ENTREPRENEURS MAY HAVE MANY FACES

“Yes, he has set up his own business”

“So he is an entrepreneur?”

“He was...”

“...????...”

“He is now a hybrid and social one ...”

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Many faces, many opinions, many views

Every day we meet entrepreneurs; when we visit the deli at the corner, order a taxi, have a cup of tea in the bar on the other side of the street or go to a hairdresser. We cannot escape from them: all we use, products or services, have been made by businesses set up by entrepreneurs. They are everywhere and they have many faces. And there are many opinions about entrepreneurship. And when it comes to specific groups of entrepreneurs there are even more differences of opinions. Micro entrepreneurs, who are they? Why do we talk about urban entrepreneurs? What is migrant entrepreneurship? What do we mean when we speak about the social entrepreneur? And start-up entrepreneurship, how does one define that? We do not really have those questions answered easily.

Policymakers, services providers and academics like to categorise issues, topics and people, so also entrepreneurs. We too tried to systematize and document thinking about entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship and enterprising people. As a start we opened a blog *“ The Many Faces of Entrepreneurs”*. Various professionals and practitioners shared their ideas and opinions on the blog already.. In this magazine we have compiled a number of these posts that we consider worth sharing with a wider audience. It may make you look in a different way at entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship nowadays.

There is still a lot to learn from others especially from experiences in other countries with the promotion and development of self- employment and small and micro enterprises in developing countries. In 2015 we requested students from eleven different countries attending a Summer School on Entrepreneurship at The Hague University of Applied Sciences to tell us how they look at self employed people and micro or small entrepreneurs. But Malcolm Harper challenges us to ask ourselves whether a micro entrepreneur really is what we think (s)he is.

Marc van Ee and Ronald Visser have a special New Year’s wish: look at entrepreneurship and the way it can be promoted the coming years! And entrepreneurship is nearby in a society. Arco Kats invites us to follow our dream and Renée Veldman-Tentori takes us back to family life and shares her experiences as entrepreneurial parent.

In our modern, diverse society, social problems ask for new solutions and migration cannot be overlooked.At the Bottom of the Pyramid entrepreneurs are offered new opportunities as argued by Nicolas Chevalier. Erwin Sengers thinks that all entrepreneurs are conscious about society , if not the continuity of their businesses would be at stake. Migrant entrepreneurs can play a special role in peace making processes in fragile states as argued by Richard Yeboah. But Iwan Zunder challenges that again: the Diaspora entrepreneur does not exist!

New forms of enterprising are emerging whereby people seem to opt more for part-time self employment in combination with wage employment or social welfare benefits. Even academics can be an entrepreneur as Meine Pieter van Dijk has discovered. Henk van den Heuvel and Klaas Molenaar report that the hybrid entrepreneur is claiming his/ her place in society as well. New forms of entrepreneurship and new attitudes brings Benoît Granger to conclude that entrepreneurs will not need banks anymore, and will make use of the opportunities that the crowdfunding and peer2peer platforms offer.

Society needs entrepreneurs. But can people be trained to become entrepreneur? A question the Inge Heetvelt tries to answer, but as all others she leaves us with more questions than answers.

This magazine will hopefully challenge the reader to question his/ her own thinking and the way we are used to look at entrepreneurship. There are indeed many faces as the students at THUAS show us as well.

Questioning one’s own ideas and beliefs may be the result of reading the various contributions. What do you think is entrepreneurship? Where do you see entrepreneurial initiatives? How do you think it can be stimulated, promoted? And can it be trained? From which perspective are you looking at entrepreneurship? This magazine may lead to some confusion: too many faces? But confusion is the basis of understanding. Look around you and ask yourself which faces you see, and ask then again whether that is a true picture of reality?

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