

Editorial

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WORKER HEALTH (ST) FIELD represents a huge advance regarding the studies related to the health/disease/work relationship. In addition to the biological and technical approaches of occupational medicine and safety engineering, the incorporation of the social sciences into researches committed to the worker determines a radical change in the researcher's perspective by giving visibility to the subjects of the research, through the contribution and integration of subjects such as ergology, psychology, history, among others.

The ST's discursive formation has claimed its core identity in the essential and irreplaceable political and organizational role of direct democratic representations of trade unionists in workers' management committees integrated by workers and in the election of health council members identified with health in the workplace.

Representations of workers became constituents and creators of policies for workers as health system users. Thus, the construction of the Unified Health System (SUS) has opened political and administrative spaces for health technicians and professionals to interact with workers invested in union mandates, counselors and elected intellectuals to formulate guidelines and policies for health, welfare and social security for workers.

From 1988 to 2017, political and trade union conflicts found expression in the flow and reflux of the participation of workers' representatives in local, regional and national ST policies. The SUS received the militant contribution and, in contrast, the pressures not to give in to the organized groups of workers whether in the political, administrative or financial field.

Organizational pressures to develop ST were antagonized by business pressures, professional corporations and corporations of politicians linked to sectors opposed to the direct democratic participation in State policies.

In the last decades, several authors of the field have done what Raquel Maria Riggotto called the movement (of bridge and potentiation) towards the environmental question. We understand that such a movement emerges from the understanding that the threats to health do not obey the limits of factories, industries, and fields subjected to pesticides.

The association of ST with the 'environment' category shows a superposition of health risks in the most vulnerable populations: the same subjects work in situations of risk, have less protection in their work environment and live in less privileged places.

As an emerging discursive formation in the Brazilian technical-scientific scenario, it is important to emphasize that the ST's perspective did not exclude from the scenario the conservative perspectives of occupational medicine and occupational health. Such perspectives compete for hegemony, and the role of the academic institutions can be essential in spreading a body of knowledge that deconstructs the traditional perspective of blaming the working individual for their illness.

To get an idea, according to the National Association of Occupational Medicine (Anamt), in 2014 there were 12,756 occupational doctors working in Brazil, a fact that places occupational medicine as the sixth medical specialty, ahead of traditional specialties such as cardiology and orthopedics.

On the other hand, among the 90 public health programs accredited by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), only 11 of them offer a field concentrated on health, work and environment, and only 4 are actually worker health programs or health, work and environment. These data make it clear that there is still a long way to go until an expressive number of health researchers incorporate the categories 'work' and 'environment' as necessary to understand the phenomena related to health and illness, both in the field of the individual and within the populations.

Finally, it is necessary to mention the investment made by big capital to empty public controversies in the environmental field, by intimidating and criminalizing social actors or even by fomenting false dilemmas between workers and environmentalists. Big companies that degrade, pollute, sicken, and cause accidents bet on the fear of workers losing their jobs if they are aligned with environmental struggles.

We propose therefore a new watchword: workers, environmentalists, researchers, unite! For the right to health! For the right to work! For a sustainable world!

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