THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

CULTURAL HISTORY, GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHIES, THEORIZING AGENCY

RICHARD PFEILSTETTER

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Anthropology of Entrepreneurship provides a comprehensive overview of the unique contribution from anthropology to the field of entrepreneurship studies.

Insights from anthropology illuminate the wider socio-cultural implications of entrepreneurialism, a moral order and social practice that is profoundly shaping contemporary society. Revisiting classic works in anthropology from a new angle, this book provides an exciting introduction to diverse conceptual framings of economic agency. The author also examines a wide range of 21st century ethnographies from the Global South, alongside his own research from across Europe. Readers meet ordinary people struggling with new social landscapes, including neoliberal urbanism, informal credit, heritage marketing, social enterprising, gift competition, and silicon utopias. With sensitivity to different theoretical, temporal, and ethnographic perspectives, the author presents a thorough cultural history of the entrepreneur—this ubiquitous, yet ambivalent contemporary character.

This important volume will be of interest to scholars and students of anthropology, business studies and other related social sciences.

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Cultural History, Global Ethnographies, Theorizing Agency

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2022
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Cover photo: La Pescadilla que se muerde la cola (2013, detail) by Veredas López.

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Pfeilstetter, Richard, author.
Title: The anthropology of entrepreneurship : cultural history, global ethnographies, theorizing agency / Richard Pfeilstetter.
Description: First Edition. | New York : Routledge, 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021024116 | ISBN 9780367424398 (Hardback) | ISBN 9780367407483 (Paperback) | ISBN 9780367824136 (eBook)
Subjects: LCSH: Economic anthropology. | Entrepreneurship. | Ethnology.
Classification: LCC GN448 .P44 2022 | DDC 306.3--dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021024116

ISBN: 978-0-367-42439-8 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-367-40748-3 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-0-367-82413-6 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9780367824136

Typeset in Bembo
by Taylor & Francis Books

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is the fate of many authors that they can only mention the latest catastrophe in the preface. Like the Chernobyl disaster in Ulrich Beck's book *Risk Society* for example, or the 2008 financial crisis in Hann and Hart's *Economic Anthropology*. Besides thousands of daily deaths, the corona virus pandemic produces new global scenarios of inclusion and exclusion. But it does not put the rationale of this book into question. Before and after, entrepreneurs in business, politics, culture, and science are expected to find solutions to the latest pressing societal challenges. This book is about the sociocultural conditions of possibility of such a collective expectation. How does faith in—or disillusion with—creative, individual, and rational agency play out in ordinary life?

I have been concerned with those kinds of questions since starting my PhD in 2007. To some extent, this book is about what I have learned so far. Along the way, I have benefitted from many people and institutions, and I can only mention a few of them here. Discussions, fieldwork, and writing on this project were enhanced by inspiring encounters at the Departments of Anthropology in Munich, Berkeley, Manchester, Oxford, and the LSE, all kindly hosting me as a guest researcher. Thanks to the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, I could make long-term visits to organizations in Berlin, Glasgow, and Vienna, some of which are presented in this book. The Cajasol Foundation supported my PhD research in Spain and Germany, where I gathered the first materials for this project. Four anonymous reviewers for this book—and many others of my previously published papers—helped me to develop a balanced argument over time. I have included condensed or modified versions of some of these articles here. Subsections in chapters two and four draw on data from my paper "Mann der Tat, Enterprise Culture and Ethno-preneurs" published in *Sociologus*. "Doing Good and Selling Goods" published in *Voluntas* is the source of a section in chapter six. The data on Manchester in chapter seven is taken from "Silicon Utopias"

(*Suomen Antropologi*) and “Startup Communities” (*Compaso*). A very compressed version of my paper “Heritage Entrepreneurship” published in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* is included in a subsection in chapter eight. Taylor & Francis, Springer, and Duncker & Humblot have kindly allowed me to reproduce some of my thoughts here.

My special thanks goes to all informants, colleagues, and students who have influenced this book in any way or appear in its pages. Against tradition, I do not want to single some people out. I might risk forgetting somebody or reveal identities without consent. Those of you who personally know me and read this: thank you for your support or collaboration. Without you, this project would not have been possible. To my family—thank you for your encouragement. Finally, my gratitude goes to the anthropology editor of the Press. She and her team believed in this project early on and helped me to move successfully through the many stages up to publication.

INTRODUCTION

Forbes magazine recently put it this way: “Entrepreneurship is one of the hottest topics in economic development today, and cities, States, regions, and countries all over the world are trying to build entrepreneurship ecosystems” (2014). The World Economic Forum encourages the idea of social entrepreneurship to “improve the state of the world”. The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is promoting education in entrepreneurship. The European Union urges member States to foment “entrepreneurial culture”. Corporations finance university chairs in entrepreneurship, multinationals give prizes to young entrepreneurs, and banking groups are relaxing the loan criteria for entrepreneurs on behalf of governments. Popular literature on self-marketing and self-employment is on the rise. Here are some recent headlines from the magazine *Entrepreneur*: “How to become a millionaire by age 30”; “Ready for greatness?”, or “How to stay sane during a crowd-funding campaign”. What can anthropology tell us about such developments? Isn’t this discipline known for asking other, much larger questions, like: What makes us human?

In his number one world bestseller on the history of humankind, Harari (2014) starts by explaining the evolutionary difference between sapiens and his fellow animals. He explains this difference with the “legend of the Peugeot”. It is the unique language of sapiens that allowed him/her to imagine things that do not exist, like Peugeot and other corporations without physical substance. Besides gossip—Harari argues—collective imaginations of this kind were crucial. It allowed large scale cooperation required for war, trade, or “entrepreneurship” in the case of the invention of the limited liability company (2014: 33). I am interested in pointing to some patterns of the occasional appearance of this notion in Harari’s popular book. Entrepreneurship and Peugeot are obviously secondary examples that Harari puts forward to illustrate that collective imaginations were the crucial evolutionary advantage of sapiens. He is not interested in studying entrepreneurship or corporations. Nevertheless, entrepreneurship is framed

DOI: 10.4324/9780367824136-1

here as an example of an important evolutionary social pattern of humankind. Entrepreneurship makes us different to other species because it requires believing in things such as corporations, credit, or the market. Thus, Harari's surprising entrepreneurship-Peugeot-example, explaining human mythical thinking to the popular science audience, comes with an inbuilt ethnocentric bias. This bias consists of framing Western entrepreneurship as a shared evolutionary behaviour of all humans. To some extent, Harari naturalizes entrepreneurship by presenting it as an ahistorical and innate human trait. In this book, I explore the universal, but also the particular about entrepreneurship across the globe, both historically (Part II) and contemporarily (Part III). I will bring the concept out of the shadows of unreflected and naturalized assumptions, like those of Harari. I will show that there is a specific anthropological tradition within the concert of socio-scientific approaches to this topic (Part I). This scholarship avoids simplistic and unreflected assumptions about humans as *per se* entrepreneurial.

A more sinister, yet non-ethnocentric image of the entrepreneur appears in Ruben Andersson's outstanding book *No Go World* (2019), that I reviewed recently for the *American Anthropologist* (2020b). In his account of the spread of "danger zones" across Mali, Somalia or Afghanistan, the award-winning, Oxford-based anthropologist argues that Western "remote interveners" create the risk they are supposedly fighting. The crucial problem is "fear" and its spread is "systemic". Yet within this "system framework" that characterizes Andersson's book, he conceives of certain agents that can take advantage of the system. They play its game well. For example, they know that "in order to be rich you have to threaten" as one of Andersson's informants in Mali put it (2019: 176). Those "fear entrepreneurs" practice a "reflexive dangerization" and may both be large and small (2019: 204). For instance, there are "power brokers and entrepreneurs in putative danger zones, who know how to satisfy every dangerous desire as they court external donors and interveners" (2019: 18). In addition, there are governmental "fear peddlers"—like Donald Trump—marketing "snake merchants" and ordinary Malians that are "pitching donors" (2019: 16, 176–7). Andersson's book is a good example to illustrate the widespread anthropological employment of the concept. It also shows the notions' great interest for making sense of the world we live in. Yet it also is representative of its often utterly undertheorized employment. Thus, both popular anthropology bestsellers and cutting-edge expert monographs often tend to frame entrepreneurship as a "native term". There is little interest in the theoretical breadth and ethnographical depth with which it is addressed conceptually elsewhere.

Thus, this book speaks to the anthropological community, demonstrating how entrepreneurship permeates both past and present of the discipline and that it has the potential of moving again—like in the 1970s (see Chapter 4)—from a niche topic to a central disciplinary vocabulary. On the other hand, most academic experts and students of entrepreneurship who might be reading these lines have no or little background in anthropology. They are often eager to complement main-stream research on start-ups with contextualizing frameworks provided by critical studies,

such as anthropology (see introduction to Part II). This book is also a handbook for that purpose, diving deep into the intellectual history and present of anthropological theory and ethnography of entrepreneurship. While ethnographic methods and entrepreneurship studies will be at the core, this book has many connecting points for audiences interested in (economic) agency theory, work sociology, neoliberalism's history, advertising language, cultural, gender, development, organizational, postcolonial, and even technology studies. Ultimately, those relatively few anthropologists and ethnographers working specifically on entrepreneurship, innovation, or creativity, many of whom will probably find themselves cited here, can expect an unprecedented attempt at pulling together many different debates, sources, and thought traditions. Aware of the longstanding history of the anthropology of entrepreneurship, they might agree that this history has not yet been told consistently. Here is a first argument to start a conversation about how the field of the anthropology of entrepreneurship might be best conceived of and how the many puzzle-pieces could be brought fruitfully together. In short, I try to trace a productive balance between a general introduction and a specialized expert monograph, being very specific and very general at the same time, as one of the reviewers observed.

What is entrepreneurship? In contrast to the all-out enthusiasm of corporations and administrations cited at the beginning of this introduction, among academics, the term has become "almost trite gloss for the ills of today's precarious global economy" (Freeman 2014: 18). Others, like Anna Tsing for example, understand entrepreneurship as a basic pattern of interconnectivity or "friction".

> Rather than assume we know exactly what global capitalism is, even before it arrives, we need to find out how it operates in friction. [...] In tracing the connections through which entrepreneurship operates, the cultural work of encounter emerges as formative (Tsing 2005: 12).

This polarizing success of the notion can be explained—paradoxically—by its very ambivalence. Entrepreneurship allows for positive and negative framings, lofty generalizations as well as box-ticking accountability. Ordinary meanings range from risk-taking mentality to business creation. There are locally specific connotations as well (*where* is entrepreneurship?). In Costa Rica, *emprendedores* are thought to be positively concerned with the community, besides being innovative and creative (Schwittay 2011: S78), while in Spain we can find young business owners feeling uncomfortable with the antisocial impression that might resonate with that notion, preferring to think of themselves as *autónomos* instead (Escribano et al. 2019; see also Chapter 2). The Indian State shifted from condemning to mandating entrepreneurship over the course of a few decades (Irani 2019). In German—my mother tongue—there is no clear-cut translation at all. Nevertheless, the *Unternehmer* in the writings of Joseph Schumpeter, Max Weber, Karl Polanyi or Karl Marx is often cited as the first socio-scientific concept of entrepreneurship (see Chapter 4). While the term is normally translated into English as businessman or entrepreneur,

it literally means something similar to "someone who is undertaking". Of course, I could now turn to even more ways of defining entrepreneurship. Some have found this problem worthy of quantitative empirical analysis in its own right, like Gartner (1990). For this book's purposes, it is enough to provide a first, relatively simple working definition with some anthropological undertone. The entrepreneur is supposed to be an agentive individual or economic agent, giving inventive responses to structural constraints. Entrepreneurial sociality is an interaction between humans who conceive of themselves as individuals granted free will and choice. The ideology that places individualism above other forms of sociality might be called entrepreneurialism. Harari's way of introducing the term—mentioned earlier in this introduction—comes very close to such an ideological bias. In Chapter 8, I introduce the notion of entrepreneurialization. I think about it as the counterintuitive assignment of agency to ideas, things or people that are usually conceived as unchanging or stable. For the sake of readability, throughout the book I avoid such nominalistic exercises of definition (or endless footnotes). Instead, in the following chronological outline of the book's content, you will hopefully come across diverse and comprehensible ways to grasp the many sociocultural meanings of the concept.

This book introduces the field of entrepreneurship from an unconventional viewpoint, by looking at the ways in which ideas of micro-economic agency shape ordinary life. Far beyond the business schools, entrepreneurship programs, research, and support agencies have become an omnipresent feature around the world. In that context, starting up a risky business is a very common understanding of entrepreneurship. In contrast, this book explores a different perspective on microeconomic agency (Chapter 4), enterprise culture and entrepreneurial personhood (Chapter 5) developed by anthropologists. The book investigates the wider sociohistorical background of the "Age of Entrepreneurialism" (Part I) and discusses anthropology's contribution to understand entrepreneurship as a distinctively human phenomenon (Part II). In-depth case studies—conducted by fellow anthropologists, but also taken from various of my own projects in Spain, Austria, and the UK—provide contemporary examples for qualitative-participatory research into entrepreneurialism across time, regions, and social milieus (Part III).

Part I of the book is called "The social life of entrepreneurship". The title aims to capture different social dimensions and effects attributed to this notion—ethical, political, or semantical, for example. But the life metaphor can also be understood in terms of contradictory conditions of living. Is enterprising a universal human capability or is it a personality, space, time, or culture-contingent behaviour? Is entrepreneurship out there to be discovered or is it an invention of the human mind? How can academia study entrepreneurialism in an unbiased way, when competition, inventiveness, and rationality are at the very heart of its own workings? In order to bring these philosophical questions down to earth, I introduce the famous case of the native north American *potlatch* ceremonies of the northwest coast. This ethnographic case triggered a larger debate about the nature of economic agency among anthropologists throughout the 20th century. Namely, why

do humans compete by destroying valuables? The different ways in which this economic puzzle was addressed by different scholars—Franz Boas, Marcel Mauss, Jacques Derrida, David Harvey—gives an introductory hint towards the semantic, historic, and sociological backdrop of entrepreneurialism. Economic agency is attributed to things, to work, to social relationships or to words, according to different anthropological readings of the potlatch.

In Chapter 1, I start reviewing some important works of the second half of the 20th century, concerning the individual and its relation to labour in late capitalism. I will be discussing some big names of poststructuralist economic sociology, such as Michel Foucault, Ulrich Beck, and Richard Sennett. In the second part, I shift attention to the most recent trends of the early 21st century. I concentrate on postcolonial and feminist scholarship from a new generation of women whose persuasive, reflexive and ethnographic accounts focus on neoliberal subjects beyond the white male worker or boss. Thus, I tell the success story of neoliberlism in the West between the 1970s and 1990s through the eyes of male sociological classics. Their guiding categories are the culture of individualism, liberal governance, and flexible labour markets. In contrast, entrepreneurial *others* and their dilemmas experienced and reported by female ethnographers are at the heart of the more contemporary entrepreneurialism that I describe. Here, gendered work disparities, ethno-entrepreneurial labelling and the rising global middle classes are more prominent analytical tools. Thus, the chapter traces critical social scholarship over the last 50 years, focusing on different labels and scenarios to explain a new or specific form of economic agency—the neoliberal (Gershon 2011). Different points in time are the backdrop of neoliberal agency scholarship, from Thatcherism to the post-cold-war era, from the dotcom-bubble to the 2008 financial crisis. A shared broad concern, however, is neoliberalism's interplay with ordinary people's lives or agency, both at home and abroad. At the end of the chapter, I will turn to a recent provocative argument about the rise of "bullshit jobs" by David Graeber. Many white-collar jobs are not quite as efficient, entrepreneurial, and flexible as theory has it. This point allows me to critique some of the common places of the sociology of work presented earlier in the chapter and to speculate about possible entrepreneurial futures.

Chapter 2 moves away from the broader historic and sociological framings of an era of entrepreneurialism, towards its synchronic-linguistic reading as a contemporary discourse. The persuasive language of the microeconomic agency—the small and medium-sized enterprise or SME—is all over the place. Consider a bank promoting ordinary loans in terms of "support to our entrepreneurs". We could perform several interesting analyses of this advertising, but for the sake of illustration, let me just give one example. Microsoft Word suggests eight synonyms to the magic word at the heart of this book: businessperson, tycoon, magnate, impresario, industrialist, financier, capitalist, and mogul. It is not hard to understand why the bank preferred the word entrepreneur instead. Consider that I was reading the aforementioned advertising in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis in southern Spain. Taxpayers were forced to bail out banks, while people were evicted from

their homes as they could not afford to pay the mortgage. The "financier" probably did not sound very tempting to many clients. Along these lines, in Chapter 2 I look at entrepreneurship talk—how it works and what it does—in combination with an extensive empirical example from Andalusia.

Yet analysing language alone is deemed insufficient by a discipline that increasingly considers researchers' reflexivity as one of its key assets. Chapter 3 aims to perform such a reflexive U-turn, by looking at knowledge producers like me and the sites of knowledge production, such as academic books on entrepreneurship like mine. Entrepreneurship experts, the social sciences and academia writ large have contested *and* adopted the language of entrepreneurship, as well as its practices. We are all part of the era of entrepreneurialism. On the one hand, taking together the different ways of researching entrepreneurship that I will present in Chapter 3—from psychology and management to philosophy—brings us closer to an anthropological holistic explanation. On the other hand, the fact that so many disciplines write about the topic—and that anthropology is only reluctantly dealing with it too—speaks of different academic identities and research practices. Thus, I will discuss how research often reproduces the entrepreneurial behaviour this book aims to study. For instance, the often extractive nature of empirical research "with" communities, the competitive logic of academic promotion or the obsession with the individual genius in science more generally, are only some of the images we may find in the mirror. The empirical examples sustaining my argument are a survey among early-career anthropologists in Europe, recent experiments in Anglo-Saxon universities to practice anthropology "as design", and some instances from my own academic biography.

If there is such a thing as an anthropology of entrepreneurship, then it cannot be reduced to ethnographies of exotic businessmen. We need women, theory, and the ordinary too. In addition, research relevant to this field does not necessarily conceive of entrepreneurship as explicitly a relevant concept. This is my overall argument in Part II. In the introduction, I raise this problem by presenting scholars who have spiced their research with some input from "anthropology"—either exotic tales from far away or mystical, at best slippery ideas about "culture". I also briefly show the diverse interest for peddlers, traders, businessmen, big men, merchants, and so forth, in traditional ethnography. Both lines of research—scholars borrowing selectively from anthropology or traditional peddler ethnographies—have often something in common. They are frequently unaware of walking the same paths as classic (economic) anthropologists before them. These include Joseph Schumpeter, Fredrik Barth, Clifford Geertz, and Mary Douglas, among others. The two chapters that follow are devoted to reconstructing, discussing, and classifying these traditions—evolutionism, formalism, structuralism, and historical particularism—as applied to entrepreneurship research.

I have given the first of these traditions the title "agency-driven social change". Chapter 4 starts by illustrating the characteristics of this formalist viewpoint, through the story of a media entrepreneur in rural Andalusia. I put this story in the context of my own PhD research agenda back in 2007. Similar to many of my

colleagues, I did not acknowledge then my adherence to some basic principles of Joseph Schumpeter's and Fredrik Barth's work. Both were defying some of the central axioms of anthropological research in the early 20th century and in the 1960s. Their transgressive ideas included looking at society in terms of dynamic processes not traditional blocs, a focus on individual action instead of swarm intelligence, and the unromantic belief that not all contribute equally to grassroots social change. I track these notions in early German-language social sciences, including Weber's and Schumpeter's ideas about the *Unternehmer*—the man of action mentioned earlier. Barth later followed this change-maker idea, especially in his fieldwork in Sudan and Norway. He was promoting the entrepreneur within the discipline, for example in his plenary address to the American Anthropological Association (1967a).

"Culture" has become a hot topic for many disciplines, but especially entrepreneurship scholars. I argue that this has contributed to often quite simplistic assumptions. This is why I present the historical struggle in anthropology with its subject in the introduction to Chapter 5. I offer the works of Mary Douglas and Clifford Geertz as two points of reference for any researcher who wants to take up the task of studying entrepreneurship culture more seriously. Both are the main characters of my fifth chapter because they have put forward specific culture-theories of entrepreneurship. Geertz emphasized historic developments and local circumstances in Indonesia. His historical particularism nevertheless recognizes two ideal-type entrepreneurs. His princely type is a noble forced to maintain his traditional authority through the means of business creation. The peddler type is adapting to historically available templates for doing business, such as the social conventions of the bazaar economy in 1960s Java. Douglas for her part works with a more structuralist framework of four ideal-type cultures. The entrepreneurial culture is only one piece in her equation. She writes about the enterprise culture later in her career, but I also introduce her earlier work, through the example of her analysis of the pangolin ritual of the Lele people of the Belgian Congo in the 1950s. I argue that both elements of her work successfully tackle some of the major problems with the employment of the culture-concept. Rediscovering the culture concept, with its complex and complicated history in anthropology, is crucial to analysing neoliberal agency, instead of adopting it uncritically together with its inbuilt social relativism (Gershon 2011).

Part III of the book is a situation picture of global contemporary entrepreneurialism. For the case of anthropological scholarship, such a picture is unprecedented. I will present detailed accounts of cutting-edge research from Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa. All these 21st century accounts will be tied into core anthropology concepts and writers of the gift economy, ethnic labelling, or neocolonial power relations. Without forcing comparisons, each chapter will discuss ethnographies from the global south besides experiences from the north. This is how I try to go beyond the current divide in the scholarship, aiming for a transcultural viewpoint. You will come across women and men, ordinary and extraordinary. In the introduction to Part III, I will use Pierre Bourdieu's view on

changes in economic habitus among the Kabyle people in late colonial Algeria, to present each chapter's content. The following three chapters are concerned with issues such as social enterprising, informal credit, neoliberal urbanism, heritage marketing, do-it-yourself development, or socialist informal economics.

Can social improvements and individual profit go together? This is the question posed in Chapter 7. Enlightenment thinkers, such as Adam Smith in his famous *The Wealth of Nations*, had no doubt about giving a positive answer. In the 21st century though, even in the West, ordinary people are increasingly thinking that this is nothing but a joke. This is among the reasons why "social" entrepreneurship has strong advertisers in politics and the corporate world in recent years. The label is used to promote the idea that private initiative can bring social innovations as well as good life to clients, founders, employees, *and* shareholders. In Chapter 6, I will approach the issue of "the social" in entrepreneurship more broadly through the lens of Marcel Mauss' theory of the gift. He shows that human transactions are never completely selfish or uninterested. The point for him is different. We must act as if our interests were beneficial to the community and do the same with the interests of others. I will present three empirical examples to show how such a gift economy operates in practice. We will learn how traders in Bolivia and Venezuela capitalize on gifts in the form of informal credit and deferred payment. Trust, reputation, and fidelity is not a side product, but the essential element of their business operations. My analysis of an Austrian work integration enterprise shows how commodities can acquire enhanced social status of quasi-gifts. In this case, small scale production posited in opposition to large scale manufacturing can have such a social refinement effect on things. A third example will be the effort of organizations—like my local bank mentioned earlier—to produce "corporate social responsibility" by linking their activities to positively sanctioned moral values. Suggesting that we are donating instead of buying is one of the many fantasies produced by social entrepreneurship.

What if nudging the youth into entrepreneurship is the most effective way to accustom them to unemployment, with the positive side-effect that they will start blaming themselves for it? I have called the seventh chapter "oppressive entrepreneurship", because there are many ethnographic reports from around the globe that suggest exactly that. The young city dwellers of Cairo, Manchester and Nairobi that we will meet in the chapter, are trained and supported by corporations, universities, and non-profits. They produce or sell products and services, even if this does not really allow them to make a living. Yet, hopes and aspirations are constantly fuelled by those who do make a living in stable jobs—by selling the idea of entrepreneurship to others. These promotors are at the heart of my own research in Manchester's Northern Quarter. I follow the work of local lobbyists who get the intentions of government and investors into the hearts and minds of mostly young male "coders". They do so by creating a sense of community at "networking events" celebrated in "coffices" and "coworkspaces". But I will also take the reader to rural Costa Rica and Bangladesh. There, Anke Schwittay and Juli Huang have found much more subtle ways in which young women are

exploited. Trying to gain a little degree of economic freedom—without failing their families and communities—they find themselves frustrated in both endeavours. In the meantime, they are playing the advertising agency for foreign corporations and NGOs. Throughout this chapter, I will deliberately put very different experiences from four continents in the same box. But I will also discuss the extent to which the coercive element varies from case to case, between simple deception of Western middle-class dreams to systematic exploitation of the poor in the south. In addition, I will provide a critical examination of the limits and problems of research exaggerating the oppressive dimension of entrepreneurship. If we do not consider the anthropological groundwork set out in the second part of the book, we are condemned to (unwarily) repeat old debates from the 1960s.

In the last chapter, I assemble a diverse set of concepts and case studies. What they have in common is an innovative attempt to push the boundaries of what we might understand as entrepreneurship. I start with Howard Becker who described in the 1960s how norms, values, and "outsiders" are created from scratch by "moral entrepreneurs". But Becker is not especially interested in exploring all the theoretical consequences of his neologism (like Andersson was not with his neologism of the "fear entrepreneur" mentioned earlier). This is why I give more space to the presentation of the Comaroffs' book *Ethnicity Inc.*, where they expand on a more self-consciously produced series of imaginative concepts, including "ethno-preneurialism". Commodification of ethnic identity works through the marketing of one's own body-as-culture. This is what the authors have found, among many other places, on the French side of Catalonia. Therefore, presenting their concept is the prelude to my own example of gastronomic heritage construction in the Catalan capital Barcelona. There, the Mediterranean diet is labelled and incorporated on behalf of the food and tourism industry by a specific "non-profit" foundation, that I conceive of as a "heritage entrepreneur". The example is followed by Xin Liu's ethnography of high-tech entrepreneurs in China. In cities like Beihai or Nanning, doing business often equates to simply accumulating money, sex and power. Liu reports how entrepreneurship is corroding the historical or moral self-understandings among the local elites. Throughout the chapter, I bundle all these experiences and theories together under the title "entrepreneurialization". This is the term I use to describe how an increasing number of social situations around the globe have an entrepreneurial nature. But the term also helps me thinking about where an anthropological concept of entrepreneurship might go from here. "Framing structures as agents" is one suggestion that I make.

In the conclusions I make the case for an anthropology of entrepreneurship and rebut some of the major possible objections. I explain how I tried to avoid painting a too narrow picture of the field, despite seeking some common ground, mainly by classifying and justifying my classifications. I primarily gathered evidence of serious and prolonged scholarly engagement with this subject, despite all the differences in aim, scope and focus. Methodologically, I tend to stick to the authors' texts—instead of schools, themes or other heuristics—showing that both in past and present entrepreneurship has served anthropologists to creatively think about agency,

power, culture change, the personal and the impersonal. By tying the story of entrepreneurship research into the larger history of anthropology, I keep a distance from any sort of partisanship or hyperspecialization. I also avoid sterile conversations about whether the anthropological contribution to the topic is mainly critique, ethnography or studying non-Western scenarios. Differences, but also similarities with the rest of the social sciences and humanities are given credit. Historical, contemporary, and global everyday experiences are an integral part of all chapters—like those of Elsa in the Andes, Juan in Andalusia, or Haihun in Guangxi. Personal engagement with such ordinary entrepreneurs and an empirical interest for microeconomics—both past and present—is one of the features of the anthropology of entrepreneurship. But asking the big philosophical questions about human emancipation and its discontents is another. Critically self-observing our entrepreneurial academic lives *vis-à-vis* the entrepreneurs we study, together with a sensibility for language and cultural history, contributes another important twist. But the anthropology of entrepreneurship is not a postmodern science. It has evolved historically, especially through ethnographic encounters in the (post-) colonies, which resulted in two major thought traditions. One is concerned with *explaining* agency-driven social change, and the other with *describing* history, culture, and morality of entrepreneurialism. In my book I give room to this overall complexity, but I also make an effort to combine the different pieces of scholarship into a coherent new picture. This picture—the anthropological interrogation of entrepreneurship—offers fascinating views on the contemporary world.