

Trash Pickers and Position Taking Regarding the Environmental Field: The Participation in the Recycling Chain in Southern Brazil

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By considering the legitimisation of environmental concerns in the composition of institutional spheres and in the production of social practices, I analyse the configuration of the environmental field, along with collective actions related to the recycling of solid waste in southern Brazil. Consequently, I seek to understand how the trash pickers constitute their position in the recycling productive chain, and in their interaction with the environmental field. By analysing the accounts of different agents who act in this chain, as well as the socio-demographic data and historiographic references, I argue that the position taking by trash pickers is organised based on a history of precarious inclusion; what is more, transience at work and solidarity ties regarding subsistence in the field combine with scarce interest in environmental causes.

Key words: trash pickers, position taking, participation, environmental field, recycling of solid waste

The production and consumption model we have generated and the signs of exhaustion in it has presented for the past decades, have fostered reflections about the sustainability conditions in our socioeconomic system. This is a context in which both practices and disputes regarding the preservation of the environment have been established in actions conducted by a plethora of agents, which include social movements, companies, and public administra-