Economía plural y economía social solidaria: Discutiendo los conceptos

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ABSTRACT:
This article presents this trajectory, starting from the work of Milton Santos on the circuits in the urban economics in the underdeveloped countries and their relation to the popular economy. We also discuss the solidarity economy, which originated within the framework of European associativism, and in Brazil assumes peculiar contours when focusing on self-managed collective production. Finally, we discuss how the current Latin American debate articulates the questioning of the market society and the proposition of an “other economy” focused on work and on the plurality of economic principles. In this sense, “social and solidarity economy” would be, in peripheral and in central countries, a set of initiatives oriented to an ideal economic system, to replace the “economy of capital”.

RESUMEN:
Este artículo presenta esta trayectoria, a partir del trabajo de Milton Santos sobre los circuitos de la economía urbana en los países subdesarrollados y su relación con la economía popular. También discutimos la economía solidaria, que se originó en el marco del asociativismo europeo, y en Brasil asume contornos peculiares al enfocarse en la producción colectiva autogestionada. Finalmente, discutimos cómo el debate latinoamericano actual articula el cuestionamiento de la sociedad de mercado y la propuesta de “otra economía” centrada en el trabajo y en la pluralidad de principios económicos. En este sentido, la “economía social y solidaria” sería, en los países periféricos y centrales, un conjunto de iniciativas orientadas a un sistema económico ideal, para sustituir la “economía de capital”.

RESUMO
Este artigo apresenta esta trajetória, a partir do trabalho de Milton Santos sobre os circuitos da economia urbana nos países subdesenvolvidos e sua relação com a economia popular. Discutimos também a economia solidária, que se originou no quadro do associativismo europeu, e no Brasil assume contornos peculiares ao enfocar na produção coletiva autogestionada. Por último, discutimos como o atual debate latino-americano articula o questionamento da sociedade de mercado e a proposta de “outra economia” centrada no trabalho e na pluralidade de princípios econômicos. Nesse sentido, a “economia social e solidária” seria, nos países periféricos e centrais, um conjunto de iniciativas voltadas a um sistema econômico ideal, em substituição à “economia de capital”.

KEYWORDS:
POPULAR AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY, SOCIAL ECONOMY, PLURAL ECONOMY, SOLIDARITY ECONOMY.

PALABRAS CLAVES:
ECONOMÍA POPULAR Y SOLIDARIA, ECONOMÍA SOCIAL, ECONOMÍA PLURAL, ECONOMÍA SOLIDARIA.

MOTS-CLÉS:
ÉCONOMIE POPULAIRE ET SOLIDAIRE, ÉCONOMIE SOCIALE, ÉCONOMIE PLURIELLE, ÉCONOMIE SOLIDAIRE.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE:
ECONOMIA POPULAR E SOLIDÁRIA, ECONOMIA SOCIAL, ECONOMIA PLURAL, ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA.
INTRODUCTION

The popular and solidary economy gained expression in Brazil in the 1990s, as a response of the popular classes to unemployment and the precariousness of work in progress. In the 2000s, it gained space in public policies and grew in organization and reach.

While at the end of the 20th century the Latin American debate was based on a diagnosis of the forms of production and work in these countries, in the present century it is more directly linked to the discussion about the coexistence between different economic principles, approaching the ideas of economics social and plural economy. The recent movement approaches the issues of the center and the periphery, emphasizing the challenge of economicism and in defense of an “other economy” marked by solidarity, sustainability and emancipation (Coraggio et al., 2009a).

The present article presents this trajectory, based on Milton Santos reading about the economic circuits in the cities of underdeveloped countries and their relationship with the popular economy category. It is also discussed the solidarity economy, which has its origin in the framework of European socialist cooperativism, and which in Brazil takes on peculiar shapes by focusing on self-managed collective production. Finally, it discusses how the Latin American debate articulates the movement of questioning the market society and proposing an “other economy” centered on the coexistence between economic principles and focused on solidarity and the predominance of work over capital. In this sense, the “social and solidarity economy” would be, in both peripheral and central countries, a set of initiatives towards an ideal economic system, replacing the “capital economy” marked by the precariousness and commodification of labor.

FROM THE LOWER CIRCUIT TO THE POPULAR ECONOMY AND THE URBAN SOLIDARITY

In the late 1970s, Milton Santos proposed a reading of cities in underdeveloped countries based on two economic circuits (or systems). The space of these countries, when organized and reorganized according to external interests, is configured as discontinuous, unstable and multipolarized. This creates a circuit of the urban economy highly benefited by modernizations, and another that only partially benefits, or does not benefit at all, from technical progress and the advantages associated with it.

The origin of this configuration would be in the industrialization and modernization processes - selective and incomplete - of the 20th century, guided by technology-intensive multinational firms that generate a limited number of jobs. The so-called “superior” circuit is composed mainly of capital-intensive activities, largely imitative, of large-scale production, articulated outside the city and the region, and with the main objective of capital accumulation. It is formed by trade and industry for export, modern urban industry, modern trade and services, banking, wholesale trade and transport. The “inferior” circuit, on the other hand, covers small-scale activities, mainly non-modern services supplied by small-scale commerce, labor intensive and with relevant creative potential and articulation in the city and region. It is primarily about small manufacturing production, mostly artisanal, and non-modern commerce, in addition to domestic activities.

The relationship between the two flow systems (circuits) of the urban economy is determined by general historical conditions, linked to the penetration of modern activities in the territory, and by the State, which acts as an intermediary between innovative agents and regional realities (Santos, 2008). It is the upper circuit that occupies a privileged position in the face of government support and credit. For this reason, lower circuit units often resort to mutual aid arrangements. The control of information and the support of the State apparatus work in favor of the upper circuit, which is able to “create” or “attract” demand through advertising. The lower circuit is based on consumption; it results from demand. As the demand of the entire population is directly influenced by the upper system and its networks, the dependency of the lower system is clear.

In the lower circuit, family and autonomous work, organized in small production units, prevails. While in the upper circuit prices are defined in oligopolized markets, in the lower one, bargaining and personal agreements prevail, leading to a greater margin of variation in prices. The notion of profit is also different between circuits. In the first case, capital accumulation is essential for the continuity of activity and the monitoring of technological advances. In the second, the logic of the short term prevails (Santos, 2008).
The circuits coexist in complementarity and competition, although the relationship of subordination between them is clear. Milton Santos rejects the notion of "dualism", although he assumes this is the starting point of his theory. By refusing such a name, he clarifies that both circuits are the result of the same process: the dissemination of information and consumption that occurred in the second half of the 20th century and that leads to the transformation of the entire production apparatus. For him, what is verified are not forms of production with different technological ages coexisting in space. These are different ways of combining a new model of production, distribution and consumption, and the pre-existing situation: "it is an acceptance of modernization in different degrees" (Santos, 2008, p. 55).

Thus, Milton Santos distances himself from the argument of underdevelopment theories that income distinctions are attributable to different levels of productivity, as well as the replacement of the "traditional sector" by the "modern sector" as a natural part of the development process. These theories, strongly influenced by Lewis's model of unlimited labor supply (Lewis, 1954), saw the traditional sector as "archaic" or "backward" and doomed to disappear in the wake of economic growth. Circuit theory proposes to break with the modern-traditional opposition, and also to consider, in addition to production, the spheres of consumption, distribution, employment, as well as the role of information and the State, in the configuration of formations economic-social.

Milton Santos approach clarifies that the existence of this set of productive units constitutes a component of the peripheral capitalist structures, fulfilling a fundamental and subordinate role, and being marked by a distinct internal rationality, heterogeneity and constant mutation. Contrary to what the dominant approach to the informal sector preached, there would be no tendency to disappear or replace the lower circuit with the upper one, as long as there was formalization with the State or the improvement of technological levels. The lower circuit is not seen as a step in the development process to be overcome, but as a structural characteristic, fed into the system itself.

Still in the 1970s, other authors proposed an understanding of Latin American reality based on the logic of production and reproduction that existed there. In close perspective, Orlando Nuñez, Luis Razeto and Jose Luis Coraggio propose the category of popular economy. This would not be defined only by the social category of its actors (the poor or those excluded from the formal labor market), but by the quality of their relations and values (values of solidarity, cooperative relations) and their scale of organization, small enough to allow interpersonal economic relations, not necessarily mediated by the market and the competition. In emphasizing these aspects, they seek to differentiate the "popular urban economy" from the "informal urban system" (Coraggio, 2003).

The popular economy is thought of as the set of economic activities and social practices developed by the members of the working classes from the use of their own workforce and their own resources. These organizations are designed to provide and replace livelihoods, adding units of work, not capital investment (Kraychete, 2006). This economy is based on family work, self-employed, artisanal, on self-construction of housing, on the peasant economy. Its dynamics combines domestic production with market relations, in a diffuse connection between use values and exchange values that do not lead to disappearance or disconnection with the market. Work is the main productive factor of these units, whose internal organization involves associated production (cooperatives, associations, purchasing groups, local exchange systems), small family businesses and individual work (self-employed, "self-employed"), aimed at or not to the market.

For Coraggio (1994, 2000, 2003), the cells of the popular economy are the domestic units that depend mainly on the exercise of their work to reproduce themselves biologically and culturally. The domestic unit, as an economic organization characteristic of the popular economy (founded on kinship, affinity, ethnic relations, etc.), organizes the resources and capacities of its members (its work fund) to manage the satisfaction of its needs, with the ultimate goal of reproducing life in the best possible conditions (expanded reproduction). While simple reproduction is equivalent to maintaining the life of the members of the domestic unit at a level accepted as a minimum, expanded reproduction denotes an improvement in quality of life over time, not only by increasing incomes, but also by access to public good, better quality of consumption, better standards of social relationship, better housing conditions, etc.

Lisboa (2004) identifies Milton Santos as a precursor to the popular economy category, as it takes up a set of characteristics that the author attributes to the lower circuit of the urban economy. For example, for Milton Santos, contrary to what the formal-informal dichotomy assumes, it is not a question of assuming the existence of a set of rational and coordinated decisions in opposition to another group of irrational and incorrect actions. The lower circuit is also provided with a rationality, and, furthermore, economic rationalities are always multiple.
The rationality of the popular economy differs from that of the capitalist economy, since the assumptions of accumulation and the objective of expansion - the greatest possible - of capital are not verified there. There, economic rationality is subordinated to the reproduction needs of domestic units, which implies, for example, difficulty in replacing workers and the great weight given to the labor factor in relation to capital: “Unlike companies that - in search of profit, competitiveness and productivity - they do not need workers, members of popular economic enterprises cannot ‘fire’ their sons, daughters, spouses or elderly people who gravitate to their surroundings” (Kraychete, p. 2006, 5).

For Razeto (1993), not every popular economy is one of solidarity, and neither is the solidarity economy necessarily popular, since solidarity in economic practice can also occur in other areas. “In the popular economy, there are embryos of what can be a solidarity economy, because in the practices of the popular sectors we find an economic rationality founded on work and cooperation” (Lisboa, 2004, p. 15). This solidarity could be understood as an economic factor, insofar as cooperation can increase productivity, reduce costs and provide additional benefits, establishing what the author calls “economies of association”. It would be present, for example, in the free transfer of information and knowledge, in solidarity management (whose highest form is self-management), in the system of ownership of the means of production (collective or individual and shared), in the forms of distribution internal and external gains, and consumption, by minimizing its negative effects.

As theoretical fields, both the popular economy and the solidarity economy deny the use of labor as a commodity or mere factor of production (Tiriba, 2003). In this sense, they differ from the informal economy, which is associated, by such currents, with the exploitation of labor force of those who do not have the means of production. However, the solidarity economy is specifically understood in Brazil, based on collective enterprises where cooperation in economic activity, the common use of the means of production and self-management predominate (Gaiger, 2009). The basic units are cooperatives, associations and informal groups where the distinction between capital and labor is minimized. As a guiding principle for the Solidarity Economy, self-management implies that the means of production are collectively owned and controlled and that decisions about the rules of operation and the directions to be followed by the solidarity enterprise are made based on the democratic participation of each individual. Thus, management, production, its means and results belong to everyone, so that solidarity and autonomy-promoting practices in organizations are necessary.

Although the term “popular solidarity economy” has been consolidated in several spaces of debate in Brazil, the distinction between the “popular economy” and the “solidarity economy” is clear in the current led by Paul Singer in this country. For Singer (2000), the basic unit of analysis of the solidarity economy is the production unit, and not the domestic unit, cell of the popular economy, for Coraggio. According to the author, the domestic unit is, by definition, a consumer unit, and not necessarily a producer of goods.

In this way, the solidarity economy is associated with productive units organized collectively and in a self-managed manner. Singer (2000, 2002) associates the solidarity economy with a non-capitalist (or post-capitalist alternative) economy characterized by socialist or cooperative principles, formed by egalitarian companies, in which the ownership is of all who work there and the profits are shared. It would be configured as a way of interstitial production, inserted in the voids left by capitalism (Singer, 2002).

Common to the terms “popular economy” and “solidarity economy” is the attention given to the socio-political dimension, both in terms of internal democracy to the units and of decision-making autonomy in relation to the public and private sectors (not subject to the control of other institutions, even if partners). Such an emphasis suggests that evaluating the performance of these ventures should not be restricted to their profitability or ability to generate income, but, on the contrary, involves gains in terms of sociability, involvement and participation in political decisions, consumption patterns and interpersonal relationships, development of an alternative work culture, etc.

As they encompass diverse forms of production, flexible with regard to the selection criteria of workers, time and place of work, among others, the popular economy and the solidarity economy appear as alternatives for the public that does not “fit” in processes of formal employment and wages, for their education, experience, family configuration, etc. It is recognized in the literature that such organizations have been posed as perennial survival strategies by the vulnerable population.
In this sense, it is worth thinking about the extent to which the popular and solidarity economy, in its multiple faces, presents itself as a permanent feature of Latin American economies and in what situations it is configured as an embryo of transformation processes. Although it is often associated with a conjunctural or transitory movement, resulting from unemployment and exclusion processes, it is possible to think of it as part of a broader and more permanent popular organization process, suggesting it as a resource for alternative development processes. It is necessary to understand the real emancipatory and transforming potential contained in these practices.

POPULAR ECONOMY, PRODUCTIVE RESTRUCTURING AND AUTONOMY

For Tiriba (2003), the popular economy manifests itself in different historical times, integrating itself with the hegemonic or subaltern modes of production or models of economic development. It is not an exclusive phenomenon of capitalist societies, being present in the societies of hunters and gatherers, slavers, socialists, etc. But it is in the context of the neoliberal model of capital accumulation that it presents itself, strongly, as the “economy of the poor”, because it is when the recurrence of it as a survival strategy is made explicit.

At the end of the twentieth century, the term popular economy was associated with workers excluded from the formal labor market and those who seek to supplement their income, because they earn low wages and have few guarantees in salaried jobs. The popular economy was, at that time, the “shelter” of the unemployed and the underemployed, who supported themselves in networks of solidarity between workers, their families and the local community (Icaza & Tiriba, 2009). It is possible to question, then, the extent to which the popular economy emerges as part of capitalism itself, functional in reducing social conflicts by dampening the shocks of crises. The movement to make labor markets more flexible provides an impetus to this economy.

In fact, the flexibilization movement and the consequent decentralization of production and work feeds a diversity of subordinate relationships, ranging from direct subcontracting to apparently autonomous activities, but which contribute to reducing labor and material costs. This set of activities, often informal and precarious, would have a role in reducing costs and weakening the union base, assuming a universal character, since it exists both in the center and on the capitalist periphery, and playing a fundamental role for the penetration of markets.

For Tiriba (1999, 2005), however, in the popular economy, old social relations of production persist, which could be the embryo of a new culture of work. These remnants of pre-capitalist formations could guide economic-social relations that, at a given historical moment, could be opposed to the capitalist mode of production. In the practices of the popular sectors it would be the genesis of more general processes of solidarity and cooperation.

If the movement of flexibility in the labor markets, on the one hand, stimulates “abstract work”, subordinated to exogenous production processes, although unrelated to the wage relationship, on the other we find “self-employed” in fact, when the worker has the right to work, control of the production process. While in the first case one can speak of precarious work, in the second, greater control over time and the work process can expand the possibilities of work by leveraging accumulated knowledge and existing networks (Lago, 2009).

As pointed out by Razeto et al. (1990), although participation in a popular economic organization is in most cases the only alternative in the short term to face the immediate need for survival, it is common for its participants to progressively identify with this solution, passing even preferring it to others, economically more profitable, since they learn to value self-employment, without a boss, in an environment of greater trust and solidarity, and also due to the possibilities of cultural development, training and living with others offered by organizations.

Favreau (2004), on the other hand, indicates that the units of the popular economy (self-employed workers, small family businesses), as they develop, can become both private sector companies and social economy organizations, the latter option meaning participation in a collective organization strategy for cooperation and the construction of local exchange systems. In this case, the relationship with social movements and support and promotion entities, such as NGOs, is of great importance. Tiriba (1999, 2005), in turn, emphasizes the importance of educational processes that lead to the exercise and the horizon of self-management, defending a "pedagogy of associated production".

For Quijano (1998), the great diversity of organizations that make up the popular economy in Latin America prevents it from being directly associated with an alternative economy. What can be said, from the observation of the realities of Latin American countries, is the existence of a large set of productive units that are not fully of the entrepreneurial type, since they are not based exclusively on wage relations and neither on the market.
In many cases, therefore, reciprocity and the principle of community action are not the result of ideological decisions, or even of an ethics of inherent solidarity or adherence to a political-ideological project of society. Solidarity and reciprocity may, in reality, be the only possible resource for survival. But from there arises a set of issues relevant to contemporary debate in Latin America, such as the relationship between reciprocity and the market, the relationship between self-employment and capital, between the rationalities of capital and communities, etc. (Quijano, 1998).

**SOCIAL AND SOLIDARY ECONOMY AND PLURAL ECONOMY**

In recent years, the discussion of the popular and solidarity economy in Latin America has come more intensely to the “social and solidarity economy”, as summarized by Jose Luis Coraggio in his recent works (Coraggio, 2011, 2012c, 2013a, 2013b). While the popular economy originated in the discussion of the urban problem, the social economy is placed in a broader debate to understand the economy and to read the realities of the countries where it developed most, notably France and Canada, in addition to other European countries.

As a theoretical field, social economy is placed as a sub-discipline under construction, bringing together elements of economic anthropology, economic sociology, history and political economy. In this approach, the “economic” is understood as a multidisciplinary project, where the integration principles discussed by Karl Polanyi become central to understanding the realities. The currents that embraced the term criticized the fact that economic science does not integrate the social dimension. Thus, the social economy denies hegemonic economism in the current economic literature, proposing a different approach from both the neoclassical economy and the Marxist political economy.

At the heart of the social economy is criticism of the subordination of society to the market principle, or the supposed “uprooting” that anchors the market society, as Polanyi (2011) thought. In this sense, the economy is “rooted” in the social, cultural and political structure, which is why it cannot be understood outside its historical context and the social system seen as a whole. Such reading understands economics as part of culture in its broadest sense, and human behavior as going beyond self-interest; this would be explained by non-universal combinations of selfish interest, obligation, calculation, spontaneity, solidarity and other factors not intrinsic, but culturally defined (Coraggio, 2009a). In addition, there are no natural economies; all economies are socio-political constructions.

Thus, the use of the term goes back to the affirmation of an economy imbricated with the social, to the refusal of economicism and the autonomy of the economic in the face of society, as well as carrying a strong political connotation, by expressing a way of transforming capitalism towards social relations of production of another order (Lisboa, 2004)

In a similar vein, Laville (2009a) speaks of a plural economy, an analytical perception that is strongly anchored in Polanyi’s critique of the fundamentals of modern economy, such as the identification between economy and market, the autonomy conferred to the economic sphere in relation to the others, to identification of the market to a self-regulated instance and identification of the company with the capitalist company. The plural economy, on the contrary, will pay attention to the presence of other principles of economic behavior in societies, in addition to the Market.

In “The Great Transformation”, Polanyi (2011) uses the ethnographic research of Malinowski and Thurnwald to discuss the different modes of economic behavior on the market that permeated societies. The market principle is what allows supply and demand for goods and services to meet through price fixing. In capitalism, this principle tends to overlap with others, which is revealed in the tendency to “market” work and nature towards a “market society”.

Redistribution is the principle according to which production is handed over to a central authority that has the responsibility to distribute it, which implies a procedure for defining allocation rules. It relates to a common leadership and to the institutional standard of centrality, a conduit for the collection, storage and redistribution of goods and services.

The third principle, reciprocity, corresponds to the relationship between groups and people around benefits that are defined by ties between the parties. It is associated with the sexual organization of society, that is, family and kinship, and with the institutional pattern of symmetry, which guarantees the taking and giving of goods and services. He is opposed to mercantile exchange insofar as it is inseparable from human relations, linked to the desires for recognition and power. It is also distinguished from redistributive exchange, as it is not imposed by a central power. A particular form of reciprocity is that exercised based on the family unit, called by Polanyi...
sense, interest in forms of economic solidarity (both old and new) unites peripheral and central countries, involving daily lives are an important substrate for broader processes linked to the social and solidarity economy. In this process that reflects the incompleteness of our modernity. The networks of solidarity that exist in people’s disconnected from social relations in its most strict. This set of activities permeates the state and market circuits, popular economy, that is, a set of forms of production and economic distribution in which economic activities are not on reciprocity have not been drained here, as in Europe (Lisboa, 2004).

For França Filho (2001), the Brazilian singularity of the solidarity economy resides in the still strong legacy of a welfare state, as it has always played a minor role in Latin America, just as the traditional economic forms founded on regulation of society, especially the welfare states, on the one hand, and labor markets based on wage relations, on the other (França Filho, 2001).

The Latin American understanding of the social and solidarity economy, on the other hand, differs from the European concept. While in Europe such forms were strongly driven by the labor movement in the early 19th century, in Latin America the solidarity economy does not have its origin in the union movement, but in different sectors of society, with relevance for the poorest and not integrated to wage labor, supported by churches and other entities, and drawing on local cultural roots. Nor do the experiences of the social economy arise from the exhaustion of the welfare state, as it has always played a minor role in Latin America, just as the traditional economic forms founded on reciprocity have not been drained here, as in Europe (Lisboa, 2004).

For França Filho (2001), the Brazilian singularity of the solidarity economy resides in the still strong legacy of a popular economy, that is, a set of forms of production and economic distribution in which economic activities are not disconnected from social relations in its most strict. This set of activities permeates the state and market circuits, in a process that reflects the incompleteness of our modernity. The networks of solidarity that exist in people’s daily lives are an important substrate for broader processes linked to the social and solidarity economy. In this sense, interest in forms of economic solidarity (both old and new) unites peripheral and central countries, involving
diverse initiatives around other mechanisms of economic-political regulation that do not pass only through the market or the State.

The popular urban economy and the social and solidarity economy would be an integral part of the existing economic system in Latin America, the latter being part of a transition process towards the desired economic system, centered on work and reciprocity values. Coraggio’s sense of the social economy is both that of the “overlapping” of the economy in the social and that of shared responsibility for the quality of human life.

In Coraggio’s (2009a) view, Latin American economies are not pure market economies, nor are their societies complete market societies. Nor is the market there the only institution that mediates the relationship between such societies and the natural base. They would be mixed economies, formed by three sectors or subsystems: i) the business capital economy, a heterogeneous sector, oriented towards the private reproduction/accumulation of capital; ii) the popular economy, oriented towards the reproduction of the life of domestic units, highly heterogeneous and fragmented, including from subsistence activity to segments highly linked to the business economy; and iii) the public economy, oriented towards a combination of systemic needs, often in contradiction: the common good, combined with capital-dependent governance, the accumulation of particular power and the strategic legitimation of the system. This reading of a mixed economy formed by three subsystems or sectors seeks to oppose the traditional scheme of two subsystems (state-market or public-private). The criterion of internal rationality is placed above the others (such as the size of the enterprise or the ownership of the means of production) to understand the intra and intersectoral relationships through which society “resolves” the economic issue (Muñoz, 2013). The popular economy is a heterogeneous set of units that has always played an important role in the reproduction of a large part of the workers there, articulating in different ways to the other two economic spheres.

Since these are mixed economies under capitalist hegemony, Latin American economies are based on civilizing values that legitimize the unlimited accumulation of capital and the commodification of human relations (Coraggio, 2009a). Although the internal organization of domestic units is guided by reciprocity, solidarity is not the predominant behavior in their external relations.

The construction of an economic system in which solidarity and reciprocity persist or prevail, then, asserts itself as political action (Coraggio, 2012b). The construction of this project requires the recognition, conceptual and empirical, of a characteristic heterogeneity: “a heterogeneity that far from being a hindrance, from the perspective of modernity, is a resource, both because of the possibility of solving a sustenance that the free market does not it succeeds, as it is the field of constitution of social actors that can take on this project of reinstitutionalization of economic processes” (Coraggio, 2009a, p. 16).

In this sense, Coraggio (2012c) proposes a current reading of Polanyi (2011, 2012) that guides the construction of a political project in the direction of an economy with a market distinct from a market economy. In this sense, he differentiates the “really existing popular economy” from the “labor economy”, the utopian ideal of an economic system in which the logic of “expanded reproduction of life” predominates at the expense of the logic of capital accumulation. The “social and solidarity economy” or “solidarity economy” would be the set of solidarity practices existing in the three spheres (popular economy, capitalist business economy and public sector economy) and which are possible embryos of the transition from the “capital economy” to the “Labor economy” (Coraggio, 2009a).

To the reading of the mixed economy is added a project of an ideal economic system, centered on work and expanded reproduction of life. The economy of labor can only be thought of as a counterpoint to the economy of capital, and to the meaning conferred on labor by the latter. The main feature of the economy of capital is the tendency to market labor, which is considered a fictitious commodity, as stated by Polanyi. In the capital economy, decisions are made from the market, the dominant economic principle, where individuals are thought of as utilitarian and calculating and follow the logic of competition and capital accumulation. Labor economics, on the other hand, conceives the economy as a system that combines five principles of social integration: a) autarchy of the domestic unit, which produces individually or collectively for consumption or use; b) intra and intercommunity reciprocity, based on mutual aid; c) progressive redistribution, with a focus on both individuals and communities; d) exchange (exchange) in regulated markets in order to avoid abuses linked to monopolies, labor exploitation and damage to small production caused by competition; e) participatory planning, based on the recognition of the organizations and networks of the social and solidarity economy and the coordination of the economic actions of the multiple agents (Coraggio, 2007).
The labor economy is not guided by the quantitative growth of a mass of goods, but by the realization of people’s potential and the quality of life and relationships. It would be organized based on the disalienation of work. The social issue, in the labor economy, does not lie in the search for full employment, so that everyone can obtain income and the consumption patterns dictated by capital. It implies discovering, recognizing, recovering, enhancing, inventing and developing other forms of motivation and coordination of human activities, defined by the workers themselves and in order to fully enjoy everyday life (Coraggio, 2009b).

**FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The social economy is treated by Coraggio (2009b) as a transition from the mixed economy to the labor economy: “the popular economy represents the socioeconomic starting point of social economy practices oriented towards the institutionalization of a labor economy” (p. 125).

For Coraggio (2012b), it cannot be expected that the social and solidarity economy in Latin America, similarly to what happens in Europe, is limited to occupying niches not reached by the market or by the State, such as those of proximity services, that is, conducted by a group of individuals with high “social capital” who are capable of organizing proximity service schemes or autonomous and self-managing communities. The massive lack of basic needs, the degree of unequal access to technical and scientific training and the stigmatization of the poor by the middle and upper classes make it difficult to develop symmetrical solidary relationships that span the entire social spectrum. Despite the advance in the institutionalization of these forms, in recent years, the popular economy is mostly composed of workers in precarious situations, without access to labor rights, often in conditions of subsistence.

In this sense, the author points out three currents of thought and action within the field of social and solidarity economy. The first is that which seeks the reintegration of excluded workers into the labor market, working at the microeconomic level and focusing on poverty alleviation. Such current is based on the logic of the market when defining the ends and means of the undertakings; instrumental rationality and the capital company paradigm prevail, explicit, for example, in the separation between the domestic/family economy and the micro enterprise. According to this current, Coraggio (2013a) calls it “integrationist”, as he understands that the role of new (or old, renewed) economic forms is to fill the void left by global capitalism, guaranteeing sustainability through the competition of these companies with each other and with capitalist firms. Such a view guides the action of multilateral organizations, notably the World Bank, and is in line with the more conservative conception of the informal sector, discussed earlier.

The second and third currents are guided by the logic of reciprocity and have a systemic orientation, unlike the first, which focuses on individual ventures. They differ from each other in understanding the role of the social and solidarity economy in the context of the economy as a whole. The second current assumes the need to consider this economy as a subsystem of the mixed economy, recognizing and strengthening its networks and interfaces with the two other subsystems. Emphasizes the need for networks, not only economic, but also for reciprocity and solidarity, since the objective is to overcome the fragmentation of enterprises and promote an organic and articulated sector.

The third current considers the need to overcome the capitalist economic and cultural system, proposing the construction of the “other economy”. It tries to redefine economic relations at a systemic level, proposing a form superior to capital’s own practices, replacing the relations of competition between particular interests with relations of redistribution, solidarity and reciprocity and the predominance of the legitimately established common good. This current starts from a deep criticism of the capitalist system, questioning the importance of the other economic principles, and proposing new conceptions of State, market, forms of property, degree of commodification of labor and nature, etc.

Coraggio (2013a) assumes the need for recognition of the three currents, assuming as part of the political task the construction of alliances, in a joint movement. Each of the currents emphasizes a relevant aspect of the SSE, being such complementary aspects, reflecting the diversity of concepts and debates around the theme. In fact, these are different levels of intervention that interdepend on their real concreteness.

Such construction, however, passes through another conception of economic development that understands the heterogeneity of economic principles and relations of production as a resource to be leveraged in a work-oriented economy. It is about expanding the conceptions of economics, technology, political action and development.
REFERENCES


