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– Clues From Other Disciplines

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Abstract

This paper responds to Welter's (2011) call to pay more attention to the diversity of entrepreneurship in theorizing contexts by examining how places come to be understood as entrepreneurial. We draw briefly and selectively on ideas from a quirky set of disciplines, looking at how topics such as narratives and language, memories of the past, built environments and constellations of power among groups of people interact to shape the emergence and decline of "everyday entrepreneurship places". Our discussion illustrates some useful cues our research might draw on to challenge and improve theoretical understanding of place in entrepreneurship.

Keywords: contextual entrepreneurship, context, entrepreneurial place, theorizing contexts, entrepreneurship

Retracing Our Steps: The Roads We've Taken So Far

Ten years ago, Welter (2011) helped to shape a rising tide of research attempting to improve our understanding of context in entrepreneurship. This theme continues to attract strong interest. In this paper, we attempt to contribute to the ongoing conversation in two ways: through a brief assessment of the balance between applying versus developing theory and concepts about context during the last decade, and through a somewhat longer examination of some roads mapped by scholars in a variety of disciplines that might be helpful in generating new theory about context in entrepreneurship.

We examined 308 English language articles citing Welter (2011) through mid-2019 in Web of Science and for which we had access to full texts. In about half of the articles, context was a major theme; in the remainder, context gets some mention but plays a minor role overall. We applied Welter's 2011 typology of where and when contexts, and following Whetten

(1989), added "who" as an element of context. To us, the good news is that researchers are grappling with the multiplicity of contexts that matter for entrepreneurship: 159 articles attended to two (137) or three (22) contexts whilst 149 studied only one. Papers mainly applied existing theory and insights about context while pursuing other questions, with much less focus on theoretical and conceptual questions about context. As a first response, we celebrate our field's achievement in having made contextualization so commonplace that it is now frequently taken-for-granted.

In our assessment, however, much of the progress so far has trodden what is now a well-worn road. Researchers have identified sets of factors that encourage or discourage different forms of entrepreneurial activity. Twenty-five years ago, Saxenian's (1994) comparison of Silicon Valley (California) and Route 128 (Massachusetts) was central to debates over how entrepreneurial regions emerge and whether they could be replicated through intentional design. Today, we observe rampant use of the term "entrepreneurial ecosystems" to much the same purpose (Acs, Stam, Audretsch, & O'Connor, 2017). Researchers have embraced the need to measure and model many of the contextual factors that shape whether and how people engage in entrepreneurship and we also seem to have gotten better at describing limitations to the generality of our findings that contextualization often implies. While progress along this path has been substantial, it has come at the cost of too little exploration of other paths. Measurement, modeling and scholarly restraint have moved forward quickly, but our theorization of context has not.

We suggest that it is time for our field to challenge our – mostly implicit – theorization of context as too static and mechanistic. Welter (2011) concluded that an important frontier was to move beyond considering contexts as "out there" – as elements of the environment affecting entrepreneurship – and toward examination of how entrepreneurs engage with and construct contexts, something which Baker and Welter (2020) recently developed as the idea of

entrepreneurs "doing contexts." We were surprised to find that over 80% of articles citing Welter (2011) still portrayed context as "out there", treating contexts as given and as exhibiting a direct and unmediated influence on entrepreneurs, their behavior and their outcomes. From this angle, we do not, as a field, seem to have fully embraced the benefits of investigating the interplay of contexts and the agency of entrepreneurs.

More promising are studies that examine how entrepreneurs *do contexts*: how they interact with their environments to enact and construct the contexts in which they operate. Articles taking this perspective often look at *place*, studying, for example, how local entrepreneurs break with path-dependent industrial developments (Fredin, 2016) and shape development in peripheral regions (Burcher & Mayer, 2018), discussing the contextual agency of entrepreneurs in relation to place (McKeever, Jack, & Anderson, 2015), or the interplay between rural contexts and the skills entrepreneurs use to handle regulations (Deakins, Bensemann, & Battisti, 2016).

Building from this perspective, our goal is to contribute to the theorization of context by focusing on this one (far from simple) element of context: place. Welter (2011) drew on Whetten's (1989) classic piece, "What Constitutes a Theoretical Contribution," which identifies questions of "what, how and why" as essential elements of a theory, and "who, where and when" as factors that contextualize and bound its generality. She pointed even then to the complexities of answering the "where" question, differentiating among business, social, spatial and institutional elements of location and distinguishing between proximate versus more distal answers, while noting that all of these "have an impact on 'who'" does or does not engage in entrepreneurship (F. Welter, 2011, p. 167). Much of the recent work in contextualizing entrepreneurship research has paid increased attention to questions of "where." In part this has happened through scholars conducting empirical research across a widening array of geographic locations. From our perspective, however, the complexities of "where", and in

particular how it is intertwined with "when" remain strikingly underexplored and undertheo-rized in entrepreneurship research. In particular, while we often think of and portray questions of "where" as mainly a matter of naming a geographical place, in fact, entrepreneurs "do" place: they interact with their environments over time to enact and construct the places in which they operate.

While for the moment, the most striking and celebrated contemporary images of "entre-preneurial" places reflect Silicon Valley and the numerous "Silicon this" and "Silicon that" facsimiles around the world, increasing attention to "everyday entrepreneurship" (F. Welter, Baker, Audretsch, & Gartner, 2017) highlights the need to study and theorize myriad – typi-cally less glamorized – places where entrepreneurship happens. Our focus in this paper is to explore new roads to theorizing entrepreneurship by drawing on insights about time – in the form of narratives, collective memories, and the built environment – to interrogate the inter-twining of where and when in the construction of the places where "everyday entrepreneur-ship" happens. In so doing, we begin understanding place not so much as a static indicator of geographic and theoretical boundaries, but more as the locus of historical and ongoing pro-cesses of power and contestation that both bring together and separate people across changing configurations of stories, memories and architecture.

So far, we have focused on briefly revisiting progress made with contextualizing entrepre-neurship research during the last decade and we also raised the question of how to make our theorizing more compelling. The next section explains why we need to reconsider where and when contexts and serves as a prelude to borrowing insights from other disciplines that can provide useful lenses on the interplay of place, time and entrepreneurial agency. The final sec-tion finishes with a quick assessment of how these different insights can inform theorizing contexts in our field and outlines some ideas for future research.

Moving Towards Place – Reconsidering Where and When Contexts

Entrepreneurs embrace places as they make choices about where to live and work and places play a role in framing who they are. In a globalized world, place may matter more than ever, shaping and contributing to entrepreneurial identities and entrepreneurial actions (Larson & Pearson, 2012). "Place" seems at first glance like a pleasantly simple element of context. It allows us to index all sorts of potentially complex differences in settings for entrepreneurship – for example, across rural and urban areas or between different countries – without having to examine or even list many of the differences. It points us to important limitations to generalization and therefore to opportunities to enrich our theories through choosing different empirical settings. It is perhaps particularly easy to construe place as straightforward in the ubiquitous presence of GPS technology and consequent precision about geographic locale. Place is, of course, neither static nor uncontested. Wars remake geopolitical and economic boundaries while demolishing built environments and killing the people who live there. The very gales of creative destruction that Schumpeter made a root metaphor for our field repeatedly re-sort socioeconomic winners and losers – and the patterns of entrepreneurship – among nations, regions, cities and towns. Climate change seems poised to do the same. For the moment, we will focus on places in terms of the changing confluence of geographic location, people, and the built environment, as shaped by the differential power of different groups both through history and at any moment. In this way, especially, place evokes time.

For example, the city where one of us works, Newark, New Jersey (USA) has over the course of the last century gone from a burgeoning urban boomtown and regional center of (especially manufacturing) entrepreneurship and commerce, transportation, entertainment and culture to a deeply-troubled, impoverished place of shrinking population and high rates of crime. It now appears to be in the midst of a renaissance of sorts, especially around the Central Business District. This is already generating concerns about gentrification through the

displacement of poor Newark residents by middle-class newcomers upgrading existing housing stock and providing a market for developers to offer new upscale apartments. There is disagreement over the specific pattern of causes that led to the decline of Newark and about what might drive extensions of recent positive developments. But several broad themes – which we develop throughout the rest of the paper – are apparent. First, much of what has gone on in Newark has been strongly shaped by racial dynamics, especially the continuing economic and political dominance of whites even as the black population swelled during the "Great Migration" of around six million African Americans from the southern to the northern U.S. during the early and middle twentieth century. To understand places as contexts for entrepreneurship and the agency of entrepreneurs in changing them, it is useful to examine both persistence and change in the differences among groups of people in social, economic and political power.

Second, the history of a place generates collective memories, expressed through and by narratives, buildings, monuments and other symbols – frequently subject to contestation through many forms of discourse and maneuver – that shape and reshape how the past influences both the present and future. Narratives and memory are not the whole story of the influence of history on place, but they are primary mechanisms of this influence. Between the 12th and 17th of July 1967, the "Newark Race Riots" occurred, bringing looting, violence and property destruction that marks the city physically to this day. A subtheme of this story is that poor people in Newark wreaked havoc and destruction that made the environment in which they lived even worse than it had been before. Or perhaps not. In and around Newark, a different and competing narrative reconstructs the events of 1967 as the "Newark Uprising:" as a collective political act of protest and resistance. In this narrative an oppressed community took action that helped create a path toward apparent (albeit slow) improvement. These contested narratives matter in that they affect how people incorporate and make use of these events from half a century ago, shaping their sense of the place, their circumstances within it, and their

ideas for entrepreneurial action toward shaping the future. To understand places as contexts for entrepreneurship it is useful to examine historical narratives and collective memories that shape peoples' sense of what is desirable and what is feasible for the future: which is to ask, what are the opportunities for entrepreneurship (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990)?

Third, the built environment in Newark was made to serve as a reinforcement to racial disparities and segregation and new elements were built that served to extend this. African Americans were first concentrated in poor neighborhoods with existing low-quality housing stock, and subsequently moved into newer but problem-ridden public housing developments. In both places, they received poor city services and were often treated harshly by the police. The creation of built environments supported segregation and inequality in a broader way, as well. Whites fled the city, a migration made easier by, for example, federal government promotion of highway construction, mortgage lending policies that favored whites and suburban development, and tax incentives that favored construction of new suburban businesses over rehabilitation of urban facilities. The concentration of middle-class whites in suburbs and of poorer blacks in the city, combined with a system in which schools are funded by local property taxes, served to create and reinforce great disparities in public education. As the Newark economy eroded, so did much of the entrepreneurship in manufacturing and support businesses.

All architecture and development serve to welcome some people and activities and to resist or exclude others through mechanisms that range from dress codes, to locked doors and walls to pricing strategies. Indeed, this theme is now at the core of debates about gentrification, as middle-class residents are re-attracted to parts of Newark. To understand places as contexts for entrepreneurship it is useful to examine both the contemporaneous built environment and landscapes in which structures are embedded and also some of the history that has shaped the wondrously varied places in which people live and work today.

Travelling Diverging Roads – How Entrepreneurial Places Emerge, Persist and Vanish

We next turn to some diverging roads for theorizing places as contexts for entrepreneurship, drawing on the three ways forward identified in the previous section. There has already been quite a bit of good research on how entrepreneurial places are made and what makes some of them special. However, we would like to push a little beyond our own and many other entrepreneurship researchers' comfort zones, especially in terms of following Welter's (2011) call for more interdisciplinary approaches in theorizing contexts. Most of us, influenced by contemporary culture and scholarship imagine a very limited set of places and factors when we consider what creates or characterizes a place as an entrepreneurial place.

Other disciplines proffer distinctive versions – some of which nicely challenge our own imaginations – of how places might be instantiated into local narratives and collective memory. For example, places can be seen to come into being through walking (Solnit, 2014), through storytelling (Spiegel, 2019), and in an example of Aboriginal culture in Australia, even through singing: "Aboriginal Creation myths tell of the legendary totemic beings who had wandered over the continent in the Dreamtime, singing out the name of everything that crossed their path – birds, animals, plants, rocks, waterholes – and so singing the world into existence." (Chatwin, 1988, p. 2). We draw briefly and selectively on ideas from a quirky set of disciplines such as linguistics, human geography, history and architecture/spatial planning, mixing and matching ideas, in order to touch upon how topics such as narratives and language, memories of the past, geographical features and buildings as well as power constellations interact to shape the emergence and decline of entrepreneurial places. We do not claim to – nor are we competent to – provide a good map to these other disciplinary territories. Our

discussion can only illustrate some promising roads our research might take to challenge and improve theoretical understanding of place in entrepreneurship.

Places as Narrated: Toward More Varied Baedekers to Entrepreneurial Places

We need new travel guides. Scholars adopting a regional development lens have shown us that places become entrepreneurial through knowledge spill-overs, through financial, social and human capital, through access to physical resources, through adequate institutions, through direct support for entrepreneurs, through propitious cultures and as a result of numerous other factors. These are all more or less quantifiable characteristics, the influence of which have been hypothesized and modelled in useful ways. Even much of this work, however, contributes to overarching narratives of entrepreneurial places that – often implicitly and through worthy commitments to theoretical simplicity and generality – emphasize normative homogeneity and "recipes" for success, at the expense of the variety and differences that can be seen though different lenses. A "Baedeker" narrates a place for a visitor or someone dreaming of a visit. It provides stories and imagery to tell us what a place is like, along with some of its history, and also tells us what we should pay attention to, appreciate, do and (perhaps more subtly) avoid doing. We suggest that such guidebooks are microcosms of much broader narrative processes through which descriptions of what places are like, their history and what is good and bad about them shape how they are perceived. In our view, scholarship, informed public opinion and public policy have all moved too much toward convergence on a single Baedeker for what is a good entrepreneurial place.

The power of words – talking places into being. Theorizing the making (and unmaking) of more places as sites for entrepreneurial action demands a closer look at narratives. A so-called

narrative turn is not entirely new to the entrepreneurship field, and prior research has used narratives as a method of analysis or specifically in examination of how entrepreneurs attempt to generate resources and support. Scholars have also occasionally theorized narratives and the discourses they shape as elements of place and therefore as a foundation for theorizing context. For example, examining a deprived community in the UK, Parkinson, Howorth, and Southern (2017) identified three discursive repertoires (the ideal-typical, the fatalistic, and the progressive) which people used to co-construct their own community as *un*-enterprising. Roundy (2016) suggests three typical narratives in the emergence and development of entrepreneurial ecosystems: success stories, historical accounts and future-oriented narratives, along with six outcomes: transmitting place culture; making sense of the place; constructing place identity, legitimating places; garnering attention for places; charting the ecosystem's future.

Language has the power to create and destroy important characteristics of places. The ways we talk and interact and the words and metaphors we use are laden with meaning that is often anything but neutral. Human geographers suggest that written and spoken words make elements of places available to us: The naming of places, for example, has "the power to call something into being, to render the invisible visible, to impart a certain character to things" (Tuan, 1991, p. 688). Such naming imbues places with "emotion and personality, and hence high visibility" (Tuan, 1991, p. 685). The way we talk about a place, the words we use and our tone and the emotions underlying a conversation, all highlight different aspects of a place and contribute to its construction or destruction as a particular sort of place. Illustrating this, Tuan (1991, p. 684) notes, "(…) warm conversation between friends can make the place itself seem warm; by contrast, malicious speech has the power to destroy a place's reputation and thereby its visibility." Such uses of language are deeply entwined with how entrepreneurs "do contexts" through "bracketing" (Baker & Welter, 2017; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005), that

is by enacting a definition of the situation through "attending selectively to and acting upon some features of the environment while downplaying or ignoring others" (Baker & Welter, 2020; Powell & Baker, 2014).

Such processes apply as well to our work as researchers. Consideration of narratives and the role of language more broadly in constructing contexts points us toward critical examination of our field's widespread tendency to name things in value-laden ways. An important illustration of this is how we repeatedly generate dichotomies that valorize one sort of entrepreneurship and derogate others. For example, Welter et al. (2017, p. 314) presented a list of such dichotomies that included "opportunity versus necessity-based," "formal versus informal," "entrepreneur versus proprietor" and a number of others. For each, our literature valorizes the first term and disparages the second term in the comparison. In a variety of ways, research on places in entrepreneurship seems to exhibit a desire to jump to similar value-laden distinctions. One such dichotomy is "Silicon Valley" versus almost anywhere else. Another, based on comparing typical institutional contexts in the Global North to those in many other places generates disparaging notions of so-called institutional "voids", a concept that has been called out specifically for its non-contextualized use (Bothello, Nason, & Schnyder, 2019). We suggest that such comparisons fail to deal effectively with the diversity of entrepreneurial places, entrepreneurial behaviors within those places or outcomes these behaviors generate. Unfortunately, such habits of language serve to encourage value judgments more than they serve scientific progress toward theoretical understanding of entrepreneurship considered broadly.

The good and bad of place narratives. The process of valorizing some kinds of entrepreneurship also nicely illustrates the intertwining of popular, political and scholarly narratives and the metaphor and myths upon which they are often constructed. Much of the contemporary

focus on entrepreneurship in both public policy and academics has been based on its potential for wealth accumulation and job creation. This is complemented by a popular fascination with individual high-growth ventures that make their founders and investors uber-rich and sources of employment for many others. In current parlance, these are the metaphorical "gazelles" and "unicorns". Most founders serving as the face of such ventures are male, and they become, in the popular imagination and media, mythical creatures of extraordinary wealth, drive and – much like the gods of Olympus – fascinating flaws. Entrepreneurship scholars are seemingly less enthralled by these imperfect heroes, but these myths and metaphors infuse our research nonetheless, with economic outcomes such as growth and profitability a primary orientating framework for much of our work. More limiting, from the perspective of understanding places, such an orientation aligns with a focus on studying and theorizing entrepreneurship in places that are prone to generating such ventures and heroes, and on theorizing and promoting (arguably, not particularly effective) ways to replicate them.

Nonetheless, this powerful narrative and image of the heroic entrepreneur as male and fixated on spawning gazelles is slowly being dislodged. For example, after many years of little popular press or academic attention, research on women entrepreneurs has come strongly into its own (Brush, Green, & Welter, 2020; Jennings & Brush, 2013). This work, along with work on social entrepreneurship (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Sassmannshausen & Volkmann, 2018) and on founder identities (Hoang & Gimeno, 2010; Powell & Baker, 2014, 2017) has helped to provide new theoretical narratives that have opened our field to consideration of the heterogeneous motivations – many of them at most tangentially-related to economic goals – that shape entrepreneurial behavior. The ebbing of these myths and metaphors has been accompanied by increasing research interest in places in which gazelles, unicorns, vast new wealth and employment opportunities are hardly on the radar, that is: in much or most of the world. More and more researchers are producing work about entrepreneurs – including those

with explicitly prosocial motivations and few dreams of entering any list of billionaires – emerging even under conditions of poverty and adversity (e.g., Holland & Shepherd, 2013; Langevang & Namatovu, 2019; Shepherd, Saade, & Wincent, 2019; Sutter, Bruton, & Chen, 2019).

Place-based narratives change over time. Detroit provides a recent example of the rapid erosion of place. Long viewed as a vibrant center of the global automobile industry, the city appears recently as a dark shadow of its past. The imagery infusing contemporary narratives evokes industrial deterioration, loss, and abandoned buildings, people and places. In the face of this, media has positioned entrepreneurs as pioneers, pulling Detroit neighborhoods back from a status that anthropologists (Douglas, 1966) and geographers (Cresswell, 1997) have sometimes described as being "out-of-place." Entrepreneurs are held up as potential sources of salvation for Detroit, thereby promoting something of a "White savior" story, while avoiding "a more comprehensive and humbling narrative of pre-existing conditions of urban poverty and social disenfranchisement" (Gregory, 2012, p. 219).

Place narratives can become resources and sources of legitimacy for entrepreneurs as they "do contexts" by selectively appropriating and combining place narratives in ways that mirror how Lévi-Strauss (1966) described the creation – through bricolage – of new myths from pieces of old myths. Research has shown that high-tech entrepreneurs in some places try to distinguish themselves from "Silicon Valley" and at the same time attempt to appropriate parts of its mythology. Gill and Larson (2014) showed how high-tech entrepreneurs used discourses that both transcend places *and* are also localized. For example, high-tech entrepreneurs in the state of Utah relied heavily on the Silicon Valley story, combining it with complementary narratives from the Mormon Church, whilst high-tech entrepreneurs in Montana were more likely to use local narratives to resist the Silicon myth. In effect, both combined elements of local and distant place myths and narratives to do contexts.

The tapestry of myths portraying Silicon Valley as the ideal hotspot for high growth and technology entrepreneurship, as a region that transformed itself from local fruit orchards harvested by migrant workers to a world-class creative hub of technology-driven innovation, has become a little frayed of late. Indeed, while a main current in contemporary entrepreneurship research continues to focus on the so-called "Silicon Valley Model", other scholars increasingly question its utility as a singular exemplar (e.g., Aldrich & Ruef, 2018; Audretsch, 2019; Baker & Powell, 2019; Herrmann, 2019; Pahnke & Welter, 2019; F. Welter et al., 2017). Of more practical importance, regional development practice continues to generate a proliferation of Silicons – "Everyone from New York City (Silicon Alley) to London (Silicon Roundabout) to Hong Kong (Silicon Harbour) to Moscow (Skolkovo) has mimicked Silicon Valley in an attempt to build their own version of the lucrative startup hub" (Forte, 2019). Meanwhile, several European nations are taking Silicon Valley tech giants to task over what are seen as anti-competitive practices. In addition, evidence of racial, sexual and gender discrimination has gained a lot of attention recently. This has tainted and threatens to undermine the idealized world of gentle male tech-nerds and their heroic meritocratic paths to success through pushing technological innovation.

Who controls the narrative(s)? Commitment to particular narratives can be a source of resilience in the face of economic decline and perhaps therefore of recovery if circumstances improve. The same commitment can also become a barrier to adaptive change. In such instances, narratives become "place-*bound* rather than place-*based*" (Massey, 1995). Narratives can also be adapted incrementally. This happens, for example, if and when elements of narratives that provided ideologies for excluding some people and groups from particular opportunities are successfully challenged, creating openings for more inclusive narratives. The jury is clearly still out on how quickly the Silicon Valley mythology might generate ideological narratives

promoting and celebrating the contributions of women or African Americans (Kim, 2016; Wakabayashi, 2017).

The differential power of groups comes into play in defining, sustaining and challenging place narratives. Power defines who belongs in a place and who is an outsider. The cacophony of current discourses about immigration and citizenship throw this in our faces every day. At a more local level, sociologists point to shared experiences encouraging retrospective narration that creates an "appealing past, an assumed future, and a sense of groupness" (Fine & Corte, 2017). A variety of place-based actors – such as entrepreneurs, community groups and politicians as well as outsiders – including, journalists and social media influencers – shape place narratives. These power struggles appear up-close and personal in any community grappling with issues of socioeconomic and ethnic diversity such as we described occurring during the last 100 years in Newark. We suspect that greater attention to the power dynamics that swirl around such developments holds great promise for improving our theorization of places as contexts for entrepreneurship and in particular for creating more scholarly distance between the entrepreneurship mythologies and narratives that dominate popular culture and the narratives we construct through our research.

Places as Collective Memories: Stuck in the Past or Back to the Future?

Where memories and history abound. Let's travel to the Ruhr area in Germany – an industrial region long-dominated by coal mines and steel works. Although both industries started to shrink during the 1950s, political will and public subsidies supported coal mining until 2018. One collective memory in the Ruhr area highlights glorious aspects of the region's industry and its contribution to Germany's economic development. This was thrown into relief in December 2018, during a highly emotional ceremony in which the Federal President of Germany went in person to close down the last coal mine. Numerous monuments memorialize the glory

days of the region's industrial past and the repurposing of some facilities also feeds collective memories. For example, a former coalmine, the "Zeche Zollverein" demarcated as a world heritage site, has become a museum and a cultural center. It also offers incubator space for start-ups. Locals and visitors reminisce about coal miners' pride in "going underground." In a romantic version of collective memory, sons grew up to follow their grandfathers and fathers into the coal mine and whole city quarters were populated by a community of coal miners, bonding beyond work over soccer or their carrier pigeons, and generally caring for one another. However, a critical sub-narrative – more salient to some people than to others – draws on a past of exclusion and segregation: the bigger cities in the Ruhr area remain spatially and culturally divided, with today's workers (many of them immigrants from Poland in the early 20th century, and from Turkey in the 1970s) still concentrated in the North, close to where the mines, mills and factories were located.

How entrepreneurs use history. So far, we have characterized different – but conceptually overlapping – ways that scholars, mostly from outside of entrepreneurship, have examined some ways that the past exerts a hold on places' present and the future. When we apply these lenses to the agentic actions of entrepreneurs, we think about how they might make use of the past through drawing on collective memories and their complementary narratives: For example, how do shared stories of a glorious past and ongoing industrial decline or restructuring influence entrepreneurial actions that might contribute to reshaping places? The answer seems to be, in varied and sometimes complex ways. Entrepreneurs could and often do respond with absence or silence, effectively complicit in such decline. Entrepreneurs also sometimes resist, defying suggestions that the glories of the past are already extinguished (Powell & Baker, 2014). Entrepreneurship can be transformational, helping to imagine and attempting to build something new on and even perhaps *with* the ruins of the old (Stark, 1996).

Researchers have suggested that place-specific industrial developments from the past can assert continuing influences that suppress or reduce the effectiveness of entrepreneurship. For example, in the context of English coalfields, Stuetzer et al. (2016) identified large-scale industrialization in the 19th century as a lasting negative influence on subsequent entrepreneurship. In many smaller so-called 'legacy cities' in the U.S. that were once industrial centers, both politicians and entrepreneurs have failed over many decades to adapt to industrial change or to generate much of a post-industrial rebirth (Lambe, Longworth, & Stauber, 2017). Sometimes the effects of history are understood fairly narrowly, for example, as differences in regional traditions of self-employment. Other research has highlighted broader elements of regional cultures that emerge over long periods as enabling or restricting entrepreneurship in a variety of ways (e.g., Fritsch & Wyrwich, 2018).

Historians see the past as "symbolic resources" (Wadhwani, Suddaby, Mordhorst, & Popp, 2018, p. 1664) that can be quite malleable in use. Interpretations of the past are not fixed but may be subject to change when they are co-constructed by actors who simultaneously produce and use the past. But social construction, through processes of institutionalization and reification, can also render many interpretations as taken-for-granted and resistant to change (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). It is one thing when actors simultaneously produce, use and consume the past in ways of their own devising. But, for most people, much of the production of such "symbolic resources" was accomplished long ago and in large part by people who have now left the scene. Current generations have been socialized to unquestioningly see much of the past in ways not much of their own choosing. Historical lenses can highlight such processes and point us to important interactions between different audiences that narrate histories (Lubinski, 2018) and thereby perhaps contribute to de-reifying previously imposed interpretations.

Remembering or forgetting pasts, presents and futures. Memories express versions of the past, and narratives transport such memories. We all have memories related to places: memories of travelling to "exotic" countries and cultures, memories of moving and adjusting to new cities or countries, memories of those places we grew up in and call(ed) home. The past "conveys a kind of connective structure (…) to societies, groups, and individuals, both socially and temporally. Memory is what allows us to construe an image or narrative of the past and, by the same process, to develop an image and narrative of ourselves" (Assmann, 2011, p. 15). Memories emerge through conversations and social interactions within and across families, cultures and groups. Cultural studies scholars distinguish between communicative and cultural memories. The former describes peoples' everyday memories, originating informally and spanning perhaps three to four generations. In contrast, cultural memories contain the historical stories, symbols and traditions, the so-called mythical pasts of a whole culture. They form a disembodied and transferable institution that is "exteriorized, objectified, and stored away in symbolic forms that, unlike the sounds of words or the appearance of gestures, are stable and situation-transcendent. (…) In order to function as memory, its symbolic forms must not only be preserved but also circulated and re-embodied in a society" (Assmann, 2011, p. 17).

Both forms of memories contribute to making and unmaking places. They simultaneously represent some aspects of the past and can be a tool for remaking or forgetting the past (Ocasio, Mauskapf, & Steele, 2016). Memories influence whether and how deeply one becomes attached to places because they contribute to a cultural and spatial sense of belonging (Brockmeier, 2002). Collective memories can lock regions into nostalgic reminiscences of the past or of a perceived better past, as reflected in, for example, invented traditions that seek to create a "continuity with the past" by drawing on history to legitimize current actions (Hobsbawm, 1997, p. 1). Sometimes, invented traditions try to link back physically to halcyon times perceived as more glorious than the immediate past.

One such example is the recently re-constructed Berliner Palace – destroyed in the Second World War, demolished by the German Democratic Republic in 1950 to make place for their parliamentary building (ironically labelled "Palace of the Republic" or "People's Palace"), which in turn was demolished in 2006-2008 to make a place for a new "genuine" Palace. Obviously, cultural memories dominate here: underlying this reconstruction is a public narrative of a war-torn city center (further demolished and destroyed by the socialist government) which needs to be rebuilt to resemble the Prussian city from the early 20th century. The history of the place as such is not changed but a narrative rooted further in the past has come to dominate more recent attempts to supplant it. This re-narrating of place aligns with peoples' current desire to forget the recent socialist past.

This draws attention to the role of forgetting. Whilst communicative memories are transported and stored in written or visual (private or public) archives and narratives, cultural memories are not only stored in place-specific narratives or archives, but also in the topography, natural environments and landscapes of places, supported by popular narratives, and in physical structures such as buildings, memorials and monuments. Despite these sources of stability, however, some memories, and especially the narratives through which they are communicated, remain fluid and changeable. They are constantly recreated and retold as is visible in the co-existence of different and often conflicting historical, current and emerging narratives, replacing one another, being deliberately set aside, adapted or recalled for new uses (Lubinski, 2018).

Historical narratives create memories, but they also create forgetting because by attending to some aspects of places, they leave out and displace others (Mordhorst, 2008). This can be important for downplaying threats and for generating resistance to challenges. For example, studies of textile and apparel entrepreneurship in the southeastern U.S. during a period of rapid decline show how enduring collective memories and narratives shaped local

entrepreneurs, resulting in identities such as "textile believer" and "textile evangelist" that conditioned how they responded to – and resisted – the decline that surrounded them (Powell & Baker, 2014). In the same region, collective memories and narratives about how textiles had previously built thriving towns were the backdrop to attempts by social entrepreneurs to resist the decline and revitalize troubled areas through encouraging and supporting local textile entrepreneurs to create ventures in the places where textile jobs had vanished (Powell & Baker, 2017).

Thus, "whenever we talk about places, what is at issue, whether we acknowledge it or not, are competing versions of the histories in the process of which the present of those places came into being" (Connerton, 2009, p. 50). In very general ways, "history," forever contestable but often taken-for-granted, can contribute to the making and unmaking of entrepreneurial places, providing collective memories in the form of narratives, images or physical and built structures of how places came into being and changed over time, as well as both shared and contested expectations for what the future may hold. The uses-of-the-past approach thus allows for a broader understanding of how history influences places and how it can be used by entrepreneurs for place-making to suit their purposes. History also reminds us of the variety of places that once may have been considered entrepreneurial – as well as the vast array of places that never carried such a label but were nonetheless home to all sorts of "everyday entrepreneurship." This pushes us one step further along the road towards acknowledging both the transient nature of entrepreneurship hot spots and the need for our theories to embrace the everydayness of entrepreneurial places, behaviors and outcomes.

The Place of the Built Environment

Can buildings destroy place myths? At risk of reemphasizing a narrative that we believe is on its way to being usefully decentered, let's briefly continue with the Silicon Valley example.

Architects have started to examine and debate whether this place risks destroying the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit for which it is so often celebrated. At issue is the architecture of the new headquarters many successful tech giants have erected in recent years. Today's Silicon Valley architecture is one of exclusivity for the chosen few and of exclusion for many, symbolizing a "fantasy of total control" and moving rapidly away from any sort of freewheeling start-up culture (Wainwright, 2017). Why is this problematic? The past normally is present in today's places through collective memories (Massey, 1995). We often see such continuity reflected in attempts to ensure that new construction "fits" or complements existing architecture. But in the case at hand, the present, as symbolized in these new headquarter structures, seems to diverge boldly from much of what has been valued in the past. The dominant Silicon Valley narrative celebrates working very hard, creativity, embracing risk and recoverable failure, breaking rules and collaborating informally with others outside of corporate boundaries to generate new ventures and innovation (Saxenian, 1994).

The new architecture and built environment no longer fit the latter parts of that narrative: instead it throws up gated corporate communities, far away from where most people live (V. M. Welter, 2016), erecting structural barriers to organically-occurring collaboration among potential entrepreneurs. Maak (2019) characterizes the trend towards round buildings as "doughnut" architecture, which *may* allow for intra-corporate creativity because it can foster internal communities, but which also resembles the aesthetic of round prison buildings, offering no obvious ways in or out. In many ways, by increasing corporate insularity, this may be a move away from the "collective learning" environment that Saxenian (1994) suggested gave Silicon Valley advantages over "Route 128" in Massachusetts. The tech giants appear to have abandoned this source of regional advantage as the new buildings no longer complement or support the predominant place narrative of informality and exchange of ideas but instead create striking barriers between privileged insiders and excluded others.

How built environments shape entrepreneurship. As our short excursion to Silicon Valley has suggested, built environments and social structures complement each other and are mutually constitutive. Their joint impact on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial places has, to our knowledge been little researched, probably because most take the built environment and infrastructure for granted as a necessary baseline for entrepreneurial places, sometime recognizing the positive but seldom highlighting the potentially detrimental impact of the built environment on how a place shapes entrepreneurship. Nonetheless, spatial planning and architecture produce sites and buildings that – often inadvertently – exclude parts of the population from realizing their full entrepreneurial potential.

For example, power relations are reflected in the ways the built environment inhibits or allows access to certain places, as shown above in the example of the new gated communities of Silicon Valley's most prominent businesses. Schindler (2015) draws attention to how architecture acts as a hidden regulatory institution, infusing the design of cities, sidewalks, transport systems and many more elements of urban places in ways that isolate and exclude unwanted population groups: "The built environment is characterized by man-made physical features that make it difficult for certain individuals—often poor people and people of color—to access certain places. Bridges were designed to be so low that buses could not pass under them in order to prevent people of color from accessing a public beach. Walls, fences, and highways separate historically white neighborhoods from historically black ones. Wealthy communities have declined to be served by public transit so as to make it difficult for individuals from poorer areas to access their neighborhoods. (…) Street grid layouts, one-way streets, the absence of sidewalks and crosswalks, and other design elements can shape the demographics of a city and isolate a neighborhood from those surrounding it."

Places can be segregated geographically and architecturally. Even the ways rooms are planned and distributed within a building can contribute to the lower status of some groups within a society. Just think of the old houses where kitchens and other utility rooms used by women or by servants were built "out of the way" of the men of the house, sometimes literally as outhouses, thus supporting gender and racial segregation even within a home. As highway construction increasingly separated residential areas from the inner cities and from many workplaces, people were forced to commute, which required a car when public transit was not available. Geographical segregation reinforced labor segregation, excluding some population groups from work or forcing them into particular jobs, also hindering potential participation in entrepreneurship. Expectations that they would stay near home to take care of family meant that moves to low-density suburban areas greatly constrained women's possibilities for work or entrepreneurship and shaped gendered employment patterns (Hanson & Pratt, 1988). Such stark examples of the apparently unintentional side-effects of spatial planning and architecture have been critiqued by feminist urban planners and geographers and others (McDowell, 1993; Spain, 1992).

We can broaden such arguments, making a general case for those population groups that may have limited access to resources such as time or money or transportation services to travel beyond isolated residential areas: for example, the elderly, disabled, migrants, people of color, poor and working class residents. Members of these groups may be forced out of the regular labor market and if they choose entrepreneurship, may show a pronounced preference for home-based businesses with limited growth possibilities and low income. "The layout within which residential and public spaces sit has been proven to be of particular relevance to socio-spatial segregation and (…) is found to clearly inhibit integration" (Shehab & Salama, 2018, p. 87). In South Africa, elements of the built environment designed to separate races into different communities continue to serve this function long after the fall of Apartheid,

placing additional financial and transportation burdens on both workers and entrepreneurs of color. These sorts of structured patterns of segregation affect patterns of entrepreneurship, in part by restricting access to social ties and thereby to opportunities and resources.

Even new places for entrepreneurship such as makerspaces, co-working sites or technology-oriented incubators are examples of built environments that implicitly exclude some groups of entrepreneurs or restrict them because of stereotypical expectations. This has been shown for the example of women in high-technology incubators (Marlow & McAdam, 2012) and in makerspaces (Rosner, 2014, p. 67). Many of the new spaces for entrepreneurs are white and male-dominated. Many years ago Baker, Aldrich, and Liou (1997) labeled women's entrepreneurship as "invisible." Residential segregation and home-based businesses suggest a much more general pattern of invisibility that hides much of the everyday entrepreneurship that surrounds us and instead reinforces notions of what is entrepreneurial as limited by race, gender and social class and as occurring in "cool" places populated by young technically-trained professionals and outfitted with ping-pong and massage tables, jars of M&Ms and free lunches. In myriads ways, spatial planning and the places that result contribute to the homogeneity which currently characterizes perceptions of what constitutes a successful entrepreneurial place instead of celebrating the diversity that is characteristic of everyday entrepreneurship.

How built environments can contribute to the diversity of entrepreneurial places: Although the contrast between the "good" and the "bad" of built sites for entrepreneurship can be a useful exploratory heuristic, it can also blur our understanding of the varied ways in which places may shape everyday entrepreneurship. Struggling urban neighborhoods can create new opportunities for entrepreneurship, for example, when they provide vacant buildings and sites that can be used cheaply or for free. A limited body of entrepreneurship research has studied such

depleted communities, identifying forms of enterprise – often social or community-oriented – that can succeed in such places and contribute to their renewal (e.g., Flögel & Gärtner, 2015; Johnstone & Lionais, 2004). However, without a more critical look at the underlying mechanisms of spatial development and architecture that may also have contributed to such deprived urban neighborhoods, such research supports a binary view of entrepreneurial places: here the distressed neighborhood that generates social and community enterprises, home-based and solo-entrepreneurs with low growth potential; there the booming and vibrant city space which attracts high-growth and technology-oriented ventures. While we need to understand these extremes, entrepreneurial places are more diverse than such bifurcations imagine.

Most contemporary environments have been shaped by planning. This planning typically represents truces of one sort or another between competing interests and sources of power. At one extreme, planning has preserved places in their "natural" states by restricting development. Recent news coverage of contention over the protection of wild lands in the U.S. or burning to clear land in the Amazonian rain forests suggests the fragility of such truces. At another extreme, planning has caused the intentional and highly controlled construction and reconstruction of urban environments. Witness, for example, Hudson Yards, described by the architecture critic of the New York Times as "Manhattan's Biggest, Newest, Slickest Gated Community" (Kimmelman, 2019), it is the "largest mixed-use private real estate venture in American history." One need only make a quick search of legal dockets to get a sense of how such truces may be maintained. Much of the planning for built environments is much less comprehensive or controlling or coherent than such extremes of land preservation or urban redevelopment. Much of the world's built environment is instead developed piecemeal, by ad hoc processes and with limited attention to unintended consequences.

Of particular interest for expanding our notions of theorizing places for everyday entrepreneurship are built environments characterized by a high density of informal businesses. A

great deal of the world's commercial activity and a great deal of everyday entrepreneurship is informal. One example of compelling places for entrepreneurship that emerge in a sense from the juxtaposition of formal and informal commercial activity are organized, sometimes semi-legal marketplaces that create places for numerous small-scale entrepreneurs to come together and attract consumers. There is a great variety of such markets around the world (Mooshammer, 2015). These markets are often morally contested or condemned as places for entrepreneurship (Hohnen, 2003) and stigmatized as outlets for criminal activities – the U.S. Trade Representative publishes an annual list of so-called "notorious markets" where goods offered infringe copyrights and trademarks (Mooshammer, 2015, p. 19). However, both of us have observed widely different facets of these marketplaces, illustrating the inventiveness and creativity of entrepreneurs in using the physical and built environments.

Many of these places are simple open-air markets, which may be either actively discouraged by municipal and public safety officials, ignored, or supported as alternatives to having hawkers spread around a central business district (Aidis, 2003; Powell, Hamann, Bitzer, & Baker, 2018). Some marketplaces are temporary, for example, individuals make use of ad-hoc trading opportunities at border crossings and at train stations or even on trains (F. Welter & Xheneti, 2013). Sometimes, marketplaces seem to – implicitly – create a hierarchy between traders through their building structures as one of us observed when studying informal (cross-border) entrepreneurship in former Soviet countries in both Central Europe and Central Asia (F. Welter, Smallbone, & Pobol, 2015; F. Welter, Xheneti, & Smallbone, 2018): Better-off traders and small business owners could afford market stalls whilst others, for example, pensioners trading food surplus from their own gardens along with berries and mushrooms collected in the forests, sold illegally from the pavement close to the market entrance.

While entrepreneurship research has studied various facets of these marketplaces and the entrepreneurs using them, little explicit attention has been paid to the built environment in

relation to the nature of entrepreneurship within and at these places. One notable exception is the study by Dorado and Fernandez (2019, p. 274) who described "the transition of La Salada," outside of Buenos Aires, Argentina, "from a transient informal market into a multi-building complex" that can accommodate hundreds of buses at a time bringing shoppers to buy from the many hundreds of mostly informal traders who rent or own stalls in the facilities. While the overall legal status of La Salada remains unsettled, for the entrepreneurs who sell there, many of whom are also employed in local textile sweatshops, this marketplace provides a place that for some has become a foundation for success defined in terms of stability and to some extent growth and wealth accumulation.

In this case, the market is structured in intriguing ways that seem to proffer opportunities for pathways to entrepreneurial success that would be very difficult to achieve in their absence. The patterning of behaviors and outcomes these market structures shape represent substantial challenges to and therefore opportunities for substantial improvement for our theories of places and of entrepreneurship more generally. More generally, architectural researchers studying informal settlements and markets in both the Global North and Global South point out the parallel existence of "a myriad of indeterminate parallel worlds existing next to each other or literally within the same place" (Mörtenböck & Mooshammer, 2008, p. 73). From our perspective, they point to the diversity of everyday entrepreneurial places.

While these sorts of examples suggest that our theories fail to adequately comprehend or explain or provide useful guidance with regard to places for entrepreneurship that are likely "foreign" to most North American or European researchers, it would be a mistake for us to imply that our research is very much better for the purpose of answering questions about places for entrepreneurship closer to home and the mainstream. Despite all of our descriptive knowledge of what high technology entrepreneurial ecosystems and hotspots look like, when it comes to offering any sort of advice about how to create built environments – i.e.,

intentional places – to promote organic development of diverse sorts of entrepreneurship, we are pretty much reduced to remaining quiet or relying on common sense. Our research appears remarkably silent on what seems such a theoretically interesting and practically important commonplace challenge. It would be good for our theories to tell us more about these places for entrepreneurship as well as about what we might usefully teach the entrepreneurs who live in them. Tuning in to disciplines that have a longer tradition of studying built environments may assist us in this regard.

Roads to Be Travelled, Yet

Travelling on diverging roads in search of perspectives to theorizing contexts, we discovered, is fun and is daunting. It is fun because it opens up many more roads we could have diverged onto – some of which we will briefly touch upon below. It is daunting because the roads we have explored also make us question some of the assumptions we typically take-for-granted in entrepreneurship research. Places are made in many more ways than we usually imagine – many of them subtle, unobtrusive and largely invisible using our typical lenses. This calls for a broader perspective on theorizing their emergence, persistence and disappearance. In the final section, we briefly assess where we stand now and suggest a few ideas where we may want to go in future.

Theorizing contexts: Where the roads have led us

We now briefly turn back to Welter (2011) in order to assess whether and how the diverging roads we have explored as potential ways forward can help us address the challenges, she identified to moving beyond contextualizing entrepreneurship theory toward theorizing contexts. She posited that we need to identify "theories of context" (Whetten, 2009, p. 36) that

allow us to "understand and analyze the effects multiple contexts have on entrepreneurship and the ways entrepreneurship influences context" (F. Welter, 2011, p. 175).

Welter (2011) identified three challenges in contextualizing entrepreneurship theory: applying a context lens together with an individual lens, considering dark and bright sides and applying a multi-context perspective. We suggest that the diverging roads we have explored in this paper respond to all three challenges. They allow us to apply a context lens to study the interplay of where and when together with a perspective on entrepreneurs "doing contexts". They highlight the simultaneous dark and bright sides of contextualizing entrepreneurship, for example, by allowing us to theorize exclusion and inclusion of individuals as (potential) entrepreneurs. They thus draw attention to the potential effects of narratives, collective memories and the built environment on the diversity of what is seen to constitute entrepreneurial places. Finally, they allow us to consider multiple contexts in contextualizing entrepreneurship theory.

In relation to understanding and analyzing the effects of multiple contexts on entrepreneurship, we extended current theorizing of how entrepreneurial places are made, persist and vanish, towards consideration of how contexts are constructed through language and narratives, through uses of the past as reflected in memories and through mapping the structures of places and their impact on entrepreneurship in novel ways by incorporating architecture and spatial planning. With this, we emphasized the multiplicity of where and when contexts, which cannot be theorized independently from each other, and the interplay of entrepreneurship, places and time. We also drew attention to aspects of theorizing contexts to which entrepreneurship theories and research have yet to really attend. Narratives, memories and uses of the past, and built environments all reflect the differential power of different groups, processes of contestation and (often temporary) settlements. Increased focus on these dynamics holds,

we believe, great promise to enrich the theorizing of contexts in entrepreneurship, as they allow us to understand more and different facets of the lived reality of everyday entrepreneurs.

In relation to the ways entrepreneurship influences contexts, the diverging roads we have explored bring in another important perspective that theories of context need to incorporate. These roads, albeit in varied ways, force us to examine so far – and to us – hidden aspects of contextualizing, bringing attention to silent voices. These include, for example, people left behind when the more powerful and privileged move out, but who nonetheless continue to engage in entrepreneurship in places and over time in ways we seldom imagine or study. Such roads may thus assist us in building theories that are more suited to capture the real everyday world of entrepreneurship across places and times. In order to study everyday entrepreneurship, we need theories that comprehend and explain many such places in which entrepreneurship is happening. But we also need theories that explain how particular places are constructed as "special" for entrepreneurship. Both directions of theorizing can drive future research.

A context roadmap for the future: Where to next

Welter (2011, p. 178) suggested more attention to be paid to the "diversity of contexts of entrepreneurship" and the diversity of entrepreneurship as such. In this paper, we tried to respond to her call by drawing from scholarly fields that provide insights into how grand regional narratives and historical memory, together with the layout of the built environment, may play a part in constructing "everyday entrepreneurship places". Incorporating more of these and other research lenses we did not touch upon (e.g., visual studies, photography, arts – see Baker & Welter, 2020 for more details) into entrepreneurship research will help us to map profound new research avenues. At some point, all of the talk about contexts and contextualization threatens to overwhelm us with its potential complexity. Even here, even as we have limited ourselves to talking only about where and when, we are struck by the clichéd "tension

between not being able to see the forest for the trees versus not being able to see the trees for the forest" (Baker & Welter, 2020). Nonetheless, we have described some relatively clear roads forward.

In relation to the role of history for entrepreneurial places, we are intrigued by several additional research paths opening up for entrepreneurship scholars. For example, how do actors (implicitly or explicitly) use collective memories in attempts to renew places? When are places and people locked in by their memories of glorious times gone by? When are they instead empowered by the "hallowed past" to deal with the uncertainties of today and the future by moving in new directions through entrepreneurship? How do entrepreneurs and others (politicians, communities) play a part in creating the discourses – both verbal and visual – that shape collective understanding of the past and possibilities for the future? Extending this, the role of cultural memories and forgetting and the interplay of collective memories, narratives and the built environment in making some places more inviting to particular sorts of entrepreneurship bears promise for entrepreneurship studies.

We believe that the focus on the built environment provides a promising research lens for studying the interplay between the impact of contexts and entrepreneurial agency in remaking places. Built environments contribute to the emergence of places and the entrepreneurship therein in ways entrepreneurship researchers have not – yet – fully embraced. Entrepreneurship research has touched upon material artifacts and various links to how entrepreneurship comes about and flourishes. Extending this to spatial planning and architecture will assist us in seeing different aspects of constraints and enablers for entrepreneurship as well as add nuances to our understanding of how entrepreneurs enact their built environments and landscapes. For example, should we continue to emphasize policies supporting "separate" spaces such as incubators and technology centers even if those reinforce the exclusion of some groups from important forms of entrepreneurship? What does the need for these attempted

"artificial" entrepreneurship enhancers say about the contexts in which they come to be needed? How can such places be constructed in ways that they are more inclusive of the diversity that characterizes entrepreneurship? More broadly, can we theorize how to build homes, neighborhoods and cities in ways that foster the rich diversity of entrepreneurship? In the near future, what role will the continued rise of digital technologies, virtual worlds, artificial intelligence and the possibilities of greater independence from "time and space" play for entrepreneurial places? Will technological changes on the near horizon fundamentally change how both entrepreneurs and we as researchers do contexts?

Our arguments point strongly toward power relations as a central theme for entrepreneurship research that is mindful of place. In addition to the "invisible hand of the market" and anonymous macro social dynamics, who has the power and influence to help create, maintain and change entrepreneurial places? How does this work? In which ways can entrepreneurial places be made more democratic and inclusive? In doing such research, what lessons might we learn from disciplines that have had a longer tradition of action research and participative research models, for example, development studies and social informatics?

Climate change is one of the grand social challenges of our time and of the foreseeable future. It will bring unplanned and, in many cases, unwanted and destructive changes to a great many places. Commentators on "climate justice" predict that those hardest hit by climate change will likely be those who are already poor and relatively powerless, with fewer options for adaptation. On the other hand, to the extent that entrepreneurs view challenges as opportunities to create solutions, climate change will create a rich environment for a diversity of ventures to offer products and services to help people adapt. This seems to offer us, as entrepreneurship researchers, a rare opportunity to get out ahead of practice and to help map roads forward.

Entrepreneurship research recently has started to examine questions about visualizing. We suggest this as another promising theme for future research on entrepreneurial places: How do visualizing and seeing influence entrepreneurial places? How can a closer look at visual studies help us to incorporate the currently invisible and unseen aspects of entrepreneurial diversity into our theorizing? We suggest taking a closer look at how entrepreneurship is visualized, not only in relation to entrepreneurial places, but also in keeping some aspects invisible (and effectively silent) while others are relentlessly made prominent.

These are just some of the themes we believe are prompted by the discussion of diverging roads in this paper. While the reader may think we are now broadening the domain of entrepreneurship research yet again, we see it differently: We believe that entrepreneurship research embraces much more than we or our research has yet imagined. Interacting with other disciplines is not expanding the domain as such, but it gives us new insights into questions we have asked ourselves for a long time. It also may give us different methodological tools to find some of the answers that our typical approaches have been unable to find. The journey our community is on remains exciting with – and indeed because of – every twist and turn. The curving nature of the path ahead will be enhanced as we reach beyond our own discipline and find ways to forge collaborations with many more disciplines and perspectives than those we have touched upon here. By bringing more lenses to bear and thus making more dynamics visible, we can create a broader base for driving our work forward.

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