

Arenan och den entreprenöriella staden. Byråkrati, viljan att samverka och gåvans moraliska ekonomi

Abstract

The Arena and the Entrepreneurial City builds on a microhistory of the collaboration between public and private organizations in the creation of two public sports arenas. Several new arenas have been built in Sweden during the last 15 years and many of them have received a lot of attention because of cost overruns and design flaws. Previous research shows that there are no economic incentives for a city to build a new arena, yet they continue to be built.

In this dissertation, the plan to build a new arena is seen as an expression of the entrepreneurial city. In the entrepreneurial city, politicians and civil servants perceive their city to be facing competition from other cities due to increased economic globalization. They also perceive a pressure to engage in place marketing activities, to build flagship-projects, and to abandon the traditional bureaucracy for new entrepreneurial organizational forms, such as private-public collaborations. For more than 20 years, governance has been a popular concept among scholars for describing politicians' and civil servants' engagement in horizontal networks, private-public collaborations and other entrepreneurial activities.

A conceptual framework is developed in order to understand the relations and actions that lead private and public organizations to collaborate. Private-public collaboration is often described as a win-win strategy, but in this dissertation a slightly different history emerges. Private-public collaboration is described as emerging in an institutional gray zone where politicians and private entrepreneurs establish personal contacts and build mutual trust with the help of intermediaries and gifts. Within the city's bureaucracy, the private-public collaborations are treated as exceptional projects. As these projects are exceptions from the ordinary rules and routines, they disclose how power is exercised in the relations between politicians and civil servants, and between these and the private entrepreneurs. Furthermore, investigative journalists are important in scrutinizing the relations forming the private-public collaborations.

Applying the conceptual framework to the two microhistorical case studies results in the introduction of two concepts: the informal archipelago and the bureaucratic exception. The informal archipelago describes the content of the relations found in the institutional gray zone, while the bureaucratic exception defines the implications of the informal archipelago within the city's formal bureaucracy. As such, both concepts challenge as well as add to previous knowledge on the entrepreneurial city's organizing in general and on private-public collaborations in particular. The way the entrepreneurial city is organized is discussed against an inclusive definition of democracy, called the everyday democracy.