

Landscape, topophilia/topophobia and entrepreneurship: a proposal for a theoretical model

Paisagem, topofilia/topofobia e empreendedorismo: uma proposta de modelo teórico

Paisaje, topofilia/topofobia y emprendimiento: propuesta de un modelo teórico

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Abstract: The aim of this essay was to create a theoretical-methodological apparatus that supplements the analysis of the symbolisms present in the landscape and how they affect – in a topophilic or topophobic way – the relations of entrepreneurs with place. The proposal is to understand a little more how the socio-spatial context of entrepreneurship can direct the profile of local entrepreneurial cultures using the symbolisms (culturally loaded) printed on the landscape and the way these meanings are apprehended by the entrepreneurial community. For that, we have resort to the theoretical debates developed in Anthropology and Social Sciences about culture, and in the discussions about landscape and subjective relations with place, current in Cultural Geography. The approximation of the concepts of topophilia (and topophobia) is inspired by the recent use (2020) of the term, in a more practical and less theoretical context, as one of the key factors for the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. It is, therefore, a matter of establishing the potential and validity of using this concept to understand the phenomenon of entrepreneurship; thus, it is useful to outline a theoretical-methodological framework to understand in greater depth such implications.

Keywords: topophilia; topophobia; landscape; culture; entrepreneurship.

Resumo: O objetivo deste ensaio foi criar um aparato teórico-metodológico que permita analisar os simbolismos da paisagem e como estas afetam – de maneira topofílica ou topofóbica – as relações dos empreendedores com o lugar. A proposta é entender um pouco mais como o contexto socioespacial do empreendedorismo pode direcionar o perfil de culturas empreendedoras locais a partir dos simbolismos, com cargas culturais, impressos na paisagem, e pela forma como esses significados são apreendidos pela comunidade empreendedora. Para tanto, recorreremos aos debates teóricos desenvolvidos na Antropologia e Sociologia sobre cultura e nas discussões sobre paisagem e relações subjetivas com o lugar, correntes na Geografia Cultural. A aproximação dos conceitos de topofilia e topofobia foi inspirada pelo uso recente (2020) do termo, em um contexto mais prático e menos teórico, como sendo um dos fatores-chave para o desenvolvimento de um ecossistema empreendedor. Trata-se, então, de averiguar o potencial de uso e a validade desse conceito para a compreensão do fenômeno do empreendedorismo, sendo útil a busca por delinear um arcabouço teórico-metodológico para compreender com maior profundidade tais implicações.

Palavras-chave: topofilia; topofobia; paisagem; cultura; empreendedorismo.

Resumen: El objetivo de este ensayo fue crear un aparato teórico-metodológico que complemente el análisis de los simbolismos presentes en el paisaje y cómo estos afectan – de forma topofílica o topofóbica – las relaciones de los empresarios con el lugar. La propuesta es comprender un poco más cómo el contexto socioespacial del emprendimiento puede orientar el perfil de las culturas emprendedoras locales a partir de los símbolos, con carga cultural, impresos en el paisaje, y la forma en que estos significados son apreendidos por la comunidad emprendedora. Para ello, recurrimos a los debates teóricos desarrollados en la Antropología y las Ciencias Sociales sobre la cultura y en las discusiones sobre el paisaje y las relaciones subjetivas con el lugar, vigentes en la Geografía Cultural. La aproximación de los conceptos de topofilia y topofobia se inspira en el uso reciente (2020) del término, en un contexto más práctico y menos teórico, como uno de los factores clave para el desarrollo de un ecosistema emprendedor. Se trata, por tanto, de establecer la potencialidad y validez del uso de este concepto para comprender el fenómeno del emprendimiento; por lo que resulta

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útil esbozar un marco teórico-metodológico para comprender con mayor profundidad dichas implicaciones.

Palabras clave: topofilia; topofobia; paisaje; cultura; emprendimiento.

1 INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has been increasingly studied as a phenomenon anchored in the social and geographical context in which entrepreneurial activity takes place (Müller; Korsgaard, 2018). This theoretical-methodological movement is important because it deconstructs the myth of the entrepreneur as a solitary hero (Bjerke, 2010; Stam, 2010). However, a significant part of current studies has emphasized the economic consequences of this spatial contextualization of entrepreneurship, such as the entrepreneur's locational competitive advantage (Müller; Korsgaard, 2018) or the effects of entrepreneurship on job creation and the increase in the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] of regions (Ács; Autio; Szerb, 2014; Szerb *et al.*, 2019). In other words, these studies have mostly focused on the consequences, the end results, of entrepreneurship for a given locality, although some studies have the ultimate goal of drawing up local public policies (Audretsch; Belitski, 2017; Stefenon; Gimenez, 2023).

The purpose of this study is to understand a little more about how the socio-spatial context (Williams, 2007; Williams; Williams, 2012) of entrepreneurship can shape the profile of local entrepreneurial cultures. For this reason, we turn to anthropology and sociology to understand the mechanisms that generate and transmit culture (Cuche, 1999; Geertz, 1989). Culture would be a system of conceptions through which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge and attitudes towards life (Geertz, 1989), enabling men to adapt to their environment and to adapt the environment to men themselves (Cuche, 1999). For both Geertz (1989) and Cuche (1999), this system of interpretations is expressed symbolically, seeking to give and decode meanings to the world.

One of the ways in which a man transmits and perpetuates his culture (Claval, 2011) is through the production of landscapes, which are socially reproduced and immersed in symbolic representations of the duel of forces between dominant and subdominant cultures (Cosgrove, 1989; Duncan, 2004). The landscape's relevance, however, only exists when it is interpreted, either by those who have the power to alter/construct it, or by those who simply visit it and live with it daily (Dardel, 2011). Landscapes, says Tuan (1980), are the background to our lives and arouse in the subject feelings of appreciation (topophilia) or contempt (topophobia), which are unique to each person and develop from personal experiences- and the memories created- of the place.

We have brought this debate on topophilia and topophobia closer to the study of entrepreneurship through the book by Feld and Hathaway (2020), essentially aimed at the "community of practice", where the importance of topophilia for the success of entrepreneurial ecosystems is recommended. In contrast, in the theoretical field, very little has been discussed about how this "affective link with places" is mediated by the landscapes and socio-cultural repertoire of entrepreneurs (and managers of industrial parks, innovation hubs etc.) and the consequences of this understanding for the entrepreneur's performance or, more broadly, for the creation of a local entrepreneurial community (Williams; Williams, 2012). In addition, there has been widespread criticism of the attempt to import and replicate entrepreneurial ecosystems from other cities or countries, without properly contextualizing them (Brown; Mawson; Rocha, 2022; Siffert; Guimarães, 2020; Spigel, 2017), as a way of reproducing the "Silicon Valley model"

(Isenberg, 2011; Welter; Baker; Wirsching, 2019). We thus consider the topic important because landscape is a concept that contains symbolic meanings and social processes that are constituted and unveiled from the daily relationship between man and the environment in which he lives and the experiences extracted from this process (Dardel, 2011).

Thus, the main objective of this essay was to create a theoretical-methodological apparatus that allows different researchers to analyze the symbolisms of the landscape and how these affect – in a topophilic or topophobic way - entrepreneurs' relationships with the place. We believe that the validity of this exercise is even greater if the focus is on landscapes built with the aim of encouraging entrepreneurial activity (technology parks, innovation hubs, clusters, etc.). In order to lay the foundations for this construction, we have recapitulated below some of the contributions of the socio-spatial approach to entrepreneurship; secondly, we present the debates about culture, landscape symbolism and the development of feelings of topophilia and topophobia; finally, we present our theoretical model and try to outline preliminary methodological directions so that empirical research, using these concepts as a reference point, can be carried out, considering the impacts on entrepreneurial activity.

2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A SOCIO-SPATIAL PHENOMENON

The Schumpeterian view of entrepreneurs sees them as executors of new combinations capable of transforming the scenario of a given market, involving the search for business opportunities based on "[...] ideas, beliefs, and actions that enable the creation of future goods and services in the absence of current markets for them" (Sarasvathy et al., 2003, p. 142). In this way, Schumpeter (1983) considered the social actor who engages in innovative entrepreneurship – the "innovative entrepreneur" – to be the main driver of economic development, making it possible to argue that high rates of entrepreneurship are essential to bring about socio-economic improvements in a region (Stam, 2010).

Entrepreneurship is the result of the interaction between individual attributes and the surrounding environment, the structural context in which the individual is embedded - what Müller and Korsgaard (2017) call the "spatial context in entrepreneurship". This means that "[...] entrepreneurs are neither the lonely heroes that change the economy on their own, nor are they determined by their environment: just like any other individual they most often reproduce their structural conditions, but they are entrepreneurial because they also transform these structures" (Stam, 2010, p. 141). This spatial context of entrepreneurship characterizes it as an individual phenomenon inexorably embedded in local and regional aspects.

Entrepreneurship has been studied as a phenomenon situated in time and space. However, the "geography of entrepreneurship" still focuses excessively on the causes and outcomes of entrepreneurship in a specific region from an economic perspective, such as the performance of firms, the number of jobs created, or the impact of entrepreneurship on the growth of the GDP of municipalities or regions (Audretsch; Belitski, 2017; Siffert; Guimarães, 2020; Szerb et al., 2019). Little research has been conducted on the spatially manifested social and cultural issues that determine and condition the causes and effects of entrepreneurship. However, it is noteworthy to mention some studies that have been developed in the past 15 years that can contribute to a better understanding of the impact of geographical factors on the phenomenon of entrepreneurship (e.g. Anderson; Warren; Bensemman, 2019; Bjerke, 2010; Gill; Larson, 2014; Thomas *et al.*, 2008).

Given the various social, economic, and cultural contexts across different regions and times, Williams (2007) proposes that entrepreneurship is inherently a socio-spatial phenomenon. Entrepreneurship is closely connected to the local environment where it operates and may exhibit unique features that differ from one neighborhood, city, region, or country to another. As highlighted by Spigel (2013, p. 805), entrepreneurial cultures are defined as "those outlooks that shape the actions of actors involved with the entrepreneurial phenomenon", encompassing not only the entrepreneur, but also other actors such as consumers, investors, and even employees.

Williams (2007) examined the number of social and commercial entrepreneurs in different regions of the United Kingdom and concluded that there are different cultures of entrepreneurship among different population groups, with many marginalized groups being more socially oriented than profit oriented. The results of the study indicate notable proportional disparities between the two entrepreneurial segments across diverse localities. For instance, in rural areas, there exists a higher number of social entrepreneurs relative to urban areas, while in urban regions, the suburbs witnessed a higher relative number of social entrepreneurs.

In a subsequent study, Williams and Williams (2012) aimed to demonstrate the importance of socio-spatial context in the debate on entrepreneurial motivation. The authors, who examined the attributes of entrepreneurship in "deprived urban neighborhoods," argue that entrepreneurial motivation is primarily a direct product of the social, economic, and spatial context in which entrepreneurs find themselves, and a result of the type of entrepreneurial activity that is possible in the place where they live. Additionally, Williams and Williams (2012) suggest that local circumstances are not deterministic: space is dynamic and always in (re)production, and therefore motivations change over time as competing opportunities and perceptions in the local context also evolve.

One socio-spatial factor that greatly impacts the diffusion of a particular type of local entrepreneurial culture is the presence or absence of exemplary entrepreneurs- role models. (Sorenson, 2018; Williams; Williams, 2012; Wyrwich; Stuetzer; Sternberg, 2016). According to Williams and Williams (2012), the effect (whether positive or negative) of these individuals on the motivation of local entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs is clear.

Thus, when a high rate of entrepreneurship is achieved in a given region, it is expected that this will end up legitimizing the actions of entrepreneurs (Sorenson, 2018). This includes, for example, actions or behaviors that can have an impact on entrepreneurial activity, such as promoting collaborative practices (Yuko, 2009) and encouraging creative and innovative attitudes. (Fritsch; Wyrwich, 2018). The density of entrepreneurial activity could then gradually move a given society toward a more entrepreneurial culture with specific local characteristics.

In summary, the following factors can be seen as important for a socio-spatial analysis of entrepreneurship: (i) Entrepreneurs living in different regions may have different motivations for entrepreneurship (more social than commercial motivations) due to the prevailing culture in those places (which, by extension, translates into a "local entrepreneurial culture") (Williams, 2007); (ii) The socio-spatial context of the entrepreneur, including the local entrepreneurial culture, can explain a significant fraction of the entrepreneur's motivations, going beyond the dichotomy between opportunity and necessity as motivators (Williams; Williams, 2012).

3 “AFFECTIVE BOND BETWEEN PEOPLE AND PLACE”: LANDSCAPE, TOPOPHILIA AND TOPOPHOBIA

In this section, we introduce the concepts of landscape, topophilia, and topophobia, drawing on the ongoing debate in Geography, particularly in the subfield of Cultural Geography. As previously mentioned, entrepreneurship is inherently tied to the geographic setting in which it occurs and develops, and its outcomes are also an important factor in the production of the surrounding space. Bringing together this discussion and entrepreneurship research can provide novel epistemic perspectives on the phenomenon, expanding the theoretical framework and facilitating the development of new methods for approaching and understanding the phenomenon.

The definition of "culture" is a crucial starting point for this debate, as it is one of the elements in Cultural Geography, a field that enriches the ongoing conversation with key concepts. Clarifying this term is particularly significant since it underlies discussions relating to landscapes. According to Cuche (1999), culture is defined as the capacity for humans to adapt to their surroundings while also modifying the environment to meet their needs and goals. The author argues that the way in which man transforms nature is linked to the ways of living and thinking of a particular social group, in a particular time and space.

Another perspective on the symbolic dimension of culture is presented by Geertz (1989). According to the author, culture is a system of inherited conceptions by which people communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge and attitudes towards life. Geertz emphasizes that culture expresses itself symbolically, since the function of culture is to give meaning to the world and to make it understandable. In other words, culture arises and endures through the mediation of everyday interactions among individuals and various social groups. It is not a deterministic or unchanging concept that operates on a higher level than its subjects; instead, it is actively created and reproduced by them daily, thus constituting a social process (Geertz, 1989). This process, according to Claval (2011), fosters a sense of belonging to a shared community, to the same social class, when people who carry out the same activities communicate easily and have a clear idea of the similarity of their problems and interests. In Geertz's (1989) conceptualization, culture can be seen as a text that "depends on its context and is written, read, and understood at different and particular moments, the world being a set of these juxtaposed texts" (Name, 2011, p. 178).

Cosgrove (1989) argues that culture can be consciously evoked at social levels of reflection and communication. The author considers, based on Geertz's (1989) proposition, that different positions in society would then imply different experiences and consciences regarding the insertion of a given group in the social mosaic; to a certain extent, one could speak of different cultures for social groups that are different from each other.

According to Cosgrove (1989), Duncan (2004), and Claval (2011), a social group's power is expressed and maintained through the reproduction of its culture. Thus, the analysis of culture is intrinsically tied to the study of power, given that a dominant group strives to impose its own worldview, values, and beliefs as the definitive and legitimate culture for the whole of society. Such domination- referred to as cultural hegemony- is best achieved when it is least apparent, when the cultural assumptions of the dominant group simply appear as common sense, masking different and even antagonistic worldviews (Cosgrove, 1989). Consequently, we can speak of

dominant and subdominant (or dominated; alternative; challenging) cultures, organized around characteristics such as social class, gender, age, and ethnicity (Cosgrove, 1989; Duncan, 2004). Each of these subcultures expresses itself in the landscape, which is socially constructed and immersed in cultural and symbolic references (Claval, 2011; Cosgrove, 1989).

All landscapes are inherently symbolic and possess multiple layers of meaning, which are dependent upon the social, economic, and cultural profile of those involved in their creation, design, and use. As such, landscapes provide a vehicle for the enactment of ideological discourses. To gain a deeper understanding of the various layers of meaning embodied by a landscape, it is essential to identify the symbolic repertoire, or the "language" (Cosgrove, 1989, p. 125) employed in the codification of culture and its symbols. Cosgrove (1989) argues that the landscape's symbolism perpetuates cultural norms and disseminates values associated with the dominant classes throughout society.

In this context, landscape can be comprehended as "a 'way of seeing', a way of composing and harmonizing the external world into a 'scene', a visual unity [...] a new relationship between humans and their environment" (Cosgrove, 1989, p. 121). For the author, landscape is therefore a way of seeing the world as a rationally ordered, designed and harmonious creation, whose structures and mechanisms are accessible to the human mind and eye, where culture is symbolically represented and becomes a guide for subjects in their projects to alter and improve the environment. According to Name (2010), Cosgrove's (1989) conception of landscape represents an idea, a perspective through which subjects (collectives, groups, or societies) interpret themselves and others, and in which ideologies, networks of interests and strategies of domination manifest themselves in the way they are represented or altered.

For Duncan (2004), the landscape is a major product of cultural and social processes, as it is a system of meanings through which a social context is communicated, reproduced, experienced, and explored. Claval (2011) suggests that the locations where socialization occurs also have a crucial role in shaping individuals and constructing culture.

According to Name (2010), these notions would be particularly interesting because, on the one hand, the landscape would be seen as the result of a permanently unfinished (social and cultural) process, reiterating Geertz's (1989) idea of the creation and diffusion of culture; on the other hand, the landscape would also be seen as an abstraction, since its existence lies in the (re)production, manipulation, and contemplation of space by social groups. In this case, the landscape permits a materialistic dimension (the "real") and a representative one to coexist, under the assumption that reality and representation are complementary worlds- two sides of the same coin- that interact with each other. This interaction synthesizes various cultural and ideological representations. In this way, the landscape and its significations are constantly changing as they are simultaneously produced, contemplated, interpreted, and consumed, without the need for interaction with one or more subjects or social groups for its existence.

In other words, the landscape is both alive and experienced. Dardel (2011) posits that the landscape refers to the environment that surrounds humans, the terrestrial environment. Nevertheless, the author emphasizes that it entails "much more than a juxtaposition of picturesque details, the landscape is a whole, a convergence, a lived moment, an internal connection, an 'impression' that unites all the elements" (Dardel, 2011, p. 30). Cabral (2000) notes that this "internal connection" that unites the elements of the landscape, to which Dardel (2011) refers, would be precisely the presence and involvement of man in it. The landscape expresses one's

own conception, one's way of finding oneself, of ordering oneself as an individual or collective being, because it represents one's insertion into the world; it is "the place of the struggle for life, the manifestation of one's being with others, the basis of one's social being" (Dardel, 2011, p. 32).

Thus, Dardel (2011) identifies the term "geographicity" to describe human relationships with spaces, landscapes, and places. "[...] a concrete relationship [that] binds man to the earth, [...] as a mode of his existence and destiny" (pp. 1-2). In this sense, for Dardel (2011), geography is not only the physical relationship between man and his environment, but is also imbued with an existential, subjective dimension; and for Cabral (2000), it is a constant complicity between man and his environment. When men's experiences with his environment are positive and pleasant, they are considered topophilic; when they are negative, unpleasant, or repulsive, they are topophobic experiences. Consequently, topophilia and topophobia are concepts linked to the environment's character and the perceptions, values, and attitudes of the people who experience it (Tuan, 1980).

According to Tuan (1980, p. 5), who popularized the concept, topophilia is "the affective bond between the person and the place or physical environment", "useful if it can be defined in a broad sense, including all the affective bonds of human beings with the material environment" (Tuan, 1980, p. 107). Relph (1979, p. 19) elaborates on the term, explaining that "topophilia is a feeling directed toward home, toward what is comfortable, detailed, varied, and ambiguous without confusion or tension". Topophobia, on the other hand, is the antithesis of topophilia and is defined by an affective link with the environment that produces "experiences of spaces, places and landscapes that are somehow unpleasant or that induce anxiety and depression" (Relph, 1979, p. 20).

Tuan (1980) notes that the affective bond with a place- understood here as the immanent duet topophilia/topophobia (Guimarães, 2002, p. 107)- is not, of course, the strongest human emotion: however, when it manifests itself, it is a sign that a particular place or landscape is the site of "emotionally powerful events or is perceived as a symbol", creating a sentimental relationship between the subject and that space. In essence, personal and lasting appreciation of the landscape occurs when it is intertwined with memories of human incidents (Tuan, 1980), when man's affective bond with the environment is established, and the landscape becomes a "lived landscape" (not just a contemplated one).

According to Guimarães (2002), despite their opposition, the concepts of topophilia and topophobia are not mutually exclusive, and it is possible to verify the existence of these two feelings in relation to the same landscape, whether on the part of a single person or subjects from different social groups. This supports Cosgrove's (1989) conceptualization of landscape as socially constructed and essentially symbolic, with multiple levels of meaning that vary based on individual experiences and interpretations. The symbols, images, feelings, and expressions embodied in the landscape have the potential to stimulate topophilia and topophobia. Given this "interpenetration of the subjective and objective levels of experience and perception," the subject's topophilic/topophobic relationships with the landscape could then be organized into the key elements listed by Tuan (1980, p. 4): perception, attitude, value, and worldview. A detailed description of these four elements is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Key factors for understanding Topophilia/Topophobia

Factor	Description
Perception	It is a response of the senses to external stimuli as well as a purposeful activity. Through perception, certain phenomena are clearly registered by the subject and others remain obscured, blocked.
Attitude	It is a cultural standpoint, a position one takes toward the world. Attitude is more stable than perception and consists of a long series of perceptions, i.e. experiences. Perception precedes attitude; you act on what you perceive.
Value	Based on the cultural and social peculiarities of the individual, it concerns what is considered to be of greatest interest to those who appreciate/live/interpret the landscape.
Worldview	This is a conceptualized experience. The worldview is partially personal and largely social. It is a well-organized system of attitudes and beliefs – even if their correlations seem arbitrary – and is organized from an impersonal, objective perspective.

Source: Based on Tuan (1980, p. 4).

It is important to consider the four elements described above because the images of topophilia and topophobia are directly derived from the surrounding reality, and therefore from the landscape. People tend to focus on environmental aspects that interest them the most, and this interest is influenced by specific cultural values. Therefore, the experience and interpretation of the landscape varies among different social groups and individuals. Thus, the images of topophilia/topophobia extracted from the landscape may change as subjects and social groups acquire new interests and cultural repertoires.

Landscapes contain an intense symbolic charge that refers to the values of the cultures-dominant or subdominant- that live in, appropriate, and manipulate that space. They represent tangible results of the societal relationships formed, exposing power struggles and competing ideologies. Complementarily, these lived landscapes, with their socio-cultural nuances, awaken the subject's subjective bonds with their surroundings, evoking feelings of affection (topophilia) or rejection (topophobia). Landscapes are (re)produced and gain meaning in the interaction between humans and their environment.

In the next section, we present a theoretical framework that integrates this dynamic of production, experience and interpretation of the landscape and connects this debate to the study of entrepreneurship. As previously mentioned, entrepreneurship is inextricably linked to space, and therefore we believe that understanding this subjective and symbolic relationship between the entrepreneur and the environment in which he lives and/or carries out his activity can point to promising ways of identifying geographical traits that influence them in a positive or negative way.

4 LANDSCAPE, TOPOPHILIA/TOPOPHOBIA AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A CONCEPTUAL PROPOSAL

Feld and Hathaway (2020) argue in their book, which focuses on the empirical side of maturing entrepreneurial ecosystems, that "quality of place" and, more specifically, "cultivating topophilia" are important to the success of these ecosystems. The first theme suggests that the founders or first employees of startups are "highly skilled individuals who have options, and

therefore, can choose where they want to live more freely than most others". (Feld; Hathaway, 2020, p. 35), thus, "a location that hits critical mass enjoys a competitive geographic advantage over places that have yet to attract a significant number of creative-class individuals"³ (Feld; Hathaway, 2020, p. 36). This perspective, which has roots in the discussions on the formation of the creative class and cities, as well as the cultural and organizational aspects of technology-based firms proposed by Saxenian (1994), was adapted to the entrepreneurial ecosystem model in the earlier writings of Isenberg (2011) and was part of the human capital and culture domains of the entrepreneurial ecosystem proposed by the latter.

In the second theme highlighted, the authors point out that "startup community participants must have topophilia" and that this topophilia would manifest itself as a "deeply held desire to improve their community" (Feld; Hathaway, 2020, p. 174). Moreover, Feld and Hathaway (2020) suggest that topophilia could be employed as a mechanism to increase the involvement of members of the "startup community" who are marginalized, thereby fortifying the community. Citing a speech made by former Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper (2011-2019), Feld and Hathaway (2020, p. 175) share his belief that "love of place is a key ingredient of most economic development". Currently, this perspective is believed to not occur organically in a linear progression. For example, the extension of geographical space to digital space- digital entrepreneurial ecosystems (Sussan; Acs, 2017), or the precarious digitization that particularly affects the "marginalized members of the startup community" (Neumeyer; Santos; Morris, 2019). It is noteworthy that, in one way or another, the concept of topophilia has gained ground in the discourse, especially in the so-called "practical community" of entrepreneurship.

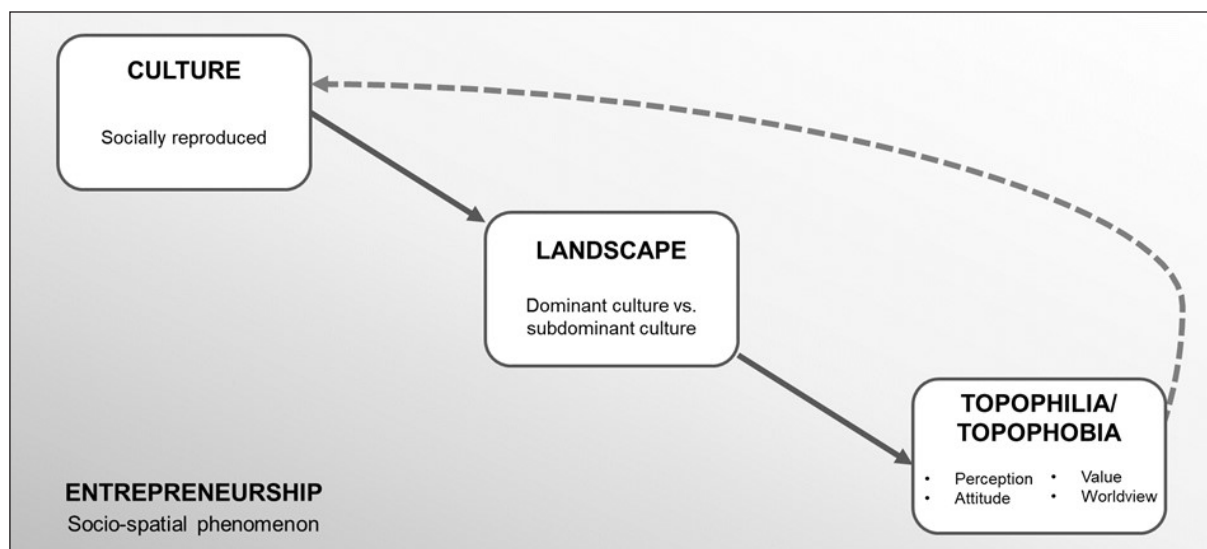
Therefore, it is our task to consider the real role of topophilia (and, why not, its counterpart, topophobia) in the diffusion of entrepreneurship and the strengthening of "startup communities" or even entrepreneurial ecosystems, as evoked by Feld and Hathaway (2020). We propose a theoretical-methodological framework to analyze the contribution of topophilia to entrepreneurship outcomes and the importance of fostering an "affective bond with place" for the diffusion of this phenomenon. Within this framework, we consider the subjective relationship between the "entrepreneurial community" and the symbolic landscapes they visit while carrying out this activity. In other words, we combine the theoretical elaboration proposed by Tuan (1980) on the basic elements of topophilia/topophobia and the socio-cultural intentionality of landscapes, as proposed by Cosgrove (1989) and Duncan (2004), highlighting the subjectivity of the experience of these landscapes. Figure 1 presents a theoretical model that attempts to consolidate these elements into a coherent structure.

The theoretical model proposes a description of how the perception of landscape and the development of feelings of place, such as topophilia and topophobia, can arise in the context of entrepreneurship. From the generation and transmission of culture, which is socially reproduced and imprinted on the landscape with its symbolic charge, to the development of topophilic and topophobic feelings, we are talking about a dynamic that operates at the highest (macro) levels of the social scheme. However, our focus is on how this takes place - among so many other possible social phenomena- in entrepreneurship, which does not take place in a vacuum, but is

³ According to Feld and Hathaway (2020), the creative class comprises entrepreneurs, engineers, educators, and artists who produce "meaningful new forms" (p. 36). The authors argue that creative class members desire to live in delightful places, enjoy a culture that is tolerant of new ideas and "weirdness" (p. 36), and, most importantly, want to be around other creative class members.

embedded in space and time, and cannot operate without a social context- entrepreneurship as a socio-spatial phenomenon.

Figure 1 – Proposed theoretical model: Landscape, tophophilia/topophobia and entrepreneurship



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The aim of this theoretical model is to reveal the cultural patterns that prevail in a given place, over a given period of time, and that are expressed in the landscape and that influence the perceptions of the entrepreneurial community- entrepreneurs, managers, investors, etc.- about the "places or landscapes of entrepreneurship". How does a dominant or sub-dominant culture influence the reproduction of spatial patterns and how does this influence the behavior and productive potential of the entrepreneurial community? How does the entrepreneurial community's subjective connection to the socially and culturally generated space in which it resides and/or operates affect the development of entrepreneurial activities and, more generally, shape the phenomenon of entrepreneurship?

The socially reproduced landscape holds significant symbolic value and presents the subject experiencing it with the cultural repertoire of a given society: be it the (almost) unanimous domination of one culture over others, or a landscape in which symbolic aspects of sub-dominant social groups are more strongly represented (Cosgrove, 1989). The interpretation of landscapes, as Tuan (1980) notes, involves perception, attitude, value and worldviews. The latter two are particularly important since they are elements where the subject's cultural context also matters and thus helps to direct the way in which he or she affectively relates to the place, with greater appreciation, contempt or both.

For potential methodological approaches, Cosgrove (1989) and Duncan (2004) propose some avenues in landscape research. Cosgrove (1989) suggests that to decipher the multiple layers of meaning conveyed in symbolic landscapes, the researcher can engage in the critical interpretation of material evidence (cartographic, photographic, oral, documentary) and cultural productions (paintings, poems, novels, legends/myths, films) about the landscape under study. In this case, it is important to seek out evidence of the meanings that landscapes hold for those who have built, modified, visited, or lived in them daily. For a more effective critical analysis

of landscape, Cosgrove (1989) also emphasizes the need for the researcher to have a certain historical and contextual sensitivity to what they are analyzing; this involves understanding that they themselves inevitably have a social, cultural, and ideological framework that can, to some extent, guide the analyses that are made and the theories that are developed.

Duncan (2004) on the other hand, considers that empirical research methods have focused heavily on the analysis of documents or artifacts and, in this sense, the symbolic aspects of the landscape have generally been approached from the point of view of the researcher rather than those who live in the space. The author proposes that interviews with residents of landscapes have infrequently been utilized, but present a valuable methodological option with significant potential.

Regarding data collection and analysis, Duncan (2004) suggests a two-stage method: "Signification of the landscape- what is signified by the landscape" and "Rhetoric of the landscape- the way in which signification occurs". Regarding the initial stage, "Signification of the landscape", the author describes three lines of investigation: (i) interviewing those who recurrently frequent and/or construct this landscape ("locals"); (ii) those who do not recurrently frequent this landscape ("non-locals"); and (iii) the meaning conferred by the researcher himself.

With regard to the "Rhetoric of Landscape", Duncan (2004) points out two possible ways of proceeding: (i) to evaluate, through the discourse of the interviewee, the effectiveness of the landscape as a device for the symbolic transmission of social processes and cultural values; and (ii) the tropes⁴ of hegemonic discourses found in a landscape that encode and communicate information by which visitors may or may not be fully convinced of its correctness, naturalness, or legitimacy; these signs in the landscape usually expose the nature of social relations in a given community, often highlighting symbols of power of a dominant class. The analysis of the landscape employing the textual and intertextual concepts reveals the social relations within and between groups, easing the identification of power dynamics within a community reflected in the landscape (Duncan, 2004). It is worth noting that regarding entrepreneurial ecosystems, studies have already been carried out that show the segregation of entrepreneurs into different networks, mostly with a more or less technological focus (Neumeyer; Santos; Morris, 2019), as well as the analysis of narratives around the entrepreneurial process in different regions (Hubner et al., 2022), revealing the specific facets of each ecosystem.

Regarding the identification of topophilic and topophobic feelings, Tuan (1980) does not present any kind of methodological guide, but some approaches have been proposed subsequently, such as those of Ogunseitan (2005) and Oliveira, Roca and Leitão (2010). Ogunseitan's (2005) research was conducted in the field of Environmental Health and was more instrumental in its methodology, seeking to quantify which aspects of topophilia were most relevant in measuring individuals' quality of life. The aforementioned study aimed to understand the landscape preferences of students who spent long periods of time and/or lived in dormitories on the campus of the University of California (USA). The study findings demonstrate four topophilia domains: ecodiversity (landscape diversity), synesthetic tendency (a blend of sensory stimuli and memory of the place), cognitive challenge (complexity and coherence of the environment), and familiarity (identifiability with the environment and privacy provided). Data analysis was carried

⁴ In the case of the study of landscape in the context proposed in this article, these tropes would be artifices used to conceal the ideological motivations behind many deliberate decisions to construct/alter the landscape. Duncan (2004) includes allegory, synecdoche, and recurring narrative structure among the "landscape" tropes.

out using quantitative data from previous research in the field of restorative environments, based on findings from an 18-item structured questionnaire completed by 379 individuals. Although certain items on the questionnaire may pertain more to environmental health research, it is acknowledged that a significant portion can inform investigations on topophilia and topophobia in the social sciences and humanities.

Oliveira, Roca e Leitão (2010) aimed to understand how topophilia can be a proactively managed resource, even included in public policies, with the aim of promoting regional development. The authors conducted a study using a focus group, in four different phases, in order to analyze which aspects of the territory aroused a sense of identity with the place in the participants, and which others could be proposed to strengthen topophilic feelings. When methodologically addressing the concept of topophilia, the authors aimed to emphasize characteristics of the material and immaterial culture found in the studied territories that would elicit an emotional bond between the participants and the territories.

The survey revealed that cultural heritage preservation in the landscape, conservation of natural landscapes, the values of local communities, and proximity to bucolic landscapes (or "rurality") were the top factors that evoked topophilic feelings in the participants. On the contrary, negative sentiments- or in other words, topophobic feelings- were evoked by the following factors: precarious road structures and public services (health and education), unemployment, the decline of traditional productive activities, the decline of civic activities in associations (associativism), unfavorable socio-economic and cultural conditions for a large part of the population, and the difficulty of establishing contact with local institutions. Still in relation to topophilia/topophobia, conducting interviews or focus groups to assess how individuals' experiences of landscape align with Tuan's (1980) key elements of perception, attitude, value, and worldview may offer valuable insights. Another methodological approach that could enhance the comprehension of the subjective connection between the subject and the landscape is entrepreneurs' creation of mental maps.

Understanding entrepreneurship as a socio-spatial phenomenon is fundamentally important. Examining the way entrepreneurs and members of the entrepreneurial community relate to their surroundings is not a new concern, nor is it exclusive to this theoretical essay. However, our proposed model aims to emphasize the subjective intricacies of the spatial relationship by establishing connections between the cultural aspects of a location, its representation in the landscape, and daily entrepreneurial practices. The aim is to develop a broader understanding of how topophilic and topophobic feelings emerge and can influence entrepreneurship, considering the entrepreneur first and foremost as a social subject who also actively participates in the (re) production of culture and in the construction and transformation of the symbolic landscapes he or she experiences daily.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The objective of this theoretical essay is to bring forth advancements in entrepreneurship research to the discussion, especially in the epistemological field of cultural geography, about landscape and the feelings developed by the subject towards place. This effort was motivated by two primary reasons: (i) the recent and relatively unprecedented use, in a book aimed at practitioners (Feld; Hathaway, 2020), of the concept of topophilia ("affective bond with place"),

which has been extensively discussed in phenomenological geography but little explored in the field of management; e (ii) due to the rarity of exploring the geographical category of landscape and the concepts of topophilia and topophobia in the study of the socio-spatial character of entrepreneurship.

Several researchers, such as Müller and Korsgaard (2017), Williams (2007), and Williams and Williams (2012), have highlighted the importance of the geographical context for the creation of a local entrepreneurial culture. Consequently, our proposal entails revisiting relevant cultural concepts (Cuche, 1999; Geertz, 1989) and emphasizing their importance in the production of space, especially landscape (Claval, 2011; Cosgrove, 1989; Duncan, 2004). In turn, the lived landscape (Dardel, 2011) arouses feelings of affection or contempt in the individual- topophilia or topophobia (Tuan, 1980)- resulting from the interpretation of these places. According to Tuan (1980), subjective evaluations, such as perception of the environment and attitude towards landscapes, combine with objective traits of individuals, including values and worldviews, in interpreting landscapes. These landscapes, in turn, carry various symbolic cultural meanings (Cosgrove, 1989; Duncan, 2004), contributing to a unique experience of the lived landscape. Individuals' perceptions of the environment will ultimately contribute to the formation and transmission of culture. This theoretical essay has also provided some preliminary indications of possible methodological paths for analyzing the effects of landscape (Cosgrove, 1989; Duncan, 2004) on the topophilic and topophobic feelings of entrepreneurs (Ogunseitan, 2005; Oliveira; Roca; Leitão, 2010).

Possible research areas highlighted by this model include social and sustainable entrepreneurship, which entails a closer relationship between entrepreneurs and their surroundings due to their motivations; perceptions of entrepreneurs and managers working in innovation hubs, science/technology/industrial parks; and incubators situated on university campuses, among other plausible cases.

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