**The 11th International Conference in Critical Management Studies**

**PRECARIOUS PRESENTS, OPEN FUTURES**

**Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, UK**

**27th – 29th June 2019**

**STREAM:**

**Critical Entrepreneurship Studies: Destabilizing and Transgressing Mainstream Entrepreneurship**

**Conveners:**

Caroline Essers (Radboud University, NL)

Patricia Lewis (University of Kent, UK)

Sally Jones (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK)

María Villares-Varela (University of Southampton, UK)

Monder Ram (Aston University, UK)

Critical Entrepreneurship Studies (CES) questions hegemonic notions of entrepreneurship as epistemology and practice. This critical shift requires not only a radical re-imagining of entrepreneurship theory and research but also re-imagining entrepreneurship from diverse communities and locations that so far have been unable to contribute to these dialogues. This stream proposal aims at triggering revolutionary breakthroughs in our ontological, epistemological and methodological repository in critical entrepreneurship studies.

CES forms an interdisciplinary, multi-perspective and rather new stream of research geared towards destabilizing and transgressing mainstream entrepreneurship study‘s habitual tropes: economic and management theory, atomistic individualism, male-dominated heroism or functionalism, to name but a few. CES, a term coined by Calas, Smircich and Bourne in 2009, is a heterodoxy (in the etymological sense of being ‘outside of the mainstream’) based on a felicitous scepticism against interpretations which unreflexively conceive of entrepreneurship as a good thing, and a good thing only. A healthy dose of heterodoxy is pertinent given that entrepreneurship as a field of study uncritically endows entrepreneurship with largely redemptive qualities wherefore it becomes not only uncontroversial but properly sacrosanct. Hailed for its proclivity to innovate and to generate wealth through a process of creative destruction, prevailing understandings of entrepreneurship treat its effects as unproblematic. Accordingly, the study of entrepreneurship has become part of a mythical project that delineates a world without contradictions (Barthes, 1972).

Trying to unveil and move beyond the rose-tinted view of entrepreneurship, it is possible to distinguish two general orientations among CES. The first orientation largely attends to the ‘dark side’ of entrepreneurship, the second fathoms entrepreneurship’s social and emancipatory potential. Key amongst the ‘dark side’ orientation has been the work of Foucault (2008) which provides a conceptual framework for understanding how discourse renders individuals governable out of their own volition by expanding norms and practices from the realm of entrepreneurship to individuals, groups and organizations which might not in the first place be entrepreneurial (du Gay, 2004). Of similar importance for CES has been the work of Lacan which has introduced the view of entrepreneurship forming a ‘sublime object’ (Jones & Spicer, 2009). Influential contributions come from feminist theorizing which have disclosed the gendered nature of entrepreneurship by showing how sex-based differences are perpetually enacted in academic articles, media reports and entrepreneurial practice, thus essentially contributing to women’s subordination (Ahl, 2006). Feminist research has also reintroduced a sense of agency back into the gendered understanding of enterprise by pinpointing how women variously resist male-dominated discourse through complex struggles over meaning (Essers & Benschop, 2007). More recently, postcolonial feminist perspectives have shown how westernized images of ‘Otherness’ impact on the legitimacy and agency of Muslim female entrepreneurs (Essers & Tedmanson, 2014).

Summarising, the persistence of the Critical Entrepreneurship Studies stream (since 2009) at CMS and most relevant the inequalities experienced currently around the world by various communities tells the urgent need for critical thinking on entrepreneurship. Hence and in line with the *11th Critical Management Studies*conference’s aims, we believe this stream may provide not only a voice but the radical alternatives required to re-shape the meaning of entrepreneurship. To this end, we ask the following bold questions: “Why should we use the concept of entrepreneurship?” and “Who benefits from its use and who is left out?” and “How do we re-imagine entrepreneurship?”

We welcome submissions including but not limited to:

* Radical papers that try to ‘renounce’, transgress, challenge and/or re-imagine the idea of entrepreneurship – even to realize its usefulness.
* Contributions promoting ideas that are not configured within Western dominant ontologies and epistemologies but from other regions and cultures that challenge the perpetuation of mainstream entrepreneurship.
* Studies that use various theoretical approaches, including but not limited to post-colonial, critical race theory, class-based analysis, intersectionality, positionality, and feminist perspectives and critiques.
* Contributions that challenge current methodological paradigms to go beyond methodological transnationalism. We also encourage contributions using alternative designs, such as visual methods, walking interviews, diary methods, auto-ethnographies, emancipatory action research, etc.
* Accounts that do not ‘frame’ entrepreneurship under our traditional academic language but add value through other meaningful communicative sources, such as, short films, photography, poetry, and short stories.

**Submitting your abstract**

Please submit a 500 word abstract (excluding references, one page, Word document NOT PDF, single spaced, no header, footers or track changes) together with your contact information to Dr Caroline Essers ([c.essers@fm.ru.nl](mailto:c.essers@fm.ru.nl)). The deadline for submission of abstracts is January 31st 2019, and we will notify you of our decision by the end of February.

**Key dates**

**31st January 2019**-Abstract submission deadline.

**28th February 2019-** Decision for acceptance will be communicated to the authors.

**REFERENCES**

Ahl, H. (2006). Why research on women entrepreneurs needs new directions. *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice.* 30(5): 595-621.

Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies*. London: Paladin.

Calás, M., Smircich, L. and Bourne, K. (2009). *The Academy of Management Review,* 34(3): 552-569

DuGay, P. (2004). Against ‘Enterprise’ (but not against ‘enterprise’, for that would make no sense). *Organization*, 11(1): 37-57.

Essers, C. & Benschop, Y. (2007). Enterprising identities: Female entrepreneurs of Moroccan or Turkish origin in the Netherlands. *Organization Studies*, 28(1): 49-69.

Essers, C., & Tedmanson, D. (2014). "Upsetting ‘others’ in the Netherlands: narratives of Muslim Turkish migrant businesswomen at the crossroads of ethnicity, gender and religion".

*Gender, Work and Organization*, 21(4): 353-367.

Foucault, M. (2008), The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-79. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jones, C. & Spicer, A. (2009). *Unmasking the Entrepreneur.* Cheltenham:Edward Elgar.