Preface

This book is the third volume in Elgar's McGill International Entrepreneurship Series. The series is dedicated to advancing knowledge in the emerging field of International Entrepreneurship. McGill International Entrepreneurship (MIE) initiatives started in the late 1990s. In its inaugural international conference in September 1998, it brought together leading scholars from the fields of international business and entrepreneurship to stimulate interaction between entrepreneurship and international business fields.

The natural, gradual and interactive process that enriches a field with the heritage, accumulated knowledge stock and knowledge creation and diffusion principles and processes of another field, that is, the process by which a field evolves by becoming increasingly interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, has not been foreign to either of the two fields. However the rapid globalization of the environment, liberalization of trade and investments and rapid advances in technology in the latter parts of the 20th century have accelerated the actual process of infusion of the two fields, as well as others, and accentuated the rather critical need to formalize the emerging interdisciplinary field. The MIE initiative proved to be highly responsive to that need by providing flexible instruments for its scholarly expression. This volume is one of the manifestations of that expression.

I have met the scholars who have contributed to this volume, and other volumes in Elgar's MIE series, at the First and Second Biennial McGill Conferences on International Entrepreneurship in September 1998 and 2000 at McGill, in Montreal, followed by the 2001 conference at the University of Strathclyde, in Glasgow. We have all become a part of the family of MIE scholars as well as the broader International Entrepreneurship network. The scholarly papers included in this volume were selected from papers written for, and presented at, the second McGill biennial international entrepreneurship conference, which was run more like an intensive-research workshop than a formal conference. Papers submitted to this conference series, and the publications emanating from it, are normally subjected to a rigorous peer review process in several stages. The chapters in this volume are not an exception. They were first reviewed before acceptance for presentation at the conference; they were then peer reviewed blindly and revised accordingly before selection as potential chapters for inclusion in this book. I have further edited them and asked for additions, clarifications and revisions, when appropriate, before submitting the collection to

Edward Elgar Publishing for their editorial examination. This examination has normally been long, detailed and methodical. Each chapter has been copy-edited for form, consistency and accuracy. Without the patience, cooperation and diligence of all concerned, especially authors under continuous time and academic pressures, this collection would not have assumed book form.

The scholarly inception of this volume, and many other similar scholarly publications, lies in the MIE Conference Series, the success of which must be attributed mainly to a host of highly interested and dedicated scholars, and supportive colleagues, staff and assistants. In addition to conference proceedings, these conferences have produced a number of edited volumes as well as coherent collections of papers in thematic issues of scholarly journals for high impact. A selective list of publications, emanating from the first four MIE conferences, is presented in Table 1.¹

In our rapidly emerging IE community, my former and current doctoral students have risen to the scholarly challenges that International Entrepreneurship presented to all of us. Yender Lee, now a Professor of Management Information Systems and Management of Technology at the National Taipei College of Business in Taiwan, and I conducted the first diligent and laborious, epistemological and bibliographic search for the early roots of International Entrepreneurship in the mid-1990s. Our research discovered that international entrepreneurship has been functioning for a long time. Documentation of internationally-oriented entrepreneurs, who practiced entrepreneurship across nations, dates back at least to a French wine merchant, Cantillon, in the 17th century, who took the highly localized French wines to international markets, and even much farther back, to traders of international trading routes.² The international traders of the ancient trading caravans trekked the trading routes of antiquity that linked many cities for more than three millennia. The true practice of International Entrepreneurship parallels the early history of international trade and appears to be the recent discovery of a lost practice going back to antiquity.³ These traveling traders must be viewed as the early ancestors of the modern international entrepreneurs who are increasing their activities in real and cyber space.⁴

The old city of Xian (shee-yan), the seat of the old Chinese dynasties, and Empire later on, in the Middle Kingdom (that is, the current People's Republic of China) was one of the easternmost stages of the 'Silk Road' that ran thousands of miles across the Central Asian planes and the lands ruled by the old Persian Empire, Assyrian kingdom, Egyptian dynasties and what we now call Central Europe. Local products served as the wellsprings of goods for barter trade elsewhere as well as the exchange currency for obtaining the goods of other nations. The group of international traders, traveling with trading caravans, the ancient version of international trade delegations, exchanged many goods on their long routes, from silk, gunpowder, compasses and other novelties from China,⁵

Table 1 The collection of leading-edge publications in the MIE Conference Series, presented in chronological order

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- I. Selected papers from the Inaugural McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference (at McGill, Montreal, September 1998) appeared in the following:
- two dedicated sections of the *Journal of Global Focus*, **11**(4) and **8**(2), Hamid Etemad, guest editor; two special issues of the *Journal of International Marketing*, **7**(4) and **8**(2), Hamid Etemad and R.W. Wright, guest editors; *International Entrepreneurship: Globalization of Emerging Businesses* (JAI Press, 1999).
- II. Selected papers from the Second McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference, held in parallel with the 1999 ENDEC (at Nanyang University of Technology, Singapore, 1999), appeared in the following:
- Journal of Small Business Economics*, **16**(2), L.P. Dana, guest editor; *Journal of Euromarketing*, **9**(2), L.P. Dana, guest editor; *Global Marketing Co-operations and Networks* (The International Business Press, 2000); *International Entrepreneurship: An Anthology* (ENDEC, 1999, L.P. Dana, editor).
- III. Selected papers from the Third McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference (at McGill, Montreal, September 2000) have appeared in the following:
- a special issue of the *Journal of International Management*, **7**(3), Hamid Etemad and R.W. Wright, guest editors; a special issue of the *Journal of Small Business Economics*, **20**(1), Hamid Etemad and R.W. Wright, guest editors; two edited book volumes in the McGill International Entrepreneurship Series (Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd), Hamid Etemad, series editor. These books are *Globalization and Entrepreneurship: Policy and Strategy Perspectives*, June 2003 (Hamid Etemad and R.W. Wright, editors), and the current volume: *International Entrepreneurship in Small and Medium Size Enterprises: Orientation, Environment and Strategy* (Hamid Etemad, editor).
- IV. Selected papers from the Fourth McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference (The 2001 Annual Conference at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, September 2001) have appeared in the following:
- Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, **1**(2) and (3); a volume in the McGill International Entrepreneurship Series published by Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd entitled: *Emerging Paradigms in International Entrepreneurship* (Marian V. Jones and Pavlos Dimitratos, editors, 2004).
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exotic spices from the Indian subcontinent, Persian rugs and other woven fabrics from countries of the Persian Empire to olive oils, minerals and other Mediterranean goods in ancient Assyria, Egypt and what became the Roman Empire later on.

Unfortunately, the modern theories of international business and international trade have drawn attention away from the inherent entrepreneurship function and the vital role of entrepreneurs, who went through a time-consuming, laborious and risky process to make trade and investments possible. Similarly, entrepreneurship has focused on the entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial process without much concern for the broader theories that explained the flow of trade and investment. With Hankyu Chu, a current doctoral student, we have begun to combine concepts from numerous fields, including entrepreneurship and international business, for studying the inner dynamics of young and fast-growing firms in internationally oriented regional industrial clusters. Individual entrepreneurs, similar to the international traders of the past, travel the obstacle-ridden roads of industrial and corporate entrepreneurship in the globally competitive regional clusters, and play a critical role in such complex groupings. If small firms grow in industrial regional clusters much faster than their counterparts elsewhere, it is mainly because of their entrepreneurial efforts and international orientation within highly progressive enterprises and conducive environments. It is this combination of entrepreneurial efforts, enterprise capabilities and enabling environment that excel young entrepreneurs and their enterprise into the regional industrial clusters and into global markets by extension.

From its inception, the MIE series has encouraged a holistic and integrated approach, if not a paradigm, to reflect the true reality of international entrepreneurship and the internationalization process in small and medium-sized enterprises. Fortunately the emerging paradigm appears to slowly capture both the bilateral relations and the multilateral interactions among the various components influencing international entrepreneurship: internationally oriented entrepreneurs who interact with their markets and environments within and outside the firm structure; growth-oriented and entrepreneurially oriented enterprises that interact with other firms and markets within and outside their environment; and continuously evolving environments that are shaped and reshaped by the competitive dynamics of entrepreneurs and enterprises acting in their own self-interest as well as the socioeconomic forces that affect local and international markets within and outside a country's immediate boundaries. The main components of this emerging paradigm and their respective interactions are schematically presented in Figure 1. The basic design of this volume also adheres to the emerging holistic and integrated paradigm.

Finally, as MIE series editor, and on behalf of all authors shaping this volume, I hope that we have collectively succeeded in advancing the state of our thoughts and knowledge on International Entrepreneurship.

Hamid Etemad

Figure 1 Interrelations among influential components

NOTES

1. Selected papers from the Third Biennial McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference (The 2002 Annual Conference at McGill, Montreal, September 2002) are in the process of being published in prominent scholarly media, all under the guest editorship of Hamid Etemad. The tentative list of the forthcoming journals in 2003/4 includes *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, *Journal of Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Small Business Economics*, *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, *Management International Review*, and possibly others. The Sixth McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference at the University of Ulster in September 2003 (The 2003 Annual Conference) will follow the above tradition. In addition to the conference proceedings, similar efforts are under way for placing a coherent and cutting-edge set of prominent publications in books and special issues of journals with high impact.
2. The highlights of the research into the scholarly roots of International Entrepreneurship as a field of scholarly enquiry, which we have termed 'the knowledge network of international entrepreneurship', is presented in Hamid Etemad and Yender Lee (2003), 'The emerging knowledge network of international entrepreneurship: theory and evidence', *Journal of Small Business Economics*, 20(1), 5–23, and Hamid Etemad and Yender Lee (2000), 'The development path of an emerging knowledge network in international entrepreneurship', *Proceedings of Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, Entrepreneurship Division*, 21(21), 72–82.
3. For brief historical highlights of international entrepreneurship in Europe going as far back as the 1600s see Hamid Etemad (2004), 'Marshaling relations: the enduring essence of international entrepreneurship', in Leo-Paul Dana (ed.), *Handbook on Research in Entrepreneurship*, Cheltenham, UK, and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing, and, for a brief review of bazaars and caravans of ancient Assyria, Persia and China, also see Leo-Paul Dana and Hamid Etemad (2000), 'The bazaar economy', in Leo-Paul Dana, *Economics of the*

- Eastern Mediterranean: Economic Miracles in the Making*, Singapore, London and Hong Kong: World Scientific, pp. 27–45.
4. For the role of e-commerce in international entrepreneurship, see Chapter 10, as well as Hamid Etemad (2004), 'E-commerce: the emergence of a field and its knowledge network', *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*. And see also Leo-Paul Dana, Hamid Etemad and Ian Wilkinson (2004), 'Internetization: a new term for the new economy', *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 2(1).
 5. For a description of many inventions of Chinese origin, such as the compass, paper and gunpowder, see Hamid Etemad (1996), 'From obscurity to powerhouse: the process of China's two decades of development', *Journal of Business and Contemporary World*, VIII(3&4), 171–222.