

THE PRODUCTION OF WORK. WELFARE, LABOUR-MARKET AND THE DISPUTED BOUNDARIES OF LABOUR (1880-1938).

Copyright © 2008

Dr. Sigrid Wadauer
Department of Economic and Social History
University of Vienna
Maria-Theresien-Straße 9/4
A-1090 Vienna
sigrid.wadauer@univie.ac.at

All rights reserved. No part of this working paper may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by information storage or retrieval system, without permission from the author.

B. Research Project

i. State-of-the-art and objectives

The erosion of standard employment relationship (*Normalarbeitsverhältnis*) and the increase of precarious forms of gainful work have been subject of recent political and sociological debates. The proposed project will historically analyse how – and against which other forms – dominant concepts of (vocational) work¹ were established. The proposed project lies at the intersection of different fields of research.

Work, the social regulation and organisation of work have changed in regard of many aspects since the last decades of the 19th century. Some authors consider this change of work to be so profound that – in stressing the discontinuity to previous developments – they even call it a ‘re-invention’ of work.² Several interrelated developments have been discussed by historical research: more and more economic practices, work and labour markets have become subject to national regulation and juridical codification. This narrowed the concept of work, which adopted more clearly the character of a commodity. Waged labour became the dominant form of occupation within society and it became a life-long status. This development changed the meaning and value of work for individuals, their life courses and identities. Knowledge and vocation (*Beruf*) gained importance. New perceptions and hierarchies of work had an impact on the gender-specific division of work and gender relations too. Work integrated individuals into larger groups; it was therefore related to the building of nations. These developments of work are also discussed as aspects of a new political order or ‘governmentality’ (Foucault). This new concept of work was institutionalized, not at last by way of social security systems. Changes of work were substantially related to changes and

¹ To translate the terminologies of work (in particular the German word ‘Beruf’) into another language is quite problematic. Moreover, in every day usage, distinctions between various terms are often blurred. Therefore I will use ‘vocation’ to designate the emphatic use of ‘Beruf’, described in part d) of the proposal.

² Sebastian Conrad/Elisio Macamo/Bénédicte Zimmermann: Die Kodifizierung der Arbeit: Individuum, Gesellschaft, Nation. In: Jürgen Kocka/Claus Offe (eds.): Geschichte und Zukunft der Arbeit. Frankfurt etc. 1999, 494-475, 450.

formalization of non-work. A system of social insurance for particular forms of non-work was established: in case of illness, invalidity, age and finally unemployment.

This is, however, no linear development without contradictions. It is a well known fact that state social welfare policy did not equally include everybody and did not achieve widespread effectiveness until after World War II. Early social policy aimed rather at what was regarded the ‘core’ of the working class. As Bénédicte Zimmermann’s³ recent work on the emergence of unemployment as a social category in Germany shows, this unemployment policy imposed a particular concept of (vocational) labour, often excluding unskilled or seasonal labour. The same applies in case of Austria, which will be the primary field of empirical research for our project. Austria was one of the first countries which established unemployment benefit (1918; 1920 as an insurance). Soon after the general establishment of unemployment support a number of exceptions were verbalized, for example: people living in rural areas (motivated by a lack of agricultural labourers), employees within private households, young and self-employed persons. Support was granted only for a restricted period. Particularly during the 1930s a lot of unemployed lost unemployment insurance, relied on *Notstandsunterstützung* (income support), poor relief or other sources. This was not a problem of a minority since during the world economic crisis unemployment rates officially reached 25%, but there are estimations up to 37 % (1934). The rates of unemployed receiving unemployment benefit declined to 50% in 1937 (estimated unemployment rates between 21,7% and 31,8%).⁴ Similarly, the pension system did not equally include all social classes. Pensions for labourers were not established before 1927 and then only in a provisional form, applying just for cases of impoverished persons over the age of 60.

The project starts out from the leading hypothesis that **poor relief systems** did not lose importance during this period. The ‘**economy of makeshifts**’⁵, combining waged labour, precarious self-employment, unemployment benefits and poor relief, persisted as well, to an extent which has been underestimated up to now. The distinction between these precarious forms of finding livelihood and ‘decent’ work or welfare was fluid and – in detail – highly disputed. The questions of how to abolish begging, how to force the idle to work and how to give work to the poor are quite old. However, simultaneously with the ‘take off’ of modern social policy the debates on vagrants, beggars, and the work-shy relived a new boom at the international level. With new regulations of the social, the question of the dis-, anti- or a-social changes too. Welfare-systems did not provide support for non-working without demanding reciprocity. They defined accepted use and misuse. Support required acknowledged inability and/or willingness to work.

The opposite of decent work is not simply inactivity. ‘If work means just to earn your daily bread somehow, then it is just the idlers who do not work. If work means to have a stable occupation and to really earn a living from it, it is something completely different.’⁶ There was a broad range of activities in search of livelihood, changeable between acknowledged work, non-work and what was called ‘negative work’ by late 19th century scholars: unstable, temporary, informal work with very little income, activities more or less at the verge of begging or even minor criminality. There was, for example, informal, occasional and seasonal labour, petty trading, hawking, collecting rags and bones, singing in the streets, drifting in search (probably) of employment, begging etc. Job flexibility and geographic mobility were basic features of the various strategies to make a living and survive. These activities were to a varying extent accepted or criminalized and persecuted. In fact

³ Bénédicte Zimmermann: *Arbeitslosigkeit in Deutschland*. Frankfurt/M. etc. 2006.

⁴ Fritz Weber: *Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung*. In: Emmerich Tálos et al. (eds.): *Handbuch des Politischen Systems Österreich. Erste Republik 1918-1933*. Vienna 1995, 23-39, 24f.

⁵ Olwen H. Hufton: *The poor of eighteenth-century France: 1750 - 1789*. Oxford 1974, 69-127.

⁶ An informant quoted in Pierre Bourdieu: *Die zwei Gesichter der Arbeit*. Constance 2000, 76f. (Author’s translation).

the same activity could appear as being quite different things from various perspectives. Some were officially regulated by the state, not at last as a – selectively given – substitute for welfare: destitute elderly people physically unable to do other work could gain a licence, for example, as buskers or peddlers. However hard it was to find a living in these ways, they were commonly suspected to be a cover for work-shyness. Criminological writings in particular expressed a far reaching suspicion on being out of job, on change of employment, and on quite a range of occupations particularly on those including mobility. There was a general obligation to earn a living if possible, yet these activities to help oneself were regarded as damage to national economy and it was a disputed question, too, how the unemployable poor could be stopped from independently searching for a livelihood in these illegitimate ways and be forced into the poorhouse. In the 20th century these survival strategies and the authorities' way of dealing with it appear as highly anachronistic or traditional. They as well changed and were subject of redefinition through this new context.⁷ With the new status of labour, with the increasing importance of vocation and with a social network for legitimate forms of non-work other, precarious forms of occupation, unskilled and temporary labour have been marginalized. They become (even more) endangered of being practically defined as negative work, work-shyness or even crime. Social policy, the social divisions of welfare and labour contributed to the production of what has been discussed as 'underclass'.⁸ What is work or not was also not just a theoretical question but a highly disputed question of practical impact, since it could make a person subject either to police activity, to public welfare or to economy.

There is a close interrelation between the poor law, criminal laws and (in case of Austria) the *Heimatrecht* (right of residence). In case of poverty not the place of residence but the community where a person had his/her *Heimatrecht* was relevant. Despite some reforms of the *Heimatrecht* from 1863 it remained basically unchanged in this respect until 1938. Simultaneously to the welfare state's 'take off', also a number of laws dealing with the illegitimate non-working were (re)formulated: the *Schubgesetz*, concerning the possible deportation of people without employment and subsistence, of vagrants or the work-shy who lived on public welfare to their hometown (1871). The vagrancy act (1885) and the *Arbeitshausgesetz* (1932) allowed to keep small-time criminals and people 'with an engrained aversion against honest moral conduct and labour' under arrest in a workhouse. These drastic measures, however, manifested not a mass phenomenon but rather extreme possibilities of handling the (deviant) poor.

Restrictions of mobility and settlement regarding the poor mark another relevant context of international research. Entitlement to social welfare also required affiliation: to a local community and/or to a nation state. Participation in the newly established social and political rights depended on citizenship. Research debates on the **history of migration control** have been discussing the interrelation between the emergence of welfare states, possibilities of political participation, the control of national labour markets and the emergence of nations.⁹ Modern states have, according to John Torpey,¹⁰ expropriated from individuals the legitimate means of movement and people have become dependent on a state for an identity. States are not able to effectively control all movement, but they monopolize the authority to restrict movement. Also, the necessity to identify and distinguish citizens from non-citizens leads to an increasing amount of information about individuals. Research has indicated similar developments regarding internal migration: as modern states have expanded their administrative capacity to embrace the population resident under their

⁷ Eckart Pankoke: *Die Arbeitsfrage*. Frankfurt/Main 1990, 9.

⁸ Kirk Mann: *The making of an English 'underclass'*. Philadelphia 1992; John Welshman: *Underclass*. London 2006. Michael B. Katz: (ed.): *The 'Underclass' Debate*. Princeton 1993.

⁹ Leo Lucassen: *The Immigrant Threat*. Urbana etc. 2005, 15.

¹⁰ John Torpey: *Coming and Going: On the State Monopolization of the Legitimate 'Means of Movement'*. In: *Sociological Theory* 16/3/1998, 239-259; idem: *The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Passport System*. In: Jane Caplan/John Torpey (eds.): *Documenting Individual Identity*. Oxford 2001, 256-270.

jurisdictions, controls on internal movements (and on residence) have sometimes been strengthened as well.¹¹ In fact after World War I – which has been discussed as (one) caesura for international migration control – a number of new techniques to register and identify came into practice. A number of card files were established for unemployed, for people receiving welfare benefits, for criminals and gypsies. Photos became obligatory for occupations which required travelling. Fingerprints came into use for identification. Particularly during the world economic crisis the *Heimatrecht* and further restrictions of the right of free settlement of the poor were under discussion. Internal migration – although in quantitative aspects more important than international migration – has yet not gained similar attention within research debates. However, we will have to ask for the efficiency of these tools. As James C. Scott has suggested, one might consider the modern state the enemy of ‘people who move around’.¹² However this does not mean that authorities succeeded or even in many cases tolerated, supported mobility or even caused displacement. (Nor does it imply that mobility is subversive per se).

The **goal of the project** is to analyse how new regulations of labour, including labour market institutions and the emergence of welfare systems, imposed new differences and hierarchies within the variety of occupations. (In respect of precarious forms of self-employment the project can build up upon my last project). In order to understand what work is we must understand which activities are not acknowledged as work and vice versa. This project aims at analysing how inclusion and exclusion into labour markets and labour force work *in detail*. The imperative to work apparently does not address everybody equally and it does not work with any kind of work. Who should work? Who is allowed to work? And who is not? Who is entitled to receive help? Who should be punished? Who should be forced to work? How are job opportunities distributed? What actually is work, i.e. work of value for society and for economy? What is – contradictory to that – damage to the greater public good? The project follows the hypothesis that it is not intrinsic attributes which make an activity to be ‘real work’¹³ (respectable or at least acceptable) but a set of interrelated moments: the activity’s attributes such as regularity, a stable location or workplace; profitability, formal vocational training; a function within local economy (as a competitor, customer, distributor); it is important if taxes or national insurance contributions are abated for this occupation and/or if it serves as a substitute for welfare expenses; if there are regulations and official associations. Furthermore, it seems important if an occupation belongs to the sphere of production, distribution or service. The person’s attributes as well play a role for the status of an occupation: age, gender, working ability, education, ethnicity, religion, reputation, criminal records. What is the particular weight of these aspects? How are they interrelated?¹⁴ How do those who work or do not work contribute to the distinctions and hierarchies of work?

Changes of work and the emergence of the welfare state have mostly been written about from the perspective of programmatic objectives, the state, politics, political parties and welfare institutions. Very little research on the actual impact of social welfare policy has been conducted.¹⁵ The proposed project changes perspective, it intends to reconstruct the history of work by equally

¹¹ Gérard Noiriel: *The French Melting Pot*. Minneapolis, London 1996, 61f; idem: *Die Tyrannei des Nationalen*. Lüneburg 1994, 33; John Torpey (1998), 239f, 254; Clifford Rosenberg: *Policing Paris*. Cornell 2006, 1-3.

¹² James C. Scott: *Seeing like a State*. New Haven etc. 1998, 1.

¹³ Chris Tilly/Charles Tilly: *Work under Capitalism*, Boulder (Col.) 1998; 23; Richard H. Hall: *Dimensions of Work*. Beverly Hills etc. 1986.

¹⁴ On the question of multidimensionality and multifunctionality of practices see: Pierre Bourdieu: *The Social Structures of the Economy*. Cambridge 2005.

¹⁵ There is – with different focus though – an increasing number of studies on poverty and welfare at a local level. See, for example: Andreas Gestrich et al. (eds.): *Being poor in modern Europe*. Oxford etc. 2006.

including the perspective and practises from the ‘margins’ which are regarded as a constitutive – but highly neglected – part of this historic change. The project starts by analysing activities at the fringe of work, but it will not study them in isolation. Beggars, vagrants, work-shy do not represent clearly distinguished groups or practices: they are in many ways extreme positions within the variety of possibilities. They rather manifest a disputed sphere of borderline cases between labour market, police, criminal justice, poverty and welfare. These disputed cases, however, manifest central social questions in a particularly clear way. This project will therefore open up new perspectives on the general history of work. It is located within the field of socio-economic and cultural history, but it touches on disciplines like sociology, economy, demography, criminology and anthropology as well. It will have to conduct basic research in many aspects. It therefore seems necessary to focus the empirical case study on the area of the Republic of Austria, but the project will include comparative perspectives, especially on Germany. International co-operations and workshops will contribute to a larger comparative view. Primary analysis will start with a shorter period of time (1918-1938) and proceed from there to pursue important developments and questions through time as far as to approximately 1880. This will allow evaluating more clearly the impact of long-term developments and/or crisis. The project will ask about the hierarchies and distinctions imposed on labour/unemployment/non-work of Austrian citizens rather than foreigners. (Keeping in mind, that citizenship was not at all clear in many cases and there were different grades of foreignness.) A comparison of different regions (in respect of the different socio-economic structures and political regimes) and of rural-urban contexts will be crucial. The project team will pursue conjoint questions and methodological principles in particularly closely interrelated fields:

a) Employment offices and labour market

Since the late 19th century the government made more efforts to officially regulate job placement. In the interwar period, a network of public employment offices was established, assigned to the following tasks: register the unemployed, organize unemployment benefit and job placement. By that, Austria was one of the first countries which established unemployment insurance (1920). The establishment of public employment offices has often been described as a result of or reaction to processes of modernization. Increasingly complex labour markets apparently created a requirement of new tools to match offer and demand of workforce. According to this perspective, the function of public employment offices would be to rather coordinate and regulate; to find adequate labourers for open positions. The proposed project starts out from the hypothesis that employment offices did not primarily coordinate and regulate labour markets but fundamentally contributed to create a labour market and workforce under several aspects. They include, exclude, they establish categories. They classify and produce workforce. They define appropriate workers for appropriate jobs. They formalize and define legal and illegal employment. Through that they created shadow economies and (new forms of) irregular work as well. Unemployed entitled to receive support were distinguished from non-working or unemployable. Registered unemployed were classified according to certain criteria, not at last according to a certain number of occupations and their specific requirements of training and skills. One of the most important agendas of employment offices was vocational counselling. Psychological tests were established to determine a person’s optimal vocation. Courses were offered to (re)train the unemployed. Other measures aimed at bringing back the almost unemployable war invalids back to work. Finally, jobs were not simply registered, they were also created. Thus in many aspects the employment offices did not simply administrate but aimed at being productive, too. Some studies have already described the political intentions and discussions, the laws and the constitution of these institutions in Central Europe. However, we do know very little about how labour exchange and job placement were actually working at that time. The project will ask about the actual position of public employment offices within alternative possibilities of support and job search. Apart from commercial job placements, unions, guilds and trade associations, for example, still defined vocations and regulated access to

occupations (even more after 1934). Neither should we underestimate informal ways to find a job.¹⁶ How did people make use of these new possibilities? This part will include comparative empirical research on Germany.

b) Labour-market, non-work and vagrancy

Parallel to the more recently established public employment offices, other forms of support, job placement and hunting for a job persisted. Within this context wandering – with all its disputed meanings – was (still) a possibility to deal with unemployment, not at least for those who were not entitled to receive unemployment benefits. With the world economic crisis and especially during the Austro-Fascist regime (1933-1938) a ‘plague of beggars and vagrants’ became an urgent problem of internal security and social policy again. The crime-statistics show a drastic increase in court sentences on the basis of the laws against vagrancy: they rose up to 21,752 in the year 1936.¹⁷ Punishment, especially by court, was probably still selective and does not represent the actual numbers of people on the road but the authorities’ practices. The debates on vagrants commonly pointed out the extreme heterogeneity of these rambles and the necessity to distinguish between the different reasons and intentions. This kind of mobility was seen as forced by mere necessity or caused by work-shyness and wandering impulse. However, there is also a frequent reference to the decline or persistence of crafts traditions of wandering in search for employment and professional experience. There was a reference to juvenile’s search for adventure, an experience of nature and *Heimat*. Autobiographical writings of craftsmen and skilled labourers frequently refer to these contexts, so did sometimes even court-statements by rambles. Rambles (and their accounts) could refer not only to traditions of narration and common ideas of wandering; there were also institutional contexts which practically encouraged, allowed and defined their wandering as something still reasonable. In the 1880s a network of *Naturalverpflegsstationen* (relief stations) was installed by the government. They were designed to provide shelter, food and arrangements for employment for destitute, (almost exclusively) male wayfarers, able and willing to work. They were regarded as instruments to fight vagrancy and to regulate mobility. In the 1920s several provincial governments re-established and re-defined this network as *Herbergen*. Besides these public institutions, however, there are several other ways of supporting and integrating the rambles out of work. As we can conclude from numerous autobiographical writings, they could receive support from family, friends, church institutions, unions, shopkeepers, political parties, private welfare etc. Thus rambles could rely on a ‘mixed economy of welfare’,¹⁸ they could occasionally steal; they could find temporary employment within or outside their own occupation. Sometimes – even in economic crisis – they rather hit the road than work under certain conditions. The experience of unemployment was obviously not uniform and not exclusively depressing, as it was indicated by the contemporary study on the unemployed of *Marienthal*.¹⁹ Wandering in search of a job still could serve several individual and collective purposes, it manifests both moments of tradition, modernization and economic crisis. The project’s hypothesis is that wandering might endanger social affiliation but does not necessarily manifest or lead to social ‘disaffiliation’²⁰. What is necessary to maintain the reference to a legitimate purpose of travelling? And how does ‘vagrant’ or ‘work-shy’ become a lasting verdict? Unskilled and temporary labourers seem to be more endangered to disaffiliation. An analysis of records from different *Herbergen* will shed light on this form of internal mobility (numbers, frequency, occupations etc.). Furthermore they can give insight to conflicts surrounding these institutions: cases of exclusions from the use of the *Herbergen*, rambles’ protest against the way they were treated, problems the heads of these institutions had to

¹⁶ Mark Granovetter: *Getting A Job*. Chicago etc. 1995.

¹⁷ *Zahlenmäßige Darstellung der Rechtspflege 1936*, Nr. 28, 6.

¹⁸ Michael B. Katz/Christoph Sachße (eds.): *The Mixed Economy of Social Welfare*. Baden-Baden 1996.

¹⁹ Maria Jahoda et. al: *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal*. Frankfurt/M. 1975 (1933).

²⁰ Robert Castel: *Die Metamorphosen der sozialen Frage*. Constance 2000, 28 and passim.

face. Some of the outlined questions of vagrancy overlap with the history of gypsies and travellers. However, the administration handled these questions separately. In the political debates on vagrants, beggars and the work-shy, gypsies are almost never mentioned. Therefore it seems rather problematic to simply adequate the problems. One of the project's objectives is to gain a better understanding of this interrelation.

c) Free and compulsory work

Forced labour has been studied within early modernity, the context of totalitarian regimes and colonialism, yet it has not gained much attention within this historical context (of an until 1933 democratic regime). The poor law and the establishment of unemployment insurance generally involved an explicit duty to accept appropriate work. What does this mean in practice? The distinction between compulsory labour in labour camps or workhouses and voluntary employment in workfare programs seems blurred under several aspects. The voluntary character of programs to employ the youth, for example, appears questionable since unemployment insurance did not apply to the youth in many cases. Additionally, these programs were not totally separated from institutions for persons who were convicted for offences against the vagrancy law. The labour camp for beggars and vagrants which was established in Upper Austria in 1935, for example, was related to a camp for voluntary workfare. After their release the inmates could either – in a few cases – find a job, join the workfare program or simply hit the road again. However, their forced labour was not acknowledged as proof of recent employment, which was required to use the public *Herbergen*. There are further, similar forms of employment between free and unfree labour, between help and punishment: the police could, for example, send homeless beggars to a doss house. To stay, live and work there was officially on a voluntary basis. The general aim of getting everyone able to work into employment also raised further questions, particularly when employment opportunities were rare. The limited jobs available should be preserved for the natives, and for the unemployed of one's own province. 'Real work' should not be wasted to those regarded as work-shy. It was a disputed problem if forced labour should have economic purposes and could therefore be a further threat to the labour market. Apparently these institutions selectively aimed at re-integrating or at keeping persons safely isolated and controlled. Institutions for vagrants and work-shy distinguished between elderly inmates who were simply trained to work or kept busy without regard to their former occupation and juvenile convicts who should receive vocational training, since a vocation was also regarded as protection against the endangerment of criminality. Thus, education was more clearly separated from punishment. Institutions for deviant youth did not only aim at vocational training, they intended training for decent leisure, too (which paradoxically included tramping). Legitimate leisure only exists in relation to decent work or education. In fact, illegitimate forms of leisure and avoidance of stable employment appear as a common argument for the commitment to such an institution. The inmates' files of the *Eggenburg* institution near Vienna, for example, name: vagrancy, truancy, moral misdoing, running away from apprenticeship, hanging around in the streets in search of entertainment etc. The juveniles were in many cases handed over by parents who argued that they felt incapable of dealing with their children. Apart from the programmatic aims, we know quite little about these institutions. How was the population of convicted socially described? Why were they handed over to an institution? A first necessary step would be to get an overview of the existing institutions in the different provinces. Furthermore the project aims at gaining insight into how the different institutions worked. The objective is not to add a further case study on a singular institution but rather to aim at a comparison of different institutions and provinces, not at least because the rates of convictions on the basis of vagrancy laws extremely differ between the provinces. What were the concepts of labour applied to in regard of the different inmates?

d) Establishing vocation as a universal concept

It was not just about finding and having a job and some income. During the whole period work became increasingly equated with vocation. The census of 1894 defined: 'The actual meaning of vocation is not just exercising any vocation or a gainful occupation. Vocation requires the whole personality's involvement; it determines the person's function within society and his attitude

towards life.²¹ Employment offices practically contributed to establish this universal importance of vocation. The dominant model was that everyone should have vocational training, stable employment, sufficient income, career prospects. Vocation was an important concern within different political ideologies and regimes as well. Social democratic politics stressed the importance of welfare from the cradle on (or even before birth). Vocational counselling and training for the youth was a central part of the intended systematic management of human capital. It was regarded as a productive investment in a better future, contradictory to the high non-productive expenses which were required to simply support the unemployable for mere humanitarian reasons.²² Within Austro-Fascist ideology vocation was seen as the foundation of political order. A particular vocation and the membership in a particular vocational association or guild defined a person's place within society. It was supposed to give a higher purpose and meaning to individual life. The project will analyse how the range of vocations changed through these developments. What kind of occupation did become a vocation? What kind of occupation lost legitimacy? How did the concepts of vocation vary among the parties concerned: the political movements (parties, unions), authorities, the employers, individuals in search of jobs? Vocation was a far reaching concept, it was also quite ambiguous. There was a tendency to adequate work and vocation, but there was also a countertendency of dissociating work from vocation. Furthermore this model of vocational work did apply to men, women, young and old to a quite different extent. Additionally, having a vocation did not mean to have gainful work. War and economic crises made lifelong, undisrupted employment within one's vocation generally not very likely. Youth, being the main subject of this policy of vocation, was affected by particularly high unemployment rates. Similar to other countries, labour market policy in Austria during the interwar period aimed at maintaining and developing the manpower of the unemployed youth for the future: workfare programs such as *Jugend in Not* or *Jugend am Werk* were designed to teach, maintain and broaden professional skills. They should keep up work discipline without employment or simply keep the young people busy and away from the streets. These policies, their administration as well as implementation, to train the youth for a vocation, will be a further focus.

e) Vocation, labour and gender

A gendered perspective is of fundamental importance to any of the described fields of the project, but we will also have to ask for specific networks and survival strategies. Previous research has pointed out to the fact that women were more vulnerable to poverty and that welfare systems reinforced gender hierarchies. Men are apparently more endangered to be criminalized for non-working, for vagrancy and begging. The perception of women's poverty or unemployment appears to differ from that of men. Women had other strategies of dealing with poverty and unemployment, too. As described above, the development of work and welfare changed gender relations and gender specific division of work. Initially, labour protection meant protection of women and children, which contributed to define gender specific work. With the dominance of waged labour, housework changed its status, too. Only to a very limited extent women's work became a vocation or was acknowledged as skilled work requiring formal training. In 1930, 136 vocations were open to men and only 17 to women.²³ Women replaced men in many spheres during World War I. Afterwards, and particularly during the economic crisis, the politics against *Doppelverdienertum* aimed at assigning family income to men only. However, this did not mean that women were generally excluded from the labour market. There are counter tendencies as well.²⁴ Women's labour was less tied to vocation, and it was cheaper. Apparently this also could make it easier for women to find job

²¹ XXXIII Österreichische Statistik 1. Heft. Vienna 1894, I.

²² Julius Tandler: Ehe und Bevölkerungspolitik. Vienna etc. 1924, 16.

²³ Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte in Wien (ed.): Handbuch der Frauenarbeit in Österreich. Vienna 1930, 39.

²⁴ Richard J. Evans: Introduction: The Experience of Unemployment in the Weimar Republic. In: Idem/Dick Geary (eds.): The German Unemployed. London etc. 1987, 1-22, 11ff.

opportunities and earn money, which became more necessary due to economic crisis. The project will have to include these specific kinds of employment opportunities, for example in domestic work, new employment opportunities in tourism and the specific forms of labour exchange.

f) Science of work and non-work

Without doubt, science of work and science of non-work became more important during this period. Contemporary research (work science, economy, criminology, psychology, psychiatry, eugenics) will serve as a source for every of the sub-fields sketched out above. Furthermore the project will have to discuss the actual impact of scientific categories. Scientists obviously developed most extreme ideas of the reasons and effects of poverty and how to deal with the anti-social. However, these discourses do not seem to have automatically gained impact on the every day practice of police and welfare institutions. Perceptions and categories of – for example – beggars and vagrants highly differ between and within science, police (of different levels of police) and the press. Apparently contradictory to frequent public appeals, people did also not stop supporting beggars and vagrants with alms. Up to now the assumption of the broader efficacy of these scientific categories lacks an empirical test. The results of our research will allow discussing the impact of science on the actual handling of questions of labour and the work-shy on a new empirical basis.

ii. Methodology

The proposed project does not start out from given facts (of ‘labour’, ‘unemployment’, ‘vagrancy’) or from clearly distinguished groups (of ‘labourers’, ‘tramps’, ‘the work-shy’). Instead, the project will analyse the interrelation of practices which define and produce distinctions and hierarchies in differently successful and lasting ways. Not every practice or representation is equally able to create (the intended) effects. This is true for individual and collective strategies, and also for official bureaucratic practices. There is of course no way around the authorities’ practices and intentions, since they produce relevant material, but a reconstruction reduced to bureaucratic contexts, discourse or ‘dispositives’ (Foucault) would not be sufficient to analyse problems of efficacy. It would actually imply the assumption of an unquestioned monopoly and practical success of official categorization. However, individuals are not only subjects to or victims of bureaucratic practice or discourse. They act, define and describe themselves implicitly or explicitly. In doing so, even the most dominating practices substantially contribute to the order and hierarchies of work/non-work/negative work through participation in consensus and conflict.

The project will construct a **field of forces**, constituted through all the different perspectives, interests, and practices. The inclusion of a broad variety of different sources allows a better understanding of the specific perspective and specific caesurae manifest in particular kinds of material. Since the project aims at understanding how differences and hierarchies are produced, the reconstruction of **individual cases** is of particular importance. The project does not start out from assumptions about typical cases, nor does it start out from assumptions about the a priori given importance of attributes. Instead the project aims at analysing the weight and interrelation of attributes. Therefore it will systematically explore and reconstruct the range of possibilities and include the most important dimensions of variation.

Autobiographical writings, letters, court records, police records, personal files produced by involved authorities or institutions can give insight into this variety. They also manifest perceptions, practices and strategies of persons endangered by marginalisation. The project does not want to reduce the analysis to those already convicted or to the most extreme forms of persecution. Autobiographical writings come (almost) exclusively from persons who managed to escape total exclusion although they might have experienced arrest for vagrancy and begging. Court records for example, on the other hand, allow some insight into the tendency of careers, but in most cases it is not possible to reconstruct what happened after the arrest. These cases are extremely diverse, which gives evidence to contemporary assumptions about people on the road, but it is also an effect of individualisation through bureaucracy. All these different sources available include context-bound

statements of different quality. An interpretation of such cases requires to systematically compare and contextualize them in a very careful way.

In order to understand how the distinctions of labour/unemployment/vagrancy are produced it seems necessary to gain more insight into the **networks** of job-placement, support and mobility. The research project deals with activities which are simultaneously at the margins of several social fields: of welfare system, criminal justice, labour market. Neither the practice nor the person is once and for all part of a particular field of responsibility. They are rather subject to repeated examination, definition, allocation. They receive help, punishment, and education. Any of these fields has its own logic too, and together they produce several contradictions and paradoxes. We do not have to deal with 'state' policy but with a complex interrelation of different public authorities, which includes numerous conflicts on local, regional level or between different agendas. How did these institutions practically work? What is the interrelation between different institutions? Additionally we must consider and analyse the importance of informal networks.

Furthermore the project will have to consider how **collective representations** contribute to categories of labour and non-work. Periodicals of unions, chambers of commerce and labour, trade associations, associations of the unemployed etc. will have to be considered.

There is a variety and a rich amount of sources available, yet at large it has not been analysed in a systematic way. As a general principle the project will avoid the dichotomies of qualitative and quantitative analysis, by **combining a close interpretation of text with statistical analysis**. For this research strategy methods of the *analyse des données* (or as Le Roux/Rouanet have more recently called it *Geometric Data Analysis*) have proven extremely useful in previous projects.²⁵ We can build on this experience. Unlike classical statistics, the *Geometric Data Analysis* offers tools to deal with the heterogeneous and scattered data which are usually available in historical research. This particular concept of multivariate statistics and the graphical display of its results are particularly useful for this concept of the research subject, since they allow analysing the complex interrelation of numerous moments. However numerical representations are not irrelevant and the project will therefore use and analyse published census data or crime statistics, for example. Altogether this will allow getting a better understanding of its categories and of how statistics contribute to the production of social facts such as 'labour force' or 'unemployment'.²⁶ Certainly, particular methods will have to be used and adapted to the specific questions and material of each sub-topic. This will have to be done after a first, more explorative approach to each field and the related sources. Systematic gathering, evaluation and analysis of data will then follow in a second phase. A frequent discussion of work process and intermediate results in each field in relation to the larger projects hypothesis will be crucial.

iii. Resources

The team will include both experienced researchers, who have already conducted research in this field, and doctoral students. As the principal investigator I can build on my previous project on 'Mobility and sedentariness. Practices, categories, discourses (Austria 1880-1938)'. Besides supervising the team I will focus on the questions described in chapters b) and f). The team will also include two excellent scholars. With both of them I have already collaborated successfully in previous projects. *Dr. Alexander Mejstrik* will work part-time on the project. He will support the project-team with his excellent knowledge of statistics, i.e. Geometric Data Analysis, and focus on questions of vocation and youth. For that he can build on several case studies on working class

²⁵ Brigitte Le Roux/Henry Rouanet: *Geometric Data Analysis*. Dodrecht etc. 2004. The best known examples for the usage of this tool are works by Pierre Bourdieu and related researchers. The PI and A. Mejstrik have been working with these methods for their PhD theses and following projects.

²⁶ Alain Desrosières: *Die Politik der großen Zahlen*. Heidelberg 2000.

youth in Vienna and on professions and exclusions from the labour market during the NS-Regime. Furthermore he has published relevant articles on the concepts of space and field in research.²⁷

Dr. Thomas Buchner has already published a number of books and papers on crafts and labour in early modernity.²⁸ He has recently started a habilitation project on labour markets and labour exchange in Germany from the 1870s to 1930s. He will contribute particularly to the comparative aspects of the project (part a). He will be employed full-time within the project from third year on, but certainly we will collaborate right from the beginning. Since the project will have to do basic research and time consuming work in several different archives, further collaborators are required. The project will employ *four doctoral students* who will work on sub-fields of the proposed project: 1) specific networks and survival strategies of women, 2) labour exchange and vocational counselling, 3) forms of forced labour, 4) historically new forms of precarious and seasonal work, for example in the flourishing business of tourism or in the field of the emergent entertainment business. Two doctoral students will start in the first year, and two in the third year of the project, preferably in this order. This will allow readjusting the focus if the results of first years' research should indicate this to be necessary. We will organize internal training to make sure that each team member has the necessary skills in respect of data handling and statistical analysis. It seems necessary to outsource data entries, specific administrative work (i.e. related to the workshops), proofreading and editing on a contractual basis.

C. Research Environment

i. Transition to independence

The proposed project can build on the results of my previous project on mobility and sedentariness and on my current project 'work at the margins'. The grant will allow me to complete this work and finish my second book. This book, submitted as a habilitation thesis for social and economic history at the historical-cultural faculty of the University of Vienna, will allow applying for a professorship in Austria or abroad.

During my recent projects I have developed an overview on theoretical and empirical questions in this field and also an overview on relevant source material. Establishing a team will allow me to follow up these ideas in an extended context. It will allow using and further developing the potential of my research concept. I intend to increase my teaching experience and establish a research seminar with the objective to include – beyond the actual team members – students interested in this field.

The project would also provide further possibilities to establish and intensify my international contacts and my reputation as an expert within this field of research. The research team will present the results at major international conferences. Furthermore, as successfully done in the context of the previous project, I would take initiatives in organizing research discussions related to the research topic at a national and international level. The research team will organize 4 international workshops on the topics of

1. The economy of makeshifts (or as I would rather put it: activities between economy and makeshifts)
2. Labour market, job search and job-placement
3. The history of vocation

²⁷ For example: Welchen Raum braucht Geschichte? In: ÖZG 17/2006/1, 9-64; Kunstmarkt: Feld als Raum. In: ÖZG 17/2006/2&3, 127-188; Urban Youth, National-Socialist Education and Specialized Fun. In: Axel Schildt/Detlef Siegfried (eds.): European Cities, Public Sphere and Youth in the 20th Century. London 2005, 57-79; Lecture et Imitation. Apprentissage à grande distance. In: Gérard Mauger (ed.): Rencontres avec Pierre Bourdieu. Paris 2005, 387-397.

²⁸ For example: Möglichkeiten von Zunft. Vienna 2004; together with Robert Brandt (eds.): Nahrung, Markt oder Gemeinnutz. Bielefeld 2004; together with Philip Hoffmann (eds.): Working in the shadow. (to be published in 2008).

4. Science of work and non-work

These workshops will allow discussing the projects results in an interdisciplinary and international context and in a larger historical frame. Through that we will further establish a frequent intellectual exchange with researchers working on related fields in other countries and in other scientific disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and economics. The results will be published as papers, books and volumes.

ii. Hosting institution

The Department of Economic and Social History at the University of Vienna provides an excellent frame for this research project. Located at the department there are various scholars on the economic and socio-cultural history of Austria. Research on labour, migration and the welfare system is well established at this department. This research manifests itself in numerous projects, publications, and events. A number of studies on unemployment (Dieter Stiefel), welfare system (Ernst Bruckmüller, Gerhard Melinz), and the workhouse (Hannes Stekl) have been written in the context of this department. Josef Ehmer is located at the same department. He has published broadly on the history of migration and labour. He is also a member of the FWO Research Network 'Labour 1500-2000'. For many years now we have successfully co-operated in several projects and organizing international conferences. Working with him and his team has always been intellectually inspiring and pleasant. He is involved in a number of current research projects which will offer possibilities of further collaboration for my research team. Josef Ehmer and Hermann Zeitlhofer have recently started a research project on 'Labour, Aging and the Elderly: Historical Variations and Trends'. Further experts on labour mobility are: Annemarie Steidl, who works on a project on 'Transatlantic Migration in Relation to Internal and Continental Movements in Central Europe'; Andrea Komlosy, who has recently published her habilitation thesis on disparities of regional development and labour mobility in the Habsburg Monarchy. Another important field related to my research subject is research on developments in demography. A project team (Josef Ehmer, Werner Lausecker, Alexander Pinwinkler) participates in the *Schwerpunktprogramm* of the German Science Fund (DFG, SPP 1106) on the history of German population sciences and demography. These numerous and varied research activities and publications at the department allow intense and stimulating discussions between different fields and perspectives. Furthermore the department hosts the *Dokumentation autobiographischer Aufzeichnungen* which provides a large collection of autobiographical accounts, relevant for our project. Therefore, the department will be an excellent frame for the suggested project.