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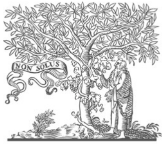

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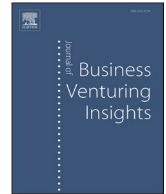

Whatever the problem, entrepreneurship is the solution! Confronting the panacea myth of entrepreneurship with structural injustice

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ABSTRACT

A topic of growing interest in entrepreneurship research is how entrepreneurial ventures address grand challenges. This literature, we argue, tends to produce a panacea myth by suggesting that entrepreneurship is the universal remedy for existing social and environmental ills. Starting from the claim that the persuasive power or 'stickiness' of the panacea myth depends not only on what it explicitly says (in terms of ideas and beliefs) but also on what it leaves out, we suggest that the exclusion of explicitly political and holistic explanations of grand challenges such as Iris Marion Young's theory of structural injustice, which we use as an illustrative example, precipitates a 'constitutive absence' whose mythic function is to sanitize the image of entrepreneurship as the preferred solution to grand challenges. In an effort to denaturalize the panacea myth, we first identify three 'figures of thought' – coined 'extrapolation fallacy,' 'political agnosticism,' and 'positive acculturation' – that define the content of the panacea myth while simultaneously excluding theoretical concepts and frameworks, such as structural injustice, that conceptualize grand challenges as structural, multidetermined, and inherently political problems that are not necessarily amenable to stand-alone entrepreneurial approaches and solutions. Second, to loosen the grip of the panacea myth, we suggest rethinking entrepreneurship research in terms of who is involved, what methods are used, and how we talk about it. Taken together, these tactics create an opening in entrepreneurship research for a more complexity-sensitive and political understanding of grand challenges that cultivates a more humble and realistic depiction of entrepreneurship's problem-solving capacity.

1. The panacea myth and the need for denaturalization

One of the more recent additions to the list of myths about entrepreneurship (Brown et al., 2017; Drakopoulou Dodd and Anderson, 2007; Fayolle and Redford, 2014; Lautenschläger and Haase, 2011; Rehn et al., 2013; Secundo et al., 2021; Shane, 2008) is the *panacea myth* which envisions entrepreneurship as the preferred means to solve the world's most pressing problems, often referred to as grand challenges (Doh et al., 2019; Markman et al., 2019). The panacea myth is based on the belief that entrepreneurship holds the key not only to securing positive economic finalities such as economic growth, job creation, and innovation, but also social virtues such as care, inclusiveness, or equality by overcoming deep-rooted constraints related to patriarchy, class, stigma, or prejudice, for example. By

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effectively solving grand challenges, the myth goes, entrepreneurship becomes a vessel of emancipation that ensures human flourishing through "a move from an inferior past to a superior future" (Laine and Kibler, 2022: 410).

To claim that contemporary research on entrepreneurship as a solution to grand challenges is mythical is to suggest that it tends to rely on stories that are not necessarily true or that, as we will argue in this essay, do not tell the whole story to offer a deceptively convincing and 'natural' account of what entrepreneurship is capable of achieving. The problem with the panacea myth, as with any other myth, is that unless it is recognized as a myth, it has an epistemological authority or 'truth value' equivalent to an infallible fact (Gilman-Opalsky, 2011). The basic contention of this essay, therefore, is that it would be fallacious to accept the panacea myth as representative of entrepreneurship's ability to mitigate and solve grand challenges. Although the knee-jerk response may be that the panacea myth must be debunked, it should be noted that myths cannot necessarily be rebutted by confronting them with factual evidence, i.e., the 'truth' (Marlow and McAdam, 2013). The limitations of empirical 'reality tests' in debunking myths are aptly demonstrated, for example, by the hero myth of entrepreneurship, which reduces all the richness and complexity of entrepreneurship to a 'one-man show' (Braun et al., 2018). Because even if the weight of empirical evidence suggests that entrepreneurship and venture creation cannot be reduced to the traits, talents, or skills of supra-normal individuals, the appeal of the hero myth remains almost undiminished (Drakopoulou Dodd and Anderson, 2007).

Since a confrontation with empirical facts may do little to debunk the panacea myth, our approach to demystification is to denaturalize it by paying close attention to how it is produced, focusing not only on what the myth says but also on what it explicitly excludes. So, while the explicit story of the panacea myth is that grand challenges can be overcome by stand-alone entrepreneurial approaches, what it deliberately leaves out is that grand challenges are wicked and multidetermined, and therefore often elude solutions based on the ingenuity and agency of entrepreneurs. If we assume that grand challenges are inherently complex, often enabled and sustained by multiple actors (not just entrepreneurs), and underpinned by political dynamics (e.g., favoritism, unequal power relations, exploitation), the panacea myth immediately loses some of its 'stickiness' and persuasive power. There is an array of theories, such as *structural injustice* by political philosopher Iris Marion Young, which we will discuss in section 2, that would help us denaturalize and challenge the universal promise of the panacea myth by confronting it with complexity-sensitive, structuralist, and political explanations of grand challenges.

Even a cursory glance at the literature on entrepreneurship reveals that such theories are mostly lacking (we discuss this in more detail in section 2). While their absence can be dismissed as mere coincidence (after all, the literature on entrepreneurship and grand challenges is still in its infancy), we consider it in explicitly political terms as a 'constitutive absence' to emphasize its strategic nature and to highlight that its elemental function is to exclude certain perspectives in order to maintain the illusion of entrepreneurship as the ideal solution to grand challenges.

Importantly, the harmful effects of the panacea myth are not limited to the academic sphere but extend to the development of effective policies (Brown et al., 2017; Klyver and Bager, 2012), as policymakers informed by entrepreneurship research may uncritically adopt assumptions and priorities pertaining to the unlimited power of entrepreneurship to achieve large-scale change (cf. Chalmers, 2020). Policymakers may thus potentially miss the opportunity to develop and implement ambitious and context-sensitive legislation to address structural problems.

With this in mind, we use the remainder of this essay to debunk the panacea myth in three broad steps. First, in section 2, we introduce Young's theory of structural injustice to argue that the exclusion of such explicitly political, complexity-sensitive, and structuralist explanations of grand challenges creates a constitutive absence in entrepreneurship research whose mythic function is to sanitize entrepreneurship's problem-solving capacity. Second, in section 3, we identify three 'figures of thought' – coined 'technical rationality,' 'extrapolation fallacy,' and 'positive acculturation' – that together contribute to the production of the constitutive absence and thus form the basis for the panacea myth. Third, in section 4, we propose three tactics to loosen the grip of the panacea myth by rethinking entrepreneurship research in terms of who is involved, how research is conducted, and – to conclude this essay – how we talk about it.

2. Structural injustice

Iris Marion Young's theory of structural injustice is currently used by business ethicists, political scientists, and philosophers to illuminate the complex intertwining of political, economic, and social structures that foster and perpetuate conditions of enduring injustice. Broadly speaking, the theory of structural injustice is consistent with existing debates about entrepreneurship and grand challenges by affirming that the availability of resources and opportunities are important elements of empowerment and emancipation (Morris et al., 2020; Sutter et al., 2019). At the same time, Young's theory points out that an exclusive focus on resources and opportunities may overlook important structurally embedded processes that underlie structural injustice. In her book, *Responsibility for Justice* (Young, 2011: 52), Young provides a comprehensive definition of structural injustice:

> "Structural injustice […] exists when social processes put large groups of persons under systematic threat of domination or deprivation of the means to develop and exercise their capacities, at the same time that these processes enable others to dominate or to have a wide range of opportunities for developing and exercising capacities available to them. Structural injustice is a kind of moral wrong distinct from the wrongful action of an individual agent or the repressive policies of a state. Structural injustice occurs as a consequence of many individuals and institutions acting to pursue their particular goals and interests, for the most part within the limits of accepted rules and norms."

At the heart of Young's work is the idea that structural injustice makes people vulnerable to domination and oppression, and that there is no single actor who causes injustice alone. Structural injustices are found in many industries, from commodity trading (Irwin

and Sanders, 2012), to electronics (Rosenberg, 2021; Tempels et al., 2017), to fashion (Young, 2003, 2004, 2006), where organizations, groups, and individuals, often unconsciously and unintentionally, cause and perpetuate them (Young, 2006), with no single actor being able to individually fix them. Transposed to the panacea myth, two important lessons emerge. First, given the complexity and political nature of structural injustice, which is at the root of many grand challenges, it is unlikely that a single entrepreneur, or group of entrepreneurs operating together, is either the sole cause of structural injustice or the sole source of its mitigation or alleviation. Second, and conversely, Young's work supports the view that entrepreneurial activity can contribute, to varying degrees, to unjust social structures and may thereby be implicated in the creation of grand challenges such as precarious working conditions, environmental degradation, and climate change. Considering this assumed link between structural injustice and entrepreneurship, it becomes pertinent to ask why the theory of structural injustice, or any other theory with comparative explanatory power, is not an explicit topic in entrepreneurship research.

This said, it would be wrong to claim that entrepreneurship research is incapable of dealing with complexity or that it has not addressed structural issues and, in particular, how entrepreneurial ventures can create new or alter existing structures. Institutional entrepreneurship (Aldrich, 2011; Battilana et al., 2009; Garud et al., 2007; Maguire et al., 2004) is perhaps the most obvious and well-known example of how entrepreneurship researchers and management scholarship more generally have theorized the implications of entrepreneurship beyond the creation of new organizations by including how entrepreneurial ventures and actors leverage resources to create new or uproot existing institutions – that is, deeply held collective beliefs, norms, and practices that shape human behavior in order to effect system-level change (Allison et al., 2021). Research on institutional entrepreneurship has produced very detailed insights into how the introduction of new institutions, or the modification of existing institutions is met with resistance and how institutional entrepreneurs work to gain acceptance for their innovations or changes by securing resources and support, thus achieving legitimacy for the new or changed institutional arrangements (Mair and Marti, 2009; Uyarra and Flanagan, 2022). Despite its undeniable merit, the literature on institutional entrepreneurship, whose key interest consists in how agency is enabled by resources and opportunities (Dorado, 2005), operates on a narrow and apolitical view of structural change that ignores the fundamental role of power. More specifically, consideration of power in research on institutional entrepreneurship is confined to its linguistic and symbolic aspects (Garud et al., 2007) as scholars have mainly focused on how actors holding opposing views confront each other by trying to normalize particular meanings or interpretations. While important, discursive struggles and the 'translation' of sectional viewpoints and interests into dominant formations of 'truth' through the creative use of cultural and linguistic resources is just one way in which power is enacted (Fleming and Spicer, 2014). Indeed, by giving priority to exploring the effects of complexes of meaning and the power of language, research on institutional entrepreneurship tends to ignore or take for granted existing power hierarchies and associated relations of domination and oppression (Willmott, 2015). While institutional theory is concerned with 'dysfunctional' institutions that enable certain grand challenges, it is not committed to the normative commitments of Young's approach which views structural injustices underlying many grand challenges as 'moral wrongs.' What Young's approach adds, or, more precisely, could potentially add, to entrepreneurship research, then, is an explicit interest in the political nature of structural change and, in particular, how oppression, domination, and exploitation are embedded in social structures that reflect the pervasive forces of privilege, elite status, and interest.

Against this background, we present below three figures of thought that, taken together, contribute to making structural injustice a constitutive absence in entrepreneurship research so as to protect the purity of the panacea myth.

3. Three figures of thought enabling the panacea myth

3.1. Extrapolation fallacy

Research on entrepreneurship and grand challenges is predicated on the conviction that small-scale changes instigated by exceptional enterprises and entrepreneurs – such as the emancipation, empowerment, and inclusion of marginalized groups (Jennings et al., 2016) – will over time translate into broader, structural changes, thus transforming society toward greater equality. All too often, we tend to make an interpretive leap by assuming a link between micro- and meso-level effects and systematic macro-level changes. In doing so, we run the risk of fetishizing the micro-successes of (prosocial) enterprises while neglecting what is happening at a broader level (Cremin, 2011). The belief in such trickle-up effects is misleading in that research shows that the existence of a few prosocial enterprises run with 'good' intentions and achieving promising effects on a local scale (Bruder, 2021) in no way guarantees that the structural causes of grand challenges will cease to exist. That grand challenges are often too complex to allow for (simple and stand-alone) solutions and scaling has been aptly demonstrated by Chalmers (2020) using the example of homelessness. Karlan and Zinman (2011) and Banerjee et al. (2015) have reached a similar conclusion regarding microfinance as an effective means of alleviating abject poverty. These are just two examples that remind us that the 'solution promises' of the panacea myth, though intellectually comforting and affectively soothing, are often too good to be true. While overestimating the potential of entrepreneurial solutions is a problem for anyone interested in understanding the true transformative capacity of entrepreneurship, the extrapolation fallacy takes on a political connotation when policymakers use it as an excuse to rely solely on liberal market forces rather than developing (market-based and non-market-based) policy solutions (Chalmers, 2020). This danger is particularly salient in the domain of social entrepreneurship, which is being used in many countries as a substitute for welfare services, covering for budget austerity and displacing support by public institutions through the creation of regulatory and fiscal frameworks (Dey, 2007).

The extrapolation fallacy receives rhetorical support from a technical rationality that includes the belief that "all complex social problems are amenable to human action, if not now, in a future soon to arrive with the help of technological advancements" (Dorado et al., 2022: 1255) or scientific methods and techniques (Schön, 1988). The idea behind this belief is that existing social problems, when broken down into 'discrete chunks' (Dorado et al., 2022), can be solved in a linear, one-by-one fashion, which neatly distinguishes "problems from solutions and means from ends" (Dorado et al., 2022: 1255). Technical rationality is not so much about

technology in the colloquial sense of technical tools and means as it is about instrumental reason (Horkheimer, 1947), which views the world in terms of objectivity, tangible knowhow, efficiency, and effectiveness. The complexity of structural injustice, however, defies such 'technical' frameworks and 'linear' fixes. Structural injustice is a complex adaptive phenomenon, composed of a multitude of interconnected elements and maintained by reciprocal and non-linear reinforcement mechanisms, making it difficult, if not impossible, to break it down into small, independent 'chunks' that can be analyzed and resolved individually. Despite this, the fact of the matter is, as Grimes and Vogus (2021: 2) point out, that linear thinking is "ubiquitous in much of today's approaches to solving grand challenges." Entrepreneurship research's continued adherence to technical rationality and the associated tendency to extrapolate micro-level achievements to macro-level structural changes creates a milieu in which researchers are encouraged to address those aspects or symptoms of grand challenges that lend themselves directly to entrepreneurial solutions, thus validating the panacea myth. Mostly discouraged, on the other hand, is a concern for grand challenges that, due to their inherent complexity, require a high degree of collaboration and orchestration within and across sectors and in which political actors, institutions, and context, as well as power, privilege, status, and interest play an important role.

3.2. *Political agnosticism*

The panacea myth offers an overly optimistic view of entrepreneurial actors' ability to act (Bacq et al., 2016), obscuring the political side of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial change. For instance, success stories of entrepreneurship may highlight (prosocial) ventures that improve the health and wellbeing of their beneficiaries, while ignoring the underlying structural and political reasons that affect people's health, such as income inequality (Pickett and Wilkinson, 2015). Also, there is a tendency to ignore problems – wittingly or otherwise – that are subject to ongoing contestation (Hervieux and Voltan, 2018), and that therefore defy easy (entrepreneurial) solutions, such as gay rights and marriage equality (Wettstein and Baur, 2016). Due to the tendency to focus on problems and grand challenges, such as climate change, that are broadly considered as legitimate, while ignoring issues that are subject to ongoing controversy, we are left with a sanitized view of entrepreneurship as a social change mechanism that is hard to disagree with. With some exaggeration, it can be argued that the omission of structural injustice in research on entrepreneurship and grand challenges is indicative of how contentious and political issues are edited out of the common understanding of entrepreneurship. This points to a situation of political agnosticism as extant scholarship rests on a set of substantive and paradigmatic assumptions that prevent it from capturing the inherently political nature of entrepreneurship (Hjorth, 2013). The 'political' alludes not only to the obvious fact that entrepreneurship can have political consequences – such as contributing to the amelioration of social ills – but also to how the way we understand entrepreneurship carries different axiological connotations and ideological colorations (i.e., certain beliefs, premises, values, etc. are foregrounded while others are pushed to the background) that allow us to legitimately talk about and see certain things but not others. As Holm and Beyes (2022: 230) astutely observe in this regard, the solving of grand challenges through entrepreneurship is strongly "framed as opportunity exploitation, [...] and presented as requiring the employment of market principles and the realization of business models for the creation of what can be translated into 'social value', or even 'social wealth'." While there is no denying that extant entrepreneurship research has offered very detailed insights into the nexus between entrepreneurship and grand challenges, it mainly accepts interpretations that are apolitical, post-ideological, objective, and value-free (Dey, 2016). The canonical understanding of entrepreneurship is thus politically agnostic in that it uncritically accepts purportedly value free and politically neutral management approaches as the preferred lens for understanding how grand challenges are solved, while turning a blind eye to how entrepreneurship, when examined from perspectives that are explicitly value-oriented, reflexive, and critical, might enable, for example, new forms of belonging and living outside the coordinates of market liberalism. Given the conditions and premises under which entrepreneurship research currently operates, it is impossible to affect any real social change if the agents of change (entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ventures) are considered axiologically neutral and non-political entities (Farias et al., 2019).

3.3. *Positive acculturation*

The over-optimistic view of entrepreneurship's transformative power is not surprising. Many researchers, ourselves included, have entered the field of entrepreneurship because we share a passion for the subject (Low, 2001), believe in its transformative power, and are fascinated by entrepreneurial action, its mechanisms, and its (positive) impact on communities and society. As new colleagues, such as graduate students, join the entrepreneurship community and are introduced to its norms, values, and premises, they are inevitably exposed to a predominantly positive view of entrepreneurship. A recent article by Lundmark et al. (2022) demonstrates that the language in entrepreneurship journals is significantly more positive than that in management journals, confirming earlier criticisms of a positivity bias in entrepreneurship research (e.g., Lundmark and Westelius, 2014; Rehn et al., 2013; Tedmanson et al., 2012). This positivity bias is not unproblematic if we want to study entrepreneurship in all its facets, because "language governs thought and action [...] [and] [t]he vocabulary used to talk about entrepreneurship is critical to the development of a theory about this phenomenon" (Gartner, 1993: 232).

While more critical voices have increasingly challenged the portrayal of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs as mythical figures of positive influence (Tedmanson et al., 2012), the positivity bias in our research efforts is destined to introduce new colleagues into an affective mood that is hard to escape. This creates a general atmosphere that makes structural injustice and other concepts and theories that might challenge the panacea myth a much less obvious choice for investigation. Or more pointedly, the positive mood in entrepreneurship research tends to act as a neo-normative censorship mechanism (Fleming and Sturdy, 2009) that shapes existing research agendas and debates by determining what can and cannot be said.

Taken together, we suggest that these three figures of thought contribute to an analytical myopia in entrepreneurship research that favors reductive and partial explanations of grand challenges that, for example, neglect important elements and mechanisms

Table 1
The panacea myth in entrepreneurship research: Possible demystification tactics and suggested research questions.

Figures of thought that lead to analytical myopia in entrepreneurship research by favoring reductive explanations and neglecting structural mechanisms that underlie grand challenges	Demystification tactics			Suggested research questions that could counteract the predominant figures of thought
	Rethinking who is involved in entrepreneurship research	Rethinking how we do entrepreneurship research	Rethinking how we talk about entrepreneurship research	
	Promoting heterogeneity in terms of researchers' academic backgrounds and cultural experiences	Incorporating societal perspectives and engaging in participatory and community-centric research	Adding nuance and circumspection to how we communicate our results	
#1: Extrapolation fallacy · Assumption that micro-level successes lead to systemic change over time · Technical rationality that leads to an overreliance on 'technical' fixes and/or 'linear' thinking	Invite new perspectives to counter oversimplification, over-reliance on technology and integrate overlooked angles, e.g., · critical social scientists (e.g., sociologists) who focus on understanding unequal social relationships, power structures, elite formations, endemic injustice, etc. as they occur in different market environments (Balsiger, 2016) · sustainability transitions researchers who analyze how grand challenges are addressed and mitigated over time, and how exploitative and unjust structures and contested market environments may be changed in the direction of greater responsibility (Köhler et al., 2019)	Apply methodological approaches that can capture interdependent relationships, network-like dependencies, and institutional mechanisms, e.g., · network analysis to understand the relationships (from collaboration to contestation) among various actors – including, social movements, activists, or advocacy groups – that contribute to either the creation or alleviation of certain grand challenges (de Bakker et al., 2013; Horowitz, 2012) · complexity theory to understand the distributed agency of different actors in the market, the way in which small interventions can have broader and often unexpected effects, and the non-linear dynamics and interplay of economic networks (Plowman et al., 2007)	Avoid talking about individual 'heroes' and entrepreneurial ventures that single-handedly 'fight' grand challenges, e.g., · consider the importance of context and embeddedness of entrepreneurship, and the critical role of communities or ecosystem conditions under which entrepreneurs operate and which support or hinder attempts to address grand challenges (Welter and Baker, 2021) · recognize the necessary 'boundedness' and inherent limitations of diffusing and scaling entrepreneurial initiatives, which may only work in certain contexts but not in others (MacVaugh and Schiavone, 2010)	· How can entrepreneurs build and become part of broader networks to collaborate with other actors to bring about systemic change and mitigate structural injustices over time? · What are the boundary conditions and limits to scaling (prosocial) entrepreneurial approaches? · How can new ventures in the same industry collectively increase or decrease structural injustices through (inclusive) innovation, orchestration, advocacy, or agitation (Battilana and Kimsey, 2017)? · What are the ingredients of effective and collaborative approaches to scaling entrepreneurial solutions to address grand challenges? How do these translate from one context to another? What are the necessary conditions?
#2: Political agnosticism · Research foci that divert attention from the political side of entrepreneurship · Portrayal of entrepreneurship as a largely apolitical phenomenon	Include new perspectives to better assess the influences of political mechanisms and political actors necessary for systemic change, and to overcome entrepreneurship's Western ethnocentrism, e.g., · researchers with different social positions in terms of class, ethnicity, religion, and cultural or geographic background, as well as researchers who come from regions other than the global North (Baker and Welter, 2017) and have had first-hand experience with structural injustice (Bruton et al., 2023) · ethnographers, anthropologists, and sociologists trained in reflexive and participatory action methodologies (Schultz et al., 2016) that can represent their subject	Turn to a societal (including environmental) perspective to consider the enabling and disabling role of political mechanisms and political actors related to entrepreneurial activities and solutions pertaining to grand challenges, e.g., · participatory and community-centric research to capture the context-specific and political underpinnings of grand challenges (Venugopal, 2021) · approaches that allow for more granular, complexity-sensitive, and political explanations of grand challenges, e.g., Young's (2011) social connection model emphasizing the importance of sharing responsibility among the involved (and powerful) actors, ethical approaches informed by neo-institutionalism to stress the normative (moral) obligation of corporate actors in	Incorporate policy and practice implications when reporting on entrepreneurship research and its results and actively inform actors involved in policy development, e.g., · organize workshops, roundtables, and panels to present research designs and (interim) research findings, and to discuss, comment on, and modify possible measures to reduce structural injustices among researchers, policymakers, corporations, and actors from civil society (Jessani et al., 2017) · address how current policy may perpetuate structural injustice (Diem et al., 2014) · convey how research results should be translated into political measures to effectively mitigate structural	· How do (prosocial) entrepreneurial activities lend legitimacy and significance to particular grand challenges, thus influencing political actors to engage or disengage on these challenges? · How can (prosocial) entrepreneurs and policy actors work together to mitigate structural injustices (Gigauri and Damenia, 2020)? · What are the ingredients of effective collaborations, partnerships, and alliances between entrepreneurs and organizations aimed at reducing structural injustices (George et al., 2023), and how do these change as a function of context? · How do entrepreneurs respond to policy changes

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (*continued*)

Figures of thought that lead to analytical myopia in entrepreneurship research by favoring reductive explanations and neglecting structural mechanisms that underlie grand challenges	Demystification tactics			Suggested research questions that could counteract the predominant figures of thought
	Rethinking who is involved in entrepreneurship research	Rethinking how we do entrepreneurship research	Rethinking how we talk about entrepreneurship research	
	Promoting heterogeneity in terms of researchers' academic backgrounds and cultural experiences	Incorporating societal perspectives and engaging in participatory and community-centric research	Adding nuance and circumspection to how we communicate our results	
	matter in a non-reductive manner by encouraging (a) disclosure of the moral-political stand-point of the researcher, (b) reflection on researchers' co-implication in the knowledge creation processes, and (c) retention of the authentic voice of their respondents as much as possible (Punch, 1994)	the context of institutional change (Beschorner, 2004), or the theory of political corporate responsibility (Scherer and Palazzo, 2011) which is concerned with the political responsibility of corporations under conditions where strong states and a shared value basis do not exist	injustice (Grimshaw et al., 2012)	related to structural injustices (e.g., compliance, resistance, tactical appropriation, etc.)?
#3: Positive acculturation Positivity bias that influences research agendas and that leads to an overly optimistic way of talking about entrepreneurship, which may imprint a certain mood upon the next generation of researchers	Foster greater theoretical and paradigmatic pluralism (Calás et al., 2009) to counter convergent thinking, challenge the positivity bias underlying entrepreneurship research, and allow for increased diversity of viewpoints and opinions, e.g., · lend a sympathetic ear to young scholars, including PhDs, who may challenge the dominant narratives of the field based on unorthodox and more unbiased perspectives (Bristow et al., 2017) · transdisciplinary research projects involving researchers from different disciplines and with different geographic, socio-demographic, and cultural backgrounds, resulting in a more balanced, cosmopolitical, and less Western-centric view of what is and is not possible in particular contexts (Efstathiou, 2016)	Turn to a societal and environmental perspective to uncover potential negative consequences of (technological) innovation and entrepreneurship, e.g., · engage in longitudinal research that captures immediate outcomes and long-term effects of entrepreneurial solutions on the living conditions of direct and indirect customers or beneficiaries (Millar, 2007) · integrate reflexive practices of authentic dissent (Nemeth et al., 2001) into the research process (e.g., regular reviews by peers or discussions by and with 'devil's advocates') to uncover researcher biases that can affect what is studied, how it is studied, and what hunches are followed or disregarded	Provide a more balanced account of the positive (bright side) and negative (dark side) aspects and consequences of entrepreneurship, e.g., · report on holistic and multilevel representations of the consequences of entrepreneurial action (Xu et al., 2022) · report on non-results and overcome the tendency to exclusively publish research results that show positive results or confirm hypotheses (O'Boyle et al., 2014)	· How does the choice of wording and style (e.g., in relation to formulating research questions, communicating results) influence the trajectory and outlook of entrepreneurship research (Ramoglou and McMullen, 2022)? · How do underlying philosophical viewpoints influence the choice of research questions and research designs (Fayolle et al., 2018)? · What are the positive and negative consequences of positive, neutral, or negative language in entrepreneurship research papers and science communication for policy and practice?

underlying grand challenges, such as those captured by Young's theory of structural injustice. Analytical myopia describes a situation where our understanding of grand challenges changes as a function of our observational position: when analyzed up close, grand challenges look clear and manageable, but blur when analyzed on a larger, structural scale. Analytical myopia leads to a deceptively compelling but ultimately misleading understanding of entrepreneurship's problem-solving capacity. Understanding the mechanisms that contribute to the panacea myth provides a starting point for denaturalizing it and for thinking about how we can move from treating structural injustice as a constitutive absence to placing it at the center of entrepreneurship scholarship. We propose three tactics to reshape the panacea myth without losing its positive mythic function (Campbell and Moyers, 1988).

4. Tactics for reshaping the panacea myth

Reshaping the panacea myth requires a fundamental shift in the way we practice entrepreneurship research, including rethinking who is involved in research, how we do research, and how we talk about research. Table 1 provides a comprehensive summary and expansion of these three tactics, which we discuss in more detail below. In addition, we propose research questions that we believe

hold promise for pursuing the goal of placing structural injustice at the center of entrepreneurship research. The table includes specific suggestions that we do not elaborate on below, but that may be instructive for readers as they seek to incorporate structural injustice into their own work.

4.1. Rethinking who is involved in entrepreneurship research

We believe that a greater degree of heterogeneity of researchers' disciplinary backgrounds and cultural experiences will help reshape and nuance the panacea myth. Researchers from fields such as sociology, social anthropology, political science, and cultural studies are well trained in understanding political and sociological dynamics and practices, as well as their complex interactions. Although entrepreneurship research is characterized by its plurality (Down, 2013; Welter et al., 2017), we suggest that opening entrepreneurship research even more to these perspectives offers an opportunity to counter the analytical myopia discussed earlier and the reductive tendencies it entails (Gras et al., 2020). Creating a more pluralistic and multidisciplinary environment could enrich the perspective of entrepreneurship researchers by moving beyond seeing societal problems merely as entrepreneurial opportunities that can be tackled with a business model based on a linear problem-solving approach.

Including researchers with a variety of cultural and ethnic experiences would further help us overcome the distinct ethnocentric nature of our field (Essers and Benschop, 2009). Commentators have pointed out that entrepreneurship research is dominated by Western perspectives (Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2018), meaning that much of the world is un(der)represented and important worldviews, many of which are shaped by experiences of precarity, abject poverty, marginalization, and inequality, are missing. Structural injustices exist all over the world, but some of their more serious, persistent, and far-reaching consequences, such as environmental degradation and human rights abuses, are more likely to occur in less affluent countries with weaker or inexistent institutions (Blicharska et al., 2017; Hansen et al., 2021; Hertel and Lobell, 2014; Khan et al., 2007; Mendelsohn et al., 2006). As a result, many grand challenges, notably those precipitated by structural injustices, may fly under the radar because the most prolific and hence visible researchers in our field, due to their positionality regarding class, geographical location, race, gender, etc. (Awkward, 1995), lack access to them because they are simply not greatly affected. Dominant perspectives and assumptions in entrepreneurship research may limit not only recognition of and concern for the mechanisms and consequences of structural injustice, but also understanding of the capabilities of different actors from civil society or the private and public sectors to address and mitigate structural injustices. While calls for greater representation of the 'non-Western other' in entrepreneurship research have been heard for some time (Storr and Butkevich, 2007), it cannot be overstated that including the voices of subaltern groups who lack agency due to their social status in society (Spivak, 1988) – both as researchers and research participants – should become a priority in our research.

4.2. Rethinking how we do entrepreneurship research

Much (but not all) of entrepreneurship research is concerned with the successful creation and management of entrepreneurial ventures. Structural injustices, as Young (2011) reminds us, are not caused by individual organizations. Rather, they are the result of processes and networks that connect many different actors, including entrepreneurial ventures, that collectively, but often unintentionally, create, reinforce, and reproduce them. Thus, if we limit our focus to the level of individual entrepreneurs or ventures, we broadly misconceive how these micro-level actors are related to structural injustices. Consequently, we propose a shift from organization-centered research to research that is multilevel in its orientation, that provides a stronger societal perspective (see Weiss et al., 2023 for suggestions), and that allows us to consider a broader range of mechanisms, including those related to power (such as oppression, domination, and exploitation), and actors, including those from the political sphere and from civil society. This can counteract the pervasive tendency in research on entrepreneurship and grand challenges to draw linear connections between a problem, an idea, an action, and an outcome (Etzion and Ferraro, 2010; Grimes and Vogus, 2021). While (political) contexts play an increasing role in entrepreneurship research (Welter and Baker, 2021), structural injustice has not yet been recognized as a legitimate analytical concept or as a means of moral judgment. One countermeasure would be to develop research designs capable of reflecting the complexity of social systems and capture the interdependencies and collective agency of different types of organizations and institutionalization processes. Examples include, among others, the institutional analysis and development framework developed by Ostrom and colleagues (McGinnis, 2011), ethical approaches informed by neo-institutionalism (Beschorner, 2004), or Young's social connection model (Young, 2011).

Additionally, and consistent with our previous call for inclusion of the subaltern in our research, we see potential in enabling greater participation of a variety of stakeholders in research endeavors, notably those affected by structural injustices. To do so, we need research designs that go beyond traditional, purportedly objective, and detached approaches, in which those affected are only included as 'research subjects' (e.g., as interviewees) who provide empirical input to the process of knowledge creation, while the authority to define the research design and the questions asked, as well as the sovereignty of analysis and interpretation rest with the researchers. We call for more participatory and community-centric methods, which are still the exception in entrepreneurship (for an exception, see van Niekerk et al., 2006). Participatory action research seems particularly well placed to include research subjects as active participants in knowledge production and problem solving, placing their views at the center of the entire research process, from identifying the problems to be considered, to selecting appropriate methods, to interpreting data and disseminating results (Schultz et al., 2016).

4.3. Rethinking how we talk about entrepreneurship research

The above suggestions have the potential to change the way we think and talk about entrepreneurship (Kibler and Laine, 2023), raising awareness that entrepreneurship cannot solve deep-rooted, complex, and structural societal and environmental problems on its own. One of the main premises of this article is that the panacea myth can be challenged by questioning its supposed naturalness and

'innocence' (Barthes, 1972). This involves more deliberate and sensitive use of language, applying greater caution in speaking of individual 'heroes' and entrepreneurial ventures 'fighting' grand challenges against all odds, striving for greater balance in portraying positive and negative intentions, processes, and outcomes of entrepreneurship, and including voices that are not currently being heard. As informants to policymakers, more careful, realistic, and balanced language is conducive to dismantling deeply ingrained assumptions underlying the panacea myth that influence the process of developing and implementing policies to address structural problems. If entrepreneurship research achieves to summon a more realistic assessment of what entrepreneurship can and cannot do, and if researchers actively inform policymakers accordingly (Klyver and Bager, 2012), we expect to see more effective policy solutions that improve the situation of people affected by structural injustice. To this end, we need to create interfaces and initiate regular exchange between policymakers and academia to foster ongoing debate and reflection on the assumptions that are made about the processes by which entrepreneurship policy is arrived at (Gibb, 2000). In practice, dismantling the panacea myth helps us understand entrepreneurs' responsibility for structural injustices and determine where exactly entrepreneurs should invest their limited resources by focusing on structural problems where they, along with others who have complementary resources, can bring enough power, privilege, interest, or collective ability to contribute to change (cf. Young, 2006). After all, given the plethora of structural problems that exist worldwide, "most of us, in principle, share more responsibility than we can reasonably be expected to discharge" (Young, 2006: 126). We imagine that local entrepreneurial solutions may well serve as evidence of effective approaches that could promote systemic change if scaled or replicated through interaction with other (powerful) actors and/or through legislative measures (Mersmann et al., 2014), and if adapted to context. Entrepreneurs can thus reduce uncertainty for powerful actors (e.g., policymakers, large corporations, NGOs) so as to increase their willingness to partake and invest in the transformation at a later stage. How to transition from local approaches to action at scale, i.e., what role entrepreneurs can play and what actions they need to take, is a promising avenue for future research.

In line with Rehn and colleagues, we would like to conclude our essay by emphasizing that myths should not be viewed as 'pathologies' but rather as "necessary steps in establishing the grand narrative of a field, even when we are aware of the need to continuously dismantle the same myths" (Rehn et al., 2013: 546). In this sense, we recognize the importance of a field's ability to generate interest and excitement, for which myths play an important role. At the same time, the panacea myth in its current form is misleading and dysfunctional for the development of the academic field as well as for the development of effective policies. Thus, we hope that our essay contributes to the ongoing process of dismantling prevailing myths in the field of entrepreneurship while problematizing overly grandiose and sanguine understandings of entrepreneurship they have naturalized. A central concern for future research on entrepreneurship and grand challenges should be to draw inspiration from the figure of *Aidos*, the Greek goddess of modesty and humility, to consider how entrepreneurship might be rethought not in terms of its superhuman potential but in terms of its inherent boundedness and limitations and the need to be supported by and collaborate with other actors.

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