Telework, subjectivity and social ties

Lic. Vanessa E. Cravero
Specialist in Psychology of work and organizations. Independent Consultant.
Córdoba. Argentina.
vcravero@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The paper reflects on the Telework trying to open questions about the changes that installs on the organization of work. For it, their conditions of production are explored.

This new organization, remember the ideal of interconnected flow network, coordinated in knots by self-organized groups, where none is the center.

Interesting to reflect to reflect how transformations in the way of building social ties and the construction of subjectivities take place. Ultimately revived the debate on the centrality of work.

These reflections try to explore lines of professional action to contribute to development and implementation of programs that promote these practices and also reflect on the grounds and think for example, if since the company is looking perpetuate a modality existing by means of a new strategy or accompany the emergence of the instituyente, with a new way of working.

Keywords: social production of subjectivity, modes of organizing work-binarisms-

I.INTRODUCTION

The intent of this writing is to reflect on the initiatives of Teleworking[i] . Because it is a growing phenomenon[ii], it is not intended exhaust here the scope of the same, but open the reflection in order to guide the collision professional since it does not seek only in a different way to work but that invites to think the profound transformations that entails.

On the one hand, interested thinking and open questions about the changes that installs in regard to the logic organizational work.

On the one hand, it is interesting to think and open questions about the changes that installs on the organizational logic of the work. In this sense, there is the ideal network of interconnected streams, coordinated in knots by self-organized groups, none is at the heart, causing shifts in terms of power dynamics. For another, how to produce changes in the way of building social ties and the construction of subjectivities and ultimately causes reactualize how the debate on the centrality of work.

In short these reflections are not looking for a vacuum, but intend to explore vocational courses of action to contribute to the development and implementation of programs that promote these practices and also reflect on their foundations and think for example if from the company seeks to perpetuate a existing mode through a new strategy or accompany the emergence of the instituting, with a new model or way of working.

II. CONDITIONS OF PRODUCTION FOR TELEWORK.

Castoriadis invites reflection from a socio-historical perspective. Somehow warns that neither synchronous nor diachronic simplification, will allow a broader and deeper approach to give rise to powerful questions that lead to powerful thoughts in terms of professional activity.

So, is enabled to think the multiple and reciprocal interactions that create the framework of possibility of the emergence of teleworking. Assuming it is a fragmented reading, the chronological presentation of some Telework´s milestones, provide the diachronic issues that help to illustrate the phenomenon and to diversify reflection.

Telework Initiatives dating from the late 50s, in the post-industrial society. The economic crisis of the 70s created great expectations on its dissemination and the need to shift from fixed systems of production processes and systems that enable flexible and cheaper to adapt quickly to changing market demands or (post-Fordism), but under massive development of ICTs[iii] prevented such development. However, it appeared the contract, the flattening and reduction of organizational structures, etc. and arriving 80s, Telework was still practiced very sparingly. Pilot projects could not succeed mainly because of business resistance to a profound change in the organization of work.

The 90s which gave a great impetus from the widespread use of ICT (De la Cámara Arrilla 2000; Lenguita, P. Duhalde, S. Villanueva, M. 2005).The regulation – complex by the diversity of Teleworking- arriving later in Italy in 1998[iv] and 2002 in the European Community with the signing of European Framework Agreement on teleworking. However, this is still a critical point in most of the countries where teleworkers perform.

But what other aspects of the 90s, aside from the development of ICTs, explain this renewed drive for Telecommuting? .This decade has on the one hand a group of workers, especially professionals, with great development and recognition expectations and on the other organizations poorly prepared to provide opportunities. By contrast the life within it requires the exhaustion of productive time, with days that the internal jargon are known as "full life"[v] turn preventing the deployment of these needs in the outdoors, leisure time is becoming more limited. The crisis of global employment occurs simultaneously with discussions on the role of the family, the use of free time, the importance of quality of life, the demand for equal access without restrictions on gender or physical . This encourages the review of working arrangements.

In opposition to the precepts of modernity that installs the separation of substantive rationality (ethical) and the rationality of means (results), displacing the private sector's ethical position[vi] today's worker is increasingly questioned on substantive rationality the end of the work done within these organizations. This separation of rationalities, of spaces and roles, caused among other things, the displacement from the center of the family as the principal element of social life by delegating their duties in different organizations (schools, hospitals, etc.)..

Paradoxically, explains current phenomena such as crime, insecurity, addictions, among others, the crisis of values and these are usually acquired within families. In other words, the question of quality of life, not only refers to the organization within which you develop your job role, but extends to the fabric of institutions and organizations involved in society life.

III. WORK, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION (ICT) AND PRODUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY AND SOCIAL TIES.

The acquisition of technologies involves an acumulative process of development of modes of action and knowledge that include support for its effective utilization. In the manifest, not only appears new methods of working (from home, in a remote office, etc..) but also tasks has to be executed differently, being necessary other skills (self-manage time, self-management, etc.) but the entire organization is subject to other changes sometimes barely perceptible. How do you think the changes that these processes that seems naturals, produced in the formation of groups within the organization and how this affects the construction of subjectivity?. In the words of Crozier and Friedberg (in Villavicencio D., 2006), the subject in an organization is an actor who plays a game of contingent relations that circumscribe their productive and social action. That is to say, the subject isn´t a being disciplined devoid of projects or transaction without resources. The use of their skills, knowledge, the place occupied, personal stories, are aspects that can be used as a means of negotiation. In addition that changes introduced by ICTs, are compearing with previous decades, more and more entrenched and naturalized. That´s whiy is difficult to read the profound effects that produce the patterns of relationships.

How to understand the practices of Telework in relation to the concept of subjectivity?. According to some statistics (De la Camara Arrilla 2000), telework is more widespread among college-educated populations. The skills required to access this type are part of the explanation for this statistic (dominance of ICT can complement the absence of links with initiatives outside the workplace everyday, self-management of time, etc.).. It will be necessary to account for the new exclusions that are installed and that have been avoided, the benefits of shortening after geographic distance and time. Exclusion from the technical / instrumental, those with access to technology and non-exclusion is compounded by the conditions caused by use, as are the skills needed to operate and the type of relationship that emerges.

In addition, interested think about the effects or implications of these shifts on the subjective sense (González Rey, 2005) considering the subjectivity not as an interiority but as social subjectivity, that is, one that exceeds the physical limits of the individual and to meet this subject in action and context.

The notion of *social imaginary* proposed by Castoriadis (in Fernandez, AM 1993), refers to the set of meanings by which a collective, a society, a group is established as such: for it must not only invent forms of social relations and their way of contract, but also their subjective figures. It is, thus, their worlds of *social imaginary significations* [vii] operating as the *organizers of a sense of* human actions in each era social / historical, guiding and directing the lives of individuals constituting a society, establishing the permitted and forbidden, the valued and devalued, giving the attributes that define what established as legitimate or illegitimate, agreeing consensus or disagreement. In this line, it is interesting to outline how it operates within the framework of collective social meanings, the idea of a worker outside the factory / office / corporation and inserted in your home. We attributed to the word "Home", meanings of private, intimate but also is associated with the feminine, and "not working"-that is, no "paid" – Therefore keep invisible, the choice that the subjetc performs. Again, different, would be synonymous with negative or less. Some teleworkers summarized above under the Myth "to work in the home is not working", generating profound effects on subjectivity and identity of the worker.

Telework and particularly the work from home, looking to institute new ways of thinking about work and relationships among workers in a dialectic of 'invention' that creates new realities and in turn, these realities reinforce this invention. Moreover, ICTs contribute to the division of occupations, for example by checking more deeply the difference between manual and non manual and, consequently, the enhancement in both recognition of

the work also as to how is paid and how defined career paths of success or failure, among others, generating a direct impact on the social construction of subjectivities.

The question of the social imaginary that is to say the universe of meanings that institute a society is inseparable from the problem of power. Locate the nature of power include questioning about the registration of devices not only in the organization of a society and its institutions, but also its inclusion on the subjectivity of men and women.

The power as a relationship of forces invites to think about control devices. Thus, the panoptic device[viii], characteristic of modern and control society, allowing controlling a group of people without the presence of someone who controls and because of the impossibility of who is controlled TO note -by its position relative to the rest-, it is self-controled. Teleworking as a modality mediated by ICTs, mantein this mechanism and allows you to install multiple relationships that were once unthinkable. Unlike an organization where "Everyone in his place, well enclosed. It is seen, but he does not see, is object of information, but never a subject in communication. ... The crowd, dense mass, instead of multiple exchanges, individualities merge, mass effect, cancels the benefit of a collection of separate individuals. "(Foucault 1989) Telework installs a logic of networking inclusion. Used terms such as "stay connected" to name a single technology event but also implicitly, the possibility of linking to others where not to share space and time scales becomes infinite possibility of interactions, even simultaneously, being in control, not impossible from the technical but difficult related to the magnitude of relationships that can be established. As Telework allows interacting with a larger number of people simultaneously without shareing space, probably is needed not only technical training to competently access and use electronic media, but in addition, it is necessary to study languages and cultures codes. In this sense, implies an effort to the organization to provide alternative ways for the workers to maintain their sense of belonging to the organization (Bélanger 1999). Combined modality could be thought, such Teleworkers performing in a different allocation, but shareing regular "face to face" meetings or by video conference or activities with the exclusive objective to socialization.

It is interesting to think what new ways of distributing and holding positions of power will be needed to create in the virtual network of workers. The teleworker- generally knowledge worker- encourages other ways of organizing either independently or in a post-Fordist company. Gorz said(1999) "The paradigm of the organization is replaced by the interconnected flow network, coordinated by the knots self-organized groups, none of which is the center. Instead of a central-hetero-organized (as was the Fordist model), we have a self-organizing system offset, comparable to a nervous system wich interconnected networks try to imitate."

The panoptic device automates and control de-individualized and therefore power (Foucault 1989). At Telework the power is not only not individual, but is also "inhuman", that is to say, control and observation implies not only another subject, is the technology itself that has that power.

So what connection, link, is built from this logic? What are that potential and difficulties that this ideal network has in the construction of subjectivities? . It may help to think about the habits of teenagers whose use the Chat to speech, dialogue and express theirselves. The novelty of this logic produces simultaneously fearful adults and young that chan built in a different way. Appears again the labeling of difference as negative and even harmful?

Moreover, what happens to that relationship with the other that allows building on shared knowledge from someone who knows more?. It seems that there is a shift in the power supply from the authority system to the skill system. (Mintzberg, H. 1992).

If modern society, with the emergence of the organization as "universal standard of social structures" (Lapassade and Loreau 1973) involved a large concentration of power in those areas, the Telework could be seen as a threat to that concentration of power as it would be distributed in different nodes of the network. In this sense, the Telework reinforces the idea of the strategy without a strategist at Foucault. This contributes to resistance to this mode by the managers but also the maximum power concerning the organization.

IV. BINARISM

In pre-industrial society the work was integrated into the familiar, domesticity. Including rural work outside the home doors, took place in an area close to the family. The industrial era, offers people a different allocation not only to work in the factory as a space different from home, but because many left their trades (rural workers, artisans, etc.) to develop its work as a laborer in a factory in the city.

Thus, with modern industrial society, is installed the binarism "private life vs. working life"and consequently, personal development. vs. professional development. Also, installed the idea of efficiency and in this sense another binarism "productive time vs. leisure time", here the efficient use of time involves the "exhaustion" of time, devaluing leisure and rest, resulting from the significance, inequality or inferiority from the productive time.

But this classification of time, turns invisible or devalue that free time that take place into productive time. We often hear phrases like "meeting again, when are they going to work?", that is to say, this exhaustive and unrealistic division of tiem devalues workspaces that involve collective production. In this context, what would think about subjectivity that is built into those spaces? It is striking to note that some of the basics that are wielded against telework is related to discourses of fear about the loss of link at work. However, it seems that after this argument, it presents the concern over the loss of a type of bond which is to control, for example, top-collaborator. Different is

the concern if we think the construction of subjectivity as a collective process...who will the construction of subjectivity and the social bond be impacted by the displacement of the physical and daily space as a meeting point? What is lost and what is capitalized in that direction with Telework?

It is interesting to pause a few seconds to think about why appoint Telework as "alternative" and remember that the choice of this word also means taking a position in relation to a center (Fernandez, AM 2009). In this sense, it seems that is alternative in relation to "normal" work as a synonym for wage-earning, outside the home, on rule, etc .-. El desafío es reflexionar y proponer más allá de esos centros, intentando The challenge is to consider and propose beyond these sites, trying to think from the difference unbiased, in the words of Deleuxe "think the difference of the difference."

The focus will be then, in the Telework as a personal choice, one of many other equally valid-raised from the desire of the worker and not only as a measure proposing organizations as part of their flexibility and coping strategies of crisis and contextual changes.

It seems that after instituting force appear meanings that suggest a lower quality work, or of lower rank, developed by a minority who do not choose this method, but assumes it passively and without a proper look and approach can potentially further polarize workers between those inside or outside the system. This is of utmost importance because the social imaginary operates as a centrifugal force that can prevent or discredit silently what you think or make out of a given order of things.

Then, it is necessary to encourage others 'ways of thinking' enabling the overcoming of the episteme 'as one' that hegemonized modern western knowledge and led to think separately what is now attempting to link (Bozzolo, 2008).

IV. PROFESSIONAL INTERVENTION IN THE NET

The precedent, impacts from the professional and ethical framework to think the intervention. It will be important to consider these weave of relations in a particular organization at a especific time, ie how the particular history, social relations are established, the culture that they live and which has been claimed, conflicts of interest, etc. provide a framework to it.

In this context, the main tool is the question. For if so, what happens when there is a market condition or business that would legitimize the medium (Tele), is to say, what happens when the market is not asking ... but the worker do?.

Some local companies understand the Telework as a tool that addresses their need, for example, those where it not possible that its parent company, is located in the same place as their production facilities or customers, such as Banks, hypermarkets, food processing, cement, among others. Others understand telework as an alternative to include people with different needs and in that sense seek to retain their "talents." Other as a way to meet people with different abilities, as part of their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)

In this sense it is important to reflect whether the Telework involves work of first or second, reserved for those people with disabilities, or with different desires or different genera.

Thus, it is necessary to think of how to hold clear and fair rules to ensure that the Telework is really a legitimate "alternative". For example, should be clarified the criteria for staff promotion and whether those who telecommute are included in succession planning or not, and should be, if the change of position would leave that mode.

On the other hand, it is possible that many occupations or positions, couldn´t develop in the form of teleworking, at least in the same way the organization has been conceived until now. It will be necessary to revise the design of structures and tools available. It also poses professional challenges in the distribution and management of power, the skills of teams of teleworkers and in this sense how to help create the conditions necessary for the implementation of this method? How to select and train competent leaders to work with teams of teleworkers, how to accompany the formation of the skills needed for teleworking? How do you think the group from this new modality? What devices provide? How to strengthen link and group dynamics from the virtual?.

VI. CLOSING THOUGHTS

Will present some ideas and a series of questions rather than conclusions because at Social Sciences statements contain claims of "truth" or "reality" and in turn hide other, more so because Telework is a contemporary phenomenon and the knowledge about it is current in construction.

Modernity brought the organizations, without introducing new functions but differentiating existing made so far within the family or social group of references putting them around new spaces with new rules. That is, the novelty was not educate, but the school. In this vein, one could say Telework has the main interest al the function and second in the organization. And the question, how to hold the function outside the organization? Specifying ... ... how within an organization but outside the building?. Behind this question, a question most powerful "These organizations will be the place where people develop their careers professional in the future?.

In this sense, looks in the Telework replay a given order by changing the context or are looking for think differently the work and the worker as a way to integrate the activities of daily living to work, giving the work an equivalent space of other facets of human life-not necessarily the central or the only. How can we think Telework as a means of inclusion without installing in the same operation inequalities?

Gorz argues that this change is possible, but get out of positions involving magic instant own model that was installed with the salaried society and promises to satisfy all needs and achieve happiness and progress. It is necessary today to start building the world as the author calls the exodus, the author said "... begin to be aware of the fact that begins to be possible a society on the side, underneath, above which it ceases to exist. Not that no longer exists, but no one finds his way into it. No one has its place. To have a place today must be located outside "(Gorz, A. 1999).

How do I join separately? How to overcome the contradictions and the mandates that were held for decades? how should be installed in the collective imagination the idea that who teleworks ... "works"... how does this integration through the gender issue? How to ensure adequate regulation to make Telework as a worthy work? How to generate invention and not to reproduce the logic of "entrepreneur" in the spaces household?. Perhaps the relative novelty of Telework especially in Argentina make possible not hastily put into universal a-historical categories and instead invited to reflect and discuss because as Gorz notes "(...) do not understand more than what we know and we only know what we are capable of understanding. If we perceive and interpret the new schemes as interpretive and cultural stereotypes of old, we are blind to what is its novelty. "

Is Telework an "alternative" way which is updating a device or model or concept or the institution of work and along with it, subjectivities and relationships? …is Telework an instituting force that tries to modify the institution of job or question its centrality?.

Probably part of the answer has to do with the environment in which it is implemented and the interests to which respond. From the perspective of the company's policy framework or needs for adjustment to market logic, one could say that telework could enhance the power of the panoptic device, ie Superpanopticon mail. From the perspective of workers or organizations seeking to create working spaces that facilitate the development of other aspects of the worker's life - balance between work and personal life- it is at least one way in which workers may think your relationship with work. Somehow refers to the debate on the centrality of work in the sense of work = job-because the telework includes not only remote in the context of the dependency but also enables the worker to be thought in another relationship with the wage and with productive organizations. It opens the space for the invention of other forms that can integrate the diversity of interests and vital needs of a worker.

REFERENCES

[ii] For the purposes of this paper Telecommuting means according to the ILO (International Labour Organizational) as "a form of work done in a place away from the central office or production facility, which involves a new technology that allows the separation and facilitates communication "

[ii] "Particularly in Argentina last year, this method increased by 20% compared with the previous year, bringing the population of Teleworkers amounting to 1.8 million according to study published in the newsletter" Comments "Carrier Consultant and Associates. May 2009.

[iii] Information Technology and Communication.

[iv] N. Law 191 of June 16, 1998 regulated the implementation of Telework in Public Administration (Lenguita et. al 2005).

[v] Word "full life" regarding recruitment procedures that has the alternatives ook part-time and full-time.

[vi] Montenegro, Roberto. Seminar classes "Sociology of Work and Organizational" for Career Psychology Specialization in Labor and Organizations. June 2009.

[vii] These meanings are imaginary because they are given by creation or invention, ie, do not represent eternal universal essences, and are social because they only exist from the participation of a collective or anonymous.

[viii] "It's a ring-shaped building has a tower in the center with wide windows that open on the inside of the ring. It is divided into cells, each of which crosses the entire width of the building, these two windows, one to the inside (for the windows of the tower) and the other to the outside allows light to pass through the cell. " (Foucault, M. Discipline and Punish 1989).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arilla De La Camara, C. Spain. (2005). Teleworking, an indicator of change in the labor market. Notebooks Labor Relations. 227-256 17 :227-256
- Echeverria, Rafael (2000). The Emerging Company: Trust and the challenges of transformation . Granica Ediciones, SA
- Fernandez AM (2007). "The differences unequal." Presentation at roundtable: "Multiculturalism. Subjectivity and difference." National Library. Buenos Aires.
- Fernandez AM (2007). "Metodhos Making" in The IMAGINARY collective logic, MANY BODIES. Biblos. Buenos Aires ch. 1
- Foucault, M. Discipline and Punish (2002), Siglo XXI Editores. Argentina.
- Gorz, André. (1999) "The work disenchanted" misery of the present, WEALTH OF THE POSSIBLE. Paidós. Bs
- González Rey, F. (2005) "Subjectivity and Political Subjectivity. Interview with Fernando González Rey Cuban psychologist . "Interview by Alvaro Díaz Gómez. Retrieved on: http://www.liber-accion.org/Joomla/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=59&Itemid=28&limit=1&limitstart=2
- ILO (1999). Teleworking. The challenge of labor negotiations in the new working conditions, Job No. 30.
- Mattelart, A. - Garcia Castro, A. (2008) "Knowledge society, information society, a society of control - Interview with Armand Mattelart", Cultures & conflits, Inédits of Regards sur l'Entre Deux, [en ligne], mis en ligne le 15 November 2007. URL: http://www.conflits.org/index2682.html.
- Mintzberg, Henry (1992). Power in organizations. Editorial Ariel. Barcelona.
- Neffa, Julio Cesar (2003). Human Work. Contributions to the study of a value that remains. Grupo Editorial Lumen. Buenos Aires, Mexico.
- Lenguita, P. Duhalde, S. Villanueva, M. Argentina. (2005) The forms of labor control in times of teledisponibilidad analysis on the organization of Telework at home in Argentina 7 ° National Congress for the Study of Telework. ASET Association of Specialists in Labor Studies.
- Lopez. M (2009) Conceptual riffs around the notion of subjectivity and on theoretical approaches organizations. " Material internal circulation of Career Specialization in Psychology of Work and Organization, led by Dr. Mercedes Lopez. Faculty of Psychology. Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Unpublished manuscript. "Conceptual riffs around the notion of subjectivity and on theoretical approaches organizations."
- Villavicencio, D. (2006). Work, technological learning and innovation. In de la Garza Toledo, Enrique (coordinator.) Social theories and studies of work: new approaches. 2006 | 412 pp | ISBN: 9788476587898

- Interview with Andre Gorz (1999) by Michel Klotowsky. Clarín y Michel Zlotowski,. Translated by Cristina Sardoy. Available at: http://www.antroposmoderno.com/antro-articulo.php?id_articulo=63
- Workshop with Ana Maria Fernandez (2009). El pasaje. Córdoba.