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Discursive and media tessitura of entrepreneurial activity in Brazil¹

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Abstract

The present paper aims to discuss the discursive relationships among entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship in contemporary Brazil. Observing the Brazilian digital platforms that make the object of research, we have identified the emergence of projects and discourses referring to the utopia of an “entrepreneurial society”, as seen in P. Drucker. In that context, we are able to relate the social roles (DAHRENDORF, 2012) of the business entrepreneur and of the social entrepreneur, both being identified with the notion of common good. From Fairclough’s (2001) critical discourse analysis perspective, we study the intersections and overlapping between such agents, corporations and initiatives that aim at profiting and those of the non-profit sector.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial culture. Communication and consumption. Social entrepreneurship. Discourse analysis. Inspiration.

Introduction

The emergence of social entrepreneurship in the Brazilian context did not equally correspond to a precise conceptualization that could help us establish clear distinctions between such term and other that inhabit the same semantic field, as “social economy” and “social business”. It is common sense in Brazilian culture that all agents identified with social activity are not well distinguished, but yet another more complex phenomenon and full of paradoxes unfolds, which is the current overlapping in meaning of the images of business entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs. We have the Brazilian reality as our focus of observation and that includes regional issues as much as globalized discourses that are connected to the national context. That is the case of the Chivas Regal marketing campaign, the international whisky brand that has developed a global strategy in line with the Brazilian scenario.

1 Modified and amplified version of work presented in the 5th CIRIEC International Research Conference on Social Economy, that took place on July the 15th to 18th 2015 in Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (ISCTE/IUL), Lisbon, Portugal. The present work was accomplished with support from CNPq, National Council for Scientific and Technological Development - Brazil (process no. 303434 / 2019-8); and the São Paulo State Research Support Foundation (FAPESP), process no. 2019 / 14365-7.

Our initial premise is that there is a moral dimension that recovers the field of entrepreneurship and that it also includes social entrepreneurship. Such entrepreneurial morality represents a shared world view, a true expression of a social class. As we may observe in the Project Draft (<http://projetodraft.com/>), which is one of the objects of the present study, creative economy, startups, social businesses, amongst other variations, are united by a perspective on the world which is based on the logic of an “entrepreneurial society”. The ideology of such community of entrepreneurs, as expressed in the Brazilian mediatic context, is founded on the sharing of ethical aspects, ideas, tastes, and consumption practices. It also founded as much as on the models for conceiving what should be the “new” Brazil, visualized under the leadership of those agents.

From that perspective, we have pointed out some arising issues: the market and the neoliberal logic that intertwine both activities; the presence of the biographic space (as in Leonor Arfuch), meaning the use of biographies and autobiographies to spread “inspirational” examples to be followed by all of society; the representations of happiness related to the entrepreneurial culture. We are also reflecting on consumption as being the axis for the interchange and overlapping between entrepreneurial practices, projects that focus on profit, and those that identify with social entrepreneurship such as social businesses, social economy, among other expressions associated with the notion of the “social”, often confused in the Brazilian context.

Before we go any further, we have to point out that the methodological perspective adopted for this study is the critical discourse analysis as seen in Fairclough (2001, pp. 27-28). The multidimensional approach proposed by the author includes the following aspects, considered relevant to the understanding of the objects in a context of social change:

- a. The adoption of a multidimensional analytic method – such approach considers the relationships involving discursive and social changes by establishing the correspondences between textual properties and discursive events, understood as social practices. In the present work, the entrepreneurial and social entrepreneurial practices are considered as a communicative phenomenon. That way, the discourses over such agent’s social practices bring textual marks and they inform on ideology and on the world view of the entrepreneurial society. The social transformations envisioned by the agents in the scene equal the changes in discursive formations. That we have observed concerning the way the profile and the role of social entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs are built;
- b. Applying a multifunctional method of analysis – it takes into consideration the analysis of discursive practices and their effects on knowledge (including beliefs and common sense), social relationships, and identity matters. The notion of discourse should be adequate to the study of those three aspects and also it should consider that “texts simultaneously represent aspects of the world (the physical world, the social world, the mental world); enact social relations between participants in social events and the attitudes, desires, and values of

the participants” (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003, p. 27). Regarding that aspect, we see how the discourses of entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs end up feeding social representations at the same time that they enhance identities related to entrepreneurship as the paradigmatic institution of contemporaneity. In other words, the diffusion of the biographical pattern, guided by the entrepreneurial culture, promotes and encourages models for social relationships and for building identities that are compatible with the project of society at stake. In the realm of subjectivities, that is, in the contemporary process of individualization (BECK, 2010), the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture is often expressed by regimes of convoking (PRADO, 2013).

- c. Applying a historical analysis method – discursive analysis should consider historicity, the building of discursive orders from a historical perspective. That way the meaning attributed to an entrepreneur and to the most recent figure of the social entrepreneur has to be debated in relation to the historical movement that results in the contemporary context. Fairclough (2001) takes into consideration the intertextual processes by which, in times of changes, discursive practices broaden the limits established by institutions or by society in general. From the textual environment to the broader historical movement, we try to understand how discourses on entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship engage their own historicities based on a past that is adequate to their idealized vision. They also project the future according to their actions and values;
- d. Critical approach applied to the method – the “change in discourse as a dimension of wider cultural and social change” (FAIRCLOUGH, 2001, p. 28) is not transparent to the agents immersed in the social practices. A critical study contributes to include reflexivity in the processes of change as they put in evidence the institutions, technologies, social movements, and paradoxes that those processes entail. At this point, we try to contribute with the debate over the social transformation process through deconstructing the discourses that promote an entrepreneurial culture and that try to universalize their world view disguising interests and power disputes, the available forms of legitimacy in stake, etc.

The concepts of economy, entrepreneurial culture and the meanings of common good

As we debate the meaning of an economy of the common good as well as the participation of entrepreneurs (generic notion associated to business entrepreneurs) and social entrepreneurs as protagonist agents in this scenario, we find relevant to present a historical perspective on the economic field, its relation with the civil society and with community interests. That way, in consonance with Fairclough’s (2001) methodological approach, we

intend to retrace a possible historicity applied to the present study, which is supported by bibliographic research, and that sets light over matters related to the entrepreneurial culture of our time.

Polanyi (2012b, p. 95) bases his economic theory on the idea that capitalism, consolidated during the 19th century, has brought an economic system institutionally separated from the whole of society. The participation of individuals in that system is not granted by tradition or by any other institution. The system of market economy imposes with its self-regulation, through its own laws, a new paradigm of society according to the dynamic of supply and demand. In the words of Polanyi (2012a, p. 151): “Economic liberalism was the organizing principle of a society engaged in creating a market system. Born as a mere penchant for nonbureaucratic methods, it evolved into a veritable faith in man’s secular salvation through a self-regulating market”. The idea of having faith in the liberal market discussed by the author corresponds to the ethics of the capitalist system as a whole - presupposed by the utopian vision of the invisible hand of the market and its autonomous criteria of justice. This ethics is updated in the context of contemporary neoliberalism, in which the entrepreneur’s “purpose” corresponds to an individualized conscience, even more autonomous from the social scenario in which their practices are established.

The advent of a liberal economy is the generator of a countermovement almost simultaneously, a defensive reaction to the changes that would destroy the very system itself through the crisis that historically persists in relation to capitalism. The principle of the great transformation promoted by such economic conception means the subjection of man and nature to the logic of the market:

Production is the interaction of man and nature; if this process is to be organized through a self-regulating mechanism of barter and exchange, then man and nature must be brought into its orbit; they must be subject to supply and demand, that is, be dealt with as commodities, as goods produced for sale (POLANYI, 2012a, p. 146).

In that conceptual environment, Polanyi (2012a, 2012b) rebuilds the social history of the 19th century around two basic conflicts that found the crisis of the capitalist system. One of them is the well-ventilated class conflict, widely studied by authors such as Karl Marx, considering the classic polarization between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The other one is the “The one was given by the clash of the organizing principles of economic liberalism and social protection which led to a deep-seated institutional strain” (POLANYI, 2012a, p. 149). In the core of this dilemma is the notion of freedom as understood from a market perspective:

Second, there is the equally mistaken doctrine of the essentially economic nature of class interests. Though human society is naturally conditioned by

economic factors, the motives of human individuals are only exceptionally determined by the needs of material want-satisfaction. That nineteenth-century society was organized on the assumption that such a motivation could be made universal was a peculiarity of the age. It was therefore appropriate to allow a comparatively wide scope to the play of economic motives when analyzing that society. But we must guard against prejudging the issue, which is precisely to what extent such an unusual motivation could be made effective (POLANYI, 2012a, p. 282-283).

Supported by such notion from Robert Owen's (1771-1858) – considered one of the founders of the utopian socialism and the cooperative movement –, Polanyi (2012a) reviews the critical approach that echoes from Owen's actions and ideas. The author then relates them to the emergence of the social matter (QUINTÃO, 2012) and the traditional trend of social economy. Polanyi (2012a, 2012b) looks for the economy in a wider sense, considering the fundamental values of the human being. That leads him, for example, to the conclusion that the liberal project fails exactly in restricting freedom to the market dimension. That overshadows the restriction in the freedom of those marginalized by the system – the unemployed, the helpless, those slaved by the fear and the uncertainty regarding their lives and future.

In another theoretical framework, Foucault (2008) develops in his *The birth of biopolitics* on the incompatibilities between the concept of civil society, brought by the modern State, and the economy resulting from this context. The economy organizes its laws and its own self-regulation and those are independent of the centralizing power that should rule the civil society and the realm of the subjects of law. A character emerges from such a scenario, the *homo oeconomicus*, characterized by his individual interests, conflicts and opposed to the State, on its turn identified with collective and communitarian interests. In face of economic autonomy, which can be related to Polanyi's notion of great transformation, the sovereign power is left to negotiate with those economic interests and with the permanent risk of compromising its very sovereignty because of that. According to Foucault (2008), market-based society is ruled by a regulating principle that is beyond the possibility of the exchange of goods, being mainly focused on competition mechanisms to which society should surrender.

On the limit, the social network built around the *homo oeconomicus* is known for the aspect of atomization in opposition to the idea of totality: "*Homo oeconomicus* is the one island of rationality possible within an economic process whose uncontrollable nature does not challenge, but instead founds the rationality of the atomistic behavior of *homo oeconomicus*" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 383). As Foucault (2008, p. 296) summarizes: "*Homo oeconomicus* is, if you like, the abstract, ideal, purely economic point that inhabits the dense, full, and complex reality of civil society". Considered a technology of the liberal governmentality, civil society is born as an arrangement of the modern State in order to deliver a notion of

community, which includes the subject of the law and the legal principles supporting the wider social contract. Despite that, the ideal kind of economical subject seems to belong to broader conjunction and at the same time to be detached from it: “civil society is the concrete ensemble within which these ideal points, economic men, must be placed so that they can be appropriately managed” (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 296).

From such Polanyi (2012a) and Foucault’s (2008) debate on the historical contributions over the economy, we notice the complex aspects that involve the emergence of an agent focused on the common good. He is conceived in an entrepreneurial culture, meaning that he is born according to the logic of the market: the *social entrepreneur*. His relationship with the image of the entrepreneur resides in the adoption of similar procedures and forms of performing the work according to the incorporated market logic even though they differ on their goals. The entrepreneur theoretically aims at the profit and the accomplishment of individual interests, establishing a relationship with the image of the *homo oeconomicus* as described by Foucault. On his turn, the social entrepreneur sets as the objective of his work the attention to *social issues* (SARKAR, 2010). That seemingly easy equation develops its own logic, far from the Cartesian one, as the images of both agents are overlapped, aligned with an economic conception of the common good.

In the present study, we perform the analysis of the discourses that recover the field of Brazilian entrepreneurship, observing the particular way it incorporates and resignifies the logic of the common good. Practices and discourses are put together in the name of the social role of the entrepreneur within society, expressing the imaginary formations of a field. It simultaneously privileges the connection with the spirit of a time, the spirit of capitalism applied to the contemporary Brazilian context.

Critical analysis of discourse in the field of Brazilian entrepreneurship

“*Social entrepreneurs of the world, Unite!*”. Such calling for action found in the header of a research form² takes us back to the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels (2002) as it is part of a platform project for promoting social entrepreneurship in Brazil. In the original Manifesto, we face the convoking of workers (“Workers of the world, Unite!”), now, in its recovery in the research form, we call for the union of an imagined community organized around a concept – which, by intertextual reference to the summons of the Marxist manifesto, seeks to appropriate an image of social class, emptied of its original meaning. The same text, included in the presentation of the research form, understands the social entrepreneur as an authentic subject, as Taylor (2011) indicates; this interpretation is identifiable in the statement: “the questions are directed to the entrepreneur that there is in you”. Such an approach, subsuming a vocation for the social entrepreneurial activity and evoking authenticity, provides us with some clues to the understanding of the spirit of a

² Available at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1dMEPKEP4uyIUJTxrJZlu5VitPhDhVKAJeCy_ZzwjO7A/viewform?c=0&w=1. Accessed on: Jan. 16, 2018.

time. It is a time in which the successful business entrepreneur is a cultural model and the social entrepreneur responds to the solidarity and utopian yearnings of restless individuals, pragmatic and citizens.

The polarization between “good” and “evil” conducts the entrepreneurial initiatives and as they are taken to the edge, inform on the studies of what is economy and its agents. The slogan for the Atados network website (atados.com.br), a social entrepreneurship that promotes volunteer work, is “A network for good, to do good!”/ “Uma rede do bem, para fazer o bem!” It works as a way of worshiping all the projects and initiatives reunited, as well as the image of the people that actually volunteer to work. In this platform, we basically have the exhibition of activities related to the third sector, as non-governmental organizations and other kinds of projects clearly related to the notion of common good. The solution for social problems is understood to be the goal of the agents and the adoption of the same moral attributes by the participants is encouraged. The “good” network presupposes, at a certain level, the existence of the opposite, the economy of “evil”, in which the paradigm is the focus on profit and the response to individual interests rather than communitarian ones.

That kind of endogenous self-criticism is born within the very economic system for the existence of its “social” strand. Nevertheless, it does not embody an aggressive discourse that can challenge the neoliberal paradigm. Regarding that specific aspect, such process can be related to the incorporation of criticism by the capitalist rhetoric, present in the scope of the theory for a new spirit of capitalism (BOLTANSKI; CHIAPELLO, 2009).

As Iglesia (2014, p. 45) argues, “to consider that the main motivation for the entrepreneurs and the businessmen is selfless contradicts the very essence of ‘capitalism’, whose expressed name already presents the ultimate goal of such economic system”. The equation that tries to sum up the historical contradictions between the economic field and communitarian interests, as we can see in Foucault (2008), raises the flag of making a profit with a “cause”. It is through this notion of “cause” that we consider that there is a contemporary reinterpretation of the vocation discussed by Weber (2004), through the image of the social entrepreneur. For Weber (2004), a religious ethic mobilized the bourgeois entrepreneur, which is incorporated into the capitalist system as rationality of earthly acts, governed by a greater purpose, associated with the common good. The social entrepreneur incorporates the transcendent mission - devoid of the traditional religious character - to his practices through a heroic and sometimes personalist narrative, which disconnects his actions from private interests, from the practice of profit, or even from the support of the State. In this way, a macro narrative of the social entrepreneur is built, fed by global agents who publicize their social roles - such as the organizations Ashoka, Skoll Foundation and Schwab (CASAQUI; SINATO, 2015).

The alignment of the common good to a purpose as a way of expressing a good intention, a desire to win, but in “the right way”, is at the core of the Chivas Regal marketing campaign. Chivas’ strategy, having in Brazil one of its world connections, involves globalized advertising communication and considers regional unfolding. It even includes the

organization of events and room for networking and the exchange of ideas, as we debate a little further. In the ad movie that presents the concept entitled “Win the right way” (CHIVAS REGAL, 2014), we are presented to a gallery of model characters, social entrepreneurs by the definition of Chivas. Which perspective should that be? It is the one of success, of the “good winners” that combine a cause to competitiveness, to their performance in the market.

The Brazilian scenario has several social entrepreneurs recognized beyond the country’s borders, as is the case of Vera Cordeiro, founder of the NGO Saúde Criança (Children Health) and a fellow of the Ashoka. Ashoka is one of the main organizations for the encouragement of social entrepreneurship in the world, to which is attributed the birth of such concept itself. The person appointed to represent the social agent in the marketing campaign is Marcos Palmeira, a soap opera actor from Globo Network, the main television network in the country. He is also the owner of a farm that produces organic food and so he was raised to the title of social entrepreneur. On Chivas Regal’s Facebook profile his life story becomes a heroic narrative told in six episodes, six short duration movies followed by a gallery of photographs.

The visibility given to exemplary life trajectories (BUONANNO, 2011) is part of the productive system of the digital platforms in the field of entrepreneurship. The consumption of such representations and narratives is a process implied in the project of an entrepreneurial society (DRUCKER, 2011). That way we can have a production chain, the circulation – boosted by the digital media – and consumption related to the entrepreneurial culture. Such chain is explicitly undertaken as a strategy for the country’s transformation through a new economic conception.

In the case of Chivas and the promotion of the life trajectory of Marcos Palmeira, the presented model includes a series of mythicizations, paradoxes and shifts in meaning (and also the absence of it). In such a present take that recovers the remote past, it is interesting to notice how an alignment of life cycles and the process of making sense points to an Ethic, an integrity presupposed by the concept of Protestant Ethic as analyzed by Weber (2004). In that sense, the calling of the actor would have come through his proximity, still in his youth, with indigenous people because of his father’s work. His father was Zelito Viana, a movie maker that has reported on the drama and conflicts that had affected Brazilian native populations, especially in the 70s with the documentary “Terra dos índios”/ “Land of the indigenous” (1978). Palmeira will locate the origin of the teachings, of the ethics that he currently associates with social entrepreneurship exactly from the Indigenous. Thus, his life is organized in cycles, in episodes of the web series that reiterates a logic of vocation, of something transcendent that mobilizes the actions of the actor and entrepreneur, practicing “fair trade”, and now associated with the spirit of the social entrepreneur, across the symbolic universe of Chivas.

The process of building life as a narrative does not escape the feeling of awkwardness brought to the viewer that knows the actor in the Brazilian context, because he is a celebrity, because his everyday life is followed, even if sporadically, by the press supported by gossip,

photography and the *paparazzi*. Marcos Palmeira has a long and stable trajectory as an actor, with a many years lasting contract with Globo network and having originated from a successful family of artists. Besides his father, he is Chico Anysio's nephew, one of the greatest Brazilian comedians of all time, also with a long career at Globo network. Even so, the actor is represented as someone who had to overcome countless obstacles to win. His coronation a successful man with a purpose is thus a rhetoric construction made by Chivas advertisement, combining the mythic model of the American self-made man and the legitimization of the journey of the Brazilian worker (SOUZA, 2010).

However, the main legitimization at stake transcends the image of Marcos Palmeira, which becomes controversial when overlapped with the concept of the social entrepreneur. It regards the understanding of the value of “good” extended to all and any entrepreneur nurturing the idea of adding a purpose to his profit goal. The actor-entrepreneur describes in one of the movies on his story: “To me, it is essential to make a profit and to make good. I think that is a marriage of success”. The *homo oeconomicus* described by Foucault (2008) is now isolated from the historical contradictions that would be present in his actions towards civil society and communitarian interests. The “epic” effort of Palmeira is compared to goals of changing the world and to solve social problems: the production of organic food and the direct commercialization to the final customer – following the logic of the fair trade, in which everybody, producers and consumers, supposedly wins equally –, the recognition of the “value” of workers and of the relevance of nurturing the “entrepreneurial origins of the good” and the association with the image of the indigenous people. Those missions are attributed to social entrepreneurs, to the representatives of a social sector, renewed under the perspective of entrepreneurial society.

Possibly pointing to the place of a whisky brand in the social entrepreneurship environment and as a result of Chivas' marketing campaign in Brazil, the bar Chivas Spirit has been opened, defined as “a new place for a happy hour and networking”. It included:

(...) talking with guests that are changing the world with their ideas, besides shows and amazing DJs.

The place is also a combination of art and socio-environmental good origin products. Even the meals themselves are made by hands that promote a good cause. All of that followed by incredible drinks, of course³.

Placed at the JK Iguatemi, one of the high consumption standard malls in São Paulo, the Chivas Spirit bar combines entertainment, talks by people who represent their particular view of social entrepreneurship and, obviously, the tasting of the drink that sponsors the “spirit” shared by the participants. The consumption of Chivas has the mark of the distinction,

3 Available at: <http://www.chivalryclub.com.br/lifestyle/chivas-spirit-o-novo-bar-de-chivas-que-nao-e-so-um-bar>. Accessed on: Jan. 16, 2018.

in the sense seen in Bourdieu's theory (2007). That is to say, it is a community of subjects that have achieved success or wannabes that exchange ideas according to their perspective on how the world transformation should be, free of any sense of social change beyond the endogenous capitalist conceptions. The ideology spread through the community represents, in its limit, the symbolic environment of the Chivas Regal brand translated in the scope of the experimental marketing and its consumption proposals.

Chivas' communication strategy uses the biographical realm (ARFUCH, 2010) connected to something recurring in the entrepreneurial and social entrepreneurial scenes: the intentionality of the act of "inspiring", of engaging the listeners. That true *inspirational culture* is recurring in our time, having as a great model the sequence of talks known as the *Ted Talks*⁴. On those, the show of the self (SIBILIA, 2008) and the narrativization of the experience of oneself is understood as a contribution to the transformation of the world, following the expectation of sharing inspiration by the means of "contagion". Other representatives of the Brazilian entrepreneurship scene follow the same militant proposal based on a "new economy" that will bring the future Brazil. That is the case of the Project Draft, which we now look more closely at.

The Project Draft as imaginary territory for the "new Brazilian economy"

The digital platforms related to the entrepreneurial culture have proliferated in the recent Brazilian scenario. They are an expression of a connectionist world, as Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) understand it. That type of business represents the "strategic utilization of relations", with "profits pertaining to connections" (BOLTANSKI; CHIAPELLO, 2009, p. 460). The Project Draft is an initiative of the Brazilian agency The Factory aiming at attracting advertisers⁵. In the specific case of the Project Draft, the production of "content", meaning information organized as specialized knowledge, becomes inseparable of texts, practices and the engaged discourse towards a world view. The visibility regimes privilege the entrepreneur characters and their actions thus revealing the explicit militancy in favor of the ideology for an entrepreneurial society towards a revised "new Brazil". The presentation made for the project⁶ diagnoses:

The Draft is born to follow and record the impact of creative entrepreneurship among us, to echo the histories of social entrepreneurship in the country, to

4 TED is the abbreviation for *Technology, Entertainment, Design*. It is a nonprofit organization founded in 1984 in the United States and that organizes conferences in Europe, Asia and America focused on the spreading of ideas regarding today's much wider subjects than the ones appointed in the acronym. The format of the conferences is based on "short and powerful talks" with a maximum length of 18 minutes bringing strong motivational, inspirational and "transforming" content. Available at: <https://www.ted.com/about/our-organization>. Accessed on: Jan. 16, 2018.

5 The web portal is sponsored from the beginning by the Brazilian cosmetic brand Natura, which associates its image with the idea of sustainability. Among the companies that sponsor the content production, we have the international Intel HP.

6 Available at: <http://projetodraft.com/o-que-queremos/>. Accessed on: Jan. 16, 2018.

narrate the effervescence of the startups – the accelerators, the incubators and venture capital funds that are multiplying around us like never before.

The project puts in the same level social entrepreneurship, startups, new businesses, services and goods innovation, with the mission of following the “game changers”, the representatives of what is known as the contemporary Brazilian “maker culture”. That way it considers the effervescence of an economy in which entrepreneurship is fomented and enthusiastically celebrated. It becomes the measure of all valuable actions, including the social ones, which should also be entrepreneurial.

The engagement of the Project Draft producers under the perspective of the new spirit of capitalism theory is guided by a euphoric perspective on the ideals of mobility, flexibility and “self-enterprise” as a paradigmatic model. “Our best talents do not look for a *long-lasting job* in a *big* company anymore – they want to be involved in *projects* that last for a *fair* period in an *agile* company (which usually they themselves have founded.)”⁷. The adherence is clear to the imaginary of the Y Generation or Millennials generation and its attitude towards labor activity, understood as a tendency to be generalized as something irreversible and to be followed by all. Such an enthusiastic interpretation of working with projects molds into a trace of behavior and into a symptom of human evolution something that is otherwise resulting from the scarceness in the job market, the lack of job openings, the unclear horizon picture by the capitalist system itself in its recent transformations.

A connectionist logic challenges the once established limits of personal relationships “morally (and, to a great extent, legally) considered to be non-commodifiable” (BOLTANSKI; CHIAPELLO, 2009, p. 470). Following that logic, we find an ode to the innovative action that sees the human experience as an opportunity. There is the made commitment to the transforming attitude which restricts to the market the freedom of the agents to destroy what the “past” represents and the possibility to conceive something new. Such ideals have their synthesis, an organizing concept: the notion of *disruptive innovation*.

The concept of disruptive innovation is attributed to the Harvard professor Clayton Christensen, having derived from the classic image offered by the economist Schumpeter (1961) of the entrepreneur as a *creative destroyer*. He would be the engine of capitalism for his ability to propose new businesses, products and innovations with the aim of disassembling the established economic structures. The author’s cyclical conception of capitalism presupposes overcoming the previous stage, according to a progressist and developmental perspective. The Project Draft, in its definition to “What is disruption”, explains the possible use for the notion:

When a company releases a cheaper, more accessible and efficient technology, aiming at lower profits, it starts a revolution. It makes market leaders become

⁷ Available at: <http://projetodraft.com/o-que-queremos/>. Accessed on: Jan. 16, 2018.

obsolete. It is the opposite of what Christensen understands as “sustained innovations” – which do not open a new market and go against other companies in the most traditional way.⁸

The concept presented by the Project Draft, which organizes a perspective on contemporary Brazil, is guided by a radical neoliberal logic, in which there is no room for the weak. The competitiveness and the destruction of “obsolete” competition are identifiable by its side effects, such as the “dismissing of millions of people, the bankruptcy of companies or at least the drastic decrease in their profits pushing competitor to change course”⁹. In that sense, it is interesting to look at other projects as the Atados, in that same symbolic realm: the “good network, to make good” shares the same community of people than the “people who work according to disruption in one hand and with a purpose in life on the other”, as the Project Draft summarizes referring to the “game-changers”. They are the protagonists of the narrative of a new Brazil.

The proposal by the Project Draft of giving incentive to disruptive innovation sounds obviously contradictory when we look at its condition of being a web portal sponsored not by the new economy, but by big companies of the traditional economy settled in Brazil or abroad, like Natura (cosmetics), Bauducco (food sector), Tecnisa (a company in the construction business), and Itaú (financial institution). The distance between the discourse on the valued practices and the reality of the web portal as a business platform results in a statement that summarizes the capitalist rhetoric in its contradictions: the text entitled “Letter to the corporative innovators”, released after 6 months of the Project launching. The editors of the project try to establish a link between the new and the old economy, that is, to reconstruct the missing bridge through *disruption*:

Cheers to the Corporative Innovators that build the bridge (most commonly on the cost of great personal expenses) between the traditional industrial economy and the new post-industrial digital economy. That is a holy job. (...)

While the work of the innovators that are outside the company is very often to make big corporations obsolete and put leaders down, the work of the innovator inside a company is to help the big corporations to remain relevant, keep leadership – even if most of the times having them to reinvent themselves entirely. (...)

Do not give up. You have our recognition, our gratitude and admiration. Besides, of course, you have the kingdom of heaven.¹⁰

⁸ Available at: <http://projetodraft.com/o-que-queremos/>. Accessed on: Jan. 16, 2018.

⁹ Available at: <http://projetodraft.com/verbetedraftoqueedisrupcao/>. Accessed on: May 18, 2015.

¹⁰ Available at: <http://projetodraft.com/draft6mesescartaabertaaoosinovadorescorporativos/>. Accessed on: May 18, 2015.

The religious discourse, emptied of its link with doctrine, comes into play to narrativize the task of reconstructing the bridge and of promoting the conjunction of “new” and “old” economies. This rhetorical exercise intends to relate the activity of the “corporate innovator” (also called *intrapreneur*) to the “sacred work” of reconstructing the links broken by the notion of *disruption* through the “miracle” of transforming the traditional and “obsolete” industry into the new economy’s universe. In the same semantics, the “kingdom of heaven”, mobilized in an ironic tone, means success in saving the old economy from its obsolescence announced by Project Draft. The rhetoric of the letter, more than promoting the conciliation of what was previously polarized, reveals the loopholes in the discourse of proclaiming a new world, a new Brazilian economic era.

Final considerations

The paradoxical condition of the discourses on the entrepreneurial culture in Brazil, whose highlight is the *Letter to the corporate innovators* by the Project Draft, reveals how the rhetoric of capitalism works. The resignifying of concepts and ideas is a process inseparable from its operation. That is why we find necessary a communicational approach to the theoretical studies of the contemporary economy. It is the only way to understand the complex and twisted relationship between creative economy, entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, dream, world transformation, destruction and happiness – among so many other issues that are related to this world edited by the ideology of the entrepreneurial society. Looking at such a multitude of apparently disconnected things, discourse builds the links and, may be nurtured by the full “immersion” of the makers, it makes sense to a sector of society, produces engagement and ultimately expresses the spirit of a time. It is announced as the paradigm for an admirable new world to which we are all obliged to adapt.

The ideals of the entrepreneurial community convoked to be united and transform Brazil founds its mission as something sacred, heroic, an unstoppable movement that should overcome all obstacles of what the “old”, the “obsolete” and the “past” represent. To such intent, it universalizes the meaning of its discourse as it legitimates the herculean task for the common good. The “good people” call to themselves the conduction of our destinies, of our future. They argue that, despite the inevitable destruction, the suppression of the weak and outdated, we will be reborn stronger, we will bring more benefits to future consumers, as the logic of disruptive innovation and its perspective on the cyclical approach to economy show. The perspective on progress and the positivist logic had been so scattered by the end of the XIX century and beginning of the XX and they are now recovered by understanding what is the XXI approach and according to the pragmatist idealists of the entrepreneurial culture.

The entrepreneur as a model for our culture and a hero of our time (EHRENBERG, 2010) is glued to the image of the hacker, of the destroyer that corresponds to the connectionist world. As the Project Draft leads us to believe when defining its mission in a grandiloquent

and visionary way: “As we tell the stories of people that hack businesses, making them better and of people that hack their own lives, making them happier, we should be inspiring many people to invent and reinvent themselves [...]”.¹¹

Let us be the hackers of our own lives if we want to be happy and to survive this world conceived and imagined towards a capitalist economy. A world that proudly assumes its condition of permanent innovation and destruction.

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