested and always under negotiation) space. The idea of place as the local, genuine, “real”, closed, coherent is thus also challenged by such a take on space. It therefore becomes interesting studying how places are produced and reproduced in the relationally-constituted space, made coherent (or contested), in connections and disconnections, while organizing unfolds – and what kind of configurations of relations are thus achieved, configurations producing and reproducing gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness.
Studying intersections in organization studies

Even if the relevance and importance of studying the doings of gender at work has been recognized in organization theory for decades now, the idea that there are more power-related ordering practices that play a role, and that such practices intersect with each other, is still relatively new (cf Eriksson-Zetterquist & Styhre, 2007; Geerts & van der Tuin, 2013). The idea of intersectionality was originally developed in order to highlight the importance of simultaneous categories of oppression that concur to constitute differences in power. (Crenshaw, 1991). Hence, an intersectional analysis considers gender, ethnicity, class, disability and other power-related categories as they jointly produce power effects because of how they intertwine and interact, while a “mono-dimensional” analysis as, for example, an analysis focusing exclusively on gender would silence other dimensions (Lykke, 2005, de los Reyes et al, 2003). In other words, an intersectional analysis does not consider each category separated from the others since there are always dynamic relations connecting them and different forms of oppression are experienced simultaneously (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Styhre, 2007; Geerts & van der Tuin, 2013).

One way of applying an intersectional perspective is to study how gender, ethnicity, sexuality, class, disability are jointly experienced or performed in everyday situations, which identity constructions or practices are involved. Undertaking such endeavor requires a reflective handling of the categories studied in order not to reproduce inequalities and silences, and different ways of treating these categories are present in the literature (McCall, 2009). Critically used, these categories offer analytical means for making the (re)production of norms and power differences visible.

What many scholars do is therefore to study single practices, and at times their intersections, by directly or indirectly referring to the concept of identity and treating gender, ethnicity and disability, for example, as facets related to people identity work, or as dimensions of individual and collective identities (cf Holvino, 2010). Taking a processual perspective, such dimensions are seen as embedded in other social relations, as for example sexuality, and as sites of heterogeneous subjects positions. The aim of intersectional analyses is to provide a non-additive conceptualization of multiple dimensions of identity – that is, instead of considering subjects as the sum of their atom-like aspects of identity, such aspects are conceived as jointly producing experiences of power difference (Geerts & van der Tuin, 2013). This is an attempt to produce more fluid, anti-essentialist and anti-universalist accounts. Although such approaches have contributed to foreground important dynamics and to voice different forms of oppression, they may also be criticized from a postmodern point of
view as they suppose that the “intersectional subject” is constrained by hegemonic discourses, but at the same time can see through them (producing in a way knowledge that is outside the discourse) – this argument fails if one follows Butler’s and Focault’s, among others, claim that subjects are produced by the discourses that are supposed to represent them (ibid). An alternative is to conceive subjects as assemblages of “dispersed but mutually implicated and messy networks” (Puar, 2007, p 211). The problem with intersectionality is that it talks of perpendicular axes of identification within which bodies may be positioned:

“completely neglect the topological dynamics and figure intersectionality in Euclidean geometrical terms as a mutually perpendicular set of axes of identification within which marked bodies can be positioned. […] The following set of misunderstandings seem axiomatic to this pathology, a belief that (1) gender, race, class, sexuality, et cetera, are separate characteristics of individual human beings (i.e., that the axes of identity are at right angles to one another – that the axes themselves are independent and do not intersect – and that they measure inherent characteristics of individuals); (2) it is not only important to pay attention to the ways in which there multiple identities intersect in certain specific marked bodies, as if gender only matters for women, race only matters for people of color, et cetera (i.e., that the dimensionality of the coordinate system is determined by the degree of multiplicity, which is equal to the number of categories that are thought to apply to a specific individual if and only if that individual is seen as marked by the category in question); and (3) that the situation of people “with multiple identities” ought to be understood in terms of the intersection of “their” gender, race, et cetera […]. (Barad, 2001, p 98-99).

Barad’s alternative is to conceive instead of identity formation “in terms of the topological dynamics of iterative intra-activity” and “as a (contingent and contested ongoing) material process through which different identity categories are formed and reformed through one another” (ibid, p 99).

One could thus conceive of agency as emerging in action, not preciding it, and therefore of social categories not as pre-existing structures, but rather thinking of structure as “phenomenal interference patterns that are always on the move” (Geerts & van der Tuin, 2013, p?), both enabling and constraining action. Here interference brings in the metaphor of waves that, when meeting, may result in patterns of intensification or of weakening. Certain patterns may thus result in the specification of inequality, others in the blurring of inequality.

Such a take is possible to combine with strands of research talking of gender, ethnicity and disability as enacted practices, not properties of the individual. This means considering gender as a social
practice (Poggio, 2006) through which identities are discursively (Martin, 2003) and materially (Suchman, 1985) negotiated and (re)confirmed. Gendering is situated, carried out in the virtual or real presence of others who are presumed to be oriented to its production (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Gendering may thus be conceptualized as performed in context, through the materiality of composite assemblages of technology, bodies, practices, and place (Butler, 1990; 1993; Gherardi & Poggio, 2001, Haraway, 1985/1991, Suchman, 1985). Ethnicity is often treated as the property of a group, an entity, to which interests and agency can be attributed (Brubaker, 2002). An alternative to this entitative conception is to consider ethnicity in processual, relational and dynamic terms (ibid, p 167). Hence, rather than taking ethnicity as pre-existing action, we can ask how and when ethnicity is mobilized, but also how and when ethnicity is re-enacted in certain practices, some of which organize space by including/excluding different constructions of ethnicity. Related to ethnicity we have nationhood or national identity, that has been defined as

> It is an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (Andersson, 1983, p 15).

This is an often quoted definition, but it does not say much about how it comes that constructions of communion emerge and are organized in time and space. National identity may be considered as produced in practice, enacted in everyday practices that assume a symbolic value (Ehn et al, 1993). Following Massey, national identity can be conceptualized as the production of a place, as for instance “Sweden”, through the co-evolution of related trajectories and processes of meaning negotiation around such development of configurations (Massey, 2005). Hence, ethnicity and national identity can be studied as practices, rather than identity markers, and there is always space for contestation and multiplicity of meanings.

The field of disability studies also offers the means for treating disability not as an individual condition, but rather, following the embodied approach, as produced “through the interaction of social and bodily processes” (Thanem, 2008, 588). Both disability and impairment are considered social constructions, but not all the “bodily problems and experiences that affect disabled people are socially constructed” (ibid, 588), rather the embodied experience of impairment is also foregrounded. The notion of disability and impairment are also problematized, “everyone is impaired, in varying degrees” (Thomas, 2004, p 574). Disability is thus “social and bodily problems suffered by people with physical and mental impairments” (Thanem, 2008, 588). At the same time, although disability is more than a social construction, there is the need for scrutinizing how able-bodiedness is largely a
“nonidentity” (McRuer, 2006, p. 1), or an identity that is supposed to exist and on which other (less) identities supposedly rest, but which is never possible to fully achieve. How is able-bodiedness produced and how do able-bodies become the “natural order of things” (ibid, 1), although they are never fully achievable?

Concluding, while there are perspectives on gender, ethnicity and disability that enable to focus on the practices in which they are enacted, rather than treating them as individual identity markers, dominant focus in intersectional studies is on identity dimensions meeting in particular individuals. What I want to argue in the rest of the paper is that, by using the concepts of space and place as proposed by Doreen Massey, we could add to those efforts of developing intersectionality in more processual and relational terms.

A processual take on space and place

This paper is grounded in a process perspective, which means taking the fluidity, interrelatedness and complexity of life and work into consideration (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Van De Ven, 2013). Inspired by process theorists and philosophers, we turn our attention from stable and discrete entities to fluid and ongoing processes (Hernes & Maitlis, 2010, Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). To be noted is that the idea of process may be understood in different ways. One common understanding is that a process is a sum of a number of finite stages that follow each other in a linear sequence. This is not what process means in a strong ontology of becoming. Rather, process is a more profound idea:

What is real for postmodern thinkers are not so much social states, or entities, but emergent relational interactions and patternings that are recursively intimated in the fluxing and transforming of our life-worlds. (Chia, 1995, p 582)

Space and place – following Doreen Massey

There are several ways of conceptualizing space (cf Clegg & Kornberger, 2006; Kornberger & Clegg, 2004; S. Taylor & Spicer, 2007; Vásquez & Cooren, 2013; Yanow, 1998). With a process ontology, space is to be understood as ‘processual and performative, open-ended and multiple, practiced and of the everyday’, thus making us aware of provisional spatio-temporal configurations always in process (Beyes & Steyaert, 2012, p. 47). This paper answers the call for bringing space back in by referring to the work of geographer Doreen Massey (2004, 2005; Vásquez & Cooren,
2013), who argues against views of space as stable and ‘already there’, suggesting instead that space be considered as always under construction and as the sphere in which trajectories co-exist. Hence, my reading of such a view is that space is not a specific material place, but rather a sphere, a dimension, such as time – ‘if time unfolds as change then space unfolds as interaction’ (Massey, 2005, p. 61) – and space and time should be seen as intertwined in space-time (Massey, 2004). Without taking space into consideration, we only see one trajectory, we are not able to take into account plurality and the interconnectedness of the world. Space is the dimension of the simultaneity and multiplicity of trajectories and it is constructed as trajectories develop in relation to one another. A trajectory, or a ‘story-so-far’, has thus a temporal character in that it emphasizes the process of change in a phenomenon, but also a spatial character as a trajectory always develops in relation to other trajectories (Massey, 2005, p. 12). A phenomenon may be a living entity, a physical formation, a norm, etc. Thinking space allows us to think of a plurality of stories-so-far, of their relations and of such relations creating conditions that influence but never fully determine future developments. Hence, interrelations not only happen in space, but rather space is the ‘product of interrelations’ and ‘constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny’ (ibid, p. 9), always in the process of being made.

The idea of place as space ‘originarily regionalised’ (ibid, p 6), often mobilized in different kinds of political struggles (nationalism, working-class resistance to globalization, aboriginal groups claims, and so on), is also problematized. Massey therefore challenges the idea of place as the local, genuine, ‘real’, closed, authentic, coherent (something that makes her position different from others considering “place” as stable and pre-existing the individual). Even places are relationally constructed and their ‘boundedness’ is socially produced (and always contested), their cultural distinctivity maintained through connections rather than disjunctions. Such a view therefore implies a rejection of non-problematised notions of collective identities, identities that are supposedly formed by the place, by ‘the roots’ (for instance, being Swedish). Rather than essentially (I am Swedish because I come from Sweden), place changes us through the practicing of place (I become in interactions in which Swedishness is performed), which implies an ongoing negotiation of intersecting trajectories (ibid, p 154). It thus becomes interesting studying how places are produced and reproduced, made coherent (or contested), in connections. Instead of a billiard-ball view of place, in which definite places come in contact with each other, the idea is that of place “meeting place, where ‘the difference’ of a place must be conceptualized more in the ineffable sense of the constant emergence of uniqueness out of (and within) the specific constellations of interrelations within which that place is set (‘the impossibility of a position which is not already a relation’ –
Kamuf, 1991, p. xv) and what is made of that constellation’ (Massey, 2005, p 68). Places may thus be thought of as spatio-temporal events (p 130), they are collections of stories-so-far – their specificity lies in the intersection of such stories, as well as in the non-meetings-up, the relations not established (ibid).

**Intersections and simultaneity – A spatial perspective**

Space is still a relatively unexplored concept within organization studies. While the temporal aspect has increasingly being brought to the fore, as the different takes on process in organization theory witness, the spatial dimension has not been explored to the same extent. Studies focusing gender, and more recently on ethnicity, may be considered an exception as they conceptualize the particular doings of gender as instances of the unfolding of power relations that position people in different ways. The spatial dimension is therefore crucial, although not necessarily explicitly acknowledged. Taking a processual approach, we can think of space as socially enacted in everyday practices and of the spatial dimension as the dimension enabling us to make sense of relational configurations (while the temporal dimension, simplifying, allows us making sense of before-after developments). The spatial dimension also gives us the possibility to consider a multiplicity of trajectories in the present, while the temporal dimension most often narrows our attention to one trajectory over time. This means that a spatial perspective enables us to think in terms of simultaneity and relationality. There are always a number of stories-so-far that meet, clash, merge, diverge, and so on, and the resulting configurations always in the making are important to observe and analyse. This should be particularly interesting for intersectional studies in organization theory. In gender-blind and ethnicity-blind studies, what we often find is a single story-so-far that is being privileged over the others, which are silenced or not even considered. Studies taking gender and ethnicity into consideration do bring more stories-so-far to the front and do analyze the relation between different stories-so-far to more or less extent. What I argue is worth developing further is the idea of simultaneity of heterogeneous stories-so-far proposed by Massey, in order to add to the problematization of the doings of gender, ethnicity and other power-related practices in organization by deepening the analysis of the co-existence and interdependence of different stories-so-far. The configuration of trajectories becomes crucial.

Such concepts could enhance intersectional analyses in which the focus is on the simultaneous doings of practices resulting in certain positionings. As previously discussed, while the idea of intersection seems to focus the analysis on certain subjects in which “the practices intersect”, a spatial perspective could center our attention on the social configurations enacted in practice
characterized by multiplicity and relationality, thus adding to current studies by bringing to the fore the simultaneous and related unfolding of different doings. The focus is thus not on the nodes (certain people) but on the connections (relational configurations) in the social world.

**Studying intersections and simultaneity in the production of place(s)**

One way of advancing such a perspective could be to use the concept of place, even in this case following Massey’s definition (Massey, 2005). While often place is taken for granted and conceptualized as static and closed, as site for authenticity and continuity (for example the national state or the local community), we could refer to her idea of place as constructed and its boundness as an ongoing social production, always necessarily contested. Moreover, the particularity of any place is not determined by drawing boundaries and presenting such a place in counterposition to other places, but is rather the result of the specificity of the configuration of links and interconnections to what is “beyond” such a place (Massey, 1994).

What I want to develop in this paper is the view that by studying the production of place(s), we can study the joint enactment of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. As above argued, paying attention to the spatial dimension means focusing on the configurations under production. By looking for the production of places we are moreover enabled to study attempts to closure, positioning, authenticity – power-related processes. The production of place may thus be an interesting way of studying power-related practices and the doings leading to certain configurations gaining stability as connections are being enacted and boundaries thus strengthened and/or challenged, making other configurations more peripheral. In particular, in this paper I focus on temporary spaces in which certain places are being enacted. To be sure, speaking with Massey, all spaces are temporary (there is no “container out there”), but what I focus on is events in which certain trajectories are brought together for a limited amount of time (although repeatedly), and therefore I use the label “temporary”. What I will look at is both what kind of practices make to possible to enact these spaces in this way, what kind of places are being performed in these spaces, and which practices are thus re-contructed.

In order to do that, subscribing to a processual view of organizing, I conceive of organization as ‘real-ised’ (made present) by anchoring the production of organizational presence (Cooren et al,

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1 “Anchoring” may not be a good metaphor if it suggests that the places are “already” there, since I
In such situated, but dispersed, achievements, ‘the organization’ is made present at the same time as ‘the organization’ and other places are produced and reproduced. How such productions take place has consequences for the simultaneous construction of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. [this argument will be developed]

**Method**

In this study I take an abductive approach, which means that the theoretical parts presented at the beginning of this short paper have emerged as relevant in an interplay between fieldwork and search for literature that made sense of the empirical observations. As previously stated, my approach is grounded in process ontology. The aim of coming close to the unfolding of the phenomenon by being present during instances of ‘constitution of organisation’ was what guided the planning of fieldwork. Closeness to interactions is crucial (Ashcraft et al., 2009). Therefore, I use observations as the central means for coming close to practice and for how organisations are made real as a ‘lived’ experience, in time and space, rather than a ‘reported’ experience, as in interviews (Alvesson, 1996; Samra-Fredericks, 2003).

This paper is part of a larger project in which I study the outdoors industry (clothing and equipment) in Sweden. The choice of this industry has been based on the theoretical aim of discussing how the production of organisational presence is intertwined with the construction of the intersection of ethnicity, gender, able-bodiedness – and problematizing processes in which norms are enacted, rather than studying, as often done, ‘minorities in organisations’. The outdoors industry provides an interesting ‘case’ to analyse as ‘doing outdoors’ is intertwined with a long history of production of national identities (the romantic view of nature in Sweden, for example, but also the later project of assuring a healthy population, (Emmelin, Fredman, Lisberg Jensen, & Sandell, 2010)) and of production of authenticity (being nature constructed as the ‘stable’, the ‘sublime’ for those people that need/afford it, leading outdoors to be an ethnically exclusive practice, (Drennig, 2013)).

Fieldwork has, so far, consisted of observations of meetings, events and workshops where people and objects from several companies meet. For instance, the European Outdoor Summit in 2013 (a conference with people from the industry), the annual meeting organized by Scandinavian Outdoor Group in 2014 (a conference with people from the industry but also occasion for meetings), the

view the places as ongoing relational achievements. On the other hand, the metaphor suggests the temporary “tangible” organizational presence in those places and the attempt at further intensification of that presence.
Nordic Outdoor in 2014 (a fair/event for consumers), ISPO 2013 (the largest trade fair for outdoor and sportswear in Europe, and one of the two largest in the world), Swedsport 2013 (a national trade fair), the Norrlandsgatan functional week in 2012 (an event along a street where several flagship stores are located – event for consumers but also occasion for a number of meetings between suppliers and outdoor brands/retailers) and ‘Chatting about training with Steve House’ (an event organised by an outdoor store, with a lecture given by a famous adventurer). During these occasions, I have also interviewed a number of actors from the industry, as well as participated to lunches and dinners. These events and interactions have been documented via pictures, sometimes videos, recording of interviews and accurate notes of speeches (as well as pictures of the slides being presented) and notes of informal interactions. I have also spent one week at Icebug, one Swedish company, doing observations and interviews. Finally, I have collected printed material, and in particular a large number of product catalogues (more magazines than catalogues in many cases), as well as downloaded webpages (including movies of the brands’ ‘friends’). Pictures are particularly significant in order to bring materiality to the fore in analyzing/presenting the material.

Event 1 - Norrlandsgatan functional week

The first event that I want to present is Norrlandsgatan functional week (picture 1).

Picture 1. Images from Norrlandsgatan functional week 2012
Norrlandsgatan functional winter week is an initiative that started in 2012 in Stockholm. The flyer marketing this event said: Norrlandsgatan Functional winter week – 15-18 November: “experience week” (upplevevecka in Swedish) with winter inspiration along Norrlandsgatan, with Haglöfs, Hestra, Houdini, Norrona and Salomon. Gatan is “street” in Swedish and Norrland is the North part of Sweden, which is just the proper location for a number of outdoors flagship stores that had recently opened along this street. Not all of them participate to this initiative, but all the organizers (with the exception of Salomon) are Swedish and Norwegian (Norrona), and they sell outdoors equipment and clothes. The event lasts four days and consists of a number of “clinics”, that is product presentations held by material producers (for instance Polartech) for retailers in the stores and a number of initiatives directed to potential consumers, as for example promotion of locations (Ramundberget), possibility to talk with alpine guides, presentations of expeditions (Ola Skinnarmo), possibility to try ice sculpting, and so on. There is also a party in the evening which I could not attend.

When I took part to this event, what stroke me was how many different people and objects were “brought together”. Speaking with Massey, there are a number of trajectories that converge into Norrlandsgatan for a couple of days. Let me give some examples of what trajectories I am talking about before interpreting what this results into.

Picture 1 shows some scenes from these days in which at least two trajectories meet. Starting with the one on the left upper part and going clockwise, we see one guy from Growercup (a newly started Danish company producing coffee-bags to brew fresh coffee when outdoors) promoting the product in the Haglöfs store; a couple of guys from the Ice Hotel (North of Sweden) dressed in Haglöfs clothes helping people working on ice sculptures; a “clinics” (presentation of properties of materials/products) being held by a Polartech (one of the most technical and used materials in outdoors clothes) salesperson at the Norrona store (two pictures) showing, among other things, their military products; two guys working for Blå Band (food company) that have further developed the dried food they worked on when employed by the Swedish army and promoting it in the Haglöfs store after Ola Skinnarmo, a famous Swedish adventurer (which they cooperate with) has just held a presentation (and behind them you see the poster for “expeditionsresor”, a travel organizer); one large poster showing a mountain landscape at the entrance of the Haglöfs store; Hendryx skis exposed in the Norrona store (the to companies have a “friendship”) and the poster advertising the clinic they will held in Serre Chevalier; one guide from Mountain Guide Travels talking extreme
tours in the Houdini store (also in this case they have a “friendship”); people from Ramundberget (a small village known for skiing possibilities and wild nature more in general) promoting their village in the Norrona store (a “friendship” in this case too); a slide from Polartech clinics showing all the magazines in which their products had been praised; a number of outdoors magazines in the Norrona store. These pictures capture just some moments of what was happening during the week, moments in which trajectories, in the form of humans and nonhumans, become intertwined. These are also communicative moments, in which humans and non humans produce meaning about companies, organizations and practices, thus doing “things” in the name of one organization and making it present.

Hence, speaking with Massey, the trajectories that are coming together are people (from companies/locations, stores and potential consumers) as well as a number of artifacts (products, magazines, clothes, ice cubes, power point presentations, and so on) and Norrlandsgatan itself. While the flagship stores are located in Norrlandsgatan and therefore the presence of companies as Haglöfs, Norrona, Houdini and so on is ongoingly enacted in this setting, during this week a different space is taking form, in which the presence of these companies along the presence of other organizations is enacted in a different way through the production of a specific kind of place. In this way the presence of the newly started company Growerscup is, for instance, produced by connecting the trajectory of people (sales representative) and objects (the coffee and the hot water) to other trajectories, primarily the Haglöfs store (that is inviting people to interact with the coffee in the name of Growerscup) and trajectories related to it (the pictures on the walls provide a landscape in which to place this coffee), as well as other trajectories touching the store during the week (the presence of Ola Skinnarmo links Growerscup to expeditions practices), but also other trajectories taking shape outside the store during the week, but related to the event (for example the alpine guide and talk about travelling to the mountains). Hence, we have trajectories meeting in the stores, and then we have Norrlandsgatan itself as a place being constructed by what is going on in the stores, outside them and between them, as the flyers frame this as “one” event and as people move between the stores. Through the enactment of this place, a number of companies and organizations are materializing their presence.

In picture 1 I presented some of the trajectories that produce Norrlandsgatan during this week. What I want to argue now is that the configurations created by these trajectories are made possible by the intersection of practices of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness related to outdoors practice. And that, in turn, these configurations re-produce gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. Hence, what I want to argue is that the production of organizational presence is no “neutral” process, but rather is
intertwined with the production of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness.

Outdoors practices may be argued to be the product of a specific way of constructing nature, in terms of search for the sublime in certain geographical areas (nature – the wild) as an antidote for urban life in order to return to an authentic self, although this requires advanced equipment, making this thus a commodified escape (Drenning, 2013). It has thus to do with the enactment of wilderness. Instead of taking nature for granted, we can see this as a specific way of constructing nature and wilderness and as a whiteness project, as long as the need for the uncontaminated as escape from modern life can be argued to have been a construction related to the construction of whiteness. For example the creation of natural parks can be seen as a manifestation of such a construction, thus actively making nature “clean” and “uncontaminated” for white people to enjoy as leisure activity, for those who can leave their behind. Still today, the imaginary produced when showing outdoors is dominated, if not exclusively composed by, white bodies. (Drenning, 2013) More specifically, close relation to genuine nature has been one of the construction on which Swedish national identity has been shaped. Hence, in Sweden (but also in other countries) the promotion of outdoor recreation was right from the start part of a project directed towards establishing national unity and common identity (Emmelin et al, 2010), also by mobilizing the Sami people symbolic repertoire (for example clothing, see Larsson, 2013): being truly Swedish is loving (Swedish) nature. Ethnicity is still a relevant category when it comes to who practices outdoors activities and how, and both norms and material constrains must be taken into consideration (Emmelin et al., 2010). Not only, but the construction of wilderness in terms of overwhelming sense of trascendence that started with the Enlightenment and continued in the Romanticism first, and the early conservation and following environmental protection movements (Drenning, 2013), is also a gendered construction. It is the male body that has been the subject that craved for and could experience such trascendence (Larsson, 2013). Female bodies were for long not allowed to participate in outdoors activities and contrained by particular types of clothing when they were. Hence, outdoors practices have been gendered practices. On the other hand, outdoors practices have also contributed to re-construct gender practices, as the evolution of outdoors clothing witness – the more place in outdoors activities women took, the less constraining (and more similar to men’s) clothes they could use, and the more their body could become visible in such public spaces (Larsson, 2013). This means that outdoors has been a masculine practice, but has also provided a practice for women to gain more freedom and to use and show their bodies in public, at the same time as this has happened within “outdoors masculinity” (clothes have become similar to the men’s, women have been allowed to participate into men’s activities, and so on). Finally, experiencing the sublime also means experiencing “delightful horror” and confronting one’s own
mortality, which results in a search for the physically challenging and dangerous, for bodily risk and exertion (Drenning, 2013), thus celebration full able-bodiedness. Also looking at how the practices are represented in different kinds of media, both by producers of clothes or equipment, and by practitioners (for example helmet-camera), it is possible to see how extreme, adrenaline-fueled situations are often emphasized, to the expense of more ”mundane” parts of the activities – thus reinforcing constructions of masculinity and ethnicity. Not only, but traditional imagery also highlights loneliness, one person ”against nature” (Drenning, 2013). The result is a celebration of able-bodiedness in terms of well trained bodies that can master ”natural” challenges. Concluding, outdoors practices constructed on the celebration of the “sublime” re-enact gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness in terms of producing spaces open to male-like (bodily and artifact-wise equipped as dominant constructions of masculinity) white un-impaired bodies that, together with artifacts, enact outdoors and nature in terms of wilderness – these practices produce exclusion.

Having claimed that outdoors is related to the joint practice of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness, I want to argue that these practices (together with others not analyzed in this paper) make it possible to bring together the mentioned trajectories during the Norrlandsgatan functional week, shaping a particular temporary space. It is due to this specific way in which gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness interfere in outdoors that certain bodies, objects and practices converge in Norrlandsgatan. Protagonists of this week are mostly well-trained, fully un-impaired, well-equipped, white, male bodies, as for example the adventurer, the alpine guide, the people on the posters on the walls and in the magazines on tables. The mannequins wearing clothes and the people in the pictures are all muscular and well-trained, with no apparent impairment. Certain practices are materialized through people, pictures, stories, doings. For instance, dangerous and mentally craving expeditions through Ola Skinnarmo, the lone adventurer, that is known for carrying out expeditions based on the track followed by “historical” explorers (“the heroes”), with the latest and most advanced equipment. He is present and holds a presentation about these expeditions. Or through the images to be found on the posters in the stores. At the Norrona store there is also a chamber where you can try equipment at different temperatures and in wind conditions. Also, the marketed dry food and coffee for hiking are to be enjoyed in places not available to bodies not able to, for example, seat on the ground or walk for hours. Certain places are enacted through people and artifacts. The North of Sweden is brought here by the practice of sculpting ice, as well as by the name of the street, Norrlandsgatan and by the pictures we find around in the stores.

The presence of military practice is also materialized through several trajectories. Such practice is
not a product of enacting nature as wilderness, but brings in trajectories that also create a space open to male-like (bodily and artifact-wise equipped as dominant constructions of masculinity) un-impaired bodies – this is one way of making sense of the presence of these trajectories. The US Army is one important user of and driver of innovation for Polartech, one of the most used materials in outdoors. The power point presentation held during one clinic brings this trajectory to Norrlandsgatan. Also dry food being promoted during the week is a product developed for the army, the Swedish one, to be used during their missions, and the guys presenting it are former soldiers – hence the guys preparing the soup and telling the story introduce another trajectory related to military practices.

But we also see trajectories contributing to alternative enactments. Houdini, one of the companies on the street, was started by women who wanted a comfortable and warm bra when practicing outdoors. This is still one of the products they sell, and it is well visible in their store – foregrounding breasts, one part of the body that is not usually focused on in the enactment of outdoors –, together with outdoors clothes for small children – foregrounding bodies that are usually not present in outdoors enacting wilderness. Well-trained female bodies are also visible in magazines and products catalogues (that often may resemble magazines), although not to the same extent as male bodies. Finally, the trajectory of the place Ramundberget is also brought here through the presence of a person and some artifacts, and through the partnership with the Norrona brand. Ramundberget is enacted as an outdoor place, a place for adventure, but also a family-friendly location, with the possibility of enjoying nature in company of children.

Hence, one could argue that the space taking place during this week is enabled by the interference of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness in outdoors practice and the kind of space that this practice thus enacts, but also stretches such outdoors space, introducing more trajectories that are locally relevant. Hence, the production of the temporary space in which Norrlandsgatan becomes a place during this week re-enacts gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness as a space open to white un-impaired bodies, mostly male-like bodies (bodily and artifact-wise equipped as dominant constructions of masculinity) enacting nature mostly in terms of wilderness, but also in terms of family-friendly practice (for instance due to kids clothes and a family-friendly location).

Summarizing, during a limited period of time, a number of trajectories meet in this location and become related to each other in new configurations. Some configurations are stronger, the ones being enacted in the same store, for example, and some looser, becoming related since they are going on at
the same time along Norrlandsgatan. In these convergence of trajectories, outdoors companies become presentified and materialized. What is of concern for this paper is that, in this process of presentification, Norrlandsgatan is produced as a specific place (although with possible multiple meanings) by the configurations being shaped. In such a process, the joint practice of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness is of interest for this article. Such a practice enables for a temporary space in which Norrlandsgatan is produced as a place where gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness interfere and are re-enacted in terms of a space open to white un-impaired bodies, mostly male-like bodies (bodily and artifact-wise equipped as dominant constructions of masculinity) enacting outdoors mostly in terms of wilderness, but also in terms of family-friendly practice (for instance due to kids clothes and a family-friendly location). This means that the presentification of the companies is not a “neutral” process, but rather, in this case, happens through enactments of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. This event also shows that looking at space and place, rather than individuals’ and their identities, allows for discussing practices related to power relations as they interfere with each other and which forms of inclusion/exclusion are thus produced.

Event 2 - Nordic Outdoor

At Nordic Outdoor the visitor get the chance to try a number of exciting activities, listen to inspiring seminars and se some of the world best adventure films. [press release, http://services.svenskamassan.se/massor/pressrelease-feed/pressreleases_rss.asp?ProjectId=061&Lang=SE&releaseid=995766886, retrieved Oct 2015, my translation]

Nordic Outdoor is the second event I am going to present and it was first arranged a few years ago and has grown in size with time. It takes place in the halls of the Swedish exhibition and congress center in Gothenburg. It brings together producers of and retailers for clothing and equipment for outdoors and action sports, organizations promoting outdoors, competitions, film-makers, and so on. The person in charge of the exhibition describes it as:

Nordic Outdoor meets the interest we see around an increasingly active outdoor life in both Sweden and the rest of the Nordic countries. But we want to create something new. An event where experience and interactivity are in focus and where visitors get both wet, sweaty and feel adrenaline pumping, says Angela Anyai, director of Nordic Outdoor [press release, http://services.svenskamassan.se/massor/pressrelease-feed/pressreleases_rss.asp?ProjectId=061&Lang=SE&releaseid=995766820, retrieved Oct 2015, my translation]
During the exhibition people can thus meet outdoors brands and also buy the products directly, they can try a number of activities, they can look at films, they can see competitions (to one running competition they can also participate) and listen to presentations (Ola Skinnarmo is for example present here too).

Picture 2 below summarize some moments before and during the exhibition.

*Picture 2. Nordic Outdoors 2014*

The first two photos show the exhibition center in Gotheburg from the outside. It is located in the center of the city, next to two skyscrapers hosting the conference facilities and a hotel. Hence, this is no ”outdoor place”, rather, the other photos show how this facility is enacted into outdoors during the days of the exhibition. The other two photos in the first row show a presentation held by Angela Anyai for representatives of the Scandinavian brands before the exhibition opens. The first one shows a slide with a poster presenting the “Nordic leading event for outdoors and action sports” and showing surfers running into the water with their boards under their arms (more action sport than
outdoors). The second one shows some pictures from the year before, with people climbing a trunk, participating to a bouldering competition and to a running competition, among others (rather traditional outdoors). What may also be noted is that Angela is not the person you usually find managing this kind of events: she is a woman, of colour and pregnant. Continuing, on the second row we see the event opening the exhibition, when a couple of persons balanced on a slack-line their way between two windows in the two skyscrapers, at some 60 meter height. Then, inside the exhibition, people trying slack-line, a poster for the event showing people hiking on the top of a mountain (thus referring even more to traditional outdoors), adults and children trying to climb (again traditional outdoors) and people sitting on stocks looking at a film being showed on a wall where deer skulls hang (also traditional outdoors). On the lowest row we have kayaks awaiting someone that wants to try them in the pool, the Icebug stand where you can try their shoes on wet rock (shoes that have particularly good traction properties according to the producer), but then we also have a hall for trying bike tricks and a parkour demostration, examples of what the industry calls the "new outdoor" not related to the traditional practices of hiking, climbing, and so on, but rather to urban practices in which outdoors is no longer synonimous with wilderness. Finally, we also have two more photos showing children, a baby that is being fed (note the fur on the chair, fur was also present on benches in the photo where people where looking at a film) and some children at the Isbjörn of Sweden stand, trying this brand clothes as they go through a "track" presenting a number of obstacles that require different actions, as for instance balancing and climbing.

This is another example of a temporary space, existing a couple of days a year (and then as inscription in different media that document it). Also in this space, outdoors company are presentified by people and artifacts doing things in their name. And also in this space, Nordic Outdoor becomes a specific place in which gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness are re-enacted. But in a different way than at Norrlandsgatan functional week.

The practice of outdoor enacted as wilderness producing a space open to male-like, white and unimpaired bodies enables certain trajectories to land to Gothenburg. Protagonists of these days are still mostly well-trained, fully un-impaired, well-equipped, white, male bodies, as for example the same adventurer as at Norrlandsgatan, the people balancing on slack-lines (at 60 meters outside or 20 centimeters inside the halls), the people on the posters and in the movies, the people competing. But we also have children as protagonists in a number of "stages", from the Isbjörn of Sweden track to the climbing wall – still white, apparently un-impaired and well-equipped, but no longer only young/middle-aged bodies. Finally, we also have bodies and practices that further expand this space,
as for example the pregnant woman of colour organizing it, the baby being fed during it or the elderly people walking around. These bodies are not foregrounded in the event but they are important presences.

We have also a number of practices taking place and the name of the event itself reveals that under the “outdoors” label, both “traditional outdoors” and “action sports” have gathered. Hence, the practices enacted are not only coming from enacting outdoors in terms of wilderness, but also from other meanings given to what the industry calls “the new outdoors”, including activities presenting a more urban character such as BMX-biking (?) and parkour. This event thus contributes to efforts to re-construct “outdoors” that is promoted by some of the actoros active in outdoors (either in the practice or in the industry around the practice). Some activities lies somewhere in between, as for example the use of slack-line, that is present both in “urban” settings as well as in “wild” ones, or climbing, which is a traditional outdoor practice, but here enacted on an “artificial” wall. Hence, the enactment of outdoors as wilderness brings here practices as climbing, walking on rocks or hiking – practices enacted during this event either by visitors trying them together with artifacts as climbing walls, shoes, carabines, tents, and so on, or by artifacts representing such practices, as for instance films, pictures, the products exposed and other artifacts as the deer skulls or furs. But the enactment of outdoors as a possibly urban activity too brings other practices to the event, as for example parkour competitions. Also the location of the event contributes to bringing a urban character, not the least because the event starts with the slack-line outside the exhibition, between two skyscrapers, that thus become trajectories related to the production of this place.

Making outdoors more than enacting wilderness thus opens up for other practices to participate to the production of this place. In particular, while enacting wilderness may be argued to be strongly connected with ethnicity in terms of whiteness, more urban practices are not necessarily related to such constructions of ethnicity. What is common to enacting wilderness and these more urban practices is the celebration of danger, adrenaline, exertion, which thus jointly produce gender and able-bodiedness in similar ways. Hence, the space in which the production of Nordic Outdoors as a place is shaped takes form in an interference of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness where ethnicity may play out in a different way when it comes to producing exclusion/inclusion. On the other hand, the observations I could make where still of white bodies being protagonists of the event, live during the days or through artifacts reproducing their actions. Also, given the focus on practicing and trying activities of this event, able-bodiedness with the right equipment is re-enacted in strong terms. From people going a slack-line at 60 meter height, to children going through obstacles with
high performing clothes. On the other hand, Sweden, and more generally Scandinavia, as a place is enacted through some artifacts (as for instance pictures and the name of the event), but is not so central as it is in the other two events analyzed in this paper.

Summarizing, during a limited period of time, also in this case a number of trajectories meet in a specific location, the congress and exhibition center, and become related to each other in new configurations. In these convergence of trajectories, outdoors companies become presentified and materialized, along with other organizations. In such a process of presentification, Nordic Outdoor is produced as a specific place (carrying possible multiple meanings) by the configurations taking form that re-enact gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness also in this case in terms of a space open to white un-impaired bodies, mostly male-like bodies (bodily and artifact-wise equipped as dominant constructions of masculinity) enacting outdoors both in terms of wilderness, of urban recreation and of family-friendly practice. Hence, also in this event, companies are presentified through the enactment of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness, although the practices involved were more diverse than in the previous event.

**Event 3 - Outdoor Academy of Sweden**


Finally, the last event is the outdoor academy of Sweden. Initiated by the Scandinavian Outdoor Group (gathering the most famous brands) under the name Outdoor Academy of Scandinavia and now organized, in Sweden, in cooperation with Visit Sweden (hence the new name), the academy
has gone from being directed to retailers to include press and tour operators too. Hence, not only promoting brands but locations too. The original idea was for retailers to spend 5 days in the wild in order to test the equipment, live an adventure and take part in clinics (presentations in which the manufacturer explains the properties of the equipment). I observed the preparation of one week when the academy was directed only to retailers. The aim was then to provide them with some challenging days (stories were recalled of people having had serious problems in keeping the pace during such training weeks) and to create a full wilderness experience, for instance by having dinners around the fireplace with storytelling in the most classical fashion. Now meetings with local companies are also included. These are two extracts from the program of one of the weeks they organize:

Join us in exploring this invigorating, magical natural world. Walk through hills and valleys with stunning views, listening to the silence and drinking pure, clean water straight from bubbling streams. Spend days learning new skills and discovering the deep sense of relaxation inspired by this incredible landscape, storing up memories for life. […]

Over these days you’ll find out more about Swedish outdoor culture, learn more about Sweden’s unique indigenous population, the Sami, stop off for photo opportunities, with tips on how to become a better outdoor photographer, and experience the fascinating art of cooking food out on the fells.


The academy “alumni” are also now called “outdoor ambassadors of Sweden” and there is a blog for sharing news (although most of the content is produced by a journalist). This event is directed towards people in the industry. Hence, while the first two events were directed even towards consumers, this event is more exclusively focused on the industry. And there is a very explicit effort to connect the companies artifacts to be promoted to Swedish wilderness and to a challenging, but positive, experience of such kind of outdoors. To this purpose, other artifacts and people are mobilized, together with the physical formations (see picture 3). So we have for instance the fireplace, the pure water, the bubbling streams, the Sami people. And sociomaterial practices as hiking, photographing, climbing and, in winter, skiing, among others, are enacted.

This is another example of a temporary space, existing for a short time (and after that through the ambassadors). Also in this space, outdoors company are presentified by people and artifacts doing things in their name, and the Outdoor Academy of Sweden becomes a specific place in which gender, ethnicity and able bodiness are re-enacted. Compared to the previous examples, in this case
the production of Sweden is particularly intense, and achieved through the enactment of able-bodiedness that allows for enacting Swedish wilderness in this way. But also people and artifacts are mobilized in this effort, as for instance the Sami people and their artifacts – their trajectories also enact Sweden.

The practice of outdoor is strongly enacted in terms of wilderness producing, again, a space open to male-like, white and unimpaired bodies that enables certain trajectories to construct the Academy in this way. Typical Swedish landscapes, exerting activities performed thanks to the “right” equipment, challenging tracks, cooking outdoors, tents and fireplaces, and so on, are brought together to enact the Academy. Protagonists of these days are well-trained, fully un-impaired, well-equipped, white, mostly male bodies. In particular, while the other events were open to everyone that wanted to participate, this event requires specific physical capabilities and, according to the people organizing it, there have been problems in the past of people either not having the premises for “hanging on” or people “trying to hard” as for instance one man apparently provoked by the fact that the guide was a woman.

Concluding, we witness a third event during which certain trajectories come together in specific ways, making outdoors companies present as people enact wilderness in their name and together with their products. Such a process is made possible by, among others, the joint practice of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness, which in turn is re-enacted with a particular focus on producing Sweden as a place interfering with the production of able-bodiedness. Hence, once again, the space that is taking place is not a neutral one and it is a space related to strongly enacting outdoors in terms of wilderness.

Discussion
Intersectional analyses often focuses on single individuals and their identity constructions and experience of power relations. While such contributions add important knowledge as they expose the experience of being subjected to different kind of power relations, it also means that what becomes problematized are “marginal” positions. Hence, for instance, we have entrepreneurship research focusing on studying immigrant women who start and own their businesses. That is, intersections are often problematized when they are about ”minorities” or the “victims” of current power relations. Also in studies of organizing processes, it is often highlighted the experience of those being oppressed through unequal power relations, power relations conceptualized as axes of oppression that “meet” in the individual and that are therefore problematic for the individual. The aim of this
paper is to add another perspective building on more relational and processual understandings (i.e. Barad, 2002), by looking at the interference of practices, not at individuals. And thus by problematizing constructions of gender, ethnicity and able bodiness when they produce ”the norm” rather than ”the minority”.

To this aim I mobilize the concepts of space and place following Massey’s conceptualization and analyze the production of certain temporary spaces in the outdoor industry in which the presence of certain organizations is being materialized as a certain kind of place is being enacted. Temporary spaces coming into existence as a number of trajectories converge in a certain location for a limited amount of time (although this may happen repeatedly).

In these temporary spaces we witness the enactment of places that are made possible by and reproduce certain interferences of practices of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. It is the configurations of the trajectories under development that enacts such practices. Thus it is not one single trajectory that is important, but rather how different trajectories relate to each other.

Outdoors practices constructed on the celebration of the “sublime” enact gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness in terms of producing spaces open to male-like (bodily and artifact-wise equipped as dominant constructions of masculinity) white un-impaired bodies that, together with artifacts, enact nature in terms of wilderness – these practices produce exclusion. Outdoors practice enacting wilderness, and the connected interference of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness, thus is one of the dynamics that bring the specific trajectories analyzed together in the temporary spaces that are taking form in the presented events. But, as we have seen, there are also alternative ways of enacting outdoors, as family-friendly practice or as action-based urban practice, which means that some of the analyzed events also include more trajectories than the “traditional” ones. Hence, the spaces produced present different nuances of “outdoors”, are made in partly different kinds of configurations and, consequently, also re-enact different nuances of the interference of gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness. What is common is that the space produced is open for white un-impaired and well-equipped bodies, mostly male-like, enacting outdoors in terms of wilderness or wilderness combined with other practices. This is therefore a powerfull space, which marginalize certain trajectories, although in somewhat different ways in the three examples.

The presentification of outdoors companies happens, among others, in these spaces. It is thus no “neutral” process, rather, my analysis shows that gender, ethnicity and able-bodiedness are relevant
in these processes, not only when “minorities” are doing business. The concepts of place as a collection of trajectories always under development and of space as produced by related trajectories enables to take into consideration how several doing are related and co-evolving, as well as focus our attention on sociomaterial character of such doings (as trajectories are material too). They enable to look for configurations and their effects, rather than focusing on individual experiences.

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