Keeping [Social] Entrepreneurship Hybrid:

Towards a Dangerous Research Agenda?

Abstract

While theories of entrepreneurship within a creative process view mainly have been formulated in terms of enactment, narration, disclosure and effectuation, this paper proposes the concept of invention in order to emphasize the secretive and embodied features of entrepreneuring. The concept of invention allows re-interpreting the Schumpeterian notion of creative destruction as deconstructive creating and to reconfigure the research agenda of entrepreneurship studies as "dangerous", giving credit to the as yet neglected double-sidedness implied in the riskiness of entrepreneuring.

Keywords: Invention, Social Entrepreneurship, Creative Process View, Hybridity

> *My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. (Foucault, 1984a, p. 343)*

Arguably, that entrepreneurship is decisive for how the world looks like is a contemporary truism. Through its new combinations, entrepreneurship is said to contribute to how people in their everyday context give form to their lives and to how their habits and styles of living are changing. From the automobile to the mobile phone, from the pencil to the personal computer, each of these new devices and artifacts has had enormous implications and irreversible consequences for how transport, communication, writing and work have been

construed, organized and practiced. In concert with these impacts on everyday practices, entrepreneurship gets associated with the emergence of entirely new ranges of organizations, new communities of practice and new populations of organizations (Aldrich, 1999) which redistribute economic activity, wealth and societal options (Giddens, 2000). Far from being the sole affair of bringing new products and services to the market, entrepreneurship can be considered a process of cultural innovation (Berger, 1991) and of disclosing new worlds (Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus, 1997) which in a most significant way determines how certain everyday practices and forms of living become changed or remain stabilized (Latour, 2005). For Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus (1997: 41), "the entrepreneurs worth thinking about are the ones who are sensitive to how the problem that they sense has its roots in our pervasive way of living, our lifestyle […]. The changes they bring about are changes of historical magnitude because they change the way we see and understand things in the relevant domain." As this process of "history-making" is chiefly based on creating and sustaining difference, a crucial question becomes how difference is introduced, contested, negotiated, inscribed or rejected in the process of entrepreneurship. After all, these differences are neither neutral nor about economical value only (Thrift, 2006), but are ontological as they are generative for the process of entrepreneurship. To capture the ontological condition of the entrepreneurial process which is based on the continuous movement of differences we will speak of entrepreneuring, thus highlighting the becoming-metaphysics that is presupposed in this definition (Chia, 1999). Stated otherwise, the inventive mode of entrepreneurship does not only turn out new things which are consensually deemed useful and hence good, but invariably produces contestable and contested effects which question past and present practices and which thus render entrepreneuring into a risky and undecidable activity. Entrepreneuring, on the face of it, is risky not just in the sense of economic risk (Knight, 1921) but as an ontological condition, meaning that the dream and the danger, the promise and cost of every entrepreneurial invention need to be acknowledged and handled.

Essentially, what we claim in this paper is that this double-sidedness or what we will construe as the hybridity of entrepreneurial invention has not been adequately, if at all, embraced in the theorizing of entrepreneurship. Therefore, we endeavor to give an answer to how the role of invention and its double quality can be conceptualized and hence integrated into a processual theory of entrepreneuring.

In general terms, with answering this question, we hope to make two contributions. Firstly, the paper wants to give more prominence to the role of invention in theories of entrepreneurship within a creative process view. We thereby use the concept entrepreneuring as a heading to relate and extend the yet disconnected "fragments" that have started to conceptualize a processual view of entrepreneurship. Secondly, based on the establishment of a new understanding of invention, the paper wants to contribute to the research agenda of entrepreneurship studies by conceiving entrepreneuring as deconstructive creating and by pointing at its dangerous or hybrid edge, thus integrating both the hopes and dangers that entrepreneurial activities and those who take up entrepreneurship in their policies bring to people's lives.

The argument of the paper is organized in four sections. First, we explain how entrepreneurship as an inventive phenomenon has *either* been projected with promise *or* with danger, and pinpoint that this double-sidedness or Janus-face of entrepreneurship has largely been overlooked in the agenda-setting and theoretical operations within entrepreneurship studies which mainly have embraced the promising side of invention. Secondly, in search of a concept that can integrate the antagonistic possibilities of entrepreneurship, we suggest the notion of entrepreneuring which we partly reconstruct based on a literature review presented in the second section. There we review how the concept of entrepreneuring has been used in the field of entrepreneurship in a rather a-theoretical way and we distinguish four theoretical concepts developed within a creative process view which contribute to a theory of entrepreneuring, namely enactment, narration, disclosure and effectuation. Thirdly, we

develop the concept of invention through emphasizing its secretive and embodied features in order to acknowledge the hybridity of entrepreneuring. Fourthly, we discuss how the concept of invention helps us to conceive entrepreneuring as deconstructive creating based on re-interpreting Schumpeter's notion of creative destruction, and to align with the need for a reconfigured agenda of entrepreneurship studies which we characterize as dangerous and which incorporates the undecidable nature of invention in entrepreneuring.

1. What the world should look like: the dreams and dangers of entrepreneurship

1.1 The double-sidedness of entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a highly contested phenomenon that on the one hand attracts admiration and radiates hope as its activities most literally give a face to the future, and, on the other hand, evokes fear for the radical way in which it attempts to change the world and its not always predictable effects of how the world will look afterwards. Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff (1991: 539-540), in our assessment, most adequately express the double-sidedness of entrepreneurship as they emphasize that entrepreneurs are both "admired and feared":

> "[E]ntrepreneurs represent an every day's dream of the successful life. They are Columbus's, treasure-hunters and Horatio Alger's heroes all in one. Their task is to create new worlds, often with a mainly pecuniary interest in the background. In a sense, their play is most often a tragedy […]. They might become Macbeths if things go wrong, but also *inventors* [our emphasis] like Faust, who wanted to be immortal and succeeded - indeed, it depends on very individual moral judgement as to whether we see Faust as a failure or as a total success. When successful, entrepreneurs acquire God-like (or Satan-like) properties in eyes of the rest of the people: those who can create worlds are to be both worshipped and feared.
>
> In the beginning was meaning -
> In the beginning was power -
> In the beginning was action -
> (Faust)."

In this illustrative and metaphorically rich passage, Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff relate entrepreneurship to invention as a form of world creation that is fundamentally unpredictable or immeasurable, even undecidable (on the background of existing knowledge) since it presupposes entrepreneurial decisions in the face of uncertainty and the multiple possibilities entrepreneurs always have on offer. The simultaneous presence of anticipated promises and dangers, as we believe, creates a double bind situation where the entrepreneur is torn into different directions, ultimately not knowing where to go (Jones, 2003). Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff's reference to the ambiguous figure of Goethe's Faust thereby makes clear that creation and the "action of the beginning" has at once ontological, political, and ethical dimensions which need to be incorporated when theorizing the concept of entrepreneuring. However, to indicate that the current literature has not yet come to integrate the antagonistic forces and possibilities of entrepreneuring, we will shed some light upon how the dreams and dangers of entrepreneurship are kept apart. Thus elaborating on how the two aspects of entrepreneurship are dealt with separately we will then enfold these still uncoupled theoretical routes under a singular conceptual model.

The dream of entrepreneurship. Historically speaking, the positive expectations or hopes attributed to entrepreneurship have palpably surmounted the occasions in which the problematic and potentially dangerous side of entrepreneurship has been emphasized. Where it seems generally accepted that entrepreneurship is a "good thing" (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006: 136), entrepreneurship is topical particular because it is habitually related to issues such as innovation and because enterprise is regarded as the (single most important) determinant of economic growth and prosperity (Drucker, 1985). In addition to that, the utmost positive evaluative accent of entrepreneurship was evidently not the least a result of its inscription in the political agendas of Thatcher and Reagan - which is, unsurprisingly, also the time where

contemporary entrepreneurship research took off (Reagan, 1985). That is to say that entrepreneurship during the nineteen-eighties has been given more and more political weight and seen, in agreement with Kirzner's (1973) economic theory, as a promising cure for economic development and the creation of wealth and employment (Acs & Storey, 2004). With the fall of the Berlin-wall and with the incremental globalization of business and human affairs at large, entrepreneurship has been captivated as the strategic key to reform the economies of former communist countries and to rebuild so-called developing countries. To be sure, entrepreneurship refers not only to new ventures and start-ups, though this still represents the preeminent perspective of academia, but also to established companies, where the dogma of the culture of enterprise has been introduced to give form to the belief, not to say imperative, that employees are to act as entrepreneurial agents, considering them as what has been called "entreployees" (Voss & Pongratz, 2003). Increasingly, entrepreneurship is no longer seen as a phenomenon that exclusively belongs to the private sector. Rather, it is obvious today that entrepreneurship has been transferred to all sides of society where it is considered crucial to give shape, for instance, to reforms in the public sector (Zerbinati & Souitaris, 2005), education (Etzkowitz, 2003), culture and art (Lavoie & Chamlee-Wright, 2000).

To be sure, our proposition that the current entrepreneurship literature exhibits a bias toward emphasizing the positive over the negative aspects is supported through one of the most recent developments in the field, namely social entrepreneurship. It becomes evident, even at a cursory glance, that it is mainly the dream-like features to improve and better the world which take centre stage in representation (Jones & Keogh, 2006). Notwithstanding there being a minor critical literature - which pinpoints, among other things, the (potentially) negative ideological, political and economic effects of social entrepreneurship (Roper & Cheney, 2005; Humphries & Grant, 2006; Reid & Griffith, 2006; Steyaert & Hjorth, 2006) -, it is beyond all question that the "rise" of the social entrepreneur (Leadbeater, 1997) and the

"spring" of social entrepreneurship are unstoppable. In light of the almost univocally positive connotation of social entrepreneurship in the academic realm (e.g. Bornstein, 2004), it appears as if we are not primarily dealing with a scholarly concept but rather with a "hurray word" or, as Jones and Spicer (2005: 235) claim elsewhere, "with an empty signifier […] whose operative function is not to 'exist' in the usual sense but to structure phantasmic attachment." Provided that inquiries of social entrepreneurship in the spheres of, for instance, hospitals (Drayton, Brown & Hillhouse, 2006), primary school education (Su & Muenning, 2005), education for low-income children and women (Sperandio, 2005) or higher education (Todres et al., 2006) primarily highlight the benefits (and not the costs) or literally the promise (Martin, 2006) of such transformations, it appears as if we have very few arguments at our disposal to turn around or at least temper the high popularity of social entrepreneurship in media and politics, where social entrepreneurship is fervently promoted as a "cure all balm". After all, to proclaim that we must counteract, if not even put into oblivion, the euphoria produced in relation to social entrepreneurship would not only entail an utmost heterodox and thus dangerous[1] move, but would blithely ignore that the emotional engineering of the term social entrepreneurship has, despite its rather young pedigree, already been remarkably solidified and naturalized.

The danger of entrepreneurship. In view of the utmost positive reception of (social) entrepreneurship it is essential to note that neither the proliferation of entrepreneurship nor its pervasive entrance in all corners of society (Steyaert & Katz, 2004) have remained unnoticed and that there are also voices which have scrutinized and critiqued the ruptures and effects engendered by the entrepreneurship discourse (Perren & Jennings, 2005). For instance, Ogbor (2000) argued that entrepreneurship studies seems to act as an objective and value-free endeavor (e.g. gender-free or culture-free) as it supports a hegemonic ideology of enterprising

[1] We consider such a gesture as dangerous since there are "few incentives and many disincentives for scientists to challenge ideas that already enjoy prima facie support" (Fuller, 2005: 58).

that fits certain (i.e. economically dominant) parts of the world. Claiming that power relationships are inherent to discourse, du Gay (2004) convincingly argued that the discourse of "entrepreneurial culture" or "enterprise" leads to a heightened sense and importance of business virtues such as performance and competition and, most fundamentally, endorses that people are supposed to approach their work tasks in the same way business managers are said to approach their responsibilities and challenges. Critics thus came to argue that the logic of "enterprising" or "entrepreneurial selves" (Fenwick, 2002) provides the ultimate means to control or, more precisely, govern employees not through overt force but through their own volition (e.g. du Gay, 1996). Making use of Foucault's (1988; 1991) work on governmentality, Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio (2004) speak of "entrepreneur-mentality" to seize how entrepreneurial discourse proclaims a system of acting and thinking that normalizes certain forms of being an entrepreneur and excludes other forms, showing how people willingly govern themselves without discerning that they are actually subjected to a new "organic ideology" (du Gay, 1996: 67). A final critique holds that despite the increased spread of entrepreneurship its meaning has simultaneously become reduced, as it has been observed that entrepreneurship is more and more conceived as an economism - which recognizes no other form of exchange than that of "egoistic calculation" (Bourdieu, 1990: 113) - or as a managerialism - which sees management as an effective solvent for a wide range of economic and social ills (Pollitt, 1990). Perren and Jennings (2005: 177) have thereby argued that this reduction must, at least partly, be construed as the effect of the government discourse which "reveals a structural grand narrative of entrepreneurs and small businesses having a role in the "machine" of the economy and an implicit responsibility to deliver results imposed at the macrolevel." The paradox entailed in what Perren and Jennings call "discourse of subjugation" is that it brings entrepreneurs, who are simultaneously credited for their heroic action and single-minded autonomy, back to the control of the state, claiming that they cannot (despite their seemingly extra-terrestrial capabilities and skills) do without the aid (financial,

technical, managerial, etc.) of governments. A last important issue we want to emphasize in the present context is that the utterly functionalist, even instrumental understanding of entrepreneurship is not unique to political discourse but also traceable in academic discussions of entrepreneurship since there too one finds a tendency to simply advocate entrepreneurs as "cogs within the economic machine" (Perren & Jennings, 2005: 181).

The Janus-face of entrepreneurship. In consequence of what has been said above, we want to take issue with the fact that the positive and negative aspects as contained in entrepreneurship are as yet not aptly related. Where it must remain clear that the notions of dream and danger are themselves ambivalent, it is obvious from the current literature that those who see entrepreneurship as a desirable phenomenon are seldom emphasizing its threatening side (and vice versa). By implication, we find it both essential to inquire how the ambivalence and double-sidedness of entrepreneurship can become connected and theorized as "one" process and to see how this would come to influence the agenda-setting in entrepreneurship studies. To gain a, however provisional, understanding of how this semantic alignment has come about, it is through the following section that we will give a brief overview of how the agenda-setting in entrepreneurship studies is inclined to illuminate only one side of the Janus-face.

1.2 Agenda-setting in entrepreneurship studies

Sidestepping the double-sidedness of entrepreneurship. Agenda-setting, i.e. the negotiation of how the field of entrepreneurship studies should be defined and developed, has a long tradition as entrepreneurship researchers have almost obsessively been reflecting about the past, present and future of entrepreneurship research (Low & Macmillan, 1988), asking whether entrepreneurship research has moved into and beyond adolescence (Low, 2001), and how to assess and address future needs and directions (Davidsson, Low & Wright, 2001).

Given the breadth and intensity of agenda-setting endeavors, it comes as a surprise that the double-sidedness of entrepreneurship has not yet become an issue and that entrepreneurship is furthermore and persistently denoted through a discourse of "progress". Three arguments can be given to explain this omission. Firstly, many scholars in the field have argued in favor of centering on the distinctiveness of the entrepreneurship field (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). In this line of argumentation, it is said that the field should evolve towards a mature discipline that exploits its many years of exploratory research (Welsch & Liao, 2003). As entrepreneurship research tries to overcome adolescence (Low, 2001), there is a preference for a self-limiting discourse (Steyaert, 2005) that keeps a lid on exploration and expansion. Although such kind of "redrawing" recourse to a somewhat protected and well-defined area of expertise is quite understandable (e.g. in terms of legitimacy building), it might not be adequate to take into account the pervasiveness and ambivalence of the entrepreneurial phenomenon as we sketched it above and it seems too early to close the (definitional) circle around entrepreneurship. Secondly, although entrepreneurship studies have preferably emphasized its interdisciplinary character (Landström, 1999), and although repetitive pleas for more multidisciplinary research have resounded, the tripartite of economics, psychology and sociology which historically has dominated the development of the field, has in practice hardly been contested; meaning that instead of a growing multidisciplinarity, entrepreneurship studies has had trouble in distinguishing itself from other research traditions such as strategic management (Zahra & Dess, 2001; Gartner, Davidsson & Zahra, 2006). For instance, the discipline of psychology, which lost much credit as personality research started to wane in entrepreneurship research (Gartner, 1988) has indirectly kept a strong hold on theoretical developments through importing cognitive approaches (Mitchell et al., 2002; Baron & Ward, 2004). As a consequence, other disciplines, which might be useful especially with regard to exploring the ambivalence of creativity and invention as at one at the same time a desirable resource and a threatening potential (Bröckling, 2006) have relatively rarely been implied in

theorizing of entrepreneurship (Steyaert, 2005). Thirdly and related to the slow inclusion of new disciplines, entrepreneurship studies has only in a slow pace considered a multi-paradigmatic philosophy of science (Grant & Perren, 2002). As a consequence, the double-sidedness which is not so easy to be conceived in the causal modality of functionalism, has too little been explored from alternative paradigms, and explored through a critical dialectics or a postmodern dialogism.

The need to re-invent entrepreneurship. The somehow constricted or even shrinking agenda-setting that opts for a well-bounded field, for limited interdisciplinary research and theory, and that remains passive instead of affirmative towards a multi-paradigmatic research agenda within entrepreneurship studies, is not adequate for the conceptual agenda we set in this paper; i.e. an agenda that is to contribute to a theory that takes up the risky and undecidable side of entrepreneurship and that seeks to strike a balance between promise and defeat, between creativity and destruction. Such conceptual endeavor thus requires a bolder agenda, or what we will call a dangerous agenda, that gives ample recognition to the Janus-like face or hybrid effect of entrepreneurship and hence links the optimistic and critical "school" in the field of entrepreneurship. To capture this double-sidedness, we proclaim it is needed to re-invent entrepreneurship through the notion of entrepreneuring as this allows us to formulate "one" encompassing process theory of our subject matter. Based on a review of the (scarce) literature on entrepreneuring or of what we consider potential "fragments" to a creative process theory of entrepreneurship, we will elaborate the notion of invention as the concept that can be seen to be based on an ontology of difference or the Other, overwriting a metaphysics of presence or what Derrida has called an ontological xenophobia (Smith, 2005). This will subsequently allow us to re-interpret Schumpeter's notion of "creative destruction" as "deconstructive creation".

2. Entrepreneuring: Entrepreneurship in a creative process view

2.1 A short history of entrepreneuring

A process theory[2] of entrepreneurship or what we henceforth prefer to call entrepreneuring has long been overdue in entrepreneurship theory. One of the first entries of "entrepreneuring" was in an executive forum by Macmillan (1986) where he made a plea to study habitual entrepreneurs and reserved (implicitly) the notion of entrepreneuring for the repeated effort of so-called business generators or habitual entrepreneurs and for what he calls "an "experience curve" for entrepreneuring" (p. 242). Macmillan connected the focus on the experience process with the need for developing "a comprehensive theory of entrepreneuring" (p.242). However, such a comprehensive theory is still lacking, as it seems that the notion of entrepreneuring, instead of being received as a fertile concept for understanding the processual aspect of entrepreneurship, continues to be used in a casual way. For instance, Anderson (1998), despite using the term "environmental entrepreneuring" in the title of his article, never becomes explicit about his use and definition of the term in the course of the article itself. However, what is conspicuous at large is that when entrepreneuring is mentioned in scholarly works, it is mostly deployed to denote a quality of a person rather than a process. For instance, Apospori, Papalexandris and Galanaki (2004) speak of "entrepreneuring minds", while Scharmer and Käufer (2001) mention "the entrepreneuring human being" and Chell (2000) sees "entrepreneuring as a skill" of the entrepreneur. As with Macmillan, Fletcher (2000: 213) takes a learning understanding to refer to "international entrepreneuring" as "learning from different cross-border exchanges and converting that experience into organisational practices that build strategic capability in international markets." Obviously then, in these exemplary cases we don't find any well-grounded rationale for endowing entrepreneuring with any added value (vis-à-vis the mainstream view of entrepreneurship), for

[2] To be sure, the term process theory is elusive. We will only focus on those process theories formulated within a so-called creative process view, thus leaving out the discovery perspective (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) and the evolutionary perspective (Winter, 2006) which equally speak of processes.

decoupling entrepreneuring from its quasi-stable link with "new venture creation" (Low & Macmillan, 1988), and, most fundamentally, for making explicit the processual character of entrepreneurship. It appears as if the use of the concept of entrepreneuring is elusive and a-theoretical, at least to the extent that is does not acknowledge that "to talk of entrepreneurship as "entrepreneuring" has major implications for how we think of entrepreneurial knowledge, theory, and methods" (Steyaert, 1997: 19). This permits a basic assessment, namely that the as yet scarce work on entrepreneuring reveals a scientific discourse that has largely failed in or refrained from adding to a processual understanding of entrepreneurship.

Nevertheless, it does not follow from this that the field of entrepreneurship studies completely lacks a stream of process theories. Instead, it is rather the case that processual theories of entrepreneurship have come along without making explicit reference to the concept "entrepreneuring". That is, process theories have most thoroughly been treated through contributions which took either an interpretive (Gartner, 1993), a narrative (Steyaert, 1997), a phenomenological (Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus, 1997) or a pragmatic (Sarasvathy, 2002) perspective on entrepreneurship and which thus revolved towards a different paradigmatic understanding. As developing a theory of entrepreneuring in our view is urgently needed, we take as point of departure the encouragement to approach entrepreneurship as a verb (hence "entrepreneuring") that pinpoints "one of the most inventive human activities" (Steyaert, 1997: 223). We will therefore first bring to the forefront the tenets of this small group or say fragments of creative process theories in order then to further develop them through a systematic inquiry into the concept of invention.

2.2 Theorizing within a creative process view

Theorizing in entrepreneurship has recently been enriched by conceptual efforts that work with a creative process view (Sarasvathy et al., 2003). This view engenders a fundamental rupture with mainstream approaches that conceive of entrepreneurship as being located in a

stable world, that work with a logic of causation and that, consequently, emphasizes entrepreneurial activities in general and invention in specific as recognition and discovery. Following Sarasvathy (2001: 261-262), "[r]esearchers have thus far explained entrepreneurship not as the creation of artifacts by imaginative actors fashioning purpose and meaning out of contingent endowments and endeavors but as the inevitable outcome of mindless "forces", stochastic processes, or environmental selection". In this creative process perspective, which chiefly tries to explain "ways of worldmaking" (Goodman, 1978), we can distinguish between various related concepts: creation as enactment, as narration, as disclosure and as effectuation. Whereas these conceptualizations exhibit a fair deal of overlap, what most notably connects these different views of worldmaking is that they all break with the dominant ontology in entrepreneurship studies. More precisely, creative process theories take issue with the logic of discovery (Sarasvathy et al., 2003) which assumes that opportunities reside in an objectively existing reality (and hence exist irrespective of the entrepreneur's presence or attention; see Kirzner, 1979) where they only need to be recognized or discovered by the entrepreneur (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Essentially, process theories get to emphasize the active creation of opportunities through entrepreneurial events. In reviewing each of these concepts, we will indicate how they contribute to a processual understanding of entrepreneurship. With the notion of invention, we can on the one hand draw upon and integrate several core ideas of the existing creative process theories and on the other hand pinpoint the secretive and embodied character of creating.

Enactment. Enactment theories of entrepreneurship (Gartner, 1993; Gartner et al., 2003) focus on creation as the organizing of new organizations. In accordance with Weick (1979) who urged scholars to stamp out nouns and to think in verbs in order to formulate a process theory of organizing, Gartner is looking for a vocabulary of organizational emergence. Gartner focuses on words as being, emergence and genesis but does not opt for notions such

as becoming and entrepreneuring. Taking Weick's understanding of enactment, emerging organizations are considered as thoroughly equivocal realities "that tend towards non-equivocality through entrepreneurial action. In emerging organizations, entrepreneurs offer plausible explanations of current and future equivocal events as non-equivocal interpretation. Entrepreneurs talk and act "as if" equivocal events are non-equivocal. Emerging organizations are elaborate fictions of proposed possible future states of existence" (Gartner, Bird & Starr, 1992: 17). Essentially, construing organizational emergence as a process - although there is a reifying tendency towards the entitative "emerging organizations" - tries to lead attention away from the heroic creator. Moreover, Gartner suggests to speak of founding since its double meaning can underline "the equivocal nature of creation as a process, rather than assuming that creation always is a successful outcome" (Gartner, 1993: 234). For Gartner, the notion of enactment is crucial to counteract the conventional understanding in entrepreneurship that opportunities can be recognized and discovered as if they are already there waiting to be seen, noticed or found. In contrast to this objectivist perspective which holds that metaphysical opportunities exist "out there" which turn "toward us a legible face which we would only have to decipher" (Foucault, 1984b: 127), the opportunity enactment perspective focuses on retrospective sensemaking, where reality is socially constructed through "a bracketing of a cacophony of experiences and opportunities that entrepreneurs are engaged in" (Gartner, Carter & Hills, 2003: 110).

Narration. Whereas narrative theories partly concur with the Weick's view of creation as enactment (Ochberg, 1994), they particularly stress the linguistic construction of reality (Steyaert & Hjorth, 2004) while shedding light on the relational encounters through which the "creation of a living world" is made possible.[3] The enactment of the entrepreneurial process,

[3] Though this distinction is clearly heuristic rather than substantial, we would claim that Weick's enactment approach is more concrete on practice and action whereas narrative approaches keep a relative primacy on the linguistic and relational features of entrepreneurship.

then, is seen as a sensemaking process (MacIntyre, 1981), which is not in the first place about merely telling stories ex post facto but about living out entrepreneurial affairs through metaphors, storytelling, dramatization and discourses. As an ontological condition of social life (Bruner, 1991), a narrative perspective of entrepreneurship claims that new organizations become constructed through a myriad of stories that perpetually repeat, contradict and extend each other. In this way, entrepreneurship is seen as a process of storytelling through which people become implied in an ongoing emplotment (Davies & Harré, 1990) and through which actors and networks continuously become connected and disconnected. Both Steyaert (1997) and Rae (2004) emphasized that a narrative approach enhances the contextual and embedded understanding of the entrepreneurial process. This is the case primarily because stories are not conceived of as individual expressions of entrepreneurs but as re-performances of cultural metaphors (Dodd, 2002), macro-cultural discourses (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004) and political discourses (Perren & Jennings, 2005) that at one and the same time limit and make possible the thinking and talking of entrepreneurs. Put in a slightly different manner, the entrepreneur is never the sole author of his or her story since narratives are always contingent on the available scripts of a given historical period and subject to conversational positionings (Davies & Harré, 1990), meaning that stories are always "accepted, rejected, or improved upon by the [entrepreneur's] partners in the conversation" (Czarniawska, 1997: 15). In this way, narrative perspective presupposes a focus on the cultural contingency of entrepreneurship (Berger, 1991; Lavoie & Chamlee-Wright, 2000), and situates entrepreneurship within the more or less shared ways of thinking, believing, understanding, and feeling as well as those of work practices and social interaction (Berger, 1991). The enactment of opportunities through storytelling is then culturally embedded as Lounsbury and Glynn (2001) illustrated since they conceive cultural entrepreneurship as the process of storytelling that mediates the crafting of a new venture's identity that serves as a touchstone upon which legitimacy is conferred. Entrepreneurship through semantic innovation, however,

is not only subject to the entrepreneur's storytelling skills, but inextricably linked to the ability to persuade others or, in other words, to establish the legitimacy and acceptance of a new story within the parameters of existing knowledge. Since what is deemed reasonable and acceptable within a given period is subject to constant negotiation, it is intuitively compelling that entrepreneurship is chiefly about probing the limits of accepted truth, i.e. of introducing, negotiating and establishing new ways of talking of (and thus of thinking and acting upon) the world. It accordance with Berger and Luckmann (1967) who proclaimed that it is the language people use in everyday life that determines the order within which things gain a subjective experience of truth, O'Connor (2004) eloquently argued that entrepreneurs have to graft their new stories onto existing, canonical story-lines. By implication, entrepreneuring as narrating emphasizes the cultural embeddedness through which entrepreneurial action is always bounded by and stretching traditions of living and thinking.

Disclosure. The theory of disclosure is arguably the most marginal of the process theories presented here, which is supported by the fact that it is primarily related to Spinosa, Dreyfus and Flores' (1997) seminal *Disclosing New Worlds*. Spinosa, Dreyfus and Flores thereby draw on the thinking of Heidegger to establish an anti-Cartesian ontology of disclosure; that is, they seek to come up with an answer not to what the essence of entrepreneurship, democratic action and the cultivation of solidarity (which is the subtitle of their book) is, but to how we encounter things in the course of our everyday practices and thereby bring new worlds into being. This process, which the authors call history-making, is chiefly reserved for those actions and events which fundamentally "change the way in which we understand and deal with ourselves and with things" (p. 2). Arguably, this definition does not appear new in any sense since it broadly accords with existing theories which emphasize entrepreneurship's catalystic function (Knight, 1921; Schumpeter, 1934). The difference and tenet of their work, however, is revealed in the way they delineate the concrete process of history-making. In

concrete terms, Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus are not primarily interested in how people endow everyday occurrences with meaning, but with people's "ability to appreciate and engage in the ontological skill of disclosing new ways of being" (p. 1). Disclosure, so it seems, is about the way people act upon, refine and even extend the traditional ways of doing things. This requires, as the authors remind us, a certain sensitivity to detect the "small perturbations that rule-followers miss" (p. 179). In the case of entrepreneurs, this sensitivity does not allow the simple persecution of rules since it takes the form of identifying the unique "anomalies" in the disclosive space in which they find themselves. Admittedly, this might conjure up the image of entrepreneurial alertness as elaborated, for instance, by Kirzner (1979), but Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus provided a perspective which was simultaneously broader in scope and more concrete with regard to how new things come into being. Where the authors mention that many of the current approaches of entrepreneurship are rather weak in providing an apt understanding of innovation, the theory of disclosure is more concrete about the process of creation (i.e. history-making) which, as Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus tell us, is mainly about sensing an anomaly, that is, "a disharmony between [entrepreneur's] understanding of what they do and what in fact they do" (p. 193). What makes change possible, then, is that entrepreneurs hold on to these anomalies long enough for its meaning to become clear in order then to reduce the given disharmony by changing the style of the disclosive style in which it initially appeared. Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus hence see articulation as a central disclosing activity of entrepreneurs, meaning that entrepreneurs stimulate change by bringing marginal practices or concerns to the centre of people's attention (by making them more important to them) and then to reconfigurate the practice of concern. As Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus claim in that context, "successful entrepreneurs bring about social change by modifying the style of particular subworlds or the style of society in general" whereas they specify that the "entrepreneur reconfigures the style of a disclosive space by installing a new product, service, or practice in that space" (p. 68). Two additional things need particular

attention here. As with narrative approaches and Weick's work on enactment, disclosure is essentially about the embeddedness of creative processes in that change only becomes possible if the person is familiar with the disclosive space she/he wants to alter. Since each disclosive space has its own requirements, it is only by gaining a thorough contextual sensibility that entrepreneurs are able to shift the customary ways in which things are done. Secondly and related thereto, the disclosure of disharmonies which common sense leads us to overlook is not primarily Cartesian but a distinct "skill of intensified practical involvement" (p. 43). It follows thereof that history-making is for the most part predicated on a practice of "involved experimentation" (p. 24) where change is stimulated by the sustained examination of the lived experience of a given disharmony.

Effectuation. The theory of effectuation, as developed by Sarasvathy (2001), draws upon the distinction between mainstream economic theories which see entrepreneurial actions as taking place in spaces that are known and that allow for prediction and their own view which construes entrepreneurial action as occurring in situations of uncertainty (Dew & Sarasvathy, 2002). In this way, effectuation is notably about challenging the economist's view of "utility maximization in the individual, profit maximization in the firm, and welfare maximization in the economy" (Sarasvathy, 2002: 95) and about introducing an alternative perspective that highlights entrepreneurial imagination and that conjoins the task of entrepreneurship with creating "the society we want to live in from the society we have to live in" (Sarasvathy, 2002: 110). In a nutshell, where Sarasvathy's theory of effectuation is grounded on empirical work carried out in the course of her doctoral dissertation (Sarasvathy, 1998) as well as on the integration of theories ranging from Hans Joas' theory of the creativity of action to pragmatist philosophers such as William James and John Dewey. Be that as it may, it is particularly worth noting here that Sarasvathy makes reference to Karl Weick to underscore that the entrepreneur has an active influence upon his or her environment (and is not solely influenced

by it; Sarasvathy, 2003). Having said this, Sarasvathy's concept notably seeks to challenge the rational choice paradigm of economics and to supplement (yet not replace; see Dew & Sarasvathy, 2002) it with a perspective that construes entrepreneurship as an open-ended process that creates unanticipated and often multiple ends. Following Dew and Sarasvathy (2002), effectuation "steps up to the plate where rational choice bows out of the arena – where predictability, pre-existent goals, and an independent environment are not available to the decision maker", which in turn implies that it sets the entrepreneur "free to *wield* uncertainty as a powerful tool in the creation of new ends" (emphasis in original). The single most important tenet we identify in effectuation is that it accounts for the non-teleological aspect of entrepreneurial action and hence gives rise to a view in which the entrepreneur is not supposed to rationally evaluate and/or calculate available opportunities but to actively create the conditions upon which he/she wants to act. On the face of it, effectuation is the "inverse of causation" (Sarasvathy, 2003: 206), meaning that it is not assumed that entrepreneurs simply chose between available options but that they actively generate "the alternatives themselves" (Sarasvathy, 2003: 207). This inversion is most significant for the argument we will develop below as it indicates that entrepreneurship is often more about constructing the part of the world with which they are concerned than about producing calculations and acting upon its script. In addition to that, we deem the idea of effectuation worthwhile because it gives weight to the fact that invention is often subject to decisions being taken in a context of uncertainty where neither means nor ends are predetermined but constructed in an incremental way, i.e. in the process of the making.

3. Invention and the hybridity of entrepreneuring

While it hardly needs mention that theories of creativity and invention stress the new (Bröckling, 2006), for extending the current understanding of entrepreneuring it is crucial to make explicit that newness does not necessarily presuppose making tabula rasa with the

presence in order to start afresh. In accordance with the process theories on entrepreneuring we have just alluded to, we favor to construe invention not as a process which primarily seeks to put into oblivion existing wisdom and ways of acting. Instead, we claim that the new is primarily to be seen as the creation of difference in relationship to the existing parameters of the presence. Yet, though we totally agree with process theories of entrepreneuring regarding the premise that all invention is embedded and contingent on prevailing practices and styles of doing things, we claim that there are two grave omissions in this stream of literature. Existing process theories, in our view, have remained rather implicit about the way entrepreneuring stimulates invention and in particular how entrepreneurship gets to account for the secrecy and for the embodied aspect of invention. A second omission we would like to address in the following section is that the current use of the concept of entrepreneuring is ignorant of its double-sidedness, its hybridity, and therefore fails insofar as it overlooks that entrepreneuring *simultaneously* contains promises and dangers. We will treat these two omissions in turn.

3.1 Re-conceptualizing invention

To establish an alternative understanding of invention we need to become explicit about how difference and newness emerge out of an aporia or "area of paradox" between orders of habitual practices and ways of thinking on the one hand and acts of disengagements and fundamental change on the other. What concerns us most here is to explain how knowledge, the body and invention hang together in an aesthetic conceptualization of entrepreneuring. Additionally, it needs to be noted that by opting for an aesthetics of entrepreneuring, we are largely re-interpreting and connecting the above theoretical fragments, as we claim that the concepts of enactment, narration, disclosure and effectuation, with their respective emphasis on fiction, writing, style and the artificial, all are deeply ingrained in a logic of aesthetics.

The secret of invention. When emphasizing the secrecy of invention, we immediately come in conflict with the predominant theories of entrepreneurship which proclaim that invention presupposes tangible knowledge and entrepreneurial learning (Young & Sexton, 1997). These theories of entrepreneurship focus on the pursuit of (economic) opportunities and the individual actions being carried out to pursue this task. Essentially, entrepreneurial action is said to take place in the context of an unknown future, and since such events are inherently uncertain (van Mises, 1949) scholars have come to conclude that this engenders doubt on behalf of the entrepreneur which in turn impedes the likelihood of entrepreneurial action (Lipshitz & Strauss, 1997). To put things bluntly, the simple formula of this generic rule is: the more knowledge is available, the less insecurity produced by the situation, the less doubtful the entrepreneur, and hence the more likely his/her entrepreneurial action. Though we have no stake, and no argument, to counteract the point that acting in the face of uncertainty might produce doubt and that this in turn might impede the course of entrepreneurial action, we nevertheless believe that it is worthy to reflect on the positive (and not just on the inhibiting) aspects of doubt so as to discuss that the experience of doubt is precisely the condition of aesthetic creation. Where we would like to impart the somewhat heterodoxical belief that invention does not require knowledge but, to the contrary, a certain what we would like to call non-knowledge. Though we are fully aware of the apparent oxymoron entailed in such a plea, given that the availability of knowledge is presumed to increase the likelihood of entrepreneurial action by reducing the amount of experienced doubt, we nevertheless claim that the tenets of such a theoretic leap prevail. The objective of our undertaking is thus twofold: on the one hand we would like to argue that the creation of newness must always and by necessity deal with a certain vagueness and, second, that this is the pre-condition for an aesthetic mode of creation, since aesthetics – more than anything – stresses action which cannot be determined from scratch and which therefore cannot concur with the simple application of rules and programs.

Derrida's (1989: 60) thought-provoking claim that "the only possible invention is invention of the impossible" brings the profundity of an aesthetic view of entrepreneuring to the forefront, implying that invention which simply extrapolates the new from the given does in fact invent nothing (hence pseudo-invention). True invention, in contrast, always "presupposes some illegality, the breaking of an implicit contract" (Derrida, 1992: 312) and emphasizes the production of new events which are neither enforceable nor programmable by means of pre-ordained, rationalistic (e.g. scientific, managerial) knowledge. To be sure, this polarity is in no way compatible with the distinction between fundamental and incremental change (Becker, Knudsen & March, 2006) as it refers less to the sort of change being engendered by entrepreneurial action than to the individual action itself. Our contention that entrepreneurial invention must exceed and surprise every determinate anticipation is obviously Kantian, at least to the extent that it construes invention as an aesthetic practice that is not and simply can not be governed by rules, algorithms or formal canons. In concrete terms, recalling that Kant (1954), within his *Critique of Judgement*, set aesthetics apart from science, claiming that the latter is only able to imitate (since relying on a set of shared, thetic rules) whereas the former is the sphere where man gets engaged in "the free play of imagination" (Cowen, 2003: 10), we would like to extend this distinction in order to keep apart what we call calculative and pure invention. Along the lines we have just established, we must recall that this distinction is primarily put in place to separate those acts of invention which occur in the context of well-specified goals and well-understood causes (Sarasvathy, 2003) and thus rely on instrumental knowledge and those which act in a context of uncertainty and thus have to proceed without preordained knowledge. In consequence, we would like to make the point that Derrida's notion of "pure invention" takes into account that novelty, being the result of creative processes in a - economically expressed - literally non-existent market (Arrow, 1974), is neither the somehow accidental effect of an (deliberately) unstructured, chaotic environment nor the result of thoroughly organized management

procedures and technologies (Meier Sørensen, 2006). Instead, pure invention is most notably a "risk-laden instigation of a movement toward an unknowable future" (Bogue, 2005, p. 117). This view is in evident contrast to both common sense and management research which both hold the belief that novelty presupposes rendering knowledge tangible; since only if knowledge is meticulously organized will it become possible to "squeeze every last drop of value out of the system" (Thrift, 2006: 281). Hence, though the notion of non-knowledge or secrecy are diametrically opposed to the view of innovation being the result of deliberate efforts undertaken "in response to identifiable economic stimuli" (Winter, 1975: 102; quoted in Becker, Knudsen & March, 2006: 359), this is not to be read as saying that invention takes the form of daydreaming, not to say fantasy (Boeddrich, 2004). Non-knowledge, as we have said, means that retaining a sense of the surprise or the secret entails giving weight to that which is not controllable in terms of time (when something new will happen) nor effect (what will happen). In economic terms, non-knowledge implies that true invention, not mimicry (i.e. copying), falls outside the scope of any predictive rationality and thus of probabilistic calculi (Dew & Sarasvathy, 2002). This evidently conjures up the image of Knightian (1921) uncertainty[4] which tells us that since future invention cannot be (precisely) anticipated from the perspective of presence, that is, rendered amenable to probabilistic scenarios, the future remains not only unknown but unknowable. Yet, in the present context this state of affairs does not give reason for despair as we hold the firm conviction that to invent, in a most hyperbolic sense, entails that the aesthetic process of entrepreneuring "must have no 'meaning', no finality, even no intelligibility. It is the madness of the impossible" (Derrida, 2004: 45). Keeping in mind that non-knowledge is antagonistic to those endeavors which try to engineer "the space of innovation" (Thrift, 2006: 282) by making knowledge seizable, we are keen to assert that invention is and must be mad as it presupposes a courageous "leap of faith" beyond the facts at hand and thus beyond available (technical or economic) rationalities

[4] Which is one of the central concepts in Sarasvathy's theory of effectuation.

and calculative reasoning. To be sure, Derrida's notion of madness is the only valid category to accommodate the idea that the possibility of invention is invariably related with a journey into unknown waters, so to speak. In light of this, we concur with Sarasvathy's (2002) telling observation that potential entrepreneurs do not primarily deal with externally imposed measure of performance, nor do they seek to apply some pre-established skills or learned technologies. Invention is enabled not through prescient people but by those who believe that the world and hence the future are invariably "in the making" (p. 109). By implication, pure invention is not in the first place a cognitive exercise and even less so the savvy of good planning or managerial foresight. The sort of invention we associate with entrepreneuring is denoted as pure because this attribute is apt to highlight that invention often coincides with unanticipated economic, social, historical consequences. In a peculiar sense, pure invention indicates the excessive side of newness, alluding to that which can never be made present (from the perspective of presence). Moreover, pure invention, according to Derrida (1991), is basically the invention of the impossible, i.e. of a future which emerges "endogenously over time" (Sarasvathy et al., 2003: 142) and which comes into being through non-teleological entrepreneurial events. It is beyond doubt, however, that such pure invention becomes possible only if one gives oneself over to new experiences or, following Meier Sørensen (2006: 135), if one puts one-self, with one's entire body (not just with one's ratio), to work in order to produce a crises where "new and unforeseen connections […] become possible".

The embodiment of invention. This brings us to the second aspect that has, in our assessment, not yet been elaborated in current conceptions of entrepreneuring, namely its embodied element. Whereas available process theories cover a broad range of the aspects we deem relevant with regard to entrepreneuring, we believe that they have not yet fully grasped that invention is an integrated physical experience. Thus departing from the assumption that invention is not necessarily the result of a meticulous conducted optimization decision, it

follows from this that entrepreneuring means to set out for unknown or unknowable outcomes. Entrepreneuring, so it seems, becomes an immanently insecure, if not dangerous, event as it acts upon or interferes into the presence without precisely knowing in what ways this impetus will affect the future. Yet, to act in the face of uncertainty shall not in the first place conjure up the image of the dare-devilish, risk-taking entrepreneur who neither shies away nor surrenders while experiencing hardship and obstacles (Kihlstrom & Laffont, 1979). Quite the contrary, the insecurity engendered through entrepreneuring implies that "we neither know what is coming upon us nor see its origin; it therefore remains a secret. We are afraid of the fear, we anguish over the anguish, and we tremble" (Derrida, 1995: 54). Fear and trembling thus indicate that entrepreneuring always exceeds "my seeing and my knowing" (ibid.) and thus denotes the experience of anticipated (yet unimaginable and uncontrollable) change. Fear and trembling, which we take to signify the "irrepressible shaking" of the body (Derrida, 1995: 53), are chronologically anterior to knowledge since they appear before we consciously perceive them (Arsić, 2003), and are thus nothing else than the sensual, pre-cognitive response in the face of an unknown future and, most fundamentally, the always present possibility of failure (i.e. the chance to take the wrong decision). Notwithstanding our contention that entrepreneuring is accompanied with the "mysterium tremendum", this is not meant to paralyze invention, but, far from it, to enable it. Though this may sound like a contradiction, we contend that the fear and trembling of entrepreneuring does not imply that entrepreneurs must love risk (which they evidently don't; Brockhaus, 1980). Rather, this bodily experience indicates, as Sarasvathy (2002: 99) convincingly explained in economic terms, that the opportunity costs of not trying are too dear to be afforded. The body, then, enables the sensual and physical experience of the aporia immanent to the decision between trying and not-trying. It is precisely this view which corrects the economic proposition that rationalistic thought is the crux of entrepreneurial decision making (Sarasvathy, 2002) as it indicates that the body reacts or responds, though not in a prescient way, to a pending

decision. Again, that is to say that the body is not the instrument of cogito that carries out the commands send to it by the brain, but a pre-reflective, semi-autonomous stance (Dalton, 2004). This embodied perspective of entrepreneuring, as we believe, is apt to bring to light that entrepreneurial action and thinking cannot be strictly held apart. If we are willing to believe that entrepreneurial action is always carried out through and in relation to a body that is rather loosely coupled with people's conscious will, it follows that invention is embedded in a stream of action which is only partly determined by the entrepreneurs rational choices but also mediated through semi-autonomous, subliminal impulses and action tendencies.[5] Fear and trembling, then, "means composing the singular points of one's own body or one's own language with those of another shape or element which tears us apart but also propels us into a hitherto unknown and unheard-of world" (Deleuze, 1994: 15). Making new things possible means that though nobody (nor our body) can assure us where we will finally end up we nevertheless need to devote our full energy to become familiar with the context which affects us and upon which we act so as to relate to oneself and others in ways that enables new worlds and ways of being. Fear and trembling, rather than being a reason for inaction, are thus to be seen as the mobilization of physical energies that prepare people for "an ordeal, a test, a crucial moment through which *we* [our emphasis] have to go" (Derrida, 2001: 63) and, by implication, that provide the force that makes newness possible in the first place.

3.2 The hybridity of entrepreneuring

So far, our inquiry of entrepreneuring leads to the conclusion that novelty does not necessarily presuppose rendering knowledge tangible. Seeing invention as an event that provokes fear and makes us tremble, we want to add that these sensual experiences do not only refer to the anticipation of entrepreneurial dangers but equally testify to its positive possibilities, to the affirmative trajectory of worldmaking. Following Collins and Moore's (1964) elaboration of

[5] Dalton (2004: 608) claimed that impulses or embodied actions are creative in a fundamental sense: "it may be surprising, destructive, innovative, or simply irrelevant and foolish".

"enterprising men"[6], which eloquently sketches out the double side of creation as they stated: "[i]n this period of fear and doubt, […], these men found creativity", we find it necessary to stress that the embodied experience of fear and trembling in the face of an insecure future can act as a genuine leverage for creative action. In consequence, the perspective of entrepreneurial invention we have just established stands in harsh contrast to those theories which exclusively deal with either the promise or the danger of entrepreneurship. We posit that these two aspects must necessarily go together, since they build the ontological condition of inventive, aesthetic practice. It follows from this that one can enliven the current process theories of creativity by supplementing it with a hybrid understanding of entrepreneuring. Such a hybrid understanding holds that entrepreneuring is necessarily carried out at the narrow path between success and failure, whereas failure refers not solely to economic collapse but also to the dark side of entrepreneuring, its shadow, which covers a broad range of potentially negative phenomena such as domination, suppression, entrepreneurial governance, etc. If looked at from that perspective, hybridity endorses that one must gain a fuller picture of the potential, both positive and negative, consequences of entrepreneurial endeavor. This is, however, not primarily meant to say that entrepreneurs must become more realistic in terms of their expectations, but rather that the hybrid nature of entrepreneuring must be grasped as a source of instability and tension which requires constant negotiation and which makes the engagement of entrepreneurship fundamentally dangerous. Yet again, the tensions and paradoxes being engendered through the dream and promise of entrepreneuring are not meant to be solved in a managerial sense. Where such an account would irrevocably be doomed to fail - not least since evidence shows that the conceptualization of success/failure as a "zero-one variable" (Sarasvathy, 2002) does not concur with the lived experience of entrepreneurs - it is more helpful in the present context to see that the respective tensions can be conceived as the hotbed of invention. Essentially, that it to say that the

[6] Which, despite is undeniable significance, reveals a tendency to construe the act of creation as a masculine and heroic endeavor.

conflicting aspects of a hybrid modus operandi must not be suppressed or solved, but brought into communication, while nevertheless keeping them endlessly diverging. Hybridity, then, becomes the engine of invention which derives its energy from the dialogue between incommensurable demands and possibilities of entrepreneurship and from creating an "interstitial passage between fixed identifications" (Bhabha, 1994: 4) which is at the same time the condition of possibility for dealing with difference in a non-hierarchical way. Moreover, our idea of hybridity counteracts the dichotomy between the dream (of success) and the danger (of failure) since it conceives entrepreneuring as aesthetic practice which, as Sarasvathy (2002: 101) argues in a different context, always and necessarily consists of "a stream of successes and failures". The dream and danger, to put this in a slightly different way, are co-implied, implying that any act of entrepreneuring invariably takes place in an inconsistent field, structured around fundamental and irresolvable antagonisms which in turn endorses seeing entrepreneuring as "a journey of learning to outlive failures and cumulate successes over time" (Sarasvathy, 2002: 98).

4. Towards a dangerous research agenda

4.1 From creative destruction to deconstructive creation

Condensing the main points of our previous elaboration it can be stated that our re-conceptualization of invention has depicted entrepreneuring as a process that is always embedded in concrete situations and broader contexts as well as physically embodied and socially integrated. Thus, in line with the observation that all invention is embedded (contextually, bodily and socially), we use this insight to suggest seeing entrepreneuring as a process of deconstructive creation. Though this conceptual gesture partly relates to the Schumpeterian (1976) view of entrepreneurship as being the preeminent economic catalyst and in particular to his seminal idea of "creative destruction", we also think that Schumpeter's theorizing includes several fallacies that are not compatible with a processual view of

entrepreneurship. Firstly, the Schumpeterian logic of entrepreneurship has been associated with the individualization and heroization of entrepreneurship as entrepreneurs (Johannisson, 1995). Notwithstanding the fact that the glorification of the individual entrepreneur has had the "noble" effect of legitimating entrepreneurship as a distinct and independent field of academic inquiry (Cowen, 2003), it is undoubted that such a perspective is improper for understanding how newness emerges out of a process of mutual negotiations and how newness is co-determined by entrepreneurs' contexts (literally con-texts). Secondly, Schumpeter's (1976: 83) disequilibrium view which holds that the economy (i.e. capitalism) proceeds through radical transformations, that is, through an "evolutionary process" that "incessantly revolutionalizes the economic structure *from within*, incessantly destroying an old one, incessantly creating a new one" (emphasis in original) is in obvious opposition to the flux view of continuous change as suggested by process theories of entrepreneurship. Stated otherwise, Schumpeter's idea of disequilibrium turns a blind eye towards one of the central premises of process theories, namely that novelty is not necessarily a result of a single-minded entrepreneur who energetically "pushes things through" but of people who relate to others and thereby deploy language in order to constitute new realities (Shotter, 1984). Thirdly and most fundamental for our re-interpretation of entrepreneuring, Schumpeter's notion of "combination" - though delineating the creation of novel services, products, ways of producing, markets - is not apt for understanding how new combinations actually relate with "the processes generating novelty" (Becker, Knudsen & March, 2006: 357). That is to say that the idea of new combinations has been notoriously weak in explaining how precisely novelty takes place and had arguably little to say about the inheritance mechanism of novelty (Ruttan, 1959), i.e. how novelty relates with and emanates from the prevailing social, economic, historical order.

With this in mind, we would like to suggest deconstructive creation as a concept for counteracting Schumpeter's notion of creative destruction, since it is, in our view, better

suited to account for the premise that entrepreneuring always takes place in a concrete environment which simultaneously poses the possibilities and limitations of new realities (Foucault, 1984c) and, by implication, that invention cannot be practiced in a vacuum, that is, without recognizing the specific conditions of possibility of a given temporal/cultural space. In view of Knight's (1997: 696) insightful comment that "we cannot assess the rationality of individual action without taking account of the institutional and cultural context in which everyday decisions are made", we would like to add here that deconstructive creation indicates the cultural sensitivity of entrepreneuring by highlighting that all invention takes place with a view into the presence and one into the future. More concretely, deconstructive creation refrains from "brushing off" the given legacy by dint of a destructive move. Quite the contrary, deconstructive creation points at inventive processes into which one is literally pushed because of the realization that one can no longer pursue the parameters of the presence. Deconstructive creation thereby takes place in the here and now in that it pinpoints concrete anomalies or disharmonies of the given order (Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus, 1997); it is, on the other, future-oriented in that it dictates immediate action for addressing and overcoming them. Deconstructive creation thus delineates a chronological order where entrepreneuring is supposed to start at the middle of things, the present, or, following Deleuze (1988: 119), from asking, "what can I see, and what can I say today?" in order then to endeavor to find possibilities yet not realized. It probably hardly needs mention that there is an active and reflective side to deconstructive creation which is most elaborately revealed in Derrida's (1994) contention that a heritage is not simply a thing that one receives (or destroys), but rather an active task. Derrida's tenet thus brings another aspect of deconstructive invention to the forefront, namely that entrepreneuring always requires a "willingness to assume [one's] legacy" (Egéa-Kuehne, 2005: 38) and, moreover, that every entrepreneurial decision is inexorably linked, as Derrida reminds us, with the specters (i.e. enunciations and practices) of the past and those of the future and the present. Where Chia

(1999: 224) insightfully commented that "change implicates its other" this means that invention must necessarily start from the middle of things, the presence, and though entrepreneurial decisions can engender a different future one is not simply released from prevailing modes of thinking and acting, since invention basically circumscribes a historical embodiment which is forever haunted by specters which inform our current social reality. In a seemingly paradoxical sense (but well in line with Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus's idea of worldmaking; see above), deconstructive creation enables novelty be searching for new conceptualizations or, to use Derrida's term, traces of the new in the old and the old in the new. In line with Derrida's contention that deconstruction always works from within and not from outside a given tradition (Jones, 2004), it directly derives from this that any notion of destruction, to the extent that it comprises the obliteration of past and presence, is fundamentally challenged. Deconstructive creation thus emphasizes that novelty presupposes the active participation with the given heritage and that to enable new things requires that one "must filter, sift, criticize, one must sort out several different possibles" (Derrida, 1994:16). Creation, as we believe, is thus not in the first place about putting into oblivion past or traditional practices and ways of thinking, but about creating continuity by retaining a sense of familiarity between the new and the old. In a peculiar sense, entrepreneurial change, following Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus (1997: 168), can be historical only if "people sense [it] as continuous with the past".

We would like to develop this line of thought so as to draw an image of deconstructive creation which enables novelty not by overt force or by blithely ignoring prevailing norms, rules or rights, but by constantly questioning, rethinking and re-evaluating the assumed certainties of prevailing doxa and praxis. Since this might yet sound like a revolutionary act or even a Morian (1992) utopia, we would like to point out that deconstructive creation invariably operates, if not balances, between the "belonging and the breakthrough" (Critchley, 1999: 70), which implies that deconstructive creation enables novelty through the realization

that the possibility of reconfiguration and transformation is always inherent (not external) to our "existing, historically conditioned and contingent ways of understanding" (Patton, 2003: 18). By analogy with Derrida's (e.g. 1981) idea of deconstruction, we are eager to proclaim that deconstructive creation cannot do without engaging with the framework of accepted forms of "truth", since it is only by dint of engaging with the prevailing order that given positions can be challenged from within. In this view, deconstructive creation is essentially about discerning the possibilities of difference inherent to the given social-political-economic order. Engaging with the given heritage is thus the single most important precondition for making "new connections" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 15). However, this encounter with or, more precisely, acceptance or rejection of one's legacy comprises a "double injunction" since it simultaneously affirms and challenges the presence. In concrete terms, deconstructive creation, though pointing at the fundamental embeddedness of all entrepreneurial action, entails a fundamental paradox in that one must always "negotiate a balance between engagement and disengagement" (Egéa-Kuehne, 2005: 39). This, as we believe, is the pivotal crux of deconstructive creation as it indicates that invention borders on the tension between the preservation of that which is given to us (i.e. habitual practice and thinking) and the unpacking of the sedimentations of this legacy and the creation of heterogeneity and of something absolutely new (Derrida, 2002).

4.2 Conclusion

Our elaboration of entrepreneuring, to put it bluntly, was aimed at identifying that the concept is at one and the same time "inaccurate but necessary" (Spivak, 1997: xiv). The concept, in our view, is inaccurate, even inadmissible, in the sense that it ignores the essential concurrence of the promise and danger in all entrepreneurial endeavors. Our hybrid exegesis of entrepreneuring is thus to be seen as a provisional complementation of the stock of existing, i.e. "familiar", interpretations of the subject matter which sought to put the one-sided

readings "under erasure" (Derrida, 1976), so to speak, in order to emphasize that hybridity disallows reducing entrepreneuring to either one perspective. Hence, instead of advocating the downright overthrow of the current literature, we have tried to establish a nexus between the "eulogies" which bring to the forefront the "kinship" between entrepreneurship and positive social, economic, cultural, etc. transformation and the route of critical scholarship which unveils a skeptical orientation to the ideology of entrepreneurship. In line with this, there is nothing in principle to object to in either of these two antipodal scholarly orientations and we hold the firm belief that both streams of reasoning have contributed in a significant way to how we presently conceive of entrepreneuring as deconstructive creating. Nevertheless, we belief that the future research agenda *must* become dangerous in the sense of accounting for the paradox and double condition of entrepreneuring in both theoretical and empirical investigations. In analogy with Thrift (2006) who postulated that invention needs to be reinvented, we suggest that the entrepreneurship agenda needs to become re-invented by paying more attention to the role of invention. We hence concur with Thrift's argument that currently the production of economics (and the fabric of capitalism) is fundamentally transformed and that new forms of value-making are emerging that are based on a relational and participative principle and that potentially can alter the way we understand entrepreneurship by emphasizing the processual and ephemeral character of invention as well as by downplaying the role of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial teams in favor of a form of co-creation and relational assemblage, and, lastly, by highlighting how the whole range of senses is at play in invention, thus foregrounding the simultaneous need for a theory of affect and aesthetics in value creation and for a critical assessment of how in invention new practices become introduced into people's life. This suggestion is in alignment with recent suggestions to see entrepreneurship studies as a science of the imagination (Sarasvathy, 2002; Gartner, fortcoming) or of the artificial. (Sarasvathy, 2003) but our paper, additionally, has pointed at the dangerous condition such a route implies for entrepreneurship studies. Our

paper most notably tried to extend existing process theories of entrepreneurship by highlighting not just the contextual embeddedness of invention as brought to the fore by theories of enactment, narration, disclosure and effectuation but also by stressing the secretive and embodied aspects of entrepreneuring. Provided that entrepreneuring is more than the cognitive assessment and exploitation of ostensibly pre-existing opportunities, we deem urgent studies which address how invention in entrepreneuring is dangerous, as it questions the way things are done in the present and as it probes the impossible by bringing forward different styles of being.

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