

# CREATIVITY – THE ANGEL OR DEVIL IN THE INNOVATION EDEN

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to scrutinize the implementing an innovation work model in workplaces in regard to creativity. The main contribution is to discuss how creativity is understood in a commonplace innovation context today and to develop a deepened understanding of creativity and its constituents. In our case, it is the element of criticism that is underlined concerning the creative process. In order to enable sustainable and fruitful participatory innovation, in an everyday struggle for innovations, creativity needs to be practiced as the revitalizing potential and diversity-affirming force – sometimes not so pleasant – that is to be expected based on what definitions and descriptions suggests. With the support of examples from previous research and with reference to creative destruction that has been present in regard to change, in philosophy and national economics, since the nineteenth century, we argue that this rarely happens because of the way implementing participatory innovation processes is described, motivated and conducted. In short: In this presentation, we want to underline the importance of a critical element in creative processes aiming for innovations. We do this with support from voices withing contemporary projects and philosophy.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, the idea of innovation has become something like an engine, in different parts of society, for economic growth (politics, finance, management, consulting, education etc.). Within this spirit, for example, management and consultants have established an innovation implementation chorus that chants: “We want societal growth, for this we need to have *attractive workplaces*, for this we need a *creative climate*, and for this, we need *idea generation!*”

It is important to note, that the logic is not the issue here. The practical application’s treatment of creativity is the problem. By practical application, we mean the participatory processes the management introduce, in our example an innovation work model, for the employees at four workplaces in the healthcare sector, in order to build a creative climate. Saying that the logic is not the issue here, mean that we are not addressing the logic per se. It does not mean that the logic *could* be an issue, although it is not in the scope of this presentation. We argue that the practical use of the logic, on the level of management that strives to address the workplace climate, by means of idea generation, *conflicts* with the human beings creative efforts within the workplaces. Accordingly, the practical problem in this paper is: The ongoing activities in the name of establishing a creative climate, that has become commonplace in organizations within businesses as well as the public sector; and that these activities, that strive to increase the creativity among the co-workers, do not always acknowledge the critical aspects that coexist with a notion of creativity in a process struggling for innovation. The idea of *struggle*, as we shall see, becomes important in the perspective we want to disclose.

Today, these practices unfold a misunderstanding of creativity and creative behavior, i.e., how creativity is expressed, and also tend to bring tension into workplaces where innovation processes are being implemented. Employees who perceive that they indeed *are* creative, i.e., that they often provide suggestions to improve their work situation, cannot see their initiatives being confirmed by management and gets frustrated when management calls them to *become* creative. This problem is paradoxical, as the aim of the management is

to establish a creative climate at the same time as the employees become less keen to take creative initiatives and engage in the organization's creativity endeavors.

The question we have asked ourselves is: Does this not open up for a different understanding of how creativity needs to be considered in these participatory innovation processes? Built on an understanding that affirms a profound correlation between *criticism* and creativity. Our core message is that creativity and criticism is profoundly linked together in the everyday practices striving for a creative climate. There is a field of forces within and among human beings, which needs to be affirmed and this is the same as to say that creativity and destruction is at the heart of original creations. This is what the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche argued is the case on an ontological level of human's artistically creative existence, for example, seen in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1988, KSA 4). The title of our paper, "The Angel or Devil in the Innovation Eden," will get its explanation in relation to Nietzsche. It is important to note already here, that our title do not refer to the human beings involved in the empirical studies. It refers to the unreflected understanding of *creativity* used in the contemporary strive to enforce innovation. Creative destruction is also what the political scientist an economist Joseph Schumpeter argued, in *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*, i.e., is the essence of capitalism (2008). Creative destruction, we argue, needs to be acknowledge also in the everyday struggle for creative climates, by sustaining criticism in the innovation processes.

*Firstly*, we address what we criticize. The way innovation is described, and how the implementation of an innovation work model (the KINVO model, Rindom et al. 2013) is explained and motivated for the employees and that will ultimately—according to the logic—lead to innovation. *Secondly*, we give some examples how the KINVO innovation model's working methods can affect the employee's creativity, based on interviews with the organization's own idea coaches, indicating frustration of reduced creativity. *Thirdly*, we turn to theories practice about creativity to highlight the creativity constituents and to show possible causes of misconceptions about the relevance of criticism to creativity. We also support this with empirical data from creative group sessions with industrial designers practice where differences, e.g., opinions, perspectives, ideas, are scratched against each other and actually being criticized or rejected. Our *fourth* step is to elaborate on theories and thinkers that *do* acknowledge creativity linked to criticism and destruction, besides Nietzsche and Schumpeter, for example, Rehn & De Cock (2009). The empirical data in this presentation is thus both used as a description of the current utilisation of creativity, that is criticized, and as an indication of the need for an altered understanding of creativity for participatory innovation processes. This is where we show how the "Eden", the ideal expectancies on outcomes of innovation, meets the creativity of the

human beings, in ways that risk excluding their criticism! *Fifth*, and finally, we suggest how a participatory innovation process could be changed to enable creativity in the sense we suggest. For example, one way is to enhance an agonistic perspective, i.e., a perspective on creativity that acknowledge the element of struggle and thus embraces criticism.

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INNOVATION PROJECT – AN EXAMPLE

In order to clarify these claims, a recently completed follow-up research project, *Innovation Pleasure in Sörmland County - opportunities for the individual, the business and the society*,<sup>1</sup> that followed a county organization working on healthcare that implemented a participatory innovation project at four workplaces, will be used as an example. In their strategic document, "Project Directives," (January 31, 2014) are the following formulations:

*Stimulating innovation power is important for creating a creative climate and an attractive healthcare that can deliver welfare services with increased quality and efficiency. By creating an innovative working environment, the healthcare can also be perceived as a more attractive employer when recruiting new staff.*

Quote from Project Directive: Innovation Pleasure in Sörmland, 2014.

The quote is an example of how financiers and project owners formulate the purpose of the innovation project and motivate the work on developing creative climate – it is expected to result in a more attractive workplace where more competent individuals want to work. In addition, the implementation of this innovation model is a strategy for developing a more efficient healthcare which, in turn, will lead to societal benefits, i.e., contribute to reduced unemployment, to establish a healthier population in general, and to increase economic growth. These four dimensions are related to each other in the "Project Directive" to argue for the benefit of the project, confirm its status, and establish motivation in the forthcoming innovation work. The figure 1 shows the rationale of the management and financier's explanation of the connection between healthier population in general and employees' development and exchange of ideas. The fact that the Swedish government<sup>2</sup> has developed a national innovation strategy, also gives status to the entire project and gives weight to the arguments.

<sup>1</sup> The project Innovation Pleasure in Sörmland, (<http://www.fou.sormland.se/ehalsa-och-innovation/innovation/kinvo.aspx>) is owned and operated by R&D in Sörmland County and is funded together with NovaMedTech and Sörmland Regional Association. The project purpose was to implement an innovation work model, called the KINVO model, at four workplaces in healthcare at Sörmland County Council in 2014. The aim of that project was to test and further develop the KINVO model in order to make it scalable for future dissemination locally, regionally and nationally.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.government.se/information-material/2012/10/the-swedish-innovation-strategy/>

*Improved healthcare can, in turn, mean a healthier population (through more effective healthcare of higher quality) and to economic growth (through innovations generated as a result of the implementation of the KINVO model)... by increasing creativity and improving the innovation environment, the project contributes to creating a more competitive business community. By creating more efficient healthcare with high quality, the project also contributes to sustainable and attractive living environments.*

Quote from Project Directive: Innovation Pleasure in Sörmland, 2014

In this quotation, the commercial arguments are also highlighted, such as a regularity that an innovative environment contributes to a competitive business community. The employees' creativity and exchange of ideas are also linked to increased competitiveness in society in general.

*For the business level, a more creative environment not only contributes to the motivation of employees, but also to employees becoming more aware of the potential for improvement in the business.*

Quote from Project Directive: Innovation Pleasure in Sörmland, 2014

Finally, the importance of developing a creative environment motivates the need for the individual employee to gain increased awareness of opportunities for improvement. The Project Directive for the Innovation Pleasure project clearly outlines the purpose of innovation work and argues for its implementation with reference to the four dimensions in figure 1: societal growth, innovation process (organizational level), creative climate (workplace level) and idea generation (individual level). At the workplace level, the project aims to establish a creative climate that is argued to increase employee's well-being through the actual participation. At the individual level, the creative climate contributes to the employee's increased motivation to engage and detect potential development

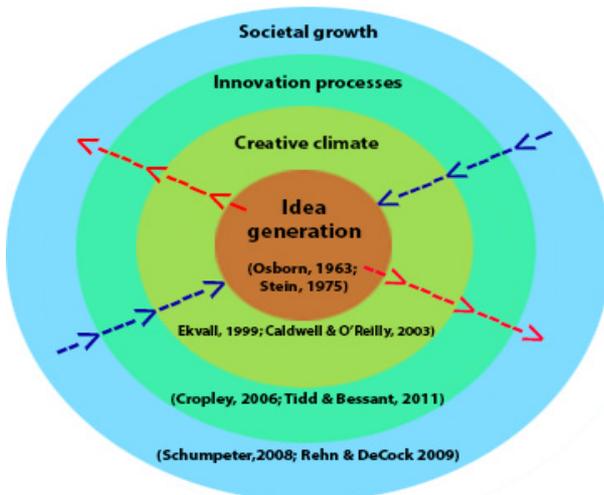


Figure 1. Dimensions of innovation system, based on the logic from the "Project Directives" of the Innovation Pleasure project. The references in this figure is not taken from the project directive, they are referred to in our presentation of the theories on innovation and creativity.

and improvements, i.e., innovations. The red arrows in Figure 1 point out how the project directive justifies the innovation models working methods, i.e. that it is idea generation and idea development that develops a creative climate, which in turn, is a prerequisite for innovation processes which in the long run drive society's growth and business competitiveness. The blue arrows show how financiers and project owners base the project's beneficial effects in societal needs and their understanding of innovation processes as coherent structures suitable for achieving the overall objective of the project. Furthermore, the project directive also expresses the view that we can not *order* a creative climate, but we can encourage, perhaps even require, employees to generate and exchange ideas. And, that you can implement working methods and announce that you expect your employees to follow these new routines.

### EXPERIENCES FROM IMPLEMENTING AN INNOVATION MODEL

We now turn to the second step in our presentation to focus on employees experiences and reflections from being engaged in the activities for implementing the innovation model for increased creative climate at four workplaces. In the Innovation Pleasure project, eight employees had voluntarily signed up for the mission, as *idea coaches*, based on their interest in creativity in general and in developing ideas, but also in developing colleagues competence. The interviewed idea coaches had central functions in the project, which included organizing and facilitating an "idea café" to engage interested colleagues in idea generation and development. An idea coach also supports and inspires "idea carriers," with the aim of guiding their ideas to realization. The interviews with the idea coaches were conducted at two occasions, after six month and after nine month during the first project year. Several of the coaches expressed their own opinion of the purpose of the project, what the organization really needed, but also what the employees was expected to do in relation to the implemented innovation model:

*Improvement in working methods would be good. This means that we must say what we think, be involved and influence. The organization is moving in the wrong direction, with increasing control. However, one should instead let the employees gain more responsibility and make decisions.*

Quote from interview with a healthcare assistant at Home Service C, who also worked as an idea coach in this project.

During the short training course for idea coaches the focus was on how to develop ideas into products and how to introduce them as innovations on a market, with the possibility of starting a new business, i.e., the training was clearly focused on product innovation. However, several idea coaches said directly that this was not relevant for them or their workplace. Instead, creativity was thought of, by the idea coaches, as something that is relevant everywhere in the

organisation. Furthermore, the idea coaches did not think of creativity in terms of big blockbusters, to be implemented during a particular project, but rather as incremental and emergent. Some idea coaches expressed that creativity is a general characteristic and ability all human beings have, and that they, and their colleagues, come up with ideas and suggestions on a regular basis.

*Creativity is important in everything I think. Many think they will come up with an invention, but it's too big. They need to get into the creativity of the daily - dare to think differently and to question. We need a creative work environment - but it's difficult because the work is so controlled.*

Quote from interview with a healthcare assistant at Home Service D, who also worked as an idea coach in this project.

Some of the idea coaches expressed frustration regarding managements request to be more creative, and argued that the employees at their workplace are both proud of their idea-generating ability and their work climate, i.e., that a creative climate was already established in the workplace.

*But I think everybody is an inventor every day - incredible problem solvers. We are quite proud that we solve today's problems - and this creates creative climate. (Idea coach and healthcare assistant at Home service C).*

Quote from interview with a healthcare assistant at Home Service C, who also worked as an idea coach in this project.

Based on the innovation model, the management and project owners requested the employees to participate in idea cafés and to generate ideas. As described above this was motivated by arguments that this would develop a creative climate at the workplace. Some idea coaches questioned the project owners' purpose in developing the creative climate of the workplace. One of them discussed whether the project owner and the management really understood the link between employees' initiatives and change efforts, on the one hand, and the effect of the innovation model introduced from the outside, on the other side. Even though the employees agree that changes are necessary, they wanted to be asked to participate and influence what to improve as well as the goal of the development process. In addition, the idea coach also pointed out that a prerequisite for creative climate is trust:

*It is believed that we are more efficient in this more controlled way. The trust has gotten worse, they (the management) do not let ourselves plan and do it ourselves. I think they bite themselves in the tail!*

Quote from interview with a healthcare assistant at Home Service C, who also worked as an idea coach in this project.

Finally, during an interview where the conversation came to be about how the innovation model approach was feasible and what expectations management had on employees the idea coach exclaim: *"Creativity is not appropriate in this innovation model's way of working!"* (Healthcare assistant at home service D).

During these interviews with committed idea coaches, a picture emerges that draws a gap between project owners and management on the one hand and workplace employees on the other side. The project owners and management strive to develop the creative climate at the workplaces by inviting employees to meetings, "idea cafes" for idea generation and encourage employees to be more creative. The employees, on their part, had different opinions on the relevance of the project and argued primarily against the management's call to be more creative. These arguments were based partly on the employees opinion that they already are more creative than the organization could handle, and partly that the way the work was organized and managed did not support the employees creativity. In addition, some findings from a survey were approximately 80 participants in the *Innovations Pleasure project* answered very interestingly indicated that the creative climate, as defined in the innovations model, does not necessarily emerge at workplaces where the employees generate and develop many ideas. The analysis compared employees assessments of the creative/motivational climate at each workplace, and the amount and quality of ideas developed during six month of the implementation project. The analysis showed low correlation between idea generation/development and creative climate. The two workplaces whose employees consider the creative/motivational climate to be weak/low, were the ones who developed twice as many ideas as the other two workplaces (Köping Olsson, 2015). These differences may have several other reasons than the quality of the creative climate at the time the measurements were made, such as the overall work situation, staff turnover, leadership, etc. However, the differences between the workplace's actual idea development (which were the measurable goal of the project) and the employee's assessment of the creative/motivating climate were significant. These measurable factors also contribute when we consider that the arguments, regarding how creative climate and creative idea development are related, can be questioned.

We have now described some ideas coaches experiences and reflections from the workplace's innovation work, implementing the KINVO model's working methods.

We now turn to our third step, theories and practice about creativity in order to highlight the creativity constituents and to show possible causes of misconceptions about the relevance of criticism to creativity. How is creativity, idea generation and development, defined and explained in theory, and how is creativity performed in practiced?

## CREATIVITY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Creativity is defined in terms of novelty, originality, or unexpectedness, and this quality is, according to some thinkers, always *combined* with that which is appropriate, useful, high quality or otherwise meets task constraints (Sternberg, Lubart, Kaufman, & Pretz,

2005). The understanding and assessment of creativity is built along a continuum of the extent to which these two quality dimensions (i.e. novelty, originality, unexpectedness on the one end and appropriate, useful, high quality on the other end) are expressed. Researchers have problematized the utility or usability criterion in definitions of creativity (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2008), while at the same time affirming uniqueness and deviant aspect as the core requisite for creativity. However, several authors argue that creativity is the *fuel* of innovation, its *driving* force, implying that innovation has everything to gain by incorporating creativity (cf., e.g., Cropley, 2006; Tidd & Bessant, 2011; Gupta & Trusko, 2013). This urgent need for more or less original and useful ideas stands in the foreground when innovation processes are described and motivated while the effect of creativity dissenting originality is often completely overlooked or at least rarely confirmed as creativity. One reason for this lack of understanding can be derived from early descriptions of brainstorming and the set of rules of thumb for effective idea generation, which Alex Osborn formulated in the late 1930s. He intended to streamline certain parts of his work meetings by allowing and freeing out more or less wild suggestions regarding different types of problems (see, e.g., Osborn, 1963; Parnes, 1961). Osborn's rules of thumb for efficient brainstorming is 1) Don't criticize; 2) Think freely; 3) Quantity breeds quality; and 4) Improve through combination. The purpose of the brainstorming method is for the group to come up with new and feasible solutions to a defined problem. The most important criterion for an effective brainstorming session is said to be the number of ideas, i.e., the more ideas you manage to produce, the greater the probability that more qualitative and potentially innovative ideas will emerge in the larger amount. To criticize an idea is considered to hamper the development of ideas and dampen the members' motivation to initiate new proposals (Stein, 1975). Thus, these guidelines for creativity-stimulating methods claim that creativity decreases to the same extent as the criticism increases, that the participants are more likely to build on someone's ideas if the proposals are received in positive terms, than if the response is to highlight its shortcomings.

Since brainstorming is the most widely used method of group creativity (Barki & Pinsonneault, 2001), and has worked as a model for creative processes in everyday practice, the rules and its impact seem to be hard to ignore. It is not far-fetched to argue that Osborn's well inculcated rules have contributed to the creation of methods based on the notion that we need to separate the creative from the critical. This said, there is no lack of research studies scrutinizing Osborn's rules for brainstorming and creative problem solving in groups and the validity of these rules has been questioned. A number of researchers has suggested reformulations and additions (see, e.g., Paulus & Nijstad, 2003). Despite this critical questioning of rules that distinguish criticism from creativity, practitioners have continued to

comply with these rules. Gedenryd (1998) problematized the idealistic perspective on creativity described above. He pointed out that the problem with the ideal image, is that it forms the guidelines for what an effective and appropriate way of working is. He puts the problem at its head, by saying that the actual situation becomes wrong by the ideal and that reality is considered to be adjusted to better match the model. For example, if participants are (too much) aware of Osborn's regulatory framework and its axiom-like injunctions, such as "Do not criticize!", they can flail the "criticism flag" in the name of creativity, at any time during the creative session and thus silent dissent or ideas that runs counter to the predetermined purpose of that project.

Turning to the practice, we will now give an example of this skewness between inculcated rules and actual performance. In a previous study, we observed five brainstorming sessions at two industry design companies in which the participants often reminded each other not to criticize (Köping Olsson, 2008). These industrial design companies are both successful, receiving rewards for winning design. The brief presentation of these activities is in this paper aimed to function as an example of creativity and creative processes that at least to some extent include criticism even in the initial idea generation. When participants in these sessions were interviewed, they were very doubtful, sometimes directly questioning the purpose behind postponement of criticism to a later stage in the creative development of concepts or services. They claimed that anyone who wants to silence criticism in creative processes such as brainstorming sessions, has not understood how creativity actually is performed in practice. An industrial designer at company A reflect on criticism in their creative processes:

*But criticism is good for creativity, that's what it's all about, figuring out the pros and cons of the different ideas. So, I do not understand that rule about deferment of criticism to later evaluations. Why not talk about the negative things directly, it's wasting a lot of time, you have to criticize and question.*

Quote from interview with an industrial designer in company A.

Because criticism and questioning were so common in these creative processes, the name of these sessions was changed from brainstorm to 'storm of criticism' (Köping Olsson, 2008). When the participants in these sessions took creativity seriously, that is, to think divergently, combining wide, propose original and different ideas in relation to the other participants' perceptions and previously proposed ideas, the session became both challenging and intense (ibid.). In these session the critical initiative initiatives often preceded creative actions by bringing in divergent views and opinions (Köping Olsson & Florin, 2011). These designers' experiences of creativity are that it is usually laborious, uncomfortable, and many times annoying. This characterizes the work climate in these teams of industrial designers, were interaction and exchange of

ideas is the breeding ground for development of new concepts and innovations. One of the industrial designer says:

*Sometimes I think that if someone is talking a lot about a particular idea, then I talk about the other to weigh them in any way. I do that so that it does not disappear, it is quite a deliberate strategy. (Industrial designer, Company A)*

Quote from interview with an industrial designer in company A.

This striving to maintain different perspectives and keep on developing different – often alternative and directly incompatible – ideas, is essentially based on an understanding of creativity we want to affirm in this paper. Thus, contrary to Osborn’s rules and principles for efficient creativity in groups (Stein, 1975), there is empirical evidence indicating that criticism actually contributes to and stimulates creativity. To summarize so far. We have now presented one example of how the purpose of innovation is described and in what terms the implementation of an innovation model is motivated. We have presented theories that more or less explicitly assign creativity the tool function in innovation processes, giving creativity the task as driving force of generating ideas for innovation to achieve the intended goals. We have also provided a brief account of how creative processes including criticism *can* be practiced with examples from groups of experienced industrial designers. In accordance to our question regarding how creativity needs to be understood in relation to innovation and its pursuit of creative climate, our next step is an ontological based understanding of how creativity and criticism, i.e., destruction, has been described as *interrelated* on the level of individual human beings, as well as every type of force working amongst humans (such as, for example, an ordering of something into an organization) by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and on the level of economic and societal growth by the economist Joseph Schumpeter.

## CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

The reason why we return to Nietzsche’s nineteenth century philosophy, as our fourth step, is that we believe that aspects of his thinking can be used to revitalize the commerce around innovation. It is the concept of creative destruction we refer to. Nietzsche was not the first to speak about creative destruction. It is a notion in Hinduism, picked up by Arthur Schopenhauer, Nietzsche’s predecessor and early inspiration to his philosophy (Reinert & Reinert, 2006). Nietzsche is, in turn, an influence for later thinker, such as Schumpeter.<sup>3</sup> By using Nietzsche, we argue that researchers and practitioners need to study the importance of *originality* in creation and the consequences of its deviating and, in that, its *criticizing* character. This is what becomes important in Nietzsche and Schumpeter’s thinking; in

<sup>3</sup> Reinert & Reinert (2006) argue that the economist Werner Sombart was even more influenced by Nietzsche.

Nietzsche’s case it is in regard to the ontology of human beings in our world; and in Schumpeter’s case it concerns the economic growth. We argue that it is possible to transfer the creative destruction into a concrete and everyday implementation of a creative climate, by allowing criticism to take place through the acknowledging of *agon*, i.e. a struggle where a protection against *one* ‘genius’ is to introduce another ‘genius’ – thus to acknowledge a perspective of differentiation and the conflict (Nietzsche, KSA 1, 1988) in creative endeavors. In the essay “Homer’s contest,” referd to here, Nietzsche refers to ancient Hellenistic contests. In his later writings, this is expressed as an encounter between forces until there is a union, an arrangement, that then also is a new force in a continuous struggle (1988, KSA 13). In our contemporary context it means a struggle with different ideas. The thinking of *agon*, however, must also be seen in relation to Nietzsche’s understanding of human beings, so that we better understand originality and criticism concerning creativity. According to Nietzsche, human beings are, in their inner will, profoundly creative. This is something that runs throughout his works (cf. Carlsson, 2005). For example, human beings are unfolded as essential artistic in their bridging of the gap between language and the world, which Nietzsche writes of in, for example, “On truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense” (1988, KSA 1). Our understandings of life in the world are artistic creations at heart – but not affirmed as such by the very own creations we have ourselves made. Christianity is such a construction that we, according to Nietzsche, have created and that, in turn, hinder our creative wills (1988, KSA 5).

This inner will and force that humans have, if it is affirmed, also means that something else is pushed aside at the same stroke that one creates something new. Christianity, to use the previous example, discard the sinners if they are non-believers. Nationalism discard that which is alien to the nation. But, these two grave examples, are in themselves only human creations pretending that they are not – thus negating human’s true creative condition in the world. This creativity takes somethings place. To affirm new values, are to overthrow the old ones. The latter is seen, throughout Nietzsche’s own work is his filling old concepts with new meaning and creates an artistic, poetic, style. The creation of new meanings is, for example, seen in Nietzsche’s books on morality: *On the Genealogy of Morals* and *Beyond Good and Evil* (1988, KSA 5). Creativity can then not be a piling up of new things without affirming that something needs to be replaced in a new order of rank. Hence, it is critical. New creations *are in themselves a criticism towards the old values*. If it *makes a difference*. We are not fostered in this way of thinking about creativity today, according to Nietzsche *and* us, we nevertheless believe that it is possible to highlight certain qualities and bring them to light in contemporary discussion on creativity. Creativity is then also to be associated with *power*, which needs to be acknowledged. Following an external narrative, such as

the “Innovation Eden’s” narrative and rules that places criticism *after* creativity as if they were not depending on each other is *not* to make use of the force from one’s own being. Using Nietzsche is thus a criticism of Osborn’s (1957) thumb rules.

So, as human beings, we have much more creative potential than we think, but we do not affirm it because we, also by necessity, live in narratives (small or big ones) that *hinders* this potential. Not even art, according to Nietzsche’s notion of his time, was a place where this artistic ability could bloom. The romantic art of his period was instead part of a narrative fostering single “geniuses” that used art for other narratives – this was for example Nietzsche’s thinking about Wagner. After first having praised him, Nietzsche later stresses that Wagner was a disease that he then became cured from (1988, KSA 6). This is why he also localizes the artistic, outside the sphere of art, in a truer understanding of creativity. This creativity is destructive, critical, if it is original, and part in a continuous power struggle. Important for us, is then also to see that Nietzsche highlights *individuals* in contrast to a mass that follows external narratives; individuals speaking in their own words. If transferred to the concrete everyday strivings for a creative climate in innovation processes, we also see that individual voices are hindered when criticism is silenced. The power, which is affirmed by Nietzsche as integral in all strivings, if transferred to the concrete everyday striving for a creative climate is paradoxically both hindered and fostered after having made a somersault in regard to Nietzsche’s perspective and landed upside down: The power of the individuals in strive with their different creative wills and forces is hindered, but power is indeed performed in the pressing down of the innovation Eden narrative, understood as an engine, and forcing upon them a truncated form of creativity (figure 2). An external, construction we have created and that is a hindering of a creativity that affirms itself as such. To affirm creativity in the sense is to affirm a struggle among wills, i.e. criticism is involved, and that there will never be an equilibrium in the world; just an ongoing struggle where criticism is essential for change.

Schumpeter was one of the modern economists that became influenced by Nietzsche. Capitalism, Schumpeter (2008) says, is an evolutionary process. The change in economy hence does not always come from outside, but from within economy itself. It is an organic process. Like Nietzsche stress of humans being in the world, Schumpeter says of economy, that the essence of its being is continuous change. Competitiveness, according to Schumpeter, comes from “the new item, the new technology, the new raw material, the new type of organization” (Schumpeter, 2008, p. 109). Rather than having more of the same to reduce prices. It is not the new small shop in retail, but the mail order firm or the supermarket that create competition. Taking a look at this brief sketch of Schumpeter’s ideas, we see several similarities with Nietzsche’s thinking: The

power perspective, rather than a strive to an equilibrium or more of the same is preferred. The emphasis on the original, innovative, that overthrows the previous narrative and its values.

The temporary monopoly linked to creative workers in the economy is argued as conflict between creativity and traditional economics (the invisible hand). The creative workers (architects, engineers, scientists, urban planners, writers, artists etc.) today has a higher status. Nakamura (2000), writes that a creative struggle, however, involves risks: “while some efforts will fail and yield little, if any, payoff, efforts that yield successful new products are richly rewarded.” This description of societal growth can be translated to the level of idea generation to increase a creative climate. That is: there is a risk taking of presenting ideas; the whole elaboration of them includes criticism that might eliminate the whole idea. Like products during a temporary monopoly, ideas last until a better idea comes along (cf. Nakamura, 2000, p. 20 and note 9). Creative destruction, Nakamura (2000, p. 21) writes, is hectic and involves risk and change. The same, we believe, should be true of the activities that are thought to lead to innovations.

The suggestions that are silenced in meetings and workshops by the heavy weight of the top down Innovation Eden, might indeed not be great inventions that, for example, overthrow old technologies solutions (cf. Reinert & Reinert, 2006: 56). Still, the voices that are silenced might contain the seed of the next revolutionary wave. The *individual* is important here. Reinert & Reinert (2006) writes, concerning morality based on the idea of creative destruction and quotes Nietzsche: “it demands of each individual human being that it ‘write its own tablets’, thereby destroying the ‘old tablets’”. Creative destruction, originality, power, and the individual versus the mass, are thus something we brings with us into the discussion.

## SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

In an development project implementing an innovation model for an enhanced creative work environment, the purpose and motives of the project directive were formulated in terms of positive effects beyond the participating workplaces and organizations. It seems that project owners and management had different perception of what creativity is in comparison to what the employees interpret as creativity. Creativity for employees is to make changes in their everyday work tasks that are of great importance to them and have impact on their work; the employees also point out that the questioning of counterproductive directives from management, is also included in their perception of creativity. Employees (idea coaches) claimed that they and their colleagues were already creative but that management did not understand to appreciate this creativity. This discrepancy between management’s perception of what creative climate is, i.e. how creativity expresses itself (e.g. they may not interpret

employees' initiatives, criticisms and behaviors as creative), and employees' perceptions that methods of the innovation model and the requests for more creativity, rather push away/down the motivation to take creative initiatives, i.e. the effect of management's efforts to develop a creative climate risks resulting in unwilling employees and fewer creative initiatives. This effect of the implemented innovation model for increased creative climate on employee creative initiatives is illustrated in the figure 2 below.

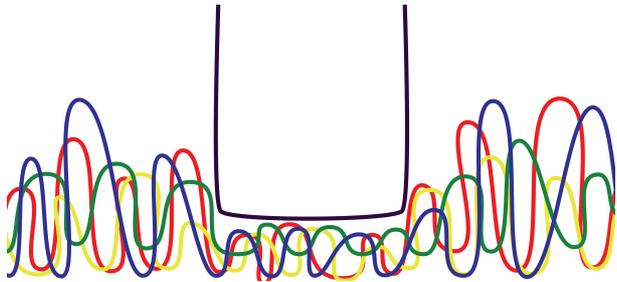


Figure 2. The effect of implementing an innovation model work methods on the employees creative initiatives.

This gap between management and project owners' perception of the workplace situation and what employees need to do in terms of the creative climate on the one hand, and the employees' perception of the implemented innovation methods, that they are already creative if only given the opportunity, is paradoxical.

To attribute innovation projects expected far-reaching positive effects, as the example from The Innovation Pleasure project, run the risk of alienating its practice (a creative climate) from strategic policy and decision making based on unreasonable expectations. We have shown that tensions arise between employees and management when innovation projects are described in visionary long-term effects and where creativity is considered an obedient servant, a tool, to realize a worthwhile goal. Looking at Figure 1, it is as if creativity on the level of individuals at workplaces is expected to improve something that the management level actually hinders through a misunderstanding of what creativity is.

What we wanted to highlight from Nietzsche is the creativity that is, like one of the informants in an innovation project said, "is everywhere," but that it has to be acknowledged as such, i.e., as a continuous strive that is both creative and destructive, critical. Thus, creativity does not always look appropriate in its context (cf. Sternberg, Lubart, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2005). It is indeed "uncomfortable" as designers in another project argued. The informants in the projects we have referred to are on to something (although to be truly Nietzschean, might be to address the idea of having a logic for innovation projects all together). They do, however, as are we, criticize the temporary "blockbuster" idea of creativity and favour creativity as part of what a human being is. This is showed, as they stressed, in their thinking *differently* and *questioning* the status quo. Which in their cases are difficult because of the control

they are under. Yet, a control that is part of a striving that "argues" that they should be more creative! The thing with the artistic creativity in Nietzsche's understanding, though, is that it is *not* to be truly creative if you have an external instance controlling it. Bluntly put, Wagner wasn't artistic, not even human, according to Nietzsche's hyperbolic rhetoric in *The Case of Wagner* (1988, KSA 6), because he created under the external framework of Antisemitism, Nationalism, and Christian redemption. On a micro level of innovation processes, that is our concern here, an acknowledging of creativity in the sense of a creative destruction, then would, perhaps, also include, a diabolic critique of the angelic framework – and actually be a coming *beyond* the "angel or devil in the innovation eden."

Criticism thus occurs in our thinking in this sense: Through the lens of human beings involved in an ongoing *agon*, when two or more 'geniuses' struggle for ideas it is to allow for different, i.e., critical perspectives to struggle with each other. The winning idea is in itself a criticism in regard to what it replaces. This is where we return to originality. If an innovation would occur in such a setting and with this perspective on creativity, the *new*, is, in itself, a criticism in regard to what it replaces. Otherwise it would not make a difference and would not really be worthy of the term 'innovation'. We argue for a creativity exemplified by the industry designer's practice where divergence can be considered as the company's business idea. The striving to always push for the development of several parallel and fully workable ideas, continually bringing forward alternative proposals for solutions and questioning each other's proposals, is a deliberate strategy for maintaining divergence, the soil of creativity. This is an altered understanding of creativity. Unfortunately, we have several examples where the concept of creativity is used with meanings that do not include divergence, questioning and rather tedious rejecting of something cherished. We highlight Alex Osborn's well-established rules as rather problematic and sometimes directly inhibiting creativity in the longer term. Certainly, brainstorming methods can be used strategically in order to establish co-understanding, rather than primarily generate ideas and suggestions on solutions to a particular problem. Nevertheless, with the support of our empirical data, we claim that criticism, contrary to Osborn's rules, is central to creative processes. Unfortunately, we also have seen that Osborn's rule can even be used to silence criticism or dissent. Speaking of power, that do not affirm itself as power, i.e. not the power Nietzsche affirms, we might ask: Could it be that work meetings and organizational teams more or less consciously describe a process in terms of "brainstorming" or group sessions as "creative" in order to avoid criticism? Besides being fraudulent, it may also indicate misunderstandings about creativity. Moreover, with the support of Nietzsche and Schumpeter we have discussed that Osborn's rule of quantity and combination can lead us to understand creativity as an endless addition.

We argue that creativity run the risk of being distorted into a caricature, i.e. unserious nice play, far from the function of creative composites and destruction, 1942, Nietzsche, 1988). As we said in the introduction, creativity and destruction is at the heart of original new creations. This, we reason, needs to be acknowledge also in the everyday struggle for innovations. On a concrete and everyday level of implementing a creative climate, the quality of a creative process has to be related to awareness, courage and ability to remove cherished ideas or proposals in order to provide scope and possibility to use such content that in comparison is different. Creativity is not something that is brought into a gathering of humans through, for example, an expensive consultant, but something that is already within the workforce. Creativity is however not encouraged through *more* external and oppressive narratives (than workload, time, workplace rules etc.) that the individuals already have.

Bringing philosophy into this discussion, one way of implementing criticism in relation to creativity is through the perspective of *agon*, i.e., an acceptance of the struggle, and looking at language games as a concrete method (cf. Lyotard 1984; with reference to Wittgenstein 1953). Obviously, we understand that the framework to the employees creativity, the creativity discussed here, are bound to be under a certain controlled narrative—if they are to continue to be employees. But just an inclusion of *agon* through “semantic games” in the everyday struggle for new ideas could open up for an increased acknowledging of other elements of creativity and thus sustain the possibility of originality in innovation ideas within this everyday framework.

To sum up, this paper have elaborated on the notion that innovation has taken creativity as hostage and stripped it of its provocative side. This is indeed a dramatic approach in order to highlight how creativity could become incomplete and trivial. After all, the process of change is not a smooth activity when it comes to economic growth, neither is the creative destruction in an everyday process of innovation. Nordhaus, Cain, and Shellenberg (2014), from the think tank *The Breakthrough Institute*, writes that economic growth is not a smooth, incremental, wealth-producing process: it is a messy one punctuated by new technologies and processes that change not only the material basis of our everyday lives, but also our culture, our politics, and our values.” We argue that this is also true of the commonplace processes that are introduced in workplaces in the spirit of innovation; i.e., that they ought to be more accepting of disturbance and the disorderly, for example, through the integration of criticism.

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