

Handbook on the Entrepreneurial University, edited by Alain Fayolle and Dana T. Redford, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 2014, 486 pp., £150 (hbk), ISBN 978-1-78100-701-3

'It is clear', Fayolle and Redford begin in their introduction to this book, 'that universities need to become more entrepreneurial'. What might this mean, we wonder? Well, we're told later in the same sentence that it means 'helping students and faculty members to develop their entrepreneurial mindsets' (1). Perhaps sensing that in terms of an explanation this might still not go quite far enough for some readers, over the page they add that 'Universities also need to develop a more entrepreneurial orientation and culture' (so that's now clear), in order to overcome 'strong resistance to change' (3). Ah yes, change: universities, what do they know? True, Oxford and Paris Universities have apparently been doing good business since the eleventh century, but what can they possibly have learned about change over the last 900 years?

This book uses the term 'entrepreneurial university' to mean different things, and so the reader has to be constantly alert to shifting usages. Very occasionally, it is used in the sense that Burton Clark (1998; 2004) popularized, meaning a public university exhibiting certain organizational characteristics – a 'strengthened steering core', an 'expanded developmental periphery', and other factors. Clark's entrepreneurial universities did not *teach* entrepreneurialism, though (or if they did, Clark didn't mention it). Yet here, 'the entrepreneurial university' is more frequently used simply to describe a university that *does* teach it – Markowska's chapter, for example. But what exactly is taught? Is this something taught as a stand-alone subject, or integrated somehow with the teaching of history or chemistry? Markowska doesn't say, though she is clear that 'entrepreneurial competence is crucial for entrepreneurial action', with 'positive beliefs' helping things along (211). One really had no idea. The chapter by van Burg on university spin-off companies, presenting the pros and cons of such ventures, is conceptually closer to the Clark model than most other chapters, but is only marginally related to entrepreneurialism.

To describe this book as 'uneven' is a considerable understatement. The chapter by Åmo on Finland, Sweden, and Norway, for example, turns out to be about 'institutional structures and individual perceptions' (105) regarding entrepreneurialism in general in those countries, with only an afterthought about entrepreneurship education: which could be summarized as, 'it would be a good idea'. The chapter by Reihlen and Wenzlaff on Germany gives a useful account of changes to higher education generally there since 1945, with the word 'entrepreneurial' hardly appearing.

The approach of most authors, though, is to argue that something called 'entrepreneurialism' should be taught by universities. But if you are looking either for a critical perspective on this (for example, in what sense is this a university subject? Can it, indeed, be taught at all?), or even for a practical guide to the development of a curriculum, you will be disappointed. Blok *et al.*, in their chapter on entrepreneurship education programmes in Europe, the US, and Canada, and Mwasalwiba *et al.* doing the same for Tanzania, approach the topic unproblematically, which is bad enough, but, maddeningly, give hardly any clue as to what the content of these programmes looks like close up: 'Entrepreneurship education programmes ... primarily focus on the development of entrepreneurial competencies' (66). Quite so.

A few of the chapters are perhaps worth reading to appreciate the extent to which the idea of 'the university' has now been deformed. The editors, in their chapter on 'Stakeholder management and the entrepreneurial university', present an Orwellian vision, under the heading 'Good practice recommendations' (quoting, it should be said, another writer, but with apparent approval), of 'the curriculum ... [which] must focus on: the future instead of the past; creativity instead of critical analysis; insight instead of knowledge...', and so on. My first thought was

that this was a cruel satire of some half-baked model of management education, but I fear my generosity was misplaced.

This book does, though, have one valuable benefit: a brief acquaintance with it makes the emancipatory model of liberal higher education suddenly seem very precious indeed.

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References

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