Living in Beta

An Ethical Discussion of an Entrepreneurial Subjectification

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Thanks to my wife and my two children for their patience and understanding

Thanks to my parents for coming to Copenhagen and babysitting in times of need

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis discusses entrepreneurship from an ethical perspective. Organizational management has been a leading perspective on entrepreneurship and innovative practices. Management is however based on control, a practice of organizing, structuring and limiting space. It can be described as a reactive force. Entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is a creative practice of openings, of going beyond boundaries and creating lines of flight. It can be described as an active force. There is a need for different perspectives on entrepreneurship, which complement its active forces, rather than cutting them off. In this respect this thesis proposes an ethical approach founded on a post-modern philosophic thought.

An ethical discussion is developed from a phrase, coined at the Copenhagen Innovation Symposium (CIS): learn to live in beta. The phrase represents an entrepreneurial subjectification, i.e. a constant becoming and a refrain in a chaotic world of chance and change, active and reactive forces. The thesis sets out do describe living in beta based on the philosophical perspective and selected presentations and discussions from the Copenhagen Innovation Symposium, especially design-driven innovation and experience economy.

The conclusions made, are that the ethical substance of living in beta, is willing and embracing change. Its mode of subjectification is through problematizations and resistance. Solutions and meanings become reasons for new problems, for deterritorialization and creation of new meanings. Its approach or ethical work is an artful becoming of playfulness and affirmation. Living in beta is therefore, to unburden one of her own opinions, “to release oneself from one self”, can be described as an objective of its problematizations and playfulness, which ultimately can be described as an affective or disruptive experience, an in-between event that dismantles life.

Living in beta offers an alternative to managerial thought of entrepreneurship. Of freedom to create and openness, rather than control and limitations. Of ethical work, rather than moral values. It suggests a change in organizational structure and the boundaries between the roles of managers and employees.
1. Introduction

The lesson we are learning [...] is: LEARN TO LIVE IN BETA! There is no finished product. We change constantly, our market changes constantly. It allows us to believe in the freedom of innovation society – living in beta.\(^1\)

Who are we? The question transcends almost every system of thought in religion, philosophy, psychology, even in astrology and biology. The answers vary, depending on the perspective, time and place. More interesting than any specific answer is the influence they have on who we become, i.e. how they, rather than giving us certainty about who we are, come to form us. Some of the answers have become a part of our collective experience with enormous consequences. In the circular interplay between defining who we are and who we becoming, a power struggle takes place, to gain the power to translate being into becoming. Religion represents the most explicit example of this struggle, e.g. Judaism becoming Christianity becoming Islam. Each has multiple sub-branches interpreting the holy word, giving them control of its subjects.

We can ask ourselves if management is a profession of interpretation in a similar sense, i.e. it has gained legitimacy to manage our time on the basis of a certain human understanding or moral ideas of who we are? Management is the profession of organizing and structuring the actions of others.\(^2\) Its moralizing effects are capsulated in the role of the employee. The manager is equipped with the ‘tools’ to get people to fit into these roles: conforming and normalizing who we become.

Innovation and entrepreneurship have become a main interest of organizational management in recent years. It relates to and is a response to a transformation with multiple origins and effects, e.g. economical, technological, cultural and environmental. The transformations have been given different names, like globalization, post-industrialization, information or knowledge society and so on. What is common in the descriptions of these terms is that, not only is it a transformation towards a new order, but a transformation that entails a new duration of change: the speed and complexity of change increases.

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1. (Andy Wilson, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 45, emphasis added)
2. (Weiskopf, 2007, p. 150)
For organizations to adapt and lead change in these ‘worlds’, they need to be innovative. They need entrepreneurs. But how are we to define and managerially organize the role of an entrepreneur who can be described as one who is “driven by passion, not by reason or interest, always working on the boundary or the margin”\(^3\) and who is to come up with new ways of doing things, or doing unexpected things, rather than learning things already invented?

My proposal and the point of origin in this thesis, is that entrepreneurship is not another managerial or rigid role. The entrepreneur shifts the focus from what is: “who am I?” or takes on a role, and asks: “what can be accomplished?”, “who can I become?” The shift may sound innocent, even trivial, but it is an opening beyond the organization and management. To limit entrepreneurship with the two things, or discourse formed solely by them, would be to cut off forces of passion and creativity. With this it is not being said that they should not be allowed access to an entrepreneurial discourse, rather that the discourse needs to be open to different voices (e.g. art, humanities, philosophy) – a cross-fertilization.

The voice of the thesis is ethical. It is ethical for the very reasons implied above. If entrepreneurship is about going beyond that which is: structures, roles, homogeneity, and is better described by creativity, passions, heterogeneity, it implies an ontology of freedom, which is exactly Foucault’s understanding of ethical thought: “Freedom is the ontological condition of ethics. But ethics is the considered form that freedom takes”.\(^4\) This is to say that ethics is the practice of freedom, of giving form or style to life. And what is innovation and entrepreneurship if not this? Take a look at mobile phones and PCs and how they have radically changed the lifestyle of billions. Herein lays the potentiality of entrepreneurship of inventing new practices of living.

Ethics may not be confused with moral. Ethics signifies the power and freedom to create beyond the transcending laws of morality. Moral, on the other hand, limits freedom with predefined values of right and wrong, possible and impossible. This differentiation between ethics and moral is central in post-modern philosophy (e.g. Nietzsche, Foucault, Deleuze) and reflects the distinction made earlier between being and becoming. Ethics as creative work, always becoming something else, is what I call subjectification, with a reference to the French post-modern

\(^3\) (Hjorth, Johannisson, & Steyaert, Entrepreneurship as Discourse and Life Style, 2003, p. 98)
\(^4\) (Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, p. 284)
philosopher Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze rejects the existence of a subject: “[t]here’s no subject, but a production of subjectivity: subjectivity has to be produced”. He would describe man through becomings, never a fixed being, but a relatively stable moment in the flux of becoming.

We revisit the relationship between management, entrepreneurship and ethical subjectification in the third chapter.

What sparked the idea of an ethical and philosophical perspective on entrepreneurship was a symposium on entrepreneurship, attended by the author. The symposium (the Copenhagen Innovation Symposium (CIS)) took place in November 2008. It was not the average conference on organizational innovation. A stated anchoring was the conference’s multi-disciplinary nature, bringing together, on the one hand, a selection of academics with extensive experience whose research was within or related to the field of entrepreneurship and innovation. The academics were both European and American, which already implies different approaches to entrepreneurship. On the other hand, there were ‘hand-picked’ individuals from Danish business life, all representing interesting cases of innovative practice. An extensive knowledge of entrepreneurship was gathered during these two days in Copenhagen.

Close to the end of the conference, the words at the beginning of this introduction, about learning to live in beta, were spoken. The phrase, expressed at the end of a presentation, created intensity, in the way that it spoke in different ways to attendees. It became a central point of the discussions following the presentation, forming a space for a variety of heterogenic reflections on innovation and entrepreneurship.

There is no necessity in relating the phrase to an ethical discourse of entrepreneurship. It might even be understood as the name of a new managerial tool. However, as explained in chapter three and four, what led up to the utterance of the phrase and the subsequent connections made during the discussions, pointed towards an approach to entrepreneurial living. Something we might call, to become entrepreneurial, never final.

What makes the symposium interesting here is that those contributing to an understanding of a life in beta had previously spoken about innovation from other perspectives (e.g. design,

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5 Deleuze’s philosophy will be discussed further at a later stage.
6 (Deleuze G., Negotiations, 1995, p. 113)
7 It is worth noting that Deleuze is interpreting Foucault in this way, but as I will come to mention later that Deleuze’s interpretation of other philosophers was often more related to his own philosophy.
8 A more detailed description of the CIS conference is given in chapter two.
experience economy and globalization). Hence, also in this way, living in beta created an intensity, which can be described as a moment of disorientation, sparking a second-look at what had previously been discussed, but now in relation to living in beta. Chapters five and six address this, taking a second look at presentations and discussions with an emphasis on design and experience economy.

The problematization framing the thesis in its most fundamental form is the following:

**What is living in beta and how can it be described?**

1.1. **Purpose**

It is a purpose of the thesis to be an ethical voice in an entrepreneurial discourse, speaking from the premises of the CIS and describing a potential entrepreneurial way living. It is not to describe the desirable characteristics of an entrepreneur to use in a managerial search for an entrepreneur, or “entreployee” as it has been called.\(^9\) It is not meant to rationalize innovation and entrepreneurship for the purpose of creating a managerial process or a tool.

This is not to say that the discussion does not concern organizations and management. On the contrary, the purpose is to show the relevance of an ethical thought in an organizational and entrepreneurial context. It is, the aim is to present thoughts and ideas that today are not usually related to economy and organizational management in general, and imply a different approach, more in line with present (and possibly future) economic changes (e.g. globalization, increased speed, complexity). An ethical perspective, founded on a post-modern tradition briefly described, has the potential to redirect organizational thought towards openness, rather than structuring and narrowing down. The thesis is relevant for individuals and organizations that are focused on innovation and entrepreneurship and are interested in an alternative approach and ideas for working with entrepreneurship and radical innovations, both on an individual level and making a “space” for innovation.

1.2. **Structure**

The following is a brief summary of the chapters that make up this thesis, addressing only their content and relation to the topic.

\(^9\) (Weiskopf, 2007, p. 129)
Chapter two develops a perspective on the thesis, describing a philosophical angle, empirical data, and analytical approach. Finally, there is an overview of some of the most influential philosophical concepts used in the analysis, with an emphasis on the concepts of Gilles Deleuze.

The following chapters discuss and analyze the symposium. They follow selected topics presented and discussed at the symposium. Appendix 1 contains the whole program of the conference, but in addition to a chapter description is an overview of, which presentations and moderated discussions from the symposium are primarily represented in each chapter. Other discussions may be quoted, but then to a much smaller extent.

The third chapter sets the stage by forming an understanding of the post-industrial economy described for the present era and the increased importance of entrepreneurship and innovation. The post-industrial is portrayed here in the context of a comparison between the industrial and the post-industrial, pointing towards a need for a different approach to entrepreneurship.


The forth chapter analysis the phrase learn to live in beta, describing its relationship with ethical thought and relevance to post-industrial economy. The phrase was never defined at the symposium, but sparked an interesting discussion at the time, which we will try to make sense of.


Chapters five and six, move to the front of the symposium, selecting presentations and discussions surrounding design and experience economy, respectively, to exemplify and add to a description of living in beta.

(Chapter five) Primary presentation: Plenary Key Note: Design-driven Innovation by Roberto Verganti (Politecnico di Milano). Primary discussions: Moderator: Robert Austin (CBS). Panel
members: Søren Overgaard (e-Types), Dorte Krogh (Krogh&Co.) and Roberto Verganti (Politecnico di Milano).

(Chapter six) Primary presentations: The Experience Economy: - The case of Volkswagen Luxury Car Project by Daniel Hjorth (CBS) and the case of Alessi by Roberto Verganti (Politecnico di Milano). Primary discussions: Moderator: Alf Rehn (KTH Stockholm). Panel Members: Daniel Hjorth (CBS), Rasmus Bech Hansen (Kontrapunkt) and Svante Lindeburg (e-Types).

Chapter seven summarizes previous discussions by describing living in beta in a Foucaultian framework: the ethical fourfold. Followed by a final chapter that discusses some possible implications of the conclusions made in chapter seven.

2. Methodology, Analytical Strategy and Philosophical Theory
The Copenhagen Innovation Symposium research case is based on qualitative empirical material, generated by recording the audio at the conference. Working with empirical data the question becomes how to approach the data. From which perspective do we interpret the data? A cardinal point in the validation of a local and qualitative approach is to develop a perspective and a way of writing, where the reader can see what the researcher has seen. This is a constant process of a thesis, but the following chapter describing a methodology, an analytical strategy and theory is specifically written to help the reader understand what it is that guides the author in dealing with the conference in relation to stated problematizations.

We start by taking a closer look at the philosophical perspectives that guide the analysis, moving on to the empirical data, before a description of the analysis. Finally, I describe the philosophers that contribute to the thesis, or more accurately, I describe some of the concepts they have developed, which are important for the analysis and the understanding presented in the thesis of the conference.

10 A perspective is even produced (consciously or unconsciously) in the interpretation of quantitative research.  
11 (Kvale, 2001, p. 204)
2.1. Philosophical Perspectives

The approach of the thesis is under the influence of a combination of two philosophical perspectives: post-modern philosophy and hermeneutics. Post-modern thought providing it with an ontological and epistemological understanding and hermeneutics with a reflective analytical approach. They are described briefly and the reasons for choosing them.

2.1.1. Post-Modern Philosophy: Epistemology and Ontology

Post-modern thought is often used to describe a broad and, in many respects, heterogeneous movement of 20th-century thinkers, especially French.\(^\text{12}\)

Episteme is true, reliable and objective knowledge in Aristotle’s writings. Epistemology is therefore a ‘search’ for true knowledge through logical thought. Ontology on the other hand looks to discover true being, existence or reality in general. There is no one, specific ontology, but multiple theories regarding the nature of being.

Post-modern thought creates a break in epistemology and the history of ontology. There is no basis for true or final knowledge in the world, neither is there a definitive or objective reality to be discovered. Post-modernity is a delegitimisation of universal systems of thought, presented as bearers of truth. Instead reality becomes a construction\(^\text{13}\), breaking down the boundaries between objective and subjective reality. Steiner Kvale (1994) describes it as a hyper-reality,\(^\text{14}\) as signs referring to signs. Similarly, Deleuze, a renowned post-modern philosopher, writes: “every sign refers to another sign, and only to another sign, ad infinitum”.\(^\text{15}\) Language is therefore not a representation of reality, but presents and constructs a reality. A reality that is a social construction like language itself.

Some post-modern philosophers negate the ontological tradition,\(^\text{16}\) but we also find an ontological shift in post-modern thought, i.e. from being to becoming that can be traced to Nietzsche. For Deleuze the fictiveness of the world did not mean the death of ontology, but the need for ontology to embrace creativity and difference, rather than discovery and identity.

\(^\text{12}\) (Kvale, 2001, p. 51)
\(^\text{13}\) It is often referred to post-modern philosophers as constructionists.
\(^\text{14}\) ‘Hyper-reality’ is a translation of the Danish word ‘hypervirkelighed’.
\(^\text{15}\) (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 124)
\(^\text{16}\) Todd May writes of Foucault and Derrida: “Both reject a certain traditional philosophical project that falls under the rubric of ontology” (May, 2005, p. 13).
To gain an understanding of and create knowledge in a constructed reality a perspective needs to be developed. The perspective-dependent knowledge created in the thesis has to be measured against something other than being a universal discovery.

With its epistemological and ontological views post-modernity provides an opening into research or knowledge production that is local and qualitative, as opposed to a quantitative research producing statistical data, which is often taken to be more scientific. Quantitative research emphasizes universals, making wholes prior to parts in both logic and in terms of being, which is the way William James (1842-1910) described rationalism. It is the same rationalism that Alexander Styhre (2006) identifies in managerial and organizational literature, reflected in the view that innovation and creativity are extraordinary events. This should not come as a surprise, because if quantitative research is representative for rational thought it implies an ontological view on a reality that can be captured in mathematical system.

A post-modern approach, being local and qualitative, is under the influence of empiricism, which “lays the explanatory stress on the part, the element, the individual, and treats the whole as a collection [...]”\(^1\). The thesis is therefore an examination of parts, or more accurately relations between parts, drawing from Deleuze’s concept of multiplicities, which designate a set of lines or dimensions which are irreducible to one another. [...] In a multiplicity what counts are not the terms or the elements, but what there is ‘between’, the between, a set of relations which are not separable from each other.\(^2\)

Under this influence the thesis becomes a development and examination of relations that constitute entrepreneurial subjectification. Additionally and as mentioned, the knowledge produced is not universal. Instead the question of knowledge, its validation, becomes a question of practice and relevance to an entrepreneurial discourse: “Bringing together a number of resources into a functional multiplicity is the best the practising scientist can hope for”.\(^3\)

The reasons for choosing a post-modern approach might already be clear to the reader. Post-modern philosophy allows us to look at an event like the symposium as a source of

\(^{1}\) (James, 1912, pp. 41-42)
\(^{2}\) (Deleuze & Parnet, Dialogues II, 2002, pp. vii-viii)
\(^{3}\) (Styhre, 2006, p. 147, emphasis added)
knowledge, i.e. a construction of signs referring to other signs. A phrase like living in beta obviously does not tell us all about the symposium and living in beta was never defined in any final way. With the help of a perspective, we can still produce knowledge, as it is nothing but a construction, as we have discussed. The problem here can be that the connections are without any qualifications, so analyses can become anything and consequently, nothing. For this reason, among others, the thesis uses a hermeneutic approach to the text.

2.1.2. Hermeneutics
Hermeneutics is a study of interpretation and meaning-creation from texts. In addition to a postmodern ontological and epistemological perspective the analysis of the data is under the influence of hermeneutic philosophy, primarily under the influence of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002). Gadamer speaks of fusions of horizons when an interpreter meets a text. The horizon of the interpreter is all his experience, opinions and thoughts at a given time. They meet the horizon of the text and there is a merger. This relates directly to the so-called hermeneutic-circle, which is the circular movement of understanding an individual part of a text with a reference to the text as a whole and vice versa. There is therefore a constant merger of horizons, and the process can in theory continue eternally, but in practice it stops when the understanding becomes reasonable and without contradictions. We could also think of a spiral where the challenge is to enter in the right way, by having an overview before entering.

A reason for choosing a hermeneutic perspective is that hermeneutics, we are dealing with a text, which is the transcription from the symposium. A part of that text is represented by, living in beta, so to understand this part, it is put in the context of a whole.

On the other hand, the disadvantage can be, that the transcription (and the recordings) is not a finalized whole, like for example a novel with a defined structure, a beginning and an ending. The transcription represents fragmented discussions and heterogenic presentations, also lacking the things that were not spoken, like movements, implicit references and the PowerPoint slides used.

2.2. Empirical Data: Copenhagen Innovation Symposium
The Copenhagen Innovation Symposium (CIS), 10th – 11th of November 2008, was a sister symposium to the Seattle Innovation Symposium (SIS), an initiative that started in 2006. According

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20 (Kvale, 2001, p. 53)
to Richard Nolan, one of the two professors spearheading the project, SIS was supposed to gather serious academic and business researchers, based on the belief that sustainable innovation needed to be tackled in a multi-disciplinary way, i.e. by bringing together people with different backgrounds and perspectives. The first conference was initiated to start a network of people that could be sustained over time. CIS can be seen as a verification of the success of this objective.

The conference, hosted by Copenhagen Business School, was a gathering of approximately 45 people, attending by invitation.²¹ Most of the presenters were academics or had strong connections to the academic community. Panel participants and other attendees were a mixture of academics and business people. The academics had various backgrounds and/or research focuses from within philosophy, art, architecture, IT and so on. The business people were primarily from companies in design, brand consultancies and manufacturing. Of all the attendees, the vast majority lived and worked in Europe, but with a few important exceptions of academics coming from the US.

This rough overview of attendees is to provide the reader with a basic idea of the background and mood at the symposium. The academic/business hybrid effect was also reflected in the settings. The first day was hosted on the premises of Carlsberg, the Danish beer producer, and the second in Copenhagen Business School. In a symposium setting, the discussions benefited from the liberty to flow rather freely, without constant concern or questioning of direct relevance to business, though such relevance was of course a foundation of the discussions.

If we can talk of an approach for the symposium in general, it was a qualitative approach. Discussions and conclusions were usually based on cases rather than quantitative data. For this purpose, a variety of independent cases and examples were presented.

### 2.2.1. Individual Sources

As we saw in the structure of the thesis, there are a few individuals that are fundamental empirical sources. These are the following three:²²

**Andy Wilson**: Co-founder/owner of the international innovation bureau, Hybrid State AB. The company is supporting bottom-up communication and open innovation through

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²¹ The number of attendees is according to a list of participants handed out at the beginning of the symposium.
²² The descriptions of the three are based on a handout, containing descriptions of participants.
implementation of design, tools and processes. At the symposium, Andy was a presenter of “Innovation Tools for an Innovation Society” and panel member in following discussions.

**Daniel Hjorth:** Professor of entrepreneurship and innovation management at CBS, where he teaches entrepreneurship, organisational entrepreneurship and innovation. He is an editor for a series of four books that represent a so-called new movement in entrepreneurship studies. His work is also published in a number of journals. Daniel had two presentations at the Symposium: “Innovation in a post industrial economy” and “The case of Volkswagen” in the context of experience economy, in addition to being a panel member in the following discussion.

**Roberto Verganti:** Has been investigating the management of product innovation for more than 20 years, focusing on design-driven innovation and collaborative innovation. At the symposium he was a keynote speaker on the subject of design-driven innovation and a panel member shortly after. Later he presented “The case of Alessi” in the context of experience economy.

### 2.2.2. Transcription

The conference recordings were a few minutes shy of nine hours, and the transcript fills approx 60 pages. The recordings were transcribed in considerable detail, but influenced by the context of the thesis, the fact that the recordings were on a digital format (mp3) and the quality of the recordings. Additionally, audio and transcription excludes presentations and discussions after lunch on the second day. They were a part of an anniversary celebration for one of CBS’s professors and not relevant in the context of the thesis.

In the thesis there are differences in emphasis on presentations and discussions, which are somewhat reflected in the transcript. In some cases a decision was made to make bullet-points or summarized notes rather than a word-by-word documentation. Practical announcements and so on were not transcribed.

The digital format makes the audio files very accessible, and it is easy to revisit specific utterances and listen to repeatedly, if needed. Therefore, during transcription the name of the file and timing (min. and sec.) of utterances is registered at various intervals. This has at least three important advantages. First, the few parts that were left out during the main transcription process could be revisited at a later stage. It is safe to say that every one of these has been revisited at a later stage. 

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23 Approx. 75 normal pages (2275 letters per page)
later stage in the writing process and reevaluated. Second, before quoting an utterance directly in the thesis it would be listened to again to make sure the quote was as accurate as possible. Finally, the audio files can better preserve the atmosphere at the symposium than a transcript can, e.g. enthusiasm, irritation or acceptance with which people pronounce their words.

Though the recorder used was of high quality, the quality of the recordings varies. There are lot of variables that can affect the quality in these circumstances: the distance between a voice and recorder could be between one and five meters; people speaking too quietly; people speaking with strong accents that sometimes made it hard to understand specific words; background noises and conversations produced by other attendees and so on.

The transcription is in one document that will be referred to as “CIS Transcription”, following a year and a page number. Usually there will not be a name in the reference, as the first name of the person will be made obvious in discussion. It is primarily the names of the three presenters: Andy, Daniel and Roberto. Others are also mentioned by name, but also as attendees, as it is not always clear who speaks.

2.3. Methodology

After being invited to attend the CIS, due to my interest in writing a thesis on innovation and entrepreneurship, I attended the symposium, armed with a high-quality digital recorder. My excitement for the conference as such is reflected in previous descriptions of it, i.e. its heterogenic approach to entrepreneurship. Before attending, I had not decided on any specific topic or perspective. After seeing the agenda and how it also reflected heterogeneity, I decided to approach it with as open a mind as possible, listening to and recording everything that went on. My openness did however have a philosophical context, due to the fact that my thesis was to be a finalization of a study that merges business and philosophy.

This approach of collecting potential qualitative data before having a defined perspective, does not comply with some qualitative “best-practices”, as they are for example described by Kvale (2001, pp. 176-7) in relation to interview research.

We are not dealing with interviews. We are dealing with an event in a defined time and space. The researcher did not take part in discussions or try to influence them in any way. The opportunities for doing so in any considerable way, as one of the attendees, would be limited,

24 I choose to use the first name since it was the manner of speaking at the symposium.
compared to a researcher taking interviews. Presenters would go on making their predetermined point and discussions were organic and could take any shape and form, beyond anyone’s control, e.g. someone would feel the urge to express an opinion without any relation to the discussion taking place, there would be misunderstandings, slips and dead-ends. These were usually inspiring and of interest.

There is of course the possibility of following up on things after the conference, interviewing specific persons, but then we are moving beyond the boundaries of the symposium event, and ultimately creating new events to interpret. \(^{25}\)

I stay within the boundaries of the symposium (in all general terms) to investigate its potentials,\(^{26}\) which a rigid \textit{a priori} perspective could limit substantially. Instead, I searched for \textit{intensity}, a feeling of excitement, like something about to take off and encourage thought. This was what happened with the phrase \textit{learn to live in beta} and the following discussions. Consequently, the phrase became subject to a hermeneutic circle in the analysis and interpretation of the conference.

\textbf{2.3.1. Organizing Material}

In the whole process I have been using “mind-maps”. The interest in \textit{living in beta} came right away. I began by analysing/mind-mapping the \textit{living in beta} discussions and then the other discussion. From there I started making links between living in beta and the other topics.

In the writing process these mind-maps were developed over into the chapters of this thesis. Each chapter had a mind-map from which it was written, first rather isolated from other chapters, but as they took form, connections were added to other chapters, primarily \textit{living in beta}.

\textbf{2.4. Analytical Strategy}

We have come far in describing a local perspective for the thesis. What follows zooms closer in on how the philosophical perspective, data and method come together.

\(^{25}\) There were of course discussions following the conference with the supervisor of the thesis, Daniel Hjorth. He was involved in the planning of the conference and both attended and presented at the conference. These discussions were not in any way a follow up on the conference, nor are they ever quoted.

\(^{26}\) Or virtuality of the event, to use two important theoretical concepts, soon to be introduced.
2.4.1. The Symposium as an Event: Affirmative Approach

I approach the Copenhagen Innovation Symposium as an event, i.e. an opening of infinitive potentials. We draw from Ole Fogh Kirkeby’s philosophical writings of the event. There are different levels of the event. Here it is interesting to look at what he calls alma-event: “an ‘active nothing’, an echo of an endless ‘Never’ breaking into our lives”.27 On this level the event has not yet been brought close to any consciousness, understanding or interpretation. Forming a perspective on the event that is the symposium is therefore a productive act that is followed by a creation or an actualization of the CIS event. The event is not, but becomes, under the influence of a perspective, which is in agreement with post-modern thought.

What was seen and heard at the symposium constitutes an actuality or the data, from which the paper starts. We have a tendency to call a transcript and audio recordings ‘factual’, but the data contain as many cracks as there are spaces and silences between the words. The cracks are openings into the ‘active nothing’ of the event, its potentials, what it can become.

Approaching CIS in this way, i.e. finding intensity and cracks and investigating potentials and becomings, can be described as experimental and productive. The two point towards an approach that affirms, rather than criticizes. To investigate the cracks and produce meaning or knowledge from the event, we affirm the conference by making it a point of origin in the analysis, creation of ideas and framing the discussion.

The selection of living in beta as the part to interpret in the context of the symposium, and the symposium in the context of living in beta, is what makes up the hermeneutic spiral of the thesis.

2.4.2. Hermeneutic Spiralling

The reader might recall that living in beta was brought up close to the end of the symposium. A thought was also brought up at the symposium about how previous presentations, discussions and the phrase, living in beta, might have evolved, had it been formulated earlier. This describes the experiment that is this thesis, and the previously described structure of the thesis is a consequence of this.

Taking a second look at the structure as a spiralling process, we start in chapter three by entering the hermeneutic spiral, finding a need or reason for describing a life in beta. In the fourth

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27 (Kirkeby, Eventum Tantum: To Make the World Worthy of What could Happen To It, 2004, p. 293)
chapter living in beta merges horizons with the discussions taking place in the related session. The result is a preliminary production of meaning, which then meets two major topics of the symposium, i.e. design and experience economy. The final chapter puts an (temporal) end to the spiral, by territorializing it and taking stock in a Foucaultian ethical framework.

The hermeneutic process of producing meaning or understanding is also affected by the selected theory. Theory therefore enters the circular process and is in return affected by it. Theory can therefore not be described as a constant, but becomes an integrated part of the circulation. Initially however, theory may be said to represent the author’s horizon, as the selection of living in beta ultimately does.

2.4.3. Multiplicity and Middle
The hermeneutic spiralling can also be described differently, or in relation to multiplicity, showing a slightly different aspect of the analytical approach.

“Every multiplicity grows from the middle, like the blade of grass or the rhizome”. Living in beta here becomes this middle from which relations grow to other utterances, topics and the conferences as a whole, forming a multiplicity. But other chapters can also be viewed as multiplicities, having their own middle and creating connections. Consequently, for example, the chapters on design and experience economy will not only tell us something about living in beta, but also present a certain understanding of design and experience economy that may be viewed independently.

2.4.4. Selection
In giving prerogative to living in beta, letting it be the middle or the part of the symposium that merges horizons with the conference and creates relations to other parts, results in a selection (inclusion/exclusion) of other parts of the conference. In very general terms the selection is based on the relevance to an ethical discourse of innovation.

Design and experience economy were central topics at the conference, partially therefore, but more importantly, for reasons I will discuss as we enter these chapters, they become central to living in beta. Living in beta, design (especially Roberto’s description of design-driven innovation) and experience economy (especially Daniel’s idea of an experience economy) became

28 (Deleuze & Parnet, Dialogues II, 2002, p. viii)
a guiding triangle in the inclusion/exclusion process that had to take place, both together and individually.

Finally, the intention is not to fix (which also means to castrate) the phrase, *living in beta*, but create an opening, a start or an addition to a discourse. The final translation, which can put the results into practice, sits with the reader, asking, “How can I use this in my practice?”

2.5. **Philosophical Theory**

I have stated the importance of empirical data for the progression of the thesis. Still, the influence of the chosen theory is probably not less, for as I have explained, the thesis remains a merger of horizons. Its initial selection is based on the author taking a look at the empirical data and then becomes an active force in the analytical process.

There are different ways of analyzing empirical data from an event like the symposium. A theoretical approach to analysis, creating meaning through chosen theory, adds to the validation of the thesis. We have discussed the practical validation of knowledge produced, but there is also the theoretical validation; for example, are theories and their concepts used in an acceptable way? Having said this, it is important to note that an analyzer creates new connections to theory by applying empirical data. It may change theoretical concepts or even create new ones. But an empiricist epistemology, with practice as its standard or valuation of knowledge, does not have to be sensitive to possible conceptual transformations. What would theory be without an empirical dialog?

The theoretical foundation of the thesis is found in post-modern philosophy, similar to its philosophical perspective, creating a certain continuum between the two, which should support the consistency of the text, but also a certain conceptual overlapping.

Explaining the theoretical perspective is necessary for a complete understanding of an analytical approach. The following offers a discussion of the main philosophers used in the thesis. The discussion emphasises their concepts and ideas influencing the empirical analysis.

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29 Kvale (2001, pp. 210-1) for example, writes about ‘self-understanding’, i.e. to focus on the understanding of the attendees, which most likely would require an iterative process of interviewing the delegates. He also mentions a ‘critical common-sense interpretation’, which would be an attempt to reach some kind of a common or public understanding of the event.
Nevertheless, the philosophical concepts may be developed further and additional concepts will be introduced and developed along the way.


Deleuze’s philosophical concepts are the most influential in the thesis. There are two main reasons for this theoretical predominance: First, his ontological perspective of constant change and creation. Secondly, it can be argued that Deleuze’s philosophical project was an ethical thinking in terms of creation and difference. Paraphrasing Todd May (2005, p. 3), Deleuze’s ethical philosophy is nothing other than the engagement with the question: “how might one live”, which is exactly what we are asking in the context of entrepreneurship and innovation. His philosophy orbits around the thought of living differently and opening up new regions of life. It offers an alternative approach to rationalistic (managerial) thought of creativity being something extraordinary or divine. In Deleuzian thought it is constantly present and of a combinatory nature, reflected in concepts like *machines, connectivity, rhizome and multiplicity*, rather than *new or novelty*.

His philosophy is not his accomplishment alone. Nietzsche described the history of philosophy as an arrow shot by one philosopher, picked up by another and shot further. Deleuze sometimes got help picking up the arrow, especially from Félix Guattari (1930-1992), a French psychotherapist and philosopher.30

One of those inspiring Deleuze the most was Nietzsche, arguably the first of post-modern thinkers and extremely influential in post-modern philosophy, especially his ontological and ethical thought. His concern was always how to live in a world without a transcendental force giving meaning to the world. For Nietzsche this meant that man became a *creator* or *overman*, a thought that is very close to the topic of this thesis. Nietzsche is most relevant in the analysis in the context of Deleuze’s writings on Nietzsche.

In the application of Deleuze’s concepts I draw from Deleuze’s own writings, his writings on others, as well as from those that have written about him (e.g. Todd May and Claire Colebrook),

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30 Deleuze wrote books on several of the most influential Western philosophers, e.g. Kant, Hume, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Bergson and Foucault. He not only interpreted their philosophy, but fundamentally rethought and transformed it. He described his approach in the following way: “I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous. [...] But the child was bound to be monstrous too, because it resulted from all sorts of shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions that I really enjoyed” (Deleuze G., Negotiations, 1995, p. 6). This quote was an inspiration to the analytical approach of the thesis, in that it aims to develop an idea of *living in beta* that was not necessarily intentional, but exemplifies its potentiality.
been inspired by him in their own philosophy (e.g. Brian Massumi and Ole Fogh Kirkeby) and/or organizational studies (e.g. Alexander Styhre and Daniel W. Smith).

The concepts and ideas discussed in the following pages are not all of Deleuze’s concepts that are used in the thesis, but are chosen to give further insight into the fundamental world view of the thesis and explaining the basics of the theoretical horizon. They will also limit somewhat the need for theoretical explanations in the analysis, but at the same time make current discussion, relating to a perspective, fill more. It should help the reader to contextualize the discussion, having, at the outset, an insight into the basic ideas of creativity and creative work (in this way we might call them meta-concepts or ideas of the thesis). These are: Deleuze’s approach to ethical living, active/reactive forces, the virtual and the actual and rhizome.

Ethical Living

For Deleuze there would not be a single answer to the problem of life or how one might live. It was not the discovery of a way of living, but a creation that took place by embracing difference, the potentiality of living differently. In the light of this, life becomes a problem with infinite potential solutions, and we become the creators of our own lives. This kind of problematization and multiple solution creation is not unique for the question of living. Deleuze advocated this approach to problems in general.

We are trained in educational and professional life to go from problems to solutions to opinions. We face a problem and try to eliminate it as quickly and efficiently as we can by finding ‘the’ solution, from which we form our opinion we frequently hold on to for the rest of our lives. Surely this can make sense for specific quantitative problems, e.g. “2 + 2” or “what is the most economically profitable department?”

In short, we structure the world, define categories and hierarchies (what is a mammal?), then we go out and apply the structure to the world, discovering its identity and are amazed by the results (a camel is a mammal!). Deleuze would not accept such narrowing of the world.

Most of the time we are faced with problems with multiple potential answers: “which market should we enter?” or “how should the product design be?”. Deleuze’s encouragement is to

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31 Meeting and solving every problem in this way applies to Nietzsche’s description of when someone hides “something behind a bush and looks for it again in the same place and finds it as well, there is not much to praise in such seeking and finding. Yet this is how matters stand regarding seeking and finding “truth” within the realm of reason. [...] He forgets that the original perceptual metaphors are metaphors and takes them to be things in themselves”. (Nietzsche F., 1873, pp. 6-7)
disturb them, look for differences rather than similarities, as they are the resistance that can move us beyond the point we are at. We should explore the potentials that a problem provides, or in Deleuzian language: we should think beyond the actual and into the virtual, which can result in lines of flight. This may sound a bit hazy, but becomes clearer when we have taken a look at a few key concepts.

We need to keep in mind that it was not Deleuze’s intention to provide a manual or a formula for life or creative thinking, resonating with his emphasis on becoming rather than being.

**Forces of Change: Active/Reactive**

It is hard to exaggerate Nietzsche’s influence on Deleuze. Their philosophical projects are tightly related as ethical thought based on creation: freedom to create a way or style of living beyond transcending norms and values. Deleuze grounds his worldview on metaphysical concepts he identifies in Nietzsche’s texts, referring to the field of forces that make up the world. Phenomena, things, organisms, societies and consciousness present an interplay of forces active and reactive. The forces represent a difference in quality, where active forces dominate reactive. This is to say that “[q]uality is nothing but difference in quantity and corresponds to it each time forces enter into relation”.

Active forces are creative forces, capable of transformations. They seek to exercise themselves and experiment to realize their full potentials, striving for the limits of what they can do. Their creation can mean destruction, disruption. It is unrelated to moral opinions. But most importantly creation is not just up to the active forces, but the context in which they are exercised: An entrepreneur sets out to create a way to make solar power economically attractive. She studies physics and engineering and strives to reach her goal, but doesn’t succeed. Someone possibly beat her to it, she was unable to acquire enough investment capital, or she might have died before reaching her goal.

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32 As stated, Deleuze is inspired by a number of philosophers. Todd May (2005) has emphasized three of them, calling them the holy trinity in Deleuze’s philosophy, i.e. Spinoza, Bergson and Nietzsche.

33 The concept of metaphysics might be considered problematic as it refers to conventional ontological thought on discovery and identities. Here it may be understood literally, i.e. as that which is beyond the physical, but also that which forms a basis for its function.

34 (Deleuze G., Nietzsche and Philosophy, 1983, p. 44)
Reactive forces are defined by active forces in that there only objective is to “separate active force from what it can do”, castrating them, making them reactive. Reactive forces do not overcome, but put an end to the becoming of an active force. It is a force of moral, conformity, homogeneity, structure and status quo. For Nietzsche and Deleuze the great transcendental narratives told by religion and philosophy were examples that gave primacy to reactive forces.

What about organizational management, is it possible that managers are reactive when they manage entrepreneurial activities?

Active and reactive forces imply an interesting difference in thinking about change. Recall that active forces are capable of transformations. Transformations are not limited by the current situation. It is a non-linear development, an experiment without a known result. There can be change despite domination of reactive forces, but it is change that is controlled and expected and entirely based on the current situation.

To understand the difference between active and reactive change we introduce another pair of concepts, the virtual and the actual.

**World of Infinite Potentials: Virtual/Actual Reality**

The virtual and the actual are two sides or dimensions of reality. The actualized world is the world as it appears here and now (the words you are reading, the paper you hold and the murmur from the traffic). But it is not all that is real in the world, actually only a small portion of it. Take the Copenhagen Innovation Symposium, for example. What was seen and heard and is the foundation for this discussion was an actuality. But there were, without doubt, participants with knowledge that they did not express: unasked questions and silent statements. This knowledge is real; it just did not get actualized within the time and the space of the symposium. It signifies the potential of a multiplicity of symposia that would have been different, but remains virtual.

The virtual is not the same as the possible. First of all the possible does not yet exist, while the virtual does. It does not have to have anything added to it in order to be real.

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35 (Deleuze G., Nietzsche and Philosophy, 1983, p. 57)
36 Active and reactive forces might be what Foucault had in mind when he encouraged homosexuals to experiment with homosexuality as a way of life, to become homosexuals by asking: “how is it possible for men to be together? To live together, to share their time, their meals, their room, their leisure, their grief [...]? What is it to be “naked” among men, outside of institutional relations, family, profession, and obligatory camaraderie?” (Foucault, 1997, p. 136) In this way homosexuality becomes an active force, going beyond its limits and creating desirable ways of living, without guilt or remorse. Rather than trying to fight off the reactive forces of religion or other places in society. It would stifle the active forces and transform them into reactive. Possibly turn it into some kind of an imitation of heterosexuality?
Second, the possible reflects the real. It is an image of it lacking nothing but its reality. The possibility of stopping writing and going home now is the same as not doing it, except that it will not be realized. This possibility only reflects the actuality of the event: the sitting and writing. May (2005) describes the virtual in terms of

relation[s] of substance to attributes and modes. Attributes and modes unfold (fold, refold) substance, but not as copies for which substance provides the original model. Although substance actualizes itself in attributes and modes, its way of being as virtual is not simply a mirror image of its way of being as actual modes.37

We could say that this is an ‘anti-platonic’ description of reality. Substance in this case cannot be thought of as something other than its actualizations, i.e. actualizations are not representations, but presentations of substance. They are however not all that is substance, as it is infinitely larger than its actuality.

With reference to active and reactive forces, what gets actualized is determined in a constant battle between the forces, ensuring a constant becoming of the virtual.

Like other Deleuzian concepts virtuality has many relations that show it in different perspectives in different contexts. There is no final and closed definition of the virtual. In the context of this paper there is reason to highlight the difference between thought in terms of the virtual or the actual. Deleuze’s critique is that philosophical thought, and western thought in general, has limited thought to actuality.38 Since “thought is creation”,39 limiting thought to actuality blocks the active forces of transformation. We need to think in the sphere of the virtual, beyond what we have experienced. How might this be accomplished?

In the next section we will take a look at how the world is made up through connections. Trying to understand the world we need to look at its connections: how one thing is defined by its connections. One possibility of thinking virtually would therefore be to create new connections (e.g. think of entrepreneurship, not just in relation to economy, management, technology and market, but politics, environment, art, philosophy and a way of living).

37 (May, 2005, p. 49)
38 (Parr, 2005, p. 9)
39 (Deleuze G., Nietzsche and Philosophy, 1983, p. 54)
Rhizome

We are tired of trees. We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They’ve made us suffer too much. [...] Many people have a tree growing in their heads, but the brain itself is much more like a grass than a tree.40

The trees and roots Deleuze and Guattari are so tired of represent arborescent or binary structures and hierarchies, e.g. found in biology, linguistics, history and so on. It is genealogical or rational thought: the connections in the world, whose structure is rational and fixed, only has to be discovered. As before, the idea of change is evolutional: cause and effect. Following the previous discussions, it is change based on the domination of reactive forces and thought limited by the actuality of the world, unable to see what could have been and might be.

Grasping virtual thought and the interplay of active and reactive forces, Deleuze and Guattari create the concept of the rhizome, an organic and dynamic structure: “[a]ny point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be.”41 Actually, “[t]here are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines”.42 It is a multiplicity of lines connecting and crossing each other. The rhizome grows with new active lines that constantly deterritorialize the rhizome, transforming it in unpredictable ways with unpredictable consequences. We call these new connections in creation lines of flight. They are lines of chance (not cause and effect) adding dimensions (not points).

We can think of the rhizome on a virtual field:

[The rhizome] has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overspills. It constitutes linear multiplicities with n dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency, and from which the One is always subtracted (n-1).43

The picture drawn here is of a world with multiple virtual dimensions (n), one of which gets actualized (n-1). We can relate this to the preparation and setup of the symposium. It had its time,

40 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 17)
41 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 7)
42 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 9)
43 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 23)
duration, location, specific people got invited, presenters got chosen and so on. All this influenced
the outcome of the conference, but it did not determine or directly cause its actualization. We can
prepare the world for the event, but we cannot control it.

We need to be aware that Deleuze’s philosophy is a philosophy of becomings. “There ‘is’
nothing other than the flow of becoming. All ‘beings’ are just relatively stable moments in the flow
of becoming-life” and Deleuze and Guattari add that “[b]ecoming is a rhizome, not a
classificatory or genealogical tree.” The lines of flight are offshoots, but they are still connected
to the rhizome. If they are to ‘live’ they need to maintain this connection and so they become
reterritorialized. Had the symposium been invaded by fashion models, as one participant hinted at
in an example, it would constitute a line of flight. Would the participants be numb to the invasion
or disregard it completely the line of flight would crash and disappear, without connection to the
symposium, without context, meaning and effect?

Connecting this rhizome of Deleuzian concepts with the conference, happens as we move along,
but we have supplied the framework of the study with an insight into a life and a world of infinite
potentials, growth, creativity, change and chance, that supports the discussions at the symposium.
It provides an essential foundation for an ethical discussion in the context of entrepreneurship, of
the world we are innovating in and the importance of relations.

2.5.2. Brian Massumi: Affect

Massumi focuses in his work on, among other things, percept, affect and the virtual. He translated
Deleuze’s and Guattari’s notorious work A Thousand Plateaus and draws especially from Deleuze’s
philosophy. We take a closer look at his description of affect in relation to innovative design and
experience economy. Massumi is chosen here because of his distinction between affects and
emotions, this will be described in more detail later, but the important thing is that affects disturb
our rational thought. They can open up thoughts potentiality to create more intensely, to take a
line of flight in a different direction. I will argue, in accordance with the symposium, that this has
become an important element of the experience economy. Deleuze and Guattari wrote in What is
Philosophy? that art was about creating affects.

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44 (Colebrook, 2002, p. 125)
45 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 263)
46 We will revisit the example at a later point and discuss how, in this case, the line of flight could stay alive.
2.5.3. Ole Fogh Kirkeby: Event
Kirkeby is a productive philosopher and has been effective at putting philosophy into organizational and managerial perspectives. He draws inspiration from the ancient Greeks to recent post-modern thinkers. In the context of the thesis, it is especially his theorization of the already mentioned event that is of interest. He draws from Deleuze’s philosophy of the event, which however is very fragmented according to Kirkeby, and he creates a holistic philosophical model for thinking about events, and this is why he is chosen here in relation to the CIS event. He divides the event into three theoretical levels. The first level is beyond both ontology and epistemology. The second level is the alma-event, “presenting the tension between sense and non-sense”. Third is the proto-event, “constructing an analytical figure of the zones of the event”. The alma-event and the proto-event are respectively related to Deleuze’s concept of the virtual and the actual and provide an added understanding of these concepts. Kirkeby’s, as we will come to see, shares and contributes to the described ‘world view’ in Deleuze’s philosophy. His most important ideas here are represented in the term “to make the world worthy of what might happen to it” and “being worthy of the event”; both will be applied at a later stage.

Our lives are series of events, understanding the event in relation to, e.g. entrepreneurship, experience economy and affect, is therefore valuable for the purpose of the thesis.

2.5.4. Michel Foucault (1926-1984): The Ethical Fourfold
Foucault is probably the best-known and most influential of 20th-century philosopher. He is best known for analysis of the structures that make up society and subjects, which he approached from an historical perspective. Most of his carrier, Foucault regarded “the very idea of change, of making something radically new either of society as a whole or of a single individual, with the deepest suspicion”. We mortals were subjects of history, stuck in a net of power and knowledge relations. Eventually however Foucault engaged himself with ethics and freedom from a strikingly ‘Nietzschean’ point of view and it is here that he becomes relevant for the thesis. Foucault is especially chosen for his view on ethics as signifying the power and freedom to create and think independently. He becomes especially relevant at the end as we sum up the thesis and draw

47 (Kirkeby, Eventum Tantum: To Make the World Worthy of What could Happen To It, 2004, p. 290)
48 (Kirkeby, Eventum Tantum: To Make the World Worthy of What could Happen To It, 2004, p. 290)
49 (Nehamas, 2000, p. 169)
conclusions in the context of a ‘Foucaultian’ framework called the *ethical fourfold*, by Paul Rabionow. The framework and Foucault’s ethical philosophy will be discussed further at that time. The framework helps to structure the results, but may also limit them in some way.

3. The Post-Industrial Economy
The following chapter takes a look at the first presentation of the symposium. In it Daniel Hjorth made an effort to describe the post-industrial economy, a term sometimes used for the current economic era. Compared to later chapters we follow Daniel Hjorth’s presentation relatively closely, summarizing large parts of it. This approach is selected because Daniel’s presentation leads up to a problematization, which becomes a fundament for later chapters.

The post-industrial carries the obvious reference to industrialism. We usually trace industrialism to the industrial revolution starting in Great Britain in the late 18th century, marked by machine-based manufacturing. Post-industrialism hints at an obvious durational distance, but at the same time that there has been a break, which differentiates the two eras. There are of course different opinions and explanations of what constitutes this break. A common-sense differentiation might be to look at changes in production or manufacturing, as the industrial revolution is commonly tied to machine-based manufacturing. Daniel takes a different approach, for example by describing ideological differences, related to the two eras.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three parts. First we look at how changes made in the industrial era were legitimized and made possible from a philosophical and political perspective. In this context Daniel develops an idea of organizational management or managerial thought. From this perspective, management and the philosophy it is based upon become fundamental in describing the industrial era.

In the second part we move on to the post-industrial economy and the question becomes: how management, rooted in industrialism, is placed in the post-industrial economy? It is a question that leads towards a problematization of the relationship between entrepreneurship and organizational management. This problematization is elementary in the discussion that then follows and deals with entrepreneurial subjectification. In the third and final section of the chapter this relationship is explained.
3.1. Modernity, Industrialism and Management

One of the most fundamental changes [of industrialization] is the radical shift in organizing time for people who have been involved in the production of most of what they needed themselves. In order to sell their time to an employer that organizes time for them. Telling them when to stop and what to do and in what order. That is of course a major, major shift in terms of one’s subjectivity we could say. The way you relate yourself to the world.50

Right away we are all eyes and ears. Daniel declares a shift in subjectivity, or what I have chosen to call subjectification, and relates it to industrialism and management. To describe this he later uses three concepts representing different roles. These are the roles of citizen, employee and consumer. Accordingly, men of modernity51 were supposed to take on all three roles at the same time. Daniel then moves on to describe a common philosophical and political thought transcending the three roles of modernity.

As mentioned, the history of philosophy has been marked by its attempts to find essence or nature in the world and its phenomena. Man him/herself has of course been the primary object of this ontological thought, having a great influence on social, economic and political structures and practices. In this context Daniel points towards three thinkers: Niccolò Machiavelli (1469 – 1527), Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) and Adam Smith (1723 – 1790). Machiavelli in relation to his book The Prince (Il Principe in Italian), a ‘guidebook’ for a becoming or existing prince, guiding him on how to acquire and stay in power. The Prince gave guidance in governmentality and had a profound influence on political discourse the next 200 years.

Hobbes is even more interesting in this respect, forming a clear view on human nature on which he bases his political philosophy and governmental legitimacy: “A life outside the state is a life in the wild, where people’s passions rule, a world without security” (Hobbes, 1996, p. 117). The passions are dangerous and unsecure and need to be constrained, hence an agreement between a ruler and his subordinates, which Daniel explains in the following manner:

50 (CIS Transcription, p. 2, emphasis added)
51 Hjorth uses the concept of modernity to describe the era leading up to the industrial revolution and during (ca. 1500-1940). I follow this example.
We know Hobbes said that there are two drivers of a human being. One is that they want power and when they have got power they want more power. And secondly they fear death. So the principle for social order is to say: “I can secure you. I can prevent you from dying if you hand over some of your decisional authority or power to me”.\(^{52}\)

Lastly, Daniel refers to Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* and the *invisible hand* metaphor, as representing a lack of systematic and common thought.

Following Daniel’s discussion, modernity and industrialism were periods in need of organizational knowledge and skills. These skills needed to be applied to different spheres of society that presented enormous challenges with the formation of nation states, large cities and complex markets and production. There was need for a managerial revolution, complementing industrialization.

Ellen O’Connor (1999) is very explicit in drawing the connection Daniel makes between managerial thought and Machiavellian and Hobbesian human perspectives. In her view this perspective is still fundamental in organizational management, providing important legitimization for control. To summarize her writing briefly, she reflects on the writings and research of Elton Mayo (1880 – 1949), who is considered to be the father of Human Resource Management (HRM), which retains the fundamentals of Mayo’s findings.\(^{53}\) She concludes that Hobbes and Machiavelli had a direct influence on Mayo in that he also took man to be an unstable being of desires. Consequently, management has the legitimate objective to become

a science, for, if man were simply a function of his desires, then these could be measured, compared, manipulated, giving managers the genuine capacity to make people [...] what was wanted for the organization.\(^{54}\)

It is a description of management with which we are very familiar even today, complementing the management adage: “you can’t manage what you can’t measure”. The employee becomes an

\(^{52}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 3)
\(^{53}\) (O’Connor, 1999, p. 223)
\(^{54}\) (O’Connor, 1999, p. 229)
object for constant measurement and manipulation: from seasonal employee interviews and goal setting to customer relationship management systems (CRM) to balanced scorecards and so on.\textsuperscript{55}

Daniel makes a similar case as he speaks of economical man as \textit{homo oeconomicus} and relates the idea to the educational system: “there is the kind of asking people to participate in becoming controllable or manageable or governable. The educational system is all about this”.\textsuperscript{56} Accordingly, we have an educational system that produces governable subjects and workers and business schools producing managers that can govern workers in doing their job. I Daniel’s own words:

Management has a set of very dangerous tools at their disposal. The business school has been a part of using those tools for how to exact and precision, demand, certain deliveries from the employee. Their accountability is secured by numerous IT technology tools. Presented, of course, as enhancing freedom, but making it impossible for most of us to escape employers at this point in time.\textsuperscript{57}

Why are the tools disposable to students in business schools \textit{dangerous}? Do they not make us more efficient? Daniel is of course speaking in the context of entrepreneurship. Management is a profession of control and measurements, as we have seen, a territorialization of time and space, and at the same time an attempt to eliminate chance and the unexpected. Its approach is engineered and scientific.

This is probably nowhere better reflected than in Frederick W. Taylor’s (1856 – 1915) widely recognized \textit{Scientific Management}. His approach can be compared to Mayo’s in that the employee is subjective to managerial \textit{dressage}, but in Taylor’s case, it was the body that had to be ‘tamed’ and organized down to the smallest movements.

To summarize, a managerial concept has been developed that relates to a subjectification that is controlled and tamed. Its legitimization is provided with a certain human perspective in the

\textsuperscript{55} Balanced Scorecard is a widely used strategic management tool, designed to measure in detail employee activity in relation to the overall strategy of an organization or its parts. The system is developed by the Harvard Business School Professor R. S. Kaplan and D. P. Norton. The Balanced Scorecard concept was selected by the editors of \textit{Harvard Business Review} as one of the most influential management ideas of the past 75 years.

\textsuperscript{56} (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 5)

\textsuperscript{57} (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 6)
philosophical thought of modernity. Taylor and later Mayo are two influential examples of the application of this philosophy in management theory.

3.2. Post-Modernism, Post-Industrialism and Entrepreneurship

Turning to the question of post-industrial economy: how can the present era of the post-industrial economy be described and how does it relate to management, entrepreneurship and philosophical thought? This conceptualization becomes a problematization and produces an assemblage of challenges.

“[What] I think it is important to acknowledge when you think of post-industrial is some of these fascinating transformations that have been going on”.

According to Daniel the transformations of the post-industrial, concern a variety of phenomena, e.g. population, markets, geopolitics, environment and so on.

There are dramatic shifts in the world’s population. An explosive growth in the so-called second- and third-world countries, while the development is even in the opposite direction in some developed countries. The West is becoming older, by 2050 over 20% of the world population will be 60 years of age or older and fewer people will live in countries that fit into the definition of ‘developed nations’.

Markets and resources are moving and changing at the same time. The movement is not a ‘copy-paste’, i.e. new nations becoming Westernized. A transformation is taking place.

Modernity was the rise of the nation state, a centralized authority of a defined geographical space. In the post-industrial era the state, according to Daniel and a variety of other thinkers (e.g. Jurgen Habermas (2001) and Jan Aart Scholte (2005)), becomes a ‘withering economical concept’, a symbolic representation of globalization. The conclusion is made on the premises of constant movement of culture, capital, organizations, information and people. In this environment it is difficult, if not impossible, for single nations to exercise authority in a variety of matters. The Internet is a good example of this. It deterritorializes and transcends geographical space as we know it. Its natural and manmade borders and distinctions: services are hosted in one

58 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 3)
country and offered in another. Information is flowing in a digital cloud without a permanent location.59

This has widespread consequences for organizations (and subjectification). Organizations need be able to adapt and move into the new markets taking form, not only in different countries and continents, but also in virtual or digital spaces. At the same time organizations have an opportunity to draw resources from all around the globe, requiring extreme alertness and consciousness of the potentiality of this open environment of flowing capital, information, people, etc.

In this context, Professor Richard (Dick) Nolan, in a speech about globalized innovation, introduced the Boeing’s 787 Dreamliner project as an example, of tapping into a global workforce. Boeing has different parts of the airplane made in different parts of the world. From Boeing’s perspective, production itself is a process of collecting and assembling.

A special 747 flies out of Everett. Stops in Japan, picks up the wings. Goes over to China and picks up the tail assembly. Flies on over to Alenia in Italy, picks up the fuselage. Flies into, in this case, Wichita, picks up some more. Lands (silent)... In one day, lands back in Everett, and they are putting that plane together, a final assembly. They are clicking it together – it is an all-digital plane – they are clicking it together like Legos. It’ll be done in 3 days, not 30 days.60

Following this description we could argue that value is taking a new form at Boeing. Moving from technical and engineering supremacy to something very different, which might be described as creating a network that extends beyond organizational boundaries and through which there is flow of information and ideas.

Up until 2003 Boeing was an emblematic example of the sophistication of industrial manufacturing: assembling airplanes out of over 3 million parts, made to fly in the most extreme conditions, sounds like a miracle in itself. Richard describes how in 2003 Boeing was forced to wake up and acknowledge that their competitor, Airbus, had become their superior. Conventional

59 Gambling and pornography are examples of services that are hosted where such things are legal, though the customers can be everywhere else. The way films and music usually flow around the Internet is often without any fixed database. Rather it is a constantly changing network of PCs hosting the information.

60 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 30)
production methods and strategies of the industrial age were no longer enough. The 787 Dreamliner is Boeing’s attempt to get ahead again.

Our way of living is also in transformation in the globalized post-industrial world. The roles of citizen, employee and consumer become blurry. The consumer for example is no longer just the one buying the product or the service, as Daniel points out:

The consumer position is important, because what we are experiencing in the experience economy is a kind of preservation of the role as consumers. We have lots of possibilities of playing with it, or escaping or stepping out of the role as consumers. Some use the word prosumer – the in-between producer/consumer.61

We discuss this merger of roles more closely in later chapters, but it implies a consumer role that becomes a more active subjectification (becoming) than before, that there are elements of production and creation that can be applied to the consumer.

The employee role is also fundamentally changing. We are not only employees between 9 and 5. We find ourselves increasingly to be always at work, carrying our mobile phones and laptops – e-mail hunting us. The employee role is breaking boundaries like the role of the consumer. For the post-industrial knowledge worker there are no functional or technological obstacles for being at work at all times.

What is described as post-industrial is a world of and in transformation. A transformation is not a linear change, but is a rhizomatic growth with unforeseeable consequences, a deterritorialization and a reterritorialization. The rigid segments and boundaries of modernity, e.g. of nation states, organizations and individual roles, are dissolving and things start to move, in a stimulus of new ideas and technologies. Speed increases when the economy becomes global, because innovative change anywhere has almost immediate effect everywhere.

To emphasize the differences in what has been described, between managerially organized space of industrialization and the global space of post-industrial economy, we refer to a Deleuzian description of spaces. Here, every space is simultaneously made up of two kinds of segmenting lines: molar lines that are rigid, forming a binary, arborescent system of segments, and then molecular lines that work through deterritorializations, but which can also be subject to

61 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 2)
reterritorializations and turn back into molar lines.\(^{62}\)\(^{63}\) Accordingly, we can describe modernity and managerial thought as a space where molar lines dominate, in contrast to a domination of molecular lines in the post-industrial economy.

The molar and the molecular reflect two different perspectives on change and creativity, or innovation. Innovation within a predominantly molar space would have to be managed, organized. It would be an incremental development, where every step forward reflects the opportunities of previous activity – for example, a new edition of a mobile phone, which only enhances the features of the last one. Additionally, few would constitute that Boeing had not been an innovative company, but in 2003 they found out that there were others getting better playing by the rules that Boeing themselves had created. Rather than just continuing to try to get even better at what they did, Boeing has the opportunity to do things differently. Not just change, but transform their business. This is what we could call a molecular innovation or entrepreneurship, becoming radical through transformation. Boeing has literally deterritorialized their business in an attempt to create a line of flight that may change the rules of the game. It is what Daniel, with a reference to Schumpeter, calls a ‘creative destruction’, i.e. a deterritorilization and a reterritorialization, but this can be a very painful process in managerial, molar space:

The problem is not the creative part, but the destruction part. When you launch a new idea and you want to put something in place. The old ideas, or a lot of those, are destroyed and they all have protective bodies, often managers that sit on those old constructs that now should be shuffled.\(^{64}\)

This utterance reflects the problematic relationship between entrepreneurship in the post-industrial economy and management. The rigid or molar segments of management represent a reactive force in the face of the active forces of change and creativity, cutting them off from their potentiality. In a complex world of flow, movement and speed the only certainty is change. To manage change in an organized molar manner is to slow it down, to be able to control it. Consequently, we will end up following, rather than leading, just like Boeing. A manager requires an overview of the situation, controlling the development step-by-step and making plans

\(^{62}\) (Parr, 2005, p. 145)
\(^{63}\) Lines of flight are molecular lines, but there is a difference in radicalism.
\(^{64}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 7, emphasis added)
accordingly. Daniel calls it a ‘tamed version’ of entrepreneurship, strategic and instrumental, always intact with its point of origin, like in the mobile phone example or Boeing’s previous strategy.

In the complexity of post-industrial economy it is difficult, if not impossible, to have a complete overview. A similar problem faces organizations as states. It is not enough, for example, to know the hierarchy within the boundaries of the organization. The organization is a part of a global network that, like a rhizome, keeps growing in unexpected ways.

To be entrepreneurial and lead change is to be transformative, destructive, working through deterritorializations and reterritorializations. It means going beyond a point of origin. Embrace the active forces at play (unaffected by ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘good’ and ‘bad’). The consequence is that it cannot be controlled and measured in any conventional managerial way. Boeing’s Dreamliner contains multiple technological and logistical innovations. However the ones that may prove to be most radical could be so because they shift the market, change the rules (e.g. if people begin to select Boeing’s Dreamliner for its superior comfort when they travel).

Post-industrial economy can be described as an entrepreneurial economy, according to Daniel.

If the industrial economy is at least 80% managerial and 20% entrepreneurial. I’m thinking we are moving into the post-industrial, which is much more of a 50/50 situation, which is of course tremendously problematic.

It is problematic because organizations are still structured and managed according to the needs of industrialization, resisting the unexpected. Subjectification takes place within rigid roles like manager, employee and consumer.

From Daniel’s problematization of the rigidness of management in the transformative flow of the post-modern economy and the need for entrepreneurship, there is an opening to ethical thought. It is an opening to entrepreneurial subjectification, an ethical discussion that should not be limited within the boundaries of a role; its ‘role’ is to go beyond

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65 The differentiation made between managerial entrepreneurship and post-industrial entrepreneurship here draws from the differentiation made by Ole Fogh Kirkeby (2001) between change (Danish: forandring) and transformation (Danish: forvandling).

66 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 7)
boundaries. Within boundaries things stay relatively still and organized, as we have seen. While outside, the world has picked up pace, and complexity increases. Are people then to become diffused and chaotic (neurotic)? No, but instead of being employees, consumers and so forth, we make the leap of becoming, not something fixed, but different. We need to find a way of giving style to such a life.

### 3.3. Post-industrial Territorialization

The lesson we are learning [...] is: LEARN TO LIVE IN BETA! There is no finished product. We change constantly, our market changes constantly. It allows us to believe in the freedom of innovation society – living in BETA.67

Deleuze and Guattari speak of a refrain, a territorialization, which they describe as rhythm and melody (e.g. “[a] child in the dark, gripped with fear, comforts himself by singing under his breath”68, or the bird that sings to mark his territory). The refrain and its rhythm becomes an answer to chaos (chaosmos), but does not exclude flow and even chaos, which still enters the refrain and can transform it. Of special interest here is their description of the refrain and territorialization as becoming-expressive.69 It is this potentiality of expressing oneself and while doing so, territorializing. This constitution of a territory is in itself creative, viewed as “freeing, of matters”,70 putting one’s signature on the world – giving it meaning.

If we are not to enter into predefined roles, we will need to find ways of territorializing in ways that go beyond fixed territories. Can living in beta be described as a refrain in the face of the post-industrial economy?

### 4. Living in Beta

In a gripping and energetic speech, Andy Wilson coined the term learn to live in beta.71 Right away the enthusiasm and engagement contributed to the idea being presented, implying that entrepreneurship and innovation is more than the processes and tools that were an initial point of the presentation, but that there is a human element, an approach. The initial utterance (see end}

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67 (Andy Wilson, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 45, emphasis added)
68 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 343)
69 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 348)
70 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 349)
71 In the discussion we refer to the term ‘learn to live in beta’ in different forms, e.g. ‘living in beta’ and ‘beta’.
of last chapter) also points towards an ontology of change and freedom, suggesting a human perspective different from a managerial approach rooted in the ideas of Hobbes and Machiavelli.

Living in beta cracked open what had seemed to be a managerial topic and unleashed the discussions into some unexpected territories, but directly related to the problematization made at the start of the conference between entrepreneurship and organizational management as discussed in the previous chapter.

In the present chapter the emphasis is on the term learn to live in beta. We will look a bit further into how it relates and adds to our understanding of post-modern economy and how it differentiates itself from managerial thought. From here a perspective is developed on ‘living in beta’ as an entrepreneurial way of living or becoming.

The following is primarily based on interactive discussions between a number of attendees: the analysis therefore becomes more interpretive, in a way, giving key utterances more space in the discussion.

4.1. At the Outset of a Refrain

Does the term living in beta differentiate itself from what we can call a managerial thought of entrepreneurship? From the previous chapter and various general readings of management, there are developed three common-sense judgments of managerial thought in relation to entrepreneurship. The first is that entrepreneurial management provides a tool or a process for innovative work, for the manager to use in different situations. The second one is focus on monetary value, that an innovative idea or invention has to be developed on the basis of sound economical advantage. Finally, that it is the managerial tendency to generalize and create rigid segments of inclusion and exclusion. These become counter-arguments for living in beta and through their negation we pick up hints of what it is, or more accurately, what it could become. The outcome will be the fundament for further investigation.

According to one commentator we seem already to have an overflow of tools and methods for entrepreneurial management: “the market is coming out with new methods every day to select the right idea to get into the market. You have ten a day coming into the market”. To describe living in beta as a tool or as rigid managerial processes does not reconcile with the initial utterance of “no finished products” and “constant change”. At least the tools and the

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72 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 54)
processes would then have to be subjective to constant change, which is in agreement with a post-modern and post-industrial perspective. Constant change implies another characteristic of this world or ontological view, which is the unknown state of things – of present and future (even past?). Following a description from Andy:

We are in a paradigm shift. We know that, because nobody knows what it is called. Everybody is talking about different things. I put up today ‘Information and Knowledge Society’. We hear ‘The Innovation Society’; ‘Collaboration Society’, etc. We hear about all different kinds of changes; we just don’t know what it’s named yet.\(^{73}\)

We do not know its name because we do not know exactly what it includes. The best we can do is creating relations, as Daniel did, and test them in practice. Andy does however maintain that it is characteristic of this new society that there is no lack of resources. The point was debated, e.g. in relation to the world’s environmental situation, but the essential here is that information and knowledge have become a primary resource in society and that “[e]very time we use it we create more and more and more”.\(^{74}\)

In a world where the only certain thing is that things change, living in beta cannot be something fixed, especially if the idea is to be entrepreneurial and innovative. As soon as such a constant is created, it becomes obsolete, pointing to the past. Furthermore, there is not only change, but growth in terms of the most valuable resources. Additionally, “this paradigm shift [...] is this feeling and sensation of chaos that we run into”.\(^{75}\)

This implies that in order for living in beta to be relevant in the context presented above, which has been described as post-industrial, it is not farfetched to suggest, like one attendee, that “living in beta is a way to invent a new ontology for us. [T]o me a new ontology for invent[ing] or become inventive”.\(^{76}\) This might be an ontology relating to some of the concepts above, e.g. change, growth and/or chaos?

\(^{73}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 41)
\(^{74}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 41)
\(^{75}\) (Andy Wilson, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 48, emphasis added)
\(^{76}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 55, emphasis added)
Secondly, when the question of monetary value was brought up in relation to social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), Andy made it clear that an emphasis on monetary value can be counterproductive. It is therefore not descriptive of a life in beta.

[T]here are some examples that are interesting, like MySpace, where there is a monetary value connected to something that never made a single piece of money. It is the value of time. It is like Google. Google is not a software company; it is an advertising company. There is money in these systems all the time, you just have to look at it differently. In our context models we are looking for different values, different value set.\(^\text{77}\)

Putting monetary value at the top of hierarchical entrepreneurial thought is limiting oneself to the actual, at a point when our thought needs to move beyond it. The way money is made today does not tell us how it can be made in the future. Neither is money the only thing of value in an economical context. If capitalism can be characterized by something, it is its extreme ability to connect with anything of any value and translate it to monetary value, or even not, but still relate to it.\(^\text{78}\)

The third and final counter-argument regards the generalization and segmentation that management is based upon in its attempt to control. Dividing processes, ideas, people and work into categories or segments requires generalization in the process of including and excluding. The beta concept is on a more intimate and personal level, with ‘learning to live...’ and ‘feelings’ and ‘sensations’ and its living is rather to break through and transcend segments, having no respect for generalizations, as Andy implies:

No, we are not talking about a study, we don’t study people. It is much more about getting them in context. [...] If you find something, and you’re studying them with a camera, you go: “Uhh... look there is something interesting.” That person will often never want to be a part of the

\(^{77}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 47)

\(^{78}\) Economy or capitalism has been successful in putting monetary value on the larger part of our lives. It should be sufficient to reflect on urban living where monetary transaction has become almost a direct prerequisite for (physical) movement. The experience economy, discussed later, is also an interesting example of this. On the other hand there are some interesting examples of things of great economic value, but which remain difficult to translate into a direct monetary value, e.g. trust, goodwill, image and contact networks.
process. To be able to get a successful innovation process going you have to find that person that
is *leaping forward, bouncing over the canvas and banging on the door.*

It is apparent that *living in beta* has the potentiality to affect the way we think and act as
entrepreneurs. It is however not the effect provided through constant managerial measurement,
neither is it a search for the entrepreneur as if he or she would be *something*, waiting to be
discovered. Such methods are more likely to develop a ‘blind spot’ to entrepreneurial activity or
even destroy the very thing it tries to find, as Andy warns us.

We cannot use the conventional roles of managers and employees with *living in beta*. *Living in beta* is not a role, but a way of thinking beyond the societal roles we have already
mentioned. It might be more helpful to use a term presented by Daniel: *homo ludens*, or the
playful human. She could be the one ‘leaping forward, bouncing over the canvas and banging on
the door’. In this respect, *living in beta* embraces *movement* that might be described as
playfulness.

As a preliminary conclusion, *learning to live in beta* has the potential to resituate the
entrepreneurial discourse within the sphere of life and tie it with ethics and a way of living. Not as
*homo oeconomicus*, but as playful humans *living in beta*. The words: ‘It is much more about
getting them into context’ point out that we live and become who we are in and through context.
The context, i.e. relations affecting us (e.g. people, work, education and objects), is bound by what
we experience. It is important to note that *living in beta* is not an attempt to isolate parts of a
person (e.g. citizen, consumer, employee). The person doing the dishes in the evening and
enjoying Bach at the same time may differ from the person that cunningly sold the multimillion-
dollar contract the previous morning: her mood, energy and behaviour. But in that they share the
same body that senses the world and experiences, from which they form their thoughts and
understand the world, they are the same, not to be separated from each other. *Living in beta*
takes note of that and opens into a way of living and a world perspective of change. It does not
share the organizational view (an organizational *Leviathan*) that keeps passion, creativity and
desires, all that fuels creativity, at bay – on the contrary.

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79 (CIS Transcription, 2009, pp. 49-50, emphasis added)  
80 (Weiskopf, 2007)
Through previous counter-argumentation of what living in beta is not we have made three important implications. First, beta life points to an ontology of constant change and growth, even chaos. Living in beta does then become a potential answer to how to live in such a world – a refrain. This remains our main question, moving forward. Second is the opening to other influences than monetary value, the need to go beyond an economic context. To address this we investigate the potentials of our imagination to go beyond. Thirdly, living in beta relates to a way of living that might be described as movement and playfulness. What does that mean?

These three implications will be reflected in the remainder of this chapter, starting with the Idea behind our inquiry.

4.2. The Idea of Becoming Beta

To further frame our inquiry and give it an end that follows the described context of constant change, growth and of going beyond conventional entrepreneurial thought, we borrow the concept Idea from Deleuze (who borrowed it from Kant) and used it throughout his work: “An Idea is a concept pushed beyond any possible experience. [It] extends the concepts through which we think the world to a virtual point beyond the world.” An Idea is also that which differentiates one thing from another.

We approach living in beta as being an attempt to create an Idea. From this perspective it becomes an attempt to push entrepreneurship and innovation beyond the common sense place of management, economics and organizations, and into the unknown and the extreme. To further support this way of thinking about living in beta, note that it is presented as a result of years of collaborative experience of working with and thinking about entrepreneurship and innovation. It is a conclusion made by a seasoned team of experts. Nevertheless, the conclusion is not a final opinion, but a beginning and an opening. Some might have expected a rigid definition, a system or a process, summing up and narrowing towards a clear and concentrated methodology, but living in beta is no such thing. It is rather the opposite.

No clear definition of what living in beta is was ever presented. To underline this, the term was presented at the end of a presentation and at the beginning of an open discussion. The

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81 (Colebrook, 2002, p. 52)
82 The experts referred to is the team behind the company HybridState, consultants working with innovation in a global perspective: [http://www.hybrid-state.com/](http://www.hybrid-state.com/). Andy started the presentation by introducing these individuals and their experience.
conclusion is therefore more of a challenge, to which there are multiple potential solutions. This is the challenge taken up by thinking in terms of an Idea, in terms of potentiality and virtuality.

Consequently we move on, transporting our thought through living in beta, looking for hints that can push it beyond, for example the pointless glorification of creativity, a meaningless mantra leading nowhere, or as one commentator, Alf Rehn, pointed out: “[i]f we just talk about the things we like, we get stuck in the metaphors and just talk about: “you like creativity? I like creativity”, and then we can go on like that for ages.” 83 The mantra is also a mystification that makes creativity something extraordinary and divine, instead of being constantly present. In a way this legitimizes managerial control of entrepreneurship and innovation, the need to manage the creative forces, so unique that they can only be activated under special conditions or they cannot be worked with at all.

Life in beta is an attempt to take entrepreneurship and innovation to the extreme, experimenting with how far we can reach in the context of the symposium. It reminds us that we do not know the boundaries of our world (not even what a body is capable of. To move beyond we need to think beyond and attempt to live in beta, which embodies precisely this kind of thinking.

In that living in beta can differentiate innovative living from other styles of living is not to say that all innovation is by definition about learning to live in beta. It is to say that it is a potentiality of innovative thinking. This section will continue the above discussion, bringing entrepreneurship into the sphere of ethics, which is based on the necessary freedom of ethical thought of which Foucault spoke, and looking to form an Idea of a refrain that is the becoming of living in beta.

4.2.1. Welcome to the Chaos
Beta (β) is the second letter in the Greek alphabet. In product development the concept of beta is often used to signify a specific version, for example in the software industry where it is usually the version before the final, or launched, version. This seemed to be a reference that participants of the symposium connected with, e.g. Jørgen Thorball from Novozymes: “[w]hat I like with the beta thinking is that you also have beta 1.05 and beta 1.06. […] beta implies that you are constantly developing”. 84 It is similar to the point made before as we looked at beta in the context of a post-

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83 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 49)
84 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 55)
industrial description of the economy. ‘There is no finished product’, no final version of a *life in beta* or *becoming beta*. It is a continuous process that requires acceptance of a path without an end. There is therefore the potential of a direct relationship between *living in beta* and the constant *becoming* that more than anything represents Deleuzian thought.

Beta is also a well-known concept in economics, more precisely in relation to stocks. Here beta signifies *volatility*. A high beta value (>1) shows that a certain stock has higher volatility than the stock market. The openness of the term *living in beta* represents certain volatility, as constant development does. There is no stable definition of *living in beta*, as soon as this definition is put together it is obsolete, as we have stated. The same thought was expressed, by Thomas Jensen from Danfoss Universe, in discussions drawing parallels to writing a book:

> Normally, I say, when someone writes a book, that’s not the front of it. It’s the back of it. Jørgen you wrote a book [on entrepreneurship] that came out about 2 years ago. It would have been more interesting to talk to you 8 years ago, when you started having the first inspirations. The book is just a summing up: “ok, now we are here”.85

A book is beta while the author is working on it, in a middle of a crisis, faced with numerous questions. In searching for answers the author goes through periods of devastation, writer’s block, euphoria and everything in between. Usually the book gets published, packed with the writer’s opinions on matters pertaining to his/her topic.

An author *living in beta*, the *becoming* writer, knows that the published book is only one version of the book he could have written and that if he were to start on a book with the same topic again, it would be different. In this respect a book is really a beta version that remains without a final version.

Constant development, represented by becoming and movement, joined by volatility is an excellent description of chaos. As the reader recalls, *living in beta* was put in the context of a world characterized by the experience of a chaos (‘feeling and sensation of chaos’). To live in beta we are advised to embrace chaos and move “into the complexity [and] focus into the whole.

85 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 46)
Finding [ourselves] in several different wholes”. 86 This somewhat cryptic description deserves our attentions and becomes surprisingly insightful when we put it in the context of becomings.

Recall earlier insight to Deleuzian becomings. There are becomings in everything from molecules to stones to animals to humans, which is to say that each of those experiences the world. Opening up for these experiences is a potentiality we have in a process of subjectification, inspired to move beyond that which is.

In a chaotic world the ‘different wholes’ can become different becomings. For example: “[a] becoming-animal always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, in short a multiplicity.”87 All becomings can be described as multiplicities in that they contain multiple differences. A multiplicity can contain any thought, thing, concept, etc. Multiplicities are not a part of a greater whole. They are imminent and “in the most basic sense, a complex structure that does not reference a prior [or transcendent] unity.”88 A multiplicity is rhizomatic in its structure and any multiplicity can relate to another, e.g. the becoming boxfish of a car and becoming shark of a swimmer.89 In the multiplicity the boundaries between different identities are dropped and new differences come to play. We are not searching for likeness, commonness, inclusion, but difference and to go beyond the boundaries of a rigidly segmented world, represented by transcendental and arborescent structures and a priori relations (e.g. manager/employee; product/service; man/animal; object/subject).

Commonness conforms, simplifies and hides the variety in life. In problem solving we tend to conform instead of opening up to difference.90 It is the attitude of a moralist, instead of opening up to diversity, she looks for similarities. This is why conformism is a reactive force and a being rather than a becoming. This also exemplifies the difference between a moralizing human

86 (Andy Wilson, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 48)
87 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 2004, p. 264)
88 (Parr, 2005, p. 176)
89 Bionics provides examples of becoming animal directly related to innovation. Here we have scientists and designers examining animals and nature, not to copy directly, but to learn and find new problem solutions. For example, a shark’s skin inspires the design of fast racing swim suites, providing considerably lower surface resistance in a sport where every millisecond counts (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swimsuit#Competitive_swimwear, accessed 09/27/2009). The way a boxfish’s, awkward and clumsy-looking, body cuts through water motivates DaimlerChrysler to design a new car, combining the practical look of the family car with the ideal aerodynamics of a racing car (http://news.mongabay.com/2005/0710-DaimlerChrysler.html, accessed 09/27/2009). Stay tuned for the hearing equipment for the blind, allowing them to ‘see’ as bats do!
90 Colebrook gives an entreating example: “[R]acism […] is not a logic of exclusion; its violence and tyranny lies in inclusion. […] We are all the same; other cultures need only to be recognized as just like ‘us’.” (Colebrook, 2002, p. 139)
perspective like the one we saw from Hobbes and Machiavelli, explicitly advocating management and control ‘from above’, versus the ethical discussions we see in post-modern philosophy, e.g. in the writings of Foucault and Deleuze.

In opening up for chaos and moving into the complexity we allow ourselves to be affected from different directions and in different ways. As in the *multiplicity* there are no systems and subsystems. It is not a genealogical tree structure. *Living in beta, becoming beta*, is celebrating the world of *becomings* without necessities and without regard to identities. Instead of the identity or characteristics of a person, a product or a service, or for that matter, an animal or a molecule, they all become a multiplicity with the potentiality of becoming connected. *Living in beta* is therefore the ability to create connections and form a refrain in the chaos. We can therefore say that we find ‘ourselves in several different wholes’ when we are able to create connections. This is a fundamental *becoming* or capability of *living in beta* and relates to its purpose as a refrain. To be able not only to make sense in a volatile and chaotic world but to constantly make sense differently – to deterritorialize and reterritorialize – fold, unfold and refold. Embracing the chaos is to be able to create an idea of how the how the world can become different. However, the potentiality of the world is not only found in present opportunities. It extends into past and future. We will take a look at this in the following discussion.

4.2.2. Imagine a Future

*Living in beta* has an important temporal dimension, ‘being’ that which becomes beyond past and present and pointing towards the future. As we will see we can think of learning to *live in beta* as *learning to live in the future*. Therefore we would gain from a concept of a future, open for the active forces of the imagination, unloaded or freed from the limitations of the actuality of past and present. The discussion takes off and is formed by the following remark made by, Richard Nolan:

> Just an observation: The notion of *living in beta*, I underline, I think is a really entreatying concept and the observation is that I founded a consulting company in the 70s, on IT strategy and assessment and strategy. [A] thing we learned as a company is [...] that *to go to the future you have to live in the future* and as a result the culture we tried to create in the organization is to literally make that intangible, of having an organization with a good IT strategy, a value of describing what
it was and actually, as I said, creating an environment where our consultants would live in that future and talk in that future so they could actually create it.91

A couple of minutes later there was a direct response from Daniel, suggesting what was essential to be able to live in the future:

Living in the future: how do you do that? Imagination! [...] Who does that? George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four, really lived in the future, some would say; Dostoyevsky’s [The] Idiot and so on and so forth. Literature is very much about proliferating, enlarging the imaginative dimension of life and in many cases we have moved real life into the formats that literature had presented for us.92

It is common to think of the present as a realization of possibilities bestowed by the past. We tend to look at the whole of history in this way, one event causing another (almost as a matter of necessity). We say that the US invasions in Afghanistan (and even Iraq) were a consequence of 9/11. We create a chain of events, each event having its cause and effect. A present event becomes a realization of a specific possibility within a space of possibilities left by past events and leaves yet another space of possibilities for future events and so on. This is a linear and spatial type of thinking of duration and events. It is our way of making sense of the world around us, finding certainty, security and a sense of understanding. There is always a past that rationalizes a current situation. David Hume (1711-1776) wrote however that cause and effect where nothing but our sensations, inferences made from repeated experiences.93

With living in beta we recognize that the past, present and future are woven into each other, but not as cause and effect. The actuality of past and present does not define directly how the world can become. Explaining this we encounter the previously described concepts of the virtual and the actual.

The problem of thinking about the future as a set of possibilities limited by past and present is that we limit thought and creativity to what is and has been. An understanding that was

91 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 56, emphasis added)
92 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 57, emphasis added)
93 (Hume, 1999)
explicitly rejected by one attendee: “I think it is naive and I think it builds upon a linear thinking of the future and that history is repeating itself”.94 95

In the language of entrepreneurship this line of thinking represents incremental innovation, which we have described in the context of managerial thought. The question becomes how to go beyond, into radicality and transformation? Deleuze suggests offered an explanation through his thought of duration (past, present and future).

Deleuze developed an innovative way of thinking about time, inspired by Bergson (virtual/actual) and Nietzsche (eternal recurrence). Accordingly, the past is an ontological whole of duration, and it is virtual. This is important to keep in mind. It means that the past is not only the past of what has happened and been actualized. It is the past of everything that the world could have become and can become. As before, this potentiality is not limited by what has been actualized, what we have ourselves experienced, read about in history books, etc.

The past is virtual and the present is its actualization, or with the analogy of substance and attributes: the present unfolds, folds and refolds substance by providing it with new attributes, new relations. The imminence of past or duration in the present means that the present has greater potential for transformation than it appears.

Actuality in the event of the present is a difference of identities, “exteriority, of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of order, of quantitative differentiation, of difference in degree”.96 A computer is a computer, a chair is a chair. But there is another kind of difference, virtual difference or difference in kind. One “of succession, of fusion, of organization, of heterogeneity”.97 It is the difference of the multiplicity where windmills can become giants, urinals can become fountains and fishes can become cars.

Any event is open to the unlimited virtual difference in kind, until the decisive moment where we say, ‘this has happened’. What Ole Fogh Kirkeby (2004) calls the proto-event, the event where we make sense of what has happened (invasion, terrorism, war) and ‘losing’ the potentiality of the event. But let’s finally focus on the future.

94 For clarification, the utterance was made to reject a certain idea of a possible future development.
95 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 54)
96 (Deleuze G., Bergsonism, 1988, p. 38)
97 (Deleuze G., Bergsonism, 1988, p. 38)
“What I think is especially interesting here, when we talk about philosophy and art, is to challenge mind, to move beyond what used to be there or is there.”  

We now have the fundaments to establish a concept of a future that goes beyond linear thought of past and present and opens up for radical innovations or lines of flight that break-out and free themselves from difference in degree and incremental development based on actualized past and present.

Nietzsche was a man of the future in more than one sense. We could say that he wrote for and about the future as his work gained recognition long after his death, inspiring some of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century. One of his best-known concepts is the eternal recurrence: “behold, you are the teacher of the eternal recurrence”, the animals mock Zarathustra. “Behold, we know what you teach: that all things recur eternally, and we ourselves too; and that we have already existed an eternal number of times, and all things with us.”

Rather than interpreting the eternal recurrence as something like ‘history repeats itself’ or some sort of reincarnation, Deleuze finds a future that, despite being of the past, is eternally open to change and creative cracks. It is the eternal recurrence of difference.

Duration as past, present and future contains virtual multiplicities, whose difference is difference in kind, opposed to a difference in degree or of identities (actualized difference, the “this is what I sense” or “this is what happened”). The difference in kind of the eternal recurrence is virtual substance unfolded, folded and refolded again and again. It is becoming itself, the becoming of difference (May (2005) sums the whole of this discussion up in a single sentence: “The past is duration; the present is actualization; the future is the eternal [recurrence]”).

Chance is at the heart of thinking of the future as eternal recurrence. There is no transcendental force, neither God nor determinism that delimits the future. The only necessity is the necessity of chance. “Nietzsche turns chance into an affirmation.” Deleuze explains:

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98 (Jørgen Thorball, 2009, p. 46, emphasis added)
99 (Nietzsche F. W., 1976, p. 332)
100 (Nietzsche F. W., 1976, p. 332)
101 (May, 2005, p. 62)
102 (Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy, 1983, p. 26, emphasis in original text)
To affirm is to unburden: not to load life with the weight of higher values, but to **create** new values which are those of life, which make life light and active. To invent new forms of life rather than separating life from what it can do.103

Affirmation therefore is to embrace chance and the recurrence of difference, which connects us with stoic philosophy, of wishing for everything to happen exactly the way it does. For Kirkeby this means to be worthy of what happens to you, “not just by enduring it, but by being its motor of transformation.”104 This is precisely what it means to embrace chance, according to Deleuze, i.e. to **invent**, which is “to produce and create with the **imagination**”.105

We now better understand what Daniel meant by imagination being an answer to how we might live in the future and how imagination can be described in relation to thinking of the infinite potentiality of the future and an affirmative approach. We have also gained insight into the literal examples he comes up with, e.g. the George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Orwell’s description of a potential future is not based on any linear thought. It is an experiment, thinking totalitarianism to the extreme, going beyond experience and putting it in a new context, creating new affects and connections. For example to a total world order, war, language, love, media, literature and so on, and at the same time creating concepts, e.g. ‘Newspeak’, ‘doublethink’ and ‘Big Brother’.

Chance, i.e. the swirling currents of active and reactive forces, and a vital characteristic of the chaos we discussed earlier, does not therefore mean that we are destined to drift like wood on the raging sea of life. We can put ourselves on the side of active forces by affirming chance, ‘being worthy of what happens to us’ and through our imaginations we can learn how to swim in the flow of currents, winds and waves. Not by cutting off or controlling, but exploring the potentials of an active force. Take it as far as possible.

In the 1970s most people didn’t **affirm** or understand the potentials of IT: “One of the first things we encountered was walking into large organizations, which were the ones having computers at that time, saying: “We are here to sell IT strategy,” and they were saying: “What?!”.106

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103 (Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy, 1983, p. 185, emphasis in original text)
104 (Kirkeby, 2004, p. 308)
106 (Richard Nolan, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 56)
Richard and his partners founded their company on the basis of many years of research, but they found out that their future prediction was not inevitable, and they had to react, or more accurately imagine and invent: “We very quickly learned that we needed to educate the market in order to sell into it. We had to share the articles and that kind of thing.” 107 Andy had made a similar point earlier: “[...] what you are talking about is selling visions. You sell it with yourself, your core”. 108

Richard and Andy are obviously not describing a world of necessities, but a world with a variety of potentials that we are able to affect. In this world, an entrepreneur ‘living in beta’ imagines and invents for the purpose of, on the one hand, become worthy of a future. 109 We can argue that this is precisely what Nolan did in his research, i.e. creating a vision and a map of a potential future. We tend to think that research is an objective process, a discovery of reality. However by now we should know that this is not the case. Imagination and inventiveness are always vital elements, though they may be hidden behind a priori ideas of the world and its phenomena, and they are rarely as vital as when it comes to future predictions. This is what Daniel is referring to above. Saying that we have moved real life into the formats of literature, even scientific research always has an important fictive element in its interpretation and fundamental views. Marketing and branding, for example, are in the business of creating and telling stories, and now we have begun talking about marketing and branding for everything from products to persons, from organizations and states.

On the other hand, imagination and inventiveness helps to make the world worthy of what might happen to it. In that respect the consultants tried to create an organizational culture according to the envisioned future, educate the market and share the relevant information. 110

In a world of chance, the IT revolution was not a necessity. No change is. They are products of chance, prepared and utilized by individuals like Mr. Nolan and his partners.

107 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 56)
108 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 46)
109 This is a paraphrasing of Kirkeby, who writes of becoming worthy of the event and what happens to you. This means to be equal to the event by being its motor of transformations (Kirkeby, Eventum Tantum: To Make the World Worthy of What could Happen To It, 2004, p. 308).
110 The two steps are inspired by Kirkeby’s (2004) article Eventum Tantum.
Imagination and inventiveness directs us towards another concept connected to beta becoming. It is one which, possibly more than any other, distinguishes learning to live in beta and assembles and adds to previous discussions. This is playfulness.

4.2.3. Meet Resistance with Playfulness
Now we have related living in beta with inventiveness and imagination that can move beyond the scope of actualized reality. It is a chaotic reality where the only certainty is chance and change. There is however reason to add to these implications made regarding a life in beta. How could we become inventive and imaginative, without trying to develop a fixed process, but rather add to the refrain of becoming beta and take it further? Jørgen, a doctor of medicine, problematized the situation and the boundaries of imagination further.

The problem here is that we are fighting against our own mentality, the way our brain is organized. Every time we try to think out of the box, the brain resists. That applies to all of us, because it creates this uncertainty. And also the objectivity of what the world is about [is] challenged, and we are all already borderline insane anyway. We are between insanity and boredom. We are trying to navigate ourselves and then we are asked to be more innovative and creative on top.111

If we are mentally and physically resisting the potentiality of the imagination we need to ask how it might be possible to cheat or create cracks in these ‘stone-walls’ (as Dostoyevsky called the walls of ‘truths’ and opinions that demarcate and restrain thought and action in Notes from the Underground). Deleuze spoke of opinions and common-sense in our day-to-day usage. Our laziness to think, would concentrate experiences and thought previous and common opinions. This is what an objective view of the world ultimately is according to a post-modern perspective: opinions that we acquire through experience and most of them social constructions. Foucault described it as the result of a power/knowledge struggle where power defined knowledge and vice versa.

Jørgen is saying that we hold on to our opinions because they give us certainty in an uncertain world, keeping us away from boredom and insanity. But is it there that we find inventiveness and imagination? Deleuze would agree with this assertion as far as they represent

111 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 54)
ways of thinking in extreme forms, escaping the fetters of opinions. Alf Rehn had even stated earlier at the symposium that some of man’s most radical and fundamental innovations were products of boredom:

The original Stone Age man lived, according to the data we have, in abundance. The economy we know today was created because the aboriginal man got bored: “uhh, let’s build a church.” And there is only so much time you can spend in conversation [and] copious copulation. So you had to figure out something else to do, so we started creating economies, we started herding things, creating rituals etc.\(^{112}\)

We might describe boredom as resistance as the experience of a lacking resistance, of not being affected. Something we all experience, at one time or another. Insanity, as a symptom, does not appear approachable in any convenient or acceptable way. But is insanity maybe also to pose unusual questions and arrive at abnormal solutions? Could we then not all potentially become insane? May (2005, p. 85) writes that solutions are actual, but problems virtual, i.e. that to access virtuality we should problematize. This can be described as not going directly from a problem to think of a solution, as we are accustomed to, but instead to see them as opening up fields of discussion. A short example might be to ask why it is for example that all of a sudden, there are men with mobile coffee stations in downtown Copenhagen having great success, selling coffee to people. Is it simply a need for coffee ‘on-the-run’ they are fulfilling? Is it because they can offer their coffee cheaper than the coffee houses? Is it because there was unused space on the streets, or lack of reasons for people to stop or form groups?

Problematization is to consciously create resistance, and use that to stimulate imagination and inventiveness. Andy also speaks of resistance, but in a slightly different way.

[In chaos] the mind and the body [are] out of sync. Acting and thinking at the same point in time and when there is conflict, for example when you have a group of models coming into a boardroom or a very, very small room. They are like cut out of a magazine. They act and walk like models. They stand and you sit with a bit of sandwich hanging out of your

\(^{112}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 28)
mouth and you are like: “ahhuhhhehhh...” and they don’t move. You are challenged to move way beyond your boundaries.  

What happens? Do we cave in, let the murmur be the last thing we say and do? Or do we affirm the resistance, take on the challenge and imagine and invent? We could explore the potentials of the event by involving the fashion models in the discussion and connecting the current topic to their world of experiences. We might be inspired and act on something more specific in the situation: a piece of clothing, a smile, a lipstick colour, that would change the event to something other than and beyond an organizational meeting. Are we able to enjoy the experience of being in a room, overcrowded with beautiful women?

Andy is pointing out the power of resistance, even crisis, i.e. a disruptive event that does not comply with our expectations. The voluptuous fashion models crowding the boardroom disturb the rigid lines of communication, behaviour, rank, attention, thought and so on. They stimulate new thoughts and ideas that collide with our opinions, deforming, bending and welding, transforming the space so its rules are unknown and dynamic. Thought and action are improvisations. We become worthy of the event – or not.

The described event shows how resistance affects us and inspires us to explore the virtuality of an event, almost forcing us to imagine and invent by removing the routine and the security of opinions, or making the routine the only absurd potentiality, as in this example. Resistance, from this perspective, is unexpected in that we cannot move from it straight to our opinions. There is an element of surprise that stimulates imagination and makes any respond or a solution experimental, inventing a line of flight.

If we can speak of resistance in the form of problematizations and disruptive affects, how do we approach resistance?

I am in love with the role of being a corporate jester. I have been with companies where it was not allowed to do failures. So I did a lot of failures. People were watching me, saying: “When will you be fired?” I kept on failing on purpose and I spoke of them as a corporate jester, fooling around. [W]hen they realized that I wasn’t fired and was actually invited to different sessions, they started to realize that maybe there is a small chance of being a hero.

113 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 46-7, emphasis added)
in this company. Meaning, you talk about failures. So I always go to the extreme and say: “Well if you have a problem here, I’ll show you what happens here”.114

Thomas advocates play, humour, foolishness, of going to the extreme when he faces resistance, creating more problems and even failing on purpose and making fun of his own failures. He even suggests that such behaviour is rewarded in the end. Thomas’s description complements the playful human Daniel spoke of. We can propose playfulness as an approach to resistance. The playfulness that like a nomad, does not respect boundaries, coming in of the steppes “sow[ing] deterritorialization everywhere”.115

4.3. Inhale and Move On
The lesson we are learning [...] is: LEARN TO LIVE IN BETA! [T]here is no finished product. We change constantly, our market changes constantly. It allows us to believe in the freedom of innovation society – living in BETA.116

Now we have formed some idea of what living in beta could become. Starting by looking at what it is not, from a managerial view, we developed three offshoots. The first one pointed towards an ontology based on a chaos of constant change and chance. From there on it became a question of how to live in such a beta-world, which in the end is similar to the description of the post-industrial economy – how to create a refrain? Answers to this question are presented in the concepts of imagination and inventiveness: to imagine and invent a future that is not necessary or determined, but based on something we might call ‘beta-ontology’ and which relates to Deleuze’s ontology of difference. Therefore the future is presented in the form of an eternal return of difference.

Affirming difference and chaos is to unburden ‘life with the weight of higher values’, making life ‘light and active’. Playfulness, adds to an affirmative approach, or might even be considered of it. Playfulness seeks out, creates and celebrates resistance, for resistance can unburden or free us from our opinions and open the abyss of virtuality for the imagination.

114 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 53, emphasis added)
115 (Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus. London, 1988, p. 222)
116 (Andy Wilson, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 45, emphasis added)
Additionally, what we can take from the above discussion is the fundamental concept of *freedom*. Andy tells us that living in beta, allows us to believe in the freedom of innovation society, a society of entrepreneurship (see above). This must be, as we have implicitly confirmed, that living in beta is the exercise of freedom, which is a reference to Foucault (1997, p. 284), as the reader may recall, i.e. of freedom being the ontological condition of ethics and ethics the practice of freedom. Once again we the ethicality of living in beta is revealed.

In this context, we must remember that freedom is not just about being *free from* something. Just as Daniel pointed out in the previous chapter that digitalization has provided us with more freedom, but at the same time made it impossible to escape employers, customers and so on. More important is to be *free for* a purpose, the freedom to create and innovate. That is the freedom of living in beta.

Therefore, ethics and subjectification is always a part of entrepreneurship as something that creates and introduces something new to the world. Living in beta may therefore be related to any form for entrepreneurship or industry. Nevertheless, there can be aspects of the economy with stronger relations to ethical thought than others.

*Design* and *experience economy*, were two of the main themes of the conference, relating to almost every topic or penetrating it in discussions. But it’s not only for this reason that they will specifically be discussed in the context of an ethical discussion of *living in beta*.

With regard to design there are different ways of describing this relationship. According to John Locke (1632-1704), we give form to ourselves as we give form to things: a carpenter, a mason and a software programmer are giving form to themselves, at the same time they execute their work. For Karl Marx, man is an animal that gives form to its tools. Finally, Foucault thought of ethics as a *form-giving practice*. Life could be thought of as a work of art, giving form through ethical thought and action. Does that not imply that we might learn something by looking at our actions when we are giving form to things? What is more is that the discussion will revolve around the relationship between design and *meaning*. From a post-modern perspective meaning is created by a perspective (see methodology discussion) and relations, so that who we “are” and who we become is influenced and reflected in meaning. This point will become clearer as we move along.

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117 (Thyssen, 2003, p. 313)

118 (Thyssen, 2003, p. 313)
The relation between experience economy and subjectification is even more explicit, according to Daniel Hjorth, the main presenter on the subject: “The experience economy is about becoming the *author of your own life script*”.\(^{119}\) The idea here is that we are able to buy certain experiences or take part in them and through them we become – a capitalization of subjectification?

Design and experience economy will be discussed respectively in the two following chapters. Framing the design chapter is Roberto Verganti’s presentation of design-driven innovation. The experience economy discussion takes, as its point of origin, Daniel’s presentation. The purpose is twofold. On one hand to exemplify and contribute to some of the elements we have related to beta life and on the other to add to its meaning, become additional offshoots.

### 5. Design-Driven Innovation

The first day of the symposium was heavily design focused, not only because of the agenda or the topics, but also due to an interesting theory presented by Roberto Verganti regarding the relationship between design and innovation. The theory is the product of a large research project made within the design industry in Italy in the Milan area.

This chapter, with its focus on design, explains and reflects on Roberto’s theory in the context of his presentation and related discussions, but guided by question of how to *learn to live in beta*.

After a short general discussion of design and an introduction to Roberto’s theory, a case is presented to support the theory. Roberto presented two cases, demonstrating the theory or the innovative process he calls *design-driven innovation*. Following his lead the first case presented is the case of the Nintendo Wii gaming console. Thereafter we discuss the theoretical process in more detail and finally present the latter case of Alessi’s kettle design.

While the overall description of the two cases relies on the description given at the conference, going into some detail or emphasizing certain aspects, I will draw from a few additional resources beyond the symposium.

\(^{119}\) (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 18)
5.1. Innovating Through Meaning in Design

In the context of living in beta, thinking about the relationship between design and innovation is to ask what design can become. How we can think of design to the extreme, approaching its infinite potentials – infinite, partially because of the monstrosity of the concept itself. There is, for example, no such thing as non-design. We can only divide between good and bad design, intentional and unintentional, natural and human and so on.

A common constraint on the concept of design is reflected in the term functional art – art becoming functional. Art, in a narrow aesthetical understanding, or as beauty on top of function is also commonly related to design. Actually, aesthetical changes will not lead to radical innovations, according to Roberto:

[!]f design was just about aesthetics the connection between design and innovation would be very weak. Actually, sometimes innovation and beauty are in contrast. [Y]ou recognize something as beautiful […], because it reminds you of some standards of beauty. [Design] is not about style”.¹²⁰ ¹²¹

Regarding functionality, we can also say that improvements in functionality may well be called radical, but as there is a shift in functionality, a side-step would recreate values and markets. In these cases we might be talking about something other than functional innovation.

Roberto takes a third approach to design, relating design and innovation: “The connection between design and innovation is that design is innovating the meaning of things”.¹²² Designing and experiencing design, we are compelled to apply meaning to it. Meaning also relates directly to the etymology of the word design (Latin: de + signare), as Roberto points out, which is to give significance, making sense of things.¹²³

¹²⁰ [CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 9 ]
¹²¹ It is worth noting that here the words ‘aesthetics’ and ‘style’ are seemingly interpreted narrowly, primarily referring to beauty. Both concepts can however be used without or beyond this reference, which would not exclude them in discussions of design and innovation.
¹²² [CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 9, emphasis added]
¹²³ "The etymology of design goes back to the Latin de + signare and means making something, distinguishing it by a sign, giving it significance, designating its relation to other things, owners users or gods. Based on this original meaning, on e could say: design is making sense (of things).” Krippendorff, K. (1989). On the Essential Context of Artifacts or on the Proposition that “Design Is Making Sense (of Things).” Design Issues 5(2):9-38 (Spring).
In this respect there is the clear relationship with the subjectification of *living in beta* and design and meaning. *Living in beta* and innovative design both share the becoming of creating new meanings. Both strive to make sense of the world differently. In the context of *living in beta* we therefore take a look at design and meaning, hoping to gain an understanding of how new meaning could be created. On the other hand, meaning becomes, in the context of an *idea*, a concept to guide thought towards that which design can become.

5.2. Case: Nintendo Wii – New Problems in Console Gaming

The reason why I talk about this product is because this is exactly one of the most interesting examples of what design is. It is not about style. I will say that, aesthetically speaking this is one generation [behind], because they took inspiration from the iPod [...]. But this is not about style, it is about the meaning.124

Nintendo Wii surprised the market and outperformed its competitors, the giants Sony and Microsoft, which offer consoles far superior in technology and style. What Nintendo has managed to do is change the *meaning* of console gaming. In conventional console gaming, the user can sit completely still, moving only his/her thumbs, while beating Manchester United in a game of football or slaying a vicious dragon. Nintendo, on the other hand, has gone against the trend of moving the whole of the action into cyberspace and moves it in the opposite direction, (back) to reality. The user is active in both places. Movements of hands and/or legs (with the whole of the body following) are translated into cyberspace. You might swing the control in your living room as you swing your sword on a battlefield in medieval times or hit a tennis ball towards a digital Agassi.

In short, console gaming is not the same as before given the advent of the Nintendo Wii. It puts gaming in a different context, creating new relations that give different meaning and actualizing new potentials:

*A family comes together on a Thursday evening and plays bowling in the living room, almost as if it were a bowling alley (“now we don’t just do things together during the holidays”, Mrs. Anderson declares). A Hollywood star recovering from a heart attack builds up strength using his Nintendo *

124 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 9)
("I’m playing a lot of Wii!", Kelsey Grammar adds). Retirement homes use Wii to activate the elderly, e.g. in a game of tennis or golf ("the Wii means I can do some things that in reality I’m a little past [laughs]", the 85-year-old James states).

Sony and Microsoft, on the other hand, still deal with a similar set of problems as they have in previous versions.

[W]hen[they] thought of a new generation they went to IBM and asked for a very, very powerful [equipment]. It is very simple, because they were observing users and they were observing teenagers in the basements, and they were seeing that teenagers wanted to have real fast-moving graphics.

Their focus is on improving their previous solutions for the current market. That is the platform on which they innovate in style, technology and experience. Nintendo had been taking part in the same race, but their sales figures soared with every new version. Up until the point that they were forced to take a chance – experiment. Takeda Genyo, the head of development of Nintendo, explained the situation in an interview in 2006:

It was around a year after we started the development of the Wii [...]. When talking with our development partners, I noticed that there is no end to the wants a person can have when they keep thinking of making things better. It isn’t like a person who gained one then reaches for two, and then for three. It’s more like five, ten, 30, then 100 and onwards. These wishes exponentially increase. If we simply follow these, we’d end up with a disaster.

With Wii, Nintendo offers a solution to a different set of problems (e.g. togetherness, rehabilitation and exercise, even surgical training). By creating these new relations it opens new

127 (Roberto Verganti, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 9)
markets, touching a broader age group with a larger variety of interests. It is console gaming going far beyond teenage leisure. Gaming has been given a new meaning, a different way of playing and ultimately a different way of living in the context of console gaming.

Style, function and technology follow and support the shift in meaning: we get a simple remote control resembling a classic TV remote, which is familiar to almost everybody. The technological development is a shift or a break, not necessarily an improvement. It now focuses on creating an immersing experience with 3D motion sensors, force feedback mechanism, built-in speakers, infrared pointers, etc. This Nintendo did instead of dramatically faster processors or finer pixels like its competitors. The result is, as Roberto points out, that Wii is the most successful gaming console in terms of sales, and they are the only one of the three producers that is making money on selling the consoles, as the others are so expensive in production.

Before moving on we can see that what Nintendo has problematized console gaming differently from Microsoft and Sony, allowing them to find a different solution and meaning. Next we will see how such a process or space can be created and who the players are.

5.3. An Innovative Design Process: Creating Resistance
Roberto calls the process of innovating in design through meaning design-driven innovation and contrasts it to the very popular innovation ‘church’ of Eric von Hippel and user-driven innovation. A short description of user-driven innovation is that the user drives innovation. Organizations study end-users’ behaviour and opinions to innovative further, as we saw in the example of Sony and Microsoft.

Design-driven innovation does not rely on end-users in the same way, though still of course innovating for and in the context of end-users. Roberto even states that by moving closer to the user, entrepreneurs get trapped in a narrow perspective, gaining insight only into “how people give meaning to things. Not how they could give meaning to things differently.” User-driven innovation represents a perspective that is invested in the present meaning of things and therefore with a strong tendency to remain within the same design language. The critique from

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131 A description of Nintendo Wii, parts and technology, can for example be found here: [http://scriblerus.net/kunkelfruit/index.php?title=Nintendo_Wii#Wii_Remote](http://scriblerus.net/kunkelfruit/index.php?title=Nintendo_Wii#Wii_Remote) (accessed: 09/27/09). Here it is also stated that researchers spent an entire year on an infrared pointer that would work in rooms of all sizes.

132 (Roberto Verganti, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 11, emphasis according to vocal expression)

133 According to Roberto Verganti (2008, p. 440) a design language contains a specific set of signs, symbols and icons that deliver a message.
Roberto could also sound in the way that users have a tendency to stick to actuality when they are asked about innovation, blocking the lines of flight that could become radically innovative. Possibly because most users used to think in this way, or they way they are asked is always in the context of a previous product.

Sony’s PlayStation 3 and Microsoft’s Xbox 360 may be considered radically innovative in terms of technology. They did not, however, change the meaning of console gaming, as we saw in the case of the Wii, but stayed within the boundaries of the actualized past, rather than creating a future.

Rather than asking the customer directly what she wants in the context of a specific product, Roberto points out the need to step-back:

[W]hat we have to learn is that, actually, [the innovative organization] makes a step back and looks at the broader picture, because the way people give meaning to things depends on the context of life and if you can understand how the context of life can change, or capture the change […], you can have a better guess of how people could give meaning to things in the future.134

Roberto here deals with a problem similar to the discussion taking place in the previous chapter regarding imagination and future. Stepping back, however, sounds slightly different than affirmation, in that it suggests that we try to understand the ‘context of life’, how it can change and how people give meaning to things. In an attempt to answer these questions we start with examples from art, everyday experiences and then discuss Deleuze’s machine concept.

Things gain meaning (or are given meaning) through relations with other things. Especially since the early 20th century, art has dealt with the problem of creating meaning. Marcel Ducamp (1887-1968), is a classic example. At the start of this period, coined the term ‘readymade’ for his method of taking common objects out of their usual environment – a bicycle wheel, a bottle rack and a urinal – transforming their relations, changing the context and turning them into objects of art.

The art of Olafur Eliasson, a renowned Icelandic/Danish artist, also deals with how we create meaning from our experiences. In his work there is an attempt to think through the whole

134 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 11)
‘process’ of experiencing his work: from the advertisements, brochures, entering a gallery, noises in the surroundings and so on. The pieces themselves are then often made as transparent as possible, so that the viewer can see exactly how it has been created, seeing the relations that make up the effects experienced and the meaning s/he attributes to the work.\footnote{Pedersen, 2004}

We experience, in everyday practice, how we assign different meanings to things, events and utterances depending on their context. Most of us have experienced, for example, the fine balance between a joke becoming offensive and hilarious. It all depends on who tells it to whom, where and when. A large sharp knife does not raise alarm as it slices through the Sunday steak, but had you brought it along to a pub or a disco the night before, it is not certain you would have made it home before dinner, due to the difference in the meaning bestowed on the knife.

Deleuze’s concept of a \textit{machine} grasps the idea of different contexts resulting in different meanings. Instead of looking at a designed thing as a closed system of a fixed meaning and identity, we can think of it as a machine, which “is nothing more than its connections; it is not made by anything, is not for anything, and has no closed identity”.\footnote{Colebrook, 2002, p. 56} The kitchen knife becomes its connections: to someone holding it, to the kitchen or to the pub, from a Sunday-steak-cutting-machine (steak knife) to a potential killing-machine (weapon). The knife itself is also composed of parts that gain meaning through their connections, i.e. its haft and blade, which again are composed objects, down to and beyond the molecular level.

\textit{A user or a customer} is precisely that in and because of a specific context. The 15-year-old gamer has a PlayStation, because s/he likes to sit in a dark room in front of a (42” plasma) screen and blast away aliens, race cars, etc. with minimum physical/muscular strain and maximum audio and visual stimulus. That is what console gaming means to her, so her main concern will be how to enhance this meaning and this experience, rather than creating something different. This is what Roberto (and Genyo) is referring to with the need to step back, the current customer has the understandable tendency to be immersed in her own context of life, shaping her interpretations of meaning. To ‘step back’, in this sense, is to think of things as \textit{machines} or in terms of relations, and to innovate becomes the ability to create new relations and \textit{interpret} their meaning. In a chaotic world innovativeness requires a creation of relations, \textit{multiplicity} of objects, ideas, concepts, becomings and bodies that can be translated into something meaningful.
A console is not a closed mechanism of processors, memory chips and remote controls, but a dynamic machine in a world of obesity, lack of exercise, desire to socialize and move, of people in all age groups with time to ‘kill’ and so on.

There are two primary players to be mentioned in design-driven innovation: the entrepreneur and the interpreter. The entrepreneur creates a platform for innovative design. The platform can be described as a space for collaboration, containing a problematization related to a vision. Drawing from Robert Austin and Daniel Hjorth (2008), Roberto’s entrepreneur can be described as a gardener and his activities gardening: a way of living that refers to patience, alertness, care and repetition. It shifts the managerial focus from careers to care, from guarding to gardening.\textsuperscript{137}

The entrepreneur then casts in the “roles” of interpreters, often relying on external resources:

There are many types of interpreters that are researching how people give meaning to things. [...] If your company is doing lamps, like Artemide, and your promise is not to help people to change bulbs, and you want really to change the meaning of lamps. You want people to feel better when they use your lamps. And your problem is really how to make people feel better when they come back home at 7 o’clock at night. There are so many other companies that have the same kind of problems.\textsuperscript{138}

Roberto goes on to mention companies like Philips, with their LCD and plasma screens, a sofa manufacturer, TV channels and so on, as possible helpful interpreters, and the same applies to designers, suppliers, schools and artists sharing similar problems.

It is important to note that there is talk of interpreters and not necessarily designers in a conventional understanding. Interpreters are sense-makers or cartographers, making sense of the world, researching in the context of life and its potentials. But what does ‘researching in the context of life’ mean?

Roberto is not very specific here, beyond the examples given. To gain an understanding we could start with Deleuze’s (Foucault, 1999) comparison of Foucault’s work to cartography, and

\textsuperscript{137} (Austin & Hjorth, 2008, p. 14)
\textsuperscript{138} (Roberto Verganti, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 11)
already we might be drawing a very Foucaultian image of interpreters and ‘stepping back’, that it becomes an eternal process of trying to understand the world and (re)construct it. That is perfectly all right.

Let us take a closer look at how the work of an interpreter might be described as a cartographical becoming. Researching in the context of life resembles cartography in that there is a terrain that cartographers want to represent and to do that they use various modes of projection. What gets mapped depends on where and how they look and what they want to represent. There is no right or true map, for any terrain there will be an indefinite number of useful maps, only the usefulness determines their value. Again, in line with the implied ontology of living in beta, researching in the context of life is not a process of discovery, but construction and creation, imagination and invention.

Secondly, entrepreneurial research must be experimental, in this case with design and what it is capable of; in developing ways for design to change the context of life (though it may be in a minuscule way). Experimenting is the only way to break free from the context of life, from past and present, and construct lines of flight or movements of deterritorialization. Playfulness is an obvious ingredient in the research process of the interpreter, but it also adds to our understanding of playfulness, and its relation to what would usually be described as ‘serious’ research. For example, the playfulness of going beyond organizational boundaries in a search for interpreters; asking a lamp to improve life; putting a small ‘singing’ bird on a kettle (as we will come to see) or offering people to swing a remote in their living rooms, surrounded by potted plants and family pictures, while slaying a dragon. We will revisit this topic in the next chapter on experience economy to gain further insight into the relationship between research and playfulness. To exemplify the design-driven process in action we turn to the next case.

5.4. Case: Alessi
The Nintendo Wii console is an excellent example of how changing meaning relates design with radical innovation. The latter case presented by Roberto at the symposium was presented in a session under the topic of experience economy, but demonstrates the design-driven innovation process we have been discussing. Due to these two relations the case is first discussed in the

139 (Weick, 1990, p. 9)
current context of design-driven innovation and then again following the experience economy, where the consequence, or the meaning, of the two relations is analyzed.

Alessi is a northern Italian home-furnishing manufacturer. The product we are especially interested in is a teakettle (model 9093). It is a playful cone-shaped kettle with a little plastic birdie affixed to its spout. The kettle is designed by the now-famous architect, Michael Graves. Since its introduction in 1985 the kettle has sold over 1.5 million units, considered to be a phenomenal success for an expensive kettle.

Alessi is a part of the Lombardy design discourse, a loose collection of home-furnishing companies creating highly marketable products with a distinctive profile. Being located in Milan they are a part of a unique community of schools, museums, designers and manufacturers.

Summing up the design process of the kettle, factually sticking to the description given by Roberto at the symposium, Alberto Alessi, chief executive of Alessi, created a platform in the form of a competition between ten foreign post-modern architects (interpreters), none of whom had designed products before. The basic problematization of the competition was based on an inspiration from psychological theory on transitional objects. It refers to the transitional period of children around the age of one, as they gain more independence and get used to life without being constantly in the presence of their mother. Psychology suggests transitional objects, typically a teddy bear or a doll, are used by children to make this period easier. Apparently adults also have transitional objects, for example a BMW, i.e. an object representing something other than the object itself. According to Roberto, today every other producer in the industry has adapted this philosophy, but Alessi was the first.

One of the first experiments undertaken, after the constitution of the platform, was for each of the designers to design a tea or coffee service line, without limitations of functionality and price. The architects were told to bring the language of post-modernity into the product. In other words, they were to create a connection between kitchen utensils and post-modern architectural thought. The result was a new language in product design, and Alessi found out that Michael Graves, one of the interpreters, was a great product designer.

A second experiment was for Michael Graves to design a kettle that had to be functional and not very expensive. This resulted in the creation of model 9093, about three years later.
The Alessi case is presented as a refined example of the design-driven innovation process.140 All the elements described before are represented. Alberto Alessi (the patient gardener) creates a space that contains the psychological idea of transitional objects. The process itself is an experiment without certainty of success, other than the dedication of those involved. The ten post-modern architects are interpreters. Their experience as architects can be described as a map or maps of the world. The question is: how are they able to interpret their cartography in a new terrain; to make new connections to live; to create new meaning in the design of utensils? The answers varied, but one was to be chosen.

Alessi changed the meaning in the design of utensils, but there seem to be some fundamental differences when compared to the Nintendo Wii case.

Alessi’s kettle does not reflect change in functionality or usability. It is rather in its form, contrary to the Nintendo Wii. This is only to underline the fact that in design-driven innovation changing meaning is a primary and differentiating factor. Functionality and form are consequences of a change in meaning, but at the same time, the means to get there.

5.5. Design-Driven Innovation and Learning to Live in Beta
Now, pause for a moment. There have been made several explicit and implicit connections in the previous discussion to living in beta (they have themselves been made rather playfully). Fundamentally the description Roberto gives of design-driven innovation can be described as creating resistance through novel problematizations following a creative process of creating solutions.

A platform is created. The platform can be described with the concepts used to describe the global space of the post-industrial economy earlier. It is a platform of tactics, active forces, suppleness and molecular lines, always to be reviewed and transcended – platform for serious playfulness.

Roberto calls the company and its chief executive, Alessi, the ‘maestros’ of the design-driven innovation process. Without the brand, the history, the capital, the manufacturing and marketing capabilities and the selection of interpreters, none of this would have been actualized.

140 As a matter of fact Verganti’s fascination is such that he has stated that Alessi and others related to the Lombardy discourse have created “nothing less than an engine of innovation” (Verganti, Innovating Through Design, 2006, p. 1).
and become a success.\textsuperscript{141} But more importantly the ‘maestro’ contributes with a vision and a problem, going back and asking what is a kettle? And then: what is a kettle in the context of post-modern architecture and transitional objects? The same in the Wii case: what can a game console become?

The gardening skills of Roberto’s entrepreneur are measured by the ability to bring in relevant knowledge of social, artistic and/or technical contexts. Joined by a vision and a problem, the interpreters, contribute with their maps and contexts to understand the world and compose a new virtual plane of potential solutions. What counts as relevant knowledge is experimental and can only be known when looking back on the project.

The playfulness is important, both in the creation of the platform as an experiment in itself, open to surprising results and in the approach of the interpreter that enters a new space, dealing with new problems and new experiences, a space for imagination and inventiveness to be applied in. Ultimately we can see that stepping back and affirmation actually complement each other. Grave and the other architects will have had to step back, affirming or ‘unburden’ the opinion or the boundary, that architecture was the design of buildings, that their knowledge could be applied to kettles.

Going back to Kirkeby (2004), creating new meanings with design, in the end, can only be viewed as preparing for what could happen, which requires the acceptance and understanding that we cannot manage the creation of meaning as a manager on a factory floor or a general in an army. In the end the entrepreneur and the interpreter are playfully putting something into the world as an experiment. This something is a machine and a beta, always becoming in the face of life, which brings us the experience economy.

In the experience economy the concept of the interpreter becomes more diffused. Who is really the interpreter, for example of Alessi’s kettle? Who gives it meaning or could we even speak of non-meaning? This may sound paradoxical, but there is no exclusion in relation to what has previously been said.

Interpretation and experience is very relevant for the living in beta discussion. It is through experience that subjectification takes place and we become. But what kind of experiences can help us to learn to live in beta? Can push the boundaries of our imagination?

\textsuperscript{141} It also seems to be the perception of customers that reward Alessi by buying the original versions, despite the existence of cheaper copies – even made by the same designer (Verganti, Innovating Through Design, 2006).
6. Experience Economy

Actually, we are already in the midst of a discussion relating to the so-called experience economy. As stated, the Alessi case was presented under the topic of experience economy, but at the same time added to an understanding of the relationship between meaning and design, outlining a relationship between design, meaning and experience. Both Alessi’s kettle and Nintendo’s Wii can be viewed as examples of experience economy. Experience takes centre stage in both products, so one could ask if it might even be possible to replace ‘meaning’ with ‘experience’, i.e. that the innovation they represent could be the transformation of the experience of playing console gaming and using and observing a kettle? For such a swap of concepts to be useful it would, however, have to show something different about innovation, another perspective. We will wait with such experiments, at least until we have some better understanding of the experience economy.

In this chapter we start by following Daniel’s presentation of the experience economy, where he presents his idea in the context of the concept of in-betweens and a case from the automobile industry. The discussions taking place following the presentation will also be influential. The primary focus will be on the in-between concept and how that can be understood in the context of the experience economy and ultimately what it can tell us about living in beta.

The second part of the discussion revisits the Alessi case, now in the context of in-betweens and experience economy, confirming an interesting relationship between destabilizing experiences and living in beta.

6.1. In-betweens

The term experience economy is a similar change of concepts, applying ‘experience’ instead of, e.g. ‘industrial’ or ‘commodity’, ‘goods’ and ‘service’, if we follow Pine and Gilmore (1999). They coined the term in the late 1990s precisely to emphasize a shift in economical development. Accordingly, the discourse of the experience economy is based on the assumption that experience is becoming or will become the most valuable product, or aspect of a product. As a description of the present and future economy it relates to our understanding of the post-industrial economy. It is therefore of no surprise that Daniel was a presenter of the two topics. Following his presentation the experience economy is an economy of in-betweens, using angels and troubadours as emblematic examples of in-between beings:
Angels are the fruit of the human fantasy. They are *in-between*, they are translators, interpreters that bring messages from the gods. They live somewhere in-between, and they transverse this space. Troubadours are those happy people in villages that do a little kling, klong [...] and collect a little fee – also in-between characters. This is interesting because I think the experience economy is about *moving in-between consumer [and] producer*. And somehow destabilizing the conventional role system that these two have on a market.\[^{142}\]

To demonstrate the in-betweens that will turn out not to be limited to the roles of consumer and producer, Daniel describes the Volkswagen (VW) luxury car project. Summarizing Daniel’s description, VW decided to launch a luxury car, competing with the likes of BMW’s 7series and Mercedes’ E Class, even though VW’s name (in English: ‘the people’s car’) and reputation refers to being a car for common people. The launch would therefore be an attempt to enter a new market, and in a sense re-brand the company.

The product was no less a spectacle than a car. The car’s name, *Phaeton*, referred to the “first car-ride in history”, setting the expectations high from the very beginning. Customers could come to the historical baroque city of Dresden, located in the former DDR. A dedicated train would bring them from the centre of the city to the factory. The factory was a modern transparent building with wooden floors and state-of-the-art robots assisting workers in white overalls to assemble the cars, without any moving or bending being necessary. The customers could view the process in the context of a three-course gourmet dinner, while enjoying music played by a chamber orchestra. “By the end of the story you get the keys, not to your car, but your **new life**. To a new story where you are a central character, to which is attached all kinds of promises”.\[^{143}\]

The first thing to note regarding the Phaeton example is that the customer becomes a part of a narrative that helps her escape everyday life (the popular term ‘customer is king’ is taken to a new dimension). Instead of just buying a car, the customer steps into a fairytale and the customer role is destabilized. Her experience is really the product, and ultimately she creates this experience. Daniel sees this as a central point: “The experience economy is about becoming the

\[^{142}\] (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 18, emphasis added)

\[^{143}\] (Daniel Hjorth, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 19, emphasis according to vocal expression)
author of your own life script. Instead of acting the character served to you”. It is a line of flight taking off from the rigid role of the customer, but approaching something looking more like a human.

Buying a car, entering a story, watching industrial manufacturing while listening to music: the Phaeton story does not just go in-between producer and consumer, but in-between economy and art, or as Richard stated in discussions: “design, management and tradition blur into art”.

Daniel points out that experience comes from the Latin word *experiencia* and means trying out or experimenting. Experimenting is at the heart of Daniel’s description of an in-between, i.e. “arriving at something that was not a part of the point of departure”. Again, we see the importance of experimenting. The difference is that now it has become a product, something that can be sold, not to consumers, but to subjectivities: “people want to be playwrights, want to become part of plotting, adding something to the story”.

To be an active creator of one’s life is no easy matter; it can be a matter of life and death, as Daniel points out: “There are young women dying from anorexia. They have not been able to resist, over-coding what is expected of them or their bodies, due to a problematic engagement with the ready-made script”. Here Daniel emphasizes the transcendental nature of roles. They are not our own making but ready-made scripts of religion, pop culture, educational system, economy and so on. They can be reactive forces that hold us back from what we can become.

The experience economy as an experimental, in-between economy, a destabilizer of roles, carries the potentiality of a freedom to create.

We see how Daniel’s emphasis on the experimental and in-betweens is starting to look very much like an entrepreneurial subjectification, or living in beta.

We divide the remaining discussion in two, first looking at in-betweens in the context of playfulness and entrepreneurial research, allowing and demonstrating a slightly different

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144 (Daniel Hjorth, CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 18)
145 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 25)
146 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 18)
147 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 18)
148 (CIS Transcription, 2009, p. 18)
149 (Pine and Gillmore (1999) were on the right track in that they tried to think beyond the experience economy, of what it can become. Their conclusion was reflected in what they call transformation economy, which entails transforming subjectivity. The transformation takes place through a customized transformational process. But in the transformation economy, as it is described with examples by Pine and Gillmore, there seems to be a lack of destabilization and experimentation. The path and the outcome are usually known.)
perspective and emphasis than before, exemplifying and deepening our understanding of beta life. Secondly, we revisit the Alessi case in the context of in-between experiences and living in beta.

6.2. In-betweens and Playfulness in Entrepreneurial Research
In the previous chapter on design-driven innovation we spoke of a relationship between living in beta, playfulness and research. To better understand this relationship through in-betweens, we revisit the rigidly segmented and organized spaces, a space representing a certain framing of the world, but not the whole world. Robert Cooper (1996, p. 301) maintains that “we map the world in terms of significant differences, selecting certain features and excluding others.” Cooper (1986) analyzes organized space and concludes that it has a therapeutic and normalizing function. Therapeutic because it draws attention to selected differences, rationalizing and simplifying a world we have described as chaotic and characterized by change and chance. The differences are of a degree and are binary, e.g. good/bad, man/woman, day/night. Organizing and structuring rationalizes by referring to other segments, like looking up a word in a dictionary refers you to another word and then another and so on. To rationalize is also to simplify the excess in the world, but all this helps us to make sense and up to a point feel secure in the world, but the downside is that we do so within the limits of the organized space. Accordingly, and Foucault would agree, living in an organized space as it is described here, normalizes subjectivity. Cooper goes as far as concluding that in this situation, rigid segments or “boundary as a differential term is the subject.”

In-betweens escape rigid segmentations and systems, being the space in-between. They may be difficult to approach, leaving the impression that they are the exception, narrow and tight. This is only because of our engagement with the segmentation. But the in-betweens are infinitely wide, like the grey between black and white. They are the excess: the sea, the plains, the highlands, which we are becoming more and more aware of (literally) – again. They have always been there on the horizon for us to explore. They are virtuality. Order and organization is reduction, a deduction.

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150 Here Cooper refers to the classical study of the Hawthorn Works of the Eastern Electric Company, where complaints against management were reduced to vague and indefinite terms (e.g. “the washrooms are unsanitary”, “the job is dangerous” and “rates are too low”). This is also where Mayo made his most influential research.

151 (Cooper, 1986, p. 331)
The main reason for mentioning Cooper here is his encouragement to examine boundaries and question their legitimacy. The Phaeton case implies an examination of boundaries (and the Wii and Alessi cases for that matter): the boundaries between producer and consumer; economy and art; and we might add the boundaries between a luxury car and a people’s car, manufacturing and aesthetic experiences and so on. Despite the vastness of in-between spaces they may appear to us as boundaries and differences, and what is more, boundaries may seem to be shared (teacher/student, doctor/patient, producer/consumer, etc). But the boundaries are in-between and do not belong to one side or the other. Therefore Cooper points out the importance of play in examining boundaries: “Let us remind ourselves that play as the movement of ‘difference’ is that which is always ‘more than’ a specific form or meaning; that which cannot be contained or limited.”

We have mentioned the active/reactive forces and molar/molecular lines in spaces, it is therefore of no surprise when Cooper maintains that play is supplementary to formal, structured spaces, that it creates ‘pockets’ for play, unstructured and supple.

With regard to living in beta, we can say that it is about creating and/or entering these playful pockets (spaces/events). In relation to research, playfulness constitutes the examination of boundaries and difference. The playful researcher living in beta will take on boundaries: they are his resistance, to see how they may be moved. Not, just to create specific meanings and make connections, but to produce and experience affects. The difference between the two may not be obvious, but it can be vital and informative, helping us to understand the potentials of the experience economy and experience in the context of living in beta. For this purpose let us take a second look at the Alessi’s kettle.

6.3. Affective Economy?: Alessi Case Revisited
It has been stated that Alessi’s kettle takes an innovative form that reflects change in meaning. But is that all? Following the idea of an experience economy of in-betweens we are inspired to take another look.

Roberto gave an example, mentioned briefly in a previous chapter, where form is actually of no importance, but still contains similarities to the Alessi case. Artemide, a high-end lamp

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152 (Cooper, 1986, p. 320)
153 (Cooper, 1986, p. 320)
manufacturer, developed the Artemide Metamorfosi, a lamp that produces coloured atmospheres controlled by a computer. It is not the lamp itself as a beautiful object standing in the living room that is being sold. The lamp itself may actually be hidden. Instead it is the customized light that produces an emotional experience.\textsuperscript{154}

Regarding Model 9093, the form is undeniably a clever synthesis of pop and art deco references, a genuinely innovative form design. Beyond that, however, I will conclude that it is in the emotional experience that we find the radicality of the innovation, which is the potentiality of changing people’s expectations and experience of seeing and using a kettle, for example, while they enjoy breakfast. But we need to be careful when talking about emotions.

Massumi points out that we often refer to emotions as a subjective content or “the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal”.\textsuperscript{155} Emotion becomes a qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual – common sense. This is not an irrelevant dimension of our case. We could argue that now, 1.5 million kettles and over 20 years later, emotions linked to the Alessi kettle have become so molar and organized, that they have become conventional, emotions we are ‘allowed’ to have as users. Sentences of the kind of “this is...” followed by words expressing certain emotional tenor, have been expressed so frequently and so loudly, that the context becomes fixed, and emotions and meaning a common sense. Buying the Alessi kettle becomes an answer to a desire for comfort and meaning, as one attendee put it. On the other hand, the innovativeness of the kettle cannot be found here, with a reference to a consensus or standard (like the standards of beauty, Roberto spoke of). Instead the novelty of the kettle is in the affect it produces: affect merging design with art, removing the boundaries of functionality in the common sense. Design playing with the becoming of art.

In \textit{What is Philosophy?} Deleuze and Guattari (2009) maintain that the idea of art is creating affects and percepts. Affections are what happen to us when we perceive (e.g. observing the form of the kettle, hearing its sound as the water boils and the bird ‘whistles’). We are used to speaking of affects as emotions, but here affects become the opposite of emotions: a deterritorialization rather than a territorialization; molecular rather than molar. For Deleuze and Guattari art is capable of freeing the forces of affect and percept from the particular observer and even from any

\textsuperscript{154} This more detailed information about the lamp was found in an article sent to attendees before the symposium: (Verganti, Design, Meanings, and Radical Innovation: A Metamodel and a Research Agenda, 2008)

\textsuperscript{155} (Massumi, 2002, p. 28)
particular object. Colebrook (2002, pp. 22-3) exemplifies this in the poems of Emily Dickinson and plays of Harold Pinter. Dickinson creates the affect of fear, describing harmless objects and situations in a language and mood of terror, while Pinter expresses boredom in his plays without the characters necessarily being bored or the play being boring. The terms fear and boredom are however a retrospective sensemaking, they do not necessarily describe the affect experienced by the spectator. Affective experience is in the surprise of an unfamiliar encounter, a deterritorialization of emotions. Colebrook writes: “Affect, as presented in art, disrupts the everyday and opinionated links we make [...]”.156 We can see the direct resemblance to Daniel’s description of in-betweens and experience economy and then again to living in beta.

The event of affect is an in-between experience, a disorientation that escapes consciousness, common sense and opinions. It is an opening to difference, of living differently. The reader recalls Kirkeby (2004) speaking about the event of sense, or the alma-event: a ‘non-place’, “an ‘active nothing’, an echo of an endless ‘Never’ breaking into our lives. It is a thought without an object [...].”157 To be actualized, this ‘active nothing’ needs to pass through our body and mind. The passing forms opinions when we move too easily from affects to concepts, which is the sense of the event, from Kirkeby’s perspective. An affect without an object, or related to an unconventional unexpected object, disturbs the passing and prevents or delays it from moving through the channels of habit and interest. Instead it opens up for difference and desire (or should we say playfulness?) – potential new relations and meanings. It is the space of freedom where we have the opportunity to create or narrate our own life (to know who the interpreter is).

The innovation in Alessi’s kettle lies in experimenting with affects, the kettle’s capability to surprise and affect us in ways we would not expect from a kettle, blurring all boundaries. Common sense would have us believe that a kettle is a functional object that boils water; we may then have opinions of its form, i.e. if we think it is beautiful or not. But what happens when we begin to smile early in the morning as we hear the kettle ‘sing’ (like a French poet wrote to Graves).158 Or when a mere look at an object brings tears to our eyes (as Ole Thyssen experienced when he first laid eyes on a kettle designed by Ole Palsby).159

156 (Colebrook, 2002, p. 23)
157 (Kirkeby, 2004, p. 293)
158 (Verganti, Innovating Through Design, 2006, p. 2)
159 (Thyssen, 2003, p. 352)
If we are ‘lucky’ and playful we problematize: ask ourselves new questions, think thoughts we have not thought before. Thoughts that open up for new perspectives on life and the world (just as Thyssen did: “I wondered what a teakettle is for me, “that for it I would shed tears” ”).\(^{160}\)

For design to create affect there needs to be a degree of openness. Artists are especially aware of this. When asked to explain or interpret their own work, they often become reluctant and hazy in their explanations or they straightaway say something like: “I want people to put their own meaning into my work” – become interpretative.

As mentioned, affect is the opportunity to create our own narrative, our own life – living in beta. Massumi (2002, p. 23) describes an experiment where a short film in three versions was shown to a group of children. One original version that was wordless and two narrated versions: a ‘factual’ version, adding a simple step-by-step account of actions as they happened and an ‘emotional’ version, which was much the same, but at crucial turning points, added words expressing the emotional tenor of the current scene. The original wordless version had previously given indications that it had a strong influence on children, and had even made them afraid, though the content seemed to be harmless.\(^{161}\)

Massumi’s analysis of the experiment and forces of affect is detailed and highly informative. The point here is that factual narration and pre-designed meanings tend to connect us with common sense emotions and opinions. It creates physical arousal in the organs: heart and lungs.\(^{162}\) “The reason may be that they are associated with expectation, which depends on consciously positioning oneself in a line of narrative continuity”\(^{163}\) – a ‘conscious-autonomic’ loop, keeping affect at bay, but strategically collecting rational concepts and meanings in the context of a narrative.

The affective event dwells outside the autonomic loop, creeping through the skin (circulating in a body without internal organs). To experience and register the intensity of affect, the narrative needs to be punctuated. This was done in the ‘emotional’ version, adding a few phrases that broke the narrative line with emotional qualifications, in a way, opposing the objective content of the

\(^{160}\) (Thyssen, 2003, p. 352, my translation from Danish)

\(^{161}\) Massumi’s description of the film’s plot: “A man builds a snowman on his roof garden. It starts to melt in the afternoon sun. He watches. After a time, he takes the snowman to the cool of the mountains where it stops melting. He bids it good-bye and leaves.” (Massumi, 2002, p. 23)

\(^{162}\) The children were connected to equipment that would measure different physical responses.

\(^{163}\) (Massumi, 2002, p. 25)
narrative. A second alternative is to drop the narrative, as in the original version, producing a
deterritorialization of the “function-meaning interloops that travel the vertical path between head
and heart”. 164

Applying Massumi’s analysis to Alessi’s kettle, a ‘function-meaning interloop’ takes place in
our common sense experience of a kettle. A kettle’s meaning is experienced in terms of its
functionality, of warming and pouring water or tea or coffee, etc. This narrative, however, is
disrupted, e.g. by the bird affixed to the kettle’s spout and its singing. It opens up the potential of
a line of flight, breaking out of the narrative loop, following a fiction of our own imagination.

We are starting to see that innovating in design does not just include those involved in the
design process before a thing is introduced to a market of potential users or customers and the
meaning designed by them. It may have been the case with Nintendo Wii, where a new and
specific meaning is designed a priori, reflected in a different, but distinctly defined, functionality
and experience.

The situation is more blurry in the Alessi case. If there is a change in meaning, what does it
involve? The functionality does not change, but the form contains dramatic changes in style, which
raises questions, such as: “what is this bird doing there?” The questions reveal the paradox at the
heart of the example, the non-meaning of the designed meaning. The bird or the kettle may mean
something to Alessi and Graves, but it is as relevant (or irrelevant) as the meaning any other
owner assigns to the kettle. As before, the innovativeness, i.e. the “new meaning” created in the
blurriness of boundaries, is the disorientation of the affective event, the in-between and the non-
meaning.

6.4. Affects, In-betweens and Non-Meaning
The Alessi case, in relation to the experience economy, has allowed us to see design and design-
driven innovation from a wider perspective. Now, Roberto’s interpreter does not only design new
meanings, he experiments by creating affective experiences. Putting something unfathomable,
mysterious into the world, relating to the potentiality of an experience economy of in-betweens,
where the ‘prosumer’ is able to interpret and thereby create.

The beta experience is the affective experience. Affects are the sensations of chaos of Andy
spoke of earlier. They create cracks and in-betweens through disturbance, they provide a

164 (Massumi, 2002, p. 25)
necessary resistance to meta-narratives and roles. It shows that \textit{living in beta} is both disrupting and creating meaning. Creating meaning, it is territorialization and actualization, but to emphasize meaning can be policing and reactive. \textit{Beta} is the emphasis on a constant disruption of meaning, a \textit{non-meaning} eternally becoming meaningful.

7. The Ethical Fourfold
As we reach the end we make a final attempt to form a refrain of \textit{living in beta}: not to narrow thought or exclude other interpretations the reader may have, but hopefully to take the idea further and possibly even closer to practice. For this purpose we use a Foucaultian framework, developed by Paul Rabinow, who calls it the \textit{ethical fourfold}.\footnote{The term is coined by Paul Rabinow in relation to an interview with Foucault, \textit{On the Genealogy of Ethics} (Foucault, 1997, p. XXVII).}

Foucault has been mentioned several times before, and it has been pointed out that his ontological fundament, of ethics being the practice of freedom, complements \textit{learning to live in beta}. This is one important reason for referring to his framework, an ethical thought that does not seek some form for self-understanding, but rather guides towards that which we can become.\footnote{(Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, p. XXVIII)} Although Foucault treats the four folds or “categories” as independent one from the other, he recognizes that, in any historical instance, they are always found in a specific configuration. Using the ethical fourfold as a framework for \textit{living in beta}, can, in this sense, be viewed as one configuration of Foucault’s fourfold, made in the context of a post-industrial economic era. The intention is not to explain specifically how Foucault thought of the four folds, and the boundaries between the folds are not necessarily obvious or clear. The framework is supple, which serves well our purpose of composing a refrain.

First of all, ethical work may be guided by different ethical \textit{substances} (e.g. we might say that John Stuart Mill’s (1806-1873) utilitarianism was guided by a quantitative concept of \textit{happiness}, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) by \textit{intention} and Christianity by \textit{desire}). Foucault himself spoke of the \textit{will to truth}, and it was this will that guided him when choosing and working on an ethical material.\footnote{(Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, p. XXIX)}

The substance of \textit{living in beta}, what drives it, is \textit{change} or \textit{willing change}. This element has been present in the whole of our discussion, learning to embrace change, affirm the active forces.
of change and be a motor of change. Paraphrasing Kirkeby (2004), living in beta is about becoming worthy of change and preparing the world for change.

The second aspect is the mode of subjectivation/subjectification, or giving style to oneself. In an article, “What is Enlightenment?” Foucault demonstrates how Kant and Baudelaire represent two different and unique styles that relate to their own present and history. Kant applies a historical perspective to thought to help us understand ourselves, inspires us to dare to know—not to let authorities, law or moral values hinder us in thought. Baudelaire found his style through seizing hold of the present through art, and in art, a way to understand himself.

In the same article Foucault describes his own mode of subjectification as historico-practical. It is criticism of one’s own historical era (criticism “genealogical in its design and archaeological in its method”). It is to help us understand the historically defined knowledge and power structures that make up our world, “but it will separate out, from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing or thinking what we are, do or think. [...] [I]t is seeking to give new impetus, as far and wide as possible, to the undefined work of freedom”.

Similarly living in beta seeks resistance in boundaries. We have discussed the importance of problematizations in changing the boundaries of entrepreneurial thought and creating new meaning, in the context of design-driven innovation, different solutions. When solutions become common sense, beta life problematizes again, deterritorializes. Again, this is why Alessi is the maestro of the design-driven innovation process. It is the problems that form resistance and stimulate our thought, not the answers. Living in beta is to understand the boundaries (like Roberto’s interpreters), and with the help of a problem, to create beyond them. They are the platform from which living in beta shoots its lines of flight.

Is that not that linear thinking of a future? It can be, but it does not have to be. The problematization can affirm and unburden. Moving newspapers and banking onto the Internet platform may sound trivial, but the consequences have been radical, so radical that they cannot be compared with their physical versions in terms of experience, service, duration, pricing, business models or as a way of living. A transformation took place in the shift itself, beyond what one might

168 (Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, pp. 303-19)
169 (Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, p. 315)
170 (Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, p. 316)
have expected, because there was a new problem and the ongoing question is: what is a newspaper or a bank on the Internet?

Foucault’s third aspect, *ethical work*, is the actual work we do trying to transform ourselves. It has to do with the relationship between thought and experience. How do we manage thought provoked by experience? For Foucault, ethical thought is the art of *stepping back* from the ways we act and react. Make it an object of reflection. And then act.

We recall that Roberto also used the same term of “stepping back”, but *living in beta* complements that with *playfulness* and *affirmation*. We must not let the boundaries between the second and third folds prevent our thought. What becomes interesting here is the ethical work artists like Baudelaire perform, which begin to work when the world goes to sleep, as Foucault (1997, p. 311) writes. They exercise their freedom by going beyond the boundaries of common sense and opinions: ““natural” things become “more than natural,” “beautiful” things become “more than beautiful,””\(^{171}\) just like a kettle becomes more than a kettle and a car becomes more than a car, which is to say that they become something other than a kettle or a car.

A relationship between art and entrepreneurship was not new to CIS presenters and attendees and there have been several references to artists and artistic behaviour. It is therefore safe to conclude that *living in beta* represents an artistic *becoming* and style of innovating, represented in both design and experience economy and concepts like *playfulness*, *in-betweens* and *affects*. Further inquiries into artistic subjectification are therefore of relevance in the entrepreneurial discourse.

Finally, there is a *telos* (Aristotle’s final cause) or what we aspire to become. In Foucault’s writings it is identified as disassembling the self: “to release oneself from one self” (*se déprendre de soi-même*).

Similarly, *learning to live in beta* is to unburden one of her own opinions. This is can be described as the potentiality of problematizations and playfulness, which ultimately can be described as an *affective* or disruptive experience, an *in-between* event that dismantles life. Releasing oneself from one self through creating and experiencing *affects*, i.e. an event without “narration”, an unfamiliar encounter.

\(^{171}\) (Foucault, Ethics - Subjectivity and Truth, 1997, p. 311)
We saw the direct linkage from affects to in-betweens in the experience economy. For a life in beta experience is an experiment with unknown results. Boundaries are blurred, and there is no obvious meaning presented or to be found. We escape consciousness and common sense and gain access to the virtuality or potentiality of our imagination, playfully avoiding a quick and fixed conceptualization and meaning. As stated, affects and in-betweens connect us to art. To become the artists of our lives and the things we create is the power of affects and imagination.

8. Final Remarks
There is time to exit the spiral, this application of ethics in an entrepreneurial discussion. We asked: What is living in beta and how can it be described? The relevance of the problematization was discussed in relation to the post-industrial economy in chapter three, and from there we entered into the spiral of interpreting living in beta, in contexts of relevant discussions, design-driven innovation and experience economy. Finally, in the previous chapter, for further clarification, findings were discussed in relation to Foucault’s framework of an ethical fourfold.

The living in beta discussion of entrepreneurship in an organizational context emphasizes the human as a creative subjectification. Creativity is not something hidden, but always present. The first response should not be to restrain it, and that might be the biggest challenge in an organizational culture of managers and employees, where the manager’s role is to organize and structure. Living in beta points out a need to reinvent organizational space and the roles of managers and employees in the name of entrepreneurship. It implies a space of more equality and collaboration, a space where the individual can do ethical work, forming herself and her environment, where boundaries can be broken and recreated. The (dis)advantage here is that the results are not known – they are lines of flight that can either vanish or be reterritorialized, and then there is the problem of destruction Schumpeter pointed out long ago. Consequently the problem for management could become to reterritorialize and manage destruction.

It is not a given that individuals want to live in beta. It is always a question of passion and desires. Critics would most likely say that living in beta would increase stress and pressure, and that may occasionally be correct. The response would however be that it could be a consequence of the way we organize, for example, business schools and organizations rather than any necessity, which poses an important question: in the end, could it be those institutions also need
to *learn to live in beta*? That is at least how we could interpret the findings of Bob Mason from the University of Washington, which were presented at the symposium. He has been researching the generation currently growing up and entering the workforce: *the digital natives*. Their experience of going beyond and between borders is enriched by the fact that they have grown up with another dimension in life, the digital dimension. This dimension has been developing rapidly and in a rather democratic manner. According to Bob, the digital natives have developed different *becomings* and values. He names multitasking, the synthesis of competition and cooperation, willingness to share information, different respect for authority and so on.

Changes are inescapable. *Living in beta* represents a potentiality of entrepreneurship; but we have to break through some of the barriers of management, common sense and opinions to get there.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


CIS Transcription. (2009) (See Appendix 2).


APPENDIX 1: Agenda for Copenhagen Innovation Symposium
On the following page you will find the agenda from the Copenhagen Innovation Symposium, November 10th-11th 2008.
Monday, November 10th

Location: Carlsberg Academy

09.00-09.30 Registration and coffee

09.30-09.40 Opening Address by President Finn Junge-Jensen, CBS

09.45-10.15 Introduction to the Symposium: Innovation in a post-industrial economy by Daniel Hjorth (CBS)

10.15-11.00 Plenary Key Note: Design-driven Innovation by Roberto Verganti (Politecnico di Milano)

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-11.45 Design and Innovation: Opening by Robert Austin

11.45-12.15 Plenary moderated discussion. Moderator: Robert Austin (CBS). Panel members: Andy Wilso (Hybrid State), Thomas Aakjaer Jensen (Novozymes), Soren Overgaard (eTypes), Dorte Krogh (Danfoss Universe), and Roberto Verganti (Politecnico di Milano)

12.30-12.50 Challenges for Teaching Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Business Schools by Christian Vintergaard (Bogesund Entrepreneurship Academy)

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13.30-14.00 The Experience Economy – The Creative Economy
   — The case of Volkswagen’s Luxury Car Project by Daniel Hjorth
   — The case of Alessi by Roberto Verganti

14.00-14.45 Plenary moderated discussions. Moderator: Alf Rehn (KTH Stockholm). Panel members: Daniel Hjorth (CBS), Rasmus Bech-Hansen (Kontrapunkt), and Svante Lindenburg (eTypes)

14.45-15.00 Concluding

15.00-15.30 Coffee break

15.30-16.00 Globalised innovation Opening by Dick Nolan (HBS and Uni. of Washington)

15.45-16.30 Innovation and Intrapreneurship. The case of the Danfoss case by Thomas Aakjaer Jensen

16.10-17.00 Plenary moderated discussion. Moderator: Dick Nolan. Panel members: Henrik Herlau (CBS), Thomas Sanderskov (CBS/TrygVesta), Susanne Justesen (Innovation), Maianni Lubarski (Innovation Center Denmark)

17.00-17.30 Informal networking and discussion

19.00-22.00 Symposium Dinner at Restaurant Bleu, First Hotel Skt. Petri

Tuesday, November 11th

Location: Dalgas Have 15, Copenhagen Business School

Before lunch: Room SV052. After lunch: Room DSC033

09.00-09.15 Opening and Welcome to second day by Mette Monsted (CBS)

09.15-09.45 Virtualizing Business Architecture Opening by Jeff Huang (EPFL)

09.45-10.30 Plenary Moderated Discussion. Moderator: Bob Mason (Uni. of Washington). Panel members: Ioanna Constantiou (CBS), Jeff Huang (EPFL)

10.30-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-11.45 Innovation Tools for an Innovation Society: Innovation 4 Care in the transnordic healthcare sector by Andy Wilson (Hybrid State)

11.45-12.30 Plenary Moderated Discussion. Moderator: Pierre Guillet de Montbouc. Panel members: Andy Wilson (Hybrid State), Thomas Aakjaer Jensen (Danfoss Universe), and Jorgen Thorhav (Novozyymes)

12.30-12.50 Challenges for Teaching Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Business Schools by Christian Vintergaard (Bogesund Entrepreneurship Academy)

12.50-14.00 Lunch

14.00-14.10 Leadership in Innovation. A Workshop Celebrating Flemming Poulelt’s 60th Anniversary. Opening by Mette Monsted (CBS)

14.10-14.45 Leadership of Innovation in Knowledge Intensive Firms – New Challenges. Opening address by Anthony Buono (Bentley University)

14.45-15.15 Entrepreneurial Leadership and Challenges to Strategy by P.O. Berg (Uni. of Stockholm)

15.15-15.30 Coffee Break

15.30-16.00 Plenary Moderated Discussion. Moderator: Anthony Buono. Panel members: P.O. Berg, Flemming Poulelt

16.00-16.15 Replies and reflections Flemming Poulelt

16.15-16.30 Summing up the two days and invitation to coming events by Daniel Hjorth

16.30- Informal reception hosted by CBS
APPENDIX 2: CIS Transcription

Attached is a CD containing: CIS transcription document and recordings from the symposium.