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1

Introduction

START-UP U

As the last century wound to an end, Patrick Awuah, a former software engineer and program manager at Microsoft, and Nina Marini, his fellow MBA student at the University of California, Berkeley, created a business plan for a new kind of liberal arts college in Awuah's native Ghana. Twenty years later, their vision became Ashesi University, designed to educate the next generation of African leaders. Around the same time, the F. W. Olin Foundation asked Richard Miller, an engineering dean based in Iowa, to bring its vision for an innovative engineering school to be based in Massachusetts to reality. That germ of an idea became Olin College of Engineering, which today rivals MIT in the rankings of engineering education.

Just over a decade later, in 2010, John Sexton, the president of New York University, met in Abu Dhabi with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, and the two agreed to launch a new campus for NYU in the Middle East that would come to be known as NYU Abu Dhabi. Soon after Sexton and Sheikh Mohamed shook hands, Dam Bich Thuy, the chief executive officer of ANZ Bank in Vietnam, sat in her office with Thomas Vallyely, a former marine who had served in Vietnam and was then the head of Harvard's Vietnam Program; together, they imagined building a kind of university unknown in the region—one that would combine public policy, business and management, engineering, and the liberal arts. This vision became a reality in the form of Fulbright University Vietnam.

Meanwhile, in India, four first-generation entrepreneurs—Pramath Sinha, Ashish Dhawan, Sanjeev Bikhchandani, and Vineet Gupta—began meeting in the Oberoi Hotel in New Delhi. By 2010, they had decided to pool their resources to launch a liberal arts school to compete with the most prestigious institutions in the world and attract the best students from across India and beyond, which became Ashoka University. At the same time, Tan Chorh Chuan, the president of the National University of Singapore, and Richard Levin, the president of Yale University, began negotiating a partnership to build a new global liberal arts college in Singapore, which became Yale-NUS College.

During these same years, in California, the Silicon Valley entrepreneur Ben Nelson secured a \$25 million dollar investment from Benchmark Capital to create a university that would be named Minerva, which promised to revolutionize the teaching enterprise while radically cutting costs. And in a 2014 TED talk, Fred Swaniker, a former McKinsey consultant, would articulate a vision for building twenty-five university campuses across Africa that would educate three million new leaders by 2035. This network, now known as African Leadership University, is part of a larger ecosystem of institutions that has raised almost a billion dollars, built two campuses, created a set of cost-efficient regional hubs, and launched a virtual career accelerator and a global talent matching system.

All this activity might strike many as odd, given the ways in which higher education observers routinely predict the demise of the university and question the value of a liberal arts education. Critics in the United States point to a series of interlocking problems facing contemporary higher education: increasing costs and a perceived lack of return on investment, a monochrome political culture that stifles wide-ranging debate on controversial topics, and a growing perception of the liberal arts as outmoded and irrelevant to the challenges of the twenty-first century. Yet even as these storm clouds hover over traditional forms of higher education in the United States, the sun is shining brightly on new institutions that are redefining and reinventing liberal arts in every corner of the world.

Since the turn of the century, new schools devoted to liberal education have sprung up in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as in North and South America. Student demand for entry to these schools is unprecedented, and some of them are more selective than the far more established schools in the Ivy League. After the excitement of launching the new schools, the high-quality results of this type of education have kept observers interested—and made parents, governments, and employers

enthusiastic supporters. Despite the global pandemic and fraying international relations, we are witnessing ever-greater interest across the world in new global liberal arts universities, as nations seek to build their own incubators for creativity and innovation.

This book tells the inside story of the who, what, why, when, and especially the how behind the launch and development of eight of these new colleges and universities. We provide a detailed assessment of these schools, and the lessons learned from the dramatic history of their founding can guide anyone aspiring to start up a new college or university. We also aim to spur the imagination of those seeking to reinvent established institutions. Two of the schools in this book are global ventures of established universities: Yale-NUS College in Singapore and NYU Abu Dhabi in the UAE (United Arab Emirates). The other six schools—the Olin College of Engineering and Minerva University in the United States, Ashoka University in India, Fulbright University Vietnam, the African Leadership University in Mauritius and Rwanda, and Ashesi University in Ghana—are entrepreneurial ventures built from the ground up.

Some of these new colleges and universities seek to recover and reimagine ancient traditions of learning in countries that previously offered only more colonial forms of education. Others concentrate on creating modular and integrated curricula that draw on advances in our understanding of how students learn. Still others focus on the complexity and richness of education that can arise from a truly global student population. All of these schools offer new learning environments focused on achieving the highest quality of undergraduate education, advancing the most cross-cutting forms of inquiry and experiential education, and cultivating the dispositions and skills needed to navigate a turbulent world. They exemplify practices that have a high impact on student learning, including a strong emphasis on writing and research, first year and capstone seminars, common intellectual experiences and collaborative assignments, and internships and civic engagement.¹

We follow each of these schools through its history to date, with a special focus on the founding era, when the complexities and difficulties of the enterprise rise to their greatest levels. By studying this wave of new institutions, we preview the future possibilities for an educational enterprise unhindered by preexisting structures and legacy curricula: these are laboratories for innovation. The schools we examine aspire both to curate the knowledge and accomplishments of a wide range of global cultures and to transform their own societies to meet the profound challenges of the twenty-first century. Their formation, evolution, and setbacks tell dramatic

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stories of how academic entrepreneurs have overcome the constraints on innovation that pervade much of higher education. How the founders of these universities have navigated these constraints offers important lessons in leadership and intellectual courage.

We have visited most of these institutions in person, though the COVID-19 pandemic meant that we conducted our formal interviews online. And while you will hear the voices of students and faculty in each chapter, our attention in this book primarily falls on the founders and other leading architects of these schools. Building from interviews with nearly thirty university founders and current leaders, we offer vivid portraits of individuals who have taken the risk of starting up an entirely new institution, often forgoing the safety and security of successful careers in industry and academia. Pramath Sinha, for instance, trained in metallurgical engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania, built a successful consulting career in North America and India, and then cofounded Ashoka University. Ben Nelson pivoted from the private sector, where he had spent ten years building Snapfish, a technology company, to found Minerva University.

Other leading innovators came from inside higher education. Sidee Dlamini, born in South Africa and educated at Texas Christian University and the University of California at Berkeley, left her home to help build the new African Leadership University in Mauritius. Canadian Pericles Lewis, an expert in modernism and digital humanities and professor in Yale's English Department, gave up his life in New Haven to begin a new chapter as the founding president of Singapore's first liberal arts college. And as Olin College entered its twentieth year—it is the oldest of the start-ups we studied—Gilda Barabino left the City College of New York to take Olin's helm and complete the transfer of leadership from its founding president, Richard Miller.

We hope our interviews with university founders and leaders capture the drama and heroism of their quest to create new institutions and entirely new academic cultures. We trace what they sought to preserve, what they wanted to change, and how they pursued strategies to foster innovation. Diving deeper, we explore the transition of each new university from its inception to the emergence of distinctive characteristics influenced by location, local culture, and institutional partners—as well as by fiscal, political, and academic considerations. The stories of these universities are multifaceted, and offer lessons on multiple dimensions, while eluding simple categories and storylines. We found them continuously inspiring.

Your Guides to the Future of the University

We came to this study after thirty years of teaching, research, and academic leadership in American colleges and universities. We approach this book primarily as practitioners in higher education. Both of us have been deeply involved in launching new ventures similar to the start-ups we analyze in this book, having played key roles in the founding of Yale-NUS College in Singapore and Duke Kunshan University in China. (Noah also became so intrigued by one of our case studies, Minerva, that he ended up doing a stint as part of it.) Both of us have studied and taught at liberal arts colleges and research universities. We come from the fields of astrophysics and politics, and together our perspectives help bridge the cultures of science and the humanities. With decades of experience in academic research and administration, we know all too well the barriers to change in academic life, yet we recognize the necessity of new academic programs for renewing and sustaining higher education.

How did our collaboration come about? We met in 2012 when we were going in different directions. After a long career at Pomona College, Bryan left for a fellowship at Yale University, where he would help design the curriculum and work with the inaugural faculty and leaders of the nascent Yale-NUS College. Noah, who had been teaching ethics and public policy at Duke University for fifteen years, was spending his fellowship year working with the president of Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania, as that school adapted to significant demographic, financial, and educational pressures. We made common cause, and, jointly and individually, we visited over fifty schools in the United States and abroad. At every stop, we sought to understand how university leaders were dealing with the waves of change washing over their institutions.

Despite our disparate academic backgrounds and trajectories, we share two core beliefs. First, we are both devoted to the transformative value of high-quality, meaningful liberal arts and sciences education. As students and as teachers, we know firsthand how a college community can cultivate deep learning that goes beyond narrow areas of specialization. We appreciate the ways in which a liberal arts college is optimized for undergraduate learning and how faculty are incentivized both for their prowess as scholars and for their effectiveness as educators and contributors to the commonweal. This teacher-scholar model provides opportunities for frequent interaction and deep mentoring between faculty and students and is combined with a more open-ended pathway through the curriculum, enabling students to explore

unexpected interests and engage in a process of self-discovery. By receiving opportunities to discover new talents and interests before specializing, students can maximize their learning engagement and also make connections between different forms of knowledge that equip them to better analyze and address complex problems in their own communities.

At the same time, we also share a deep frustration with the inability of both liberal arts colleges and liberal-arts-oriented research universities to embrace change. Narrow, specialized forms of expertise are still the primary form of knowledge recognized and rewarded in most of higher education, and especially among the top-ranked schools. Majors still largely reflect traditional, disciplinary-based knowledge, as if ten courses in English or political science are the only or best ways to prepare students for a world in which deep habits of writing and reading and crucial skills as leaders will be required. While we value students gaining some measure of depth and expertise in a field of study, we see siloed and increasingly narrow forms of research and teaching as barriers to cultivating adaptable, creative, and truly wise students.

This narrowness is exacerbated by the demise of any commitment to ensuring that students share enough knowledge and experience in common, so that, as Columbia University's Andrew Delbanco puts it, "no one student is a complete stranger to any other."² Instead, faculty offer students vague distribution requirements, as if a course in chemistry here and literature there amounts to any kind of coherent exposure to core ideas or ways of knowing. The highest quality of teaching is also insufficiently prioritized, even at some of our best schools. When tenure largely rewards scholarship, great teachers remain the exception rather than the rule. And even when a school does prioritize the highest-quality teaching in thoughtfully designed curriculums, the cost of attendance is beyond the means of many. Those few schools that can afford to provide significant financial aid move mountains to meet the needs of as many students as they can. But the very cost of the education and the unwillingness of most institutions to think differently about ways to offer more flexible and affordable ways of learning mean that most elite schools remain overwhelmingly populated by students who come from the wealthiest backgrounds. As we began to talk about these issues, we realized how frustrated we both felt by these seemingly intractable barriers to a genuinely outstanding education.

The reasons for these constraints are not hard to find. Too often, colleges and universities are driven to conformity by their desire to maintain or to achieve prestige. Indeed, far more than creativity, cost control, or innova-

tion, the world of higher education is defined by rankings based on research productivity and by popularity based on how difficult it is for students to be admitted. These twin metrics—research productivity and student exclusivity—cause colleges and universities to emulate one another, replicating practices that maximize research scholarship and curriculums that imitate highly ranked peer institutions. In the most prominent institutions, the historic accretion of wealth and prestige has paralyzed the academic culture into a state of stasis, leaving leaders unable to muster the energy to fix something that many faculty do not think is broken. While serving as founts of creative thinking inside the laboratory or by the solitary thinker, universities paradoxically lack all but the most superficial forms of differentiation.³ Richard Brodhead, former president of Duke University, calls this “the inertia of excellence.”⁴ This lack of differentiation also reflects the cultures and structures of higher education, which were designed internally to support institutional longevity and to encourage mimicry owing to external regulation; over time, these forces converge to reduce dynamism in the market. This risk aversion is further supported by a system of shared governance that fragments decision-making authority and often requires a high degree of consensus to try something new or even just to stop doing something old.

As Bryan was working to launch what became Yale-NUS College in Singapore, Noah was invited to help create a new university in China, today known as Duke Kunshan University. As we pursued our respective work, we met many others around the world who were also founding new institutions, and we became inspired by the possibilities to push at the boundaries of the constraints on innovation in higher education. Both of us began our explorations by leaving our own institutional culture to learn about other cultures; and, to our happy surprise, we were indeed discovering fresh perspectives about the value of the liberal arts. Traveling in India to visit new universities and living and working in Singapore and China gave us the chance to see the exhilarating new ways in which Asian countries were embracing the liberal arts as a way to invigorate and accelerate economic growth. They saw a direct linkage between higher education and their national success, an understanding that seems notably absent today in the United States.

It was bracing and refreshing to see how important the educational enterprise was for the future of these countries. Our travels also gave us insights into what a start-up in education looks like on the ground. Start-up universities embody the youthful energy, the utopian spirit, and the open-ended possibilities that match the mind-set and energies of their students. While

traditions and culture strongly shape what's possible at well-established schools, start-ups create their own cultures and new ways of thinking, often cocreated by faculty, students, and staff in real time. This process of cocreation was another wonderful surprise from our journey across the higher-education landscape and is shared in the pages of this book. Across all these institutions, we found a truly compelling level of engagement in the creation of the institutional fabric—and a sense of shared ownership of the school's vital importance. We came away wanting to share those institutional stories with readers who might also find them inspiring.

Thorny Questions

Our journey also made plain the many thorny questions that founders of new universities must confront. Higher education is a complex environment in which simple solutions often end up dashed on the rocks. Some of the problems arise in the planning process, such as how to communicate the vision behind a new venture to attract supporters, faculty, and students. Essential to this quest is the elusive quality of prestige and the accompanying question: *How do you start a new university and create an appealing brand when nobody knows who you are?*

Another problem, much lamented by the popular press and by parents paying for tuition in the United States, involves higher education's astronomical cost. Paradoxically, the best weapon for reducing these costs is a massive institutional endowment, which allows for expenses to be reduced through financial aid. At most of the wealthiest private universities, these endowments are built over centuries and amount to billions of dollars. They are supplemented by gifts from generations of alumni and well-wishers, allowing the established university to bank on the accumulated social capital of many generations. A new university enjoys none of these benefits. Yet it somehow must build a new campus, pay faculty, and provide financial aid and a reasonable price point for students. This raises the question: *Where in the world do you get the money needed to build a top-ranked university from scratch and keep it financially viable?*

Even if the university founder has somehow navigated past these daunting obstacles, the new institution needs to attract high-quality faculty, who in coming to the new university are taking giant risks for their career, and almost certainly will be saddled with Herculean challenges in designing the curriculum, starting new research programs, and establishing the institution, sometimes in an unfamiliar country thousands of miles from their home.

This raises another difficult question: *How do you attract faculty to commit their careers to an institution that does not yet exist, and then convince students and families to invest in the unproven institution?*

Once the initial capital, campus, and founding faculty are in place, the next steps involve building the new curriculum and earning accreditation from agencies that often favor familiar and time-tested approaches to teaching and learning. While faculty and supporters are often motivated by the challenge to innovate and provide something entirely new, their energy and enthusiasm can collide head on with the harsh reality of creating classes that work and that accreditors are willing to validate, while finding faculty who understand how to teach in new ways. Hence another thorny question: *How does one design a new curriculum that is innovative and distinctive, that is responsive to the demands of the new century, and yet is recognizable to accreditors and employers?*

As a new university begins to mature and rapidly outgrows its initial location, its physical and virtual infrastructure simultaneously needs to grow with it to support the many new programs, classes, and research projects underway. The process is a bit like building a railroad track right in front of the locomotive as it moves ahead at full steam. Somehow the campus needs to be built out even as the programs are being initiated. *How does one acquire land, build a new campus, and expand the physical and virtual presence of the new university, even while the institution is being launched?*

As daunting as these questions are, they are only the most tangible challenges in building a new institution. Still knottier challenges arise in creating a workable system of governance and forging an academic ethos that can help the new institution's leaders collectively make intelligent decisions and respond to the needs of the country and region where their college or university is located. These challenges can be summarized as follows: *How does a founding team build an effective governance structure and an authentic shared culture in a brand new institution, without any of the shared assumptions or traditions that most universities enjoy?*

Another set of especially difficult questions arises from the tensions between an explicit or implicit commitment to preparing students to function in a democratic society within a world in which they might live under radically different forms of governance. The nature of both the questions and the answers here varies, but they are shaped by the location, the local culture and community, legacy practices imported by faculty, and the energetic influence of the student body. All these forces shape an institution and its emerging cultures and values. Yet this process raises additional thorny

questions. *To what degree are these new start-ups reflections of a distinctly American approach to the liberal arts, and to what degree do they reflect local traditions and aspirations? What are the different and sometimes hidden meanings embedded in aspirations to offer a globalized form of education and to create “global citizens”?*

Some of the schools we survey in this book have had to navigate explicit and implicit challenges to their commitment to *ars liberalis*, or the “art of freedom,” when operating in different cultural and political contexts. *How, then, can one create a university that protects academic inquiry and free expression in societies that don’t share democratic values?* The chapters that follow offer observations and lessons learned—sometimes lessons still in process—from the institutions we examined.

A Pluralist View of Impact

Higher education has paid much attention in recent days to the tasks of increasing access and lowering costs. The primary strategies for addressing these vital concerns have involved building larger institutions and deploying technology to reach even more students. These strategies have begun to have a significant impact. Schools such as Arizona State University (which in 2022 enrolled over 70,000 students on campus and more than 60,000 students online, with 13,000 international students on campus and 29,000 graduate students) and Southern New Hampshire University (with 3,000 students on campus and 175,000 online as of 2022) have led the way in inventing new and improved ways to deliver higher education to more students.

By way of contrast, the institutions we profile in this book have all started small, usually with well under a thousand students, and even the ones that imagine scaling their size aspire to reach no more than a few thousand students, though a couple aspire to reach ten to twenty thousand students. We focus on these smaller schools for several reasons. As important as it is to lower costs and increase access, some of the larger institutions are simply scaling up existing models of higher education. While these larger institutions are indeed refining efficiency and improving delivery mechanisms to reach larger and larger audiences of students, their Achilles’ heel can be the quality of the education they offer. In too many cases wider access, whether in person or online, offers poorly defined curricula and outdated modes of teaching often delivered either by faculty focused primarily on research or by adjunct instructors cobbling together classes at different colleges or universities. These larger-scale institutions, with only a few notable excep-

tions, do very little to ensure that their students actually receive a meaningful education. For this reason, we concentrate on smaller institutions with a more innovative bent that have set their sights on reimagining ways to offer the highest-quality education. These schools also face the challenge of increasing access and reducing cost, and so we spotlight several that have taken on this challenge in exciting new ways. Even for those institutions that intend to remain relatively small—and some of them are also expensive—we see enormous value in examining what innovations are possible when the quality of education constitutes the highest priority.

Not all these innovations will be adaptable by larger institutions, of course. But we think much can still be learned from the opportunity to loosen the constraints on the imagination and by the process of design. As with any sort of monoculture, a lack of diversity and experimentation poses a long-term threat to higher education. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic gave us all a shared personal experience of how our human species is threatened, and it reminds us of how ecosystems are at risk without the ability to learn from differentiation. For this among other reasons, we see our start-up universities as vibrant green shoots of change, of innovation and experimentation, traits that can be notably lacking in the larger or older institutions, including many well-established liberal arts colleges. Ultimately, we are pluralists in the educational arena: we think that having more schools worldwide in which participants and planners get under the hood and tinker with the engine, or even reimagine the chassis, drives impact. A thousand smaller to medium schools that offer high-quality education should complement the current preoccupation with a few schools gaining increasing market share.

Our start-up universities have employed a spectrum of strategies for developing greater impact beyond their walls. Ashesi University in Ghana is an example of a school that seeks to stay small, form partnerships with others, and to accomplish its mission of nurturing a new generation of entrepreneurial and ethical leaders for Africa. By seeking to educate a new vanguard, Ashesi aims no less than to foster a new African renaissance and allow African countries to fully enter the global stage. By contrast, another of the institutions we study, African Leadership University (ALU), aspires to operate on a completely different scale of student enrollment and refuses to limit itself to one country or even one continent. Some of the institutions we study, such as ALU and Minerva University, are pushing the boundaries to find more efficient ways to develop the highest-quality learning environments, while others, such as Yale-NUS College and NYU Abu Dhabi, instead prioritize maximizing quality, with few cost constraints.

Still other institutions, such as Ashoka University and Fulbright University Vietnam, have had a direct impact on higher-education law in their regions—here India and Vietnam, respectively. Fulbright leaders successfully pushed to revise regulations in their country so that the measure of independence they gained from government oversight could be claimed by other universities as well. Ashoka’s imprint can be seen in the National Education Policy issued by the government in 2020 and in subsequent government promulgations. The 2020 policy document validated the liberal arts approach within Indian education and urged its broader implementation across the country.

The influence of these start-up institutions doesn’t end there. We can also observe their demonstration effect—that is, the ways in which their new organizational forms and pedagogical cultures have become a reference point for broader transformations in higher education. For Ashoka, these transformations are apparent in the spread of similar kinds of ventures across India, as hundreds of new privately funded universities have opened their doors since 2015, including prominent entrants that offer Ashoka-like interdisciplinary and liberal arts forms of education. Olin College of Engineering sits at the top of the rankings for engineering education, a remarkable level of recognition that has enabled it to achieve a worldwide impact: leaders of engineering schools around the world regularly visit and establish connections to emulate the unique ingredients of success that Olin has found. Minerva University, too, is regularly recognized within the top ranks of innovative universities; and the for-profit Minerva Project now partners with a growing number of new and established universities across four continents, which seek to adopt Minerva’s approach to curricular design, teaching pedagogy, and systematic assessment for their own regions.

Who This Book Is for and How It Unfolds

There are three different audiences for this book. First, our colleagues in higher education will find value in the courage and intellectual chutzpah that it takes to start a new college or university from scratch. Leaders of future start-up institutions as well as established universities can learn valuable lessons about fostering innovation and change. Second, the growing legion of entrepreneurs who come from outside the academic tradition can also gain from reading this book: we hope it will help them see more clearly how academic culture and priorities within a start-up university share certain characteristics with industrial start-ups but also have substantive

differences—and why these differences matter. Finally, we would like to help the general public, both in the United States and globally, better understand the value of a liberal education for unleashing creative capacities and building collective understanding both in the humanities and social sciences and in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and entrepreneurial fields.

As participants in start-up ventures ourselves, we are painfully aware of how hard it is to create something truly new and valuable in academic life. As such, our inquiry has been driven by an appreciation of the intellectual challenges and practical trade-offs involved in founding new colleges and universities. We haven't looked for scandals, written an exposé, or sought to discredit what the various founders have aspired to achieve. Where warranted, however, we have brought an appropriate measure of skepticism, because we wanted to test claims and dig deeper than a public relations exercise. One of the greatest ills in academia occurs when critics shift from skepticism to cynicism, and we've worked to avoid that in these pages. Instead, we've sought to question superficial claims made by both supporters and detractors, and we want in our inquiry to understand deeply and fully how these institutions have come to life. As a result, our narrative offers few easy solutions; instead, it seeks to inspire others by showing how our founders have, for the most part, successfully completed inordinately difficult journeys, while also revealing tensions that they have navigated along the way.

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to us as authors and our journey through the landscape of higher education. The following chapter provides an overview of the global landscape of higher education and some of the emerging trends that affect universities around the world, and that have set the scene for a wave of exciting new start-up universities. The subsequent eight chapters provide deep dives into the founding stories of eight of the most exciting twenty-first-century global start-up universities. Our stories focus on the founders, their vision, and the struggles and achievements that arose within the first years of starting their new university. These stories constitute chapters 2 through 9, the main body of this book. In each chapter-length case study, we create a portrait of the founding team members, their environment, and the unique factors that shaped the design solutions they developed.

Our first two case-study chapters follow the founding of two new institutions built in Asia by well-established parent institutions: NYU Abu Dhabi in the UAE (chapter 3), and Yale-NUS College in Singapore, built by Yale University and the National University of Singapore (chapter 4). The next

two chapters follow the development of new institutions that made use of a codesign process where students and faculty worked together to build the curriculum: Olin College of Engineering in the United States (chapter 5) and Fulbright University Vietnam (chapter 6). The subsequent chapters consider the adoption of a largely American-style liberal arts model to new contexts, founded by leaders who were making a return to their home countries after experiencing the US liberal arts model in their own education: Ashoka University in India (chapter 7) and Ashesi University in Ghana (chapter 8). The final two case-study chapters explore the founding of two unique models for a new kind of university that offers holistic reform and promises to lower costs and leverage new technologies as a central design feature. These institutions also are both heavily influenced by corporate entrepreneurial culture and arise from founders with extensive experience within the Silicon Valley start-up environment: African Leadership University in Mauritius and Rwanda (chapter 9) and Minerva University in the United States (chapter 10).

After our journey through the stories of each of these schools, we conclude with three chapters that synthesize and analyze what we have observed. While the geography and personalities are indeed distinct, all the new universities share common properties shaped by similar forces and constraints within higher education. In chapter 11 we explore the visible dimensions of building a new university, which can be thought of as the artifacts and espoused values of the emerging culture, to use the terminology of organizational theorist Edgar Schein. These artifacts and values include the development of institutional prestige and a sustainable business model, the mechanics of the build and launch (including hiring faculty and recruiting students), developing a new curriculum, and achieving accreditation. The development of both a physical and a virtual presence is also explored in this chapter, and the ways in which the resulting community and campus foster a new institutional culture and the interactions needed for a vibrant intellectual learning environment. Chapter 12 dives into the complexities that arise within the newly established academic community, including the thorny issues of governance, the conflicts that can arise from competing interests in the new university, and strategies for resolving these tensions. Among these complexities are the ways in which the new university interacts with multiple stakeholders, especially local governments, and manages competing political interests within its country and region.

In chapter 13 we reflect on several underlying patterns. We include in this final chapter a set of takeaway lessons for the diverse audiences for this

book and for higher education as a larger shared enterprise within human civilization. This chapter includes lessons for future founders of new universities and participants in established colleges and universities (current faculty, students, academic leaders, and boards), as well as all who care about preserving what's special about a liberal arts education, while creating new ways for this type of learning to flourish in the world. Lastly, we conclude with a set of personal reflections on our journey together, on what most inspired us, what we found most surprising, and what questions continue to consume us. We thank all the founders, faculty, critics, and supporters who have made a high-quality liberal education accessible to their students and to future generations. We hope you enjoy this journey as much as we did in taking it.

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