

ABSTRACTS

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1. Reality changes in labor in Brazil and Portugal

Sonia Guimarães Larangeira

The articles included in the dossier of this issue of **Sociologias** were presented in meetings that took place in Brazil and in Portugal under the CAPES-GRISCES Cooperation Program named Changes in Labor and Jobs in the Context of Economic Restructuring – coordinated by Dr. Valmíria Piccinini in Brazil and by Dr. Ilona Kovács in Portugal. They involved the UFRGS Business Administration and Sociology Post-Graduation Programs and the Center for Economic Sociology Research (SOCIOUS) of the Higher Institute for Economics and Management at the Technical University of Lisbon and the Department of Business Administration Sciences of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil as an associated institution. The aforementioned interchange program has allowed the researchers involved a fruitful debate about research results on the changing labor reality in both countries, in such a way that we find it timely to make at least part of those contributions available to the public interested, which we do now.

Keywords: labor, employment, economic restructuring, Brazil and Portugal.

2. Flexible employment in Portugal

Ilona Kovács

This article, based on some results of an ongoing study project, is aimed at analyzing the spread of flexible employment in Portugal as well as showing its diversity. The spread of flexible forms of employment is part of the processes of productive restructuring and labor market flexibilization in the context of growing competition in the global economy. By resorting to statistical data an analysis is carried out on the spread and development of the most relevant forms of flexible employment in Portugal, such as limited-time labor contracts, temporary labor, independent labor, and part-time labor. Flexible-job workers have much lower satisfaction levels than those with stable jobs. However, those jobs do not have homogeneous situations, but rather quite diversified circumstances that are presented through a typology of flexible-job situations and a typology of professional histories.

Keywords: employment, flexibility, Portugal, types of flexible employment.

3. Porto Alegre's work co-operatives and flexibilization of labor

Valmiria Carolina Piccinini

This article attempts to verify the meaning of work co-operatives in the process of productive restructuring and labor flexibilization within Brazilian economy, especially in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul. A research study has been conducted in co-operatives in the city of Porto Alegre, investigating labor flexibilization, quality of life, and employability. Valorization of co-operative ideals and concern for the quality of life of members has been found. Those co-operatives, however, struggle against problems resulting from competition by “façade” co-operatives, legislation seen as restrictive, and the fact that those who hire their services seek the lowest costs. A large part is composed of low-training workers who find an alternative to unemployment in co-operative work. Even as they point out the problem with this kind of organization, they see it as a solution to the economic crisis and a way to remain in the job market. Three case studies have been carried out later on Porto Alegre co-operatives and compared. Since they are co-operatives with distinct levels of training among their members, prospects and expectation are quite different.

Keywords: labor flexibilization, employability, quality of life, work co-operatives, fake co-operatives, globalization.

4. Labor relations and employment

Maria da Conceição Cerdeira

The issues of changes on labor relations resulting from ongoing economic, technological and social changes have raised a growing interest by social analysts in recent decades. The debate is strong and the diversity of works published points to complex and conflicting developments. This article starts by presenting the most important terms in that debate. Afterwards, it attempts to cover the main trends in the Portuguese labor system. Therefore, issues such as the labor conflictuality expressed in strikes, union membership, and collective negotiation in its structure and contexts are analyzed. Finally, the modernization process in businesses is

examined in order to show how unions, through negotiation, act upon businesses' technical and organizational processes of restructuring and change as well as the problems they face when defending their jobs.

Keywords: Labor relations, collective negotiation, technical and organizational change, employment.

5. Human resources management: theories and practices

Maria João Nicolau Santos

It is a known fact that given the current social and economic changes businesses have significantly altered the way they manage human resources. However, a deep hiatus still remains between a management discourse that is quite centered on the human factor and the practices effectively carried out by companies.

At the theoretical and conceptual level extra attention has been given to the importance of people's creative potential as a crucial strategy for companies' adjustment to change. That factor emerges as a basic condition for survival of companies in a highly competitive and extremely uncertain context. The current spread of concepts and theories about intellectual capital, knowledge management, and emotional intelligence is a clear example of that extra importance attributed to the human element. Nevertheless, the workings of the economic and social system are a lot more complex, showing a multifaceted reality that neither always fits that conceptual approach nor effectively corresponds to policies publicized by companies.

Instead of the much spread valorization of human capital, what is seen is the emergence of dual practices and a segmentation of human resources within companies. Regarding the labor market, even though a gradual deregulation is often advocated – usually to favor more economic flexibilization and job generation – the fact is such diversification of contractual relations has been often associated to an increasing precarization of labor and employment relations.

Our analysis will focus on those multiple movements and contradictions between theoretical assumptions and real practices developed by businesses.

Keywords: human resources management, intellectual capital, knowledge management, networks and labor market.

6. Ways of working and being in bank restructuring

Carmem Ligia Iochins Grisci
and Vânia Gisele Bessi

The article discusses how productive restructuring in bank work has affected ways of working and being of workers of a century-old bank organization that established programs to encourage voluntary resignation as one of its new management tools. It is a case study that investigated 104 workers in the southern Brazilian states of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina who joined the third round of one such program in 2001, as well as five managers and three human resource workers directly involved with the Programs or with the people who quit. Data collection happened through questionnaire, semi-structured individual interviews and document sources. Data collected were subjected to content analysis. Research results point out that the productive restructuring of bank work marks the move from a culture of stability and safety to one of instability and insecurity that affects employees' ways of being and working. Therefore, the investment desired by the company from work subjects is a sign of total and unconditional subjective mobilization to its project and its profitability aims.

Keywords: work productive restructuring, labor organization, bank work, subjectivity.

7. Granted autonomy and work appropriation

Cinara L. Rosenfield

This work is aimed at debating the meaning of *granted autonomy* as the organizational corollary of a subjective mobilization demand. Labor is undergoing the contradiction between the eulogy to autonomy and an increasing normalized labor organization, where being autonomous is the rule. The concept of labor autonomy resorts to two issues: the operational dimension and the identity dimension. The transformation of labor into a good whose possession demands sacrifices and the transformation of the job into a privilege culminate at subjection of the worker's very person, without really raising the issue of labor re-appropriation, which *a priori* follows labor autonomy. The core issue, however, cannot be diluted

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into this paradox between real autonomy and granted autonomy: the search for autonomy is placed out of the economic logic and within a logic of values and achievement of meaning, while granted autonomy is part of an instrumental logic.

Keywords: normalization of labor, granted autonomy, symbolic gains, instrumental logic.

8. The abjured roots of the human capital theory

Renato P. Saul

The article aims at tracking the trajectory of the human capital theory in its original society, the United States. By identifying trends present in American social thinking, markedly the one oriented at first to organization of industrial labor through experiences carried out by Frederick Taylor and, later, by theorizing about a new concept of property emerging in the process of organization of large stock companies, the theory of human capital is placed within the field of solving American capitalism's major dilemma, namely the institutionalization of a classless society.

Keywords: social thinking, liberalism, property relations, Taylorism, human capital.

9. Governmentalization of the Contemporary State: mapping State control mechanisms

Luiz Felipe Rocha Benites

This essay examines the process of "governmentalization" of the State and its consequences for the its own community. Based on genealogic works and contemporary studies, an attempt is made at mapping some ways in which mechanisms for control and regulation of populations are begin re-created and re-organized, renewing the normalizing ability of the state domain. The analysis points out the move of contemporary government into the territory of immaterial

labor within public service when it articulates the use of new telematic technologies with the production of subjectivities which “desire” control.

Keywords: State changes, governmentality, immaterial work, control society, production of subjectivity.

10. Civilian Policemen's representations about professionalization

Alexandre Sant'Ana de Brito
and Lídio de Souza

The study aimed at identifying social representations about professionalization of civilian policemen and their relations with the increment and maintenance of the democratic State. Semi-structured questionnaires were applied to a sample of police agents and investigators, focusing on professionalization at personal, institutional and political levels. Representational elements identified were: 1) lack of investment in the institution; 2) subservience of the police force to conservative technical groups; 3) professionalization seen as the acquisition of technical contents that aim at financial gains and criminal classification of socially excluded segments. The study concludes that those elements act as obstacles to implementing and maintaining the rule of law in the state of Espírito Santo.

Keywords: social representation; professionalization; democracy; civil police; violence control.

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11. As Metamorfoses do Emprego: ilusões e problemas da sociedade da informação (Employment metamorphosis: illusions and problems of information society) KOVÁCS, Ilona. Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2002. 167 p.

Sociological investigation for a critical assessment of the informational society

Daniela Alves de Alves

Ilona Kovács' *As Metamorfoses do Emprego* is a contribution to the debate on changes in labor and employment within the scenario of globalization and the adoption of innovative technological and organizational discourses and practices. The theoretical reflection on the several subjects approached is supported by investigations conducted by the author in recent years, from which she presents results about European – especially Portuguese – reality. The main issues approached are the consequences of globalization and the diffusion of information and communication technologies, the proposal for organizational innovation and its effects, the relationship between qualification, training and employability, the flexibility of businesses and the debate on the centrality of labor.

Key words: employment, labor, organizational innovation, information society.