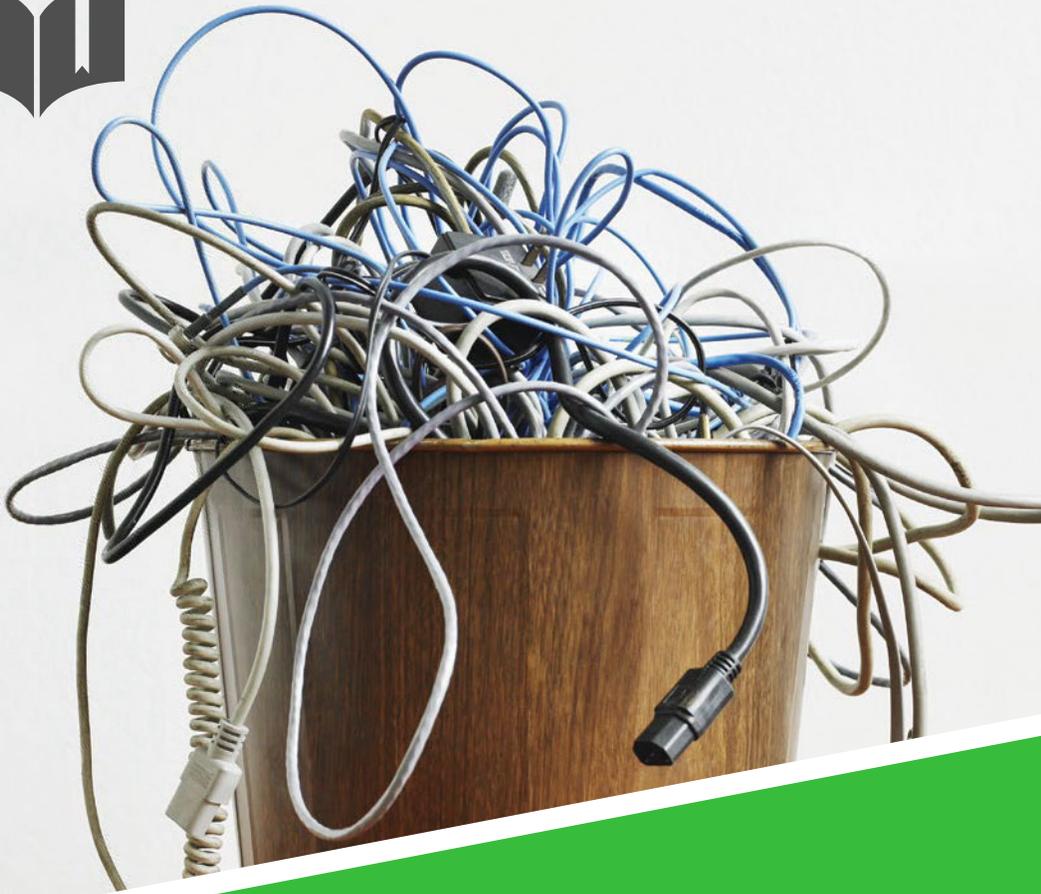


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THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF WORK IN EUROPE

Edited by
Paul Stewart, Jean-Pierre Durand and
Maria-Magdalena Richea



The Palgrave Handbook of the Sociology
of Work in Europe

Paul Stewart · Jean-Pierre Durand
Maria-Magdalena Richea
Editors

The Palgrave
Handbook of the
Sociology of Work
in Europe

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ISBN 978-3-319-93205-7 ISBN 978-3-319-93206-4 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93206-4>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018943636

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Preface

The initial impetus for this project began in 2006 with a comparative study by Jean-Pierre Durand and Paul Stewart of the changing character of labour sociology and the sociology of work in France and the UK respectively. Several aspects of their initial findings were published in the journal of the British Sociological Association, *Work, Employment and Society*.¹ Then in 2012, when the European Union provided funding under the auspices of the EU-FP7 Marie Curie Initial Training Network (ITN) for the graduate and post Doc research programme, *Changing Employment: The changing nature of employment in Europe in the context of challenges, threats and opportunities for employees and employers* we explored the possibility of extending the comparative study of the sub-discipline to a number of other European countries. This was an exciting endeavour and while it proved more difficult than we initially anticipated, not least due to the significant variation in reaching a common understanding of the object of study of the sub-discipline across a range of countries, the outcome of debates within the team proved compelling. We included both experienced and new researchers as well as colleagues from outside our Marie Curie supervisory network.

However, we still required time and more substantial organisational support and this came with the award of a Jean d'Alembert Chaire at Paris Saclay to Professor Paul Stewart during 2016. Moving beyond a good idea we now had the time and resources to organise seminars and travel in a more

¹Durand, J-P and Stewart, P. (2014) 'The birth of French labour sociology after the War: some reflections on the nature of the corporate state and intellectual engagement for the sociology of work in the UK today', *Work, Employment and Society*. Vol. 28(6), 1003–1015.

integrated and focussed manner. In our discussions it became apparent that there were common features to the way in which the sub-discipline had been evolving across countries with quite different intellectual formations. While these could be linked to the usual borrowings and appropriations we associate with intellectual developments more widely others seemed to be associated also with the changing nature of capitalism or, in case of Eastern European countries, post capitalism. The possibility of exploring what seems to have been a relatively under-examined link in the literature of the sociology of the sociology of work between societal form and the nature of the sociology of work (SoW) across a range of countries formed the leitmotif of our book. We decided to consider the evolution of the sub-discipline since the Second World War linking developments in each country to changes in social structure both at a national level but also in relation to the wider political economy. Thus, in Western Europe we considered the ways in which it evolved in relation to the welfare state and its crisis in the early 1970s, the rise of neo-liberalism, and then in the current period, the impact of financialised capitalism. In Eastern Europe we used the same approach to assess the ways in which post capitalist societies after 1945, and then since the late 1980s and 1990, neo-liberal capitalism, have impacted patterns in the development of the SoW. In subsequent editions we aim to include more European countries but also those in other continents.

We hope that the present Handbook project will provide a teaching resource for students and others working in the area of the Sociology of Work assisting them in their own investigative paths within the sub-discipline. An additional feature in this respect is that we have prepared the conclusion as a series of easily accessible summaries of the main features of the arguments contained in each chapter.

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Introduction

The Palgrave Handbook of the Sociology of Work in Europe Since World War Two

Paul Stewart, Jean-Pierre Durand and Maria-Magdalena Richea

We are living in turbulent times. Emergent patterns of migration, scarce resources, climatic change, poverty, febrile international relations, are sustained by deepening patterns of inequality. In this context, job creation and job improvement, job degradation, represent demanding concepts attached to policies and politics that constantly need to adapt, in order to be more encompassing, more cohesive, more inclusive, more humane, but most importantly, to seek concrete problem-solving solutions for workers in the workplace and beyond. With respect to our discipline, which for us is best when it seeks to make sense of these issues in a radical, progressive way, it is axiomatic that sociologists working in the field of the sociology of work have always had to evolve in order that they can meet the challenge of changing work place dynamics. This may not even require pause for thought since it is pretty obviously a feature of a sub-discipline premised on the study of work in capitalism that as work changes so too must critical features of the study of work itself. Thus, the sub-discipline has been defined by variant patterns of conceptual evolution and institutional reframing.

Accordingly, against a background of socio-political turbulence, the changing nature of work and employment requires research focusing (a), on the changing paradigms of work and labour processes, production organisation and employment relations, including the policies of labour

market inclusion, but also (b), an analysis of the organizational cum socio-environmental patterns that lead to workplace exclusion, unemployment and rising inequalities in terms of gender and ethnicity. An interesting question for us is how the sociology of work has changed over time and especially since the end of the Second World War.

In searching for an analytical scheme for sociologists and other social scientists that will allow us to attempt to make sense of work environments, we need to consider the extent of national path dependence. Thus, while the sociology of work assumes universalistic (i.e. non ethnocentric) claims, how far is it possible to accept the claims to universalism? This is not simply a matter of arguing that analyses of work place change in say Germany or Spain in the post-war period are explicable by accounting for variant patterns of fordism in assembly-line work. The development of fordist work processes in different countries can be ascertained easily enough. However, whether it is possible to develop an explanatory framework that ties the *social form* of post-war German, or French capitalism say, to variant, national path-dependent *forms* of sociological analysis, that is, the character, the doxa, not just the agenda (is it Taylorism/what kind of Taylorism?) is more ambitious, to the extent that it is possible at all. While in other respects our aim may appear no less ambitious, nevertheless, the Handbook will attempt to examine the extent to which it is possible to interpret national variations in the sociology of work in relation to the changing nature of capitalism in specific national contexts in relation to certain questions. This is premised upon the argument, which we make at intervals in various chapters, that since sociology does not stand outside society, whatever the occasional professional conceits to the contrary, its theoretical and empirical agendas and methodologies will bear the hallmark of the interests of various and competing hegemonic (and occasionally counter hegemonic) classes and status groups. This is consistent with our view of sociology, following Therborn, as being “historically formed” (Therborn 1976, p. 37) and therefore necessarily tied to the spirit of the age (Therborn 1976, p. 37), and moreover can be interpreted as an important feature of an “ideological community” (Therborn 1976, p. 222). That is to say, the ways in which variant national sociologies of work frame questions, together with their methodological preferences, depend upon what is happening to the capitalist society, or actually existing socialism (until 1989), within which the sub-discipline is located. The concerns of hegemonic and counter hegemonic social forces enable or exclude the importance given to certain features of work and employment which means that the way in which research is conducted, what is thought of as a scientific agenda and perspective, is not

above society, standing outside social conflicts delivering ex-cathedra statements in such a way as to presume social analyses are in some way class, gender and ethnically neutral. These are matters framed by social interests articulated by institutional power and various other agencies, as our project will attempt to demonstrate.

The distinctive advantage of our Handbook is that a comparative project of this kind has yet to be attempted and certainly not in terms of tracing the impact of macro socio-economic and political changes on the way in which the discipline goes about constructing its sense of intellectual practice. Aside from the excellent *Worlds of Work: Building an International Sociology of Work* (2002) edited by Cornfield and Hodson, there have been limited attempts to offer an international comparative analysis of the sub-discipline beyond comparison of extant social phenomena such as, work and labour regimes within particular sectors, and other key comparative concerns including, for example, national variations in gender, ethnicity, class and social inequality; comparative migration research; and labour market studies. Therefore, while comparisons of particular features of social life across countries abound, comparisons of the theoretical and empirical agenda, historical trajectories and social character, that's to say, a *sociology of the sociology of work*, has been insufficiently developed. While a range of sociologists of work in many countries have addressed conceptual issues associated with the sub-discipline, it is fair to pay our due to the call by Juan Jose Castillo (1999) for a *sociology of the sociology of work*. His desire to explore the importance of the influence of national histories, political influences, and the changing influence of different national social actors and their demands is one that we seek to embrace in our project. Also, credit also must go to the work of Claude Durand (1985) and the Groupe de Sociologie du Travail in France which some years previously had begun to question the sociology of work with respect to its reflexive capacity. They posed the question: what does it mean to imagine self-criticism? Amongst other themes, they were concerned with what they perceived to be the problem of 'critical' distancing of the sociology of work from its object of scrutiny. Their desire was to explore the importance of the influence of national histories, political influences, and the changing ways in which different national social actors and their demands might be embraced by the sub-disciplines.

In pursuing this prospectus, our study will explore the way in which the character of the sociology of work has evolved in relation to the changing nature of post-war Europe. There are, as we noted, many studies of the

changing interests and perspectives within nationally specific sociologies of work but that is not the same as a comparative study, and certainly not equivalent to, the project attempted here which seeks to connect social interest, national research agenda, and social form (viz, capitalism or actually existing socialism). We proceed by weaving the trajectory of the sub-discipline into three historical periods in post-war Europe: (1) 1945–1975 (*The Golden Age or Trente Glorieuses in the West and actually existing socialism in the East*) the rise of a post-war social democratic compromise across Western Europe, or the period we commonly define as actually existing Socialism; (2) 1975–1990s (*The Accumulation crisis and the first solutions to the crisis: automation, the rise of globalization*), the supersession of the post-war social democratic consensus in the West and actually existing socialism in the East, by the variant forms of neo-liberalism in the West and also the East; (3) 1990s–to the present (*Globalisation, neo-liberalism and financialisation*), the rise of new dominant class strategies and patterns of subordination sometimes described as class struggle and, additionally, in the East, system transformation from above, in some countries leading to a debate on the origins and trajectories of a presumed new individualism. Needless to say, these are generalized as opposed to precisely delineated periods of time that might be read off from specific years and within exactly same time span in each country.

Finally, to preempt the inevitable question, “why use the term sociology of work” when there is no such common nomenclature? Our pragmatic answer reflects our shared finding: it highlights a feature of our argument throughout which is that there is in fact no common, or settled, term in the discipline internationally let alone nationally, for the sociological study of the activity of work. For instance, in all our exemplars the nomenclature used to describe the study of work has varied: sometimes “industrial sociology”, or “labour sociology”, or again, “sociology of organisations”; and most recently, “sociology of work and employment”. Moreover, in some countries the study of work has not always been separated from the study of employment relations and, as in the instance of Romania, the sociology of work has never been clearly delineated as sub-discipline in its own right. We agreed in the workshops and other meetings that authors would stick to the nationally preferred term, or terms of reference, but that for the purposes of the common project we were convinced of the utility of the designation, Sociology of Work. What is common in all cases is that the SoW has been characterised not just by moments of fragmentation but that at root, the SoW is inherently fissiparous, that it reproduces by division and subsequent

association. Thus, while there is a lot of SoW it is frequently practiced in other social science departments, from Social Psychology to Economics, History and HRM. Moreover, this can be seen in the extent to which it is 'claimed' intellectually by other social sciences, whether as adjunct to social psychology and HRM or simply as the "study of work which anyone can do". We take this for granted for how could it be otherwise for a sub-discipline so routinely courted by the state and dominant social groups. The latter notwithstanding, whenever possible our chapters seek to highlight the importance of the trajectory of other, counter hegemonic, social agenda in the sub-discipline.

The Handbook will chart the trajectory of the Sociology of Work in 11 European countries: Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania. After mapping the current state of the theoretical background for the development of the sociology of work in each country, the authors explore the ways in which sociologies of work are socially congruent within the ambit of major socio-economic, historical and determinate political events. By socially congruent we mean that the sociology of work is limited in its study *to* historically specific, extant, social phenomena and that it is limited *by*, inter alia, its social class, ethnic and gendered milieu. And moreover, given what we said previously, one of the things we are particularly interested in deciphering is the degree of separation between cultural specificities and cross-cultural tendencies in each country.

Just as there are common features in Western Europe, so too Central and Eastern Countries (CEE) have distinctive markers and our thesis is that we will be able to explore, on a country-by-country basis, the dominant relationships between the state, macroeconomic trajectories and variant sociologies of work.

By focusing on the relationship between broad social changes and the trajectory of the sociology of work in each country we can connect the rise, for instance, of social-democratic and communist (or "actually existing socialist") regimes, or today, neo-liberal regimes, the more common trajectory of contemporary capitalism, to the fate of work in its articulation with notions of the "worker" and his/her concerns. Or, perhaps the concerns were not with the fate of the "worker", but rather the fate of the "worker" only in so far as the activity of the worker impacted upon national reconstruction (Britain and France, notably). Much more on this below!

Now to our studies of the development of the sociology of work in 11 European country cases.

Case 1

The Sociology of Work in Britain

Carol Stephenson, Paul Stewart and David Wray

The first chapter explores the period from 1945 to the early 1970s, takes us through to the era that witnesses the decline of the post-war social democratic consensus starting in the mid-1970s, and the rise and consolidation of neo-liberalism, beginning in the late 1980s to the current period characterized, by amongst other developments, a critical sociology of neo-liberalism from below. Stephenson, Stewart and Wray emphasize the importance of locating the character and form of the sub-discipline of the Sociology of Work (SoW) in early post-war institutional and disciplinary consolidation especially within universities. They argue that to understand the trajectory of the sub-discipline it is necessary to see that the SoW does not stand outside social influences, and moreover, that particular concerns shape and push (and pull!) the SoW according to the social interests of the class and social groups that dominate in particular historical moments.

For example, the term, sociology of work, has been historically contested and in the early post war period much work that we now consider the SoW was carried out under the auspices of “industrial sociology”. More than a matter of fashion this reflected an overriding concern for the social relations of, principally, male blue collar factory workers. As blue collar industrial work became more febrile and then declined, beginning in the late 1970s early 1980s, a concern with the wider political economy began to impact on the kinds of phenomena that SoW specialists researched.

This was not because work beyond the factory gate had never existed prior to the decline of the post-war social settlement. On the contrary, unregulated, part time and temporary work had always been there but in the post-war years sociologists, concerned with national productivity and the interests of dominant social groups, remained largely unconcerned with a broad range of exclusions within and beyond what was seen as the archetypal job occupied by white, male indigenous workers.

Thus, in this regard, they follow Therborn’s concern to locate sociology as a “historically formed” (Therborn 1976, p. 37) discipline that reflects the determinate, typically dominant, social class interests of a particular era. The concern with the fate of work, and workers, takes a number of forms which depend upon the way in which capitalism in Britain was reshaped by

the three key moments of social democracy-reconstruction (1945–1970s), decline (1970–1980s) and neo-liberal-reconstruction, crisis (1990–2000s).

The authors make two critical points about the SoW. The first is that a relatively recent concern with the soi-disant Golden Age and the worry about fragmentation, and perceived decline, overplays historical cohesion both institutionally (within sociology departments) and intellectually (SoW as the preserve of sociologists). They describe this as *institutional and disciplinary spread*. On the contrary, the SoW of work has never been carried out only within the university and moreover it has never been, and this is as true today, if not more so, the preserve of sociologists.

Moreover, to the extent that one might perceive what the authors describe as institutional fragmentation, far from being a weakness, this is in fact a strength. This is matched by the proliferation of sociologies of work by others untrained in sociology departments. While the latter form of fragmentation (intellectual diversity) can be problematical for sociology, this is not the concern addressed by Stephenson et al. Rather, they argue that the pattern of work and activity within what we understand as the SoW over the decades since 1945, can also be defined not just by whether it is carried out in sociology departments, or business schools, but by two quite different questions. Why, today, are there now other practitioners engaged in research from beyond the traditional university social milieu and why is it that research and theoretical concerns in the SoW display a synchronicity with the spirit of the age? This leads them to suggest that it is not just that the SoW changes as capitalism changes. In the 1950s, the sub-discipline was obsessed with worker productivity (famously Triste and Bamforth) while in the period since the 1990s a key concern has been the nature of workplace involvement and control and myriad patterns of work and work place exclusion (see the work on the individualism-collectivism debate), and increasingly today issues around migration and work. Why was there so little apparent concern with the fate of migrant workers after the war from the sub-discipline? After all, there was considerable migration, and relatively more so from Ireland and the Caribbean, in the 1940s and 1950s than since the 2000s from the EU yet there is no recorded research in the SoW on the work and labour conditions of immigrant workers during the post war years.

This emphasizes one of their points which is that the concerns of dominant social groups determine what deserves our attention. In the 1950s, working-class subordination was, while not always without concern, seen as having been cushioned by social democratic social and welfare reform, while the increasing breakup of the latter and the impact this had on class solidari-

ties created, supposedly, a working class that displayed various cultures of isolation and anti-collective dissonance. The assumption behind this narrative, derived from the notion of a Golden Age in the discipline that in turn mirrored a Golden Age in society, derived from a view of the post-war period as one of increasing class solidarity and social mobility. As elsewhere, sociologists in Britain, if not quite so directed as in France, were brought aboard the grand train of British post-war consensus for reconstruction. It is hardly surprising therefore that the work and employment concerns of black, Irish and Asian immigrants, amongst others including women working in atrocious conditions, were considered uninteresting, to the extent that they were considered at all.

By the same token, it should come as little surprise that as British capitalism embarked on a period of decline in the 1970s, and later neo-liberal reconstruction, that precisely those impacted by what the authors, borrowing from Ralph Miliband, term class struggle from above, should become increasingly important to the SoW. More than this, since the delicate class discretions of Britain's universities were also becoming subject to the cold winds of neo-liberalism, it was becoming more difficult to practice the SoW as if it were a subject looking in at workers from the high ground of objective academic science practiced in the simple virtues of value neutrality. Good, clear empirical research is essential but it is also now frequently being carried out by those who were, in our first two periods, the object of knowledge: now the peasants are (often) doing it for themselves. Just as institutional and disciplinary fragmentation bring certain difficulties, so does the fact of social location matter. For the authors, while social and spatial attenuation is good it doesn't mean that it is without consequence.

Thus, after focusing on the debate about the SoW and its institutional and disciplinary origins they take the unusual step of eschewing a full spectrum narrative account of the sub-discipline since 1945. Reminding us of a number of exemplary texts in the field, they propose an unashamed selection of what they take to be defining work in the each of the three periods. The work selected is seen as exemplary to the extent that it addresses issues, and challenges in various ways, socio-economic power from the standpoint of those excluded in late capitalist society. The chapter, in other words, argues that practitioners of the SoW today can be radical and committed to change by engaging with those subordinated in and by work while at the same time maintaining good research practice.

Case 2

The Sociology of Work in France

Jean-Pierre Durand and Guillaume Tiffon

This chapter connects France's socio-economic history to specific paradigm shifts characterising the sociology of work after 1945. (It is worth recalling that France was a pioneer in the sub-discipline). During its gestation phase (1945–1975), the sociology of work was nurtured by Georges Friedmann and Pierre Naville, operating in an environment defined by post-war national reconstruction. The French state at the time, influenced by the country's Gaullist and Communist parties, sought to increase the productivity of labour, inspired in part by the notion that work could be scientifically organized. This was an American import that had failed to take root in France before World War II. The newly reborn world of French academia was dominated by the precepts of social Catholicism, the hope being that this might lead to the re-emergence of peaceful professional relationships. It was an era when the sociology of work was asked to analyze the causes of obstacles to increases in worker productivity and was largely influenced by American psychological methods, often based on quantitative and empirical analysis. Notwithstanding the efforts of Pierre Naville, worker movements (and Marxism) had little effect on the discipline's renaissance.

The second phase (1975–1990) coincided with a major crisis of capitalism spelling the end of France's 30 years of post-war growth. For the sociology of work, this made the crisis of so-called 'simple' labour a prime topic for analysis, with focus now shifting to industrial and office worker absenteeism, the proliferation of strikes and quality problems. Even so, the sociological analyses marking this era remained very descriptive, with the French translation of Braverman's seminal text failing in its quest to embed paradigms offering a radical criticism of capitalism. The French Left's electoral success in 1981 did, however, revive the sociology of work by supporting initiatives associated with certain major social transformations occurring in the country's corporate sphere. This led to the emergence of a sociology of companies that tried to make business the key driver for all societal change relating to social development and individual fulfilment. Alongside of this, sociology began to professionalize (business experts, completion of research contracts, etc.), creating an environment in which it became difficult for sociologists criticising work to receive an airing.

The chapter argues a third phase (1990–2015) can be delineated which saw the rise of the lean production model. However, in contrast to research by US and UK academics and trade unionists, in France it took somewhat longer for the world of work (including in universities) to fully grasp the extent of the transformations taking place. According to Durand and Tiffon, this meant that the sociology of work ended up more as helpful companion, than analyst, to changes in capital-labour regimes. It was only after witnessing a wave of suicides, and other signs of distress at work, that sociologists began to develop more analyses, often funded by the health and safety commissions established in the 1980s. Many of these analyses were more concerned with an attempt to observe reality than to remedy the causes of myriad social problems. Sociologists divided between two paradigms: the shift of industrial activities towards service relationships (nurturing a sociology focused on individuals and interactionism), while sociologists linked to the Regulation School favoured more systemic analyses which were sometimes inspired by Marxist discourses. Discussions now were frequently concerned with productive reconfigurations; the erosion of Fordian employment norms and the tertiarisation of activities.

In parallel to these neo-Marxist studies addressing productive reconfigurations, a number of other analyses targeted the new management models. Amongst these studies, the conventionalist approach—which can be understood as an attempt to break free from structuralism (deemed an overly deterministic over-reach)—occupied a key, and even dominant, position within the sociology of work due to its institutional importance.

Faced with this phenomenon, sociologists of work began analyzing the effects of more precarious employment conditions, especially from the 1990s onwards. It may be difficult to determine a clear-cut paradigmatic shift across this corpus but what is evident is the existence of three paradigms that conflict with one another. The first is precarity versus integration, a debate that has been especially widespread since the 1990s, featuring authors such as Robert Castel and Serge Paugam. The second involves uncertainty, perceived as something ambivalent and potentially a source of autonomy and emancipation. This debate would develop in the 2000s based on the work of a range of authors, notable amongst them, Pierre-Michel Menger, whose work led to him being appointed to the Collège de France. Lastly, the 2010s saw debate about non-salaried subordination (and exploitation) of “false independents” (“own contract workers”) and “invisible workers”, (the hidden economy) mainly based on studies carried out by a new generation of researchers whose position in the overall field would turn out to be less central than the role played by tenants of the other two paradigms.

In sum, from the early 1990s onwards, the sociology of work diversified, fragmented and experienced several paradigmatic shifts. Irrespective of the objects of study, the dominant paradigms (uncertainty, conventionalism or interactionism, for example) would continue to have theoretical and political affinities with liberalism, even if they did not share this view. Developed in opposition to critical sociology—deemed to be overly deterministic, over-arching and politicized—they would be carried forward by socially and institutionally situated sociologists who, behind their expressed desire to renew theoretical frameworks, were working in reality against any movement seeking social transformation, thereby contributing to the maintenance of the existing social order.

Case 3

Sociology of Work in Germany

Holm-Detlev Köhler

The chapter outlines the main developments of industrial sociology as the particularly influential sub-discipline of Sociology in West Germany since the end of World War II, divided in three sub-periods: the Fordist (1949–1975), the transformation (1975–1990), and the globalization (1990–2015) periods, the latter marked by national (re-)unification. Industrial sociology in Germany implies a broader scope than Sociology of Work or Industrial Relations in Latin and Anglophone countries. The main focus is on how industrial work shapes modern industrial men and women and modern industrial society.

The first period (1949–1975) is characterized by the context of the re-foundation of sociology after the liberation of the country from Nazi-dictatorship at the end of World War II. The sociology of work was at the centre in terms of empirical studies on work organization, technological rationalization and workers' consciousness. Köhler argues that there were three key reasons for the priority accorded to industrial sociology in Germany:

1. West Germany experienced an accelerated process of industrialization that set the foundations for the 'economic miracle' of the 1950s and 1960s. Industrial work and organization thus occupied a central position.
2. In the context of political disenchantment and conservative restoration, engagement with the study of industrial workers, their working and living

conditions, class consciousness and interest organizations appeared as a privileged field of work for progressive social scientists.

Certain specific German traditions in social thought and philosophy such as the Historical School (Gustav von Schmoller, Lujo Brentano), a romantic criticism of modern industrialism (Oswald Spengler, Ernst Jünger), together with the subliminal influence of Weber and Marx, motivated an interest in the social consequences of industrial and technological development among German intellectuals.

3. In Germany, industrial sociology was conceived as an approach to understanding the complex interaction of industrial work and societal institutions in modern capitalism. In this view, the firm is perceived as a public affair, a constitutional social community, wherein workers receive their democratic rights and the owner has to fulfil a set of social duties. “One could also say that the US and Britain focused on ‘private contracts’ whereas Germany focused on a ‘social contract’ within a firm” (Frege 2008, p. 48).

The recovery of Marxist theory helped to overcome the traditional theoretical deficit of a phenomenological sociology which had developed its main concepts by inductive observation. Important studies on trade unions (Bergmann/Jacobi/Müller-Jentsch 1975) and workers’ consciousness (Kern/Schumann 1970) attempted to nurture the thesis of a new militancy against capital with empirical findings. Marx’s concept of real subsumption of labour under capital in advanced capitalist production was linked with Max Weber’s concept of bureaucratic rationalisation and Joseph Schumpeter’s idea of the self-destruction of capitalism through the substitution of entrepreneurs by large industry administrations.

The second period (1975–1990) is characterized by the sudden end of the “dream of everlasting prosperity” (Lutz 1984), the crisis of the Fordist accumulation model and the end of the ‘normal’ employment relationship. The fragmentation of work and employment is also addressed in industrial Sociology.

Three primary trends may be identified as shaping the sociology of work in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s. First, international and inter-sectoral comparative analyses led to an institutionalist shift focusing on the institutional settings and complementarities in the specific national and sectoral articulations of industrial order. The second trend was more focussed on the organization of firms and production, using concepts such as “new production concepts” or “lean production” in form of a “second industrial divide” (Piore/Sabel 1984). The third trend referred to the retreat of traditional manufacturing replaced by growing service sectors and activities.

The third period (1990–2015) of an accelerated globalization under neoliberal dominance coincided in Germany with the (re-)unification process. Increased international competition, flexibilization and deregulation of financial and labour markets and the TIC revolution (Technologies of Information and Communication) met with the specific German model of organized capitalism, or coordinated market economy.

After many years of diverse empirical research in post-Fordist heterogeneity without clear concepts of society and production models, the worldwide crisis of global capitalism 2008 and its ongoing consequences, provoked a kind of wake-up among German industrial sociologists. “Bringing capitalism back in!” was the programmatic title of a conference organized by several leading industrial research institutes in 2009 (Dörre et al. 2012). The lost connection between workplace analysis and capitalist critique should be recovered in a situation where the contradictions and damages of the global capitalist system again became evident.

Under the label “integrated production systems”, the current debate in Germany tries to bundle a wide range of organizational concepts. Heil and Kuhlmann (2013) distinguished four dimensions in the Integrated Production System approach, that sometimes also appears under the labels of “operational”, “manufacturing” or “business excellence”: If there is a general trend in the huge variety of empirical studies and theoretical efforts to make sense of the current volatility and variety in working life: it is the extended conquest of the whole person for economic value production. The central idea of real subsumption of work under capital (Marx), widely abandoned in the 1980s in German industrial sociology, might be more relevant than ever.

Case 4

Labour Sociology in Italy: Resisting Erosion Through Transformation and Dynamism

Valeria Pulignano

Valeria Pulignano argues that the sociology of work in Italy has, since its foundation, developed an interesting process of internal transformation (the so-called ‘open’ approach) as a way to respond to the challenges of globalization and change within the context of historical institutional and political constraints. This process consisted of incorporating the micro (workplace), the meso (organization), and the macro (labour market, welfare state, employment, and industrial

relations) (sub) disciplines of work in order to retain the theoretical and empirical nature of studies in the sociology of work. She illustrates this while also charting the foundations and subsequent historical developments of the sociology of work in Italy since its origins in the post-war period. The chapter suggests that this process reflects the specific features of the historical evolution of the sociology of work, which are nationally embedded. She reminds us of Castillo's (1997) argument that the phases, the progress, or even the decline, in the evolution of the sociology of work reflects the influence of national histories, political influences, and the changing sway of different national social actors and demands.

Pulignano argues that methods of enquiry and topic areas covering diverse levels of analysis have contributed significantly to keeping the sociology of work together as a coherent intellectual field in Italy over the years. In so doing, sociology of work in Italy has been able to survive contemporary global challenges. On the one hand, using methodologies which allow for the study of process (e.g. process tracing) approaches helps overcome some of the difficulties associated with cross-sectional investigation. On the other hand, theoretically, the social understanding of work has required the inclusion of social phenomena which are external to immediate work settings. As a result, she argues that internal borderlines have had to be crossed within the sub-discipline.

Thus, the chapter outlines the main socio-political transformations which occurred in Italy from the end of the Second World War and their impact on the sociology of work as part of labour sociology and/or industrial sociology, or more generally, economic sociology. The chapter sheds light on the historical foundations and the evolution of the sociology of work, identifying its main themes and disciplinary specificity while addressing the question of cross-disciplinary fertilization with other disciplines in social sciences and notably with gender studies and labour relations. This has resulted in a sociology of labour which has evolved as dynamic and distinctive in its methods and research agenda. Moreover, this occurred in an historical period in Italy characterized by profound institutional and political changes.

Case 5

The Politics of Sociology and the Challenge of Fragmentation: The Study of Work and Employment in Spain

Miguel Martínez Lucio and Carlos J. Fernández Rodríguez

When dealing with the history of the study of work in any one national context from a broadly sociological and critical perspective Martínez Lucio

and Fernández Rodríguez argue it is important to cast one's analytical net as widely as possible without losing sight of the need to look at underlying currents and dynamics. They argue that the desire to uncover specific characteristics, foci, and trends must be done with an eye to the political and institutional frameworks of any one context. They point out that a critical perspective must be able to look at how ideas and thoughts within the process of academic study are shaped not just by ideational factors but by the way the academy is organisationally framed, the role of other public and private actors such as foundations (as in private and public agencies), and the political position and context of the country in question. The question of power and the question of how the 'problems' and 'dynamics' of work are determined and become terrains of struggle are what constitutes a critical approach. The chapter highlights the importance of looking at the underlying political, institutional, and economic drivers that constitute a tradition of study and analysis.

Spain which has experienced a series of profound political and social changes during, and since, the 1940s. It is a country where the right-wing authoritarian Francoist regime (from the late-thirties to the mid-seventies) framed the nature of formal study in terms of work and employment broadly speaking. The chapter begins by focusing on the way this period framed social enquiries of work and, in addition, limited the sociological approach to work and employment preferring to focus on more legalistic—and constrained—approaches to the subject. The authors consider the ways in which a more independent study of work emerged and how counterpoints within the academy, left networks and overseas universities, contributed materials and approaches. Foreign institutions, such as the ILO were also important in this regard. However, within the regime and amongst its institutional allies, there were curious developments in terms of how certain managerialist and psychological perspectives were developed. Spaces were opened up within various areas of study around so called more "progressive" management theories and in the realm of labour law. In terms of the study of employment however, there remained a weak empirical tradition and an ongoing set of socio-political constraints.

It is only in the late fifties, with the beginning of military and economic cooperation with the USA when the modernization of universities began to take place through collaboration with some US universities. This helped to establish more research-oriented institutions although they remained politically constrained. Functionalism and empirical sociology (with Merton and Lazarsfeld as key references) were to be hegemonic, but with little interest for the world of work and issues of representation. However, some of those

scholars turned their attention to industrial sociology, focusing on debates between scientific management and human relations from a functionalist perspective. A number of researchers engaged with Dahrendorf's and Coser's theories of conflict, researched the role of industrial conflict and the political participation of workers. These researchers represented the first serious effort to study empirically uncomfortable issues for the regime such as strikes and workplace conflict (while remaining to some degree close to functionalism).

There was also a selection of Marxist analyses which were published in Spain by the beginning of the seventies, when Franco's regime faced its last years in a context of growing political unrest and the perspective of a political transition was in sight. Martínez Lucio and Fernández Rodríguez then consider the development of the sociology of work in the post Franco period taking us up to the 1980s with what they see as the "uneven emergence" of a "democratic sociology". The transition to the new democratic system in the 1970s sees various observers emerge and a new generation of labour sociologists. This generation established the agenda of the sociology of work in Spain. It attempted to set the conditions for a new approach that would take into account the new conditions of labour in post-authoritarian Spain as one of the main challenges for a democratic society. The chapter highlights the extent to which, when they began, these sociologists drew their influences mostly from Regulation Theory. Authors such as Aglietta, Boyer, Freyssinet, and particularly Benjamin Coriat had an enormous influence and were invited often to workshops and seminars. A number of British sociologists were also important, particularly in Barcelona-based networks. This sociology of work's emergence had to address the context of de-industrialization and a shift in sociology where the attraction of post-industrial values seemed to imply a weakening of organized labour as the main source of identity for the working class. While in most of the 'Western World' this shift towards post-industrialism was evident in one form or another, in Spain the change was particularly dramatic, with the restructuring and collapse of key parts of industry and an exceptionally high level of unemployment since the beginning of the 1980s. This changed radically both Spanish economy and society, spreading a model of "bad jobs" in the service sector associated with high levels of vulnerability and precariousness, even before the term became academically fashionable. This led to a growing interest in working conditions, fragmenting labour markets and the quality of working life: much supported by a range of European Union funding and support.

This political reality and series of narratives was met with a variety of responses that had a curious set of political agendas. First, the period saw the emergence of studies within a range of private research institutes and

foundations normally funded by financial institutions. This more formal and institutionalised approach—which normally used surveys or expert focus groups and “roundtables”—was concerned with pointing to the contradictory nature of the worker mobilizations and actions of the period, as well as the more instrumental attitudes of workers. Second, German social democratic research centres (the Foundation Friedrich Ebert and others), with their focus on corporatism/social dialogue, opened offices in Madrid to assist the Spanish Socialist Workers Party and the allied General Workers Union (the UGT), and forged a more social dialogue and moderate ‘collective bargaining’ view of work and its regulation. The authors then focus on the way in which a number of sociologists of work began to focus on labour regulation during the 1980s and 1990s. The chapter then moves on to considering the importance of what Martínez Lucio and Fernández Rodríguez describe as the “Outsiders”: gender, youth, and race in the study of work since 2000. They conclude with a consideration of a range of work on new independent networks, forms of representation and new forms of conflict that have been important in highlighting new dynamics and themes in labour relations and the social relations at work. The emergence of *Podemos* in Spain which is linked to a radical and innovative new political generation has also galvanized alternative forms of research. Whilst alternative forms of research have been used in various sociological circles it is rare to see participant observation and more direct forms of researcher involvement in mainstream academic research. Once more it tends to fall on more radical and politically networked researchers to develop these forms of research.

Case 6

Swedish Sociology of Work

Bengt Furåker

Furåker argues that the sociology of work has been a central subfield of Swedish sociology ever since the subject became an independent university discipline almost 70 years ago. It was a time with huge economic growth, peaceful industrial relations and increasing living standards. By international comparison, sociology arrived late, but from the beginning it had a preoccupation with work-related research. Furåker begins with an assessment of what he describes as “The early sociology of work” which stretches from the opening of sociology departments in Sweden in the late 1940s

and early 1950s up to the mid-1960s. Research in this period was, for the most part, concerned with the individual's adjustment to work and a consensus perspective on workplace relations stood out. Theoretical inspiration came above all from American sociology and social psychology, not least the Human Relations perspective. Also, with regard to conducting empirical investigations, models were taken from American studies. Swedish sociology of work was from the beginning very much focused on empirical research, although the number of researchers was limited. Typical topics were: attitudes to work, worker adjustment, job satisfaction, formal and informal work groups, and workplace communication. Furåker makes the point that while there has been much more research conducted by sociologists of work in recent decades, he observes that many of the studies in the early period, mainly dealing with industrial work, received a lot of attention in Sweden.

Furåker draws attention to the fact that interest in sociology accelerated among students as well as more generally in society in the 1960s and early 1970s. With larger numbers of students, the departments also expanded by recruiting more teachers and researchers. "New currents—and reassessments" is the heading he uses to cover the period beginning in the mid-1960s during which time the dominant paradigm of sociology of work began to be questioned. During the most intense phase, everything that could be re-evaluated was re-evaluated. New theoretical perspectives—especially conflict- and power-oriented approaches such as various versions of Marxism—made their way into the field. In the course of questioning and re-evaluation, the discipline itself became more conflict-ridden. Another development was that many sociologists now approached trade unions with the effect of distancing them from employers, to some extent. Sociology became more oriented toward class struggle issues: improving physical working environments, fighting job monotony, increasing employment security, developing codetermination in the workplace, etc. The 1970s was also a time when the labour movement in Sweden carried out several important labour market reforms and made funding available for evaluations and research. It is unclear when the radical wave ebbed but it was no doubt over by the mid or perhaps late 1980s.

For many years, the period of reorientation left its imprint on the sociology of work, but the atmosphere calmed down and things gradually began to change. The period that followed is by far the longest, including most of the research in the current overview. Academic criteria were strengthened. Reaching out to an international audience and readership—through international peer review journals and publishing houses—became imperative. In the mid-1980s neoliberal ideology began to win considerable terrain in Swedish

society. Some sociologists may have become less eager in their ambitions to contribute to improvements in working life than during the foregoing phase, but most of them kept much of their older orientations and attachments. They hardly became neoliberals, although they lived in a neoliberal epoch. It was common to remain within the paradigms one had taken on board during one's academic training. The same can be said for the years after the turn of the millennium. Now there is a more relaxed relationship to Marxism; it merely became one theory among others that could provide inspiration. Still, with the liberalization of society and economy in Sweden sociologists have faced certain new topics concerning, for example, flexibility, temporary work agencies and large inflows of immigrants into the labour market. There has also been a renewed interest in attitudes to work and job satisfaction. That said, the chapter emphasizes that this is by no means a step back to the research in the 1950s, although the similarities are obvious when it comes to the gathering of empirical data. Newer inquiries are usually not based on implicit assumptions about harmonious relations in the workplace but have a more open perspective regarding orientations to work.

A characteristic of the more recent sociology of work is a growing differentiation and specialization. Furåker uses a number of subheadings to grasp this diversity. Areas of work include: (a) Workplace studies; (b) The future of work and commitment to work; (c) Flexibility issues; (d) Gender and ethnicity; (e) Educational levels and demands for skills; (f) Trade unionism. One problem that those interested in work-related issues has been confronted with in recent decades is funding. Financial stringencies notwithstanding, the sociology of work continues to be robust in Sweden as can be seen in the impact it has, and has had, internationally.

Case 7

The Sociology of Work in Finland

Markku Sippola and Tuomo Alasoini

Mainstream sociology in Finland in the decades following the World War II was liberal and consensual in approach and influenced by modern American sociology. Sippola and Alasoini argue that the discipline accepted social change as a historical necessity and tried to describe and explain it. In the 1950s and 1960s, the sociology of work constituted only a small portion of the overall development of sociology in Finland. In the 1970s and 1980s,

an increasing division between positivist, reformist, and critical approaches in the Finnish sociology of work, all affected by maturing Fordist patterns of economic growth and work organization, became more apparent. The 1970s marked a broadening of conceptual and methodological approaches within the Finnish sociology of work. Increased funding resources by the Academy of Finland and different ministries opened improved opportunities for studies that took a critical stance towards existing (capitalist) modes of production, many of which were influenced by Marxist thinking. During the 1980s, the male industrial worker also started to lose his self-evident and prominent position as a target of working-life studies. The chapter highlights the fact that an increasing attention was now paid to emerging problems that were characteristic of jobs in the rising welfare sector and other services, white-collar occupations, and work typically performed by women. This also signified a growing interest in the concept of gender as reflected by the increasing number of studies on gender and work.

The scope of the studies in the sociology of work in Finland further widened in the 1990s and 2000s, as new research areas were taken on-board. The rise of the precarisation/deterioration theme in the Finnish sociology of work can be linked to the current ongoing debate in other Western countries, and in which many Finnish labour intellectuals are also engaged. In this debate, one can clearly perceive a tension between the logics of mainstream sociology tagged to well-established sociological concepts and worldviews, and contemporary analyses on work trends that operate with concepts outside the sub-discipline. Gender analyses of work continued to gain a stronger foothold in the sociology of work. Special streams within gender studies include care-work and research on work-family balance. A long-standing stream in the Finnish sociology of work addresses the consequences of technological and organizational change, flexible forms of labour deployment, and the adoption of post-Fordist forms of work organization. Knowledge work, information society, and innovation are new themes within the Finnish sociology of work that have emerged with the rise of the competition-state discourse since the 1990s.

Sippola and Alasoini emphasize the fact that critical paradigms challenging the social order have never assumed a central role in the Finnish sociology of work; most paradigmatic approaches have been rather consensual by nature. Rather, there appears to be a considerable 'reformist' tendency in the Finnish sociology of work, aiming at producing solutions to societal problems, and in many cases in the form of action-oriented research and developmental projects. This reflects the overall pragmatic nature of Finnish