

## **Theological imaginaries of the entrepreneurial: An Agambenesque challenge to managerial entrepreneurship.**

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### **Abstract:**

In this paper, we perform a genealogical analysis of the emergence of managerial entrepreneurship by drawing on Agamben's analysis of the theological imaginaries that underpin our understanding of agency within a broader political economy. We believe a selective reception of certain dimensions of the divine household have led to a covering over of equally valuable imaginaries, which could offer another conceptualization of the 'entrepreneurial'. We therefore have to perform two tasks. Firstly, to strip the entrepreneurial of its managerial garb, by highlighting the way in which the managerial apparatus have appropriated entrepreneurship. Secondly, we have to explore what the denuded entrepreneurial may look like, and how it operates. We end the paper by exploring the dynamics of this entrepreneurial becoming and its implications for Organization Studies.

### **1. Introduction**

The 'mythical' character of particular business administration concepts, such as entrepreneurship (Sørensen 2008) and leadership (Alvesson, 1996) is well established. In a similar vein, scholars have been unpacking the roots of these myths in theological constructs and practices. Interestingly however, this literature seems to have drawn extensively on theological machismo. For instance, the creative entrepreneur mimics God's creative powers (Sørensen, 2008), the bourgeoisie subdues nature through culture, the bureaucratic manager creates order out of chaos (Balcomb, 2014) and the 'spiritual leader' casts a clear path, Moses-style, towards a destined future. In the management realm these macho conceptions are echoed in literature that claims that 'vision' is primarily considered a male capacity (Ibarra and Obodaru, 2009). We challenge this managerial 'dress-up' of entrepreneurship in two ways: First by unpacking the symbolic layers of meaning and significance that instrumentalize entrepreneurship as the savior of the managerial. Secondly, we seek to recover entrepreneurship in its denuded state, and articulate the modes that may characterize it.

In what follows we track, with inspiration and guidance from Agamben's genealogical approach, this conception of agency back to its theological roots, and show how the way in which theology informed our views of economy also shaped how we have come to think agency. We argue that the selective reception of certain theological constructs within our economically dominated management thinking has enabled and strengthened certain 'managerialist' conceptions, and downplayed other forms of agency, which we believe are central to entrepreneurship, and to creative organisation as such. Using an analytical strategy that operates genealogically, we take inspiration from Agamben as a philosopher that has explored such an approach in his work, known not the least for revitalising the role of religion in contemporary societal analyses. As long as the efficiency- and control oriented industrial economy ran at full speed, the falling into oblivion of entrepreneurship during this era passed unnoticed. Already this gives us a reason to learn from Agamben, for what his perspective adds to Foucault's genealogical strategy, is an exploration of the mythical relationship between the divine and the earthly which inform our contemporary understanding of the political economy. This, in turn, is a relevant background for an attempt to renew our understanding of entrepreneurship.

We invite you to imagine the culminating scene of H C Andersen's fascinating story of the Emperor's new clothes. Here the emperor parades with an entourage of shrewd and deceptive tailors who have convinced the Kaiser that he is now wearing the most wonderful haute couture available to any quasi-deity. These invisible clothes, as it were, sewn from the invisible cloth, are in addition an extension of his governmental powers; for they are invisible only to those subjects who are unfit for his/her position or plain stupid. The newspeak that the weavers/tailors have constructed as the productive discourse of this scam works beautifully, on the Emperor himself as well as his ministers. Parading down the main street there is only one disclosive power in wait that has escaped those who since long have forgotten that they unlearned their capacity to be a child, namely a child. A child, with little power to be affected by the hegemonic pretense, spouts out, in crystal sharp accuracy that the bodily centre of this grandeur is wearing no clothes, is naked. Like a balloon's uncomfortable presence next to a needle, the Emperor knows this child's observation is true, but focuses on the maintenance of status quo so as to keep the centre of power intact.

This narrative affords us two somewhat paradoxical symbolic gestures. In the first place, it allows us to reveal, to disclose the nakedness of most managerial discourses, and its employment of entrepreneurship as a covering over of this vacuous center of managerial power. Secondly, we hope that this denuding of entrepreneurship offers us an alternative opening. Rather than accept the dominant – management- and business school research based – tradition that directs the entrepreneurial body (also corpus, such as in body corporate, the firm, the business) towards specific ends, Agamben urges us to inquire into its *potentia absoluta*, its immanent capacity to become (Hjorth, 2014b). Such an endeavor seeks – in the tradition of process philosophy (Helin, Hernes, Hjorth, and Holt, 2014) – to introduce the un-thought (in this case, about entrepreneurship) into thinking as a free movement. Such movement is actualized in action as a creativity that affirms and makes use of this freedom to move. Free because there are no received

concepts for hooking it into a tradition, directing it, in institutionalized patterns of practice, to ends already present in the economy of the everyday. The child's release of common sense is also a prorolling (Hjorth, 2012) of power through an exposure of management at the limit of the existing organisation. The Emperor's entourage of 'management consultants' serving the need to increase control, are also exposed as having reached their limit as magicians of words whose trick just fell flat. At the same time, the entrepreneurial revealed that which awaited the exhaustion of the existing organisation's performative capacity. This is where organization-creation can take over, and the time of the emerging organization enters (Katz and Gartner, 1989; Gartner et al, 1992). How we can arrive at this reading of entrepreneurship, distanced from its determination in managerial discourse, is a question of genealogically inquiring into its formation as subject-position.

What we will do here is to disassociate entrepreneurship from management on the basis of Agamben's method of denuding. We want to strip down the managerial garb to reveal something of the glorious entrepreneurial subject, a subject of pure potentiality and inoperativity, at the limit where it becomes performative. A subject that then can become in new ways, and has this potential becoming as its primary immanent force and characteristic; a subject with capacity to move, in-between this glorious inoperativity of unspoiled reserve, and concrete actualisations of the new in the context of the emergent organization. In contrast, the subject of manager is intimately directed by ends in relationship to which its means are instruments of efficiency, *potentia ordinata* operationalized within the running system. The manager-subject is in this sense eminently operable and fully participates in the economy of institutions and routines – this is where it performs at its best. It is the product of a desire to secure control and institutionalize routines and habits that organizationally make economic efficiency highly probable. As such, it will always have a problematic relationship to the entrepreneurial as the inoperable, glorious, moving, prorolling (rather than controlling; Hjorth, 2012) organizational force in the context of the existing organisation. Entrepreneurship is what withdraws from being manageable. It does not become fully manageable without becoming management.

We end the paper by exploring the implications of baring or denuding, which strips away the functionality, the goal-directedness of action in order to reveal the way in which the 'new' emerges not through agentic visions, but through inoperative potentiality, pure reserve. This happens at the re-booting, the 'alt-ctrl-del' of our power to act. This is the inoperative moment of glory, when language rests in itself – as in the poem – and humans contemplate, at the time of inoperativity, their power to act (Spinoza's Ethics, book IV, prop. 52; Agamben, 2011: 250pp). This is when life's liveability is opened up anew. In our case, this is when organization-creation is opened at the limit of the existing organization. This is the *entré* or *entre-preneurship*. We can learn something about entrepreneurship and organisations from this Agambenesque contemplation.

## **2. Plotting the imaginaries of managerial entrepreneurship**

## 2a. Revealing the managerial garb

We have previously argued that understanding entrepreneurship as a creation process, necessitates a reconceptualization of the received view that defines its meaning in mainstream thinking (Author name and Author, 2003; Author, 2003). What such an alternative approach – sometimes referred to as a European school of entrepreneurship research (Hjorth, Jones and Gartner, 2008; Down, 2013) – tries to do is to ‘reboot’ entrepreneurship as a scholarly discourse. This is a complex endeavour, since it has meant *both* a return to central thinkers in the modern scholarly tradition on entrepreneurship (such as Schumpeter) *and* a distancing from received interpretations of this modern inauguration of a field of study.

This is man’s struggle with the Gestell (in Heidegger), that which challenges the human ‘to expose the real in the mode of ordering’ (Agamben, 2009: 12), Foucault’s dispositive or apparatus, which all – in Agamben’s reading – goes back to the theological Latin *dispositio*, and thus the Greek *oiconomia*. Agamben describes this as: “...a set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures, and in situations that aim to manage, govern, control, and orient – in a way that purports to be useful – the behaviors, gestures, and thoughts of human beings.” (2009: 12). In such situations of management, government, control, the managerial subject excels. Entrepreneurship prorolls such situations (pro+ rotulus) makes them move, rather than add to the control (contra+rotulus, against the rolling). Modern organisations, as we know them, and especially in the commercial form of the business, are the result of solving this challenge (Chandler, 1977) of securing control. Managers are the subjectivity we have linked to the function that Agamben here describes as ‘manage, govern, control, and orient.’ This is the more recent context for entrepreneurship, given the 1980s-1990s ‘entrepreneurialisation’ of society and economy (Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991; Dean, 1999; du Gay, 1997; Hjorth, 2003).

Not until David Birch points to that job-creation is achieved in small- and fast growing SMEs rather than in large corporations (1979; 1987) did the tanker really start to turn, eagerly supported by a political system that badly needs ways to push back on burgeoning unemployment and the gravity-shifting impact of three billion Asian people entering into the global workforce at rapid speed. In the wake of a withering industrial era, its latter stage being dominated by the Japanese teaching us both quality management, value chain management and ‘lean’, and the mentioned entering of the Asian workforce into the global economy, and a strong trend towards neo-liberal economic policy, the industrialised world pushes on the enterprise button, now re-labeled entrepreneurship. During the 1980s and 1990s enterprise, this managerial form of entrepreneurship (Hjorth, 2003; Hjorth and Holt, 2016), quickly becomes the credo of a world that stops talking about unemployment and starts instead to talk about job-seeking. As an indication, in the US there are 11 endowed positions in entrepreneurship in 1980, in 1991 there are 102 endowed positions, 1998 there are 208 endowed positions, in 1999 there were 237, in 2003 there were 406 (Katz, 2003), and so on (in that rate, some 515 in year 2015 using linear extrapolation). Enterprise, labeled entrepreneurship, is now (1985 – 2005) managed more than ever as the key ingredient in any policy for economic rejuvenation or regional

development (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2004), in city development (Acs and Armington, 2004), as well as in corporate strategic re-gearing for innovation (Stopford and Baden-Fuller, 1994; Zahra, 1996). This grasp of entrepreneurship by the 'visible hand' of management no doubt achieves many things. What slips out, however, is 'entrepreneurial entrepreneurship'. We thus lay bare entrepreneurship as molecular, as a becoming of organization rather than efficient organizing of the existing (molar) organization. Entrepreneurship, allow us this polished image for the sake of contrast, is the flightline that fabulates its way out of management's grip, that joyfully speculates about a possible, coming future (Hjorth and Steyaert, 2006). But was this always the inevitable entrepreneurial imaginary? Or can we trace in the history of entrepreneurship some other possibilities? History reveals a more complex story.

Schumpeter had already received the concept of entrepreneurship from tradition – Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1832) in particular – and accomplished a transformation of its meaning. Jean-Baptiste Say's notion of entrepreneurship (he in turn had received his from Richard Cantillon, 1680-1734) described it as a superior form of labour. It is important to understand that Cantillon was an Irish-French economist, and the British influences would explain why he referred the origin of value to labour. The French school rather traced value to utility and, with Walras (1834-1910), value was traced to scarcity (from which marginal utility and equilibrium theory then springs). As 'superior labour', however, entrepreneurship is easily collapsed into management and we see how the economist understanding of entrepreneurship was not distinct enough to survive the 'managerial revolution' Chandler described: management crowded entrepreneurship off the corporate scene and thus the disciplines of industrial economics and strategic management. Entrepreneurship was tied to the small and new business, which, in spite of Schumacher's attempt to claim that 'small is beautiful' (1973), was never associated with the kind of 'big money' that would have made it interesting to the US business school. It is not until key readers from within the business school - Peter Drucker (New York University, pioneered the first executive MBA education in the US, at Claremont Graduate School) and Howard Stevenson (Harvard Business School) - during mid- to late 1980s read Schumpeter (1934 in English version) and stressed his tying of entrepreneurship to innovation that it became possible to distinguish the entrepreneurial from the managerial. However, a more economics-based approach to entrepreneurship still thinks and studies entrepreneurship within an economic model of rational, calculative behavior. Again, this makes the difference between management and entrepreneurship more into one of quantitative nuance on a scale. If, however, like with Schumpeter, and partly based on the Austrian school of economics, entrepreneurship is understood as that which inaugurates the firm, engages in *firming* (Hjorth, Holt and Steyaert, 2015) as an organization-creation activity (Vesper, 1980; Kats and Gartner, 1985; Hjorth, 2012; Gartner, 2012; 2016) – then it all changes. This makes entrepreneurship into qualitatively different from management. This is one important element of denuding entrepreneurship – to dissociate it from management.

Schumpeter's relationship with the so-called Austrian school of economics was not straightforward and indeed somewhat difficult to sort out (de Soto, 2008). On the more obvious

side, he was a student, together with von Mises, of Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk's economic seminar at the University of Vienna. Von Mises later became central to the Austrian school, together with Carl Menger, and Friedrich Hayek. But Schumpeter had a methodological style that suited an American audience better, and upon moving to the US (1932) and the 1934 edited and translated version of his 1911 piece (*Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung*) into English as *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest, and the Business Cycle*, he became more influential in the English-speaking world. Schumpeter described entrepreneurship as a 'creative response' that could not be predicted by existing facts, that had a unique 'how' that needed to be studied in each case, and since creative responses 'changes social and economic situations for good [...] it creates situations from which there is no bridge to those situations that might have emerged in its absence.' (Schumpeter, 1947: 150). There is a certain incommensurability indicated here, between the continuity of the existing and the difference that results from creative responses. In Agamben's terms (2016: 247-8) it is the difference between living life and form-of-life, the latter emerging from 'contemplation of potential' that renders the work in which this contemplation takes place inoperative and opened to new virtualities, where form-of-life opens up to new life. Schumpeter further described entrepreneurship as 'getting a new thing done' and said that 'it may be the activity of 'setting up' or 'organizing' that stands out from the others' (Ibid., 151) when one tries to analyse how 'getting a new thing done' is accomplished. In short, Schumpeter 'rebooted' the scholarly discourse on entrepreneurship and centred it on innovation, creativity and organizing. For this reason, entrepreneurship is associated not only with creativity, but also with organization-creation (Hjorth, 2012; 2014a; Gartner, 2016), imagination (Gartner, 2007), and the artificial (Saravathy, 2003). Denuding entrepreneurship would thus also mean we disassociate it from the empirical context of the small firm or the corporate context of innovation. Rather, it is the inauguration of organization, new form-of-life that helps us to identify the entrepreneurial.

Schumpeter was also conscious of the need to distinguish entrepreneurship from management: "...evidently it is one thing to set up a concern embodying a new idea and another thing to head the administration of a going concern..." (1947: 152). It is this separation we find to be misunderstood or misappropriated, but perhaps primarily unnoticed. Instead continuity between setting up a new organisation and running a business is often assumed, and entrepreneurship is understood as a version of management. Such an understanding makes the entrepreneurship- management relationship much less problematic (only quantitatively different; more or less of this or that) and prevents an analysis precisely of the relational dynamics and organizational politics that is necessary for entrepreneurship's organizational conditions to be understood. Again, another important element in denuding entrepreneurship is this disassociating it from the *existing* organization (Katz and Gartner, 1989; Gartner et al, 1992; Hjorth, 2012), in the context of which it can only be thought as an epiphenomenon to the managerial, i.e., as managerial entrepreneurship or enterprise.

In order to explore these developments, we need Agamben's help in further understanding and interrogating the managerial garb that paradoxically covers over the entrepreneurial, but also essentially depends on it.

## **2b. The implications of the divine *oikonomia* for grasping the entrepreneurial**

Agamben (2011) allows us to trace the theological roots of contemporary biopolitics in the concept of divine *oikonomia*. Though the roots of our theories of political sovereignty in monotheistic theology are well-established, Agamben believes that we should pay much closer attention to the way in which *oikonomia* can help us understand why economy and governmentality have eclipsed the political (Kotsko, 2013; Leshem, 2015). Agamben believes that centuries of deliberation about the way in which the divine household functions, has shaped the most basic imaginaries that inform our understanding of subjectivity, governance and organisation. In terms of the functioning of the holy Trinity, our theological descriptions maintain God's glorious Being in its full divine mystery and inoperativity, while at the same time, the praxis of His church is governed through the sacrificial labours of his son, Jesus Christ, and the workings of the Holy Spirit. Christ functions as the first vicar of divine management, and in his wake, various [vicarious] official roles, i.e. vicars, ministers, functionaries, offices, and charges (*vices* and *officium*) emerge to affect the workings of God's Kingdom on earth. In taking up these theological imaginaries in our management discourses, much of our focus remained on this vicarious praxis, while at best ignoring, or at worst covering over, the divine mystery and inoperativity on which praxis relies and of which it remains an integral part. In the above attempt to denude the entrepreneurial, we have tried to show that the 'visible hand' of management, the vicar of the divine 'invisible hand' of economy in organizations (Chandler, 1977), necessarily enters into such an attempt. At least since Schumpeter, entrepreneurship, if we play with the hand metaphor, is something like Hirschman's 'hiding hand' (1967) of organisations. It inaugurates the organizational form where economy has to be vicariously managed. At the same time, the 'hiding hand' is always present in on-going organization since the need for management has to be recalled.

From the perspective of this spiritual unity, our typical binaries between active and passive, being and praxis, or operative and inoperative are transcended and reframed within God's 'providential-economic' paradigm of governance (Siisiäinen, 2014: 53). The divine *oikonomia*, also translated in Latin as *dispositio*, offers us a way to understand both the anarchic and the sabbatical functioning of the salvific machine and the way in which it produces subjectivity (Siisiäinen, 2014: 54). Agamben points out that the perfect 'orderability' (Bestellbarkeit) that Heidegger describes as Ge-stell corresponds perfectly to the Latin term *dispositio* and the Greek *oikonomia*. Agamben believes that we will not be able to address Heidegger's problem with technology – that it simultaneously reveals and conceals truth, that it is instrumental as well as poetic – and the ultimate problems of metaphysics as such, if we do not restore the political locus of these problems in tracing its origins in economic theology. As a

result, we continue to suffer the collateral effects (since it is inherited from theology, from theology's *oikonomia* or *dispositio*), and as such the collateral damage of the theological machine of government that we inherited (Toscano, 2011: 127). This damage means we suffer the effects of an inherited – from theology – idea of perfect orderability which spilled over from the realm of theology into the sphere of government of citizens and to the management of employees. Agamben thus claims that a theological notion of order provides support for Adam Smith's idea of the invisible hand, something Toscano (2011) perhaps rightfully points out also has to be read as an effect of a not too careful genealogical reading.

This form of theological governance is anarchic, i.e. without foundation, yet not without direction. Agamben describes the act of governance as representing a zone of 'undecidability' between the general and the particular, between the calculated and the non-willed (Kotsko, 2007:13), between the planned and the spontaneous. In the context of today's work organisations we can understand this zone of undecidability as that between management (as the emblematic form of calculated, planned decision making) and entrepreneurship (as the spontaneous, passionate response to emergent opportunity). Historically, management typically rules 'vicariously', i.e. it operates on behalf of someone else (Burnham, 1941; Chandler, 1977; O'Connor, 1996), which we believe should be recovered if entrepreneurship is to flourish. Today, as already Burnham (1941) sensed, management has become a dominant class, and the relationship to an often anonymous and quarterly-reports-demanding crowd of shareholders has come in the place of a present owner. Entrepreneurial creativity, springing from knowledge of local conditions and contextual-emergent potentials thus has to battle abstract-general demands for short-term profitability.

Agamben's claim that government and management have lost sight of their theological history is helpful in understanding the functioning of the entrepreneurial within capitalist organisations. Some critique the genealogy through which Agamben recovers this history (see e.g. Toscano, 2011), arguing that it simply repeats other forms of genealogical analyses. There is broad enough support, though, to say that his work does complement Foucault's when it comes to grasping the emergence of governmental-managerial rationality, itself crucially important for an understanding of agency and creativity in today's organization. Within the medieval theological conceptions of God, a distinction is made between divine *potentia ordinata* and *potentia absoluta* (Kotsko, 2007, p. 8). Our political economy focuses nearly exclusively on the administrative, and because of its preoccupation with 'whatever works', it has lost sight of the glory of the inoperative, *potentia absoluta*, the inefficient, pure reserve. Agamben argues that 'inoperativity' constitutes the ultimate mystery of the divinity, i.e. the theological apparatus needs a central void of glory to function. In the same way, governmental apparatus functions because it captures within its central void the inoperativity of the human body. Power vitally needs glorious inoperativity, and only in this way do we discover our "act-ability and our live-ability" (Robert, 2013, p. 127). Subjectivity, or selfhood does not in the first place reside in activity (*energeia*), but instead in the inoperative potentiality (*dynamis*) (Agamben, 2011: 251). Unfortunately this centre of human potential is too often captured by the economy, directed to be



spent on 'deals' lying in wait, or governed into oblivion. It is this void of inoperativity that we believe holds the key to rethinking contemporary management and its uncomfortable relationship with entrepreneurship. A genealogical inquiry, such that Agamben undertakes, enables an effective history to be written for a more precise understanding of the agentic nature of organizational subjectivities.

There is a certain irony in the parallel that gets drawn as soon as one operates with Agamben as inspiration: a certain human tendency to glorify the inoperable, like God, art and entrepreneurship. There is a certain strength in this weakness (Hjorth, 2012), that it does not stand 'daylight', the entering into ready-made institutionalized environments, dominated by the common sense of any economy – management – without becoming something else. The grasp of the 'visible hand' (Chandler, 1977) of management is such that it transforms what it picks up. Hirschman's study – published the same year as Chandler's – points to a force that empowers this grasp when he describes it as interest 'rationalising' the passionate human. Again, it is a grasp in Hirschman's analysis, centred on an engraving from 1617 Germany where a pair of pincers grasps a heart as a not too direct backup of the headline *Affectus com prime* - Master/Repress/Retrain the affects/passions (Leo, 2009). The arguments for capital before its triumph, Hirschman (1977) points out, was not the least that a 'homo oeconomicus' represented a more governable human because interest, as the greater passion, would make economy into the final rationality in the supreme court of reason. People would engage in enterprise and keep out of misbehavior (Hirschman, 1977: 129). As 'economic man' they would be eminently governable (Gordon, 1991), and what Chandler shows in his historic analysis of management is that it – as the supreme form of governmental rationality in the late industrialised society – provided the best system of knowledge and practices to achieve competitiveness and competitive advantages vis-à-vis other industrialised economies.

Agamben's description of an apparatus (2009), a *dispositive* (*Latin dispositio*) offers us a way to retrace the origins of management's role in shaping organisational subjectivities, and their alternatives. He picks up this concept from Foucault's writings in the 1970s where it is described to serve as "...a decisive technical term in the strategy of Foucault's thought." (2009: 1). He quotes Foucault (from 1977) offering a somewhat rare and not too precise definition of the concept, stating it is "...a thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid." (p. 194). In what follows – from the same quote – Foucault talks about 'a formation' that is a response in a given historical moment, with a strategic function. Importantly, it is 'a certain manipulation of forces' and a 'concrete intervention in the relations of forces' where we find a clear reference to Nietzsche's philosophy (Deleuze, 2006; Spindler, 2010; Holt and Hjorth, 2014). Foucault summarises his long elaboration of the concept of apparatus by saying: "The apparatus is precisely this: a set of strategies of the relations of forces supporting, and supported by, certain types of knowledge." (1977: 196).

Agamben follows this introduction with showing how 'apparatus' refers to how

theological discourse – in the developments of the early Christian church, 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries after Christ – solved the problem of God’s simultaneous unity and trinity. *Oikonomia* – the Greek term for management of the household – describes how God manages or administers the world; he entrusts certain things to his son and the Holy Spirit. “*Oikonomia* became thereafter an apparatus through which the Trinitarian dogma and the idea of a divine providential governance of the world were introduced into the Christian faith.” (Agamben, 2009: 10; Roberts, 2013: 117). The translation of *oikonomia* in the writings of the Latin Fathers is *dispositio*, from which the French gets *dispositif* or *appareil*. An important element of Foucault’s use of this term, but also its translation into Latin in the early Church discourse on the unity-trinity dilemma, is this relational nature of the apparatus. Agamben stresses this by noting: “The term ‘appareil’ designates that in which, and through which, one realizes a pure activity of governance devoid of any foundation in being. This is the reason why apparatuses must always imply a process of subjectification, that is to say, they must produce their subject.” (2009: 11). Our question finds new fuel here since it is plausible to propose that organizational contexts, and the managerial-governmental regime that has come to dominate them, have historically had little use of producing an entrepreneurial subject for government/management to work. However, for this reason, we also find something is lost, something that withdraws from the *potentia ordinata* or administrative and instead remain as a pure reserve, a *potentia absoluta*, from which emerges the event of creation.

The interaction between beings and apparatus produces the subject. One may argue that what our managerial apparatus have produced in interaction with living beings are layers and layers of bureaucracy, structures to ensure efficiency, and more importantly, the managerial subject, defined through roles and functions and operating on the basis of calculative analysis and the *potentia ordinata* that it is set to exploit: the best adjustment to existing circumstances, i.e., what gradually came to occupy the category of rational behavior traceable back to the ‘mythical’ *homo oeconomicus* (Foucault, 2008). All this have come at the cost of glory as pure potentiality, and, as we would argue, admittedly slightly idealised, entrepreneurial potentiality. Alternative analyses of capitalism, like new economic sociology and neo-Marxism (Harvey et al), post-Marxism (Negri et al) and poststructuralism (Thrift et al), also reveal how entrepreneurship is mobilized (in the 1980s) and operationalized as the hidden source of managerial capitalism. Rossi (2013) tracks the way in which entrepreneurship has been appropriated in the various ontological configurations of capitalism by using Agamben’s notion of the *dispositif* (Agamben, 2009) to identify three central ontological configurations within capitalism, i.e. embeddedness, dispossession, and subsumption. The rediscovery of the social embeddedness of capitalism as advocated by New Economic Sociology in the 1980s, allowed entrepreneurship to again be appropriated as sources of social capital and civiness – ethnic entrepreneurship would be a case in point (Rossi, 2013: 353). In terms of dispossession, entrepreneurialized governance has for instance been employed to support processes of gentrification. Rossi (2013: 358) argues that sovereignty-based ontologies (the sovereign right to decide about dispossession) coexist with relational ontologies (a sense of citizenship and self-governing) to maintain capitalism’s

neoliberal trajectory. The last *dispositif* that Rossi discusses is that of subsumption, which can be described as a dualistic ontology because capitalist accumulation has come to rely on the subsumption of life itself. In what Thrift calls ‘vitalist capitalism’, the boundaries between production and consumption are blurred through getting consumers emotionally involved in the process of invention (Rossi, 2013: 360), often creating the content that they themselves consume. In the knowledge, social networks and sharing economies, entrepreneurs play a central role creating such life-subsuming business models. The question is whether our understanding of how these *dispositifs* operate can help us gesture towards alternatives? We move on to see what may be reclaimed to better acknowledge the inoperative aspects of entrepreneurial potentiality, now subsumed in every normal organization.

### **3. Denuding apparatus**

#### **3a. Baring entrepreneurship**

The attempt to reboot entrepreneurship can, in its commitment to movement (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2003) and process thinking (Hjorth, 2014a, b), be updated and enriched by Agamben’s method for genealogically arriving at a bare concept, ready to again be thought anew. The prospect is to denude the entrepreneurial subject as one whose potentiality to become, and whose role in processes of becoming, is about openness, movement, creativity and passion. Denuding a concept like the subject-position of entrepreneur means we bring it to the limit of what it can do. As method it relies both on Michel Foucault’s genealogy (in turn inspired by Nietzsche) and on Walter Benjamin’s concept of *das bloße Leben*. *Bloße* means ‘nothing but’ or ‘bare’, and should be understood as ‘what becomes visible through a stripping away of predicates and attributes.’ (Durantaye, 2009: 203). Nudity is thus a possibility of knowing, a knowability that operates in our paper as a promise or hope: that we would make entrepreneurship knowable again by stripping off the layers that managerial discourse have dressed it in. Nude then also means that it is in pulled out of its performative economy in a managerialist discourse. This discourse has either dressed in it enterprise terms, where the entrepreneurial subject becomes valuable to the extent that it is initiative-taking and assuming responsibility for innovation (cf. Miller and Rose, 1990; Gordon, 1991; du Gay, 1997), or as the opportunity-recognising start-up individual (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). The inoperable moment, the nude/bare life, is also the passionate life, where denuded life again can ‘donate’ itself over to knowledge (Robert, 2013). This is when one’s power to be affected is at its peak and life can inaugurate new becomings: the virtually real – to speak in Deleuzian terms – can become actualized as a creation process.

For this reason, the ‘acting as if’ concept from entrepreneurship research (Gartner et al, 1992; borrowed from Vaihinger’s (1952) philosophy) makes good sense to the extent that it is understood as a giving over, a donation of oneself to knowledge: our bold suggestion is also that denuded life has an entrepreneurial quality to it. Entrepreneurship would then be a form of life that creates its way out of inoperativity at the limit of the existing. It does not discover opportunity, as the managerialist discourse assumes (Hjorth, 2003; Alvarez and Barney, 2007;

Sarasvathy and Dew, 2013), but makes time start again from a new platform (Colebrook, 2008; Robert, 2013; Hjorth, 2014b). It does so by affirming potentiality that is not already part of the economy of the already realized, but that points ahead, beyond, and therefore has to 'act as if', given there is no precedence, no efficient administration to rationally draw upon.

Using Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of molar and molecular (1987), where the former describes extensive wholes, organizable, structures, and the latter intensive, particular, processual, we would relate the managerial to the molar and the entrepreneurial to the molecular. These are not in dualist opposition, but form part of the same multiplicity of organizing, which both tends towards control (*contra+rotulus*) in its molar-managerial order, and tends towards *proroll* (*pro-rotulus*) in its molecular-entrepreneurial order (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 34). An organization is a stabilized molar structure – what we have referred to as the existing organization above – that also always at any time holds molecular forces of becoming/emergence. Entrepreneurship, when denuded as concept is freed up as a potentiality that can enter into thought and action only as a free movement. We can now think entrepreneurship as the entry of the un-thought into action that requires that new organization is created. It is not a new piece that fits into the existing jigsaw puzzle, not a new molar order, but a piece that in its newness requires organization-creation, as a molecular flightline, in order to lend itself to any performative economy. 'Entrepreneurial entrepreneurship' will not perform in the molar *potentia ordinata* of an efficient economic-managerial organization. That's the scene on which the managerial subject excels. Rather, Entrepreneurship is the gloriously inoperative in ready-made molar systems of organization. An existing, managed, organizational system is perplexed before entrepreneurial entrepreneurship. It knows not how to handle or manage that which demands new organization to become performative.

We would thus propose that organisation-creation is what entrepreneurship does, and when the new is in place, management proceeds to make it efficient and controlled. This is how management and entrepreneurship need each other to reach a performative economy: entrepreneurship takes organisations to their limit and creates organization where the existing one is inadequate; management takes over when new organization is created and bring it to its optimal performative economy. There is a dynamic between the economic and the social here. We would not see the social as an epiphenomenon to the economic. That would not help us understand entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial agency, which would be something like the inauguration of the economic: a fabulating flightline, away from the performative economy of the existing, a throw of the dice. For this, passion and imagination seem much more pivotal than strictly economic behaviour and motivation thereof, developed to fit mathematical modeling of economic functions. This critique is developed in the Austrian School of economics, and is perhaps part of the explanation why Schumpeter dares to open a door in the house of economics to creativity and innovation. Agamben stresses that power is first of all 'potential passive, passivity and passion' (1988: 17) and not only potential active (as we are used to read Nietzsche's 'will to power' concept). Certainly, for entrepreneurial agency to form, the inoperable moment, saturated with potential, is the passionate time of increased power to be affected

(Deleuze, 1998). However, it is the *becoming*-active that is the key, the affirmative overcoming of the limits of the present. The breaking out of the performance with the comment that makes the scene jolt in place. The child in the H. C. Andersen story displays greater power to be affected by what goes on than the rest. It is, however, the overcoming of passivity that defines her/him as entrepreneurial. The obvious is indeed pointed out as an action affirming common sense, which in this case reveals the limit of the naked manager – a manager at the limit of what s/he can do. Notice that, according to Agamben, this is also when the manager, in contemplation, could have moved beyond the historical limits of the present and entered a new becoming. This possibility is instead grasped by the child that opens up the possibility of questioning power as a *parhesiastes*, a fearless, free- or truth-speaker (Foucault, 2001).

When we here try to grasp entrepreneurship freed from the economic-managerial determination of it as limited to economic behaviour and business opportunity (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000), and its Kirznerian alertness to existing market-based opportunities (cf. critique thereof in Sarasvathy, 2003; Sarasvathy, Dew, Velamuri, and Venkataraman, 2003; Foss and Klein, 2012), and instead stress the Schumpeterian link to creativity, we attempt a denuding that discloses its inoperative character in management discourse and practice. It is within the existing, on-going organization that new organization (organization-creation) can be called for, but it is also within new organization (i.e., organization as emerging) that a controlled organization can be called for. In this sense, management and entrepreneurship always represent each other's immanent capacities. In other words, we thus explain why entrepreneurship constantly is transformed into managerial entrepreneurship (enterprise), so as to make it manageable. This happens again and again as a result of a managerial practice that calls upon the enterprising employee (Miller and Rose, 1990; du Gay, 1997). Most corporate entrepreneurship or employee-based entrepreneurship scholarly discourse sanctions this as normal and necessary (Kanter, 1991). With this denuding we thus arrive at the moment when "...inoperativity removes the spell from it and opens it up to a new possible common use." (Agamben, 2011: 65). Agamben would say that entrepreneurship can now, anew, donate itself to knowledge. As Colebrook and Maxwell notes in their study of Agamben's work (2016: 9): "If biopolitics operates by managing a bare life [denuded, our clarification] that it posits without law, then it is conceived beyond negativity – life as the threshold from which law and language emerge but which can never operate with the systemic force of sovereignty – that promises a new future." Nietzsche would call this an overcoming of a negative will to power that aims at re-establishing a status quo or a control. But our denuding has revealed what we also learn from Nietzsche (Hjorth and Holt, 2016), namely that every arrival at the limit, and we are brought there in H. C. Andersens story, means both active and reactive forces are given a chance. If reactive forces align with negative will to power, control (prevention of movement) is often the result. If active forces align with affirmative will to power, overcoming can be the result, meaning a becoming is released and organization-creation can happen.

The complexity of entrepreneurial agency in the context of organisations is this that it blends into management as each other's immanent condition. 'The entrepreneur' then appears to

us, denuded, as this character that hides beneath our inventions vicariously allowing us to make sense of how organisations achieve being and how the existing organization overcomes 'itself' and ventures upon newness. Historians of management (Burnham, 1941; Chandler, 1977; O'Connor, 2011) have taught us that the existing, established organization is a scene for the dominance of management as a controlling and efficiency-enhancing force. H. C. Andersen's scene has shown us that every control regime can be brought to its limit, where the question of how to go on is renewed. There and then it can go either way. It only needs a child's finger and a blunt observation, and a 'leaking point' where virtual newness first starts to sifter through the grid of habit and institutions, the ground of routine and calculable choices, has been actualised. In short, when the existing systems of order are made potentially obsolete, the creation of new organization is simultaneously made urgently needed (Hjorth, 2012; Gartner, 2016), and this is where entrepreneurship, as the inauguration of organization, can enter. Lying in wait for this newness underway is a gluttonous managerial discourse that eagerly devours it as a piece of enterprise, ready to be plugged into the efficiently performing organization. This, again, is when and how entrepreneurship becomes managerial entrepreneurship or enterprise (Hjorth and Holt, 2016).

That is, when one would think that the nude – in Agamben's sense of being freed from tradition, from institutionalized expectations of how certain means are tied to certain ends – is eminently manageable, it is precisely escaping management by staying clear of such instrumentality. However, for 'organization' to exist, the inoperative, non-instrumental elements must always remain in some relation to the operative. Agamben's analysis of the relationship between the divine and the earthly helps us unpack the paradox of the operative and inoperative elements of any form of organization. It is perhaps most clearly exemplified by the Church's difficulties in forming a doctrine that explains the role and function of the Eucharist (or the communion) while at the same time keeping its mystical and transcendent power. Note how this reflects the problem of the mystical and the administrative that the introduction of *oiconomia* – apparatus – 'solved' (cf. above). "The repetition of the sacramental rite is as such the repetition of an exceptional division that paradoxically safeguards the continuous movement between the divine image of sovereignty and the earthly administration of the institutions." (Zartaloudis, 2010: 13). This sacred ambivalence is present both in how the church becomes an earthly corpus of juridical, administrative, and economic power, and how law is anchored in a divine sanctioning and transferred in courts and protected by judges. The movement – between the divine and the earthly – is exactly the point, for in this movement the glory of the inoperative (*potentia absoluta*) is continuously renewed. This movement is incorporated by the priests' unique role in conducting sacral liturgical rites.

Agamben's work reveals the presence of the divine in places, routines, habits, institutions where we thought it had been passed to oblivion, or where we thought oblivion was enough for making it 'disappear'. Agamben complicates our relationship to tradition in his search for what he calls the nude life. Nude life has to be freed from its place in an earthly, institutional, administrative regime, where it functions according to (teleological) ends that renders its parts

and its performance as a whole into a mean(s). That is, it has to be freed from performing in accordance with its *potentia ordinata*, where the economy of the administrative is what directs the present. Like a dancer in mid-air suspends the function of arms and hips as these are tied in ordinary economy of things to the ends of walking and running, a potentiality of becoming (something other) is revealed. The body is literally suspended from *potentia ordinata* and its economic performance, to instead become gloriously manifest in its ostensive *potentia absoluta* – it can become anything. Rather than performative, the body(-parts) become ostensive: “Rendered ostensive rather than efficient, a body becomes revealed as a glorious body, which is, according to Agamben, ‘an ostensive body whose functions are not executed but rather displayed,’ in their inoperative potentiality.” (Robert, 2013: 9). Glorious bodies thus display their potentiality of its means as such, not as directed – by tradition or dogma – towards certain ends. “It is, in Agamben’s words, a body ‘undone, rendered inoperative, liberated and suspended from its ‘economy’ exposing and denudingly displaying its inoperativity.” (Agamben, 2011, in Robert, 2013: 9).

Agamben’s insights reveal the need to recognise the groundless decision that is made by life in this position of the inoperable, glorious freeing and opening up to new possible uses. What happens on this line between the virtual and the actual, what makes the virtual leap over into the actual, how does incipient newness become the new: this is the mystery of creation processes. How this happens is a question of *poiesis* in Agamben’s (as well as Deleuze’s) work. “...Agamben is closer to Spinoza’s concept of a positive and expressive power...” Colebrook and Maxwell, 2016: 137) and as such also more intimate with thinkers of passion, such as, again, Spinoza and Deleuze. In Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza it is one’s power to be affected that decides one’s passionate capacity, and which makes imagination into the mode of thought that can openly receive possibilities of how to become: “Imagination is the mode of thought most precisely suited to the differentiating vagueness of the virtual.” (Massumi, 2002: 134). In Agamben’s (2013: 63) analysis, our ‘being-at-work’ as a dwelling of presence is replaced with a fusion of potentiality and action. Agamben came to the conclusion that operativity, as divine potency, is brought into work and operationalized. “*Operativity is, in this sense, a real virtuality or a virtual reality*” (Agamben, 2014: 64). This would be to affirm this glorious inoperativity as a virtual blankness from which one could again and again become new. Every such actualization into the operative is then grasped by managed systems of performance, where the manager is a subject-position endowed with preferential right of interpretation.

It is all good and well to disclose the entrepreneurial as this ‘real virtuality’, but what does this entail for organizational life? If we follow Deleuze in arguing that the virtual is not the opposite of the actual, but instead that part of the actual that is always already present and in the process of becoming, how can we engage with this ‘virtual reality’? In what follows, we highlight some of its dimensions in an attempt to focus our attention and appreciation on those dynamics that we often ignore or manage away in organizational life.

### **3b. Re-enacting entrepreneurship**

By following Agamben's advice to acknowledge the glorious inoperativity at the heart of organizational life, we are challenged to suspend our interest in the immediately instrumental dimensions of organizations and focus instead on that which is becoming, that which is persisting without effort, and that which is withdrawing. These movements co-exist and cooperate with each other in ways that do not necessarily lend itself to managerial tools such as strategic management, or scenario planning, but nevertheless are crucial to organizational life.

- *Anarchic emergence*: Agamben's analysis allows us to retrace the emergence of certain 'rules of life' or 'habitus' or 'hexis', i.e. habits, orientations, tendencies and dispositions, which replace formal rules and codes. It operates as an emergent normative order to facilitate autonomous subjectivation and the evacuation of potentiality. As such it combines the anarchic and the sabbatical, freedom and obedience (Siisiäinen, 2014: 62). We have seen from the above that the capitalist *dispositifs* that has since emerged have managed to embed the habits of functionality, efficiency, directed towards the goals of growth and consumption. The question is whether it could operate in any other way? The answer may lie in understanding that the power of economic-providential governance is not derived from an agent or a guiding principle, but instead relies on a network of relations that unfolds an-archically. It is therefore something that emerges, rather than being directed, but the emergence depends very much on the interaction between living beings and various sorts of apparatuses/*dispositifs* with which living beings interact. In our previous research, we have found that the sustainability of many entrepreneurial enterprises reside in the enabling, constraining and in some cases contaminating relationships of which they form a part (Author and Author, 2011: 13). It is less about individual genius than about coordinating exploring and contemplating a complex set of relationships. The force of the entrepreneurial is more a question of the entre-, the in-between, the relational capacity, than it is about individuals. This anarchic emergence may provide us with some conceptual keys to reclaim some dimensions of the entrepreneurial that have been lost in agentic formations of what it means to be an entrepreneur. In addition, those formations are – in organizational contexts – always dominated by the managerial prerogative as the emblematic guardian of efficient resource use and control. In focusing on the activity of entrepreneurs in building business, creating employment, fostering growth, we have solidified certain active habits. In Chia and Holt's (2009) terms, we have accustomed ourselves to building, instead of dwelling. In the process, we lost sight of the inoperative potential that may reside in other types of habits, orientations, and tendencies.

- *Speaking without meaning*: Agamben spends much time considering the unity of external and internal glory. If this breaks down, the disturbing question arises why God would in fact need external glory, i.e. the praise, thanks and glorification of his subjects. Is the ritual worship of the believer 'effective', i.e. 'creating' God's glory, as Maus' analysis of prayer seems to suggest? Agamben (2011: 232) does not answer this question explicitly but he does stress the potential of



ritual acclamations within doxology to innovate and transgress. In doxologies and acclamations the semantic aspects of language is deactivated and it is this 'empty' turning of words that creates the almost magical efficacy of producing glory (Agamben, 2011: 232). Agamben's analysis draws on Rilke's poetry and Holderlin's hymns to indicate that this praise without content is the radical deactivation of signifying language, words rendered inoperative (Agamben, 2011: 236-237). It seems that through participation in doxology, hymnology, and poetry, nude life finds its nourishment. The empty throne, God's absence in the world, the glorious inoperativity, is what makes the administrating Angels, or managers, necessary. At the same time, acclamation of 'the entrepreneur', something that has grasped politicians, policy makers and managers alike since the 1980s, has also secured the glory of this new 'god' of job-creation. Being administrated as an enterpriser, however, has indeed added to the despair that the entrepreneur might be the eternally ascent figure of organisations (cf. Jones and Spicer, 2009). It denies the glorious inoperativity as of the entrepreneurial. The entrepreneurial is the instantiation of the glorious, which is precisely revealed when signifying language is avoided or transgressed. In organizational terms it will entail an openness for statements and practices (artistic, symbolic and otherwise) that may defy instrumental logics.

- *Life* marked by the *as not*: Agamben (2011: 248) explains that life is divided into the life we live (the facts and events of our biography), and a life for which and in which we live (what renders life livable and give it its form and meaning). Our current life in its predetermined form has in some sense to be placed under erasure, in order for the glorious inoperative (Messianic) life to become a possibility. This inoperativity however does not imply inertia or inactivity (*aprassia*) – instead it implies an energy completely free of labour, without any suffering, expended with ease. For this to occur, contemplation and inoperativity must liberate man from his/her biological or social destiny and deactivate linguistic and corporeal, material and immaterial praxes (Agamben, 2011: 251). It often means that instead of knowing what to do, it knows what not to do, or the embrace of the not-knowing / knowability as a new opening. The managerially mad modus of acting we have sometimes attributed to entrepreneurship – that it acts to know, rather than know in order to act – is resonant with this 'blankness' or the moment saturated with potentiality and inoperativity. Everything is possible, and instead of seeking knowledge to find out more precisely how this possibility is delimited by reason or praxes, entrepreneurial madness 'takes the plunge', or 'acts as if' (Gartner, et al, 1992) everything was possible/open/free.

- *Being* rather than *acting*: Agamben (2013: 63) argues that because of the ontological-practical paradigm of liturgy's focus on effectiveness, i.e. showing that one can act in order to be, the primacy of being over acting which defines classical philosophy, has been lost. With this comes a preoccupation with functionality, and as such operativity. Agamben (2011:2016) spends a lot of pages of the Kingdom and the Glory considering the relationship between God's internal existential glory and the external glory given to Him by angels and human beings. At certain points, Agamben's analysis portrays external glorification as the way in which believers become

part of God and participate in his most intimate inoperative existence (Agamben, 2011: 221). In this unity, believers are glorified in a way that allows them to exist beyond utilitarian concerns and role-functionalities – everyone is after all equal in God. Agamben teaches us that God's glory lies in inoperativity.. One could develop the idea, drawing upon Agamben (see also Dean, 2012: 157), that the entrepreneurial subject is the subject of resistance to productivity in organisations; resistance to the managerial regime of outputs - a Sabbathical subject, the subject of Sabbath as inoperativity. If our contemporary conceptions of entrepreneurial activity are modeled on this theological understanding, it would mean that we are primarily interested in what an entrepreneur does, or creates, rather than on what s/he is becoming.

- *Genius*: In one of his most playful texts, "*Profanations*", Agamben (2007: 13) describes the struggle between *Genius* and *Ego*, which characterizes any creative act. *Genius* is our life, insofar as it doesn't belong to us, and every attempt of *Ego* to force *Genius* to sign his/ her own name is bound to fail. These two forces co-exist, intersect and have different modes, but they cannot extricate themselves from each other. Agamben (2007: 14) describes the encounter with *Genius* as 'terrible', and as such the struggle between *Genius* and *Ego* can only be called 'poetic'. When *Genius* exceeds us, it is impersonal, and as such, we are inevitably thrown in 'panic'. Most people flee in terror, but those who can let themselves be shaken, without instrumentalizing *Genius* as their own private sorcerer, only knows that 'the absence of God helps'. Agamben (2007: 15) describes passion as the tightrope stretched between us and *Genius*. We experience *Genius* through our emotions, as anguish, joy, safety or fear. To experience this, *Ego* must shed its own properties, it must be moved out of its self-assuredness. This pushes us towards others, through whom we find the relationship with *Genius* that we are incapable of grasping on our own (Agamben, 2007: 16). This emotional reaching out to interrelationship, allowing *Genius* to have its way while *Ego* is grimacing, may describe the profound paradox of the entrepreneurial reality.

#### **4. Conclusion:**

Our analysis suggests that though the influence of various theological explanations of the divine economy's governance dimensions have clearly inspired managerial practices, an important aspect of this divine economy has remain hidden from sight in organization studies. The glorious aspects of the divine and its pure potentiality fuels and inspires much of economic activity, yet often remains the un-thought dimension of our political economy. In the process, our understanding of entrepreneurship has also been shaped by a one-sided ontology, which focus on its activity and functionality, rather than what it means to *be* entrepreneurial.

We believe that there is much in the earliest writings on entrepreneurship to suggest that the creative responsiveness of the entrepreneurial process is less about agentic goal-directedness and more of a responsiveness to what it means to be entrepreneurial. This becomes evident in how one deals with situations where bridges are absent between the two sides of the cliffs that have not even yet been defined. The reality of the entrepreneur is being immersed in

the interaction. The practices and dispositions of living beings in interaction with others and with their material and immaterial environment shape and form them. This process is always at risk of being captured, solidified and stifled through other dominants *dispositifs*, which is why the rediscovery of certain alternative modes are so important. We describe them as being open to anarchic emergence, baring oneself by shedding the comforts of roles and functions and eluding the stifling semantics of managerial sense-making. Most importantly, to live life not just by getting through the to-do list of duties but being engaged in work without suffering or a sense of labor. In this way, entrepreneurs may indeed be capable to live the life for which they live.

For this to happen, there is however much more to deliberate. Is Agamben's explanation of the unity of divine transcendence and salvific immanence not too laissez-faire? Will recovering the fatedness of divine potentiality in our entrepreneurial discourses not render us impotent to challenge the negative effects of the entrepreneurial, just as it rendered us impotent to criticize the imperfections of the Church and its priestly orders? Does our understanding of the moral duty of offices as key to our understanding of ethics not blunt our critique of the immorality of some offices? Have we not lost our capacity for political action (Toscano, 2012) through a mystical acceptance of the collateral consequences, and damage that a seamless combination of glory and governance entails? These kinds of critical questions may allow us to perform a more meaningful interrogation of certain practices that have been indicated as stimulating 'creativity', such as Google's implementation of free time during working hours, or other strategies emphasizing sociality (Weik, 2012), embodiment (Hicky-Moody, 2006), or materiality (Hayes, 2014).

A central question that some of Agamben's critics pose is whether his analysis of the interaction between being and praxis within theological constructs can really deal with the 'absolute immanence' that he draws on from within a Spinozian-Deleuzean register (Dickenson, 2013: 89). In the two texts that we focused on, Agamben does not write about passion, about gender, about race – the messiness of bodies and injustice seems hidden behind the recovery of a way of being and acting that does not pit glory and governance against one another. Does Agamben's insistence that the thrown is empty, and the crown only a Messianic promise really help us to deal with the challenges that we face today? In this respect, it would be important to further explore what Agamben offers Organization Studies above and beyond Foucault's genealogy. Our current analysis reveals the potential of a closer exploration of the spiritual imaginaries that inform organizational life on micro-, meso- and macro-level. As such, it allows us to integrate insights into the functioning of individual agency and institutional dynamics, with a more thorough interrogation of the logics of our broader political economy. This holds much potential - both for entrepreneurial studies, as well as for the kind of organizational studies committed to rethinking organizational forms and practices beyond the multinational corporation.

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