

Eleven

But since **our** major interest was not in an individual or a category of individuals, but in a social system, we had to go on to characterize this social system and show how the entrepreneurial activity in question was changing it. We therefore had to try to show the system of allocations in the entrepreneur's community and to place his new allocations in relation to these others. In this material and elsewhere (Barth 1967) one finds that entrepreneurs effect new conversions between forms of goods that were previously not directly convertible. They thereby create new paths for the circulation of goods, often crossing barriers between formerly discrete spheres of circulation.

This activity cannot be without effect on the culture **of** the members **of** an entrepreneur's community. If we **look** for the bases on which people make their allocations in primary cultural facts such as people's categorization of different kinds of goods and their preference criteria for evaluating different outcomes of their allocations, then we are relating their choices to the cultural values or value orientations to which they subscribe. The entrepreneurial coup, where one makes one's big profits, is where one discovers a path by which something of little value can be transformed into something of great value. But looked at this way, entrepreneurial successes produce new information on the interrelations of different categories of valued goods. The information produced by such activity will render false the idea that

people have held till then about the relative value of goods, and can reasonably be expected to precipitate reevaluations and modifications both of categorizations and of value orientations. In other words, it changes the cultural bases that determine people's behavior, and in this way entrepreneurial activity becomes a major wellspring of cultural and social change (cf. Barth **1966**, esp. pp. **16–20**).