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EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN IMAGES OF ORGANISATION

This paper explores the metaphorical building blocks of conceptualisations of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship across eight metaphors for organisation. The starting point is the notion that entrepreneurs found organisations and therefore the ways organisations are conceptualised reflect implicit images of the entrepreneurs who created them as well as the entrepreneurship processes through which they were created. Through disciplined imagination, this paper demonstrates how different metaphors afford and constrain the space for entrepreneurial agency and entrepreneurship processes. The revealed images of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship are useful tools for critically reflecting on the process of entrepreneurship for both researchers and practitioners.

INTRODUCTION

Metaphors transpose ideas between two conceptual domains and they are fundamental to sensemaking and sensegiving (Morgan, 2006, Cornelissen, 2006, Weick 1989). Metaphors underpin theoretical models and reflect basic assumptions; nevertheless, they are regularly made invisible in academic writing (Boxenbaum & Rouleau, 2011). Still, metaphors profoundly influence researchers' perceptions and how researchers' make sense of those perceptions (Boxenbaum & Rouleau, 2011). Making explicit the metaphors that are used implicitly, therefore, facilitates the identification of underlying assumptions and biases in past, present and future research (Morgan, 1980). Furthermore, uncovering the metaphorical assemblage of research facilitates dialogue, theory development, and creative combinations of multiple perspectives (Morgan, 1980; 2006; 2011).

This paper explores the metaphorical building blocks of conceptualisations of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship across eight metaphors for organisation. The starting point is the notion that entrepreneurs found organisations (Gartner, 1989). If entrepreneurs found organisations, then the ways organisations are conceptualised would reflect implicit images of the entrepreneurs who created them as well as the entrepreneurship processes through which they were created. This paper explores how eight established metaphors for organisation: machines, organisms, brains, cultures, political systems, psychic prisons, flux and transformation, and instruments of domination (Morgan, 2006), reflect images of entrepreneurial agents and entrepreneurship processes. We demonstrate that for each metaphor of organisation, there is a different framing of entrepreneurs as agents and entrepreneurship as a process. For example, if organisations are seen as living organisms (Morgan, 2006), entrepreneurs can be seen as their parents raising them (Cardon, et al., 2005). In this metaphor, the entrepreneurial process involves protecting, nurturing, advising, caring, and upbringing.

We explore how each of the metaphors for organisation constrain and afford space for entrepreneurial agency and entrepreneurship processes through disciplined imagination (Weick, 1989; Cornelissen, 2006). Furthermore, the paper analyses the extent to which the identified spaces for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship correspond to, and diverge from, images identified within the entrepreneurship literature. Understanding the links between images of organisations and images of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship facilitates dialogue between the two fields – entrepreneurship and organisation studies. We contend that metaphors of organisations, allow varied configurations of entrepreneurial agency and process. Resultantly, exploring entrepreneurial agency and process in organisational metaphors can help us develop an understanding of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship as a

contextual phenomenon that varies by organisational form, time and place. Furthermore, exploring these links can potentially improve our understanding of entrepreneurship and its role in society and organisations. We also note potential unexplored gaps suggested by the analysis of these metaphors, but unexplored in entrepreneurship research.

The paper draws on the growing strand of research on metaphors as research tools (e.g. Morgan, 1980; 2006; 2011; Weick, 1989; Cornelissen, 2006; Boxenbaum & Rouleau, 2011). We first explore how metaphors can be used as research tools in order to investigate entrepreneurship and explicate our methodology for identifying useful metaphors. We then analyse each metaphor of organisation in relation to the space they allow for entrepreneurial agent and entrepreneurship process. The paper concludes with a number of insights that fill the gaps in our understanding of how metaphors can be mobilised in exploring the space for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial processes in shaping of organisations.

USING METAPHORS AS A RESEARCH TOOLS

A metaphor compares two conceptual domains and transfers aspects of the source to the target domain (Morgan, 1980). Similarly to theoretical models, metaphors highlight certain aspects of the phenomena to which they are applied and downplay others. In fact, theoretical models and conceptual labels can be seen as metaphors (Morgan, 1980; Morgan, 2011). Metaphors can be used to efficiently convey structural similarities between two domains, but also to spark a creative process of emergent meaning (Cornelissen, Kafouros and Lock, 2005; Cornelissen, 2006). The application of metaphor requires a mapping that connects and separates the involved concepts. Therefore the application of metaphors requires pre-existing understandings of the compared domains and an understanding of the context in which the metaphor is expressed.

Language is rife with metaphors, which influence how people make sense of the world (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Metaphors can be powerful tools for pedagogically conveying insights about the nature of a phenomenon (Weick, 1989; Cornelissen, 2006). Studying metaphors can help capture cultural repertoires of complex sets of experiences, feelings, thoughts and responses, which could only be described in long prose in the absence of metaphors. This tool is used by entrepreneurship scholars. For example, Cardon et al (2005) use the metaphor of entrepreneurship as parenthood to highlight similarities between the two phenomena such as that entrepreneurs often have strong emotional ties to their ventures, that the ventures are fragile and in need of protection until they have reached a certain level of maturity and that letting go of a venture can be emotionally difficult. The metaphor elucidates certain aspects of entrepreneurship; however, it can also mislead the interpreter by overemphasising certain aspects or lead towards nonsensical analogies, such as that it takes a man and a woman to start a firm. Metaphors are therefore a way of seeing, but also a way of not seeing or even misleading (Mogan, 2006; 2011).

In addition, the use of metaphors signal how theorists view and make sense of the world around them and it reflects “implicit, core assumptions about ontology and human nature” (Morgan & Smircich, 1980, p. 493). One of the implications of uncovering the implicit metaphors in discourses is the possibility to decipher the way entrepreneurial agency and process are defined, shaped and crafted, in order to fit with the world views that underpin them. Thus, exploring metaphors can provide powerful analytical tools that show the linkages between entrepreneurial agency, process and the context of economic, social, political relations through place and time (Coşgel, 1996).

A growing body of research show how metaphors can be and are used as research tools (Morgan, 1980; Weick, 1989; Cornelissen, 2006). Metaphors are widely used in academic research, but their use often remains unacknowledged (Boxenbaum & Rouleau, 2011). The use of metaphors as research tools is established also within the entrepreneurship field. However, the explicit use of metaphor as a research tool within the entrepreneurship field has mostly focused on metaphors applied outside of academia, for example among entrepreneurs and in media (Hill & Levenhagen, 1995; Dodd, 2002; Nicholson & Anderson, 2005). While the field of organisation studies has made its metaphorical assemblage explicit (Morgan, 2006; Cornelissen, Kafouras, & Lock, 2005), scholars have, with a few exceptions (e.g. Coşgel, 1996, Cardon, et al., 2005; Lundmark & Westelius, forthcoming), not explored the use of metaphors related to entrepreneurship within academic writing. A key contribution of our paper is to make explicit the way established metaphors for organisation constrain and afford conceptualisations of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. In the next section, we present the applied methodology.

EXTRACTING IMAGES OF ENTREPRENEURS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN METAPHORS FOR ORGANISATIONS

Over the past 40 years scholars have suggested and explored a variety of metaphors in organisational studies, for example, garbage cans, machines and organisms, brains, psychic prisons, soap bubbles, and jazz bands. Whereas any metaphor can be proposed, even those that make little sense, some metaphors have proven more useful than others (Cornelissen, Kafouras, & Lock, 2005).

Weick (1989), and Cornelissen (2006) have developed criteria for what makes a metaphor useful and valuable in research. Weick (1989) propose that the identification of useful metaphors often is sparked by the generation of surprise, such as contradictions between interpretations of metaphors and preconceived notions about a phenomenon. Metaphors that generate interest can subsequently be explored through *disciplined imagination*, which is a trial-and-error based process involving problem statements, thought trials, and selection criteria (Weick, 1989). Disciplined imagination is thus a quick, inexpensive and potentially fruitful method for theory development.

Cornelissen (2006), building on Weick (1989), provides further insight into the process of disciplined imagination. Cornelissen (2006) use the term *metaphorical blend* for the complex set of concepts and relations that emerge as researchers apply metaphors. The metaphorical blend is derived not only from comparing similarities between the source and the target, but also from collapsing source- and target-domain concepts into a composition that can be transformed and completed in a process of emergent meaning.

In our analysis of how metaphors for organisation reflect images of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, we have analysed eight metaphors for organisation. For each of the metaphors, we have explored its space for entrepreneurship through disciplined imagination. Specifically we have analysed how the metaphor constrains and affords entrepreneurial agency and entrepreneurial processes (i.e. the problem statement). We have analysed entrepreneurial agency by asking what actors create or modify these entities; and entrepreneurial process by asking through what processes and by which means these entities are created or modified. We have then experimented by imagining actors and processed spurred by these questions in the framing of each metaphor (i.e. thought trials). We have selected actors and processes that produce consistent narratives regardless of if they break with or conform to the notions found in the entrepreneurship literature.

The next step has been to assess the extent to which the identified actors and processes are reflected in entrepreneurship research and in the conceptualisations of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs proposed by entrepreneurship scholars. In addition to noting the correspondence between the reflected images and conceptualisations in the entrepreneurship field, we have noted gaps suggested by the reflections, but unexplored in the entrepreneurship field. The analysis is presented in a subsection for each metaphor and compiled in Table 1.

In order to delimit the number of metaphors to explore in this paper while aiming to increase the chances of finding meaningful influences or gaps, we have limited the sample to the eight, by now well-established metaphors elaborated on by Morgan (2006): Machines, Organisms, Brains, Cultures, Political systems, Psychic prisons, Flux and transformations, and Instruments of domination. The reason we focus on these metaphors for organisation is that they have proven useful, have stood the test of time and are widely known – the book is cited more than 11 000 times (Google Scholar 2012-11-27), the first edition of *Images of Organisation* was in 1986, and the book has been used extensively in university teaching.

ORGANISATIONS AS MACHINES

The machine metaphor is one of the most frequently applied metaphors for organisation (Morgan, 1980; Morgan, 2006, Cornelissen, Kafouras, & Lock, 2005). The metaphor is associated with the era of scientific management and portrays the firm as, “a machine, either mechanical or computational, that could be analyzed into its component parts, modified, and reassembled into a more effective whole” (Barley & Kunda, 1992, 384). Such views of organisations imply that they are constructed by engineers and conceived by inventors in a process involving planning and calculation. The reflection of entrepreneurs by the machine metaphor is a person who is well familiar with the domains of business, technology and organisations in order to be able to forecast, plan and execute with precision. Entrepreneurs are portrayed as rational human beings that take calculated risks. Entrepreneurship is crafted as a rational process allowing autonomous and informed agency, which is underpinned by assumptions of contextual stability and predictability.

During the peak of scientific management entrepreneurship was not an established field of academic inquiry. However, the machine metaphor did not fade with scientific management; rather it remains one of the most frequently alluded to metaphors (Cornelissen, Kafouras, & Lock, 2005) and as such seems to have been difficult to disregard for entrepreneurship scholars. Although few entrepreneurship scholars would ascribe to a view of entrepreneurship as a process similar to machine building, the tension between machine metaphors and other metaphors such as organism and flux and transformation has parallels in entrepreneurship research. For example, there is a tension between causation and effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2001); there is debate about whether entrepreneurs should “plan or just storm the castle” (Brinckmann, Grichnik, & Kapsa, 2010, p. 24); and there is a tension between entrepreneurs as the creators of equilibrium and disequilibrium (Schumpeter, 1934/2008).

Such tensions are linked to the machine metaphor as many entrepreneurship scholars have explicitly contrasted the entrepreneurial with the mechanistic. For example Knight (1921/2002) associated entrepreneurship with uncertainty, which he separated from the mechanical and predictable. Knight (1921/2002, p. 268) claimed “With uncertainty absent [...] all organic readjustments would become mechanical, all organisms automata”. Baumol (1968, p. 64) complained that entrepreneurs were expunged from economic theory and that only Schumpeter and Knight “succeeded in infusing [the entrepreneur] with life.” Entrepreneurship is thus the ghost in the machine – Baumol (1968, p. 68) distinguished entrepreneurship from

management, where a manager is “a calculating robot, a programmed mechanical component in the automatic system that constitutes the firm.” Similarly Eckhardt & Shane, (2003, p. 336) associate non-entrepreneurial decision making with “mechanical calculation”. Recently the entrepreneurial society has been contrasted with the managed economy, which is portrayed in mechanistic terminology, for example, it “depended upon a complex and nuanced set of interventions, regulations, fine-tuning, and support” and it was based on “the large, structured, and hierarchical corporation” (Audretsch, 2009, p. 507). In summary, many entrepreneurship scholars have tended to reject mechanistic analogies in favour, as is outlined in the next sections, other metaphors.

ORGANISATIONS AS ORGANISMS

Although using the metaphor of an organism for a collective of people goes back at least to the 19th century and scholars such as Émile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer and neo-Hegelians, its use within management is commonly associated with the rise of the human relations movement in the 1920s (cf. Morgan 1980; 2006 & Barley & Kunda, 1992). The metaphor highlights that both organisations and their members have needs, organisations depend on and influence their environments and organisations have lifecycles.

Viewing organisations as organisms opens several possible roles for entrepreneurs. The most immediate role is a parent who first conceives and subsequently raises the organism. If origin is pushed back to genesis then entrepreneurs would be gods. For less religiously inclined interpreters, evolution would replace these gods. However, that becomes narratively problematic as evolution is bereft of agency (Dawkins, 1986). The metaphor reflects a different image of entrepreneurship depending on how the creator is framed. In the case of a parent, the entrepreneurial process would start with finding a partner, followed by a joyful conception, a painful birth and a process of caring, teaching and protecting. In case of a god, the narrative would allow for, looking at the variety of religious creation stories, almost any process. In the case of evolution, the process would be based on variation, selection and retention, and be path dependent (Dawkins, 1986).

The reflections of this metaphor are clearly visible in the entrepreneurship field. The relationship of an entrepreneur with an organism translates into other metaphors, such as venture creation as parenthood, or the lifecycle metaphor, which indicates that organisations need to be conceived and that young organisations are fragile and in need of protection. Terminology, such as seed funding, conception, birth, incubator and maturity alluding to this metaphor are frequently found in the literature. Furthermore, entrepreneurs talk about their ventures as “their babies” linking entrepreneurship to parenthood (Dodd, 2002). The entrepreneurs conceive a vulnerable organism that must be protected and nurtured until it has reached a certain level of maturity. Eventually the entrepreneur must let the child leave his or her care and live a life of its own.

The view of entrepreneurs as parents to ventures is well documented in entrepreneurship literature (Cardon et al. 2005). Conception and birth are also frequently alluded to in entrepreneurship literature. Even the parallel between finding a partner (dating) and entrepreneurship has been alluded to (Gartner, 1993). Viewing entrepreneurs as parents allows for agency, but choices are not always strictly rational as emotions and attachment can lead to persistence in face of evidence of futility and refusal to let the “adult” live its own life.

Although entrepreneurs have been ascribed abilities that are different in kind to other people (Coşgel, 1996), the authors have not identified any serious academic literature ascribing godlike abilities to entrepreneurs, although it has been suggested that entrepreneurs

create something from nothing (e.g. Baker & Nelson, 2005). Evolutionary thinking, in contrast, has frequently been applied to entrepreneurship studies (Aldrich & Ruef, 2006). In particular Lundmark and Westelius (forthcoming), suggest entrepreneurship play the role of mutagen changing organisational genes in the form of routines. Lundmark and Westelius (forthcoming) acknowledge that the metaphor allows limited space for rational agency. In the spectrum between conformist non-decision making and fully autonomous rational actors, they portrayed entrepreneurs as blind or myopic non-conformists.

In summary, the metaphor of organisations as organisms is established and frequently alluded to in entrepreneurship literature. Explicit metaphors anchored in the organism metaphor (parenthood and mutagen) have been explicitly explored by entrepreneurship scholars.

ORGANISATIONS AS BRAINS

The primary aspect of organisations highlighted by this metaphor is learning and information processing, which had a surge of popularity from the late 1980s (Ellström, 2011). The brain metaphor of organisations is not immediately transferable to conceptions of entrepreneurship, as the originator of brains is somewhat obscure. Arguably, the brain metaphor is related to the organism metaphor as brains are normally situated inside and are part of organisms. This conceptual overlap becomes apparent when one compares Morgan's (2006) and Cornelissen et al.'s (2005) categorisation of metaphors for organisation in organisation theory. In Cornelissen et al.'s (2005) heuristic mapping, they link many of the conceptual metaphors that Morgan (2006) relate to brains to "animate being", which would include organisms. What separates the brain metaphor from the organism metaphor in Morgan's (2006) conceptualisation is the former's association with computational networks and holograms. The metaphor also alludes to cybernetics and a sense of merging machines and organisms. Individuals (and artefacts for that matter), are seen as interconnected nodes in a network.

This metaphor portrays entrepreneurs as creators of learning and information processing networks. It allows for both the kind of rational agency associated with the machine metaphor, if the emphasis is on the computer-like aspects of the metaphor, and the bounded agency associated with the organism metaphor, if the focus is on the organic aspects of the metaphor. The entrepreneurial process is one of networking – connecting people.

Viewing entrepreneurs as part of a network, poses a big, and to some welcome, challenge for the common individualistic conceptualisation of entrepreneurs (Dodd & Aderson, 2007). Entrepreneurial networking has received much attention within the entrepreneurship literature (See Hoang & Antoncic, 2003 for a review). The study of networks prior to formal venture creation makes the fuzzy borders of organisations apparent. In fact, formally starting an organisation (i.e. registering it) does not constitute organisational founding in a sociological or management perspective, as an organisation is usually defined as a group of people working together to achieve a common goal (or something of that nature). In fact, such collaboration may emerge without an organisation being formally created or, in the instance of collaborating consultants or traders each with their own private firm, be constituted by many firms. The network metaphor therefore reconceptualises not only the individualistic image of entrepreneurs, but also the boundaries of the firm.

In summary, the brain metaphor with its focus on networks has a strong representation in the entrepreneurship field. Viewing the entrepreneur as a node in a network creates some tensions with the individualistic conceptualisation of entrepreneurs. And it makes the fuzzy boundaries of organisations apparent.

ORGANISATIONS AS CULTURES

The culture metaphor of organisations gained popularity during the 1980s (Barley & Kunda 1992, Morgan, 2006). The metaphor highlights that organisations constitute collectives that may develop “a pattern of basic assumptions [...] that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore [...] is to be taught to new members as the [...] correct way to perceive, think, and feel” (Schein, 1990, p. 111). In this sense, culture is an important aspect of organisation beyond structure and individuals. As with organisations as brains, organisations as cultures have no obvious originator. But whereas the brain metaphor is an apparent metaphor, the culture metaphor has turned into a dead metaphor (i.e. people have forgotten that it is a metaphor). Organisational culture as a concept is now used and understood without passing through the process of metaphorical unpacking and interpretation. Through a process of reification culture is treated as a (manageable) attribute of organisations. As an organisational attribute, the question of origin and originator becomes legitimate.

If organisations are cultures, then entrepreneurs would be the crafters or authors thereof. Therefore, the culture metaphor of organisations presents a view of the entrepreneur as someone who sets norms, manages organisational artefacts, and establishes basic assumptions and habits of work. The entrepreneur in this metaphor takes on a norm-setting role for the organisation. Entrepreneurship in this context becomes a process of development, often associated with normative foundations as in the fostering of beneficial, often entrepreneurial cultural practices.

Scholars of culture have emphasised that an organisational culture develops over time, and that it is thus questionable whether emerging organisations have a culture (Schein, 1990). At first glance, therefore, culture may seem like an unlikely topic for scholars of emerging organisations, but the entrepreneurs’ role in the creation of culture was highlighted already in the early days of the surge of organisational-culture studies (Schein, 1983). In this view entrepreneurs and founding teams make a lasting and significant imprint on organisational culture. The question of how entrepreneurs create, maintain and change culture remains attractive within the entrepreneurship research community (See Bryant, forthcoming, Shepherd, Patzelt, & Haynie, 2010 for recent contributions).

The notion that a culture in itself can be more or less entrepreneurial goes back at least to Max Weber’s idea of the protestant ethic. The parallel in organisations is obvious and culture has been used to explain how entrepreneurial an organisation is (Kanter, 1985; Chandler, Keller, & Lyon, 2000). However, entrepreneurs themselves are influenced by culture and therefore the shaping of culture has been described as a spiral where the mindset of entrepreneurs and culture of the organisation influence each other creating escalating spirals (Bryant, forthcoming, cf. Shepherd, Patzelt, & Haynie, 2010).

As others than founders can influence culture, the metaphor can potentially reconceptualise who counts an entrepreneur. The originators or authors of culture can be seen as institutional entrepreneurs creating or shaping culture. The concept of institutional entrepreneurs refers to a “a person who, alone or with others, is credited with helping to transform an institution: introducing new social or cultural forms/logics into the world (typically embodied in organizations)” (Aldrich, 2011 p. 1). This concept has attracted increasing interest, but also critique. For example, Aldrich (2011) argued that institutional entrepreneurship should be conceptualised as a collective process as the shaping of culture is beyond the capabilities of individuals (including entrepreneurs).

In summary, the culture metaphor has influenced entrepreneurship research through highlighting that entrepreneurs, as organisational founders, are involved in creating

organisational culture. It has been noted that cultures can be more or less conducive to entrepreneurship, both within organisations and societies and that cultures influence and are influenced by entrepreneurship.

ORGANISATIONS AS POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The metaphor of organisations as political systems highlights that people, groups and organisations have varying and sometimes conflicting interests. In this view organisations are both political systems and political actors. The roots of this metaphor goes back to Aristotle, but the study of political action within organisations became popular from the 1960s (Morgan, 2006). The metaphor brings terminology such as interests, power and conflict to the foreground (Morgan, 1980).

Subjected to the metaphor of organisations as political systems, entrepreneurs play the role of negotiators, politicians and, in their role as founders, the writers of the organisational constitution. Entrepreneurship would be a process of negotiation, bargaining and the creation of coalitions. The political system may look very different depending on the venture. It could, for example, be a democratic system among equal founders, a technocratic system where the most knowledgeable actor rules within their area of expertise, or an autocratic system where the employees follow orders. However, in all these radically different systems, the metaphor emphasises that power, conflict and negotiation are central aspects of venture development. Entrepreneurs are equipped with agency, as are other actors. Thus entrepreneurs are autonomous, but constrained by their power vis-à-vis others.

Entrepreneurship scholars acknowledge inherent differences in interests among actors with a stake in the venture-creation process. Schumpeter (1934/2008) claimed that among the entrepreneur's motives were power and independence. Such motives, Schumpeter (1934/2008, p. 93) claimed "stand nearest to consumers' satisfaction, but do not coincide with it." In this view entrepreneurs introduce new goods or provide old ones more efficiently, which would often benefit the consumer. Conflicts arising from differences in interests have also been identified and a range of conflicts have received attention, for example, conflict within families (e.g. Kellermanns, & Eddleston, 2004), investor-entrepreneur conflict (e.g. Collewaert, 2011), entrepreneur-incubator conflict (e.g. Mcadam, & Marlow, 2007), and competitor conflict (e.g. Tidstrom, 2009). However, the inherent and long recognised conflict between entrepreneurs and their employees seem to have received scant attention in the entrepreneurship literature. In general it seems that conflicts where entrepreneurs are equal or weaker parties seem to have received more attention than the cases where the entrepreneurs have the most power.

In summary, the metaphor of organisations as political systems and political actors has clear parallels in the entrepreneurship literature. Among the firm internal conflicts, entrepreneur-employee conflict has received little attention.

ORGANISATIONS AS PSYCHIC PRISONS

The metaphor of organisations as psychic prisons highlights that organisational members can get "imprisoned in or confined by the images, ideas, thoughts and actions" created and upheld by organisational practices (Morgan, 2006, p. 207). People are constrained by the social realities they have constructed for themselves, or which are created for them in organisations. Among the mechanisms supporting these prisons are collective basic assumptions and vested interests, but also the inability to relate to that which one has no tools to process (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). Due to vested interests in the status quo, established organisations may be less likely to introduce revolutionary innovations that render existing knowledge and practices

obsolete (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). The metaphor is an extension of the metaphor of Plato's cave where people could only experience the world through its reflections on the wall of the cave in which they were trapped.

The psychic prison metaphor presents an image of an entrepreneur who possess high levels of awareness and imagination by which they can break out of psychic prisons and see what others cannot. The entrepreneur is thus a rebel who breaks with orthodoxy and creates new realities. However, in time, the same entrepreneurs are blinded by the routines and boundaries of their own enterprises. This is the paradox of the psychic prison metaphor, the metaphor portrays a cyclical role of rebel and warden (in the sense of prison guard or director). Entrepreneurship requires interaction, the breaking of routines, and the creation of new ones in social contexts. Routines, however, are the antithesis of entrepreneurship and it is consequently about a process of creating its own opposite, similar to Yin and Yang. The entrepreneurs in this metaphor are equipped with autonomous agency, which is limited only by the prison which they create for themselves.

The idea that new organisations are less constrained by psychic prisons is well anchored in the entrepreneurship field. The thinking is central to the idea of the entrepreneurial society, which is a theoretical framework that has emerged over the last couple of decades (Audretsch, 2009). It is associated with a view of contemporary society based on empirical observations (e.g. the increasing importance of new business start-ups and positive attitudes among policy makers towards entrepreneurship), and a web of theoretical underpinnings. Central to the theories underpinning the entrepreneurial society is the notion of the knowledge filter, which is a societal and organisational filter between the creation and practical application of ideas and knowledge. Breaking through this filter is paramount in the entrepreneurial society (Audretsch, 2009). In the framework of the entrepreneurial society, large incumbent firms are often biased against innovations that make their previous knowledge obsolete. However, knowledge is asymmetrical, employees can therefore see opportunities where their employers do not. If employees in such situations want to pursue a perceived opportunity, they can either move to another firm or start their own firms. In this view, entrepreneurship is a force that liberates knowledge and thus facilitates commercialisation and value creation. Entrepreneurs are rebels that liberate new knowledge imprisoned in or by organisations.

The metaphor is also well aligned with the view of entrepreneurs as "anarchists and organisers" suggested by Johannisson (1987). Entrepreneurs break with orthodoxy but soon get trapped in their own routines. With the entrepreneurial process, vested interests emerge and the entrepreneur turns a defender of the status quo. This is illustrated by developments of real life entrepreneurs. For example, in 1996 Steve Jobs said "Picasso had a saying, he said – good artist copy great artist steal. And we have, you know, always been shameless about stealing great ideas." In 2010 he claimed "I'm going to destroy Android because it's a stolen product. I'm willing to go thermonuclear war on this" (see Feguson, 2012).

Instead of focusing on realisation and completion, some argue that entrepreneurship scholars would benefit from focusing on the process of becoming (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009). This indicates that once the entrepreneur has become he or she ceases to be an entrepreneur. The notion of the psychic prison is also directly applicable to the fundamental idea of entrepreneurship as opportunity recognition where entrepreneurs through their special knowledge see what others cannot (Shane, 2000).

In summary, the idea of psychic prisons is well established in the entrepreneurship literature. However, the metaphor suggests two cyclically alternating roles for entrepreneurs – rebels and wardens. The former has received much more attention than the latter.

ORGANISATIONS AS FLUX AND TRANSFORMATION

This metaphor is based on the notion of *panta rhei* (everything flows), commonly associated with Heraclitus (500BC). Organisations are viewed through the metaphor of flux and transformation, implying that organisations are in a constant process of change (Morgan, 2006). The organisation today is different to what it was yesterday. The metaphor alludes to complexity, catastrophe and chaos theory as organisations are characterised by the interaction of multiple systems that are both structured and chaotic and may jump from one stable state to another. Small random changes can create disproportionate effects through influencing bifurcation of unfolding events. However, order always arises out of the chaotic interactions. This metaphor urges organisations to move away from control and command style of coordination in favour of making organisation receptive to unplanned opportunities, which flux and transformation may present.

The entrepreneur in this metaphor is a person who can operate in a system of flux. This may imply changing shape and form in order to realise opportunities. However it can also mean showing great stability, like the rock that changes the direction of the flow of the river the entrepreneur may act as a watershed. Furthermore, entrepreneurs may instigate small changes that are amplified, as in the butterfly effect, creating enormous effects. Entrepreneurs can also be seen as catalysts of change rather than the creators of it. This metaphor opens up to radical transformation of existing organisations and therefore creates a space for intrapreneurs who instigate corporate entrepreneurship. The process of entrepreneurship in this metaphor is one of unpredictability, shooting at moving targets, seizing the moment, going with or changing the flow. Entrepreneurs are autonomous agents that are constrained by the complexity around them. They are forced to accept limited abilities to predict and control events.

The increasing use of this metaphor makes the study of entrepreneurship a central phenomenon in organisational studies as it indicates that entrepreneurship is not only associated with the origin of the organisation, but may in fact be a constant and ongoing process. It is associated with the notion that organisations never become, or should become, static (Hitt, 2000). However, in a constant flow and turbulence, planning and centralised decision-making are impossible. Instead new directions often emerge from the bottom up (Burgelman, 1983). The process is one of letting chaos reign then reigning in chaos in order to manage the constant flux (Burgelman, 2007).

This metaphor is central to the entrepreneurship field and one that entrepreneurship studies have helped establish. Morgan (2006) mentions Schumpeter's work as central contributions. In particular the rejection of equilibrium and the focus on creative destruction are central to the view of organisations as constant flux. There is a host of entrepreneurship literature emphasising the importance not only of embracing constant flux, but in creating it. In addition, although neither catastrophe theory nor chaos theory have supplied applicable mathematical descriptions of entrepreneurial processes they have been suggested as fruitful metaphors for understating entrepreneurship (Bygrave, 1989a,b). McKelvey (2004) suggested complexity science is a more suitable metaphor than Darwinian theory.

In summary, the metaphor of organisations as flux and transformation is well established in the entrepreneurship field. The metaphor is informed by entrepreneurship

studies and constitutes an area of mutual influence between entrepreneurship and organisational studies.

ORGANISATIONS AS INSTRUMENTS OF DOMINATION

The metaphor of organisations as instruments of domination is based on the observation that organisations create many undesirable, even oppressive practices. For example, they knowingly provide us with unhealthy food, pollute our environment, exploit employees and put their lives at risk, and discriminate against women and minority groups (Morgan, 2006). This metaphor has roots back to the 19th century and the writing of Karl Marx and Max Weber. The metaphor emphasises that organisation is founded on stratification, which requires some form of domination.

In this metaphor, entrepreneurs can either be freedom fighters, who take up social causes, or oppressors, whose enterprises benefit from or propagate ongoing inequalities and oppression. This metaphor depicts the entrepreneurial process as a process of domination or resistance. Like the psychic prison metaphor, the instrument of domination one allows for two opposing roles for entrepreneurs. However, unlike the psychic prison metaphor this one is not dramaturgically cyclical. That is, the freedom fighter does not necessarily turn into an oppressor once liberation is achieved. However, empirical evidence suggests that many freedom fighters do, and many revolutions are followed by a reign of terror. The central point is that the metaphor does not have an inherent dramaturgy requiring the cyclical shift from one role to the other. Entrepreneurs are allowed various levels of agency depending on how the metaphor is framed. The freedom fighters and the oppressors are tossed against each other. However, the oppressor can be depersonalised as bureaucracy or institutional forces represented by a faceless system. As such the freedom fighter is constrained by the oppressing agent, be it the system or the entrepreneur. The oppressor may likewise be constrained by the system he or she is trying to uphold.

Both roles, freedom fighter and oppressor, are found in images of entrepreneurs held by European high school teachers and students. They frequently portrayed entrepreneurs as exploiters and victims (Anderson, Dodd & Jack, 2009). Among entrepreneurship scholars, however, entrepreneurs are often portrayed as winners, sometimes as victims but rarely as oppressors. Critical entrepreneurship scholars have focused on entrepreneurship among disadvantaged groups such as women and minority groups or on liberating entrepreneurship “from economic bonds but also from association with radical scientific inventions and quantitative growth” (Johannisson 2002, p. 2), rather than focusing on how oppressive practices emerge and are enacted in new ventures. In fact, it is curious that the entrepreneurs, who are generally portrayed as people who act forcefully and purposefully, are accredited with the value creating outcomes of their ventures, but seldom held to account for the reproduction of injustice and the exploitation of labour that frequently take place in organisations. Rather than scrutinising entrepreneurial processes to reveal how oppressive practices emerge, research focuses on how social entrepreneurs help disadvantaged communities (Mair, & Martí, 2006) – the entrepreneur is always part of the solution.

This skewed attribution may be related to entrepreneurs often having good intentions, but the outcomes of their ventures frequently falling short of those intentions (Lundmark & Westelius, 2012). The assumption is that failed ventures are learning opportunities and that “time will weed out the failures” (Sarasvathy, 2001, p. 259). However, the “weeding out” is based on what is viable not on what is just, ethical or desirable (Lundmark & Westelius, forthcoming). The result is that value creation and beauty are attributed entrepreneurial

creations; oppression and injustice are attributed to psychic prisons and societal structures for which the entrepreneur cannot be held accountable.

This is not to say that the field is bereft of any mention of negative outcomes of entrepreneurship. There is an emerging and growing research focus on negative effects of entrepreneurship (Wright & Zahra, 2011). And already by the early 20th century Schumpeter (1934/2008, p. 93) noted that entrepreneurship often is driven by a will to “prove oneself superior to others” and by the will to create the closest thing to medieval lordship the capitalist system allows. The point is that critical scholars have focused much more on entrepreneurs as, outsiders and victims than as oppressors. The field maintains a view of entrepreneurship that is biased against the detection of domination and oppression. Entrepreneurship serves as “the friendly face of capitalism” (Nicholson & Anderson, 2005, p. 154) and is portrayed even by critical entrepreneurship scholars as “nothing less than beauty” (Steyaert and Katz, 2004, p. 194).

In summary, the domination metaphor is recognised in entrepreneurship studies but the field has focused much more on entrepreneurs as victims and outsiders than as oppressors.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Drawing on eight established metaphors of organisation (Morgan, 2006), we examined what space these metaphors allow for entrepreneurial agency and entrepreneurship. In doing so, we illustrate that conceptualisations of organisations are imbued with significant implications that limit, extend and delineate the role and agency of the entrepreneur as well as the form and process of entrepreneurship. Although the conceptualisation of organisations appears at first glance to be innocuous and unrelated to the conceptualisation of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, this paper demonstrates that organisational metaphors present wide possibilities and limitations to the exercise, imagination and practice of entrepreneurship. The paper thus offers a way to build bridges between the literatures of organisation studies and entrepreneurship, highlighting how theorisation in the former affects the available choices and possibilities in the latter.

Our paper renders visible what often remains as implicit: the assumptions underpinning established views of organisations and their implications for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. Table 1 presents the eight metaphors presented by Morgan (2006) and a summary of their implications for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship.

Table 1 Metaphors for organisation and their reflexions of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship

| Metaphor for organisation | Reflections of entrepreneur | Reflections of entrepreneurship |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Machine | Inventors or engineers | Machine building |
| Organism | Parents, gods and mutagens | Raising/protecting until maturity, creating mutations |
| Brain | Connectors, Networker | Connecting, creating a network |
| Culture | Authors, icons, symbols | Imprinting |
| Political systems | Politicians | Writing a constitution, negotiation and the creation of coalitions |
| Psychic prisons | Rebels or wardens | Opportunity recognition, breaking out of, and creating prisons |
| Flux and transformation | Intrapreneurs, butterflies and catalysts | Opportunity realisation or seizing, shooting at a moving target, unpredictable outcomes, constant disequilibrium |
| Instruments of domination | Oppressors and freedom fighters | Domineering or resisting |

As researchers are not always aware of the assumptions that underlie their models (Morgan, 1980), purposefully applying metaphors can be a way of challenging and making underlying assumptions explicit. Reflecting on the interplay between organisational metaphors and the domain of entrepreneurship, we call for more thoughtful and purposeful use of metaphors in order to make sense of and contextualise entrepreneurship. The metaphors elaborated on by Morgan (2006) are by no means exhaustive. Researchers may apply other metaphors or combine metaphors in their conceptualisation of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship and organisations. Nevertheless, these metaphors of organisation are by now well established and have stood the test of time. This indicates that they highlight aspects of organisations that are not salient without the purposeful application of the metaphors. These metaphors have been proven useful for organisational managers and we believe that the images of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship the metaphors reveal are useful tools for critically reflecting on the process of entrepreneurship for both researchers and practitioners.

Certain metaphors may be more useful than others and this may in turn depend on the actual context. For example, a parenting metaphor is useful for making sense of some of the feelings entrepreneurs experience in venture creation (Cardon et al. 2005). A mutagen metaphor may be useful when analysing the effects of entrepreneurship in society (Lundmark & Westelius, forthcoming). The network metaphor highlights that entrepreneurship is a collective phenomenon and that knowledge and learning is not only applicable to individuals but also to networks of people and organisations. The imprinting metaphor and the breaking out of and creating psychic prisons metaphor highlight that entrepreneurs actively create realities and that they set norms and routines that ultimately constrain their own and others' worldviews. The political metaphor emphasises that entrepreneurship always involves negotiation between different interests and although the entrepreneurs have some interests in common with both customers and employees these interests are not perfectly aligned. The political metaphor also highlights the importance of a "constitution" that outlines how conflicts can and should be resolved. The view of organisations as machines is in stark contrast to the view of organisations as constant flux. Nevertheless, despite consensus on increasing turbulence, some contexts may allow for calculation and planning. The metaphor of organisations as instruments of domination creates awareness of the consequences of stratification inherent in entrepreneurial processes. The central argument is that consciously applying different metaphors facilitate the discovery of what assumptions are actually made as well as what assumptions that may be warranted.

For us as researchers, engaging in disciplined imagination helped us discover a range of roles for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. It also identified spaces conceivable, but insufficiently explored in the entrepreneurship literature. In particular the entrepreneurship literature is much more focused on how entrepreneurs break out of psychic prisons than how they create them. Entrepreneurship research has also focused more on the conflicts where entrepreneurs are equal or weaker parties than where they are the dominant part; and the mechanisms by which entrepreneurs propagate discriminatory or oppressive practices have received scant attention, instead critical entrepreneurship scholars focus on how certain groups of entrepreneurs are underrepresented and discriminated against.

We hope that this paper will facilitate reflection on the space for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship that we as researchers and practitioners construct by our implicit metaphors and explicit models. Research, like entrepreneurship, is a process of breaking out of psychic prisons, but also of inevitably creating new ones.

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