

Crítica da inspiração nos processos comunicacionais do capitalismo cool¹

Critique of inspiration in the communications processes of cool capitalism

Vander Casaqui²

Resumo: *Este artigo tem como objetivo tratar da inspiração, como elemento que identifica os processos comunicacionais relacionados com a cultura empreendedora. Nesse sentido, a publicização dos ideais, valores, prescrições dos agentes identificados com o empreendedorismo parte de um modelo comunicacional bem delimitado, cuja função principal é inspirar, ou seja, transformar o outro, que compõe seu auditório social (BAKHTIN, 1997). Essa transformação desejada seria, em última instância, a promoção do engajamento no capitalismo contemporâneo em sua face mais sedutora, que McGuigan (2009) define como cool capitalism. Em síntese, procuramos discutir as intersecções entre inspiração, empreendedorismo e o capitalismo neoliberal, ou sociedade neoliberal (conforme DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016).*

Palavras-chave: *comunicação e consumo; cultura empreendedora; discurso social; inspiração; sociedade neoliberal.*

Abstract: *This article aims to deal with inspiration as an element that identifies the communicational processes related to the entrepreneurial culture. In this sense, the publicity of the ideals, values, prescriptions of agents identified*

1 Modified, updated and expanded version of a study presented at the Study Group of Advertisement at XVI Encontro dos Grupos de Pesquisa em Comunicação, (Simposium of Research Groups in Communication) event within the XXXIX INTERCOM – Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação, (Brazilian Convention of Communication Sciences) which took place in September 2016. Research supported by Auxílio à Pesquisa FAPESP – process n. 2019/14365-7.

2 Universidade Metodista de São Paulo (UMESP). São Paulo, SP, Brasil.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7823-9861>. E-mail: vander_casaqui@yahoo.com.br

with entrepreneurship starts from a well-delimited communicational model whose main function is to inspire, that is, to transform the other, that composes its social auditorium (BAKHTIN, 1997). This desired transformation would ultimately be the promotion of engagement in contemporary capitalism in its most seductive face, which McGuigan (2009) defines as cool capitalism. In summary, we try to discuss the intersections between inspiration, entrepreneurship and neoliberal capitalism, or neoliberal society (according to DARDOT; LAVAL, 2016).

Keywords: *communication and consumption; entrepreneurial culture; social discourse; inspiration; neoliberal society.*

Introduction

Inspiration became a recurring term in our time. Its presence is so frequent, and, at the same time, so banalized, that we have the impression that everyone thinks of themselves as a possible inspirational narrative, as a life story to be replicated by others. The sharing in digital media of emblematic sentences, of emotional images, of examples of the most diverse human gestures, in communities such as Facebook, it is the other face of this true culture of inspiration. Facing this myriad of discourses that take on the goal of inspiring, the questions to be responded in the field of this work are: how to understand inspiration as expression of the entrepreneurial culture of our time? *What is the role of inspiration in spreading the ideology of neoliberalism? How does the act of inspiring is shaped into delimited communicational models, taking part of strategies of agents identified with the field of entrepreneurship* For the development of this study, we are supported on the theoretical-methodologic principles of social discourse, proposed by Marc Angenot (2010): according to the author, discourses can constitute hegemonies, when they configure as a paradigm marked in social, cultural and historic terms. In other words, social discourse corresponds to a horizon to what is thinkable and utterable, in a certain historic period, and is concretized in certain discursive regularities, in certain standards that are repeated, updated, but keep an identity in relation to that hegemony.

The conception of social discourse is interdependent from the dialogic perspective of language, in the Bakhtinian sense. Thus, “when building discourses that explain, organize and classify the world, the speaker establishes relations and dependences, expresses values and world views, dialogues with previous and future utterances” (PISTORI; BANKS-LEITE, 2010, p. 131). In this social process of interaction is when the speaker and interlocutor are constituted. The social auditorium is this other place designed through utterance, what’s utterable and thinkable are historically marked, and that delimitation corresponds to the imagined social auditorium in the context which utterances are dialogically established. The agents of entrepreneurial culture and

their discourses, which characterize our research object, evidence this interactional process of language, when they conceive themselves as inspiring creatures and to their social auditorium as a set of individuals to be inspired. For this study, we have selected notorious exponents of the culture of inspiration in Contemporary Brazil, that both represent agents that constitute their biographic narratives into a motivational key and demonstrate institutionalities that establish as organizational mission the goal of inspiring. This diversity of cases is servicing the objective of evidencing the amplitude and corresponding nuances to the study of culture of inspiration, in their relationship with the study of contemporary capitalism.

In a scenario of flexibilization and precarization of work, as pointed out by Sennett (2007), as we currently live in, in dramatic tones, especially in developing economies – such as the Latin American scenario – simultaneously emerge discourses that promote entrepreneurial culture, as an antidote to this state of affairs. Thus, facing a situation of unemployment, abandonment in relation to social policies of State, of crisis in a wider sense, this culture is put as a solution which, as a last resort, attributes to the individual the responsibility for transforming their own destiny, failure into success, the attitude of the “common” subject into an entrepreneurial attitude. The proposition of a critical analysis of the social discourse of Angenot, more than a methodology with well-delineated procedures, is applied in this research as analysis of the spirit of time concretized in complex discursive webs, which correspond to a specific historic moment and society. This study understands entrepreneurship as social discourse and seeks to identify the wideness and diffusion of their precepts by raising a voice of multiple agents speaking on behalf of an entrepreneurial culture simultaneously updating it and reinforcing their ideology.

Throughout our research on social entrepreneurship and about entrepreneurial culture, from the objects we studied, we found numberless times the use of the term inspiration, which, in our reading, represents the most seductive face of “cool” capitalism, as defined by McGuigan

(2009). The concept of cool capitalism is based on the capacity of “absorbing the dislike of capitalism itself” (MCGUIGAN, 2013, p. 13). According to the author, this process of absorption characterizes the role of “cool”, geared towards “transforming the dislike in acceptance and consent (idem, p. 14). A more dense form of understanding this process is based on the theory of the new spirit of capitalism by Boltanski and Chiapello (2009), highlighting the capacity of the capitalist system of being re-proposed as a new rhetoric, cyclical, through the incorporation of arguments and fights promoted by their critics. Thus, if the juvenile confrontation of the generation of May 68 raised flags anti-system, imagining “another possible world”, today we find the revolutionary discourse, of world transformation, autonomy and freedom, incorporated within the capitalist system, through meanings attributed to the entrepreneurial activity, to social entrepreneurship, among other fields that are interdependent from the mode of operation of the neo-liberal market. In this aspect, the “acceptance and consent” described by McGuigan are understood by Boltanski and Chiapello, as forms of promoting engagement in subjects of the capitalist system, especially young people, which will renew their boards and take care of their future. Therefore, the project of an entrepreneurial society defended by authors such as Drucker (2011) proposes, in thesis, “this possible world”, an ideology simultaneously reformist and conservative of the principles of capitalism, refraining each and every revolutionary form of social transformation. The model subject of this project is an updated version of the creative destroyer, discussed by Schumpeter (1942), an entrepreneurial spirit detached from the conception of an entrepreneurship in the classic sense, of generating a new business through an innovative product or service. The entrepreneurial attitude – The psychological and moral characteristics attributed to this subject – superposes their technical habilitation to perform an enterprise. Facing a social scenario that Sennett (2007) defines as flexible capitalism, in which subjects would be adrift facing constant changes, continuous risks, flexibility as primordial demand and as paradigmatic model for the world of work, of

short-term flows, ephemeral values, “instability intends to be normal, Schumpeter’s business man showing up as the Ideal Common Man” (SENNETT, 2007, p. 33).

The main enterprise in our time is conceiving life itself as something to be managed, optimized, performed, in compatibility with the dynamic flexible and competitive scenario, as pointed out by the Blog Geração de Valor, one of the agents of this culture of inspiration working in Brazil. In one of their posts that most evidence this scenario, we have the image of a couple, man and woman, looking at each other in the eye, characterizing a romantic moment, illuminated by the reflections of sunlight. The emotional image of the couple gains other meanings by overlapping a sentence, a slogan signed with the blog’s logo: “Your life, your biggest enterprise”. Thus, even romantic relationships can be managed. Illouz (2009), when dealing with romantic utopia in the contemporary context, explains the relation of this utopia with the managerial culture corresponding to neoliberal capitalism. Successful marriage, for example, is an ideal propagated in society, corresponding to a fairly vigorous market, in other words, promoting consumption and mobilizing a series of agents working towards this utopia, made a merchandise. Marriage is also a company, since the subjects involved in the relationship can use emotional intelligence, define goals, procedures, promote social division of chores at home to achieve their goals of happiness. These measurements and procedures, propagated by gurus, coaches specialized in the theme, are directly derived from a managerial culture that constitutes a hegemony articulated to the capitalism of our Time. The dream, within the scope of cool capitalism, works as a way of engagement in the system, in a sense of entirety: none of the facets of existence seem to escape the possibility of being manageable, planned and executed in terms of a rationality promoted by the system.

But, finally, how do we understand the notion of cool capitalism in the scope of this study? We understand that the front of this system in contemporaneity is based on discourses that, derived from an advertisement aesthetics, publicize the dream, stimulate autonomy, freedom,

motivational force to change the world, associating these motion forces with entrepreneurial activity. The production of inspirational narratives is conceived, in this aspect, as an economy and as a market. The notion of economy, etymologically, is based in management. We understand market as a dynamic of the capitalist system, in which the form – merchandise is central for the production chain – circulation – consumption. Therefore, the production of inspirational narratives that is important for this study is based on this capitalist logic of management and manufacture of merchandise, as well as the insertion of this production in a market of ideas (ANGENOT, 2010). There are many agents symbolically disputing the power to inspire: great corporations and their advertisement pieces, capitalist agents that personalize and give voice to a system in world forums and other globalized events, transmitted online to massive audiences throughout the world, speakers that found in the activity of inspiring a way to make a profit and notoriety, activists and “mobilizers” (to use the term used in this field) linked to the field of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial contemporary culture and inspirational narratives

As we previously pointed out, the notion of entrepreneurship is disseminated in our days, becoming a modern time panacea, the cure of all evil, the solution of every problem, in the macro and micro social scope, from the state of bankruptcy of the State to the interior life of individuals. It is important to reinforce this is the macroproposition (VAN DIJK, 1978, p. 62-63) derived from entrepreneurial culture, which is defended and disseminated by a diverse array of agents. Therefore, the communicational approach of entrepreneurship which correspond to our study escapes a restrictive view of the entrepreneur, as an economic agent that conceives a business, develops a project, a merchandise, which produces innovation to cater and transform the demands of the market. We understand that, under the amplified notion of entrepreneurial culture, which is

publicized by media supports, individuals of our time are called out to be entrepreneurs of themselves, in any sphere of daily life. This is the entrepreneur's perspective, as a sign built by the media, that connects with the culture of inspiration. In the scope of this study, entrepreneurship is dealt in a critical perspective, i. e., it is seen in its discursive weaves as a theme to be deconstructed, seen at a distance, discussed through social theories that problematize issues in the world of work, the senses of entrepreneurship and their outcomes in daily life.

"I have seen many interviews and stories about entrepreneurs in media in general". This sentence, agreed by 56% of the interviewees in the research by Endeavor Brasil, titled "entrepreneurial culture in Brazil" (ENDEAVOR, 2014, p. 9), offers clues to understand that entrepreneurship is an omnipresent theme in our time. The "entrepreneurial spirit" became a positive behavior in any professional, when we consider ideal models currently disseminated. Its media presence, as well as its perception as something recurring in daily life, are symptoms of a delimitation problem of what means to endeavor nowadays. As Foucault (2008) says, the entrepreneur is also an entrepreneur of self: beyond the classic of the self-made man, the mythical model of the north American society, the entrepreneur of self is the subject that incorporates the biopolitical callings (PRADO, 2013) in order to transform himself continuously, to be an effective manager of his human capital. A recent example of this perspective of seeing oneself as an enterprise, which implies a process of self-transformation, is the discursive production of Bel Pesce, who became an entrepreneurial celebrity, especially due to her books, combining auto-biography and lessons on how to endeavor in every aspect of life. Her works are identified as inspirational, as defended by Flávio Augusto da Silva, creator of the Geração de Valor Institute (who, among other things, is responsible for a motivational blog, with the goal of inspiring people) in his foreword of Bel Pesce's book, the best seller *A Menina do Vale* (PESCE, 2015a). Flávio Augusto's texts, titled "Inspiring reality" says:

Bel's story is not a fiction. It is a real story that can inspire you to lead your own story. The experiences on Silicon Valley described here can be the raw material for building ideas in order to encourage you to move forward with strength, believing even more in your future (SILVA, 2015, p.13-14)

In the quotation above, we identify a series of ideas we discussed so far. The production of narratives with the goal of inspiring, generating a new path in other people's lives, in this case, the Brazilian youth, to be engaged by the model of the Silicon Valley – the Mecca of the most exuberant capitalism of our time, associated to new technologies, the innovative effervescence, the conception of millionaire businesses and merchandises that are so seductive as materializing of ideals of future, summarized to processes of consumption. And, as synthesis, the parallelism between life story and entrepreneurial adventure, as expressed in Bel Pesce's words. "I am aware that there is so much more to learn and that I'll be in this entrepreneurial adventure for years and years ahead" (PESCE, 2015a, p. 25, *highlighted by us*) Bel Pesce's story, beyond her auto-biography, shows the frailties of the narrativization of life, that promotes "common" people to a heroic dimension. The "Girl in the Silicon Valley", who appeared as an entrepreneurial celebrity, occupying spaces in media to tell her success story in Silicon Valley and reinforcing her condition of prodigy – authorized to take on the competent discourse on entrepreneurship and management of human capital – was confronted with the deconstruction of her "achievements" and suffered harsh criticism on social media. The evidence of this shock between the heroic narrative and the facts are registered in the website of news coverage and varieties UOL: Pesce, in 2012, told her story in two interviews made by the website. In 2016, people began to notice inconsistencies in her story, which was corrected by erratum, as we can see in the excerpt:

The entrepreneur Bel Pesce has two courses on MIT, not five. She graduated in "Business" and "Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences" (the latter is one course, not two, as previously implied) [...] She wasn't the only nor the main founder of the US company Lemon (app for personal

finances), as it was implied in the text. She was a member of the founding team, which she joined soon after her graduation. (GAMA, 2016).

In her 2015 work, *Your best version takes you beyond* (PESCE, 2015b), the author shares her techniques to develop a better version of herself every day. In Bel Pesce's words, "Great transformation are completely acceptable if they take you closer to your best and being your best version" (p. 76). Enterprising oneself, in this scenario, presents a form of biopolitical calling, in which body and mind must be capable of management for a better performance, in a continuous form, with no finish line. We are in the territory of the cult to performance, as defined by Ehrenberg (2010) Byung-Chul Han, dialoguing with Foucault's ideas (society of control) and Ehrenberg, problematizes the subject of performance, which

(...) Is free from the external instance of dominion that obligates him to work or that could explore him. He is the master and sovereign of himself. Therefore, he isn't submissive to nobody or he is only submissive to himself. This is his distinction from the subject of obedience. (BYUNG-CHUL, 2015, p. 29-30).

Let's observe how this biopolitical calling (PRADO, 2013) of the subject of performance is translated into a communicative form of motivational key, in other communication of the blog *Geração de Valor* with the title "The inspiration is what makes your transpiration worthwhile", the banner has the image of a woman, seen in a plongée, climbing a mountain having as background a valley, representing the risk of falling or failing. However, the woman's facial expression shows a challenge being overcome, a successful climb to the top. The success represented there was identified with resilience, with perseverance – attributes identified in a recurring manner to the paradigmatic image of the entrepreneur, and in which the blog's communication summarizes by the word "transpiration".

The relation between inspiration and transpiration, normally presented in the common sense as the creative process – which, in a last

instance, values the “95% of transpiration”, and not the “5% of inspiration”, or the hard work in opposition to the creation with artistic outlines – is now reviewed to give emphasis to inspiration as a guide, as illumination to be materialized by the effort of transpiration; without inspiration, the effort would be useless. The image of an athlete climbing a mountain and overcoming risks to get to the summit, is a cliché, an obvious metaphor for high performance, continuous resilience without limits of the subject of performance. This resource of mobilizing what was already said, images and ideas codified in culture works both as reaffirmation of what is naturalized in a given context, gaining an aura of truth, when supported, in communicational terms, in the identification and the familiarity of the audience with that saying, as a rhetorical strategy to produce affections – to, finally, inspire. But what inspiration would be capable of providing the subject of performance. Maybe the model to be promoted and give meaning to inspiration promoted by the banner would be put in the blog itself, when the blog creator, Flávio Augusto, offers his life story as inspiring. The following text is part of the presentation of the podcast about Flávio Augusto’s biography: “Largely recognized as one of the most inspiring leaders admired by Brazilian youth, Flávio Augusto da Silva has a well-known life story. His steps, his challenges, his stories. But do you know everything?”

Flávio Augusto, through his blog *Geração de Valor*, projects his life story as a model, as a leader of a generation, an example of success to be followed, the model for the aspiring subjects of high performance. A successful businessman, owner of a language school, *Wise Up*, his success can only be understood in the paradigm of the capitalist market, through the obtained profit, the significant participation in a competitive market, the results quantified as a form of legitimating the value of his conquests. However, his action through the blog projects him as an inspiring and visionary leader, as someone that could be translated as a narrative of exemplary life, according to the ideas of Buonanno (2011). Not fortuitously, *Bel Pesce* and Flávio Augusto were identified as exponents of the entrepreneurial culture in Brazil in recent times, due

to their presence in the media, because they became entrepreneurial celebrities, or celebrities entrepreneurs.

Positivity in communicational models based on inspiration

As we previously discussed, inspiration, in the context of entrepreneurial culture, has direct relation with communicational models designed by their agents, in their strategies – what at many times configures the way the business is outlined. The observation of this aspect allows us to problematize some aspects related to entrepreneurship as object of the field of communication, as well as it allows to advance in the understanding of projects of the society at stake in this scene.

The most simple and most frequent model, is what we discussed so far, by the examples of inspirational life stories, the biographic space, which, according to Arfuch (2010), comprises both biographies and auto-biographies, in this research it has as presupposition the production of life as narrative in motivational key. This production, in turn, is inserted in the chain which also includes the circulation and consumption of these messages. In other words, the agents that take on the place of this production establish for themselves the mission of sharing a message, of “spreading the word”: both in the case of Bel Pesce and in Flavio Augusto’s, it’s a type of evangelization, to use a term that is common in events promoted by Google around the world. In his book *The Corrosion of Character* (2007), Sennett discusses the paradox generated by the context of flexible capitalism, resulting, among other things, in a conflict of narrative production of each subject. As Sennett says, “the problem we face is how to organize our life stories now, in a capitalism that leaves us adrift” (2007, p. 140).

In the previous scenario, of a capitalism that fed the notion of career, of continuity, of a certain stability, as much as it promoted the exploration of workforce in the classic sense (as approached by the Marxist theory), it also offered the worker the possibility of constituting a coherent identity

narrative, built throughout time, which had direct implications with the formation of character: “The term character concentrates especially in the long-term aspect of our emotional experience. (...) Character are the personal traits we value in ourselves, and through which we look for the valorization from others (SENNETT, 2007, p. 10). The corrosion of character corresponds to the fragmentation of the narrative time in the flexible capitalism, adrift from subjects facing the imperative “there is no long-term”, the continuous change, the discontinuity and distancing of labor bonds. The difficulties presented through the character Rico, present in Sennet’s book, show that the impediments of a satisfactory narrative production, based on strong bonds, produce consequences in the emotional life, especially in the transposition of work ethics on family ethics, or, in a wider manner, on daily life, beyond the professional activity. The search of healing the narrative, the solution to this impasse, seem to result in the act of taking back to their own interiority, to finding in yourself the meaning of coherence. In the field of culture of inspiration, that goes through the incorporation of narrative models to follow, of exemplary life stories to replicate in our lives. Ultimately, this is a process of production and consumption of narratives, which implies the transformation of the consumer to fit into the model of success. At this point, entrepreneurship and the self-help market, in the sense of Illouz (2011), are aligned. The task of enterprising oneself can be triggered by the inspiration generated by other’s story, which brings something of coherent, heroic, epic, based in the interior strength superposed to the world’s obstacles, whatever they may be, you just have to want it and have faith to overcome obstacles. There is something mystical, both magical and therapeutic, in this communicative process of inspiration, in the spectrum of entrepreneurship of oneself.

According to Gallouj, in the presentation of the Journal of *Inspiration Economy*, edited by University of Bahrain since 2014, *inspiration is a complex phenomenon, hard to define, which “describes a particular psychological dynamic, a casual creative breakthrough”* (2014, p. 4), among other meanings commonly attributed to the term. The author

points out that, etymologically, the term is based in the latin “in spiritum”, which means “having spirit (in other words, having God) in you” (Gallouj, 2014); this notion corresponds with the understanding of the inspiration on Ancient Greece, where artists were inspired by Muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosine.

Gallouj (2014) discusses the relations between artistic and religious tradition of the notion of inspiration, and their uses on the economic sphere. While the first tradition has a transcending nature, the economy of inspiration has a relational, interactional character, in which individual characters, corporative, municipal, regional, national of a given society are articulated in “reciprocal relationships of inspiration” (2014, p. 5). In this sense, “even in a competitive environment, producers inspire each other, consumers inspire the producers and vice-versa” (Gallouj, 2014). This market view on inspiration, however, needs a critical counterpoint, once the competitive relationships promoted by neoliberalism, or even the relationships between producers and consumers, are not so harmonic as in this drawing of an ecosystem of multiple inspirations, from side to side. The relational dimension of inspiration, or the economy of inspiration, according to Gallouj’s point of view, corresponds, in our reading, to the design of positive society, critically approached by Byung-Chul Han (2013, p. 11-12):

Things become transparent when they leave any negative, when they are smooth and plane, when they are inserted without any resistance in the smooth flow of capital, the communication and information. The actions become transparent when they are operational, when they are submitted to processes of calculation, management and control.

In this scenario, the author warns, negativity, the resistance of the other, the strange to these flows, generate the disturbance of the “smooth communication of equals” (Gallouj, 2014). The communication identified with positive society, on the other hand, stabilizes and accelerates the system, eliminating the other, the odd” (Gallouj, 2014). In this aspect, there is a systemic coaction, which promotes a uniformized society.

This is the expression of an entrepreneurial monoculture, the ideal project of the most combative agents of this scene.

The communicational model from Endeavor, a global organization that motivates entrepreneurship and counts with a subsidiary in Brazil, represents its productive system and chains that derive from their activity, in a process synthetized by the sentence: “We believe that the strength of example is the way to multiply entrepreneurs that transform Brazil”. In a graphic model that represents their action, their “mission”, Endeavor establishes two basic goals: “To inspire and empower current and aspiring entrepreneurs” and “making changes in the entrepreneurial environment”, with purposes of building an entrepreneur Brazil – identified by the country map filled with a stylistic and standardized image of men, side by side, associated to the term entrepreneur. “To inspire and empower” is a goal resulting from the activity of sharing “stories and practical learnings” from high-impact entrepreneurs, who “exchange knowledge” with mentors at the Endeavor network – the mediators of this practical knowledge that must be replicated to fulfill the mission to inspire and empower new entrepreneurs associated to the world built by the organization. On the other hand, the stimulus to change is based on the “view of those who are in the front line of entrepreneurship”; the adhesion to the entrepreneurial ideology is evident, as well as their hierarchic view, “from top to bottom”, in other words, from the leaders of a field, to those successful entrepreneurs aligned with the project of entrepreneurial society led by Endeavor.

Apparently more complex than the model of production of inspirational narratives of individual agents and their desired effects, Endeavor’s graphic reinforces this unidirectional model, with the intent to build an entrepreneurial Brazil. Endeavor shares “practical stories and learnings” to inspire and empower entrepreneurs; from the universe of Brazilian entrepreneurs, implicitly produced by their actions, selects and “potentializes” those who will be recognized as “high-impact entrepreneurs” – new inspiring leaders, who will have their stories shared to inspire aspiring entrepreneurs. At the same time, this body of notables, of high-performance subjects, are positioned as mentors in the front line of the action of “making change in the entrepreneurial environment”. Therefore,

“inspiring and empowering” on one hand, and “making change” on the other, they are actions with a common goal: to produce an entrepreneurial society, a nation of entrepreneurs that align themselves to flows and logics of the positive society, according to Byung-Chul (2013). The Endeavor network, represented in the image of men in the center of the graphic, configures a hierarchy, based on the centrality of the high-impact entrepreneur – visually demonstrated as a legitimate leader of a “new economy”, based on the pragmatic” utopia of the entrepreneurial society.

Final considerations

In the (in)conclusion of this article, we take back three questions raised in the beginning, in order to, even partially, answer them. Regarding the first one (how to understand inspiration as expression of the entrepreneurial culture of our time?), we seek to discuss how the inspiration, in the current context, correspond to communicational strategies that call subjects, as a form of biopolitical calling, so that they continuously transform, being increasingly subjects of performance, effective manager of themselves.

Buonanno (2011), on discussing about the contemporary phenomenon of the profusion of everyday heroes, in other words, the possibility of anyone recognizing themselves and being recognized as such, concludes that in an era where everyone can be heroes, no one effectively is a hero. In our study, we identified that heroes of our time are subjects capable of producing themselves as inspiring narratives. In a world where everyone can be inspiring, there is doubt about who inspire who, who is inspiring and who effectively is inspired. Bel Pesce and Flávio Augusto are examples of this process of production of self as inspiring leader, mobilizer, transforming, among other denominations attributed to these model subjects of entrepreneurial culture. There is a market, which, critically analyzed, has a lot to say about the spirit of time.

About the second question (what is the role of inspiration in the dissemination of the ideology of neoliberalism?), we can affirm that the neoliberal ideology surrounds all the phenomenon of inspiration, in the delimited cut-out of this study. The notion of “cool” capitalism

ARTIGO

corresponds to the seductive way which the logics of this ideology are transmitted, as inspiring messages, The logic of competition, the transformation of the subject in enterprising, life as an object of management, business models applied to communicational processes, and mainly, the project of entrepreneurial society materialized in the analyzed examples – all these elements are publicized through the communicational strategy of inspiration. Contemporary capitalism dreams, inspires, mobilizes, transforms – and when it produces profit, we add to it a purpose, which is the key expression of the idealism that redeems the capitalist of their ambition of unlimited reproduction of the capital. The conception of entrepreneurship as social discourse (ANGENOT, 2010) is the translation and update of capitalist precepts to a world of possibilities of open transformation through available technical media, such as digital networks, that live this ambiguous movement of representing the expansion of the system for management of mentalities. Digital platforms, that are support for many discourses analyzed here and many others, have been configured as an important symbolical branch for the diffusion of neoliberal ideals and imperatives.

Finally, we deal with the third question (how does the act of inspiring is shaped to well delimited communicational models, taking part of strategies of agents identified with the field of entrepreneurship?) Through two categories of examples, the individual entrepreneurial agents (Bel Pesce e Flávio Augusto) and the corporative agent (represented by Endeavor Brazil), we discussed how both of their works are based on communicational processes, in which the inspiration is the effect produced by their actions and discourses. Therefore, there is an implied strategy of self-legitimation, of production of their own agent as a leader of a supposedly utopian society, in which he imagines to be the best for everyone's good – the expression of the “common good”, the result of efforts and the devotion of “good people”.

“Cool” capitalism is the seductive face of a project of positive society where the other, the odd, the one who does not contribute for the accelerated communicational flows, established between equals, without

foreseen noises, must be excluded. The social web based in the network of mutual inspirations, as defended by Galouj (2014), is a reading founded in this positive version of the world. A reading derived from the project of entrepreneurial society, which, despite self-proclaiming a defender of the common good, it seems to be above that abstract ideal the goal of building a world based on one point of view. A monocultural entrepreneurship – which, obviously, excludes from their communicational flows those who do not fit into their models. The idea of cultural diversity, of the democratic principle in the deepest meaning, is absolutely necessary to criticize these projects of society, beyond their “cool”, inspiring and motivational nature. Facing the principles of a positive society, the negativism is the critical perspective needed to rethink humanism, in times of an entrepreneurial culture.

References

- ANGENOT, M. *El discurso social: los limites históricos de lo pensable y lo decible*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2010.
- ARFUCH, L. *O espaço biográfico: dilemas da subjetividade contemporânea*. Rio de Janeiro: EdUERJ, 2010.
- BAKHTIN, M. (Voloshinov). *Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1997.
- BOLTANSKI, L.; CHIAPELLO, È. *O novo espírito do capitalismo*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009.
- BUONANNO, M. *Histórias de vida exemplares*. *Biografias*. MATRIZES, ano 5, n. 1, p. 63-84, 2011.
- BYUNG-CHUL, H. *Sociedade do cansaço*. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2015.
- _____. *La sociedad de la transparencia*. Herder Editorial: Barcelona, 2013.
- DARDOT, P.; LAVAL, C. *A nova razão do mundo: ensaio sobre a sociedade neoliberal*. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2016.
- DRUCKER, P. F. *Inovação e espírito empreendedor: prática e princípios*. São Paulo: Cengage Learning, 2011.
- ENDEAVOR. *Cultura empreendedora no Brasil, 2014*. Disponível em: <http://info.endeavor.org.br/os-perfis-dos-empresendedores-brasileiros>. Acesso em: 11 abr. 2019.
- EHRENBERG, A. *O culto da performance: da aventura empreendedora à depressão nervosa*. Aparecida – SP: Idéias & Letras, 2010.
- FOUCAULT, M. *Birth of biopolitics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

- GALOUJ, F. "Inspiration Economy": A New Journal. *Journal of Inspiration Economy: an International Journal*, vol. 1, issue 1, sept 2014, p. 7-13. Disponível em: <http://journals.uob.edu.bh/JIE/contents/volume-39/articles/article-838>. Acesso em: 15 ago. 2018.
- GAMA, R. Empreendedora Bel Pesce dá 10 dicas para sucesso na carreira. *UOL, São Paulo*, 1 jun. 2012 – atualizada em 5 set, 2016. Disponível em: <https://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/redacao/2012/06/01/talento-brasileiro-nos-eua-bel-pesce-da-10-dicas-para-empreender-com-sucesso.htm>. Acesso em: 18 nov. 2019.
- ILLOUZ, E. *O amor nos tempos do capitalismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2011.
- _____. *El consumo de la utopía romántica: el amor y las contradicciones culturales del capitalismo*. Espanha: Katz, 2009.
- MCGUIGAN, J. Do populismo cultural ao capitalismo legal. *Revista Contracampo*, v. 28, n. 3, dez.-mar. Niterói: Contracampo, p. 5-25, 2013.
- _____. *Cool capitalism*. New York: Pluto Press, 2009.
- PESCE, B. *A menina do vale: como o empreendedorismo pode mudar sua vida*. São Paulo: Enkla, 2015a.
- _____. *A sua melhor versão te leva além*. São Paulo: Enkla, 2015b.
- PISTORI, M. H. C.; BANKS-LEITE, L. *Argumentação e construção de conhecimento: uma abordagem bakhtiniana*. *Bakhtiniana, São Paulo*, v. 1, n. 4, p. 129-144, 2. sem. 2010.
- PRADO, J. L. A. *Convocações biopolíticas dos dispositivos comunicacionais*. São Paulo: Educ/Fapesp, 2013.
- SCHUMPETER, J. *Capitalism, socialism, and democracy*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1942.
- SENNETT, R. *A corrosão do caráter: consequências pessoais do trabalho no novo capitalismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2007.
- SILVA, F. A. A realidade que inspira. In Pesce, B. *A menina do vale: como o empreendedorismo pode mudar sua vida*. São Paulo: Enkla, 2015. p. 11-14
- VAN DIJK, T. A. *La ciencia del texto*. Barcelona: Paidós, 1978.

About the author

Vander Casaqui – Professor at the Post-Graduate Program in Social Communication at Universidade Metodista de São Paulo. PhD in Communication Sciences at Universidade de São Paulo, with post-doctorate at Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

Date of submission: 11/04/2019

Date of acceptance: 15/12/2019