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BRAZILIAN CANVAS CIRCUSES: A FIELD IN CONSTANT MOTION AND SYMBOLIC TRANSFORMATION

Circos brasileiros de lona, um campo em constante movimento e transformação simbólica

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RESUMO

This paper analyzes the circus universe, that is, the circuses and the individuals involved in the daily activities to create, maintain, and develop the circus organization, and is based on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. Empirically, we sought to build a qualitative and diversified corpus based on 28 circuses and 116 interviews, as well as recorded conversations, newspaper articles, and by accompanying circuses and watching performances. Particularly, the semi-structured interviews based on the "snowball" technique have the people who work, live, and roam with and in the circus as a common element. Seeking to resist stereotypes and give voice to those who create organizations, we conducted this study so that the various voices of the agents in the field are heard, which, in turn, clarifies how the circus subjects and organizations (the actual circuses) are built and intertwined. No clear domination of an agent over the other has been identified in the field. Except for the legal difficulties pointed out by smaller circuses, power relations are much more visible when it comes to staying in the field. The further the agents are from accessing the symbolic and power resources, the more they are subjected to disappearance or precarious continuity.

Keywords: Circus; field theory; management.

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RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar o universo circense, ou seja, os circos e aqueles que estão envolvidos em suas atividades cotidianas de criação, manutenção e desenvolvimento da organização circense tendo como lente a teoria de campos de Bourdieu. Empiricamente buscamos construir um corpus qualitativo e diversificado, tendo como base 28 circos e 116 entrevistas e conversas gravadas, artigos de jornais, acompanhando circos, assistindo espetáculos, etc. Particularmente as entrevistas semi estruturadas e construídas pela técnica "bola de neve". Buscando fugir aos estereótipos e dar voz à aqueles que fazem as organizações, desdobramos essa pesquisa, em que as várias vozes dos agentes são ouvidas, nos esclarecendo como sujeitos circenses e organizações – os circos - se entrelaçam e se constroem. Não identificamos uma dominação clara de um agente em relação ao outro no campo. Exceto pelas dificuldades legais apontadas pelos circos de menor porte, as relações de poder são muito mais visíveis quando se trata da permanência no campo. Estando os agentes mais distantes do acesso aos recursos simbólicos e de poder, mais estão eles sujeitos ao desaparecimento ou a uma continuidade precária.

Palavras-chave: *Circo. Teoria dos Campos. Gestão.*

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes the circus universe, that is, the circuses and the individuals involved in the daily activities to create, maintain, and develop the circus organization, and is based on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. We emphasize that presenting circuses as a sole, singular object of study is no simple task. The plurality in the circus formations, structures, and performances prevent their delimitation and the adoption of a universalist definition. Therefore, seeking to resist stereotypes and give voice to those who create organizations, we conducted this study so that the various voices of the agents in the field are heard, which, in turn, clarifies how the circus subjects and organizations (the actual circuses) are built and intertwined.

For Silva and Abreu (2009), circuses are historically itinerant, and their structure is based on the circus family. Therefore, both words are juxtaposed so as to refer to circuses as family circuses. This category is described as an association between the organization of the labor activity and the circus training/learning, in which the family operates as its foundation. Therefore, this circus category is perceived as depending on the family unit and as the expression of a way of life and the need for family reproduction. The organization of work and production of the shows vouch for "producing, reproducing and maintaining the family-circus" (Silva, 1996, p.13-14). Magnani (1998) classifies circuses (including family circuses) as large, medium, and small. The former offer major shows and attractions; the medium ones relate to the performance of various acts; and the small ones are associated with theatrical circus (a theater play integrated to the circus performance). In general, for Silva (1996) and Magnani (1998), the circus is a form of popular entertainment which features the division of labor and the elaboration of a product to be offered to consumers: a show performed under a canvas tent.

Canvas circuses have undergone numerous transformations in the last 30-40 years. The impact of access to a plurality of entertainment forms by the Brazilian population has characterized the circuses in terms of their transformation and diversity of performance strategies. This transformation has been marked by attempts to suit the shows to the audience's interests, so the classifications limited to the size of a circus physical structure cannot explain the diversity of internal dynamics. Although nowadays the circus language cannot refer exclusively to circuses, as it has been articulated to innumerable other art forms, educational processes, and distinct organizations, this paper focuses on itinerant canvas circuses, in order to delimit the scope of the research (Bolognesi, 2010).

From the apprehension and interpretation of the discourses (Grant; Oswick, 1996; Carrieri; Pimentel; Leite-da-Silva, 2006), we sought to reveal the particularities of this type of organization, that is, the circuses themselves. To aid our interpretations, we resorted to Pierre Bourdieu's field theory (2004; 2008a; 2008b; 2008c; 2009a; 2009b; 2009c), acknowledging that although the field is the social space where forces and struggles occur, they have specific rules and strategies that are adopted for each field. Therefore, we seek to understand how the various agents (a term coined by Bourdieu, 2004) such as circus artists, the actual circuses, the government, and even the populations related in such a complex field.

Empirically, we sought to build a qualitative and diversified corpus based on 28 circuses and 116 interviews, as well as recorded conversations, newspaper articles, and by accompanying circuses and watching performances. Particularly, the semi-structured interviews based on the snowball sampling technique (Goodman, 1961) have the people who work, live, and roam with and in the circus as a common element. These subjects are all nomads and constitute a group of individuals working and living in the same place, that is, under a canvas tent. Thus, we proceeded with our investigation by collecting and recording information on 28 different circuses, which we briefly introduce in this paper. The circuses visited by the group were Circo Royter, Circo Rakmer, Circo Fantástico, Circo do Lingueta, Circo Tihany Spetacular, Circo dos Sonhos, Circo Popular Brasil, Circo Coliseu di Roma, Big Brothers Circus Kids, Circo Castelli, Circo Nova Geração, Circo Big Brothers, Circo di Napoli, Circo Show Brasil, Circo Monte Carlo, Circo Teatro Tubinho, Circo Real Madrid, Circo Romani, Circo Spacial, Circo Para Todos (Cia Capadócia), Circo Kalahary, Circo Nacional Garrafinha, Circo Mundo Mágico, Circo Arianos, Circo Galáxia, Circo de Itália, African Circus, and Circo do Palhaço Churupita.

We conclude that Bourdieu's field theory and the methodology chosen has led us to a comprehensive understanding of the study object, as it was necessary to analyze the circuses in their most varied organizational forms as well as the relation of these organizations with society, the different communities, governments, and state and national public policies targeted at arts.

This article has been divided into seven sections, among which this introduction is the first. The second part discusses the postulates of field theory, the third addresses circuses in Brazil and in the field of administration, the fourth presents readers with the research paths, and the fifth and sixth sections discuss the research findings in terms of the agents and the field. Finally, the seventh section concludes this paper.

2 FIELD THEORY

To know more about the material conditions of symbolic production, Bourdieu (2009c) elaborated his theory based on the works of Levi-Strauss (classical structuralism), but went beyond, breaking with certain characteristics, reformulating concepts and working what he called "genetic structuralism". According to the author's view, individuals bear forms of action before the social structure, constituting themselves as agents and endowed with singular abilities to modify the structure. He did not deny that the action of these individuals was imbricated in their positions in the field and continued to formulate the concept of field as the space of forces and struggles referring to the notion of rules and strategies adopted in each one of these social spaces (Bourdieu, 2009b). For Bourdieu (2009b), the social field is an abstract and structured space of social positions occupied by agents. The abstract character of this space gives it the ability to exercise its properties beyond the imaginable physical limits, that is, the social positions occupied by agents are not only physical but, above all, symbolic. For the author, society perceived as a set

of fields is fractional, classified, and involves symbolic struggles that impose fields to adopt ideological positions. The field is just a frame, a purely theoretical perspective for practical research. In this sense, fields are limited to their effects, and the agents and institutions are only part of a field when they suffer or produce effects in it.

Bourdieu (2009b) considers individuals as automatons or self-operative beings, who are sometimes regulated according to laws they cannot control and that govern the fields, assigning defined positions for the agents in various ways, according to the valuation of capital in the different fields. In this context, the objective relations are outlined according to the existence and determinations of the field, whether they are agents or institutions. The strategies for maintaining or subverting the forces in the field depend on the positions of the agents and the limits of their positions. It is a movement of struggle to objectify and maintain the existence in the field, in which agents can have forces originating from traditionalism and their degree of involvement in relation to the power nuclei of the field to which they belong (Bourdieu, 2009a).

When approaching Chomsky, Bourdieu (2009b) pointed out the active and inventive intention of the practice, resulting from the generating capacities of the constituted dispositions. Therefore, the creative, active, and inventive capacity of agents are rescued, and the notion of *habitus* comprises the acquired systems that operate at the practical level, classifying and organizing the agents' daily actions. For Woortmann (1995, p. 130), *habitus* can be understood as a "set of acquired and naturalized dispositions. [...] The *habitus* leads to [...] an 'orchestration with no conductor,' of practices and strategies" socialized for players to play the game. There are also complementary concepts such as *doxa*, *illusio*, *praxis,* and *nomos*, which are articulators of a reciprocal relationship between what is objective and subjective. "Both the *doxa*, the consensus, and the *nomos*, the general laws that govern the field, are widely accepted and legitimized by the social environment" (Thiry-Cherques, 2006, p. 37). Besides the existence of *nomos* and *doxa*, there is also a reward for which all struggle – *illusio*. "Illusio does not belong to the order of explicit principles, these that are put forward and defended, but of action, routine, things that are done, and that are done because they are things that one does and that have always been done that way" (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 124). Bourdieu (2008b) breaks with the notions of subject, motivation, actor and role, and the opposition between individual and society, individual and collective, conscious and unconscious, interested and disinterested, and objective and subjective.

For Bourdieu (2008b), the reality is objectified in the exteriority of the elements that compose it, and the appearances are based on the difference, from relative positions in the social space. Belonging to a group generates *illusio*, a form of cynicism where agents do not dominate explicitly, but succeed vehemently, precisely because they disguise. History, objectified or incorporated, allows the emergence of *habitus*, a sort of product whose historical acquisition allows the appropriation of symbolic capital. Interest is the driving force of fields. It encourages agents to compete and collaborate. This is what Bourdieu (2009a) called *doxa*, a sort of consensual opinion, whereby there is a sensus-consensus, which gives rise to power relations, allowing the dominant forces to maintain power, which, in turn, becomes naturalized.

The capitals distributed in the fields can have the most varied forms, but they basically comprise three types: economic ("economic resources and factors of production, such as income, wealth, assets and labor"), social relationships of mutual knowledge, such as the networks of contacts and the social accesses that one possesses, such as colleagues and friends", etc.), cultural ("refers to knowledge and skills, and may be embodied in the individual, as a durable disposition, such as talents, public speaking competency and language proficiency; it may be objectified when possessing cultural goods such as artworks, for example, and may be institutionalized, which is the capital sanctioned by institutions, such as diplomas and academic degrees") (Souza Filho

et al., 2013, p. 673); finally, the symbolic capital represents all of them (Thiry-Cherques, 2008). While bearing these forms of capital, each agent acts under the pressure of the space structure imposed on them. The brutality of this pressure is proportional to the fragility of the weight of capital in relation to a given field. Along these lines, the orientation for change takes place, according to the system of possibilities available. It is this system that delimits the options of mobility and subversion in the field. It is important to understand that practices are temporary and cannot be understood as inherent properties of the field (Bourdieu, 2004).

According to Bourdieu (2008b), societies are volatile and have a set of social positions whose weight refers to the history of each field. To understand how a field operates, one must understand the relationships between positions, dispositions, and stances as well as the choices of the agents concerning the most varied practices, such as leisure, work, politics, and education. For it is from them that *habitus* is constituted, that is, a form of practical sense about what must be done in every circumstance. It is the sense of the game, in which the choices are oriented according to the objective order of the field. This logic of production characterizes the basis for the reproduction of social structures. In this sense, institutions such as schools have the power to perpetuate positions and social classes and, at the same time, to enable movements in the field, hence promoting extraordinary situations. For the author, the classifications allowed in the fields are the description, and the prescription accepted and assumed as given; but it is the family, for example, which corroborates for the construction of social reality, at the same time that it is constituted by this very reality. This is the *nomus*, the common principle of vision and division, something that is instilled in us through socialization.

It is from socialization that agents or institutions occupy their positions; and if these are opposed in the field, they will require structurally homologous strategies yet harmonized in the objective world (Bourdieu, 2008[a]). Each part of a field corresponds to its constituting totality, and each field presents a form of singularity. However, the latter cannot avoid the comparison between the parts. In turn, this comparison needs to be based on structurally equivalent parts to be considered valid (Bourdieu, 2009c). It is the codification of each field that, while combining economic, social and cultural effects; privileging some agents to the detriment of others; encouraging a moral conformism and adherence to the impositions of the current order, and influenced and guaranteed by several agents, allows the existence of families and groups, constructing fictions that determine the means of existing and subsisting, whether by obeying or subverting the field order (Bourdieu, 2008b).

Also according to Bourdieu (2009b), social reality is historical and requires an investigation that allows encompassing structures as a result of historical processes. It is important to emphasize that actions are not always consciously oriented towards the ends but may represent the adjustment of the dispositions to a position. In this sense, as far as our research is concerned, as we study the theory developed throughout Bourdieu's academic life, we find a valid way to analyze the survival strategies of the circuses observed. We present below a brief report on the history of circuses in Brazil, which will serve as a reference for how we understand the field investigated.

3 CIRCUSES IN BRAZIL

It is common to refer to the past when speaking about circuses, especially canvas circuses. In addition to being imbricated in the popular imagination, circuses continue to exist. Canvas and itinerant circuses keep on roaming through the inlands of Brazil. Many of them visit the peripheries of large and medium-sized cities. We have been able to observe that some groups and

families have acquired new canvas tents, set up new circus companies, and toured the country. For Costa (2000, p.117), however, it is difficult to measure the exact number of circuses in the country, given the non-existence of data in this regard.

According to the National Arts Foundation (Funarte, 2015), the difficulty of gathering concrete information about circuses is caused by their nomadic character. In 1996, what was called CIRCOSENSO (census of circuses) was conducted in the state of São Paulo, which identified 300 to 3,000 circuses, that is, a scattered and unreliable estimate, given the significant interval between figures (Costa, 2000). For Oliveira; Cavedon (2013, p.160) "in the 1970s, there were more than 2,000 circus companies scattered throughout Brazil; in turn, in 2000, they were no more than 300, and, in that same period, the number of school circuses increased from two to 40."

Therefore, as we cannot count on precise figures, we tried to understand what the circus as an object involves. We understand that circus arts such as dancing and singing originated from sacredness, from the representations that allowed madness and regarded it as an art form. The intimate relationship between circus arts and sports was also identified. The conventional circus, as we know it, has rings, canvases, masts, and trapezes. These circuses feature acts, performances with exotic animals and the sale of snacks such as popcorn and cotton candy. This type of circus organization that offers paid spectacles and a ring where they present acts of balancing on horseback and other diverse abilities, is quite recent (Torres, 1998, p.16). According to Silva (2007), the first reference to the circular format is the company of Philip Astley, an egress of the military cavalry who created a space directed to equestrian performance in 1776.

For Silva (2007, p. 35), from an artistic standpoint, Astley was regarded as innovative because with his circular ring, a team of acrobat riders, to the sound of a drum that marked the rhythm of the horses, he merged dance, jumps, acrobatics, juggling, and animal taming." According to Torres (1998), Astley sought to capture the audience's attention with various acts and a "battalion clown", who was a peasant recruited as a comic figure. He might have also created the ringmaster, who directed and introduced the acts performances. Around 1780, according to Silva (2007, p. 36), "Hughes, a former knight of the Astley troupe, set up the Royal Circus." That was the first company to adopt the name "circus." According to the author, Ashley and Hughes were also pioneers in gathering equestrian presentations, street performers, and street peddlers into a single space. Miming was associated with musical elements.

Over time, the show with popular aspects gradually adapted to the new times and new forms of circus manifestation emerged, mainly focused on the income and survival of the circus families. In society, spontaneous forms of entertainment have been organized commercially and attracted the audiences, who, in turn, have acquired the status of entertainment consumers (Bolognesi, 2003, p.38). This trajectory of constant changes and adaptations made the history of Brazilian circuses unique. Torres (1998) reports that the earliest records of circus activity in Brazil date back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when families of circus artists migrated from Europe.

Duarte (1995) points out that one of the first formal records in Brazil refers to the Chiarini family circus, in 1834, in the state of Minas Gerais. The family ascended from several generations of circus performers and owned a circus-theater type in which they performed pantomimes, balancing, gymnastics, and dance acts. There are references to Alexandre Lowande's equestrian circus in1842, in Minas Gerais, and in 1857, in Rio Grande do Sul. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the equestrian circus came to dominate the Brazilian circus scene. Featuring horseback balancing, juggling, and acrobatics acts, they became part of the everyday life of certain cities (Silva, 2007).

Ruiz (1987, p.21-22) presents different information, pointing out that the first circus to arrive in Brazil was the Bragassi Circus, in 1830. According to this, this was the circus that attracted the others to settle in Brazil. What both authors share, however, is the information that circus groups traveled through various towns, associating with local religious festivals and performing in local theaters. Therefore, gestures, mime, risky acts, equestrian acrobatics, theater, comedy, music, and dance reached the furthest places, where no other artistic organization had ever been. According to Silva (2007), the equestrian circus traveled Brazil and was the only form of entertainment available for the populations of several Brazilian locations.

Gradually, a new type of circus was forming. In the 1970s, some circuses performed traditional circus-theater plays and ring-style comedies, while others mixed circus numbers with musical shows by popular singers. There were circuses that featured wrestling acts in the second part of the show, in which character fighters were identified as good or evil. Another form of circus manifestation was the country-themed circus-theater, in which the song lyrics were the basis for theatrical dramatizations. Television was gradually included in the shows, through the appropriation of jargon or the creation of comic sketches based on successful shows, especially soap operas. Shortly afterward the circus business acquired new contours, and circuses became associated with amusement parks. This fixed and large model went into a crisis in the 1990s, and the circus groups were separated. As the years went by, the traveling circus-park model became financially unfeasible (Pimenta, 2005).

According to Altmayer (2008), in the late 1950s, and especially in the 1960s and 1970s, the theater circuses went through several financial crises. The famous actors migrated from to radio and later to television. Several groups decided to concentrate on the variety acts, excluding the scenic presentations from their shows, while other small circuses made the theatrical play the primary element of their shows. The actors of these new circuses acquired the scenic material and the costumes from the old groups and established smaller circuses, in which they were the main attraction. In the 1970s, traditional circuses hired shows from popular singers, with the aim of winning over the audience. These shows became the main attraction of some circuses, and the musical show model was adopted by many, becoming a typical part of circus shows.

There is still what authors like Altmayer (2008) have called “the contemporary circus model,” which has become stronger from the decade of 1990 onwards in Brazil. This type of circus features the participation of artists coming from drama, dance, and gymnastics backgrounds. These performers work with a circus language that surpasses the one established according to the canvas model. The so-called contemporary circus is based on the background of the artists, who develop a language that is a continuous object of rescue and reformulation, in a constant process of articulation with various artistic languages.

There is now a website that gathers the largest amount of data about circuses in Brazil: it is *Circonteúdo*, which lists 156 circuses operating in the country. Yet, data on national circuses is scarce. Exceptionally, the Cultural Foundation of the State of Bahia has reported that in 2009 there were 25 circuses in activity in that state. Bolognesi (2010) studied the universe of clowns and visited 38 circuses between 1998 and 2000, in the states of São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, Alagoas, Paraíba, and Santa Catarina. Therefore, despite the widespread discourses in society that canvas circuses have “died” or were “dying,” their extinction seems to find no support in reality. These organizations somehow persist and reproduce in the field of arts and entertainment.

3.1 Administration and circus organizations

Management studies have recently turned their attention to circus organizations. Parker (2011) studied English circuses and characterized them as distinctive organizations, operating with no fixed address and traveling on wheels, which leads them to establish a distinct relationship with their surrounding environment. The author's research focused on big business circuses and showed that contrary to the stereotyped view usually attributed to circuses regarding their disorganization, these organizations are in fact rooted in rigid internal processes with delineated economic patterns that offer fantastic, magical goods and services.

In Brazil, one of the first studies in administration was conducted by Costa, in 2000, who researched the institutional dimensions of the Brazilian circuses. The author's study characterized circuses as ever-changing institutions that have survived through time due to the preservation of certain essential traits such as identity, tradition, family-based operations, knowledge transfer, and itinerancy.

In 2011, Martins, Lopes and Emmendoerfer conducted a study analyzing the configuration and dynamics of circus organizations in the context of the creative economy, seeking to identify the characteristics of the circus organizational structure, their management models and their relationship with the State through public funding policies. These authors concluded that the public policies targeted at the sector are incipient, being that the preservation of the circus cultural capital in the state of Minas Gerais is fomented mainly by the family groupings in circuses and the network of circus workers.

Oliveira and Cavedon (2013, p. 166) conducted ethnographic research in a circus that has operated for 25 years. The study observed that

> "changes in the organizational routine of circuses such as the incorporation of management practices into artistic work, have made the circus change from a way of life to a field of work. Therefore, there is a movement to regulate the performance of circuses, the emergence of scientific knowledge about these organizations as inserted in the creative industries, and the attempt by cultural sector 'experts' to classify the circus organizational forms."

In a recent study, Quaresma Jr., Silva and Carrieri (2014) focused on circus strategies in which circuses establish formal and informal partnerships with the media products of the cultural industry in order to achieve economic gains and a competitive edge in the entertainment market. To a certain extent, these authors have confirmed what Oliveira and Cavedon (2013, p.156) had found concerning "the establishment of associative networks between circuses and companies, due to the existence of demand for artistic activities by the market."

As early as 2015, Oliveira and Cavedon (2015, p. 61) analyzed

> "how the relationship between emotions and labor are established as a political action in a circus organization based in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul." [...] The results revealed the existence of mechanisms through which emotions configured social mobilization actions in the genesis of the circus organization, as well as organizational practices such as the effects of political disputes between the circus, the companies, and the public power of the city in question."

Aguiar and Carrieri (2016) studied identity characteristics among circuses that referred to themselves as "traditional." The authors showed that family relations dominate these organizations, and there is an imbricated relation between life and work in the organizational routine of circus workers. In the same year, Lima, Aguiar and Carrieri (2016) proposed a reflection on circuses and their reproduction in time and space is a fact. Resorting to Karl Weick's sensemaking

approach, these authors contrasted discourses stating that "old circuses are gone" or that "circuses are dying" and showed that they, in fact, continue to exist as organizations, management forms, ways of life, and a form of art.

Aguiar, Carrieri, and Souza (2016) studied circus strategies in "traditional canvas circuses" and focused on the existence of a circus activity matrix that allows their characterization as an artistic product in constant interaction with their audiences. The partnerships with media products are perceived as strategic for maintaining the matrix of laughter and risk that pervades the identity of circuses. Also in 2016, Oliveira and Mello published an ethnographic study where they analyzed "the institutional logics in the formation of the organizational field of contemporary circuses in the Brazilian and Canadian context." (Oliveira; Mello, 2016, p. 475)

Finally, Oliveira and Cavedon (2017, p. 142), while studying contemporary circuses, performed "the theoretical approximation between studies based on practices of Organizational Studies and the concept of heterotopia elaborated by Michel Foucault." These authors identified sets of organizational practices that altered the relations of the forces in the field of the arts in the contexts surveyed, resulting in the production of other spaces in society – or heterotopias, according to Foucault, which enabled circuses to establish themselves as organizations."

In general, the papers address authors from philosophy, history, and administration, such as De Certeau and Foucault, who are concerned with analyzing society; Maus and Geertz, who carry out ethnographic studies in social groups; Zuker, Scott, and Meyer, who study the processes of institutionalization of organizations; and Brass, Doz, and Hammel, who analyze the formation of strategic alliances as a management practice allied to the market, among many others. These studies highlight the diversity of management forms and circus organizations. Behind the entertainment and fun, the circus shows and the circus art, are people inserted in a familiar and itinerant routine who also work as the managers of such organizations, whether they are small or large. They are individuals (perhaps not so ordinary) who develop strategies and tactics to make their art and business endure.

It should be noted that only the study by Martins, Lopes, and Emmendoerfer (2011, pp. 445 and 446) mentions the concept of capital culture linked to Bourdieu. According to these authors,

> "the results obtained in the exploratory case study instigated us to broaden the scope of research to the state level and enabled us to raise questions about the socio-political articulation systems aimed at the preservation of the circus cultural capital in Brazil, the results proposed by them, and whether such results are being achieved. [...] It is concluded that the preservation of the circus cultural capital in Minas Gerais is primarily driven by the grouping of circus families and the network of circus workers, with the still incipient support of the State, which limits the development of this segment in the creative economy."

However, it must be emphasized that the mentioned author, whose work is the basis of that study, is not cited in this paper. The definition of cultural capital is not made explicit. It is assumed that readers are familiar with this concept and that it can be arranged without any interrelation with other ideas developed by Bourdieu. In addition, there is a certain merge of capital forms in these author's definitions, as the network of circus professionals would comprise the so-called social capital.

The proposal presented here differs from previously cited studies in the sense of not relying on this author for the analysis of circuses as social phenomena. Instead, it aims to analyze the circus universe through the lenses of Bourdieu's field theory. What interests us are the socio-cultural, historical, symbolic and economic characteristics intrinsic to the relationships between subjects and arts as a way to assure the survival of circus organizations in the (social) field of art.

4 METHODOLOGICAL PATH

This paper derives from a broad study that sought to investigate the organizational routines of circuses based in the southeastern region of Brazil. On that occasion, we conducted exploratory visits in 30 organizations; however, two of them were removed in this study (28 circuses remained in the sample), as they were not characterized as agents in the field analyzed herein. Starting from Holanda (2012), and since our research emphasizes the understanding of the experiences lived by circuses, we can state this study is grounded on phenomenological research. Flexibility is a key trait of this type of research and, therefore, the idea that there was not a single unambiguous and unquestionable way of adopting our methodological procedures guided us, both in terms of its planning and in execution. Moreover, phenomenology cannot be reduced to a "cookbook"; it is instead an approach and attitude, and an investigative stance to be adopted by researchers.

Therefore, the group of researchers witnessed the rehearsals and mounting of the circuses shows and structures and watched the rehearsals; that is, the group observed the everyday life of the individuals working in such organizations. We conducted a total of 116 interviews with the various agents, trying to include different agents such as owners, families, contracted families, contractors, and eventual employees coming from each one of them. Respondents were named (R01) through (R116), so as to preserve their identities. In some of the circuses, we were able to talk with other agents such as priests, police officers and commissioners, mayors, merchants, and the general public. In the case of these players, we had informal talks took notes about their views on circuses and circus performers. As the circuses were very diverse in terms of the number of members associated with them, there was no concern in establishing a fixed number of interviews per organization, but instead, a number of interviews comprising such a diversity of agents. All the unrecorded, informal conversations were jotted down and systematized for later analysis with the formal interviews.

When we opted for qualitative research, we valued the possibility of organizing the investigative process throughout its development, choosing a set of procedures that took the real world into account. Our objective is not to enumerate or measure events, but to enable a critical gaze, providing information and descriptions emerging from the direct contact between the researcher and the observed reality (Rey, 2005). We resorted to the procedures of social research proposed by Minayo (1994), such as informal conversations, semi-structured interviews, and observation, as explained previously. During this process, we were able to detect certain peculiarities in the behaviors and relations emerging in the environments of the different circuses.

Grounded on a basic, semi structured guideline, the interviews allowed us to collect different narratives by the individuals about their personal trajectories and the everyday management of each circus (Souza *et al*., 2014). Formal interviews and informal conversations were systematized, transcribed and pasted to a spreadsheet containing the categories of analysis that could be identified from the agents' discourses, such as identity, strategy, roaming, family, public policy, etc. The elaboration of these worksheets allowed the analysis and compilation of the data collected.

This experience allowed us to know part of the dynamics involving the circus practices in their various organizational forms and formations. By observing the places where these organizations install their structures, their appearance, the behavior and customs of the workers involved in the shows, and the services they provide, we were able to delimit some aspects to be investigated in this particular study. In this sense, we corroborate the work of Duarte (2002), as the author states that every study is a journey, a quest for singularities in already visited places, seeking to allow a new gaze, contributing with new perspectives to the understanding of reality, and appropriating rather personal forms of knowledge and experience.

To analyze the material collected during the research process, we relied on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, which allows the design of theoretical and methodological tools for the discovery of symbolic production logics crossing various fields (Bourdieu, 2009c). Bourdieu's methodological path approaches the works of Panofsky and Chomsky, but has its own peculiarities, as Bourdieu reacted against classical structuralism, which he considered a strange form of philosophy of action and surpassed the issue of unconsciousness without reducing the agents to the role of supporting the social structures. His theory allows us to reveal the particularities of agents, which, in turn, reveal their ability to adjust to *doxa* and even produce subversions. Grounded on this theory, this paper introduces some information about the universe of circuses, its agents and the dynamics around the management process that allows some of them to take more favorable positions in the relations of power in a given field. Next, we introduce the agents identified during the investigation.

5 THE AGENTS/PLAYERS

A) The circuses

The field identified in this study consists of "canvas and traveling circuses" (TABLE 1) and features the typical characteristics of this type of organization, as explained previously. The table presents an overview of the circuses surveyed in this study and their main characteristics, such as seating capacity and start year of activities.

TABLE 1: SYNTHESIS OF THE CIRCUS SURVEYED

Circus	Start year of activities*	Category	Capacity (in number of seats)	Period when the visits occurred
African Circus	1999	Itinerant	200	Jan. 2013
Big Brothers Cirkus Kids	2004	Itinerant	700	Jan. 2013/2015
Circo Arianos	1978	Itinerant	200	Aug. 2011/2014
Circo Big Brothers	2010	Itinerant	600	Jun. 2012
Circo Castelli	1986	Itinerant	200	Dec. 2011 Apr. 2012
Circo Coliseu di Roma	1904	Itinerant	200	Jan. 2012
Circo Di Itália	1995	Itinerant	200	Apr. 2012
Circo Di Napoli	1979	Itinerant	3000	Aug. 2012
Circo Do Lingueta	1980	Itinerant	200	Set. 2012/2015
Circo Do Palhaço Churupita	1985	Itinerant	800	Mar. 2013
Circo Dos Sonhos	2011	1 fixed unit / SP and 2 itinerant units	2000	Feb./Apr. 2012
Circo Fantástico	1991	Itinerant	200	Mar./Apr. 2012
Circo Galáxia	2011	Itinerant	100	Jun. 2012
Circo Kalahary	1960	Itinerant	5000	May. 2012/2015
Circo Monte Carlo	1996	Itinerant	00	Set. 2012
Circo Mundo Mágico	2007	Itinerant	1500	Jan. 2012/2015
Circo Nacional Garrafinha	1998	Itinerant	200	Feb. 2013/2016
Circo Nova Geração	2008	Itinerant	200	Jul./Aug. 2012
Circo Para Todos (Cia Capadócia)	2006	Itinerant	300	Set. 2011/2015
Circo Popular Brasil	2008	Itinerant	200	Aug. 2011/2015

Circus	Start year of activities*	Category	Capacity (in number of seats)	Period when the visits occurred
Circo Rakmer	2007	Itinerant	1200	Nov. 2011 Jan. 2012/2014
Circo Real Madrid	1987	Itinerant	200	Jan. 2013
Circo Romani	2010	Itinerant	100	Aug. 2012
Circo Royter	1970	Itinerant	1200	May. /Jun. 2011/ 2015
Circo Spacial	1985	Itinerant	3000	Mar. 2012
Circo Show Brasil	1997	Itinerant	400	Mar. 2011/2015
Circo Teatro Tubinho	1959	Itinerant	600	Aug. 2012/2016
Circo Tihany Spetacular	1917	Itinerant	1500	Jul. 2012

Source: Prepared by the authors.

* The dates refer to the information given by the owners regarding the date of opening and establishment of the first version of the circus. Many of them were out of operation for many years but have resumed their activities under the command of successor heirs.

From our observations and the interviews with the members of these organizations, it has been possible to understand part of the dynamics that pervades the daily life of itinerant circuses. The study brought to light a range of data, such as the relationships established with the state through incentive and funding projects operated by the National Arts Foundation (FUNARTE) and other state and municipal support tools; the legal requirements with municipalities, state and the federal government; the relationship with channels and media products; other forms of income generation for circuses, such as the trade practiced in the canvas tents, including the sale of food and beverages and promotional and entertainment products; and the labor relations expressed by family groups through the contracting of artists, workers, and janitors.

We emphasize that the group surveyed in this study is not homogeneous, for it consists of large, medium, and small circuses, both family and non-family. Of the 28 circuses selected for sampling, eight operate in small towns, eight in suburban neighborhoods of large cities, and one of them has greater traveling capacity, not being restricted to regional circulation. Among these, five are medium-sized, and six are large (i.e., more than 500 seats).

Such diversity is what makes the field exist and be dynamic, and it is in the field that the circuses surveyed are located, as well as other circuses and players. We observed that in this specific group, their traveling nature is the common characteristic that unites them, while being or not a family circus is a distinctive mark. Size, of course, can be a problem in terms of structures, revenues, and income, but as a mere feature, it does not seem to create animosity between different circus groups. “What unites us is the family, the traveling, and the canvas (laughter)” (R10).

B) The State

There is a consensus view among the ones involved with the reality of Brazilian circuses that the Brazilian State “owes a debt” to circuses for these have performed all over the country in the last two centuries, bringing art, culture, and entertainment to the Brazilian population with no government incentive or support. Aware of this, the Ministry of Culture created the Circus Coordination Department within FUNARTE (National Arts Foundation) in the last decade, aiming at establishing a national public policy focused on circuses. This body is responsible for responding to the demands of the segment groups and workers, through the creation of policies aimed at the improvement, development, and consolidation of the circus language.

To reach these groups, this institution promotes public calls to support circus activity. In this sense, there are programs such as the *Prêmio Funarte Carequinha de Estímulo ao Circo* award, which funds the acquisition of canvas tents and accessories and encourages the creation and improvement of circus numbers and the conduction of research on the subject. It should also be noted that, in order to strengthen circus activities, the Circus Special Task Force was established within FUNARTE in 2005, with the mission of bringing together representatives of the circus sector, with a view to drawing up sectoral and action plans based on the demands of circus workers. This plan was completed in 2010, but some of its goals have yet to be achieved. In the scope of public policies, there are grants offered by agencies at state and federal levels.

An example of incentive is the *Carequinha Award*, which allows to cover expenses with canvas tents, equipment, assembly, and traveling. To this date, this award has been the most accessible support mechanisms for traveling circuses and groups. It should be noted that these circuses rarely benefit from the Rouanet Law (Oliveira and Fernandes, 2016) and from other incentive laws since these operate from a model in which the private sector invests in culture in exchange for tax exemption. It is up to the companies to decide which shows and cultural productions, previously approved by the Ministry of Culture, will receive the funds, which leads them to prioritize those that will give them the highest advertising and publicity return. A few shows performed by companies or groups that use the circus language and circus festivals with greater social visibility have access to the forms of funding available through the Rouanet Law.

There are also state programs such as "Cena Minas," organized by the Minas Gerais state government, which has supported the circus sector since 2007 according to the following categories: maintenance of scenic spaces; circulation of scenic shows; and acquisition of equipment and materials. So far, six editions have been organized. Since 2010, the São Paulo State Secretariat of Culture has held a competition for the selection of projects aimed at seasonal or traveling circus shows; projects for producing, improving or maintaining canvas and traveling circuses; and production and performance of circus acts. Also, in 2014, the Municipal Department of Culture of São Paulo promoted for the first time a public call for circus promotion, comprising three lines of support: traveling circuses, circus groups, and circus performers. In the state of Rio de Janeiro, there are occasional grants targeted at circuses and the sector actively participated in debates around the sector planning document drafted and proposed by the Superintendence of Arts of the State Secretariat of Culture in 2013. The state of Espírito Santo has held two public calls for the acquisition of canvas tents and equipment, one held in 2012 and the other one in 2014. The access to these grants and supporting mechanisms is available for a small group of circuses, for most organizations are unaware of the tools for elaborating projects that are eligible for receiving incentives. Circuses are supported by the box office revenues, unlike other artistic expressions. However, it is impossible to deprive the importance of grants to the circuses that have been able to benefit from them. For some small circuses, these funds have allowed their survival, if not a contribution to their structure and scenic processes.

The direct contact that the circuses have with the state bodies occurs through the local city halls. The need to constantly search for new audiences generates the need for new open spaces, installation of water and light supply, operating permits, and a series of other legal procedures required by each municipality. The facilities or difficulties imposed by the local authorities often determine whether a circus can be installed. Typically, circuses try to negotiate with the city halls, exchanging tickets and performances in schools for exemption from public fees. This practice is more common in small towns where personal relationships are more accessible. The installation of tents in public spaces is also common in smaller towns, which reduces costs. The circus workers often complain of the low availability of central spaces available in medium or large cities; also,

larger circuses with greater economic power tend to install their structures on strategic locations, such as parking lots at shopping malls. When small circuses visit big cities, they tend to set up their structures in the peripheries, often illegally. *"We can't get into cities like Belo Horizonte, there is no room for us anymore, [therefore] we have to go to the outskirts, to the neighboring cities"* (R102).

The city halls requirements are generally perceived by circuses as extremely bureaucratic and numerous. The difficulties in dealing with the Fire Department of each municipality, which usually have different policies, is the subject of constant complaint. In Minas Gerais, circus associations, together with the State Department of Culture, published in 2007 a booklet entitled "*Seja parceiro do circo*" ("Be a partner of the circus"), for distribution in the municipalities of Minas Gerais, aiming at greater cooperation between local public authorities and circuses. *"That booklet was good; it helped a lot. I always keep one to show it in the towns; there are city halls that know nothing about circuses, they don't like people..."* (R33). This speech refers to a serious problem, as some municipalities, through their agents, do not collaborate with this art form; they are often prejudiced about it and may prevent the circuses from coming to the cities. "*Gee, there are cities where the people are after us, but the mayors, priests, and commissioners... There's always someone who thinks that a clown is a woman's thief (laughs)*" (R45).

There are similar initiatives in other Brazilian states such as Bahia. The municipalities are responsible for the authorization to install circus structures in public spaces, and the inspection of the admitted facilities, through inspection and authorization by the Fire Department, the Civil Police, and the fulfillment of legal responsibilities with the city hall, such as operation permits and the Municipal Services Tax (ISS).

C) The media

The media is a differentiated tool in terms of its use by the circus groups. There are, however, intersections in how they use it. Circus parades through the city are the common element among them, whereas clowns and beautiful women are the main attractions. The distribution of leaflets, along with the use of posters and cars equipped with loudspeakers are common forms of promotion for these circuses. In terms of media, there is an apparently controversial relationship, as a nostalgic element permeates the imagination of the elders or those who appropriate a heartfelt discourse, referring to the old times before the television or the radio were invented. However, just as radio and TV programs have been used by circuses for decades to come closer to the audience's collective imagery, circuses now have come to appropriate media products and "sell them" in the same way that the cultural industry does.

As reported above, throughout their history, circuses have always sought to explore different media manifestations to reach larger audiences. There was the period of country songs, stage plays, radio singers, brief participations by soap opera heartthrobs in the shows, etc. Currently, the use of media products owned by large international corporations prevails, such as Disney, Cartoon Network, among others, as well as successful products owned by national capital groups, such as *Patati-Patatá* and *Turma da Monica*. The national products and brands are subject to contract and licensing to be used by circuses as their main attractions. Yet, smaller circuses sometimes use these products without proper licensing, whereas the international ones are used without any type of formal agreement. "*We can't afford it, so we have to create it. It doesn't look the same, but the children love it anyway*" (R70). In the *bailados*, which are dance acts performed between the variety acts, the artists often wear masks and costumes related to a currently trending topic or character such as Ben 10 or Princess Elsa (from the animation film "Frozen"), for example.

6 THE FIELD

The discourses of the agents involved in the process of circus art production situate us before a complex and interesting field, consisting of organizations that differ widely from what is commonly expected of the ordinary ones, such as fixed companies, industries, or formal commerce. In the case of circuses, as in any organization, there are particularities that pervade each one of the agents involved in the field referred to herein as "circus." In this sense, it is interesting to note that there is not a single circus agent, but agents instead. As in any organization, there are specificities in the routine practices that differentiate them from a group and from one another. Our framework included different circuses in terms of size, management forms, canvas types, traveling capacity, and types of shows. At first, this may seem a little confusing; yet, we did it purposefully, trying to unfold the differences in the permanence processes occurring in the field of circus art in Brazil. And this is not limited to the scope of economic resources, but to a variety of other affective and strategic themes, either for survival in the field or for ascension as an agent holding more symbolic capital.

In this sense, we do not understand that economically disadvantaged circuses are agents fated to the underworld of the great circus spectacles, the peripheries, the countryside towns, and the traveling limitations. Even being aware of the predominance of economic capital, we must consider the other forms of capital – cultural and social. In this field, the cultural capital derived from the circus learning, from belonging to a circus family, and from socializing in this daily life, is critical. This capital comes from *habitus*, this orchestration of practices and socialized strategies with no conductor, aimed for players to play the game of circus arts. In turn, this leads to this form of capital often surpass the importance of economic capital in the countryside.

The cultural capital coming from a family tradition that makes the symbolic capital most valued and reified in this field by most of the circuses is what these agents call "tradition," or at least the belief and the speech that enunciates it. Along these lines, being recognized as a traditional circus performer with "(...) *sawdust running in your blood*" (R01) confers great importance on these players in the field surveyed. The lexical items "traditional circus" (R10), "circus generation" (R87), and "traditional circus family" (R104) were frequently mentioned. The reference to an idea of tradition and shared values that persist through history is tied to a form of family-based activity. That is, this work is transmitted by families as a form of knowledge, and they are also the ones who sustain the circuses as a byproduct of their know-how. This aspect configures what Bourdieu (2009a) has called the "original force of traditionalism", used in a struggle to objectify one's own existence in the field. We saw how this force fosters the idea of survival for younger generations in this field.

Bourdieu (2009c) also assumes that the agents hold some possibilities of subversion of the social order, with singular capacities to modify its structures. In the case of circus agents, examples of subversion include the non-compliance of legal obligations with the city halls of the cities where they operate, as well as the appropriation of fictional characters without due legal provision. There are also other forms of subversion linked to social capital and the network of knowledge deriving from these agents' cultural capital. Therefore, there are circuses that always follow the same routes and visit the same cities where they are traditionally known and expected. "*We've taken this route for a long time. My grandfather took it, my father took it, and now I do too. People know us, they wait for us to arrive*" (R68).

However, this is not exempt from the field inscriptions. Even the subversions or small acts of resistance are also the results of the structure that pervades the field, according to the positions of the agents and the forces, struggles, rules, and strategies performed by the agents. A

characteristic intrinsic to the fields that we have been able to recognize in circuses is their ability to deal with unforeseen events and to achieve the means necessary for carrying out the circus activity. Circuses, which are agents activated by their dispositions in the field, have resistance as *habitus* and seek to produce subversions, both insignificant and significant, not only in relation to the field but also more broadly to society.

The determinations in the field promote contexts that delineate objective relations. As we have seen, the actions of small circuses are influenced by requirements such as local policies and the possibilities of being given grants. The lower the operational conditions of their activities, the more distant they are from the field's power nucleus, and the strategies of maintenance and subversion of forces in the field are delineated according to this distance and the limits of their positions. In the case of small circuses with scarce material resources, one of the alternatives found has been to circumvent the laws governing the countryside, by opting to settle in the outskirts of big and small towns, and performing shows that rely on famous media products, yet with no due establishment of licensing agreements.

Another form of subversion that operates a change of location in the configuration of power occurs when the small circuses can (re) appropriate their own symbolic capital, rescuing dormant knowledge forms, revaluing them, and bringing them back to the fore. This strategy has been adopted by some circuses and families, especially those who have rescued their history with the circus-theater; and by re-appropriating this cultural capital, they shift the location of symbolic capital and the relations in the field. Differently, large circuses with greater economic capital rely on legal media products, legitimated by licensing agreements. Coupled with this product, they work with acts of varieties and perform traditional acts in their shows. Along with these traditional numbers, there is the use of theatrical resources. Even the use of theatrical techniques typical of contemporary circuses does not necessarily represent a practice that operates opposite to traditional circus practices, as often reported by the respondents. "*These serve only to modernize the show*" (R12).

Large, medium, or small circus have characteristics that resemble or distinguish them. Tradition, as we have already pointed out, is an element valued and used by most circuses, and even those that claim to be contemporaries seldom ignore traditional circus references. Variety acts involving some form of risk to physical integrity, such as the trapeze, or those related to the comic element, such as clown performances, are typical elements of significant cultural and symbolic capital. However, it is impossible to deny that circuses offering contemporary shows, circuses operating with more advanced technical resources, and circuses that adopt official media products establish themselves in a more powerful position in the field. These resources operate as social capital, attracting audiences and enabling these organizations to reproduce as circus organizations over time and history. In our view, the adoption of traditional acts by circuses with large and medium economic capital also operates as a strategy of resistance as a large organization, to avoid moving away from tradition and losing its recognition in the field. Traditional acts revalue cultural capital and, therefore, the symbolic capital of circus knowing-doing-being, despite the aspects with which circuses disguise themselves.

Another important aspect is that the circus field is permeated by agents in continuous and multiple relations, bearers of great social capital. Circus families seem to live in a network, constantly interacting. There are proprietary families and hired families. One can observe that many of the surveyed circuses started their operations in the last decade, which does not necessarily imply the introduction of "non-circus members" who do not bear cultural capital into this activity. Most of the recent circuses were established by families who have worked with circuses for generations.

There are also cases of hired families who have closed their circuses and have offered their services to other organizations in recent years. That is, in addition to their workforce, they also sell their cultural capital. The hired artists travel a lot and work wherever the working conditions are more favorable. As they travel predominantly with their families, they seek to find work opportunities that favor their family group as a whole. That is, they seek contracts that include artistic or operational positions for the largest number of family members as possible. The constant search for better working conditions associated with one's family history in circuses favors a wide network of relationships between circus workers in different organizations.

The agreements between artists-families and the circuses are predominantly informal. The remuneration is not necessarily paid in cash and is sometimes associated with revenues derived from the sales of products in the circus space. The granting of the right to sell and to what products should be sold (typically food or toys) meets criteria set by the circus owners. Regardless of the size or economic capital of a circus, sales are as important a source of income as the actual revenue from the box office. The granting of sales to relatives of the owners and artists, as well as their hired families, obey economic and social criteria concerning the need to keep a given artist and his family working for a given circus.

Therefore, the sale of products configures one of the possible strategies for the permanence of a circus in the field. In fact, in small circuses, the revenue derived from sales is sometimes higher than that from the box office, and these resources are used for the basic survival of the circus members. This aspect is what Bourdieu (2009b) pointed out as an active and inventive practice intention, which is a result of the generating capacities of the field dispositions; that is, the very field that determines positions and enables and conveys, albeit minimally, the inventive possibilities. This is only possible because the *habitus* operates at the practical level. One may notice that the field is not static, but dynamic; there are constant classifications and organizations, and even the introduction of new agents into the field, as in the case of the grants offered by governments. In turn, with the introduction of these agents in the field, new configurations become possible, for they not only bring measurable capital but value symbolic capital and establish circuses as legitimate agents in a larger field, namely the field of the Brazilian arts and culture.

What happens is that, like society, the fields are also divided and unified, objectified and subjectified, stratified and filled with symbolic struggles that articulate the relationships happening it its domains. The barter performed by the circus-agents manifests the structure and interaction of circuses with society. This form of intersection between the various hierarchic fields brings about the possibility of updating the fields and their structures. It is interesting to note that we found many discourses based on the victimization of the very agents who have less symbolic capital. However,, we observed ambiguous and commonly interested strategies that make them resort to their underprivileged positions in the field; although pertinent, that does not always imply the disinterest or the absence of gain from such a situation. For example, pointing out problems with municipalities and the bureaucracy to set up a circus in the cities is a way of justifying the informality and the precarious conditions of certain circus facilities. This is what Bourdieu (2004) pointed out as false opposition, for the actions of agents, although unilateral and reductive, enable subversion, giving them some legitimacy.

As Bourdieu (2009c) shows us, each part of the field corresponds to its totality; the parts share some singularity, and yet are different. No field is static, and the route that agents take varies according to the field, that is, the mobility of each field is particular to it, depending on the availability of capital forms in it. Here we seek to point out a certain constitution of the circus arts and the circus field. We noted that players in this field develop practices and strategies; they are

immersed in *habitus* linked to tradition, family, and itinerancy. To think about circuses as a field, and the circus art and management as a *habitus* in which the forms of capital produced within this field (mainly cultural and social capital) are intertwined, is to realize that the circuses surveyed in this article are the result of a historical, social, political and economic process, and still continue to be recognized and legitimized by the people, their audiences, and society in general.

7 FINAL REMARKS

As we concluded our analysis based on field theory, we observed that the field of circus practice in Brazil is subject to a theoretical framework that enables practical investigation. We noticed that this field is limited to its effects, as well as the agents and institutions that compose it and reproduce their own structures in its domains. The reality experienced by canvas and itinerant circuses is objectified in the exteriority of the aspects that compose it, and the differences resulting from the positions of each agent produce *illusio*, which is, in turn, necessary for achieving success in the field. There is a form of imagery heavily worked between those who live in (or off) the circus. There are the appropriation and the tradition of the right to be a circus worker. However, we observe that several of the agents involved with the circus art adhered to it as their last resort, whether in terms of their professional or social spheres. The circus art is spoken about as if it were a single unit, but it is possible to notice the existence of various art forms, as there are several types of circuses; and those with more capital outline some of the practices in the field.

The impact of the agents most strongly established in the field on the less fortunate is not always evident, and disguising allows the incorporation or objectification of the elements that result in *habitus*. This can be seen from the reports of the representatives of the smaller circuses in relation to the larger circuses, the city halls, and the public grants. Within this dynamic, agents are encouraged to compete against each other, while collaborating with one another, in a movement that Bourdieu (2009a) worked as a form of *doxa*, a sensus-consensus that makes power relations possible, as well as naturalized. The very establishment of State incentives, whose purpose is to achieve at least a relative maintenance of the circus art, ends up creating and inciting competition for capital, for as the financial resources are not available to all, it is feasible that some exercise privilege over the others.

We noticed divergences and convergences between the agents that helped to unlock the symbolic power in this field. This study allowed us to reflect that the symbolic power is experienced by the circus agents, who seek to transform the other forms of capital into symbolic capital, especially the cultural capital (the family tradition) they hold, in order to distinguish themselves in the field. We highlight the small circuses that fail to comply with all the requirements and sometimes even disturbing determinations stipulated by state agents as they exercise their power in the management of the field. These circuses are always trying to circumvent the impositions established by the official bodies.

In turn, in certain moments this form of consented power which is not admitted as such goes into shock when the big circuses – and their economic capital – are unveiled and take the position of an explicit power, manifested in relations of antagonism and confrontation, such as the quest for grants and incentives instituted by the state, and in the struggles for the imposition of certain show formats (the use of media resources) or for the conquest of power positions in the field. In this sense, we understand that FUNARTE adds or strengthens elements to the field when it institutes its actions and programs focused on circus arts. It is not only about the economic capital, in the case of the resources made available through calls and grants for the realization of projects,

but this also brings the discourse of valuation of circus arts and traditional circus families.

We can state that no clear domination of an agent over the other has been identified in the field. Except for the legal difficulties previously pointed out by smaller circuses, power relations are much more visible when it comes to the game of staying in the field. The further the agents are from accessing the symbolic and power resources, the more they are subjected to disappearance or precarious continuity. As already explained, legal and economic pressures impact on the agents according to the fragility of the forms of capital – the economic capital in terms of earnings; the cultural capital when linked to the circus family tradition; and the social capital in the scope of the relationships with other actors in the field. This results in having more or less symbolic capital in the field. These same aspects guide the possible changes and delimit the mobility options. However, it is worth emphasizing that practices are always temporary and are not inherent properties of the field, which implies possibilities for perpetuating positions – not practices – and simultaneously enables extraordinary movements and situations (Bourdieu, 2004).

Regarding the contribution of our research to the field of Organizational Studies and Society, we understand that the daily practices in organizations must be investigated. This allows us to shed light on other forms of knowledge concerning the strategies undertaken by the various types of organizations, allowing us to reflect on the management practice in the contemporary world, as well as grounding our critique of pre-established models and their dysfunctions in relation to daily, real management carried out by ordinary men, as it corroborates our view that there are non-measurable strategies beyond the walls of academia and large corporations. There is creativity in the management and survival processes of organizations.

The commodification of organized life takes on ever more distinct lines; it enters our lives cunningly when the individuals abstract themselves from reality in such a way as not to perceive it as it is. In this sense, some behaviors become almost ritualistic (Berger; Luckmann, 2005). The respondents refer to the "abstraction-organization' with a name, a personal pronoun, and takes action. It becomes an entity or an agent, and the subjects continue to subtract from their responsibilities, as, from this perspective, it is the organizations that "make it happen" (Souza; Costa; Pereira, 2015). So, when addressing circuses, we recommend that readers turn to the individuals, that is, the circus workers, for they are the ones who make and manage the circuses, create the shows, walk on the tightrope, swallow fire, and paint their faces to make the show go on.

In terms of further research, we suggest ethnographic studies on canvas and itinerant circus, so as to observe the symbolic power relations in the management routine of these organizations. The strategies and tactics used for the elaboration of the circus shows, entering the field of art that Bourdieu also researched, are also fruitful for future research. Finally, it is interesting to remember our limitations, such as the lack of information about the number of circuses existing and operating in southeast Brazil and the rest of the country, and about the diversity of works carried out in circuses, which we are yet to know and have so far not addressed in our studies.

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