

# THE RISING OF HUMAN-BASED ENTERPRISES IN SPAIN, AND THE SELLING OF 'INTANGIBLES'

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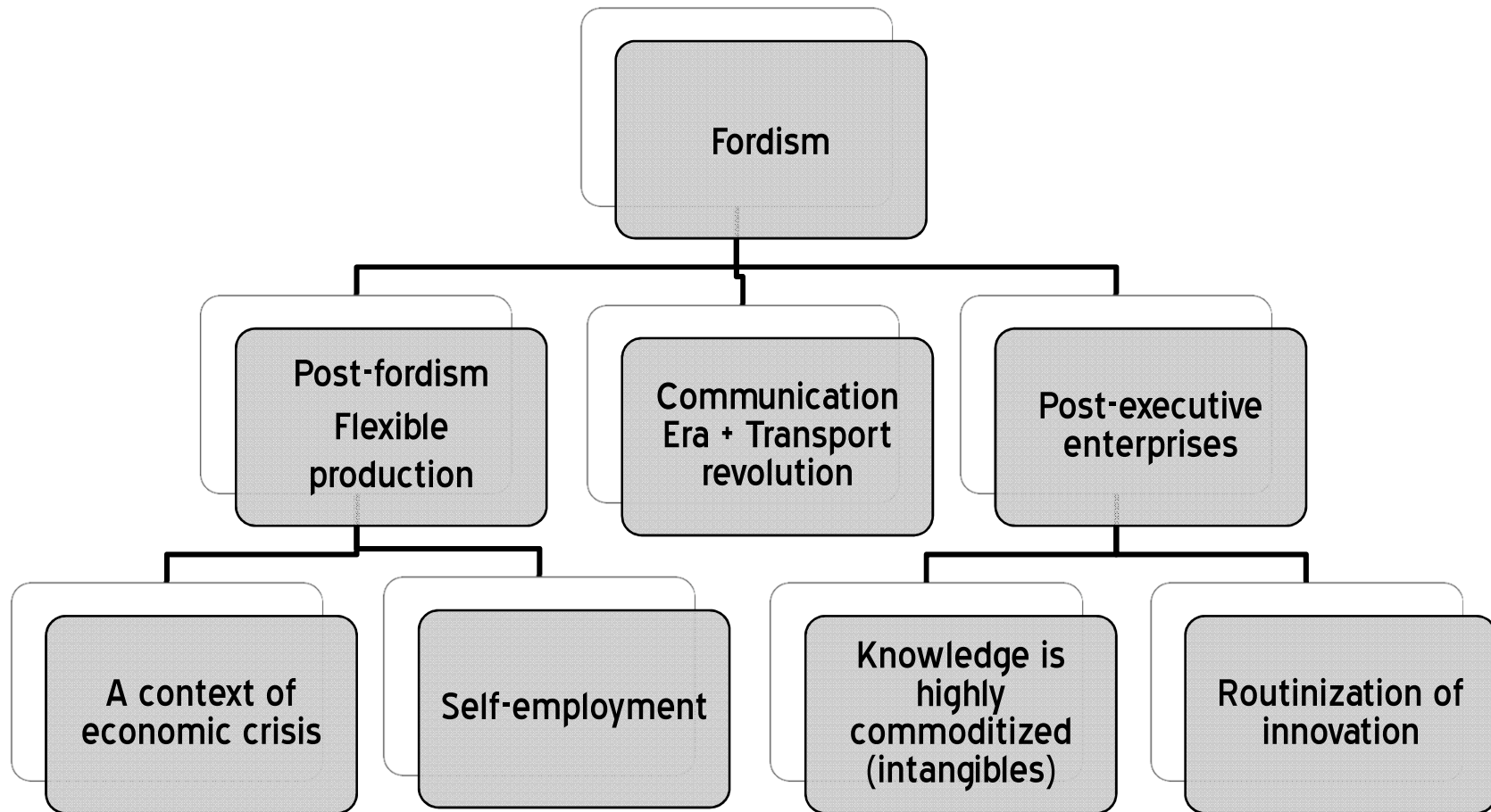
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# RESEARCH CONTEXT

- Project “New Economy 20+20” by the Spanish Ministry
- Sample: 20 companies (in Spain).
- Team: 7 anthropologists (Madrid, Mexico DF, Barcelona...)
- Ethnographic Research on “human-based enterprises”
  - Companies where the ‘human factor’ is put in the center.

# 'ARCHEOLOGY' OF THESE ENTERPRISES



# WHAT DO WE UNDERSTAND BY 'HUMAN-BASED' COMPANIES?

Companies that emphasize the human side of their organization from different points of view:

**From inside** – horizontal management, relaxed” work environment.

- Care to social relationships within the enterprise

**From inside** – good relationships with clients, suppliers and other stakeholders are privileged.

- Selling policy, environmental friendly.

**An active policy of social networking-** they foster interaction between actors.

**Bring into the human dimension in product design, workspaces, technology.**

**Incorporation of Social Sciences and Humanities** – as sources of distinction and wealth.

SOME  
ETHNOGRAPHIC  
EXAMPLES



# CULDESAC: “LABORATORY OF IDEAS”

Creative space of “design, communication & experience”.



- Young staff (under 30).
- “Horizontal” management.
- Empathic, iconoclast, and collectivists, conformists.
- Playful attitude
- Cooking and eating together = togetherness
- *There’s another way to do things*
- Clients: Zwarovski, Aston Martin, etc.









# FUNKY PROJECTS

"There are people who innovate in technology, but we innovate in the relationship between people, so that relationships are more exciting and fun...".

"We do have a knowledge and cross-value through which we innovate putting people first"



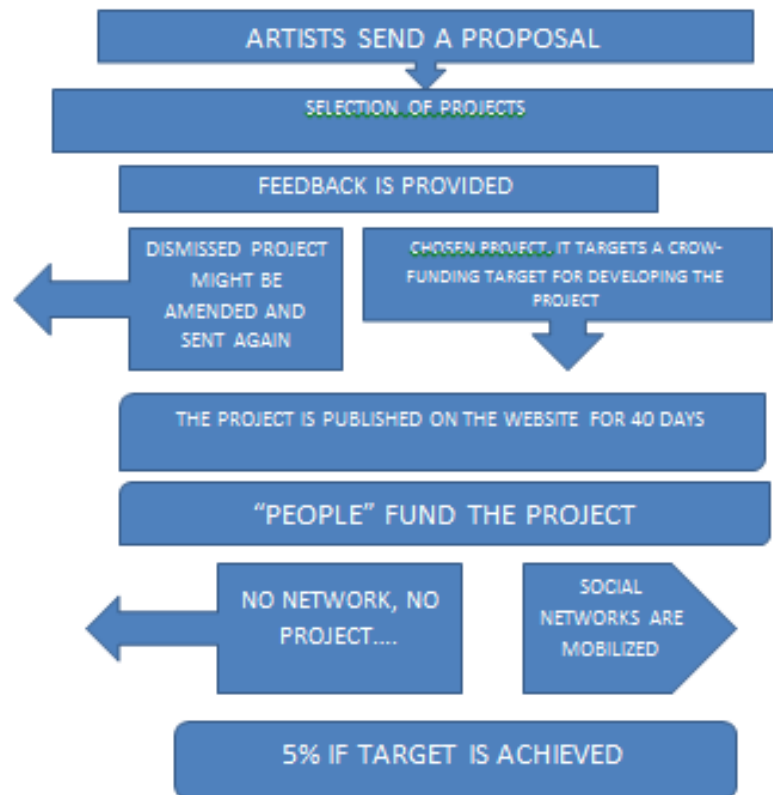
- A guru that preys 'social transformation' (not *a la* Marx)
- Agitation for innovation, deconstruct to construct.
- Following in the footsteps of BMW, Apple, Google, Whole Foods, Microsoft, Starbucks ...
  - Clients: Texaco, Sarah Lee, Infojobs, Telefónica, Philips, etc.
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEpH6ILV\\_xl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEpH6ILV_xl)







# VERKAMI: CROWDFUNDING LEADERS.



- Promotion of artist projects through popular funding
- Reciprocity, empathy, “democracy” of creativity by the way of Internet
- Social networking







# MONVÍNIC: WINE'S CULTURE



## A glocal combination

- Slow-food.
- Production of proximity.
- More than 5000 types of wine
- Environmental friendly ... but expensive!

...



## KEY ASPECTS

- **Innovative** enterprises: social focus.
- **Diversity** within the "human-based" label
- **Horizontal** self-management
- **Flexible** and **multidisciplinary** teams
  - Incorporation of humanistic knowledge in a disruptive way
- **Small scale** companies.
- Physical **spaces** that display the idiosyncrasies.
- Economic profit *is not* the only goal

- **Reciprocity** based on the moral commitment with the projects
- Dense **empathy** and shared beliefs
- Relevance of **meaningful work**
- **Learning** and knowledge are prioritized and valued.
- **Blurring** separation between the “world of work” and the “world of life”.
- **Young**, international, high education profile

# FEW CRITICAL REMARKS

- Do we face a new paradigm of work and labour relations?
  - Or maybe is another subtle step of commodification?



- Florida's "creative class": super-entrepreneurs of self-exploitation by other means?
  - No better panopticon than oneself.
- Are they contra-cultural or alternative?
  - ... they work for big Capital.
- Non-alienated work?
  - Family, social, personal costs are high.
- Horizontal management.
  - There are still owners and employees.....

**THANK YOU!**

