

Abstracts

Anne-Sophie Beau, Sylvie Schweitzer, Do Auxiliary and Part-Time Work Mean Atypical Work? 19th and 20th Centuries in France

Working hours and flexible hours are at the heart of current news, and sociologists study them as if they were a new phenomenon, especially by underlining two of their forms: part-time work and fixed-term contract. In our article we make historical assumptions, focussing on the appearance and evolution of these norms since the end of the 19th century. We examine these norms for both salaried employees and workers of the private sector, questioning the settlement of working hours (full or part-time work) and the status of employment (incumbent or auxiliary post). As far as we can tell from the present research, it shows that during the first three quarters of the 20th century, the gender of part-time work and of precariousness in employment is not absolute at all: both men and women are concerned by these forms of employment which have always existed, but gradually got their own legislation parallel to the elaboration of labour legislation. The limitation of daily working hours together with the absence of work being qualified as 'unemployment' gave birth to 'auxiliary work' in the private sector. The terminology of work was still uncertain, since the auxiliary worker could not exist without the incumbent worker and the latter did not really exist as yet, even if paternalistic policies tried to settle small groups of steady workforce. The next step concerning both men and women was the limitation of weekly working hours. In public enterprises, auxiliary workers were employed to replace the incumbent workers on Sundays. This phenomenon increased with the invention of paid holidays. The norm underwent a fourth step nowadays, in particular with the limited use of overtime hours and several fiscal measures applying to part-time work and to fixed-term contracts.

Christine von Oertzen, Farewell to the Normal Workday: The Adoption of Part-Time Work in West Germany, 1955–1969

In West Germany, the fifties and sixties brought dynamic changes to the history of women's work. Starting in 1955, the economic prosperity and the constant labour shortage especially improved the conditions for married women to work. At the same time the meaning of women's work changed profoundly. In the 1960s, women's wage work was no longer seen as an evil due to economic necessities, but as a pleasure women desired despite continued family responsibilities. Part time work was especially praised as an ideal solution to combine both spheres. Heavily promoted by industry and in the services sector, it was soon considered normal. The proportion of women part time workers increased from about 7% in 1960 to almost 20% in 1970. In its first part, the article traces these developments. The second part deals with the legal impact of the changing conditions and perceptions of women's work. Between 1955 and 1969 part time work for women was introduced into the different branches of the social and unemployment insurances, into the tax law as well as into the civil service law. The negotiations involved a wide range of actors in West German society, including courts, housewives and husbands, parliamentary deputies, state bureaucracy, women's organizations, trade unions, and others. With the beginning of the sixties, West Germans eventually allowed married women the legal status as

regular employees, even if they could not work full time. In so doing, they departed from the 8-hour-workday, which hitherto had been the undisputed norm defining access to independent personal social insurance.

Carola Sachse, Normal Workday and Housework-Day. (East-)German Variations of a Misalliance

The housework-day was invented by the NS regime after the beginning of the Second World War. Conscripted German, non-Jewish women in war industry should get one unpaid working day off monthly to keep their households proper. After the war, communists in German *Länder* parliaments were engaged not only in maintaining the housework-day but also in getting it paid. They hoped to win female voters and to convince them of their political aims. As emergency conditions were going on, no other political party dared to deny this facility to "our women". Regulations of paid housework-days for women were installed in several West-German countries and all over the Eastern zone.

Nevertheless, once the GDR was founded the SED regime would have preferred to get rid of this costly socio-political privilege. But working women – mainly those standing alone – protested strongly and constantly. They succeeded in transforming the exceptional facility of the war and postwar years into an enduring entitlement. They managed to approach the extraordinary housework-day to the social rank of the standard working day. So, the paid housework-day for women in the GDR was not at all part of the so-called state patriarchy or "Mutti-Politik" by the SED regime. Women moved the boundaries of what was called "normal" and what "special", of what was presumed to be "public" or "private". Women changed the order of gender and work in the socialist industrial society and resisted to an overall socialisation of housework.

Tilla Siegel, Crisis or Redistribution? The Normality of the Normal Workday at Stake

The ongoing erosion of the 'normal workday' is the result of precisely the same dynamics, namely those of rationalization, which made it a social norm. The basic idea of rationalization is to minimize waste of time, labour, and material in order to achieve utmost efficiency. In the era of Fordism, i.e. up to the 1970's, it was coupled with the notion that not only the firm, but also society must be set in order so as to minimize costly frictions and conflicts. Regulation and standardization have been some of the main characteristics of industrial rationalization as well as of social and labour politics in that era. Especially in Germany, although not only here, this found its expression in the concept of the 'normal workday'. In addition to full employment with standardized working hours at a defined workplace outside home, this concept stood for legally and contractually regulated working conditions and a continuous career between training and retirement. Although far from all working conditions corresponded to that concept, it came to be a norm in the sense of a seemingly natural principle of organizing social relations, compared to which everything else was seen as a deviation needing special treatment, compensation, and legitimation. It was meant for men, but also regulated the division of labour between genders. For its counterpart was the 'normal family' in which the husband is the only breadwinner and the wife is responsible for the unpaid work of reproduction. While both concepts of normality were constructed to create stable conditions for industrial rationalization, the latter also contributed to their erosion. It counted on women as a cheap labour force and at the same time suggested 'equal rights for equal efficiency' for everybody, thus contradicting gender inequalities inherent in the 'normal workday' and the 'normal family'. In principle, however, it is the same idea which was at the core of Fordist management strategies, namely that costs can and must be incessantly reduced, that has now lead to the conviction that regulation, standardization and stability are too costly. Decentralization, deregulation, and flexibility are the catchwords of modern management, calling for equally flexible working conditions and labour – and setting the stage for a reorganization of social relations and social inequalities.

Brigitte Studer, "Familialization" and Individualization: the Structure of Gender Order in Bourgeois Society

This essay examines the extensive exclusion of women as a gender from the legally and culturally guaranteed autonomy of the individual. The transition from feudal to democratic republican statehood spelled the possibility of individualization. Yet, women were not simply ostracized from modernization. Instead of awarding women the independence of the self-determined acting bourgeois, modernity afforded them a singular option of integration: binding family ties as a life blueprint. This specific path of modernization – their affirmation in the family – stood in a permanent state of tension with the potential of individualization in bourgeois society. It can be designated as the tendency towards a "familialization" of women – thus the thesis presented here. The concept encompasses double and closely connected processes: 1) the formation of a mental orientation of women for the family on one side, and 2) their legal and social positioning within the family on the other side. Introductory reflections about the concept of "individualization" and its usefulness for the writing and comprehension of history lead to inquiry regarding the central processes which implemented the genderized ascription of life options in the "knowledge/power systems" of bourgeois societies. Using selected examples, the essay subsequently tries to demonstrate the ways of functioning of such a construction, as well as its effects on the demarcation of the practical and symbolical conditions of possibility of female agency.

Regina Wecker, Regulation and De-regulation of the "petite difference": Gender Definition as Shown by the Prohibition of Night-Work, 1864–1930

In 1992, the EC cancelled the '89 Convention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and opened the way to revoke the prohibition of night-work in force since the end of the 19th century which, essentially, applied to women working in industrial enterprises. On the one hand, this eliminated a key part of labour-market regulations designated as protective laws and initiated a relaxation of socio-political security; on the other hand, revoking this prohibition felled a legislative bastion which had defined women as a special category within the labour market and, thus, substantially contributed to hierarchize the gender system.

The prohibition of night-work was at the cross-roads of defining a regular work day, the gender-specific, group-specific, and industry-specific differentiation of the labour market, the definition of gender-specific roles, and the definition of gender as such. The prohibition of night-work only applied to women and only to those working in industrial enterprises; it fractured and standardized working hours without, however, limiting the "exploitation" of male labour; it established a standard work day and, at the same time, set it aside for men; it supported a claim to better wages for those who worked nights and, thus, increased the value of male factory workers; it protected women against the double strain of wage-labour and house-work and, at the same time, defined their role as house-wives; it excluded them from specific industries and prevented them from acquiring certain qualifications; it legitimized differences in wages and contributed to the segregation prevalent within the labour market.

The very ambivalence and insecurity which made it difficult to define this revocation of the prohibition in the recent past as a relaxation of discriminating regulations or an erosion of the welfare state already characterized negotiations when this prohibition was first introduced. The present contribution will trace the emergence of the prohibition of night-work in Switzerland and Germany and analyse its discursive significance and economic effect on the gender system.