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Bourdieuian Approaches to the Geography of Entrepreneurial Cultures
Culture has emerged as an important concept within the entrepreneurship literature to help explain differences in in the nature of the entrepreneurship process observed between regions, industries and socio-cultural groups. Despite voluminous research on the topic, theories about how culture affects the entrepreneurship process remain underdeveloped. Without a framework to connect culture with everyday entrepreneurial practices and strategies, it is difficult to critically compare the role of culture between multiple contexts. Such a framework is necessary when examining the influence of local cultures on entrepreneurship, given the diverse ways they can influence economic activities. This paper introduces a Bourdieuian perspective on entrepreneurial culture that can be used to explain how particular entrepreneurial cultures emerge within regions, influence the local entrepreneurship process, and evolve in the face of internal and external developments. Building on existing work on Bourdieu and entrepreneurship, this paper argues that entrepreneurship research must carefully consider how the concept of culture is used if it is to be a useful factor in explaining the heterogeneous geography of entrepreneurship we observe in the modern economy.
Keywords: entrepreneurship, culture, geography, regional development, Bourdieu

1: Introduction

Culture is critical to the study of entrepreneurship. Far from being a solitary economic activity, entrepreneurship is a social endeavor embedded in multiple cultural and economic contexts. This is particularly true of the geography of entrepreneurship, where researchers have long agreed that variations in the nature of entrepreneurship between regions or nations are the result of complex interactions between economic and social institutions, histories, and cultures (Audretsch, 2011). While culture is generally accepted as a useful concept within entrepreneurship research, it remains under-theorized. It is difficult to understand the processes through which culture affects the entrepreneurship process (the course of the entrepreneurship phenomenon from idea generation, firm formation, growth, to final exit) without a suitable theoretical framework. This results in either overly generalized views of culture based on simplistic proxies or descriptive case studies of particular cultures that provide few generalizable findings. As a result, it is difficult for researchers to identify the salient attributes of a culture that affects entrepreneurship as well as to describe how this influence occurs. There is a need for a framework which can help explain both how these cultures affect economic practices as well as their origin and evolution.

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The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu offers such a framework. This article discusses how Bourdieuian approaches can help understand the influence local entrepreneurial cultures on the practices entrepreneurs employ as they start and grow their firms. Local entrepreneurial culture refers to the collective worldviews common to a place that affects how the act of entrepreneurship is understood and experienced. Drawing on recent work on Bourdieuian perspectives on entrepreneurship (de Clerq and Voronov, 2009a; de Clerq and Voronov, 2009b; de Clerq and Voronov, 2009c; Terjesen and Elam, 2009; Karataş-Özkan and Chell, 2010; de Clerq and Hoing, 2011; de Clerq and Voronov, 2011; Spigel, 2013), this article argues that Bourdieu's sociology of practice is a useful way to understand the processes through which culture affects the entrepreneurship process. A Bourdieuian approach sees entrepreneurial practices as emerging how actors' understand the social rules surrounding them, particularly the 'values' of the different forms of capitals (economic, cultural, or social) they posses and which they want to acquire. This paper builds upon existing Bourdieuian approaches to entrepreneurship by placing it within a geographic context and developing a conceptual model to explain the emergence, evolution and influence of entrepreneurial cultures within regions.

The following section provides an overview of the use of culture in the study of entrepreneurial geographies and discusses some of the problems that result from the lack of a rigorous theory connecting culture and entrepreneurial practices. Section three introduces the overarching themes of Bourdieu's work and recent research that has applied this work to the study of entrepreneurship. Section four develops on this work to place culture within a Bourdieuian framework and discusses how this new understanding can be used to understand how regionally based cultures emerge and influence the entrepreneurship process in particular communities. The fifth section concludes by discussing the usefulness of this perspective and how it can be operationalized in future research.

2: Entrepreneurial Culture and Geography

2.1: Culture and Entrepreneurship

An examination of the role of culture in the entrepreneurship process begins with a rejection of the Schumpeterian view of the entrepreneur as a "heroic economic superman" who creates a firm in isolation (Schumpeter 1934 p. 85). Instead, entrepreneurship is both an economic and social process embedded in complex networks of resources, power relations, and institutions (Nijkamp, 2003). Culture is one of many social factors influencing the entrepreneurship process. Culture is defined here as the collective ways of understanding the world common to a group of people, such as an ethnic group, employees in the same organization, or those living in the same region or nation. From this perspective, entrepreneurial cultures are those outlooks that shape the actions of actors connected with the entrepreneurial phenomenon, including the entrepreneur herself as well as other entrepreneurial actors such as investors, advisors, employees and customers. While there is always a great deal of difference within the worldviews of a community, a cohesive culture is defined by exhibiting less overall variation within the community than between communities.

Beginning with Weber's (1930) work on the Protestant Ethic, there has been a sustained research focus on the relationship between cultural attributes and entrepreneurial ability and desire. This body of work has examined how both external labor-market discrimination and internal cultural preferences contribute to patterns of entrepreneurial practices within ethnic communities, such as the use of co-ethnic or family labor (Sanders and Nee, 1996) or particular financing choices (Bates, 1997). However, this research been criticized for over-homogenizing ethnic groups, such as when researchers assign an entrepreneur the label of 'Chinese' when identify as Hakka (Base and Altinay, 2002) or because it assumes the existence of trust and social capital within an ethnic community where

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none exists (Hsu and Saxenian, 2000).

The importance of culture is well understood in spite of these issues. Davidsson and Wiklund argue that cultural differences can be "a powerful determinate of regional or national variation in the 'supply' of entrepreneurship" (1997 p. 2). However, researchers are still grappling with how to conceptually understand and empirically study its role. This is not surprising: definitions range from particular forms of art, to certain industries like fashion or music as well as ethnicity, race, or class. The proliferation of meanings makes it difficult for researchers to communicate effectively with each other, leading to more confusion in understanding how culture affects economic activities (Castree, 2004).

There are two broad approaches to studying the relationship between culture and entrepreneurship. The first is quantitative analysis of cultural attributes and their association with different levels of entrepreneurial activity. This steam of work relies on the quantification of culture through surveys in order to identify a group's salient cultural attributes and provided hypotheses about how these attributes might either encourage or discourage entrepreneurial activities. However, such approaches are difficult to operationalize, with complex cultural attributes frequently modeled through simple proxies (for example Chrisman et al., 2002 or Brons, 2006). This has the unintended consequence of ignoring regional variations of cultural attributes across heterogeneous populations and reducing the complicated interplay of multiple overlapping cultural values into membership in an ethnic group, region, or nation.

In light of such challenges, a second approach has emerged that investigates the social and discursive aspects of entrepreneurship. As Steyaert and Katz (2004 p. 186) argue, "entrepreneurship, like everything else people 'know', is a socially constructed reality or concept," meaning that researchers must critically examine how the social, cultural, and

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political milieux in which entrepreneurship takes place constructs the entrepreneurship process. These views of entrepreneurship can be broadly termed a 'contextual approach,' because it seeks to study the influence of social and cultural contexts in the entrepreneurship process. This builds on earlier work on the role of context within firms as well as shows the increasing influence of other disciplines such as geography, sociology and psychology in the domain of entrepreneurship research (Licht and Siegel 2006). While previous research has "….underappreciated [or] controlled away" context, a new wave of work has sought to highlight the role of social context within what have previously been seen as solely economic activities (Welter, 2011 p. 173–174). Context surrounds economic phenomenon, providing a source of variation and difference that cannot necessarily be detected through quantitative means (Johns, 2001).

2.2: Entrepreneurial Geographies and Environments

Culture plays an important role in explaining the geography of entrepreneurial activities. While economic factors like GDP growth, unemployment, and human capital explain a great deal of the variation in economic activity between regions, social and cultural factors remain important source of differentiation (Davidsson and Wiklund, 1997). Given the role of entrepreneurship in generating resilient regional economies, research on the local cultural factors that encourage or discourage the creation of innovative startups has become a point of paramount importance (Fritsch and Schindele, 2011). The relational connections between local cultures and entrepreneurship are complex and difficult to untangle, but difficult to ignore. Audretsch et al. (2011 p. 380) argue that: "the fortunes of regions and entrepreneurs are intertwined: regional endowments provide opportunity and resources for entrepreneurs, while entrepreneurs simultaneously shape the local environment." As the work of Saxenian (1994) and Feldman (2001) among others show, understanding how the cultural

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forces within a region affect the entrepreneurship process is necessary in understanding those regions' economic history and future economic potential.

This work also suggests that the region, rather than the nation, is the most appropriate scale to examine the interactions between culture and entrepreneurship. Within this literature, 'regional' or 'local' is frequently defined as a metropolitan area: a contiguous labourshed with a cohesive economy. Entrepreneurs largely draw on local resources as they start and grow thing firm, be it venture capital (Sorenson and Stewart, 2001), mentorship (Lafuente et al., 2007), or knowledge and support obtained through their social networks (Westlund and Bolton, 2003). Therefore, the provision of all of these resources will be affected by local cultural norms, such as how 'respectable' entrepreneurship is compared to traditional employment or the social consequences of business failure (Vaillant and Lafuente, 2007). Thus, entrepreneurial practices, process, and aspirations "are shaped by regionally distinctive opportunity costs, and are also formed relative to established regional norms." (Aoyama, 2009 p. 507)

Malecki's work (1997; 2009) on entrepreneurial environments is a useful way to conceptualize the role of culture within regions. The right combination of formal and informal institutions, networks, and economic structures create what Malecki (2009) describes as local entrepreneurial environments (known elsewhere as ecosystems). These beneficial institutional, economic, and historical forces combine to create a virtuous cycle that supports and strengthens entrepreneurial endeavors. Part of this environment is made up of formal institutions such as government policies and networks of support firms such as specialized lawyers and financiers (Kenney and Patton, 2005) along with informal institutions such as networks of role models and advisors. While culture is only one of many social forces at play within a region, it underlies other formal and informal institutions,

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helping to encourage actors to engage in or support entrepreneurial endeavors.

Despite culture's importance to entrepreneurial environments, its role is not fully understood. Granovetter's (1985) theory of embeddedness has been a popular way to explain how the cultural forces surrounding actors affect them. Here, the choices actors can make are constrained by the institutions and networks they are embedded in due to the threat of sanction or expulsion. However, this does little to explain the processes connecting culture and action nor how actors perceive the cultural and institutional environment in which they are embedded. As James (2007 p. 395) argues:

> ...while 'cultural embeddedness' has quickly become established as a conceptual lynchpin of the regional development literature, our understanding of the causal mechanisms and everyday practices through which spatially variable sets of socio-cultural conventions, norms, attitudes, values and beliefs shape and condition firms' economic performance remains under-specified.

This criticism is more than a conceptual quibble. Without a way to explain how and why entrepreneurial actors are affected by the cultures that surround them, we risk using culture as an all-encompassing, deterministic force used to account for otherwise unexplained variations. That is, we cannot say that an actor desires to build a fast-growing firm because he is in a region known for its entrepreneurship or because he is a member of an ethnic group with high rates of entrepreneurial activity. To do so removes all individual agency from the analysis and over-simplifies complex cultural outlooks to the point of absurdity. Rather, we should seek to explain why a particular set of entrepreneurial practices makes sense given the cultural and social contexts in which they occur. We must rigorously specify both how to understand culture as well as the causal mechanisms through which it influences economic and social actions. These mechanisms should specify not only how cultural structures and outlooks affect actors, but also how feedback from those actors' practices reciprocally affects culture itself.

Research on entrepreneurial cultures suffers from a lack of a conceptual framework to connect actors' practices with larger social influences. Without a strong theoretical grounding it is impossible to specify how culture matters. At the heart of this issue is the question of structure versus agency: how much influence do social and economic structures have on the choices humans make versus their own free will? Are economic and social structures or individual choices and agency more important in producing certain economic outcomes? The answer, as Martin and Sunley (2003) argue, is often a very unsatisfying 'both.' The challenge is to develop a framework that can balance structural and individualistic explanations for entrepreneurial behaviour while still allowing for a rigorous examination of the elements affecting both social structure and human agency.

3: Bourdieu and Culture

The work of Pierre Bourdieu offers such a framework. A Bourdieuian analysis examines practices: the actions performed by actors in pursuit of their goals. In the context of entrepreneurship, practices are the material actions entrepreneurs and other associated actors carry out as they start, grow and eventually leave the firm. These include daily, mundane activities such as manners of dress and interaction as well as long-term strategic decisions such as the creation of a business plan, taking on external capital or entering new markets. Practices are not determined by social structures like culture; rather they are carried out within a social context that makes certain actions seem more sensible (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). To understand the emergence of practices, Bourdieu's work employs three main conceptual tools: field, habitus, and capital.

Practices take place within fields, which Bourdieu (1977) defined as historically produced social spaces of rules, traditions and power relations. Fields represent the 'rules of the game' that participants implicitly agree to follow; social interaction is impossible without

this agreement. Many of a field's rules are so embedded in everyday life that they become invisible. Such rules and traditions are termed *doxa* because they are not only unquestioned by those who follow them, they appear to be so natural and unremarkable that they are unquestionable. However, fields are not simple lists of what is allowed or banned. They are spaces for strategic decision-making in which an infinite variety of practices can play out (Bourdieu, 1990).

While fields may have real and objective rules and structures, actors do not understand them identically. Rather, actors interpret the field through a set of internalized intentions and dispositions, referred to as the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). Through their habitus, actors generate an understanding of what the rules of the field, they and develop an implicit knowledge of how those rules apply to them given their status or position within the field. The habitus is best understood as the internalization of the rules, structures, and hierarchies of a field as well as a simultaneous knowledge of one's position within the field (Swartz, 1997). These understandings help actors determine not only what their goals are as well as the practices they will use to achieve them.

The relationship between field and habitus provides a way to understand practices without reverting to deterministic structural explanations or individualistic rational-actor approaches. While fields have objective rules, actors understand those rules in different ways and can exploit indeterminacies within those rules by experimenting with new practices (Bourdieu, 1989). Through their habitus, actors understand the rules of a field as well as how those rules apply to them. Based on this knowledge, actors may choose to closely follow the rules of the field by imitating the practices they observe, try to invent new practices that they think will be successful within the field, or violate the rules of the field. Breaching the rules of the field may be a result of not knowing about those rules or it may be a conscious choice based on the belief that the rewards of such a violation outweigh the possible sanctions. The

field does not ordain that actors select certain practices in response to a given situation, but rather it creates a context for habitus-informed practices to play out.

The position and power of actors within a field is determined by their stocks of capital. Bourdieu (1986) argued that capital takes many forms: its traditional economic form, social capital (the value of resources accessible through one's social network), cultural capital (knowledge of particular social rules and norms), symbolic capital (the respect accorded to different professions) and many others. The value of these forms of capital depends on the nature and structure of the field. For technology entrepreneurs, technical skills (human capital) are only valuable if they have the savings and investments (economic capital) and ability to sell their vision to customers and investors (cultural capital), which is helped by previous entrepreneurial successes or degrees from particular universities (symbolic capital).

Power is the ability to control the value of different forms of capital in a field. Established players will use the resources they control to ensure the continued value of the forms of capital they posses while those without these valuable forms of capital will try to influence the field to the advantage of the forms of capital they do control. Within established industries, prominent firms use their economic capital as well as their reputational capital (brand name and historical trust) to maintain their position and power while entrepreneurs try to disrupt the value of these capitals through their own social and technological capital (new innovations or strategies). If they are successful, the entrepreneurs have the ability to create new power hierarchies within the field in order to accumulate economic, social and symbolic capital to solidify their position.

Actors choose the practices they think will increase their stocks of the capitals that they believe are valuable and which will therefore raise their social position within the field. These practices are strategic and, within the context of the field, rational. Critically, the definition of 'rational' shifts between fields depending on their individual rules and the

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values of the different capitals. Practices are performed because actors believe that they are the best choice given the present situation, not because tradition or cultural compel them. For Bourdieu, an actor is "a virtuoso with a perfect command of his 'art of living' [who] can play on all resources inherent in the ambiguities and uncertainties of behavior and situation in order to produce the actions appropriate to each case." (Bourdieu, 1977 p. 8)

What scholars call culture is better understood as the dominant understandings of a particular field that emerge within a group or region. Even if an individual actor does not understand these cultural views (for instance, if they are a new migrant to a region), they are affected by the field because successful interaction with others requires their adherence to the field-specific norms and rules. While entrepreneurs may try to purposefully break these rules in order to open up new market niches, too much deviation from accepted cultural norms will make it difficult for them to get the resources they require to start and grow their firm. This adherence might only emerge after a period of failed social interactions due to misunderstandings of the rules, but it must occur eventually. Culture then is not a disembodied force but rather the way in which actors understand of the social world around them and which helps create a context in which different types of practices appear more sensible or rational.

4: Bourdieuian Approaches to Regional Entrepreneurial Cultures

4.1: Bourdieuian Approaches to Entrepreneurship

There is a bourgeoning interest in the application of Bourdieuian analysis to the study of entrepreneurship. This is related to a larger movement towards the study of social context amongst managements scholars and builds on previous work integrating Bourdieu into organizational and management studies (e.g. Gorton, 2000; Emir Bayer and Johnson, 2008; Swartz, 2008; Vaughanm 2008). This literature has two major themes: a practice-based approach (Terjesen and Elam, 2009) and an interest in how legitimacy is constructed within

fields (Elam, 2008; de Clercq and Voronov, 2009a; de Clerq and Voronov, 2011; de Clerq and Hoing, 2011). The practice-based approach draws on an increasing awareness that entrepreneurs' decisions are embedded in larger social contexts (Licht and Siegel, 2006). Instead of a normative focus on what entrepreneurs should do given a certain set of economic conditions, a practice approach seeks to understand why entrepreneurs employ particular practices and how these practices emerge from the their habitus.

The second stream of Bourdieuian research examines how entrepreneurial legitimacy is constructed within fields and how entrepreneurs employ specific practices to appear legitimate in order to access the resources they need. To access the resources they need, entrepreneurs must appear legitimate to investors and other actors. This legitimacy comes through the performance of certain practices, such as creating a business plan or how they dress and present their ideas (de Clerq and Voronov, 2009a). The ability to choose the right practices depends on an entrepreneur's knowledge of the field. Even though these practices may be so common as to be unspoken, entrepreneurs need a habitus attuned to the particularities of the field in order to be able to successfully them (de Clerq and Voronov, 2009c). Entrepreneurs must adhere to these unwritten rules about legitimacy while simultaneously signal their independence by violating some of them (de Clerq and Voronov, 2009b). This requires them to "...artfully navigate the tensions among the attributes of their potentially novel activities, the dominant field arrangements and broader field-level templates of change." (de Clerq and Voronov, 2009c, p. 813) However, this work has not yet considered the development and evolution of entrepreneurial fields or their material geography. As a result, it is difficult to use Bourdieuian approaches to entrepreneurship as part of larger empirical projects that examine the causes and consequences of entrepreneurial practices.

Power within entrepreneurial fields can be seen as the ability to define the practices that are seen as legitimate forms of entrepreneurship and therefore deserving of support. This power comes not just from control of economic capital but also through the symbolic capital of being associated with previous successful entrepreneurial endeavors, either as the founder, an early investor or an advisor. These are not strict rules but rather a set of dispositions, outlooks and miens that through the structures of the field signal entrepreneurial legitimacy (de Clercq and Hoing, 2011).

The rules of the field, and how entrepreneurs and other actors understand these rules, affect the practices at all stages of a startup's lifecycle. An entrepreneur's willingness to leave the traditional labour market to start a firm, and the willingness of her friends and family to support this decision, depends on how the symbolic capital of creating a startup is valued compared with the economic capital of waged work. Similarly, the inclination to embrace the risks of fast growth catalyzed by angel or venture investment is not a rational economic calculation but instead depends on how these risks are normalized within the field; if the loss of control associated with taking on outside investors is outweighed by the symbolic and economic capital of their investment. Both the large strategic decisions and mundane daily practices of entrepreneurs are made within the context of their field and the cultural outlooks it produces.

4.2: Relational Geographies of Fields

Bourdieu's field-based framework provides a way to understand the relationship between culture and entrepreneurship. Collective understandings of a field produce a culture, which in turn becomes the context surrounding entrepreneurs' choice of practices. Such cultures do not cause practices to occur. Instead, they provide in an environment in which certain types of practices make sense. Understanding how norms of 'common-sense' practices emerge involves the complex interplay of a variety of fields operating at several

different geographic scales. How entrepreneurial actors choose their practices relative to multiple fields is key to understanding the development of unique, local entrepreneurial cultures. We can envision a series of fields influencing the practices of entrepreneurial actors. First, the local field is the rules, structures and positions tied to a particular place or region. This field is of paramount importance because entrepreneurs draw most of their resources from their local community, meaning that many of the actors involved in the creation and growth of a small firm are based in this field. But there are also non-local fields which can affect the entrepreneurship process: industrial fields represent the rules, norms and social structures of particular industrial sectors such as internet technologies, banking or publishing; national fields which are the economic, social and politics rules of specific countries; and ethnic fields or the social norms of ethnic, religious or cultural groups. These non-local fields may exert influence in a region due to the presence of a cohesive ethnic group or a major firm or industry whose presence gives it the power to influence the value of forms of capital and the types of practices seen as normal.

The rules and norms of local fields have an outsized influence on the entrepreneurship process because most of the resources entrepreneurs draw on as they start and grow their firms come from actors embedded in it. Entrepreneurs must constantly react to local beliefs about the purpose of creating a startup (such as maximizing profitability, ensuring financial stability, or sustaining a particular lifestyle) if others are to see them as legitimate entrepreneurs deserving of investment and support. However, local fields do not exist in isolation and non-local fields also influence entrepreneurial actors. The focus, therefore, should not be if entrepreneurs are 'inside' of a local field, but rather the extent to which they operate within unique sets of norms and rationalities found within a region. Revealing how entrepreneurial practices develop around the rules of multiple fields is one of the key aspects of a Bourdieuian analysis of entrepreneurship.

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It is not enough to say that each region has its own field; to do so would only reintroduce the existing oversimplification of culture under a new name. Rather, there is a complex geography to fields. Local and non-local fields have different, often contradictory rules and norms, meaning that choices that make sense in one field are often seen as illegitimate in others. For instance, the choice to employ a cousin might help an entrepreneur increase their social capital within his family in order to obtain informal capital (investments from family and friends or other non- institutional sources), but such a practice might be seen as nepotism by an angel investor who is outside of the family's ethnic field. Similarly, the high-growth norms of an industry like social media startups might conflict with a risk-adverse culture of a rural community. In order to be successful, entrepreneurs must be able to navigate these conflicting rules and norms. They must be able to select practices that either simultaneously appear legitimate to people occupying different fields or at least choose practices that minimize harm in other fields. The ability to do this successfully rests in the entrepreneur's habitus: their internalized knowledge about the rules of these multiple fields and their position within all of them.

While non-local fields play a role in actors' choice of entrepreneurial practices, their influence is experienced through the local field. The influence of non-local fields materialize locally as actors understand their rules and structures through their habitus, which are in turn heavily influenced by the local field they are constantly embedded in. That is, actors depend on their habitus to understand the rules of a non-local field, a habitus developed within a local field that the actor is constantly exposed to. The structures and rules of non-local fields are 'filtered' through each local field. This is due to the overwhelming influence of the local field, which actors are continuously exposed to as they carry out their daily activities. The local field provides the context through which non-local fields are understood.

As a result, the rules of a non-local field (for example, the importance of informal knowledge sharing within the technology startup field) are experienced differently based on the nature of the local fields these rules are interpreted in. For example, Aoyoma (2009) points to how informal norms of risk-taking and inter-firm communication were understood differently by entrepreneurs in Hamamatsu and Kyoto, Japan, leading to the development of distinct entrepreneurial cultures. The interaction between local and non-local fields is therefore not static or hierarchical, but is rather a reflexive, relational connection between a local field and the non-local fields materializing within it.

This points to the need for a relational approach to the multi-scalar geography of fields. Instead of seeing space as a casual force for economic or social activity, a relational approach sees space as a lens through which economic and social activity are studied and interpreted (Bathelt and Glücker, 2011). From a Bourdieuian perspective, this means going beyond seeing local fields in isolation, but rather examining how actors balance the competing demands of local fields against other outside fields, such as ethnic, economic or business fields. That is: how do entrepreneurs choose practices that can maintain their legitimacy in multiple fields, such as the local field they live in, the industrial field their firm and investors exist in, and the ethnic field their family inhabit?

It follows that regional culture is more than the rules of the local field. Rather, regional cultures are the collective views of the multiple fields that operate in the region that emerge over time. Such fields include both local as well as non-local fields that influence the region. As actors carry out their day-to-day lives within this overlapping assemblage of fields, they create an internalized knowledge of them as their habitus develops. Over time, collective understandings of these fields emerge within a region, creating what can be referred to as a regional culture. A relational perspective of fields emphasizes the interconnected nature of fields on multiple scales and emphasizes a holistic analysis which

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includes the effects of the diverse array of fields which operate within a region, be they based on institutional forces working at a local, national or global level.

The analysis of local entrepreneurial cultures involves examining not only the influence on non-local fields but also how actors understand these fields through the locally based habitus. Non-local fields influence the practices of entrepreneurs, but that influence is channeled through the already established rules, norms, and outlooks associated with the local field. The local field, and actor's habitus-based knowledge of it, help determine how the rules of non-local fields are understood and acted upon (or ignored). The key to understanding the emergence of entrepreneurial cultures is unraveling the interplay between an array of local and non-local fields and rationalities.

4.3: The Emergence and Evolution of Regional Fields

Fields do not arise from nothing nor are they immune from change. New fields emerge from pre-existing ones after a period of struggle (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). New developments, such as the creation of a new disruptive technology or the change of political regimes, shift control of power in a field away from incumbents to new players and open up new strategies and change the values of different forms of capital. In most cases, the change happens internally within an existing field. However, within modern economic systems, new fields can potentially emerge along with new industries. For instance, the modern information technology industry emerged out of the telecommunications industry of the 1970s and 1980s. New players, armed with new types of capital — specific technical knowledge and expertise — were able to establish a new field with rules and conventions different from the pre-existing field. In such situations, new rules emerge organically from the new players' prior experience and new technical and economic realities (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994).

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Social rules are not kept because they are traditional but because they play some role in maintaining the social order and distribution of power in a field. In many modern economic fields with diffuse hierarchies of power and well-distributed capital — including entrepreneurial fields — norms and conventions can be very fluid. Within such fields, entrepreneurs have a great deal of freedom to improvise new practices based on their immediate needs. This improvisation is a result of diverse array of habitus exposed to the rules of the fields they are in and interpreting them differently based on the entrepreneurs' goals, knowledge of the fields, and their current situation. Entrepreneurs are able to observe the practices of other firms and copy those that appear to be successful. The definition of success depends on the lens of their individual habitus and the contexts of their local and industrial fields. As these new practices continue to be effective, they become a natural part of actors' habitus. These successful practices are now performed not because they necessarily lead to success but because they have now become common sense. Over time, successful practices coalesce into new traditions or institutions: they have become part of the field's *doxa*, its unquestionable logic (see Figure 1). This process shows that rules within a field are not static entities, but rather dynamic social processes that are continuously being reproduced and modified according to the present needs of the actors in the field. The constant churn of new practices and practitioners in entrepreneurial and business fields creates a system of constant renewal and reinvention. This does not imply that change will always occur within fields, but creates a space for evolution through purposeful or accidental experimentation with new forms of practice.
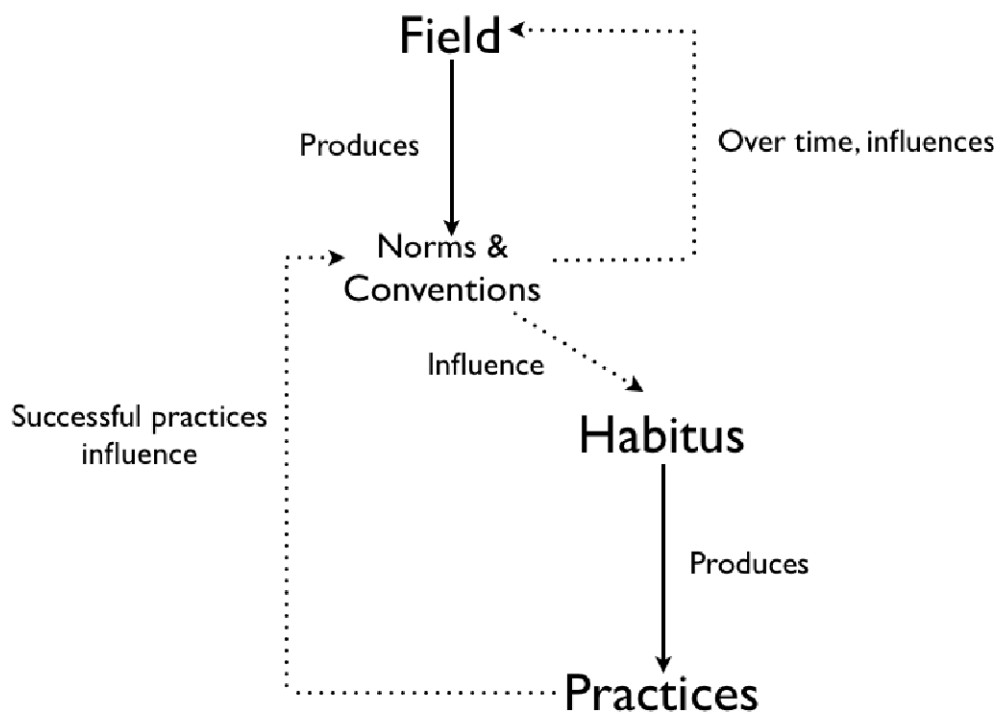
Figure 1: The dynamic nature of norms and conventions within a field

This model helps differentiate between local and non-local entrepreneurial fields. The local field is defined by the fact that its rules, norms and structures are reproduced through fundamentally *local* processes and entities. These can be powerful players in the region, such as dominant firms or industry or local communal beliefs. For instance, the high status of entrepreneurship in a region might be reproduced through institutions such as schools, universities, or networks of successful entrepreneurs, which celebrate successful startups and instill a respect for the risks of entrepreneurship. This is opposed to non- local fields, whose structures are formed and reproduced outside of the region, such as through the national media or national government policy. Local cultures are therefore the dominant understandings of a field shaped through fundamentally local social systems as opposed to cultures created by fields operating at different scales.

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There is a material geography to the development and evolution of fields. The act of observing successes and failures is easier within a local field than in a global industrial or ethnic field. Because social networks are densest locally, stories of new practices spread quickly within communities. This is particularly true for entrepreneurs, who tend to know many other proximate entrepreneurs and discuss business issues with them (Westlund and Bolton, 2003). Entrepreneurs who are constantly scanning their local environment for new opportunities are primed to observe changes in the local field and experiment with new practices that they think will now be successful. Local fields are therefore more open to change than their non-local counterparts.

Interactions between local and non-local fields not static or hierarchical but are rather dynamic, relational connection between a local field and the non-local fields materializing within it. Actors who are embedded in the local field will understand these non-local rules through the structures of the local field, which has deeply affected their habitus. Neither local nor non-local fields are necessarily dominant or immune to change or influence. The nature of the local field does not control those who operate within its boundaries, fields only set up a social space in which practices play out. Rather, through their habitus, actors create an internal understanding about the relationships between local and non-local fields and their positions within them, and then enact the practices that make the most sense given those relationships and their current circumstances.

5: Conclusion — Bourdieu and Regional Entrepreneurial Cultures

Why bring in a complex theory to an already confused debate about culture? Bourdieuian approaches are necessary because culture is too often cast as a deterministic force within entrepreneurship research. Consequently, discussions about the role of culture in entrepreneurship frequently either over-simplify culture as a dummy variable or are depend

on descriptive case studies of particular cultural attributes that do not probe the connections between culture and action. These issues come from the absence of a theoretical mechanism connecting culture with entrepreneurial practices. Without such a mechanism, it is difficult to go beyond simply describing a local culture and to fully analyze the culture's origin and how it affects actors' daily and long-term practices and strategies.

As concepts such as enterprise culture and entrepreneurial ecosystems gain currency within the academic, policy, and popular literature, researchers are increasingly confronted by questions about what makes a place 'entrepreneurial.' Often, the root answer appears to be a local culture enabling practices such as risk taking or information sharing (e.g. Saxenian, 1994; Lafuente et al., 2007) or conversely, a culture discouraging them (e.g. James, 2005). The importance of these questions to regional development means that the study of entrepreneurial cultures must go beyond associating cultural outlooks with practices. We must instead examine how cultural outlooks create social contexts where particular kinds of practices make sense to entrepreneurial actors. Furthermore, we must be able to demonstrate that the culture in question is truly local by identifying the local processes that create and reproduce it. This paper introduces a dynamic model that demonstrates how the cultural outlooks created by the structure of a local field influences entrepreneurial actors while at the same time evolving through their experimentations with new types of practices. This allows a more nuanced examination of the role of culture in the development of entrepreneurial communities, regions and ecosystems without falling into the trap of seeing culture as the *sole* cause.

The purpose of a Bourdieuian approach to entrepreneurship is therefore to provide a critical framework to analyze the role of social influences and constraints in such a way that neither reduces the agency of actors nor restricts pathways for change. Conceptualizing the role of culture within such a framework reduces problems of *ad-hoc* cultural analysis and

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atheoretical description. Through the Bourdieuian focus on how entrepreneurial actors understand the fields they operate within, it is possible to examine how practices emerge relative to cultural outlooks and values rather than simply describing those outlooks. Culture is therefore no longer a disembodied force applied to entrepreneurs but rather forms the context in which the entrepreneurship process unfolds.

This approach opens up several new avenues for empirical research. The first is identifying the rules and structures of different entrepreneurial fields and their relationship to entrepreneurship-led economic growth. What types of structures tend to encourage or discourage entrepreneurial innovation and risk taking? This research should also examine how such rules evolved and their relationship to fields at other scales as well as contingent historical events. Second, research can examine how entrepreneurs become embedded in such fields and the learning processes which take place as their habitus adjusts to the specificities of the fields they are engaging with. Finally, more research is needed to understand the complex power relationships between entrepreneurial actors and how they are able to develop and control the types of capital most important to them.

The most critical area for future theoretical development in Bourdieuian approaches to entrepreneurship is the emergence of cultural outlooks and practices relative to multiple, overlapping fields. Case studies are needed to better understand how entrepreneurs balance the competing demands of these fields and how local entrepreneurial cultures are influenced by the presence of non-local fields. Further, the influence of individual entrepreneurs, firms or regions on larger-scale fields must be acknowledged in order to understand how even these global social structures can change over time. The ways in which entrepreneurs navigate the conflicting rules of these fields is an area ripe for conceptual and empirical research. Finally, empirical research should look how individual entrepreneurial practices, such as the use of a business plan or taking on venture capital, are viewed by actors in different local fields as

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well those in different positions within the same field. This will further illuminate the relationship between entrepreneurial practices and culture.

Given the increasing focus on the cultural underpinnings of entrepreneurship within disciplines as diverse as economic geography, management science, economics, and psychology, the development of a theoretical framework for culture is critical. Without a framework to describe the connections between culture and entrepreneurial practice, research on the topic risks descending into static determinism or descriptivism that ignores the reflexive relationship between entrepreneurs' agency and their social and economic contexts. This framework is key to linking the macro-level social processes that make up culture with the micro-level daily practices and decisions that make up entrepreneurship. The Bourdieuian approach discussed here offers one such framework to describe not only why particular local cultures can affect the entrepreneurship process, but also how these cultures develop and why different kinds of actors are affected by the culture in different ways.

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