STRUMENTI
PER LA DIDATTICA E LA RICERCA

– 129 –

A Glance at Work.
Educational Perspectives

edited by
Vanna Boffo

Progetto grafico di Alberto Pizarro Fernández

Table of Contents

Pietro
Causarano

Work and Person: Places of Labour as a Divided Territory

1. The affliction of work: places of labour

My essay acts as an introductory and preparatory contribution to this publication and, to a certain extent, reflects that of Vanna Boffo on the «sense» connecting work and person in a pedagogical key. The aim is to offer a framework that takes into account the afflictive nature of work, its less consoling and pacifying aspect, more linked to the seemingly endless conflicts and tensions in this sphere of existence, which, however, are undergoing profound changes in both their perception and representation, and also finding cultural and ideological antidotes within themselves. Among these antidotes, one of the most powerful and at times most illusory – today above all – consists precisely of training and education[1].

In 1984, in a special issue of an anthropological journal devoted to *Il lavoro e le sue rappresentazioni (Work and its Representations)*, Mario Alinei, a controversial glottologist and socio-linguist, dwelled on the origin of the traditionally negative proto-historic and historic meaning inherent in many words meant to represent work[2]. Their «etymographic contents», in his opinion, in most cases are strongly circumscribed by the servile condition of work, as particularly highlighted in Classical Antiquity with regard to crafts and trades (*ars et negotium*). Only the terms linked to free work (e.g. the soldier-peasant of Antiquity, the Germanic warrior tradition, or the medieval craftsman) and then to civic service (in the ancient πόλις, and then in the medieval commune) would take on a positive significance from inside the first forms of «classist society», as the legacy linked to un-

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[1] See A. Accornero, *Il lavoro come ideologia,* il Mulino, Bologna, 1980.
[2] M. Alinei, *Lavoro classista e preclassista. Gli sviluppi etimografici di alcune lingue europee,* «La ricerca folklorica», V (1984), 9, pp. 71-80.

divided archaic communities. Human formative experience would only legitimately be connected to these. Besides, it is well known that the Greek word σκολή (from which our school derives, through the Latin *schola*), was a synonym for the Latin *otium*, and had a positive meaning connected to the state of freedom and the availability of time to devote to the common good and forming the personality. It is a word that has tellingly never been placed alongside work as personal employment or alongside the state of necessity (by negation, definable as ασκολία, *negotium*).

In other words, the terms meant to identify subordinate, above all manual work, and its sphere of activity as the transformation of nature, but in general also all work connected to material needs, have recurrently (and at length) conjured up a meaning that has become sedimented deep in the consciousness as negative, as privation, toil, suffering, exploitation. To a large extent, this meaning has come down to us intact, also and above all in dialect, jargon and vernacular expressions, in more popular and less high-brow turns of phrase. Furthermore, a similar problematic and dialectic outline emerges historically in many of the reflections and speculations on work itself and on its subsequent meanings. And it is no coincidence that in the European languages of the Christian era an incredible range of etymons and meanings have been used to deal with this ambivalence of value, from the Middle Ages through the modern era until today[3].

In his studies, Antonio Santoni Rugiu has moreover recalled the long-term effects in modern Europe that the late-medieval polarisation between «minor» (know-how) and «major» (knowledge) guilds had in terms of the transformation of vocational education and training processes and cultural identification in work: and, therefore, also with regard to the perception of one's work as positive or negative in relation to its position in the social stratification, depending on whether it was of a manual or intellectual nature[4]. By analogy, again after industrialisation, one can see that the historico-cultural identities linked to manual work at times show the same ambivalence in value insofar as they link work to the socialising dimension of the places where it is lived out and narrated and to the organisational and technological forms in which it is performed: to these places and not others, for example, the factory rather than the craftsman's workshop, the city rather than the country, etc.[5]

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[3] A. Negri, *Per una storia del concetto di lavoro nella cultura filosofica ed economica occidentale*, in S. Zaninelli, M. Taccolini (edited by), *Il lavoro come fattore produttivo e come risorsa nella storia economica italiana*, Vita & Pensiero, Milan, 2002, in particular pp. XXIX-XXXI.

[4] See A. Santoni Rugiu, *Nostalgia del maestro artigiano*, Manzuoli, Florence, 1988.

[5] H. Zwahr, *Class Formation and Labor Movement as a Subject of Dialectic Social History*, in M. van der Linden (edited by), *The End of Labour History?*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, pp. 85-104; S. Musso (edited by), *Tra fabbrica e società*, «Annali Fondazione Feltrinelli», Feltrinelli, Milan, XXXIII (1999); F. Dei, *Antropologia e culture operaie: un incontro mancato*, in P. Causarano, L. Falossi, P. Giovannini (edited by), *Mondi operai, culture del lavoro e identità sindacali*, Ediesse, Rome, 2008, pp. 133-145.

Edward P. Thompson, as early 1963 with his *The Making of the English Working Class*, but also in the following year Eric J. Hobsbawm in *Labouring Men* (albeit from a different approach), use almost a historico-anthropological lens to read the cultures of industrial work and the class languages that single out the distinctive origins of the English working class, its forms of resistance and adaptation in the passage from the artisan past to the reality of manufacturing and then factories[6]. Starting in the modern era, the projection and introjection of the positive nature of work became quite strong, also thanks to the Reform and the Protestant ethic: an example of this is the success of the topic of working class "decorum" in relation to the middle class attitude, or workers' "productivism" in relation to the entrepreneurial idea of production, namely those common grounds that are to be understood as a real and proper "patriotism" of the quality recalled by Joseph Roth[7]. Nevertheless, all this does not manage to hide the effects of privation and subordination which are equally as strong (if not stronger) than those of liberation or at least of integration in the transition represented by the Industrial Revolution. And this is so also in a case like that of Britain where social conflict has never had the politico-ideological radicality of other situations in continental and southern Europe, but where, nevertheless, the issue of the working class and its cultural and conflictual identity had long occupied a central position[8].

Therefore, if seen from the viewpoint of a place of labour (the field, workshop, plant, office, etc.), work often overlaps with fatigue and toil: the place as the metre by which to measure them. But that is not all: it is also through place (and the relationships that physically and morally define it as a human territory, also in differential and conflictual terms) that historically the ambivalence of value reappears (and at times is healed), and so those who labour try to give a positive meaning and sense and therefore a dignity to the tiring work. Delocalising work, in analysis as well as in action, that is, decontextualising it (both functionally and geographically), in many ways serves to deprive or nevertheless change its sense. It serves to try to dehistoricise work at the same time we would like to deterritorialise it, by making it abstract in theory as well as in organisational practice. And, compared to previous epochs, this is one of the most slippery cultural challenges in the current phase of globalisation, since it rehashes «the dialectic between capitalism and territorialism» both at the economic and social lev-

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[6] E. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Gollancz Ltd., London, 1963; E. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1964.
[7] J. Roth, *Flight without End*, Peter Owen, London, 1977 (orig. ed. 1927), pp. 14-16; in general, G. McLennan, *"The Labour Aristocracy" and "Incorporation". Notes on Some Terms in the Social History of the Working Class*, «Social History», VI (1981), 1, pp. 71-81.
[8] G. Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983; in general, R. Bendix, *Work and Authority in Industry: Managerial Ideologies in the Course of Industrialization*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1956.

el; but – on a smaller scale – it is so also owing to the economic reticulation of firms, to the outsourcing of functions, to the new (not just flexible, but also precarious) «moving boundaries» of jobs and services and the contexts in which they are provided and regulated[9].

The topic that I must expand on in this essay is, therefore, that of the «place» in which work and person meet and construct (or deconstruct) the sense of labour. And I would like to point out first of all, without however undervaluing its weight and importance, that the viewpoint from which I begin is not the economic perspective of the labour market and the historical processes of insourcing/outsourcing in business and its institutionalisation/ de-institutionalisation in terms of «transaction costs»[10]. To speak of person and work in relation to place and formative experience is a perspective that could be defined – if not too rhetorical – of social humanism[11]. This slant of analysis is, therefore, conscious that the human cannot be reduced to profitable work. Nevertheless, it is forced to realistically face up to the fact that, ever since the nineteenth century, the workplace has increasingly and essentially become the place of its organisation and subordination to economic profitability. For those who deal with contemporary history, work is not just divided (in a conflictual and/or cooperative form), but is above all organised regardless of the economic market relations or cultural projections and personal investments that concern it; work is not just an individual or collective fact, it is a social institution that at times almost seems separate from the people who have or do not have it[12]. Therefore, I need to make some short preliminary considerations on how space and time are considered in this essay.

2. Place, places: the historical dimension in the territory of work

In Aristotle's view, space is placed in relation to the passing of time. That is, banally, the perception of space is connected to movement (change of state) and, therefore, with the time needed for this; what is more, time cannot be outside a space. In other words, every history has its (material and symbolic) geography, just as every geography has its history. Space, and the time that defines it, together propose the historical dimension in the analysis, in the exact same way as time does in the space in which it passes like a physical movement and change of state. This is also the case of work:

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[9] M. Regini, *Confini mobili*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1991; G. Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, Verso, London-New York, 1994; J. Lucassen (edited by), *Global Labour History*, Peter Lang, Bern, 2008; B. Silver, *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003.

[10] See O. Williamson, *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*, The Free Press, New York, 1985.

[11] See M. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2010.

[12] P. Giovannini, *Tra conflitto e solidarietà*, Cedam, Padua, 1987; G. Bonazzi, *Come studiare le organizzazioni*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2006.

namely, it is possible to approach the topic of work through its chronological (historic and day-to-day) processuality, through the dynamic, concrete, non-metaphysical nature of the nexus that links, in time and in space, the labouring man with his activity and with the sense of his work. Place thus also becomes the territory for constructing a space of identity which accepts work itself and the labour involved, as well as the structure of society. This is all the more true where for a large part of human experience work has been movement and the control of movement – whether corporeal or mechanical – in space. Place as territory: thus, through the temporal management of movement and the social relations in it, the physical space of work acquires different meanings at the historical level because it takes in different territories.

All this is true more generally if we think of a geography which, insofar as it is human, is historical[13]. Taking a look at a map of Canada, alongside the federal states one will note the so-called Northwest Territories, places of wild and practically uninhabited spaces, nameless, but not so much as not to take on a human and not only physical geographical meaning: however, the territory today has a different sense from that same territory when it was a place only inhabited by the indigenous peoples or in the first phases of colonisation; indeed, it is true that in time it has undergone a profound process of erosion. The places are more or less the same, but the territories are not. The same can be said of the Web today: a virtual space, a non-physical place, which becomes a global territory of human relationships and gives new sense to the places from which one accesses the Net. These physical places change their original physiognomy of historical territories the moment in which they encounter the virtual territory of the Web[14]. Hence, it is also possible to read work and its transformations through place as a truly changing figuration, if meant as a territory elaborated by man.

Furthermore, through place, the category of work is subject to contextualisation on one hand and relativisation on the other. In this case to relativise means precisely to contextualise. Which job in which epoch and in which place? Which person at work in which epoch and in which place? But also: which time and which space of work in relation to which person and to which job? That is, what are the territories of work in space and in time? Work, almost by constitution, was thus broken down into real, concrete jobs a long time before it became fashionable for this evocative formula to mark the breakdown of the big twentieth-century meanings – the «Work» with a capital «W» of industrial society – which has characterised recent decades[15].

[13] See L. Gambi, *Una geografia per la storia*, Einaudi, Turin, 1973.
[14] See J. Meyrowitz, *No Sense of Place: the Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985.
[15] See A. Accornero, *Era il secolo del Lavoro*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1997.

From another point of view, and this aspect concerns us in particular, work relates in a different way to the formative and educational processes insofar as the workplace(s) historically constitute(s) an unresolved problematic area with regard to pedagogy and its normative intents, if referred to work. And this is precisely owing to the same tendency also shared by pedagogy to build big meanings on the basis of that original ambivalent dichotomy of value referred to at the beginning; meanings that are nevertheless difficult to make interact with the many elliptic forms of real social processes. The socialisation of work (and socialisation at work) is a form of implicit social education, which builds its own territories, which, however, is not necessarily dominated by the pedagogical discourse, or its paradigms, at least in the world of real processes. While pedagogy may deal with formative experience from the viewpoint of personal relationships and subjectivity, in the field of work it reads this experience on its own epistemological terrain (its own territory and own canons) and thus fatally clashes with – or rather verifies how much these relations and this subjectivity are conditioned by – the educational indifference of the social and economic (organisational) descriptions of work, that is, by what appears as the first territory of work, or at least has done since the Industrial Revolution[16].

The series of seminars, whose texts follow in this book, confirm that it is an exemplary approach to aim to contextualise and relativise work from a pedagogical viewpoint. In other words, despite prevalently being centred around the present and oriented towards figures and moments that are not canonical in the public discourse on work, in many cases these texts deal with the otherness of work to the standard, giving a processual (if not exactly historical) depth to the phenomena investigated: geographical-cultural otherness, individual otherness, otherness from the dominant models, the «other» at work and, therefore, in some cases its anomie, etc. The plural points of view on work, and the formative processes that affect or intersect with it, displayed by the essays in this book, thus confirm the necessity to relativise it at the same time as contextualising it, by crossing through places constituted as different, decentred physical and mental territories.

An additional difficulty is also posed by the fact that the same categories of space and time, as hinted, are built socially as cultural elaborations and practices and, therefore, they have a historical depth since they are not natural: tellingly, in this case, place is also and above all a territory, that is, a cultural space of human relations. From this point of view, time – in that it both orders and orients – contributes to institutionalising and specialising not only the organisation of life and work but also of space, according

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[16] R. Simon, D. Dippo, A. Schenke (edited by), *Learning Work*, Bergin & Garvey, New York, 1991; P. Federighi, *Le teorie critiche sui processi formativi in età adulta: tendenze e aspetti problematici nei principali orientamenti contemporanei*, in P. Orefice (edited by), *Formazione e processo formativo*, FrancoAngeli, Milan, 2001, pp. 29-58.

to that complementarity well highlighted by scholars such as Norbert Elias and Michel Foucault concerning European modernisation and civilisation and the phenomena of power reallocation that characterise them[17].

The secularisation of time and construction of the economic space in the modern age are upheld symbolically and justified technically by the invention of the modern mechanical clock, untied from other elements of sense except for its intrinsic and autonomous technological perfection: abstract regulation and self-regulation overlap perfectly in a cultural game of mirrors with the transformations of work and social life[18]. And today clocks are a constant characteristic in the workplaces of modernity, almost becoming a constitutive and significant as well as recurrent iconographical element owing to the fact that it is itself a machine and an archetype of the perfection inherent in industrial mechanisation[19]. Besides, to be precise, the same also happens for school, the physical space and phase of life increasingly devoted to education, schooling and training alone, with no regard for work because it organises the time devoted to it in a separate manner[20]. Abstract, mechanical time, therefore, increasingly becomes the regulator of the space of life, its unit of measurement; and the unit of measurement of labour in the workplace.

3. Work as localised figuration: forms and contents

Work can be seen as a «figuration», in the meaning that Nobert Elias gave to this category in his works, namely, in the terms of a network of relationships and interdependences between individuals which go to make up a dense web, not just a network, sometimes until it possesses such importance as to be defined as a social institution (and therefore capable of occupying a physical and mental territory). At the same time, it is dynamic, not just in the processual space-time dimension, but also in the cognitive and cultural dimension that rereads and interprets it with its own languages[21].

The forms and contents of work are, therefore, a good example of figuration and help make the workplace a territory not just in economic, but

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[17] A. Perulli, *Il tempo da oggetto a risorsa*, FrancoAngeli, Milan, 1996, pp. 23-66; A. Mariani, *La civilizzazione tra governo, disciplinamento, razionalizzazione e conformazione: un'ipotesi di rilettura*, in F. Cambi, C. Fratini, G. Trebisacce (edited by), *La ricerca pedagogica e le sue frontiere*, ETS, Pisa, 2008, pp. 267-79.

[18] L. Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1934, p. 15; in general, C. Cipolla, *Clocks and Culture, 1300-1700*, Norton, New York, 1978, and J. Le Goff, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1980 (orig. ed. 1977).

[19] D. Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1983.

[20] See D. Ragazzini, *Tempi di scuola e tempi di vita*, Bruno Mondadori, Milan, 1997.

[21] N. Elias, *Essays III. On Sociology and the Humanities*, vol. 16 of R. Kilminster and S. Mennell (edited by), *Collected Works*, University College Dublin Press, Dublin, 2009, pp. 1-3, pp. 9-39.

also in cultural and social – and therefore historical – terms[22]. These connotations outline the space-time dimension in which the people who start work and learn it find themselves involved. I shall ignore the effect brought about by differences in culture, gender and age. But at the same time these forms and contents have to do with how much every person brings to work and how much they take from it both in material and in moral and symbolic terms. The work forms pertain to the procedures, to how the work is done. Its contents pertain to what is done, to the product made or the service provided. Both are brought back together in where it is done and it is there that work is expressed fully as a historically identifiable figuration, all the more so when it assumes the character of a true social institution. Technique and technology are the expressive mediation carried out in that place which has become a territory, rather than in another place or another time, that is, in other territories; tellingly, over time, technique and technology have been subject to ambivalent attitudes too[23].

The combination of forms and contents in different territories can occur inside a unit of time (for example, the present), but through the pluralism of places; and we may also come across it in a unit of place (for example, a factory) but through different eras and, therefore, with profoundly different meanings. The same can be said about the recordings that statistics and socio-economic analysis make, in terms of latitudinal differentiation in space, between the various sectors of the economy, that is, by hypostatising the traditional categories of the political economy and the market with relation to the social (and if we will, also the international) division of work, on the basis, therefore, of the functional place: those working in the extraction sector or producing raw materials (miners, farmers), those who transform and manipulate them (craftsmen, manual workers), those in the service industry (in terms of functions, the most expansive sector in time). Other divisions that denote different combinations of figurations – interdependent with the others but which can also be read by themselves – and instead refer to geographical places, are instead the more traditional contrast between city and country or, today, between the North and South of the world or, as Giovanni Gozzini says, the *West* in relation to the *Rest*[24]. On the other hand, these same great divisions also show us the longitudinal differentiation at the temporal level. The conceptual categories that we use today – this «tracing of boundaries» so typical of social life – do not have the same meaning if seen in different moments, even in the same geographical or functional place, given that forms and contents giving sense

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[22] P. Causarano, *Forme e contenuti del lavoro nel '900. Il caso dell'industria*, in L. Falossi (edited by), *Il '900, alcune istruzioni per l'uso*, ABB-Giuntina, Florence, 2006, pp. 25-44.
[23] M. Bloch, *Land and Work in Medieval Europe*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967 (orig. ed. 1966); C. Littler (edited by), *The Experience of Work*, Gower-The Open University, Aldershot, 1985; G.A. Gilli, *Origini dell'eguaglianza*, Einaudi, Turin, 1988.
[24] See G. Gozzini, *Un'idea di giustizia*, Bollati Boringhieri, Turin, 2010.

to that place combine in a different manner in other epochs. The territories change, namely the historical sense of the places where the figurations of work come into being: just think of the dimensional parameter with which economic and social institutions are normally circumscribed[25].

Therefore, the figurations are different, as are the perceptions and the way with which single people come into contact with them and take part in them. In the passage from the nineteenth to the twentieth century an example is the linguistic codification of the professional figures (think of the changing meaning in time of manual worker) and of the types of work (what is industrial work today with respect to a century ago?) or the places themselves (from manufactory to the mechanised factory). The distinctive processuality of work also involves a sort of natural selection: new types of work replace jobs that have disappeared as emerges from the statistical classification of professional figures, a true form of institutionalisation caused by this economic Darwinism; the result being that the figuration of forms and contents is particularly mobile and transitory in the industrial age. Territories of work disappear, others appear: today, just think of the insertion in the space of market exchange of those traditionally communitarian services centred around solidarity and reciprocity, such as the case of care work. Even non-work changes, if we are to think of the invention of the category of the unemployed in the nineteenth century or, on the other hand, of the modern notion of free time[26].

4. Not necessarily coinciding territories: organised places and labour cultures

The space-time and cultural dimension that defines one figuration in a different key from others, if applied to work, does not only relate to chronological distances in time (today with respect to the past) or geographical distances in space (here and not elsewhere), or therefore to different sensitivities (and mentalities); in reality this dimension is intrinsic to work itself, intended as a territory for the experimentation of practices and models of its organisation, at least since the industrialisation process. Industry was not always factories in the Modern Age (think of homeworking or manufactories), in the same way as today factories and business do not al-

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[25] The social arbitrariness of «tracing boundaries» is constitutive of the fact that «without distinctions we would have a great deal of difficulties in recognising […] reality» (G.P. Cella, *Tracciare confini*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2006, p. 15, own translation); in other words, boundaries serve to make comprehensible (and governable) a reality which, otherwise, in its unitarity would risk escaping us. Obviously, however, it is not a neutral social process: e.g. to classify is also to include or exclude places, defining them as territories either included or not in certain types of protection (in work, in the market, in credit).
[26] R. Salais, N. Beverez, B. Reynaud, *L'invention du chômage*, Puf, Paris, 1986; H. Nowotny, *Time: the Modern and Postmodern Experience*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1994 (orig. ed. 1989).

ways correspond completely (indeed in the developed world it is rarely the case), since the social importance of industry as a production organisation has decreased drastically.

The division of work, from a historical point of view, combines the social and market dimensions – the subject of classic economic theories and sociology which was already coming into being in the nineteenth century – with the dimension planned by twentieth-century politics through either totalitarian or democratic state intervention. But, in the workplace, the division of labour (and its jobs) is also expressed in what as a rule is called the «technical» dimension of work, which the economist Michele Salvati considers more appropriate to define as «organisational», and which obviously interweaves and overlaps with all the former dimensions[27]. In this sense, the workplace as the changing figuration of the functional and geographical territoriality of work is particularly significant with regard to the capacity of suggestion and figurations to overlap. Just think of the debate on the organisational and social alternatives to mass production in market economics, between vertical, hierarchical integration in the big businesses such as industrial corporations, and horizontal, reticular and flexible integration in the industrial districts meant as local systems of firms or in modern, decentred lean production[28]. Industrial labour cultures are obviously present in both cases but the figurations that characterise them – the territories in which they live and which circumscribe and define them – do not correspond, as is also the case for the social relations and languages that those work cultures express. Not only is the work's business culture different, the workers' culture is also different, even though they remain inside the common and convergent panorama of industrial production, with different combinations of forms and contents of the work. Obviously one could pinpoint countless cases and examples of this.

According to Alain Touraine, the organisation of work is incorporated knowledge, and the social conflicts that have marked the history of the workers movement between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are indeed cultural conflicts, namely concerning control of the knowledge resources applied to production through techniques, technologies and the organisational capacities typical of industry and its pervasive social model[29]. The changeable combination of the relationship between space and time, as

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[27] M. Salvati, *Divisione del lavoro*, «Stato e mercato», 35, 1992, pp. 167-209.
[28] A. Chandler, *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise*, Mit Press, Cambridge, MA, 1962; M. Piore, C. Sabel, *The Second Industrial Divide*, Basic Books, New York, 1984; C. Sabel, J. Zeitlin, *Historical Alternatives to Mass Production: Politics, Markets and Technology in Nineteenth-Century Industrialization*, «Past and Present», 1985, 108, pp. 133-176.
[29] A. Touraine, M. Wieviorka, F. Dubet, *The Working-Class Movement*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987 (orig. ed. 1984); in general, D. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus. Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to Present*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1969.

the applicative field of organised knowledge – namely, one of the Schumpeterian qualities of business innovation in a competitive market – is found in the way in which the forms and contents of work blend in a workplace with a changing territorial physiognomy, meant in the sense used here. For example, the craftsman's workshop as a household economy was not and still is not a territory which can coincide with manufacturing that is decentralised (household economy with widespread but centrally organised homeworking) or centralised in a factory system; and then both are difficult to compare with the factory territory as the system organised around the mechanisation of production, followed by automation, owing to the type and size of the tangible and intangible relationships[30], and so on.

Work discipline meant as the discipline of bodies and their movement in space through controlling time, which Michel Foucault masterfully rediscovered in the eighteenth-century illustration given by Bentham in his *Panopticon*, while reducing the margins of organisational uncertainty, enables the incorporation – we could say the territorialisation – of specific figurations of work forms and contents in the workplace through the organisational control of knowledge (technique and technology): the power of knowledge as power over time and over space. With regard to this aspect and referring precisely to Foucault, Germano Maifreda has recently reinterpreted the whole strategy of asserting a «divided» work discipline that is at the same time the self-regulation of and social control over the worker and his labour[31].

These figurations are valid there and so long as they are profitable at the economic level or nevertheless do not hinder the imposed or induced social consensus; that is, so long as self-control and control are complementary and efficient. Otherwise they can change, be subject to innovation, be delocalised, in particular when the consensus disappears. The great clash on culture and society at the end of the 1960s is a good example, at several levels, of this crisis of consensus in a model of economic and social development, and we are still experiencing its consequences today: the dispute (and then the restoration) of capitalistic control over knowledge as the hierarchical expression of power over work as well as other things; the crisis and revolution in relationships between the sexes; the discovery of the social and environmental limits to exploitation and the golden rule of profit (non-productive against productive dissipation), etc.[32]

With the 1960s we see the end of a historical cycle which began at the beginning of the twentieth century, but whose roots go back further. Be-

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[30] P. Kriedte, H. Medick, J. Schlumbohm, *Industrialization before Industrialization: Rural Industry in the Genesis of Capitalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981 (orig. ed. 1977); G. Friedmann, *Industrial Society. The Emergence of the Human Problems of Automation*, The Free Press, New York, 1955 (orig. ed. 1946).
[31] See G. Maifreda, *La disciplina del lavoro*, Bruno Mondadori, Milan, 2007.
[32] See M. Revelli, *Oltre il Novecento*, Einaudi, Turin, 2000.

tween the modern age and the nineteenth century, straddling the French Revolution, we see the definitive – both economic and social – unhinging of the traditional protection provided by the guilds (control of knowledge, control of access, control of exchanges). Liberalisation of the labour market, the result of a more general liberalisation of the individual filtered by economic rationality, led to a long period of a lack of norms protecting work and its cultures which had been provided for, at least until the end of the nineteenth century, by the guilds, and the establishment of the modern trade union movements and workers' parties: namely, when the social question was actively brought out, but in a new form by its victims, who became the leading players since they expressed new labour cultures, marked by the new territories[33].

In particular, this period of regulatory void enabled the demolition of the craftsmen's traditional control over the knowledge of the forms and contents of work, a capacity summed up in the typical production techniques of that place which was the territory of free craftsmanship: the workshop. The transition first of all to the manufactory and then the factory was then nothing but a more or less gradual, but always traumatic and enforced transfer of this control to outside the professional figure involved and its incorporation into the organisational structure (the firm's historical territory, whatever its configurations may be, its physical places)[34].

The break-up of the organic unity of the craftsman's work (and its vocational education and training processes) meant the transfer of knowledge and control to the organisation of work and the entrepreneur's organisational skills a long time before the diffusion of machinery, mechanisation and automation[35]. The organisation of work, which, before the advent of industry was prevalently the craftsman's mental division of his jobs and tasks (all in the mind of the artisan as well as, to a greater or lesser degree, of his apprentices), afterwards, already with the manufactory and its hierarchical structure, shifted outside the subject, to become a physically perceptible social institution in space and time: it was business and management in their concrete form, the workplace (manufactory, factory), that defined the territory of work and helped to build, in a differential (and therefore conflictual) manner, the figurations in which work operates. From the craftsman's autonomy (and «autocephaly»), we went to the growing heteronomy that characterises manual work and marked the whole of the twentieth century with its conflicts: with the twentieth century, control of time and space became one of the main territories of the social conflict, leading to that «deg-

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[33] R. Castel, *From Manual Workers to Wage Laborers: Transformation of the Social Question*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 2003 (orig. ed. 1955); J.-L. Robert, F. Boll, A. Prost, *L'invention des syndicalismes*, Éditions de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1997.
[34] See G. Sapelli, *L'impresa come soggetto storico*, Il Saggiatore, Milan, 1990.
[35] G. Angioni, *Tecnica e sapere tecnico nel lavoro pre-industriale*, «La ricerca folklorica», V (1984), 9, pp. 61-69; A. Santoni Rugiu, cit., pp. 144-149.

radation» of the professional quality of work which later, after the Second World War, would go on to constitute a widely debated topic[36].

5. Work and education, divided (and distant) territories? Brief final considerations

The control of know-how passed through analysis of its functions, the decomposition of work forms and contents into measurable and classifiable movements that could be set out in space, subordinate to organisation, and then to that powerful factor of its scientific legitimation: technology. Work went «*en miettes*», into pieces[37]. In the first half of the twentieth century, work tended to be reduced to a job and this did not occur in abstract but in physical, concrete places which became work's specific, new territories. The decomposition of work into its single – more and more simple and elementary – tasks was already present in the famous example of the technical and organisational division of labour in pin manufacturing put forward by Adam Smith at the end of the eighteenth century in his *Wealth of Nations*, before being methodologically and theoretically perfected by the engineer Frederick W. Taylor at the dawn of the twentieth century. It was the idea, then widely expanded while also seeking mitigation at the human level, that it was possible to scientifically organise work and that the worker was necessarily subordinate to this economic rationality since it was the work organisation (the management of labour in the firms) that made the labour market and established the prerequisites for entry. At this point entry depended less and less on the skills really possessed by the subject, and more and more on those requested by the preset organisational context into which the subject was introduced at work[38].

For the whole of the twentieth century, corresponding to the tendency to standardise the production process (and the products), and the new mechanised and then automised industrial set-up of organised (and divided) work that transformed forms and contents, was a growing reduction in the specific features of these same production processes and the skills needed to make them. Therefore, in terms of job supply, that natural economic selection came into being which affected the obsolete professional figures mentioned earlier. This was accompanied, in terms of demand, by a substantial redefinition of the necessary qualities required to enter the labour market. In the meantime, products and production methods, insofar

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[36] F. Guedj, G. Vindt, *Le temps de travail*, La Découverte-Syros, Paris, 1997. In general, G. Friedmann, *Industrial Society*, cit., pp. 191-274, and H. Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital: the Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*, Monthly Review Press, New York-London, 1974.
[37] G. Friedmann, *Anatomy of Work. Labor Leisure and the Implications of Automation*, The Free Press, New York, 1961 (orig. ed. 1956).
[38] P. Causarano, *La professionalità contesa*, «Studi sulla formazione», 1, 1999, pp. 141-148; in general, G. Bonazzi, *Storia del pensiero organizzativo*, FrancoAngeli, Milan, 1989.

as they were goods, were universalised as well as, therefore, their forms and contents, the upshot being that these forms and contents became simpler in terms of the job done, and in proportion to the increased complication of the management side of the work organisation. For the individual, work was fragmented into jobs, whose skills were more and more elementary also with regard to their acquisition: and so also the transmission of the necessary knowledge, competences and skills lost its specificity, became universalised, homogenised, transferred to the organisational dimension which incorporated them through new combinations of forms and contents, namely new localised figurations.

Tellingly, after the Second World War, for example, the technical institutes and vocational schools became much more akin horizontally in the different school systems of the industrialised nations (in what they transmitted and how they did it) than they had been within the same country fifty or sixty years before: in a complementary form they became standardised too. During the twentieth century there was a tendential convergence and homogenisation, albeit with important differences, in the definition of the professional figures who carried out standard jobs. For a long time the reality of tacit skills, that is, implicit, relational, not formalised or normalised capacities, was relegated to the sidelines both in the recognition given to them in corporate and contractual professional classification systems and in training qualifications and career guidance. Obviously, the phenomenon was very evident at the lower levels of executive professional ranking, but it became generalised over several levels; and above all it was a phenomenon that only came to light clearly, because it was disputed, after the crisis of the late 1960s[39].

In the first half of the twentieth century, corresponding to the segmentation of work and its organisational fragmentation which enabled increasingly explicit other-directed control was the definitive «*démembrement de l'éducation*»[40], that is, the slow and gradual expulsion and outsourcing of vocational education and training from the workplace, a phenomenon that affected both spatial differentiation (of the functions) and temporal differentiation (school before working age or, during working age, outside working hours). Or rather, in the face of the growing universalisation and standardisation of the formative practices and their definitive specialisation and institutionalisation, the workplace turned out to be increasingly less a territory formally charged with intentional training processes and at most the space for external actions (internships, on-the-job training, etc.), originating from other territories not directly intrinsic to work, and at times compensating for the failures of the labour market. From this viewpoint, the parable of apprenticeships or enterprise and trade schools is ex-

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[39] G.-R. Horn, *The Working-Class Dimension of 1968*, in G.-R. Horn, P. Kenney (edited by), *Transnational Moments of Change*, Rowman & Littlefield Pbs., Lanham, 2004, pp. 95-118.
[40] See P. Naville, *La formation professionnelle et l'école*, Puf, Paris, 1948.

emplary, their spaces cut more and more in favour of external vocational schools, as can be seen clearly in the case of Italy[41].

Nevertheless, at the same time, in the twentieth century the vocational training increasingly transferred outside the workplace, and schooling before entry to work (and often outside the work space), was not followed by real cultural and social acknowledgement. Already in the 1920s and 30s, this phenomenon led to a two-track polarisation of the institutions in the European school systems, the typical example of which is the German dual system which drastically opposes the line of general cultural (and also technical) formation with that of vocational training for subordinate and middle management jobs. But similar elements can also be seen in Anglo-Saxon vocational education or, in different forms, in the French model[42]. It is that typical polarisation between higher education/profession and vocational training and education/trade inherited from the older polarisation between the major and minor guilds which is mirrored in the structure of the school system and even reproduced in the not – just – etymological distinction of the professional figures involved in the same function of teaching: that is, the Latin *professor* (secondary school teacher, the teachers in the school where one learns by studying) and *magister* (primary school teachers, the teachers in the school where one learns through practical experience). In other words, the school system itself contributes to the dismembering of education which Naville spoke of, indeed it almost becomes the leading actor in the process[43].

Education's exit from the very territory of work – as well as clearly explaining the current embarrassing lack of a pedagogy of work – also marks the compensatory role that the diffusion, already increasingly requested in the 1960s, of transversal, non-specific skills and competences has assumed at the historical level. Therefore, it also explains why their acquisition has been transferred – en masse – to the public sphere of the social economy, where, tellingly, spending for education has become one of the largest items in the state budget of industrialised nations[44]. No longer directly profitable in the workplace, because they are more and more non-specific and trans-

[41] P. Causarano, *La enseñanza profesional entre sociedad e instituciones: una primera síntesis para Italia (hasta la Repubblica)*, in S. Castillo, M. Pigenet, F. Soubiran-Paillet (edited by), *Estados y relaciones de trabajo en la Europa del siglo XX*, Ediciones Cinca-Fundación Largo Caballero, Madrid, 2007, pp. 85-103.

[42] B. Charlot, M. Figeat, *Histoire de la formation des ouvriers*, Minerve, Paris, 1985; A. McClure, J. Chrisman and P. Mock, *Education for Work*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Rutherford, NJ, 1985; W.-D. Greinert, *The "German System" of Vocational Education*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 1994; in general, M. Galfré, *L'enseignement secondaire, une modernisation conservatrice? Italie, France et Allemagne*, «Histoire & Sociétés», I (2002), 1, pp. 83-92.

[43] P. Causarano, M*estiere, professione o funzione? Gli insegnanti*, in P. Causarano, L. Falossi and P. Giovannini (edited by), *Mondi operai, culture del lavoro e identità sindacali*, Ediesse, Rome, 2008, pp. 183-202.

[44] See V. Tanzi, L. Schuknecht, *La spesa pubblica nel XX secolo*, Firenze University Press, Florence, 2007.

ferable to other work contexts, these basic and transversal skills, these new forms of functional and social literacy at the cognitive and relational level, become something different from work, despite being fundamental in order to gain entry to it.

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