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**Change through continuity: employment and social relations in the post-soviet workplace**

This paper intends to explore changes occurred to employment relations in Russia in the last decade, in order to understand how agents in production will react to the crisis. The dominant narrative maintains that post-socialist employment and industrial relations have been marked by strong continuity with the soviet past due to institutional legacies. On the basis of both secondary and case-study research the paper will investigate social relations in the workplace and conditions of employment in order to understand whether the experience of work has fundamentally changed opening up new challenges and opportunities for agents. The main thrust of the article is that continuity should not be equated with either satisfaction or cohesiveness. Institutions of industrial relations have remained unchallenged but terms and conditions of employment have not; this have exacerbated contradictions in the labour process but not generated change because of the peculiar nature of social relations in production. Institutionalism like transition theories, lacking theoretical space for contradictions in their model, fails to recognise both the constraints and challenges the latter pose to agency.