

**Destroyed labor and functional leisure:
possible relationships at high modernity times**

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Abstract: The text deals with the possible relations between leisure and labor with the formation of High Modernity understood as a historical-social phenomenon from a historical-dialectic standpoint. This study outline has occurred through the bibliographic research using a public material, like magazines, books, monographs, iconographic material and comprising some contemporary and classic authors. It was possible to conclude that

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leisure underwent an instrumentalization process in the Modernity development, and presents now the role of revitalization and construction of a discipline necessary to work flexibility and heterogeneity exerted by the work force, which characterize the contemporary societies.

Key-words: Leisure activities. Labor. Post-modernism.

1 About labor and the productive sphere in the contemporary world

Historically, in the leisure studies, the labor category represented the main point for analyses. From the late 90's and early 2000, new problems arose in the intellectual and existential scene and, this category brought along other categories also important (like culture) that widened and deepened the studies in the area.

However, labor represents today an even more complex category before the new production processes and its relations with society, what implies and justifies making it problematic so that we can comprehend some aspects of contemporary leisure. That is the purpose of this study, which does not ignore nor undervalue the other possibilities of leisure approach possibilities, especially, its relation with culture, but intends to focus on its relation to labor as a product and subject of the social reproduction and production system's contemporary culture.

Man is a social being. This is a quite obvious assertion. Term “social being” refers to the fact that man is an animal that establishes intentional and rational relations with other men that live in society. A being that acknowledges himself as historical and organizes himself through certain form relations so as to be able to transform the world and nature on his behalf. Labor is a process between nature and man, in which he performs, regulates and controls his interchange with nature through his own actions. (MARX, 1982).

All the animals and even vegetables perform labor. Labor, however, within its exact social sense, only exists for men and that’s due to the fact that man is the only being able to develop his work or his construction in his mind before transforming it into something real. Men produce themselves through labor and, by means of it, interact with nature and with other men. He is, therefore, intentional and rational for certain purposes, that means, proposed. (MARX, 1982).

Labor represents the world transformation, consisting in one of the conditions that man has to build and change the natural world. Everyday, man changes the exterior world and himself through labor. Jointly with language, it is possible to affirm that labor is one of the most significant spheres when it comes to know what human being is. Although exactly ontological aspects related to labor are essential to the comprehension of human labor, this article aims, even though in a germinal manner, at emphasizing labor within the modern society’s context.

Therefore, two initial questions must be elucidated. One is about understanding industrialism and the other, capitalism,

because labor is processed within those two institutional aspects¹. At this point, the sociologist Anthony Giddens' contributions are important and, although he is inserted in a sociology trend, known as configurational sociology, it presents a substantial contribution when acquiring Marxist and *Durkheimian* categories, like capitalism and industrialism that are treated as constitutive aspects of modernity. These two

¹ The analysis presented herein is based mainly on the ideas of Anthony Giddens in his work “Conseqüências da Modernidade” [“Consequences of Modernity”]; Ricardo Antunes with his two works “Adeus ao Trabalho? Ensaio sobre a Metamorfose e a Centralidade do Mundo do Trabalho” [“Goodbye to Work? Essays about the Labor Universe Metamorphosis and Centrality”] and “Os Sentidos do Trabalho: Ensaio sobre a afirmação e a negação do trabalho” [“The Senses of Work: Essays about the labor affirmation and denial”] and Márcio Pochmann with his work “O Emprego na Globalização” [“Employment in Globalization”]. Giddens is one of the main representatives of the configurational sociology first developed by Norbert Elias. Yet Ricardo Antunes and Marcio Pochmann present a Marxist tendency. The use of these three authors – and conceptual matters of Norbert Elias himself and other authors with different standpoints – becomes coherent provided that I do not confiscate the theories developed by them, but conceptual categories. I admit that there are countless differences among those authors; however, I consciously opt not for the dialog among them, but for the attempt to comprehend a phenomenon, the free time and leisure, from different conceptual contributions, within the idea of complex thinking, as developed by Edgar Morin, who acknowledges the need to implode the closed and clear proposals and concepts. This is the seventh “avenue” that Morin places so that we can overcome the fragmentation of knowledge and carry out a self-criticism of the fragmentation and closing of scientific knowledge. The approach of such authors, thus, is grounded on this Morin’s criticism, contained in the book “Ciência com Consciência” [Science with Consciousness] of 2005.

concepts are very often treated as synonyms. Sometimes one is considered as a subtype of the other.

Industrialism and capitalism are, according to Guiddens (1991), spheres or aspects inherent to the modern institutions, but with their own characteristics that, even interconnected, structuralize modern life in their way. According to this author, industrialism is about the use of lifeless sources of material energy for the production of goods, where the machinery performs a central role in the production process. The machine is an artifact that performs tasks or processes using such sources of energy as means for their operations.

It involves the regularized social organization of production in order to coordinate the human activity, machines and the applications and productions of raw material and goods. It is materialized both in a low-technology environment, which reminds of the industrial revolution's origin, and high-technology environment, which involves the use of electric power and electronic microcircuit networks. Moreover, industrialism reaches both the workplace and transportation, communications and the everyday life itself. (GUIDDENS, 1991; HOBSEAWN, 2002a; 2002b).

It is worth mentioning that the main relation established between people and nature in Modernity from the XIX century occurs upon industrialism. In the pre-modern cultures, people interacted with nature taking it as their own extension, making their lives tied to the dispositions of the natural world. However, with the modern industry built through the association between science and technology, the nature world is drastically changed (GUIDDENS, 1991; HOBSEAWN, 2002 a). At this moment:

In the industrialized sectors of the world – and, increasingly everywhere – human beings live in a created environment, an environment of action that, of course, is physical, not only natural. Not only the built environment of the urban areas, but most of the other landscapes also become liable to human coordination and control. (GUIDDENS, 1991, p. 66)

Capitalism, however, represents a production system supported by the relation between the capital private property and wage work without possession of the material production means, except for the work force itself, as outlined by Marx and Engels (1960). When assuming the Marxist concept of capitalism, Guiddens (1991) considers it as one of the aspects that constitute modernity and not as the only factor responsible for the transformation of a traditional or ancient society into a modern society, just like Marx and Engels believed it to be. According to Guiddens (1991), the modern societies are capitalist societies and, therefore, they present the capitalist system's characteristics. One of them is the constant need to expand sets of technological innovations generated due to the competitive and expansionist nature of capitalism. Another question is a certain autonomy and influence of the economic sphere in relation to the other spheres, provided that the capitalist economy is grounded in the possession of the private property of the production means and dispossession of the ways of survival, and transforms, that means, institutionalizes the wage work into goods (GUIDDENS, 1991; MARX; ENGELS, 1960).

According to Guiddens (1991), industrialism and capitalism are, therefore, spheres institutionalized in Modernity that involves everyone, whether conscious or not. Those relations are concrete and reach all the horizons in the world, through the nation states. The modern nation states have a coordinated administration control of their territories, which is not reached in pre-modern states, and that's what allows them to develop the industrial and capitalist activities. This administrative control depends on the development and improvement of the surveillance techniques, understood herein as the supervision and control of the population activities within the political and social spheres. It can be direct like in prisons and workplaces², for example, and indirect based on information control.

Labor in the modern world develops, thus, under surveillance processes. Beyond that, it is subdivided into small tasks to be performed by workers coordinately distributed through the workplace. Another even more crucial aspect is the fact that the work force is a merchandize. As reported by Marx and Engels (1960), the work force of the workers divested of production means was transformed into a merchandize.

It's also worth mentioning the contributions of the Brazilian sociologist Ricardo Antunes who, by adopting the Marxist theory, states that a production process organization was developed inside industries and in the other spheres of social work aiming at the production of added value and the capital

² The control of those spheres was classically dealt with by Michel Foucault in his **Vigiar e Punir: Nascimento da Prisão [To Watch and to Punish]**. Translation: Lígia M. Ponde Vassalo. Vozes. Petrópolis, 1977.

accumulation and, therefore, represents today an organization of labor production and management associating *Fordist/Taylorist* models with *Toyotist*³ techniques. Antunes (1997; 2002) pleads that it is possible to find characteristics of both processes coexisting in the same production process, and even the prevalence of a model over another, provided that the important is to ensure the capital reproduction.

According to Marcio Pochmann (2002), a Brazilian economist who works in the labor politics area, this situation many times results from the organization of a new company based on the electronic network that seeks a differentiation of the products and services offered so as to be more adjusted to market variations and characterized by a wrangling and unregulated intercapitalist competition. According to this author, there is a transition from the rigid-automation mechanized conventional production to a flexible one with the prevalence of the digital systems, robots, machine-associated computers and that seek a better quality in products and services avoiding, thus, inventories and financial costs through the maximization of the occupation rate and the control of the production means. In high modernity:

³ *Fordism* and *Taylorism* are characterized mainly by the production of large inventories for vast markets, that means, it is based on a scale economy. Yet *Toyotism*, also known as simple company, represents a production process directed to small markets that are fast formed and dismantled, which need, thus, a fast production of goods. It is materialized particularly by *just-in-time*, that means, an economy of scope. Each of them with its characteristics, both condition the social relations and the culture of a society (ANTUNES, 1997; 2002).

[. . .] the new business scheme would be determined from the presupposition of the simple and competitive company, with a vast integration at the factories, a bigger productive flexibility and innovative production processes (just-in-time, information systems, production cells and minifactories). (POCHMANN, 2002, p. 43).

Changes in strategies are also triggered to improve competitiveness and productivity. Production Deverticalization, diversification and rising of products quality, reduction of production costs are some of the modern company's competitiveness strategies.

In regard with the productivity strategies, there are costs and dead time reduction, a better utilization of the economy of scale possibilities and inventory reduction (ANTUNES, 1997; POCHMANN, 2002).

That's the way Antunes (2002) approaches Pochmann's explanations (2002) and pleads that the new business strategies based on competitiveness, productivity and the new means of task organization, which seek to develop a polyvalent worker associated with the group work skill, change the work content. There is, for the author, an overlapping of tasks under a single worker's responsibility, what involves a certain work enrichment due to the transition of tiresome and repetitive job posts into job posts with a bigger function rotation and more complex content. In this situation, according to Pochmann's view (2002), first, there is not a mass or less significant generation of this type of employment, but occupations with

degrading work forms, and second, even the employments that assume this setting are characterized by a more enhanced exploration of workers, especially in the services sector, whose working hours are flexible and extended, in such a way that all their social spheres are remodeled.

It's within this context that a reduction of job posts is developed in the manufacture and agricultural industry with a raise of the occupations in the services sector, composed of a wide range regarding its quality. A job post in the tertiary sector can be both a particular appointment with an ophthalmologist and the cardboard collection in the urban centers. Both of them are in the same analysis category, but are diametrically opposite, whether in relation to the qualification required, whether from the perspective of assurance of the worker's and his family's life condition. According to Antunes (1997, 2002) and Pochmann (2002), the enhancement of the services sector in the labor world is associated with the work force subproletarization and heterogeneity, as presented on Table 1⁴:

⁴ It shows how the Modern society assumes new configurations regarding labor relations. Despite the importance of the other sectors, the tertiary sector starts to take a great space in the countries' economies generating several consequences to labor and employment.

Tabela 1: Evolução da distribuição dos empregos por setor econômico em anos e países selecionados (em %)

País/ano	Agropecuária	Total da indústria	Total de serviços	
Alemanha				
Anos 20	33,5	38,9	27,6	
Anos 70	8,7	47,1	44,2	
Anos 90	4,1	40,3	55,6	
Serviços				
Alemanha	Distribuição	Produção	Sociais	Pessoais
Anos 20	11,9	2,1	6,0	7,7
Anos 70	17,9	4,5	15,7	6,1
Anos 90	17,7	7,3	24,3	6,3
País/ano	Agropecuária	Total da indústria	Total de serviços	
Brasil				
Anos 40	66,7	12,8	20,5	
Anos 70	30,8	27,5	41,7	
Anos 90	20,9	19,6	59,5	
Serviços				
Brasil	Distribuição	Produção	Sociais	Pessoais
Anos 40	8,8	1,1	4,7	5,9
Anos 70	16,7	1,7	14,2	9,1
Anos 90	39,3	1,2	14,6	5,6
País/ano	Agropecuária	Total da indústria	Total de serviços	
EUA				
Anos 20	28,9	32,9	38,2	
Anos 70	4,6	33,0	62,4	
Anos 90	3,5	24,7	71,8	

Source: POCHMANN, Márcio. **Employment in Globalization**. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2002. P. 58.

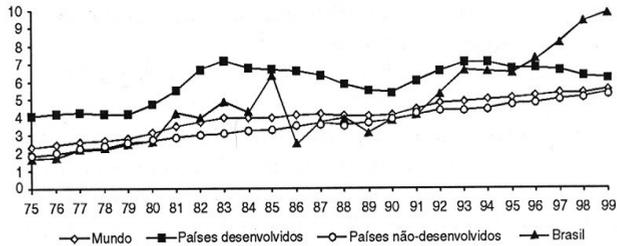
A massive development of job posts is under process characterized by the remuneration precariousness, deregulation of work conditions and the legal labor rules and the consequent regression of social rights, with a growing individualization of salary relation. As stated by Antunes (1997), “[. . .] in France, while there was a reduction of 501 thousand full-time job posts, between 1982 and 1988, there was in the same period the generation of 111 thousand half-time job posts.” (ANTUNES, 1997, p. 44).

Another characteristic of labor in such modern times, according to Antunes (1997; 2002) is its increasing heterogeneity. The class that lives on the sale of its work force is incremented with the massive contingent of women in various occupations, beside children and old-aged people. All of them are included in the production process, provided that there is a progressive reduction of the citizens' income and the State participation with the responsibility to redistribute income and provide social assistance.

At last, one must be attentive to the fact that subproletarization and heterogeneity, the two main characteristics of the occupations in the services sector, are the reflections of the world's unemployment rate itself, particularly in developing countries, which leads millions of people to seek alternative forms of survival as shown on Graph 1⁵:

⁵ It shows how the Modern World is transformed into a place where people develop considerably informal labor relations, a reflection of the modern productive structure itself, provided that it reaches all the countries in the world.

Gráfico 1 – Mundo: evolução da taxa de desemprego da força de trabalho (%), 1975-1999



Fonte primária: U
(Elaboração próp

Source: POCHMANN, Márcio. **Employment in Globalization**. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2002. p. 86.

Within this context and with these characteristics regarding the productive sphere, it is necessary to think about and make labor and leisure-related time a problem.

2 Social division of labor and abstracting time: indication of the current labor characteristics

According to the researchers Nelson C. Marcellino (1996) and Christianne Werneck (2000), one of the most wrangling discussions about leisure comes from the seek for the determination of its constitution. Having as one of their

comprehension that where it is considered as the free time and an attitude taken by subjects, several authors assert that leisure a social sphere that evolved and assumed the current identity, mainly with the modern urban-industrial society constitution.

Leisure starts to have a certain autonomy before other social spheres, particularly the labor sphere. Prior to the modern society constitution, which has as one of its component aspects the social division of labor and the transformation of work force into merchandize, this autonomy or separation had not been fulfilled. In the pre-modern society, there was not a clear division among productive, survival and recreational activities. The division of labor and the use of lifeless sources of energy are the industrialism's features. With that, human labor is subdivided into more and more broken-up activities. The producer no longer has control over what he produces and no longer knows what he produces, what for and how he produces. He is set apart from his product. One of the extremely important aspects related to such apartness refers to the working time itself, which is no longer controlled by the person and turns into a currency, as shown by the British historian E. P. Thompson (1998).

According to Elias (1998) and Guiddens (1991), time becomes an abstract entity, from Modernity. According to E. Thompson (1998), with the industrial revolution, time is the constitution of a self-adjustable market. When performing a comparison among the historical societies, Elias (1991) and Guiddens (1991) stated that in the pre-modern societies, time was most of the time unpredictable, being set in relation to several space markers and, in Modernity, it no longer occurs.

Time was exhausted and, with the mechanical clocks' action, it was standardized. People follow certain times in order to perform their activities in comparison to other times and spaces. According to the authors, it is possible to visualize the dynamic and abstract character of time created by Modernity. Now, time is experienced on such bases. It allows the society to perform various activities within the same period, because it is "measured" on an abstract interval of comparison.

Both Elias (1998) and Guiddens (1991) plead that this fully modern way of time allows the society to control in a more efficient way the material sphere that ensures its survival, that means, labor. Contrarily to Elias (1998) and Guiddens (1991), who brightly comprehend such process, but that see it as part of an unavoidable and integrated movement, Octavio Ianni (2000), a Brazilian sociologist, inclined to follow the Marxist philosophy, pleads that when enabling working time to be "measured", "applied" and, therefore, when permitting the control, with an unparalleled efficiency, of the work process and the production of the material conditions for human existence, capitalism and industrialism start reigning over men's and the society's life as well (IANNI 1997; 2000). According to this author, all the other spheres of social life, like religion, education, the culture itself, are experienced conditioned by labor. It has not occurred by chance. The labor organized through the industrial and capitalist production processes showed an extraordinary power to everyone. It showed what Marx and Engels emphasized in the XIX century, how it is possible to create human life and perform constructions,

changes, control the world in a just imagined manner (MARX, 1982; MARX; ENGELS, 1960).

This working time, however, also presented and still presents its obscure side. According to Nietzsche (1983, p. 386):

In fact, every great growth also brings along an extraordinary destruction and perishability, suffering, the symptoms of decline are part of the times of remarkable advancements; each fruitful and powerful mankind movement has created at the same time a *nihilist* movement.

When taking modern labor as the result of the double Revolution⁶, it is possible to note that this perishability – part of *nihilism* – is represented by the segregative aspect labor assumed and, moreover, by its “autonomy”, at least until the definite moment, of the other social spheres⁷. There is now a time destined to the wage work. A unique time to be followed by most of people, because society starts to be constituted through

⁶ The double revolution was the Industrial Revolution (English characteristic) and the political revolution (French).

⁷ Politically saying, The Nihilism defends that progress can only exist with the complete destruction of what exists socially and that's what the double Revolution did: destroyed the ice layer that at the same time protected and limited the ancient societies to their own existence so as to implement a new order, not only economic, political, social and cultural, but consequently ethic and aesthetic as well, where there is no stability, where all solid things dismantle in the air, as stated by Marshall Berman (1985; 2003) and Marx ; Engels (1960).

division among those that control the production means and those that only retain their work force (MARX, 1982; MARX; ENGELS, 1960).

This working time, in its turn, was able to show that the man could finally find the paradise on earth by reducing his dependence in relation to nature and enjoy the fulfillment of all his needs. The society, however, being divided into antagonistic groups, does not allow the equitable distribution of its productions⁸. On the other hand, with the determination of working time and its obligation and expropriation character, other time intervals were constituted. All of them are built mainly from the reference to working time.

Leisure time was a sphere constructed primarily based on the opposition of the time destined to labor. The time off work, available so that people can perform other activities other than the production of goods and services for the others. A time that may be used, filled according to the interests and needs of the individuals themselves (MARCELLINO, 1995; 1996; WERNECK, 2000).

This time was constituted, however, within the modernity itself and must be understood on the inside of its structures.

While institutionally crossed by capitalism, modernity is marked by a constant effervescence, by a continuous need to change and overcome the ways of interacting with the world and the men. Thus, the free time and the working time itself are continuously changed so as to allow the capital expansion itself⁹ (MARX, 1982; MARX; ENGELS, 1960).

⁸ In the classic Marxist theory, they would be, respectively: the holders of the production means and those that have only their work force.

The current time is not a mechanical time, measured by hours and minutes, but an electronic time controlled from shorter and shorter intervals: seconds, millesimals. This time provides labor with even more enhanced productivity and competitiveness imperatives. The working time is controlled to the least and, by means of it, the people themselves. It is necessary to produce faster and faster for the markets that, in their turns, are more and more changeable. The worker is entangled in even more efficient and subtle surveillance techniques. A complete inquiry of the whole time is outlined so that nothing is lost through the production process.

The time is also marked by flexible working periods in the modern capitalist industry. It is a new industry that combines *Taylorist/Fordist* techniques with *Toyotist* techniques. Now, the worker has no fixed working time to be followed during all his life long. It does not mean that all the workers work only in a flexible way. A characteristic of the high modernity times is the coexistence of several forms of a certain activity (ANTUNES, 1997; 2002; GUIDDENS, 1991; POCHMANN, 2002).

Different combination of capitalist production techniques coexist though. Nevertheless, one fact is usual within this situation and it is about the services sector's increasing participation in the social production processes (Table 1).

⁹ The need of continuous expansion is inherent to the means of production of goods, provided that the capital is liable to a decreasing valuation rate, that means, added-value production, requiring the improvement of the added-value extraction means, whether intensively or extensively, or as it occurs today, combining those two forms.

Linked to that is the growing precariousness and subproletarianization of labor across all spheres (Graph 1).

4 Conclusion: Ensuring labor flexibility and functional leisure

The characteristics aforementioned are the effects of a bigger problem of the modern society. It is about the structural unemployment issue, that means, the mass unemployment that comprises all the population strata. Beside the fact that the employment generation in the modern labor occurs in an insufficient scale, such employments are, in their great majority, temporary and low-qualification employments. The modern flexible work environment ends up influencing leisure itself. It does not mean that it determines leisure, but conditions some of the characteristics it starts to have.

In the modern society, leisure has a functionalist content provided that labor does not allow satisfactory ways of transforming people. The isolation at work reflects on leisure itself. Although the relation is not direct, it is possible to infer that leisure is developed by people as a compensation of what laborwork cannot supply. And it does not reflect only on ordinary people who quite often manage to give this situation a re-signification according to their possibilities, but mainly on the public authorities that are liable for a leisure policy that they conceive and interact with it within this paradigm (MARCELLINO, 1995; 1996).

The local, state bodies and the national State – which implemented the *Welfare State* policy after the Second World War, and were also the first to abandon it upon the 70's crises, start to see leisure only as a compensatory element of the work relations. Countless times it is associated with educational campaigns that aim at exempting the social system of the responsibilities related to the lack of commitment to basic civil rights, like health, for example: (ANTUNES, 2002; MARCELLINO, 1996; MASCARENHAS, 2003).

Of course leisure presents a very important educational content. It is necessary indeed to use it as an educational means. It is essential to question, however, its massive utilization as an element that attenuates social contradictions and, mainly, that moralizes the individual existence conditions. Leisure is considered by the public bodies as a reward for the hours destined to the exhausting labor. Thus, according to Mascarenhas (2003; 2005), it presents a functionalist connotation. In most of the time, leisure time is propagated as a moment to recover the strengths necessary to the work accomplishment. Another aspect intrinsically connected to this perspective is the leisure propagation as a very important moment for the professional qualification. Once more it is necessary to state that educational leisure represents an important practice necessary to society. (MARCELLINO, 1990; 1996). Admitting that means to be aware of the possibilities that leisure provides, but it does not mean to be more suitable to its instrumentalization.

Within the actual context, according to Antunes (1997; 2002), Ianni (2000) and Pochmann (2002) what is verified is the

growing valuation of the leisure use as a means of people improvement for the accomplishment of their labor activities. Leisure becomes an extension of the continuing formation for the labor itself. The big problem of such trend is that people end up becoming unable to experience other leisure spheres to the detriment of security at work. As a result of that, even though people feel pleasure performing activities strictly linked to their labor activities, a relation of narrowing of their experiences and knowledge is developed. This is a reflection of leisure in High-Modernity: its occurrence as a functional and utility element. The purpose is for people to introject an attitude of being responsible for their social and culture situation and, particularly, for their permanence and improvement within the labor universe. Before a logic of subproletarization, flexibility of the labor relations, people have no alternative, except for their leisure instrumentalization itself. As emphasized by Victor Andrade de Melo and Edmundo Alves Júnior (2003), there is a false association of recreation at work, which actually conceals the enhancement of exploration, as occurred with employees of information services company, or even sales representatives that start having access to several elements called recreational, like and environment with music, a better comfort regarding *layout*, but, that have to work for a larger number of hours according to the company's and the market's needs.

The ordinary workers, in their majority those that hold a rather lowly economic power, live another logic. For those that succeed in having more access to better health, education, dwelling and particularly economic conditions, a febrile process of consumption of leisure activities and services, like travels,

shopping at malls, gymnastic centers is developed. As clearly stated by the Argentinean sociologist Néstor Garcia Canclini (2003) in relation to the Latin-American cultures, the public world starts being reorganized by market as a setting for the consumption and dramatization in which people are permanently eager to perform their obligations, whether professional or personal, and to enjoy means of entertainment mostly planned according to their income.

Leisure assumes the meaning of possibility of consumption of the most diverse goods and services. It is necessary to walk through the shopping mall and buy a tennis shoes, a blouse, even if at first one does not desire to buy them. No stroll becomes complete if it does not involve the consumption, the expenditure with products and services. People have the sensation to live an “Amazing World of Leisure”.

It's strange, [...], thinking that even on Our Ford's days most of the games were limited to one or two balls and some poles and sometimes a piece of net. Imagine the foolishness to let people dispute complex games that do not contribute at all to increase consumption. It would be insensateness. Today the leaders would not approve a game that did not require the least equipment equivalent to the most complex existing games. (HUXLEY, 1968, p. 56).

To this portion of the population composed mainly of the middle class, leisure assumes the connotation of a very interesting type of labor. A purchase and expenditure labor. Likewise at work, in general, where people develop rituals performing repetitive activities, in leisure people have to walk towards a similar direction. It is necessary to acquire any merchandize at leisure time; otherwise, one will not have experienced it.

It is important to note that this situation is experienced by a lowermost portion of the Brazilian population, especially by the high and middle strata. However, those classes' desires, values and knowledge are what configure the country's ideological reality. It's such representations of desires and values that are presented as an intrinsic part of the Brazilian identity and the most part of the nation, or almost all the other groups characterized by a low income, must adapt to this situation in order to feel as Brazilians.

Leisure assumes within this context a merchandize value leading products and services to be consumed as an assurance of happiness itself. Being modern involves being happy and, so that these two conditions are reached, it is necessary to have a growing consumption level, as stated by Jean Baudrillard (1995), when visualizing leisure as signs of consumism. When analyzing the growth of the Shopping Malls in Brazil, Valquiria Padilha (2003) verifies an advancement of this society in which leisure is rebuilt and transformed into one of the main signs of consumption. The consumption melody reigns as shown in the song below:

Buy/ See and /Subscribe / Call now/ Take two,
pay three/ Acquire / The imperative reigns/
On the small screen of the TV / You and your
big buttocks / Sit down on the couch/ in the
living-room.¹⁰

In this situation, leisure is transformed into an important element within the logic of the merchandize system production. It is necessary that people feel the vehement, new and irresistible desire. All the classes, genders, ages, races and tribes are convoked to the reign of happiness.

According to Antunes (1997), dissolve waiting and the political desire to seek alternative and fairer forms in labor relations, because for workers, whether in a capitalist or socialist society, everyone will have to work. However, the situation of extreme injustice and expropriation that marks the current labor relations is concealed. Antunes (1997) and Ianni (2000) plead that, with such movement, there is an ideal construction of end of history, end of geography. The capitalist production relation only exists among men, and it is the only correct and the final form as well. It does not mean that other portions of the population are not driven to a consumption labor moral. Nevertheless, it is this portion of the society composed of the middle and high classes that represent the driving spring of this logic, provided that its own conception of world complements this situation. However, for the lowest segments of the population, according to this author, there is a growing

¹⁰ Song: **Imperativo [Imperative]**. “Ta Na Boa” [“That’s Fine!”]. Tianastácia. Emi.-1999.

improvisation of leisure spaces and activities. On the one hand, it represents a positive movement provided that it allows exploring and developing creativity and organization, like for instance, among groups of children from a “hill” that organize themselves in order to clean a terrain and build a small soccer field.

According to Mascarenhas (2003; 2005), the situation shows a lack of conditions of access to leisure spaces and activities associated with the lack of commitment and responsibility from the public power. This portion of the population is composed of the families of workers from the informal economy sector, and mainly, those that have occupations with a reduced income that prevents the consumption of goods and services are taken as an unavoidable evil of society. Leisure for such groups quite often ends up being confounded with idleness, which represents one of the possibilities to be experienced within the individuals’ options and available time. It is not leisure in itself, because there are several alternatives within a set of existing activities.

The matter is that most part of the population from several countries either develops activities in informal economy sectors or is in occupations marked by the flexible accumulation standard. They have been, thus, developing activities in which there is no fixed-time standard to be followed not even legal conditions that protect workers from the market irrationality. There is a routine that varies according to the production needs, where people may work up to ten hours a day during in the days of the week and have only one day off in the following week or

even one week off if production requires so (ANTUNES, 1997; 2002; MASCARENHAS, 2005; POCHMANN, 2002).

The society is, therefore, organized by aspects of the most diverse forms of labor relations. Such relations, however, are composed of invariable elements, like the existence of people that need to sell their work force for a salary. The most part of those people are, at high-modernity times, unemployed - employed. The intention, then, is to state that workers in front of the new production technologies especially represented by the *Toyotist* industry, have a very significant time “released” from work. However, it is not a positive release resulting from the reduction of working hours, assuring the workers’ rights and providing the said “paradise” on earth. Actually, it is an idle time, that means, a time in which people look for a job, but can’t find it (ANTUNES, 1997; 2002; MARCELLINO, 1996).

The social classes mainly constituted by the low-income population, with a low professional and educational qualification and that develop low-remuneration activities are found in a paradoxical situation: they have more time to meet their family, friends and perform other activities. They are, however, looking for a job, because they were granted time in exchange of no longer having an occupation, a monthly income, however minimum, but assured (MARCELLINO, 1996).

In High-Modernity, idleness as a leisure content becomes an element difficult to determine. It does not represent only moments lived out of the labor sphere and with a high degree of individuals’ choice. With the constant dismantlement of everything that exists in the world, especially the assurance of a job post, the smoky leisure remains. It becomes a fragmented

sphere of the people's social life, which may happen in several places and, likewise, may also not occur and then, it will remain conditioned, as Orwell (1997) would say for his Big Brother, that is not in this particularly political case, but economic, that means, the market. Thus, it is possible to visualize that leisure in the modern environment remains conditioned by the class conditions, that means, the possibilities and relations that the individuals establish with work and at work and as the poet would say: "I see the future reproducing the past, I see a museum of great novelties, time never stops, never stops, no, it never stops." (CAZUZA, 1998)¹¹

And then, following the tracks opened by Lafargue (2000), let's continue working more and more so that we can consume more and more, and at the end we will not be able to prevent ourselves, ingenuously, from having fun working and buying.

Destroyed labor and functional leisure: possible relationships at high modernity times

Abstract: The text deals with the possible relations between leisure and labor with the formation of High Modernity understood as a historical-social phenomenon from a historical-dialectic standpoint. This study outline has occurred through the bibliographic research using a public material, like magazines, books, monographs, iconographic

¹¹ Song "O tempo não pára" ["Time never stops"]. CD CAZUZA. Millenium Collection. Polygram. 1998.

material and comprising some contemporary and classic authors. It was possible to conclude that leisure underwent an instrumentalization process in the Modernity development, and presents now the role of revitalization and construction of a discipline necessary to work flexibility and heterogeneity exerted by the work force, which characterize the contemporary societies.

Keywords: Leisure activities. Labor. Postmodernism.

Trabajo destruido y función del ocio: posibles relaciones en tiempos de alta modernidad

Resumen: El texto trata de las posibles relaciones entre el ocio y el trabajo con la formación de la alta modernidad comprendida como un fenómeno histórico-social en una perspectiva histórico-dialéctica. El delineamiento de este estudio se desarrolló a partir de la investigación bibliográfica utilizando material público como revistas, libros, monografías, material iconográfico y recurriendo a algunos autores contemporáneos y clásicos. Fue posible concluir con este estudio que el ocio pasó por un proceso de instrumentación en el desarrollo de la Modernidad, viniendo a presentar actualmente el papel de revitalización de la fuerza de trabajo y de la construcción de una disciplina necesaria a la flexibilización y heterogenización del trabajo, que caracterizan las sociedades contemporáneas.

Palabras-clave: Actividades recreativas. Trabajo. Postmodernismo

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Essay

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