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KEY TRANSFORMATIONS IN SOCIETY AND REFLEXES IN COMPANIES

What historian Gordon S. Wood preached

Historian Gordon S. Wood put into evidence a historical fact has much more importance today. Since being created by its founders, the United States was, above all, a set of philosophies, concepts and ideas. This set of philosophies, concepts and ideas is what created the country's grandeur. An American was not necessarily somebody who was born in the United States, but rather somebody who believed and practiced that set of proposals created by the founders.

This prevalence of the founders' ideas leveraged the United States' trajectory until the advent of World War II. The need to articulate power and production conditions to face the Axis Nations, as well as contribute to the arming of allies, created in the United States the substitution of government for the proposals of founders to service the State's needs and organization.

The historical moment justified this movement, but, since then, the United States began to no longer be, in many aspects, the nation that was once the dream of so many immigrants, for the ideals of liberty and free will that were present. The government became more important than the nation. As such, the government suffocates and requests primacy to the nation. The United States today is a nation that diminished in relation to its past. Something similar occurs in Brazil also, however, with a major difference based on what we believe. Will one day we believe in something?

The conclusion in relation to this theme about country changes is that governments can leverage a nation in a positive or negative manner. In any way, governance never substitutes the power of solutions and delivery that a free nation can carry out. In this sense, the American example is marking.

Historian Gordon S. Wood's speech applied to companies

The concepts that are part of the day-to-day between business consultants and clients, through which perpetuity of relations and quality of business are developed, have been going on for centuries. To this day, in many countries, there are family clans that conduct business and maintain countries stable over the years, given the quality of relationships and the transmission, in family, of values that govern the same businesses.

As companies became bigger, governance and control challenges were imposed. The actions of governing and dominating a company became more important than the action of maintaining alive relationship channels as business strategies, which had been the reason for success in prior times.

Nonetheless, we have here the analogy that Gordon S. Wood presents us. The company's priority becomes its own government and its set of interests, and everything that is relationship quality and joint development with clients is naturally relegated to second plan.

Governance and audit rituals prevail in relation to the set of philosophies, concepts and ideas that are the natural reason for business quality. What before were company strengths, things that executives believed in, is now the past. Nowadays, more and more, we see companies where the internal public does not know what to believe in. Including the sales force.

Companies become smaller than their business potential. They forsake the ideas and philosophies and transform **control** into a form of business life.

Complexity at the present moment

A theme we have already discussed in other texts, regarding the complexity about the present moment, is resumed to now address the main transition that is under way. The evolution of companies from the phases of **Monotony**, marked by simple, uncomplicated management, based on good sense resolves things, has ended and we are now at the present, where we live the combining of the monotonous regimes with the **Complex**, **Hypercomplex** and **Chaotic** regimes. All this taking place at moments where the speed of phenomena that appear in the scenarios is increasingly greater.

Until recently, just to mention an example, the easy solution for transport in Brazil was trucks in the roads and buses in cities. In very little time, we reached a situation where we cannot live without heavy logistics systems, be it cargo or passenger transportation. The amateurism in which issues were handled in the past left us in a state of shock, both in terms of infrastructure as well as chaos of cities.

Here's a question: What is the reason why changes are surfacing and companies and governments are not preparing for them? The answer is

very simple. *Do companies and governments exist to serve themselves, or to serve the markets and societies they set out to serve?* If they exist to serve themselves, they will never see in sufficient time the more sophisticated and risky changes that occur in scenarios. What we therefore see are vision leaps becoming increasingly more necessary.

Risks of the present moment

Brazil is presently a country where the only strategic plan that exists is that in which the only thing being sought is to win the 2014 presidential elections. There are no other plans. Everything else is relegated to small and sporadic. In this situation of risk, it is common for companies to pay more attention and resources on their own governance.

Consequently, value chains and value fields receive less value for their own development, transformation and multiplication in new values. Everything shrinks. All this, because each person thinks a lot more about itself, in their own way, wanting to go to a different destination. This is the driving force behind crises of confidence that have affected so many economies.

More than ever, we need to return to what Gordon S. Wood described. What are the fundamentals that will lend perpetuity to our companies? What are the fundamentals that will unite our minds? In what way can the value of these ideas galvanize clients? In what way

will our employees be on our side for valuing our fundamentals? In what way can the set of ideas and its sustainment be more effective than the entire set of controls that can be put to use by a company? And lastly: in what way can this effort be the cohesion and guiding factors among companies?

Strategic Thinking and the set of Vision, Mission, Attributes and Values themes

At a recent meeting with managers from a company, we noticed that the references associated to Vision, Mission, Attributes and Values themes, as proposed in their origin, had nothing to do with what happens in the company's day-to-day and current dynamics. The scenarios changed, the market changed and, all of a sudden, the company had changed for worse. The original proposals, of high value, disappeared. This is one of countless examples we identify every moment, of how the values of philosophy, concepts and ideas lend value to a company, as we saw happen with the United States in the past. On the other hand, this set can be lost, if not properly taken care of. The main risk here is the same old one: transformations are underway without being noticed. As we lose our sense of vision and values, we lose our filters for analyzing what's happening. It's something we need to resolve. ■



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