Entrepreneurial Politicians

-A type of political entrepreneurship

By Sara Nyhlén
PhD Student Political Science
Mid Sweden University
Sara.nyhlen@miun.se

Work in progress
Entrepreneurial Politicians – a type of Political Entrepreneurship

In everyday speech, on TV and radio, we hear constant crisis reports on the northern parts of Sweden. The villages and municipalities are described to be in crisis, people move away to cities, and the situation is characterized by high unemployment and generally poor economy in the municipalities. But there are places in the northern parts that don’t confirm this negative image. How can it be that there are some exceptions to this situation? One of these exceptions, perhaps the foremost, is the village of Åre in Jämtland. Åre is a place where people come to ski and see the sights in the Swedish mountains, summer and winter. Åre is well known throughout Sweden, Scandinavia and even in parts of Europe. But it has not always been so, during the 1990s Åre was in a deep economic crisis, a crisis that Åre managed to turn around. How did this turn around happen? Who were the people behind it? In short, who governs Åre?

Who governs? are not a new issue, it was raised already in the 1960s by Robert Dahl (1961), who studied the local politics in New Haven in the United States. His conclusions were that there were key people who influence local politics; he called these actors for political entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is not a new concept for political science - it was used by many of the classic thinkers as Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. However, it was Dahl who first coined the concept of political entrepreneurship. Dahl’s definition of a political entrepreneur is that he is a”… cunning, resourceful, masterful leader” (Dahl 1961 p. 6). Many have since Dahl used the term political entrepreneurship, but it is many times used to describe the actors that do not have direct access to the political arena but which makes use of entrepreneurial characteristics in order to gain influence in the political arena (see for ex. Yoffie & Bergstein 1985). There is no uniform way to use the term, and it can mean any number of things. Many times it is business owners that are described as political entrepreneurs as they use the political arena to try to influence policy in order to support their business.

The purpose of this paper is to give examples of political entrepreneurship in Sweden at the local level. I will show that there is a difference between political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians and that it is important that we make this distinction in order to better understand what affects local development.

A Swedish researcher who has studied political entrepreneurs as a new type of politician who will replace the "faithful party worker" is Lena Wängnerud (2008). The political entrepreneur in Wängneruds material, based on studies of the Swedish parliament, is often a young politician who is driven by specific issues and is active in parliament for a limited period. Political entrepreneurs are active in politics to influence a given issue and they see
politics as a possible forum, among many others, to influence. The issue is thus superior to political participation, it is more important to get their way in the matter of substance than to be involved and participate in politics in general (Wängnerud 2008). Evert Vedung (1996 p. 17) also talks about political entrepreneurship in a Swedish context and mentions the liberal Per Gahrton and his work in creating the Green Party in Sweden in the 1980s. In this paper, I will talk about political entrepreneurship from a broader approach than Wängnerud and Vedung has done and even go into what I mean is a separate kind of political entrepreneurship that I have chosen to call entrepreneurial politicians.

There are politicians on the local level who are acting in an entrepreneurial way to create local development. A politician can be entrepreneurial in other areas than local development but a process for local development is what is focused in this paper. The paper is based on a study of a village and the work for promoting a certain type of local development. The village is situated in a rural area in the northern parts of Sweden. This is where the political entrepreneurship is especially important, because many times it's about specific individuals' strivings to develop the community to be able to live and work in the community, which often is a place with poor preconditions. That is; the political entrepreneur creates their own opportunities to be able to live at a certain place.

Local development is a very broad area and covers many policy areas, and the entrepreneurs who act in this field are therefore not policy entrepreneurs. A political entrepreneur works within different policy fields while a policy entrepreneur is more focused upon specific policy areas. The paper is based on a case study of the resort Åre in the northern inland of Sweden and stretches from 1975 until 2007. Although the emphasis in this paper will be on the developmental work that was done during the 1990ies and the beginning of 2000. Sweden undergone a very deep economic crisis during the 1990ies and it affected Åre especially much since they rely much on tourism. In Åre one had to act, something had to be done. For the inhabitants in the municipality it was about to reverse a negative trend in order to create opportunities to be able to live in the municipality.

Political entrepreneurship - who, what, when and how?

The field of political entrepreneurship is diverse and the term is used in many different ways with different meanings. Studies do not distinguish between different types of political entrepreneurship. Political entrepreneurs may be individuals within the political system, such as politicians and bureaucrats, as well as people outside the system, as business owners and lobbyists (Meydani 2008 p. 304). There are also examples of definitions like Wamplers

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1 The paper is based on interviews and documentary studies. The respondents have been selected by using snowball sampling.
(2009 p. 574), which makes no distinction between political entrepreneurs and policy entrepreneurs. In order for research about the political entrepreneurship to move forward and for our knowledge to increase, I mean that there is a need to explore different forms of political entrepreneurship. There is a need to distinguish between actors within the political system and those outside and to study the driving forces and motives behind their actions. The literature draws a distinction between entrepreneurs who act on unexploited opportunities - "entrepreneurship by opportunity" - and those who act according to necessity - "entrepreneurship by necessity."

Research on political entrepreneurs can be summarized in four points:

1. Institutions are not in equilibrium
2. Political entrepreneurs are trying to change the boundaries of authority within the institution.
3. Focus on the political entrepreneur leads our attention to endogenous development (Sheingate 2003 p. 186), which means that actors at the local level can influence development.
4. The political entrepreneur discovers a profit opportunity that she/he is acting on (Holcombe 2002 p. 1).

Based on these theoretical considerations, I have created a theoretical model (see Table 1.1), which will be filled with content as the difference between the political entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial politician is illustrated by the case of Åre.

### Table 1.1

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial Politicians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Breaking boundaries</td>
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<td>Driving force</td>
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<td>&quot;profit&quot;</td>
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**Åre - the big little village**

The village of Åre is located in the county of Jämtland. Åre has since the 1970s been a winter sports resort of international standards and has in recent years begun to focus increasingly on becoming a place for year-round tourism. Åre is unique when compared with other cities in inland areas in Sweden, which often is characterized by out-migration and rising unemployment. Åre has a positive development when it comes to population growth and unemployment. Åre was even the winner of the price "Sweden’s growth municipality” in 2006. That Åre has such a positive demographical development (about 1.5 percent) is
remarkable, since the trend in the 2000s is that rural and traditional industrial municipalities in Sweden have declining populations (Sveriges Nya Geografi, 2006 p. 8).

However, Åre has not always had positive growth, migration and declining unemployment rate. The village was, as mentioned in the papers’ introduction, in a deep economic crisis in the early 1990’s. What was done then to reverse this negative trend? The development was set in motion by a number of processes. The processes was aiming at bringing Åre out of the negative situation, and one of these processes was started by a small group of individuals who began working to bring about a “multi-purpose hall”2 at the resort. This group will be called “the vision group”. It is the work of this group that is focused in this paper, there are examples of other types of actions during this period, but they are not considered here.

That is something worth mentioning that there are always several diverging ideas of how local development best is brought about and how the local development shall be designed. In this paper I have chosen to focus upon the work with the multi-purpose hall as it was that idea that became a reality. Therefore it was the vision of this group that prevailed. The informants I have interviewed describe it as that in the 1990s, when interest rates ran through the roof and the stock market collapsed, Åre collapsed. The years 1995-1999 Åre had a negative demographical development. Åre was in a crisis. In the summer of 1995 the informants describes the situation as “nothing happened worth reporting in Åre”, there were no restaurants open, no cafés, no shops and there were hardly any tourists in the village. Åre begun to analyze what went wrong, why the positive development of the 1980s had turned into this bad situation. The informants talk about “a dream about developing Åre was brought about”.

There were several actors in Åre that cooperated to bring Åre from this, they felt, crisis-like situation. The actors came from the private sector, and from the municipality in terms of officials and politicians. The agents talks about different reasons for the feeling that there must be a change in Åre. The sense of crisis or threat is something many of the informants emphasize, both from the public sector (politicians) and from represents of the private sector (business owners and consultants). The represents of the municipality felt that the situation with high unemployment and emigration, resulting in reduced tax revenues, was the biggest threat. Since the municipality because of its geography had high costs to meet residents’ needs. Åre is to the surface a large municipality, 7,500 square kilometers, but has only 10 000 inhabitants. The represents of the private sector it was the declining flow of tourist, which was perceived as the greatest threat. Thus, the perceived threats are partly different between the public and the private sector, but they led to a joint action towards a

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2 The original idea with the multi-hall was that it was supposed to attract more visitors and create job opportunities. It was meant to contain a bath, bowling, press centre and be able to be used as a congress hall. As the paper will show this vision had to be changed (it also became a hotel) in order to be able to be realized.
common goal to address the problems. The solution to the problem was the same: more people. More people need to visit Åre and more people have to live in the village.

**Institutions in non-equilibrium gives action space**

If we assume that institutions are in equilibrium it results in a perception that change occurs at “critical junctures” and that it is only during those moments that change is possible. If we instead assume that institutions aren’t in equilibrium, such as historical institutionalism does, it means that change is possible not only by exogenous factors, but it can also be generated endogenously by political entrepreneurs. Sheingate (2003 p. 186) argues that institutions aren’t in equilibrium and that the political entrepreneur exploits this. This means that change would not only be done by external actors such as multinational companies setting up at the resort, but that change can also come about through internal change.

Sheingate believe that entrepreneurs exploit instability and that their innovation is to make creative combination of existing elements. They consolidate innovation by creating new structures and rules for how to act (Sheingate 2003 p. 190). The unstable situation in Åre, referring the negative development at the time, provided a basis for the success of the multi-purpose hall project. Stakeholders including representatives from the private sector had tried to establish a multi-purpose hall before but failed. Now that the instability was a fact, and even leading politicians were convinced that a multi-hall was the solution to the problems, the project could be implemented.

This is an example of how past failures are used to bring about change, change is not instantaneous but is gradual and is, as Sheingate puts it, relying on those earlier failures. Also Schneider and Teske (1992) speaks of the political entrepreneur as someone who creates change. They define political entrepreneurship as: “[E]ntrepreneurial innovation is a speculative act of creative recombination that, when successful, transforms the institutional boundaries of authority” (Schneider & Teske 1992 s. 190). In the case of Åre it was the entrepreneurial politicians who were crucial for the bringing about a multi-purpose hall, past attempts in which no entrepreneurial politicians were active had failed. The above empirical examples give us information about *when*, *how* and *what* in terms of political entrepreneurship. That is, when does the political entrepreneurship arise, how do they do it and what do they do? In this case it was the instability of the system at the time, caused by the threat perceived to the resort, which was crucial for politicians to act (when), a small group of municipal employees acted in cooperation with a small part of the private sector (how) and created a multi-purpose hall (what) (see Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1 Political entrepreneurship in practice**
Sheingate also focuses on failures and how they can provide a basis for future success. Innovations in the political arena are different from innovations on the market, partly because they are not protected by any patent, partly because they often are the result of "partial and incomplete victories" (Sheingate 2003 p. 16). Change is dependent on these partial victories and thus change is not instantaneous and drastic but gradual (Sheingate 2003 p. 200). One of the participants in the vision group in Åre had been involved in an earlier failed attempt to create a multi-purpose hall, and in doing so he was well informed in the subject and convinced of the positive effect of the multi-hall on Åre. This resulted in a strategic game: to highlight an earlier study made of Åre, as that study suggested that a multi-purpose hall could be good for the resort. The experience of the earlier failed attempt to bring about a multi-hall in Åre was used and turned into strength for new attempt.

Table 1.2 Political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians in the case of Åre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions in non-equilibrium</th>
<th>Political Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial Politicians</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploits the instability of the institutions in order to maximize their influence in the political arena</td>
<td>Act upon the threat to the community. The risks they take when acting are perceived as minor than the risks that they consider themselves to take if they do not act</td>
<td></td>
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**Boundaries of authority**

Schneider and Teske (1992) write about the political entrepreneurship and define it as "it is individuals that change the direction and flow of politics" (p. 737). They argue that the political entrepreneur can transform existing political coalitions by adding new dimensions to the debate. In the case of Åre it was also clearly stated early on that both deputy mayor and deputy opposition leader would be a part of the group that formed the vision. Because all actors were aware of “the Åre tradition”, which means that Åre always changes majority in the municipal council every election. It was seen as critical to the project with the multi-hall that it was supported by both deputy mayor and the deputy opposition leader so that the project would not lose ground if the political majority in the municipality were changed. Each of the actors anchored ideas in "their organizations", the politicians in their parties,
entrepreneurs in their business and the business association. Unity among the politicians in
the group gave officials more opportunity to influence the administration within the
municipality. The Multi-hall would be implemented, everyone involved in the vision group
agreed. What now remained was to get around the obstacles that might arise along the
road. The municipality had been acting as a facilitator in the process. The people involved
agree that without the support from the municipality, financially and otherwise, the project
had not been able to be completed. An official said: "Åre is a good example of how to create
short routes to decision making." That deputy opposition leader and deputy mayor
cooperated in achieving the vision is an example of how political coalitions is reformed, all
involved were convinced of the importance of the vision and thereby cooperated, and in
doing so policy was reformed.

The political entrepreneur is someone who creates political change (Schneider & Teske 1992
p. 737). Sheingate (2003 p. 185) defines political entrepreneurs as “… individuals whose
creative acts have transformative effects on politics, policies, or institutions.” A small group
of people (the vision group) representing the private sector and local authority, both civil
servants and politicians, created a network where they defined what they saw as the
problem in Åre and how it was to be handled. To use Sheingates concept, this was a small
group of people with indirect influence (business owners and officials) and people with direct
influence (politicians) on the political process who formulated the questions and problems,
and thus influenced the agenda and the political arena in a decisive way. What was
perceived as a problem - how the threat against the village was made - affected what was
considered to be the solution to these problems. That in turn influences the political agenda
and the political arena. In doing so the whole town's future and development of the village
was affected.

It is especially one politician who is mentioned a lot by the other informants and presented
as one of the process’ most important agents, several states the politician as necessary for
the process. In what follows, I call this politician for Politician A. An official said:

[The] one that showed the maximum courage was Politician A, it is this person’s courage that makes the
project succeed. The politician knows that there is a resistance to the project, and it’s very noisy, but Politician
A is so damn confident that this is right. So Politician A dare, this politician, along with me, is implementing the
vision in the political system, and the politician do so very strongly.

Another official said that the municipality invested money in the multi-hall as a result of
Politician A’s actions, but the informant also touched on another politician's effort, here
called Politician B:

That the municipality dared to take this decision, [...] it was really a result of Politician A who dared to push this
through. Then Politician A lost office in the election and it became Politician B that got to realize the project. It
was though Politician A that succeeded in taking the policy decisions that got the project to get started.
To use Sheingates terminology it is Politician A’s actions that transforms policy and thereby creates change: Politician A acts in a creative way by using public money in funding the multi-hall. But it is Politician B that gets to consolidate the transformation because Politician A loses office in the upcoming election. The official also said that the municipality had a clear view of its role in promoting local development and act innovatively. Another informant “The consultant” points to the risks Politician A and B took: "... It was very courageous for it is taxpayers' money and it is a lot of money, a lot of money, and the municipality's very indebted today."

Sheingate argues that the political entrepreneur creates innovation, the innovation must not lead to change it can also consolidate an already implemented change. The political entrepreneur defines the political debate by framing issues, defining problems and influence the agenda (Sheingate 2003 p. 188). There was cooperation between the municipality and the business which was crucial for the success of the project, one official goes so far as to say: "We did everything over the years, 1999-2003. Back then all the energy, all the driving force, all financing, everything was in the municipality." However, it must nevertheless be said to be a benefit to the project with the multi-hall that it had been so well studied in the past, when several attempts to build a multi-purpose hall had been done before. Several of those individuals who had tried earlier, was members of the vision group. The innovation consisted, in this case, by taking lessons from previous failed attempts and thus turn them into a benefit in the new project. Meydanis (2008 p. 304) definition is similar to Sheingates. A political entrepreneur is defined as follows:

[A] person or a group that tries to change the political reality by making policy change or by changing the existing political rules of the game.

In Åre the interpretation of the policy framework changed, which led to a change in the "rules of the game". An official said: "Nothing was to stop us, we had to muddle through the democratic system." This meant that in Åre all available resources was used, but in a new way. Or as Sheingate (2003) expresses it: it was creative recombination of known elements. Concretely, this meant that in the vision group a vision was created and a work began in order to bring about a multi-purpose hall at the resort. A multi-hall was seen as the solution to the problems Åre had, both for the private sector and the municipality. As a politician puts it:
Swedish municipalities build public halls and bath houses, but what Åre did was that we took the money and gave them to Holiday Club\(^3\) and said: here we have money, we [the municipality] can put them in a bath house, but if you take that money and put them in the bath that will be built at the Holiday Club, we will get more bath for the money, we get more community hall for money when we cooperate.

This is an example of how they acted in an entrepreneurial way within the municipality. The innovation is the way the political entrepreneurs found new ways of financing public sector functions. It is a form of creative action to take the resources that are available (tax revenue to be invested in a bath house) and use them in a new way in order to create local development. These actions also ultimately lead to a change in the system, a new attitude to how to finance public services.

Table: 1.3 Political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians in the case of Åre

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Political Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial Politicians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaking boundaries</td>
<td>Influences the political arena by defining potential threats and also defines the actions to take in order to solve the problems</td>
<td>Defines problems and threats and <em>decides</em> about political actions in order to solving them. Can turn visions into political action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Driving forces behind the Political Entrepreneurs actions**

Dahl (1961) argues that a political entrepreneur does not exist in all political systems, but where he exists he's seen. He is a leader who uses others as resources as much as possible, he is not a resource that others can use for their purposes (p. 6).

The agents I have studied, are all driven players who have been very energetic. An example of "muddling their way through" the democratic system is that they had to be very clear in their organizations that this project was to be implemented, no matter what. Since everyone in the group agreed that the Holiday Club initiative would be implemented it was just to find solutions to the obstacles. Among other things, some laws, rules and conditions had to be changed or the interpretation of them had to be modified. This is a typical approach for political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians: if it is not possible with current

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\(^3\) Holiday Club is the company that was contracted to build the multi-purpose hall, and it then also became a hotel, restaurant, and spa. Why it became the company Holiday Club is also a result of political entrepreneurship but a process that is not focused in this paper.
conditions or rules new ones are created, or the interpretation of them are modified. A municipal official said that "some [municipal staff] were probably struggling to find ways to implement the vision, but we [the vision group] had the vision in mind, nothing was to stop." Another municipal employee talks in the interview about protests against the initiative. The official puts it that all participants of the vision group were convinced of the visions accuracy, the work continued no matter the protests. This illustrates that the processes that took place in Åre has been top-down. The interviews suggest that problems such as conflict, competition and resistance, have been handled by continuing following the vision. In Dahl’s terminology we would say that the political entrepreneurs acted as resourceful leaders.

When politicians themselves spoke of their role they meant that they before this project have had positive experiences of "trying new things out". One politician talks about a village developmental project that gave the municipality a lot of attention. The politician continues “We like doing things in this municipality, being active agents and is not afraid to try new things.” Being creative and innovative is a tradition, as a politician in Åre you are allowed to try new things, it’s like an allowing atmosphere in the city hall. The politicians also put it that the municipality in Åre has gone further than most municipalities, they have not only provided support and advice to projects, they have actively worked for its realization, and contributed large sums of money, taxpayers’ money.

Such a political climate - that it is allowed to try new things and practices - means that there is a large action arena for the political agents. A reasonable assumption is that this facilitates an entrepreneurial behavior, a behavior that involves new ways of managing the daily business and thereby innovative and transformative policy is made. Another factor that enables political entrepreneurial behavior may be the so-called “tradition of Åre”, that Åre changes political majority in almost every election and has done so for decades. The risk to lose the job at the next election is the same for all politicians in Åre, whether they are entrepreneurial politicians who strive to realize a vision or if they act like "regular" local politicians who takes greater account of the formal institutional rules and the traditional way of doing things. A third factor is mentioned by one of the informants and that is that the personal chemistry of the group also has been important, there must be a number of people who enjoy working together and that they should believe in the same thing and that they should be willing to put in a lot of work and take risks in order to achieve that vision. The informant puts it:

“It is Politician A in combination with official X that is brave and took some bold decisions. The ones working in the municipality has been very brave.”

An official puts it:

“Politician A lost the election due to a to great courage"
The official continues by pointing to a difference between politicians and other political entrepreneurs: the politicians have to strive to be elected or reelected which is something that officials or agents from the private sector don’t have to consider. Therefore it was very important to the process that politicians and company representatives could trust each other. In an interview a represent of the private sector talked about that different “rules” apply for politicians and officials or private sector agents. The respondent said that politicians has a more ungrateful job, that it is easier for critics to get rid of a politician than to get rid of an business owner because the politician has to be elected or reelected and thereby has a greater vulnerability. The informant said that especially one of the politicians had to work hard to unite his/her political party to the vision. The informant says that politicians can be set aside politically in elections while that does not apply to an entrepreneur: "Those who have worked against me, I have ignored, they take energy and I don’t give them that, I continue to press forward, a politician can’t do that.”

The informants repeatedly talks about that almost anything was permitted, that there was a vision that would be implemented and nothing was to stop it. This suggests a permissive climate where norms and rules were supporting the process and the group continued the work regardless of how their actions were received by the surrounding society. The agents possible choices of actions were numerous and varied as long as they strived to fulfill the vision. This permissive attitude also helped officials’ work to find ways around and/or change the rules and conditions that could prevent the building of the multi-hall. That the politicians had a different role than the other actors in the process is visible in the material with the private sector agent, the private sector agents experienced less conflict in the process than those who were employed by the municipality. The private sector agents witnesses that the municipal employees were easy to blame just because of their position in the municipality, they were held responsible for the process by the citizens. While the entrepreneurs and other business representatives were not held accountable and they were not dependent on voter support to maintain their position.

The politicians are held responsible but the political role also gives a unique opportunity to influence. One politician said: "If you want to make a change, if you really want to make a difference, you must engage in a political party." Being a politician is an exposed position, but it is the ultimate position if you want to influence. However to be able to realize a vision, to make a difference, the vision sometimes has to be changed, adapted or modified. This change or adaptation is because the original vision proved to be impossible to realize. The vision with the multi-hall was changed when Holiday Club became the entrepreneur that was to build and run the multi-hall, this because Holiday Club wanted the multi-hall to be a part of a hotel. In the original vision of the multi-hall it would not contain any accommodations. This is an example of how a vision changes over time and is adapted to what is possible to realize. The driving force for the agents in Åre was to realize the vision,
what they believed was right for Åre, and not letting anything stop this vision even if it had to be slightly modified.

Table 1.4 political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians in the case of Åre

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driving force</td>
<td>The desire to work and live at the location</td>
<td>The desire to create possibilities for people (themselves and others) to work and live at the location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Profit

There are many theoretical assumptions about profit for political entrepreneurs. One is found in Holcombs' (2002) definition of political entrepreneurship. Political entrepreneurship occurs according to him when an individual “observes and acts on a political profit opportunity”. This definition differs from the perception of the entrepreneur inspired by Schumpeter, who argues that the entrepreneur is an innovator when it comes to new products, create new markets or new technologies (Sheingate 2003 p. 189). The Holcombian entrepreneur acts upon an existing political profit, the Schumpeterian entrepreneur creates the situation.

Schneider and Teske (1992 p. 738) argues that the political entrepreneur, as well as the economic, is driven by profit motives. It's personal motives and a desire to maximize profits which leads to action and the action leads to a change of the arena or the structure that the agent is acting within. Many definitions and theories on political entrepreneurship emphasize profit as one of the main reasons why the entrepreneur is acting (see example Sheingate 2003, Wampler, 2009 Holcombe 2002). It is possible that one can say that the political entrepreneurs in my material have been driven by a desire to create, by the joy in creating and shaping the development. The joy of creating then becomes the profit. In my interviews, the major driving force behind acting is the will of enabling people to work and live at the location. Profit in my case has nothing to do with monetary profit.

Also Casson (2003) writes about profit and political entrepreneurs, and he believes that a political office usually has a relatively low salary and that the salary can’t be the motive for wanting to be a politician. Cassons’ political entrepreneur acts in entrepreneurial ways in order to get a political position and then the position itself can be the reward. Casson
continues that when a political position is reached, it may be possible with personal gain through such as professional fees or outright bribery (p. 202). It’s not possible to find any support for this kind of arguing what so ever in my material and I mean that it is difficult to apply this thinking to a Swedish context. My material shows that it is important to broaden the concept of profit in terms of political entrepreneurs, we must remember that the profit in this context does not have to be monetary or material or even in terms of prestige, it must not involve a reallocation of resources. Profit may include the joy of getting to create, the sense of fulfillment. An entrepreneurial act may be motivated by a personal need, and in a Swedish context phenomena such as bribery must be considered as unusual. Also Sheingate (2003) writes that it is unclear what profit means in a context of political entrepreneurs.( p. 190)

Holcombe (2002) argues that there are two ways in which political entrepreneurs can act:
1. “...removal of inefficiencies, or the discovery of potential opportunities for gains from trade through the political process”.
2. “…forcibly transferring wealth from one group of people to another” (p. 147)

Inefficiency is reduced, according to Holcombe, by government activities restructured so that the objectives of the activity are achieved at a lower cost. Political predatory means to redistribute wealth among different groups in society. This reallocation is based on the idea that if the number of people that are benefiting from redistribution are outnumbered those who lose, the political entrepreneur will profit from the forced reallocation. Holcombe is not clear about what he believes is a profit in a political context, and his reasoning is based on rational choice assumptions about the individual is a profit-maximizing agent. I interpret his text that he means that profit to a political entrepreneur is to get voter support (if the agent is a politician) or otherwise to retain office or position in the organization. This is in my opinion too narrow way to interpret profit in a political context. I agree with Lewin (1988) that argues that politicians have a variety of reasons for wanting to be a politician, being a politician for the position’s sake is not a sufficient explanation.

Table 1.5 Political Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurial Politicians in the case of Åre

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“profit”</td>
<td>Affects the political arena in order to create opportunities to be able to live a work at the location</td>
<td>Make decisions that create a development that enables people to be able to work and live at the location.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has not been possible to confirm many of the theoretical assumptions about profit interest with my case. My case indicates that being a politician is often a way to realize their ideas,
therefore, the position is a means and not an end in itself. The aim is to have the position and thereby being able to act entrepreneurially in order to achieve the vision. To act entrepreneurially in order to maintain or achieve a political position for the sake of the political positions must in a local political context in Sweden be seen as an exception. Many times, the US presidential candidates is analyzed with the help of theories on political entrepreneurship (see, e.g., Pious 2002), most of the candidates are seen as entrepreneurial, and they are seen as acting entrepreneurially in order to achieve the position as president of the United States.

**Political entrepreneurship, local politicians and the entrepreneurial politicians**

What I have shown in this paper is that the existing definitions of political entrepreneurship are not sufficient. They do not distinguish between the various actors' positions or roles in politics and thereby doesn’t take into account the specific circumstances of the politicians who act entrepreneurially. There are special circumstances for the entrepreneurial politicians have emerged in the analysis model that has followed every part of the paper. To be able to act as a entrepreneurial politician the politicians must be elected by the electorate. To understand the entrepreneurial role of politicians, we must therefore first look at the situation facing local politicians in general in Sweden, but first let us briefly look at the role of the Swedish municipalities. The municipalities are important because they are the structure that local politicians are acting within. The municipalities are major players in Sweden, they make up two thirds of the Swedish public sector (von Bergmann Winberg 2001 p. 12). The Swedish municipalities have a distinctive position if we compare with municipalities in other European countries as they have a strong autonomy, an autonomy that is a unique form of self-government based on old traditions (von Bergmann Winberg 2001 p. 13). The local bodies, in the case of Sweden the municipalities, have had to learn to react to changes and fluctuations in the international economy. This has led to a shift from government to governance, where the former resulted in a more formal institutional exercise of power while the latter has come to lead to political influence and power is exercised through diffuse networks. (John & Cole, 2000 p. 250)

In peripheral regions, the transition from government to governance has a different outcome than in other regions. This because the social structures in peripheral regions is different. The private sector is not as extensive, there are fewer people living there and that makes a smaller number of people willing and able to engage. This means that the same person can have several different roles, these roles can sometimes overlap, and e.g. some of the politicians are also business owners. Let us now have a closer look into the conditions of local politics and local politicians. Politics in Sweden is characterized by consensus and compromise. In recent years, trust in politicians has diminished, in everyday conversations, in media and in scientific studies it’s described as a crisis of confidence. However, some political scientists believe that contempt for politicians is a too strong concept or even the
wrong concept to use in these contexts. (Strömbäck 1999 p.18 ff.) When the Swedish voting system changed in 1997 and allowed the possibility to vote for specific candidates the opportunity to express support for different personalities in politics has increased. The Swedish system is a compromise between a purely personal voting system and the old model in which the voter could only support a party and not a specific candidate. The Swedish model means that a voter can choose to place their votes on a party, and then accept the list of candidates that the party set up, or place the vote on a specific person. If the candidate does not receive sufficient percentage of the votes (at least 8 percent) to get elected into the parliament the party the candidate represents gets the vote instead. (Karvonen 2002) Without going deeper into the Swedish electoral system it is possible to conclude that the transition to a more personal qualities-oriented system has led to an increased focus on politicians and their personalities.

Politics conducted in the municipality ought to appear less abstract to the citizens than politics at the national level. This because issues such as schools, social services and even some health issues that the municipality is responsible for affects the individual's everyday life. Despite this the participation and involvement in local politics is not higher than the participation and involvement in national politics. Voter turnout is affected by the issues to be focused and managed by the municipality, but it is also affected by how visible the politicians are and to what extent they are perceived as competent and credible. (Nord & Nygren 2002 p. 69) According to Hvitfelt and Nords (2000), study of what characteristics of politicians at the national level in Sweden that citizens appreciate, it is mainly two characteristics that appear to be more important than others: that politicians are honest and knowledgeable in matters of fact. (p 20 f.) However, the authors point out, there is a difference between which characteristics are estimated to affect voter behavior and which then actually affects people when they vote. This is because there are both direct and indirect effects that influence voters' voting behavior. The direct effect is based on the politician's personality, while the indirect effect is based on what the politician says or does. It is important to remember that there is a difference between actually being honest and knowledgeable and to appear as honest and knowledgeable, it is this latter variant that affects voter behavior. Based on this, we can conclude that for a politician it's important to appear in media and at events so that citizens are aware of the politician but it's also important to appear as honest and knowledgeable in their political behavior. It’s also important to remember that the assumption that a politician wants to reach a political office at all costs does not apply to all politicians. Lewin argues that politicians want to be elected or re-elected but that they have a variety of complex reasons for wanting that, politicians can’t solely be regarded as individuals that wants to maximize their votes. Politicians have other motivations than at any cost get as many votes as possible (Lewin 1988).

To summarize we have three kinds of political agents:
- For a **local politician**, it is important to be visual, to appear as honest and knowledgeable. It is important to maintain the position as a politician in order to be able to enforce important issues or changes.

- A **political entrepreneur** has a high locus of control, which is a strong sense of being able to influence. The entrepreneur has courage and is willing to take risks, have vision but is willing to change them if they prove impossible to implement. The political entrepreneur is energetic and in my case they are challenging the existing structures.

- An **entrepreneurial politician** is an energetic politician who is visible and appears as honest and competent, wants to stay in power but has visions and is willing to take risks to enforce important issues and changes. The entrepreneurial politician's behavior can challenge the existing structures.

### Political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians, what's the difference?

This paper has shown that the political system has certain rules that the political entrepreneur can’t change, that is that politicians are elected and that these elections are surrounded by certain procedures and rules. In other respects, however, rules many times have room for interpretation: it is possible to do things in other ways than traditionally done in politics, but then there is a need to think outside the box. The Swedish democratic system means that it is crucial to entrepreneurial politicians to be elected in order to be able to shape the development to the maximum. This is a recurring topic in my material, that politicians in many ways have a more difficult situation because they depend upon voter support to maintain the position. Wallis and Gregory (2009) supports this assumption when they write that leadership often entails a strong need to hold a person in a public position accountable, when something goes wrong. (p. 252) The material from my interviews also supports this assertion, thereby it’s more risky for a politician to support a vision than it is for a person whose livelihood does not depend on an electorate. It is also clear that the entrepreneurial politicians directly affects and take decisions on the political arena, unlike other political entrepreneurs who try to realize their vision by influencing the political arena indirectly, i.e. by trying to influence politicians.

Thereby it makes sense to make a distinction between political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians, because the situation entrepreneurial politicians find themselves in is not found anywhere else in the system. The entrepreneurial politician has more potential than any other kind of political agent to directly influence the political agenda. Despite the risks the entrepreneurial politicians are acting in accordance with their beliefs, sometimes they fail to enforce their vision, sometimes they succeed and sometimes they lose their jobs in the process. My material also indicates that profit isn’t the main reason why the politicians are acting entrepreneurially in local development issues; it is more
personal motives behind the actions. It can be said to be entrepreneurship by necessity, which is about creating opportunities to live and stay at the location, creating a successful region. The agents have motivated their actions with being convinced that it’s the right thing for the region. This implies a need to focus less on profits in terms of political entrepreneurship, or at least broaden the definition of profit. Johannisson (2005) supports this assumption that profit is not always one of the main reasons behind an entrepreneurial act: it can instead often be a feeling of fulfillment that is the reason. My study also shows that political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians in the case Åre does not apply to Wängnerud (2008) definition of political entrepreneurs at the national level, the entrepreneurs in the case of Åre are not significantly young and has been politically active for many years.
Table 1.6 Political entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial politicians in the case of Åre.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Political Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial Politicians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutions in non-equilibrium</td>
<td>Exploits the instability of the institutions in order to maximize their influence in the political arena</td>
<td>Act upon the threat to the community. The risks they take when acting are perceived as minor than the risks that they consider themselves to take if they do not act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking boundaries</td>
<td>Influences the political arena by defining potential threats and also defines the actions to take in order to solve the problems.</td>
<td>Defines problems and threats and decides about political actions in order to solving them. Can turn visions into political action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving force</td>
<td>The desire to work and live at the location</td>
<td>The desire to create possibilities for people (themselves and others) to work and live at the location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>”profit”</td>
<td>Affects the political arena in order to create opportunities to be able to live a work at the location.</td>
<td>Make decisions that create development that enables people to be able to work and live at the location.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The threat to Åre perceived by the agents from the public and private sector leads to an imbalance in the institutions, and the action arena of the political entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial politicians thus increased. Entrepreneurial politicians have greater opportunities to exert influence because they are not only involved in defining problems and suggest measures they can *take measures*. Political entrepreneurs create their own opportunities to work and live in the community, the entrepreneurial politicians create those opportunities for others as well as for themselves. Profit interest is not such a type of profit mentioned by Holcombe (2002) or Cassone (2003). The “profit” for the agents in Åre, if the concept profit is to be used at all, has been the joy of being successful in turning the idea of what Åre should be into a reality, realizing the vision and thereby creating opportunities to live in the destination. My material shows that agents in the periphery use the possibilities and opportunities that are available to them in order to create local development. Thus, they create their own abilities to be able to live where they choose. In
the case of Åre the entrepreneurial politicians has always held a formal leadership position, such as deputy mayor and opposition leader. The entrepreneurial politicians don’t give up where ever they are they are seen and heard and they are energetic, they create new ways forward for the local community and opens up new ways to act in the political arena and challenge the existing structures. They are not afraid of losing their position, to implement their prioritized issues are more important than retaining power at the next election. If a project fails, they learn from their mistakes and start a new and better project to achieve the vision. The entrepreneurial politicians do not let words like "it is impossible" to influence them - they make the impossible possible.
Referenser


Sheingate, A. D. (2003), ”Political entrepreneurship, institutional change and American political development”. Studies in American Political Development, 17, s. 185–203.


Sveriges nya geografi,


