
POLITICS OF SUBJECTIFICATION IN LABOR: FROM DISCIPLINARY SOCIETY TO CONTROL

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ABSTRACT. Remarkable social and historical changes we witnessed in the late nineteenth and early twenty-first centuries show that we are facing mutant modes of subjectification, which are directly connected to productive activities. In this sense, politics and subjectivity are two concepts that go hand in hand when labor relations are analyzed, bringing into play the reinvention of ways of living and working. This theoretical study will bring together the concepts of politics and subjectification, having as reference the emergence and expansion of the so-called immaterial labor. First, we will go back in time and address the politics of subjectification in force in the historical moment which Foucault characterized as disciplinary. Then, the historical changes which Deleuze pointed out and named control of society will be described. In the face of these two scenarios, which merge in the capitalist contemporaneity, the following questions will be covered: How workers are historically and politically constituted as subjects in their labor practice? Which subjective components are updated in the productive context of advanced capitalism? Which politics of subjectification are invented and put into circulation by workers? At the end of the study, there will be a discussion about current challenges for workers who constantly move between the two politics of subjectification addressed.

Keywords: Labor; politics; subjectivity.

POLÍTICAS DE SUBJETIVAÇÃO NO TRABALHO: DA SOCIEDADE DISCIPLINAR AO CONTROLE

RESUMO. As mudanças sociais e históricas que vimos acontecer de maneira marcante no final do século XX e início do XXI mostram que estamos diante de modos de subjetivação mutantes, os quais mantêm conexões diretas com a atividade produtiva. Nesse sentido, política e subjetividade são dois conceitos que caminham lado a lado quando são analisadas as relações de trabalho que colocam em cena a reinvenção dos modos de viver e trabalhar. No presente estudo teórico, será realizada uma aproximação entre os conceitos de política e de subjetivação, tendo como referência a emergência e expansão do denominado trabalho imaterial. Para tanto, o artigo foi dividido em dois momentos. Primeiro, será realizado um resgate histórico sobre a política de subjetivação que vigorava no momento histórico que Foucault caracterizou como disciplinar. Em seguida, serão descritas as transformações históricas que Deleuze assinalou sob a denominação de sociedade de controle. Diante desses dois cenários, que se mesclam na atualidade capitalista, serão percorridas as seguintes questões: Como o trabalhador se constitui histórica e politicamente como sujeito na sua prática laboral? Quais componentes subjetivos se atualizam no contexto produtivo do capitalismo avançado? Quais políticas de subjetivação são inventadas e colocadas em circulação pelos trabalhadores? Ao final do estudo, serão discutidos os desafios que atualmente estão colocados para o trabalhador que constantemente transita entre as duas políticas de subjetivação abordadas.

Palavras-chave: Trabalho; política; subjetividade.

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POLÍTICAS DE SUBJETIVACIÓN EN EL TRABAJO: DE LA SOCIEDAD DISCIPLINARIA AL CONTROL

RESUMEN. Cambios históricos y sociales que hemos visto de manera llamativa más a finales del siglo XX y XXI, muestran que estamos ante los modos de subjetivación mutantes, que mantienen conexiones directas con la actividad productiva. En este sentido, subjetividad y política son dos conceptos que van de la mano cuando se analizan las relaciones de trabajo que ponen en escena la reinención de las formas de vivir y trabajar. En este estudio teórico, se llevará a cabo un acercamiento entre los conceptos de política y de subjetivación, en referencia a la aparición y expansión del denominado trabajo inmaterial. Con este fin, se dividió el artículo en dos fases. En primer lugar, se llevará a cabo un rescate histórico en la política de subjetivación que existía en el momento histórico que Foucault caracteriza como disciplinar. Entonces será descrito los cambios históricos que Deleuze ha señalado bajo el nombre de sociedad de control. Frente a estos dos escenarios, que se combinan en la realidad capitalista, serán cubiertas las siguientes cuestiones: ¿Cómo el trabajador se compone histórica y políticamente como un sujeto en su trabajo? ¿Cuáles son los componentes subjetivos que se actualizan en el contexto productivo del capitalismo avanzado? ¿Cómo es la política de subjetivación inventada y puesta en circulación por los trabajadores? Al final del estudio, será discutido los desafíos que actualmente se asignan al trabajador que se mueve constantemente entre las dos políticas de subjetivación dirigida.

Palabras-clave: Trabajo; política; subjetividad.

Introduction

By analyzing labor relations established in contemporary times one realizes that transformations caused by advanced capitalism have generated different ways of managing organizations, employees and planning labor activities. Such changes have also contributed to consolidating new politics of subjectification, which articulate differently at each historical time, being accomplished through multiple agents (among which we highlight owners, employees, customers and the general population). This has eventually called the attention of different areas of knowledge that seek to understand the effects of these changes on everyday life. Social Psychology turned to the critical study of social relations and ways of living in society, including labor issues, understands that man builds his existence by means of the multiple contacts he experiences, and that such building has a historical and contextualized dimension (Almeida, 2012; Soto, 2015).

Attentive to these changes, this study seeks to analyze the emergence of two distinct politics of subjectification present in the labor context, namely: a politics which is characteristically disciplinary (predominant in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and mostly intended for material production), and another politics which has in control devices, more recently developed, one of its distinctive traits (and in which immaterial production becomes widespread). However, before moving forward in the discussion of these two politics, it is worth taking some time to analyze what "politics of subjectification" is. This expression is made up by two concepts to be herein appreciated.

Let us begin this analysis by the notion of politics. This word has Greek origin and refers to the way of organizing the city. Bobbio describes:

derived from the adjective originated from polis (Politik) which signifies all that which refers to the city, and consequently, what is urban, civil, public and even social and sociable, the term Politics has expanded thanks to the influence of the great work by Aristotle, entitled Politics, which should be considered as the first treatise on the nature, functions and division of the State, and on the various forms of Government, with the most common signification of art or science of the Government, that is, of reflection, whether with merely descriptive or also normative interventions, two aspects hardly discriminated, on things of the city (Bobbio, 1986, p. 954).

Gradually, the meaning of this word has been broadened and extended to different activities involving a wider range of relations, for instance the development of scientific knowledge, social movements, education, health and wellness, besides artistic and cultural productions. It can be said,

therefore, that this expansion is a more direct reference to those activities which, in a variety of ways, help compose the existence of populations living in the cities. The concern for ruling a collective and diversified group brings about differences of opinion and value among those who are involved with the exercise of dialogue and confrontation about the organization of the population, with this discrepancy being one of the remarkable features of political activity.

For this precise reason, this study uses the term politics in a broader sense: it is understood herein as the elaboration and dissemination of certain ways of organizing life in society, which are debated, questioned, legitimated and, to a large extent, collectively shared. This endeavor counts with various agents and, given this diversity, Rancière (1996) points out that the exercise of politics necessarily generates controversies, since each individual can participate in his/her construction by exposing opinions, interests and different levels of implication to act and discuss about what happens around him/her. The contact with, the receptiveness towards and the experimentation of these controversies arising from agents located in different socioeconomic strata indicate that there is an ongoing political exercise and that, through it, a common life is built, shared. However, this "common" does not mean a denial of differences. Rather, it is something very dynamic and alive, constantly produced, confronted, destroyed and constructed, being all the time crossed by conflicts, alliances, misunderstandings, connections and paradoxes. At times this exercise is associated with the sphere of laws and institutions. However, it is worth noting that it is not restricted to this instituted sphere, as it also occurs in informal spaces of interaction such as daily meetings between people who discuss problems faced by the collective (Pineda & Cubides, 2012).

Thus, in order to understand the disparate composition of this movement of debate, exchange and confrontation that shapes political exercise we also resort to the concept of subjectivity. The latter can be understood as a ceaseless process in which the subject is constituted by coming into contact with those and with that which surrounds him/her. Hence the eminently social character that is updated in the production of ways of living. When we approach this concept, we assume that the subject does not bear an essence. From the analytical perspective of Social Psychology in its dialogue with the Philosophy of difference, he/she is constituted at each new experience of contact with others who, in their turn, generate sensations, knowledge, reactions and opinions that are marked by a significant level of unpredictability. It can be said, then, that we are surrounded by multiple subjectification components, which are invented and put into circulation in the social environment. Guattari and Rolnik point out that, from this perspective of analysis, subjectivity is "essentially manufactured and modeled in the social register" (Guattari & Rolnik, 1996, p. 31). They also argue that the way each individual appropriates these components will be singular and will depend on the meetings he/she experiences during the course of his/her life. The authors state: "... subjectivity is always a process that circulates between social groups of different size and which is assumed and experienced by individuals in their singular existences." (Guattari & Rolnik, 1996, p. 33).

By bringing these two concepts (politics and subjectivity) together, we can say that "politics of subjectification" involve a living production made up by contact, apprehension, acceptance and/or rejection of the various subjective components that are invented and put into circulation in the sphere of social relations in a given historical moment. Subjectification components are diverse but largely known. We can mention among them feelings, ideas, values, desires, sensitivity and other dimensions of existence that can be incorporated into our way of living, producing us as subjects. It is a movement that does not cease, since subjectification components are mobile and changing. What matters, then, is to analyze

[T]he way individuals and communities are constituted as subjects on the margins of established forms of knowledge and instituted powers, even if they thereby open the way for new kinds of knowledge and power. Subjectification thus appears as a middle term between knowledge and power, a perpetual "dislocation", and a sort of fold, a folding or enfolding (Deleuze, 1972/1992, pp. 217-218).

It is in this sense that subjectification components are created and put into circulation at any time, as one experiences relations of closeness to and confrontation with the social, with nature, with events and with the multiplicity of human inventions, in an exercise that it is both open and controversial

(Lazzarato, 2014). Therefore, when we resort to the term “politics of subjectification”, we are affirming the inclusion of each subject in that which is built and shared as a possible way of living. Hence the finding that the political dimension of social relations is something inalienable and, at the same time, inexhaustible in their movements of creation and destruction (Pelbart, 2013).

After this short detour, we can return to our study question and consider that the labor context is also crossed by distinct politics of subjectification, two of which we will analyze in the course of this article: disciplinary and that focused on control. Each of them, as we will see, produces disparate effects on ways of living and, more specifically, of connecting to labor.

Politics of subjectification in material labor: the disciplinarization of bodies

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were largely marked by manufacturing production. This organization demanded a politics of subjectification that was, according to Foucault's studies (1973/1999), characteristically disciplinary. Let us then begin by raising the following question: How workers are historically and politically constituted as subjects in this labor practice? We had back then a society organized through different disciplinary institutions such as schools, hospitals, factories and prisons, to name just a few. Part of them was characterized by Goffman (1961/2001, p. 35) as “total institutions”, since their structure restricted contact between their interns and the other citizens and activities carried out in the daily life of the cities. Each one of these institutions was intended for specific functions such as education, health, work and correction/punishment. For the dissemination of their activities and the guarantee of the exercise of discipline among their members, Foucault noted that the consolidation of a politics of subjectification was made necessary, in which the notion of individual had fundamental importance.

This individual can be understood as someone who was connected to different regimes of truth that ensured observance of the law, attention to sanitary procedures, compliance with social norms in force and obedience. The institutions, greatly strengthened in that historical time, aimed to spread the importance of labor, production and respect for hierarchy and values that should be incorporated by “normal” people. According to Foucault, it was about “obtaining productive service from individuals in their concrete lives” (Foucault, 1994/2014, p. 27), using a power effected by the law. In it, the subject was conceived as “one who obeys” (Foucault, 1973/1999, p. 82). In addition to obedience, other subjective components gained importance in that period, among which we highlight, mechanical effort to complete tasks in a timely manner defined by the supervisor, as well as ability to adapt to the machine and repetitive activities.

To consolidate this politics of obedient subjectification that used to be in force in disciplinary institutions and, more specifically, inside factories, a thorough job was done in order to make each individual to recognize himself/herself as someone who was being constantly watched by an extensive hierarchical network composed of specialized personnel hired specifically to carry out surveillance and monitoring activities. For being immersed in this disciplinary device and being aware of part of its functioning, workers could clearly see that they were most of the time at the mercy of different penalties and/or sanctions if caught doing something that violated the normative codes or if their productivity decreased. It is possible to identify, then, the presence of another subjective component typical of the disciplinary period: the fear of being fired and excluded from production due to low productivity or disobedience.

Another characteristic of that period to be analyzed is that a worker individual seen as exemplary was one capable of putting his/her time, body, physical strength and motor coordination at the disposal of the factory or institution in which he/she was included, favoring to the maximum increased production. It can be noticed that since the nineteenth century a worker “model” to be followed was gradually consolidated: the mass worker. The latter was required to perform simple and repetitive tasks carefully planned by the upper hierarchy which, in addition to defining which tasks should be performed by a large number of workers, also had the role of making each individual achieve his/her work goals through surveillance and, when necessary, punishment. Therefore, in the disciplinary politics of subjectification

we have as reference the manufacturing mode of production, which involved great energy expenditure. Hence the importance given to the worker's body, whose physical strength was carefully calculated and distributed into time periods assessed as favorable for production. Quantification of the results of production and measurement of the physical strength employed were the goals to be achieved through surveillance structures. Foucault clarifies that introducing this work routine in the life of the population produced concurrently different forms of resistance and questioning. To try to get around them, it was necessary to put into motion a number of disciplinary measures by means of which the time, the body and the productive capacity of men were made available to a labor market and the demands of labor (Foucault, 1973/1999).

Nevertheless, we can take a step forward in this analysis and consider, appealing again to Foucault, that through disciplinary institutions something he named as the "kidnapping" of the individual for labor was operationalized (Foucault, 1973/1999, p. 118). The kidnapping consolidated a mode of existence that tied individuals to a production device, requiring for it their time and vital energy. Foucault adds that in that historical moment the worker's body was conceived as something "to be molded, reformed, corrected, something that must acquire aptitudes, receive a certain number of qualities, become qualified as a body capable of working" (Foucault, 1973/1999, p. 119). All disciplinary devices contributed, in this way, to achieving the goal of transforming the individual's body into an obedient, "docile body" (Foucault, 1973/1999, p. 117). This endeavor would be carried since childhood, with the consent and support of family and academic institutions. It is in this sense that Foucault incisively combats the idea that labor, just as it is effectively realized in capitalism, is part of the human essence. About that he warns:

Labor is absolutely not man's concrete essence or man's existence in its concrete form. In order for men to be brought into labor, tied to labor, an operation is necessary, or a complex series of operations, by which men are effectively – not analytically but synthetically – bound to the production apparatus for which they labor. It takes this operation, or this synthesis accomplished by a political power, for man's essence to appear as labor (Foucault, 1973/1999, p. 124).

Part of this operation had as condition of possibility the kidnapping of the body and time of workers that happened inside disciplinary institutions. The latter, taking advantage of various devices (architectural, legal, sanitary, coercive and regimental) gradually enabled some sort of "internalization" of disciplinary values, that is, the dissemination and naturalization of a systematic exercise of discipline which led to the adjustment of the productivity rates of those who were inserted in it.

Another aspect to be considered in this analysis is that the politics of subjectification consolidated in that historical moment prioritized the possession of an identity through which it was possible to fit each individual into an institution, a labor activity and a well-defined social role. This facilitated both the location of the individual in the institutional structure and the measurement of his/her performance. Thus, the disciplinary politics propagated a mode of subjectification that tended to be much more rigid and turned to identities, as Hardt and Negri stresses:

The subjectivities produced in the modern institutions were like the standardized machine parts produced in the mass factory: the inmate, the mother, the worker, the student, and so forth. Each part played a specific role in the assembled machine, but it was standardized, produced en masse, and thus replaceable with any part of this type (Hardt & Negri, 2001, p. 353).

As we will see ahead, this picture will suffer changes in the next moment of labor history. For now, it is worth noting that the predominant manufacturing activity in that historical time involved a type of production that was fundamentally material: the production of durable and little varied goods generated in largely segmented production lines in which workers performed simple and repetitive activities, being attached to machines and subjected to excessively high production goals. So much so that they would work sixteen hours a day. This allows us to have an idea of the importance that was given to the worker's physical strength and motor skills.

On the other hand, the planning, distribution and monitoring of the activities to be performed by those mass workers were tasks that only high-ranking specialists could carry out, who held the knowledge of the production process. Hence the easy replacement of any worker by a stronger,

productive and disciplined one if performance suffered some kind of loss. It can be said that this ease of replacement also contributed to ensuring compliance and hierarchical supervision. After all, one depended on discipline and individual performance to keep his/her job. For Gorz, “in the nineteenth century it was necessary to make the worker execute, with the regularity of an automaton and without questioning, what the industrial machinery commanded him to, imposing the speed and pace of the actions to be performed” (Gorz , 2005, p. 19).

However, as said in the beginning, all politics of subjectification involve a complex construction that does not cease in its disruption, controversy and transformation movements. That was how the disciplinary politics of subjectification went through different changes over time. Responsible for the task of disciplining the worker’s body, who should be conscious of his/her role in the factory production line and willing to reproduce the social values preconized in it, the disciplinary practices that ruled inside the institutions gradually came out as well. Added to this, other forces such as technological advances, easy access to information, fast means of transportation, as well as competitiveness began to demand greater preparation for work, extrapolating then the mere acquisition of basic and repetitive motor skills. More direct interventions in the daily existence of the population became necessary so that the subject’s time and energy were placed at the service of preparation for work, attributing value to other subjective components.

Walking towards a society of control: the expansion of immaterial labor

It was the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1972/1992) who warned about the fact that these social transformations in the labor context have become more pronounced as of the second half of the twentieth century. An indication of these changes concerns the very capitalist accumulation strategy which was enhanced at that time, introducing greater competitiveness in labor and economy spheres. This new scenario also promoted an increase in diversification and consumption of goods, and expanded provision of services, favoring greater movement of people, information, products and services on a global scale. On that Foucault notes: “In the nineteenth century, the disciplinary power operated through a set of restrictions... Today, the opposite occurs, that is, an exaltation of consumption which begins to be used as a tactic at the moment that economists discovered the potential of the internal market” (Foucault, 1994/2012, p. 23). We continue then raising some questions: Which subjective components are updated in the production context of advanced capitalism? Which politics of subjectification are invented and put into circulation by workers?

Mindful of this new mutant and competitive scenario, Hardt and Negri (2001) bring some partial answers to these questions by showing that centralization in rigid social roles which, as we saw at the beginning of this study, worked so well in the disciplinary system has become gradually dysfunctional. Other subjective skills began to be required for the individual to be capable of meeting the growing need for greater mobility between different institutions and, more specifically, moving between different social contexts that became more accessible thanks to technological advances in transportation and communication .

Thus, counting on a discipline already internalized capable of operating beyond institutional boundaries and, therefore, also acting in a more open and diversified social context, that standardization in rigid roles to be merely reproduced by obedient, labeled and docile individuals little by little lost its effectiveness, becoming to some extent obsolete. How to understand, then, this new politics of subjectification that has been built and disseminated since a few decades ago? Both Foucault (1973/1999) and Deleuze (1972/1992), who devoted part of their studies to understand these transformations, note that we are not before an already consolidated scenario but a complex passage which, since a few decades ago, has been causing major breaks in the ways of organizing labor and social relations. Deleuze says:

In their turn the disciplines underwent a crisis to the benefit of new forces that were gradually instituted and which accelerated after World War II: a disciplinary society was what we already no longer were what we had ceased to be (Deleuze, 1972/1992, p. 220).

It can be said that these transformations have introduced new subjective components in the social organization plane and, specifically, in the labor relations plane, a fact that also contributes to the emergence of new politics of subjectification. Let us see how. It is noticeable that disciplinary institutions such as those described by Foucault have been suffering different crises, and factories in special have been largely transformed as to their organizational structure. Employed to handle new demands of production and workforce qualification, management modes began to be treated with greater attention and care on the part of administrators, economists and jurists. In this sense, little by little the factory gave way to the company, and in it management by computerization and communication processes become central and strategic (Deleuze, 1972/1992).

It can be seen, thus, that the more reforms aiming to reorganize internal processes of operation of factories and/or companies are proposed, the more they distance themselves from their prior mode of organization marked by the discipline of their workers. Along with these changes, it is also possible to notice that new values have come into play and, with them; new rules, new sanctions and new normalizations have been elaborated and disseminated in the labor context, articulated in what Deleuze called "societies of control" (Deleuze, 1972/1992, p. 222).

Keeping up with these changes becomes relevant especially with regard to disruptions that come into play in the production of new politics of subjectification. In the capitalist contemporaneity, technological networks of control emerge and spread rapidly, enhancing the production of knowledge and facilitating the transit of information in real time. In this way, the circulation of information no longer necessarily depends on permission from disciplinary institutions to be accessed. For Deleuze and Foucault, there is an ongoing transformation in the way of organizing time and spaces, in the dissemination of information and in social relations. And all this evidences other subjective components that work together to produce ways of living that is shared by workers. Another indication of this passage (from disciplinary organization to this one marked by control) can be found in the fact that any individual becomes a direct agent in the execution of the forms of control, regardless of him/her possessing specialized knowledge or being part of the vigilant hierarchy as a worker hired exclusively to perform such activity.

As the knowledge produced by the most diverse areas of knowledge rid itself of institutional boundaries and are spread out in a wide and diversified network, the population is being summoned and qualified to participate in reform processes of companies, as well as in the dissemination of new forms of control over workers. It can be therefore observed that the construction of a differentiated politics of subjectification is already in progress, through which the individual leaves the condition of a merely docile and obedient worker to take on the condition of "participant and responsible", connected to a wide and complex network of control. And this participation is oftentimes requested as a result of good performance, emancipation, quality and professional qualification.

It is also worth considering that information networks have become more efficient and fast. Equipment and services were made available to facilitate the monitoring of people, objects and events that occur in the cities and, within a more micro-social sphere, in the social relations experienced inside companies. These devices are diverse and include TV internal circuits installed in a variety of urban spaces, also encompassing satellite tracking systems for cars and mobile phones, in addition to access to images via the Internet from many different sectors in the company, extending to the external location of workers in real time (Mansano & Lourenço, 2012).

With this dissemination of control devices done by means of equipment but, mainly, by a human activity increasingly sensitized and trained to perform this type of activity, institutional boundaries cease to be the sole and indispensable condition for keeping productivity high. Thus, individuals no longer remain throughout his/her labor history in a single institution or a single job position. They move through several of them, handle various activities and, at the same time, it is worth saying, without necessarily being formally included in an operating environment. It is as though possibilities of institutional intervention rid themselves of the walls which until recently restricted them into a certain space, to circulate freely. Deleuze (1972/1992, p. 216) points out that we are experiencing a "ceaseless control in

open sites”, whose action is faster and more contextualized. Such a fact enables immediate interventions in the most different and unusual situations of daily life and spheres of private life.

As institutional values spread through the social field, the very notion of worker individual undergoes changes too. Now, he/she is no longer required to possess an identity crystallized in the subjective elements of docility and obedience. Rather, the individual is requested to perform his/her professional activities in an increasingly flexible, independent, and fast manner. Hardt and Negri (2001) call this new mode of existence hybrid subjectivity. In this new politics of subjectification the individual no longer belongs to any identity and belongs to all of them (Hardt & Negri, 2001). Thus, the growing demand for the worker to be flexible, well-informed and capable of solving unusual problems spans different professional areas and organizations.

It is also worth saying that relations of production go through changes as well. In recent decades we have seen another sphere of labor gaining importance, called by Hardt and Negri (2001) immaterial labor. This new configuration involves the complexity of a human who has been deeply transformed by acquisition of knowledge, by interaction with technological equipment and, especially, by a more direct contact with the social environment, which has also been largely transformed. It is by relying on such evidence that we have conditions to point out how much this new scenario is engendering a new politics of subjectification, whose centralization in physical effort and time control is no longer sufficient to ensure the execution of labor tasks. In this sense, Hardt and Negri show how much “The processes of modernization and industrialization transformed and redefined all the elements of the social plane” (Hardt & Negri, 2001, p. 305). Immaterial labor aims at another type of production which goes beyond the making of objects and includes in its calculations knowledge, trust, affection and socialization. Thus, the primary productive force is shifted from the individual physical activity and begins to count on production of knowledge and social contacts. This type of production also incorporates imagination, intelligence and cooperation. In Brazil, the expansion of this type of activity is noticeable. Pochmann ponders:

Technical-scientific advances in the beginning of this century create in modern societies superior conditions for economic and labor restructuring. On one hand, the emergence of new sources of wealth generation increasingly shifted from material labor leads to significant leaps in productivity. This is because immaterial labor frees itself from the prior existence of an appropriate location for its development, as it traditionally occurs in farms, industries, construction sites, offices and supermarkets, among so many other forms of economic organization grounded on material labor (Pochmann, 2009, p. 3).

The same author considers that subjective dimensions, now highlighted in immaterial labor, were practically forgotten through the long historical period in which production was mostly quantitative and organized by the segmentation of labor activities (Pochmann, 2012). Similarly, Gorz points out that in the nineteenth century workers “only became operational after being stripped of knowledge, skills and habits developed by the mundane culture” (Gorz, 2005, p. 19). Thus, it can be said that these dimensions were not needed in the execution of material labor and oftentimes impaired the fragmented and mechanical course of production, in which what mattered was obedience.

In the immaterial labor context, in turn, strongly marked by control devices, other subjective dimensions gain importance and begin to demarcate new requirements that fall on professionals. Attention, care, communication and sensitivity are given economic value, regardless of the level of training that professions require. As a result, new political contours start to characterize this type of activity. Thus, it is no longer physical strength that will give direction to the organization of labor, but rather a social and collective individual who determines the value of production, because, with labor being organized in communicative and linguistic forms, and knowledge being something cooperative, production will always depend more on the unity of connections and relations that compose the intellectual and linguistic labor, that is, it will depend then on this collective (Negri, 2003).

It is in this sense that, beyond a politics of subjectification that focuses on individuals and their individual productivity rate, immaterial labor manifests cooperation, exchange and ability to make connections in social and affective networks. However, Hardt and Negri also warn that “the cooperative aspect of immaterial labor is not imposed or organized from the outside, as it was in previous forms of

labor, but rather, *cooperation is completely immanent to the laboring activity itself* (Hardt & Negri, 2001, p. 314). This is how the politics of subjectification socially constructed in this period of dissemination of immaterial work will gradually gain new contours that significantly transform labor relations: knowledge and sensitivity place professionals in a differentiated position in the labor market, since they are no longer so easily disposable and replaceable. Capable of bringing people together and forming bonds of trust they have become precious social agents that change the relationship of companies with the population and with the cities. And this type of activity is far from being executed by the simple addition of individuals who are not allowed to interact and exchange experiences and knowledge. Addressing its expansion, Prado and Pinto (2014, p. 63) report: "immaterial labor, as concrete labor, presents itself, in fact, as an unavoidable reality in contemporary capitalism. And, in this sense, it truly brings an important problem to contemporaneity". It is worth noting that the increase in working hours (which, as already said, reached 16 hours a day in the eighteenth century) has not disappeared from all contexts of immaterial labor. It has given, however, a new look, now being made possible by the setting of goals to be achieved and full dedication to work demanded by ongoing training. These requirements are part of the routine of a wide range of professionals, from workers and vendors to great executives. Such a fact, as we will see, causes illnesses.

Final considerations

Reaching the end of this study, we highlight a few points which, in our view, are indispensable for us to continue problematizing the politics of subjectification emerging in immaterial labor. First, we have seen that in the face of new demands placed on 'immaterial' workers other subjectification components have begun to be widely requested and become the differential elements that define the permanence or exclusion of a company and/or a professional from the market. When analyzing the Brazilian reality specifically, we see that the material mode of production is still very present. Thus, there is in our country what Hardt and Negri (2001, p. 301) called a pronounced "hybridization" between material and immaterial modes of production. Regardless of a worker's function, he/she is constantly asked to present new answers and solutions to problems that emerge at random and call into question the quality and quantity of production.

Second, it is worth saying that what distinguishes this historical time is the fact that, increasingly, the results of the material labor tend to find place in the consumer market only when added by the immaterial dimension (images, values and satisfactions associated with goods and/or services). This is because the mere provision of a good is no longer sufficient to ensure trading. A whole immaterial dimension becomes important so that consumers are attracted not only by objects but also by the ways of life associated to them. Hence the frequency at which we speak today about the importance of listening to customers, who are largely encouraged to express their expectations, criticisms and opinions. So much so that advertising campaigns disseminated by the media resort to a great subjective appeal to make goods and services available to consumers.

It is worth considering a third aspect: the disciplinary and control politics of subjectification have merged in the capitalist contemporaneity. Thus, at times workers are required to adopt an obedient attitude, being constantly watched and monitored by sophisticated control equipment. At times they are called to take by themselves the control over their own productivity rates and professional training. Moving between discipline and control, new possibilities of resistance, but also of exploitation, are being shaped. In this sense, there is an evident need to carry out the task of problematizing the political effects generated by the expansion of immaterial labor and, inseparably, observing which pockets of resistance are rehearsed by workers who, situated differently in the production process, take advantage of their inalienable possession of knowledge and social recognition (marked by bonds of trust, sensitivity and affection) to invent other ways to relate to labor.

It is possible to consider, fourthly, that new politics of subjectification are gaining contours as they open space for debates, experiments and controversies about ways of living that are invented and/or

abandoned in the contemporary labor context. We have not yet completely parted from the disciplinary society and its political lines that have helped produce obedient and docile ways of living. However, it is evident that its contours are rapidly vanishing and being replenished in a complex way, since they mingle with subjective components characterized by control. In addition to the achievements and trappings that this complex and changing scenario triggers, it is important to take into account the emergence of new forms of suffering that are confirmed by the incidence of psychopathologies that entangle workers in severe cases of depression, stress and panic, which have increased the statistics of time away from work due to health problems.

If Foucault (1973/1999) already warned about the effects produced by the kidnapping of the body and time of workers, made possible by disciplinary institutions in the eighteenth century, currently this kidnapping has become multifaceted and involves other dimensions of existence linked to affection, desires and sociability, which have begun to be systematically exploited by the capital. Such exploitation, when pushed to the limit, tends to cause illnesses due to excessive pressure, goals and deadlines to be met.

This situation leads us to consider, finally, that the hybridization between material and immaterial labor produces significant effects of disruption, but also of subjection, in the lives of workers and in their relationship with the community and the organization of the cities. The expansion and legitimization of skilled labor make the population more attentive to decisions on ways of being included in job positions and in the politics that guide them. However, the effects of these social transformations are still in the process of being identified and understood. Hence the need to continue asking: Which new senses are being created for labor in the immaterial context of production? And, more specifically, which new politics of subjectification accompany them?

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