

HUMAN LABOUR AND ITS CENTRALITY

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Introduction

Following reflections are part of a broader paper to be published shortly and still being written. It is a discussion about the impact working process causes on workers health, particularly in the development of conditions, working environment and psychosocial risks.

The ILO and WHO have highlighted close relationship between workers labour and health. However we can mention an evolution in workers' health concept, since from the end of XIX century, attention was almost exclusively focused on deaths, accidents and professional diseases which decimated mass of workers. ILO agreements and International Recommendations contributed to list diseases to be accepted by Social Security system to compensate the victims and rehabilitate them, allowing coming back to their jobs. However, working processes progressively changed because of economic crises and productive systems restructuration processes, generating a proportional increase of working psychosocial risks. Those risks are in the origin of psychic and mental result of stress, harassment, burnout, verbal and physical violence, sexual abuse, longer term unemployment and precarious work. Epidemiologic studies showed these diseases are rapidly somatized, driving to cardiovascular incidents, heart attacks and musculoskeletal disorders. But we think that there is a veil preventing us from seeing reality.

We believe that from research done at CEIL-PIETTE in Argentina and in many universities, work has not lost its centrality because of changes in ways of production; it is a concrete reality with several dimensions, while working process is determining factor of relationships between labour and health.

1.- Labour remains a value

Labour, like love and social relationships are the essential dimensions which characterize the human being.

When working, we start exercising our body, besides psychical, affective, relational and mental dimensions to be rewarded and find resources allowing survive and reproduce labour force. To do a work, workers and even slaves have to decide mobilizing their labour force. Dead people do not work. The-

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rework is the result of a human voluntary activity carried under stress. It may be done in a workplace, at home, in a public space or in a company or organization, being submitted to certain conditions and a working environment. Workers will apply labour force to the objects of work (raw materials, inputs and/or information) be it manually or through use of means of production (machinery, tools, software). These means will increase productive labour force, allowing producing more goods, services, information or knowledge previously conceived or mentally processed to satisfy personal or social needs. Or, using Marx words "it is a voluntary activity addressed to an aim" (Marx, 1979 a,b,c).

Work is done facing conflicts, due to contradictions between different rationalities arising among producers, merchants and users, because workers want to be rewarded by their efforts and seeing recognized their capacity of thinking and acting on working situations, and also debate different logics to define possible and acceptable spaces (Vézina, 2003). To reach this target, workers must mobilize - voluntarily or by imposition - their labour force (physical, mental and psychical capacities), spend energies to process information or transform objects of work, overcome difficulties or resistances opposite to raw materials and intermediary inputs to be transformed, assume workload, pay attention to use efficiently machinery and tools and bear working environment risks. Or in other words, be able - when working, to adapt to required work, to develop or solve unexpected situations and overcome incidents. And all this may lead to fatigue and suffering.

Working cannot be done automatically, strictly following execution orders from company or organization responsible persons; it always demands intelligent and psychical workers commitment. To achieve this, workers will have to use their skills and resources, creativity or shrewdness to face mistakes, insufficiencies or fails when bosses *prescribe tasks* or in incidents arising during productive process, hampering achieving targets set. Working will involve supporting high psychical and mental demands bringing fatigue; if during time of resting it is not possible to recover and workload exceeds resistance and adaptation capacities, then work may bring pain and suffering, predisposing to diseases.

Companies or organization work environment risks may be harmful to labour force, due to many reasons: inadequate use of means of work, defects in raw materials and inputs and inadequate skills to handle them due to poor vocational training, defects, maintenance failures, malfunction of machinery and equipments or other means of work and deficiencies in work organization due to wrong implementation of ergonomic norms and lack of prevention. These conditions may drive to excessive fatigue, producing accidents of work, professional diseases or even worker's death.

It is true that human beings work full time, but we cannot forget that, in first place, to a greater or lesser extent, their bodies are always mainly involved

in this, particularly in handwork. Through their bodies, workers establish an specific engagement with the machines, tools, raw materials and inputs they use, linking to them and sometimes considering their property; "it is my tool", "it is my machine" say workers and feel with their senses if it works properly or not; they touch them to feel their vibrations, they listen to their sounds, they look how they work, they smell them and even talk to them. Like farmers do with animals they use in their agricultural work. Same thing happens in service activities, relationship with other peoples' bodies, for example nurses that anticipate patients' demands and needs by seeing skin color or temperature alterations, rhythm of breathing and smells. Also seeing body posture or stereotyped gestures or say key words to inject or giving children an unpleasant taste medicine (Dejours, C., e Gernet, I. 2012).

A worker is somebody willing to develop and progress in his activities. Therefore he accepts challenges and uses his practical intelligence and capacity of innovating if context allows enough autonomy to do so. By reaching these conditions, he will discover his capacities and potentialities, mobilizing knowledge and experiences, and will have tools to build a sense for his life and an identity.

Labour is never just a technical execution. There is a distance between working and performing an activity – the space to do necessary adjustments required by resistance to reality and a mistaken concept. This encourages creating, due to difficulties in standardizing procedures.

Since workers are part of a collective group with own rules and codes, third parties' judgments regarding their work have capital importance for them (Vézina, 2003).

The difference between working and performing an activity occurs by resistance to reality (problems with machines, raw materials, energy sources, interruptions) problems of relationship with colleagues and bosses, or with own human instability (biological rhythms, cognitive processes, fatigue, ageing).

The subjective dimension plays a main role in working activity, depending on subject's mobilization and a subjective reversal from him. The resistance to reality may cause failure of his knowledge, harming subjectivity and even destabilizing the subject. On the other side, compensating difference between work and performing an activity may bring pleasure or suffering, based in the degree of autonomy and control that the authority and the work organization grant to the subject to develop creativity and perform the intended activity.

From a historical, political and economic point of view, work is always done following certain development pattern - in constant evolution. As we will see further on, national productive systems have been restructured to face outcome of economic and financial crisis of last decades, thus producing deep changes. Introduction of scientific and technological innovations in processes and products plus modifications in companies and production organization (sub-hiring, outsourcing and industrial relocation) transformed working processes, making it more and more heterogeneous. As skill and competence re-

quirements grow, application of work scientific organizational principles and standardized norms, worker's degree of autonomy and control of own tasks is reduced. Sophisticated and surveillance and control computerized systems are progressively installed, together with requirement to be highly engaged and committed to company's goals. This increases global workload, particularly in psychical and mental dimension, thus having direct impact on biological, psychical, mental and social health.

Taking into account what was said before; work is a permanent value, in spite of last decade's prophecies stating "end of work". Among others, following specialists with different orientations: scientists like J. Rifkin (1996), sociologists like K. Offe (1985), Marxist intellectuals like A. Gorz, (1982), political scientists like D. Medda (1995), philosophers like J. Habermas (1975). However, in Spain J. J. Castillo (1995), in France M. Husson (2003), M. Gollac (2012), Chr. Dejours (2013) and B. Coriat (1995), and in Latin America E. da Garza and J. C. Neffa (2001 y 2003), E. Da Garza (1999), R. Antúnez (1998 y 1999) among other researchers analyzed and criticized scientifically and empirically ideas of first group of mentioned authors.

Obviously end of work did not happen, and as time goes by more people join labour market in different ways. Economic and social crisis began in middle of the 70s modified former salary relationship due to a change in work processes. Taylorism and Fordism prevailed in big industrial corporations in capitalist countries, defined by regulationist economists as the "*set of legal and institutional conditions regulating use of labour and way of existence of workers granting their social reproduction*" (Boyer, 1988)

2.- Labour is a complex and dynamic reality, with objective and subjective dimensions

Labour has multiple objective and subjective dimensions, depending on its external objective results, be them works or services, or the subject making them, because he also transforms when working. (Neffa, 2003).

1.1.- Objective dimensions

1- Labour is oriented to produce something externally of the person executing the job and has a social dimensional, since its outcome has a utilitarian purpose: to satisfy social needs.

2- Labour is a socially necessary activity, because of his characteristic of acting as mediator between human beings and nature by transforming and dominating it, the worker becomes a creator or converter of goods and services necessary for surviving and reproducing humanity. Work's objective is its final product. Therefore we need the work, because it develops rights for those performing it, and is the foundation of having right to work.

3-Labour is a "transcendent" activity, since its outcome (civil works, new know-

ledge and information) has an own objective existence apart from its producer – though carrying its human mark, since each worker has an own style – Effects of this action will last beyond creator's life, allowing overcoming geographical limits imposed by the mobility of people, transcending local environment and cutting across geographical boundaries. Thus, we can say that result of labour allows exceeding time and space limits impose to human bodies.

1.2. Subjective and inter-subjective dimensions

1.- Labour always is a human activity. Even if the worker is a slave, it is a *voluntary activity* oriented to fulfill an utilitarian purpose: producing consumer goods whose conception is result of a worker's mind, demands an own effort and working on input or information to transform it (Étienne Borne and François Henry, 1944). It is a living being's combination of needs and freedom.

Labour is always accompanied by suffering and/or pleasure, due to its content and working process organization on working and environment conditions, relationships with clients or users, and types of work. The attempt to overcome matter resistances or guiding its structure or dynamism into other directions, and gaining skills to use tools and machinery, is something painful and tiring. Being labour at the same time a creative activity projecting workers' personality on the product or service rendered, if he gets aware of this and finds a sense to that activity, this will allow him to feel pleasure and satisfaction although it could not be an objective in itself.

2.- During working activities, depending on conditions and labour environment, a direct and permanent relationship will be established between worker's life and health. Life expectancy and health status depend on countless factors, but ultimately on conditions and intensity of use of labour force. Work helps or contributes to personal achievements and development of personality of those executing and defining a social identity characterized through the profession or trade. Work allows updating all, or at least some of human physical, biological, psychical and mental capacities, conditioned by senses of belonging or insertion in a group, category or profession. Work also build people's identities, setting differences among them, though leaving them depending of others' ways of looking, criticizing, supporting and assessing. Worker's questioning of belonging to a group and about his identity are sources of suffering.

3.- Labour is a test for people, showing them which are their limits and allowing to exhibit their potentialities, what they can do and meaning or significance of their activity. Therefore, working is a permanent and renewed challenge.

4.- Working always implies in assuming risks, because to reach targets workers develop activities setting differences with required job, established by labour force managers. Usually, the required job is partial, imperfect, poorly designed, or does not fit to available resources, to average time to perform it,

nor workers qualifications and skills, because they are over or underestimated. Therefore these instructions frequently must be violated or not respected to do the job and fulfill targets fixed. Or in some cases left aside or done by “cheating”. However these disobediences imply risks, because if noticed they might be punished.

5.- Labour also implies mobilizing workers psychical and mental resources, since producing goods or services demands individual and collective motivation or commitment. Workers must apprehend, interpret and process information, talk to other people, express ideas through words and also silences, gestures and signs, foster coordination and cooperation in the working group, assess the result of their efforts. To be effectively done, it demands not only a physical commitment, but also psychical and mental.

6.- Labour establishes social relationships, it is a way of social insertion. It demands and also allows organizing inter-personal relationships and build a working group, a new entity formed by ties and inter-relations developing solidarity. It happens in first place among everybody working in companies or organizations: essentially among workers and execution employees, but also with other higher levels of socio-professional categories within a same company, and establish directly or indirectly a “relation of service” with clients and users. Inter-personal relationships of friendship, support, communication and cooperation and at the same conflicting and competitive are established within the group of work. Working organization plays a main role in this issue. The working group does not suddenly appear, it is constructed as a process through permanent cooperation of many workers in a common task, respecting usual rules of the trade, which in spite of not being always codified and written are shared by everybody.

7. To conclude, labour has a therapeutic function when provoking breaking off or distinction among subjects’ personal, domestic and permanent concerns regarding working activities assumed at the workplace. In the beginning of psychiatry, the concern to readapt and draft former prisoners of war and shut facilities where mental ill were locked up made labour therapy played a much significant role (Dejours Chr. e Gernet, I.,2012).

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However and to limit main object of this research, we have to make a general remark. Studies and specialized magazines focused on studying labour, do it almost exclusively on paid employment in companies or organizations, where labour process is oriented to get added value and capital accumulation, as in general in capitalist companies. But in developing countries and emerging economies, paid employment registered in social security bodies’ accounts for less than half of economically active population. This is a fact which must be

considered when studying working conditions and its environment (WC&E) and psychical and social risks in work (PSRW) because they have a different logics. Instead of trying to maximize rates of return, objective of these workers (micro-entrepreneurs, informal or part time workers, etc.) is maximize their income without having registered workers or being subject to an employer of a business man.

For these above mentioned workers plus domestic workers and family workers not remunerated working with the head of household, risks arising from WC&E and more specifically from PSRW are also present, however responding to other logics.

In these cases, work is individual or done in small groups, with intensive labour technologies and tools or simple machinery. They do not have a trade union organization representing and protecting them, nevertheless workers try to group to fight working rights driving them to more inclusive schemes. There is a strong orientation for craft production or rendering customized services or intangible materials. This kind of work and its marketing is not done in a store, but on streets or public spaces, most of the times without any official permission. It also does not include any social security benefits, or when available, just minimum possible allowed. Usually, user and producer of goods or services directly deal with the buyer. For example, a peddler preparing meals or fruit juices in food kiosks, in front of the client (which sometimes will give an opinion regarding the cooking); or taxi cabs or hired private cars whose drivers sometimes ask for most suitable routes, etc. (Da Garza, 2012).

These workers identity relaciones que establecen con los clientes, usuarios y familiares expression is directly linked to their activities, professions, cultural identities and family traditions, or from neighborhood where they grew up, more than the group of work and manner adopted by these processes of work. The relationships they establish with clients, users and relatives shaping specific WC&E's and PSRW's to which they are exposed (Da Garza, 2012).

3- The labour process

Whatever the production ónmodel established, it will always be necessary a labour process to produce goods and material and immaterial services to reproduce mankind. In the academic world, most traditional analysis of the labour process remained concentrated in industrial handwork, but later also adapted to other productive sectors, tertiary activities and services.

Our fundamental thesis is based in following premise: WC&E and PSRW and its impact on worker's health must be sought in organization and content of labour process.

Labour historical evolution in industrialized capitalist countries (ICC) consisting in a shift from craft work to manufacturing and industrial production during XVII and XIX centuries, was a significant change (Neffa, 1990 e 1998). First there was the working technical division introduction (dividing work

in partial tasks ordered to several workers) already analyzed by Adam Smith ((1776), 2002) and after social division of labour established by Frederick W. Taylor ((1902), 1990) by task conception, developed by company's technicians or directors, and performed by different workers.

Adam Smith wrote: "The greatest improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgment with which it is anywhere directed, or applied, seem to have been the effects of the division of labour."

Smith famously used the example of a *pin* factory to demonstrate that it is far more efficient for an individual worker to concentrate on one particular task than trying to perform on a number of activities. Specialization facilitates incorporation of technical progress. But this is not always possible, because some tasks can't be done isolatedly. Like certain textile activities in which a single worker does many tasks, supervises and feeds several machines at the same time; or other cases in mining and building industries where a team of workers jointly operate complex machinery. To conclude, specialized equipment performing more rapidly and precisely tasks, partially substituting human work (Clerc, J, 1986).

Lack of division of labour demands more skilled workers, somehow very versatile and with several years of experience and better paid. Workers specialized in a task, focuses a coherent set of practical knowledge acquired by watching more experienced mates or with the passage of time. This allows increasing productivity and cutting labour force costs, as Charles Babbage proved in England at the beginning of XIX century.

Main working process features suggested by F. W. Taylor were:

- social division of labour, workers don't conceive executing jobs other people decided as a way of preventing working when being idle.
- focusing technical division of work in tasks oriented to simplify it and specialize workers. This will increase productivity, reduce salary costs and facilitate replacement of absent workers, but at the same time will bring higher fatigue to workers,
- studying teams and movements performed to do each task, in order to allow prescribing minimum standard times to execute it.

Taylor's central idea was to establish previously and in a very precise way tasks to perform and how to do it. This required studying teams and movements needed to do so and required times. It is very important determining tasks and executing procedures, since they represent the professional qualification codified in agreements or working statutes, and is used to fix an important part of salaries.

Taylor's scientific organization of labour (SOL) consolidated social and technical division of labour and allowed using time assessment and measurement to reduce movements considered *unnecessary* and *unproductive*. Opera-

tions were timed until finding fastest one, which became the standard norm, *the one best way*. Objects and means of labour were standardized to save time and workers were chosen based on their anthropometric characteristics and needs and requirements of jobs to be done. Pay for performance began to be applied, in order to eliminate resistance to labour intensification. This made workers to accept, since that pay created hope of increasing salaries and led to work faster. Workers agreed with this new production norm - considered to be the sole option, without relating it with company's policies directed to intensifying pace of work to save time. This would allow reduce time to produce a piece, therefore increasing production.

Processes based in SOL increased productivity, thus leading to a salary increase, based in production. Taylor stated that every sector wanted to thrive, and when reaching it through mutual work cooperation and capital, an economy of resources would arise, due to downtime reduction and elimination of gestures and useless displacements.

Taylor adds to Adam Smith's technical division of labour his social division of labour, also named vertical division between conception and execution, and attributes "scientifically" standardized tasks to each one of these divisions, making sure the adequate being in his corresponding workplace: "The right man in the right place". However, fatigue caused by labour intensification should not exceed physical, psychical and mental limits. Therefore when Taylor began detecting PSRW impact on workers' productivity and quality when mounting ball bearings in bicycle bearings, a task not demanding high physical effort but making them becoming nervous and affecting bearings' quality, he decided to grant a 10-minute pause after each worked hour.

The economic success of this way of organizing labour not demanding high investment in goods of capital, leveraged United States fast economic growth and made the country arise as a global hegemonic power.

The arrival of mechanization of operations, based in the assembly line (adopted by Henry Ford) carried division of labour to an extreme, simplifying and reducing working times in each production unit (to some minutes or even seconds) and increasing productivity. With the arrival of mass production, work in continuous process and simplification of tasks contributed to reduce importance of traditional trades, therefore homogenizing labour force implementation. In this way, when establishing mechanized working process at Ford plants, specializing workers' tasks brought a high production increase thanks to "American System of Manufactures" a set of manufacturing methods intensifying social and technical division of work, using only "absolutely identical and interchangeable pieces" allowing individual work substitution to elaborate final products by using the assembly line.

Production norms and working pace no longer were decided by workers, as in craft work. They began to be defined by the speed of conveyor belts and operational modalities for each workplace, not demanding high skills and learned with supervisors' technical support. In a full employment context and

to avoid experienced labour turnover, companies fought to get employees loyalty by granting job stability, periodical salary increases and social protection, in a patronizing style. This new production norm was developed to reduce unit manufacturing costs based in scale economies allowing massive consumption and promoting new workers' consumer standards, developing access to durable consumer goods, including cars. Electric appliances arrived in first place, integrating them to the "consumption society". This led companies to set changes in workers' life style, to adapt them to new working organization. The target was to prevent facts happening out of the job, particularly at home, to avoid absenteeism that could affect assembly lines dynamics.

The massive production promoted by Ford was possible due to mechanization process and development of machinery to produce standard parts and finished products. This drove to an increase of productivity and lower unit costs and consequently of prices, allowing to gain market share due to economies of scale and a patronizing salary policy base in company's social services, job stability and high salaries adjusted in line with inflation, fostering consumption on durable goods demand. That led to decades of a "virtuous circle" which stopped at the beginning of the 70s.

In both processes working condition was the existence of a hierarchy supervising and coordinating labour, to whom workers rendered account. Then Henry Fayol ideas stated a diagram of complex supervision systems applied to administrative tasks and service activities (such as safety guards) strengthening control unit and authority, but increased costs when hiring people not aimed to produce goods but to do indirect works of supervision, surveillance and control, hindering communication and cooperation among workers, and developing a bureaucratic behavior.

These two working processes and organization of production to them related arising in the industrial sector, progressively expanded in United States to building sectors, commerce, agricultural activities, transports and services. More recently it was also adopted by fast food restaurants and other activities, flowing same logics: reducing workers' working times to cut unitary production costs and final product prices. And therefore foster massive consumption as a strategy to avoid fall in revenues.

These measures consolidating paid employment led to workers exploitation and health deterioration. Besides, they created conditions allowing in most of capitalist industrialized countries arising of vulnerable social groups having difficulties to access jobs and keep them. Among them, especially young workers without any professional experience, women heads of household, migrant workers with little skills. We also include in this group ageing workers, already wear out and with health problems making them to be frequently absent. This made them progressively being displaced to other workplaces to do passive tasks, or accepting retire voluntarily from working life or asking for early retirement.

Parcialized tasks, intensification of labour submitted to discipline and

controls, plus increase of productivity generated by these two mentioned working processes were acquired with high cost in terms of workers' fatigue, suffering and health deterioration. Up to WWI, extended daily working hours without interruption and no paid leave caused wear out, and prevented people from recovering. This drove to an increase in accidents of work and occupational diseases. Higher requirements and intensity of labour began to impact workers also psychically and mentally, but since they were not officially classified as "occupational diseases" they did not have the right to indemnities. This brought limitations or loss of autonomy, difficulties preventing workers of controlling their own work, and scarce material rewards. They were mainly moral and symbolic and did not compensate such wear out.

To solve contradiction existing among jobs required by production supervisors to reach programmed targets and concrete activities workers must develop, there is a need of compensating insufficiencies, deficiencies and mistakes of the person which designed working procedures and cope with interruptions and involuntary incidents. Therefore, workers take initiatives, make complementary efforts and activate their psychical and mental dimensions to face and solve arising problems. This "redesigning" activity generates tensions when workers cannot solve problems caused by several factors like: deficiencies in the organization, ambiguous working instructions, poor education, school grades and skills, input insufficiency or quality problems, poor information, malfunctioning of means of work, power cuts or supply gaps. Tensions arising from these problems are generally named "stress" since Hans Selye research at beginning of the 1930s. As we will see further on, based in organization and work content, WC&E and PSRW impact on functioning of companies or organizations, generating demands, requirements and tensions on persons being part of them, and can have positive effects, or more frequently negative ones.

A special case refers to continuous process companies, where some tasks are highly risky. They have really strict norms and workers must obey it; it is quite common these workers spend lots of time in control rooms in "state of alert" waiting for any signal of bad functioning or danger. However, in the meantime they may be reading a magazine, playing cards with their mates and not feeling afraid, because they have developed what Dejours calls "defensive ideology of the profession", avoiding to think or talk about the risk their lives run. Usually a job to be performed would impose a state of constant surveillance, but in these conditions it would be impossible to fulfill. On the contrary, after leaving the job, they frequently phone to their mates to remind about any functioning problem or possible risks remembered while he slept.

4.- The salary relationship and its evolution

The productive process demands an articulation between capital and work. Salary relationship is a model adopted in certain incompatible situations

regarding capital & labour, represented by institutions and norms regulating use of labour force – the employment, conditions reproducing labour force (direct and indirect wages and public services) plus workers consumption norms and life norms. According to Regulation Theory (Boyer, 1988), the “salary relationship” figure supposes that offer and demand of labour force differs from what would be a simple exchange of goods. Because if that would be the case, offer and demand confrontation would establish real salary, and unemployment only could be voluntary, for the reason that if workers would have a real salary considered enough for them, they would choose being idle, supposing they had other resources. Nevertheless, work is not a good as others are; since the origins of economic policy it differs from simple goods because labour is the result of using workforce.

Karl Marx (2005 [1867]) based his Theory of value in the distinction between labour and workforce: the first one is the mobilization of workforce under the impulse of companies and organizations managers, and the second is its result, object of exchange based in its value of reproduction. The origin of added-value, source of profits, is in the distance or gap between use values of goods created by work, and payment of a salary estimated to correspond to the value of exchange of workforce. Karl Polanyi (1983, 1946) considered work as a fictitious good, like currency and nature, because its production cannot be entrusted just to market mechanisms. In the case of labour, origin of its force does not come from the market, but from family and home life.

It is often proclaimed the existence of an economic determinism that could impose to each actor of the labour process, without any possibility to oppose resistances or modifying the situation. But professor Jorge Román reminds that, as F. Engels wrote to J. Bloch in September 21, 1890 ... “by the materialist conception of history, the factor which ultimately determines history is production and reproduction of real life. Neither Marx nor I we have said more than this. If somebody twists these words saying this is sole determinant, he will transform that thesis into an empty, abstract and absurd sentence. The economic situation is the base, but diverse factors of the superstructure built upon it (...) also influence on the course of historical fights and determine, in many cases predominantly, its shape”.

The employment contract was historically established to resolve a strategic conflict. (Neffa Julio César, Emiliano López e Demian T. Panigo - 2011) Unlike in the past, in times of slavery as a system of production where owner provided slaves resources to live and serve to his interests, currently employees are hired in exchange of a salary granting their social reproduction, thus releasing businessmen of daily risk of providing reproduction to his labour force. In exchange of a salary, employees accept subordination and submit to the businessman authority to perform services and tasks he tells them to do: it is a “voluntary servitude” they need to do. But conflict arises naturally because employees and businessmen have contradictory interests regarding working time, value of the remuneration, product volume, working intensity and qua-

lity. The employees want to do the slightest effort for the salary they get and obtain greater possible income in shortest time allowed; while businessmen try to increase maximum possible time of work and employees efforts to get higher possible surplus between value of production and labour force cost of reproduction. To regulate, postpone or overcome this social and company's conflict, some supervising institutions have been created and Labour law norms were adopted. They legislate on recruitment and employment conditions, working time, minimum wage and additional labour costs, social insurance, control norms, wage stimulus to increase productivity and improve quality, right to strike regulations and procedures to settle disputes, stipulating rights of employees to remuneration and right of businessmen to dismiss and apply sanctions. They also establish viable formal and informal alternatives allowing employees to have a participation in company's business.

Salary relationship is an "institutional definition specifying historically adopted alternatives in the existing relationship among employees and owners or managers ruling means of production". From the very beginning, regulationists defined salary relationship as the "set of legal and institutional conditions ruling use of paid employment and workers' way of existence" (Boyer, 1995, 2007). This institutional definition is essentially a macroeconomic notion having compatible complementary structural relationships with other "institutional definitions": the State, the currency, the international insertion and competition ways among capitals.

The development of capitalism led to a dramatic change of working processes. This was in answer to contradictions arising in each historic moment of this way of production, when productivity and rate of return tend to decrease. Due to this, after every strong crisis new productive paradigms surge with their correspondent working processes. These appeared after the crisis of the year's 1970 seek to adopt methods and technique to intensify labour, increase productivity, cut unitary production costs, use labour force in a more flexible manner, stop salary rise, restore rates of return and grant capital value.

Determining factors in changes of salaries, productivity and employment and its evolution, must be found within the macroeconomic context, its crises and institutions regulating them. We will try to reveal this approach in this study.

Since labour is not a real good, workforce offer is not only governed by market logics nor depends exclusively of rate of return evolution; in its formation also intervenes family, cultural values, school, the health system and other social security institutions related to indirect salary. However, salary relationship viability and continuity must be coherent with direct and indirect salary formation processes (the public health system and social works, family allowances, social policies, the unemployment insurance) (Boyer, 2007).

Which was the predominant salary relationship form during period 1945-1974 (The "30 glorious years") in most dynamic sectors of Industrialized Capitalist Countries (ICC)?

As a consequence of Fordist-Keynesian model enforced during these three decades, (whose dynamism strengthened due to working processes implementation) in most of large modern corporations “typical employments” or “true employments” prevailed” (Neffa Julio C., 2003). Although salary relationship did not prevail as a generalized practice in whole productive system, economic weight of large industrial corporations had a main role in existing working relationships.

It was particularly in ICC where regular paid employees worked (formally or really subordinated to capital, in relationship of dependency) in the context of a developed industrial economy with almost full employment, regularly progressing and in a good pace, focused in the domestic market of these countries, with a productive structure where industrial sector was prevailing. Most of workers and employees were male and worked full time (respecting maximum legal daily hours and overtime payment when corresponding).

Manufacturing work was usually done in an urban plant. It was regulated by contracts for an unlimited period. Workers had legal guarantee of stability, were registered in company’s payroll and insured to social security system; workers paid social security contributions, granting benefits for them and their families. There were lots of collective bargaining agreements (or public sector professional articles) segmented by workers’ professional association sectors, and also of most representative employers sectors, by number of affiliates. The agreements had duration of one or two years, including non affiliates or persons not considering themselves as represented by these organizations.

Direct or indirect salaries and working conditions were regulated by institutions and norms including all workers through minimum legal wage, collective agreements and norms regarding family allowances and social insurance.

By being registered in a company – having a stable employment – workers could obtain guarantees and have access to cheap loans and consumption or investment subsidies. Salaries could be periodically increased based in company’s return, establishing a variable relationship with: 1) changes in the cost of living, 2) global productivity expected from sector activities, and 3) seniority in the company.

Within this context, salaries were annually adjusted slowly and gradually, although at a slower pace than productivity. Due to this and constant increase on labour demand, employees cashed a high and increasing percentage of added value (Boyer, R., 2007). There was trade union freedom, trade unions had a high number of affiliates, which was permanently increasing, they had prestige and represented honorably their men and women workers, improving and increasing collective power of negotiation.

This process was boosted by the State, which actively intervened planning, regulating and providing credits with low interest rates and long terms, as direct producer of public goods and essential services, therefore contributing to obtain high GDP rates of growth.

After WWII and boosted by United States hegemony, this model was im-

posed to the defeated countries (Germany, Italy, and to a lesser extent in Japan) and due to its success was imported by other allied European capitalist countries, thanks to stimulus offered by the Marshall Plan.

This led Industrialized Capitalist Countries for approximately three decades to share a certain macroeconomic coherence among salary relationship, production norms and massive consumption of durable goods. This was the beginning of an expanding social security system process and development of a Fordist model, instituting a “working society” or “wage society”.

The result was a growing wave of employees and a functional income distribution, favoring them. In some capitalist countries ratio went to around two thirds of employees versus one third of capitalists (Boyer, 2007).

The crisis initiated at the beginning of the 70s marked end of an era. The attempts to control and regulate problems arising from structural changes in the productive system brought profound transformations in companies’ organization regarding production and working processes, deep influencing labour force management. This led to new WC&E and PSRW with a high health cost.

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But it is not the case of assuming a deterministic attitude and consider impossible to eliminate accidents and professional diseases, and from that conclude than working necessarily has always negative effects on health. Prevention is possible, and must be done based in national policies oriented to eliminate, reduce or at least controlling risks, bearing in mind ILO agreements and recommendations. If we agree with hypothesis that workers are human beings and not just labour force, that they have experiences and feel working impact on them, although they are not able to explain scientifically the causes of it, then it is important to establish in companies or organizations Mixed Health, Safety and Working Conditions Committees. Regarding smaller companies, workers must appoint WC&E delegates and grant them some time off to fulfill functions, create conditions to study and gather information on prevention methods and techniques to protect their colleagues from serious health risks and inform managers that they should have to be out of work.

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