TEORIE VĚDY / THEORY OF SCIENCE / XLIII / 2021 / 2
https://doi.org/10.46938/tv.2021.508

////// studie / article //

PAUL LAZARSFELD'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORY OF EMPIRICAL SOCIAL RESEARCH

Abstract: *During the 1960s Paul F. Lazarsfeld, co-founder of the renowned Columbia school, worked to promote a useful new research methodology. This paper analyses these activities. In a series of papers, Lazarsfeld demonstrated that the roots of empirical research, the useful methodology he developed, lie in the work of early European scholars. Building on his belief that quantification does not need numbers, he showed that Hermann Conring, with his "classificatory statistics," had predated Frédéric Le Play and his "family budgets" and Adolphe Quételet and his "probability statistics" by almost two centuries. In another paper he highlighted the importance of Max Weber's empirical studies on agrarian and industrial workers within the frame of his life work. His seminars at Columbia University with Robert K. Merton and at the Sorbonne with Raymond Boudon opened up transatlantic cooperation on empirical research between New York and Paris for decades to come.*

Keywords: *Sorbonne; Columbia University; Paul Lazarsfeld; Max Weber; Adolphe Quételet; Hermann Conring*

Příspěvky Paula Lazarsfelda k historii empirického sociálního výzkumu

Abstrakt: *Paul F. Lazarsfeld, spoluzakladatel slavné Kolumbijské školy, hledal v šedesátých letech podporu pro svou novou metodologii. Článek analyzuje tyto Lazarsfeldovy aktivity. Souborem statí se mu podařilo ukázat, že kořeny empirického výzkumu, jehož užitečnou metodologii vyvinul, je možno najít v dílech raných evropských badatelů. S představou, že kvantifikace nepotřebuje čísla, ukázal, že Hermann Conring a jeho „klasifikační statistika" předešla „rodinné rozpočty" Frédérica Le Playe a „pravděpodobnostní statistiku" Adolpha Quételeta téměř o dvě staletí. V další stati objevil, že důležitou částí životního díla Maxe Webera byly jeho empirické studie zemědělských a průmyslových dělníků v Německu na přelomu 19. a 20. století. Jeho semináře na Kolumbijské univerzitě spolu s Robertem K. Mertonem a na Sorbonně s Raymondem Boudonem otevřely cestu transatlantické spolupráci v empirickém sociálním výzkumu mezi New Yorkem a Paříží v příštích desetiletích.*

Klíčová slova: *Univerzita Sorbonne; Kolumbijská univerzita; Paul Lazarsfeld; Max Weber; Adolphe Quételet; Hermann Conring*

HYNEK JEŘÁBEK
Institute of Sociological Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University
Pekařská 641/16, 155 00 Prague 5, Czech Republic
email / hynek.jerabek@gmail.com

This paper was supported by the Czech Science Foundation (project number 18-13807S); by the Progres Q15 programme of Charles University in Prague – part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University; and by the ERASMUS+ Mobility Exchange Programme – Staff Mobility for Training.

1. Introduction

The year 2021 marks 120 years since the birth of Paul F. Lazarsfeld and 45 years since his death. This represents a good opportunity to take a deeper look at a subject that Lazarsfeld worked on for 15 years of his life – namely, the history of social research from its earliest stages up until empirical social research became a standard part of the everyday work of sociology. Dozens of books and hundreds of articles have been written on the history of sociological and social thought, but little has been published on the history of empirical social research, and even less on the Paul Lazarsfeld's contributions to this field.[1]

The only paper on Lazarsfeld's contribution to the early history of empirical social research is by Anthony Oberschall.[2] The paper was written a long time ago, two years after Paul Lazarsfeld's death, and in it Oberschall described some details about Lazarsfeld's style of work and his own experience collaborating with him. Lazarsfeld and Oberschall wrote a paper together on the empirical social research of Max Weber.[3] Oberschall's work was closely connected to the work of Paul Lazarsfeld. He was his PhD student in 1960, he wrote his doctoral thesis in the field of the history of empirical social research,[4] and he later on edited a large collection

[1] Many books and other works have been published on the life and work of Paul Lazarsfeld. We can highlight two of them here and they are both international. A collection of papers was published in Paris to mark the centenary of Paul Lazarsfeld's birth that was edited by Jacques Lautman and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) La sociologie de Vienne a New York* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), and in 2001 the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) released a "special issue" of its journal, the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* (*IJPOR)*, which was devoted to Lazarsfeld. In the Editorial to this issue the four editors wrote: "There is a general impression in the social science world that quantitative research approaches have largely been American, while European scholarship has emphasized systematic theory. While it is true that most macrotheorists like Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Pareto, were Europeans, it is noteworthy that the major influence on social science which stimulated quantitative empiricism was a European, who became an American, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld." Wolfgang Donsbach, Seymour Martin Lipset, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, and Robert M. Worcester, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)," *International Journal for Public Opinion Research* 13, no. 3 (2001): 225–28.

[2] Anthony Oberschall, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the History of Empirical Social Research," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 14 (1978): 199–206.

[3] Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Anthony Oberschall, "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research," *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 2 (1965): 185–99.

[4] Anthony, Oberschall, *Empirical Social Research in Germany 1848–1914* (Paris & The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1965).

of papers on the foundations of empirical research in the United States and in many European countries.[5] In his paper on Lazarsfeld, Oberschall presented a brief overview of Lazarsfeld's observations on historical thinking about Europe that he articulated in publications that he wrote between the 1950s and 1970s. Writing about one of Lazarsfeld's most important activities in the early 1960s, he said:

> To search out European antecedents of empirical sociology and to reduce the European ambivalence about it, Lazarsfeld directed a seminar devoted to the history of social research in France when he became visiting professor at the Sorbonne in the 1962–1963 academic year.[6]

Anthony Oberschall's work with Lazarsfeld and on his legacy inspired me to make my own deeper analysis of Lazarsfeld's findings and organisational efforts at Columbia University and the Sorbonne. The seven-page paper by Oberschall, however, is not enough to cover all of Lazarsfeld's research activity in the field of the history of empirical social research. I will devote this article to a detailed examination of Paul F. Lazarsfeld's work in the early history of European social research. The paper will focus on his contributions to the field and on the role played by his many colleagues and followers between 1960 and 1973 in Europe, and especially at the Sorbonne in France, and at Columbia University in the Unites States.

There are six works that provide the general context of the topic of the history of empirical social research: Stigler's *The History of Statistic*,[7] Alain Desrosières about the history of statistical reasoning,[8] John Madge's *The Origins of Scientific Sociology*,[9] Jean Converse's early history of survey research in the U.S.;[10] Jennifer Platt's history of research methods;[11] and the

[5] Anthony Oberschall, ed., *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).
[6] Anthony Oberschall, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the History of Empirical Social Research," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 14 (1978): 204.
[7] Stephen M. Stigler, *The History of Statistics: The Measurement of Uncertainty before 1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).
[8] Alain Desrosières, *The Politics of Large Numbers. A History of Statistical Reasoning* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press).
[9] John Madge, *The Origins of Scientific Sociology* (New York: The Free Press, 1962).
[10] Jean M. Converse, *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence 1890–1960* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
[11] Jennifer, Platt, *A History of Sociological Research Methods in America 1920–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

comprehensive collective historical monograph edited by Craig Calhoun with contributions from multiple authors.[12] The first two books set out the frame of general interest of historians of science in the early history of quantification, which was also an important topic for Paul Lazarsfeld. The last three books were published after Paul Lazarsfeld's death and explained the broad context of the history of American social research and its methodology before and while Paul Lazarsfeld was studying the early history of empirical social research. Unfortunately, none of these studies examined in detail Paul Lazarsfeld's analyses of the history of quantification and his findings about the roots of inquiry into the social world in Europe. I published a brief encyclopaedic entry on the history of empirical social research, but not in reference to Paul Lazarsfeld.[13] There are also histories of empirical sociology that have been written within different national arenas of sociology. Although these works are relevant to our topic, they go beyond the scope of this article as they do not relate directly to our subject.

Among the works of contemporary literature on Paul Lazarsfeld it is important to mention present-day publications in French. Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer published a long paper in the prestigious French journal *Mathématiques et sciences humaines*, in which he presented an overview of Paul Lazarsfeld's activities in mathematical sociology and in the history of social research. Lécuyer's analytical paper describes Lazarsfeld's activities in Europe and especially in France, and it includes a historical angle in that it discusses Lazarsfeld and Merton's school of methodology, the early history of European thinking at Columbia, and Lazarsfeld's collaboration with Raymond Boudon at Sorbonne University in the 1960s.[14]

Other publications have focused more on Paul Lazarsfeld's investigations into the history of early social research. Hannes Haas and Rudolf Richter, the editors of a series of publications on the history of the social sciences, wrote in the preface to *The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today*[15] that one of the motivations for the book was: "to

[12] Craig Calhoun, ed., *Sociology in America. A History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007).

[13] Hynek Jeřábek, "Empirical Social Research, History of," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. James D. Wright (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2015), 558–66.

[14] Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, "Un grande figure francophile de la sociologie empirique, quantitative et mathématique et de son étude historique: Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)," *Mathématiques et sciences humaines* 40, no. 157 (2002): 49–104.

[15] Hannes Haas and Rudolf Richter, "Preface," in *The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today*, eds. Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen (Vienna: Braumüller, 2012), ix.

document the common traditions of social sciences" and "search for its roots in the history of science." According to the series' editors: "In this regard Paul Felix Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) plays a major role."[16] "This book [...] aims to provide internationally comparative views of the development of social research, of the creativity and innovative power of its pioneers [...]."[17]

One of the book's chapters that dealt with Lazarsfeld's contributions to the field was the paper by Thomas Petersen.[18] He described Lazarsfeld in his role as a founder of new scientific fields as a "marginal man" and an "institution man." Petersen quoted from Lazarsfeld's autobiographical memoirs published in 1968, where he wrote about: "a number of areas between which bridges were bound to be built; social science and mathematics, academic and applied interests, European and American outlooks."[19] Another example of how Lazarsfeld's legacy has been built on and carried further is provided by a whole section of the book *Paul Lazarsfeld and His Contributions to the Development of Survey Research*, where four papers deal directly with the theoretical, institutional, and methodological contributions of Paul Lazarsfeld.[20] For example, David Morrison discussed the role of Paul Lazarsfeld in the institutionalisation of empirical social research. He wrote:

> The fact that Columbia sociology came to dominate American sociology in the late forties, fifties and into the sixties is owed to a variety of factors, not least the very organisation of the Bureau under Lazarsfeld's direction and the development of a rigorous research training programme [...].[21]

[16] Ibid. The volume consists of eighteen papers by authors from four continents (Europe, the USA, Latin America, and Australia). The majority of the papers were revised versions of papers presented at an international conference with the same name that was held in Vienna in 2010 and was organised by the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) together with Charles University and the University of Vienna.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Thomas Petersen, "The Art of Discovering Something Simple and New. The Role of Outsiders in the History of Social Research," in *The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today*, eds. Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen (Vienna: Braumüller, 2012), 213–30.

[19] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "An Episode in the History of Social Research: A Memoire," in *The Varied Sociology of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, ed. Patricia L. Kendall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 39; Petersen, "Art of Discovering Something Simple and New," 216.

[20] Haas, Jeřábek, and Petersen, *Early Days of Survey Research*.

[21] David Morrison, "Paul Lazarsfeld: Marginality, Migration and the Institutionalization of Research," in *The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today*, eds. Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen (Vienna: Braumüller, 2012), 28–42.

Allen Barton published a similar report in his paper about the BASR and the other three research institutes that Lazarsfeld founded earlier in his life.[22] Barton's arguments are important in the context of our theme. On the use of surveys and large-scale quantitative investigations he pointed out that: "When Lazarsfeld began to do this kind of work in the 1920's a 1930's there was no organizational base for it. [...] There was no organization available for a social scientist who wanted to make surveys for scientific purposes [...]."[23]

Two topics in particular call for serious examination. The first of them was Lazarsfeld's collaboration with Robert K. Merton in preparing a training programme in social research activities and the collaboration between Merton's theory and Lazarsfeld's methodology in scientific seminars at Columbia University.[24] The second topic relates to Lazarsfeld's activities in France. I wrote a special paper in which I discussed the dissemination of the methodology of empirical social research in France and described Lazarsfeld's collaborative work with Raymond Boudon and other colleagues in France and especially at the Sorbonne.[25]

Empirical social research was a lifelong part of Lazarsfeld's work. He therefore believed it was necessary to reflect on its past development and to examine the early stages of empirical research, which was being conducted by social scientists at a time when sociology was still just starting to emerge. Lazarsfeld's active interest in the history of empirical social research also led him to produce scholarly studies on the subject and to lecture and teach seminars on the history of research. He trained his many successors while he was teaching and lecturing at Columbia and the Sorbonne. He was also involved in a great number of organised activities that helped to advance empirical social research in the field of sociology.

[22] Allen Barton, "Paul Lazarsfeld and the Invention of the University Institute for Applied Social Research," in *Organizing for Social Research*, eds. Burkart Holzner and Jiri Nehnevajsa (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publ. Co., 1982), 17–83.

[23] Ibid., 20.

[24] The author of this article dedicated a separate paper to this topic, see Hynek Jeřábek, "Six Examples of Collaboration Between Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton," in *The Early Days of Survey Reseaerch and Their Importance Today*, eds. Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen (Vienna: Braumüller, 2012), 2–27.

[25] Although this paper, titled "How Empirical Social Research Gained Ascendancy in Post-war France," partly relates to the early history of European social thought, it would be beyond the scope of a single article to deal with these two subjects together. See Hynek Jeřábek, "How Empirical Social Research Gained Ascendancy in Post-War France," *Czech Sociological Review* (forthcoming).

Lazarsfeld was not a scholar who liked to work in isolation. In all the topics he focused on, he usually collaborated with other researchers, in most cases with his doctoral students. Lazarsfeld's approach to doing sociology led him to establish seminars on the history and methodology of empirical research at both Columbia University and the Sorbonne. Lazarsfeld explored the subject of the history of empirical social research with many younger colleagues. The final section of this paper explicitly discusses many of those researchers, and most of them Lazarsfeld had previously taught in seminars on the history and methodology of early empirical social research at Columbia University and at the Sorbonne in the 1960s.

2. Lazarsfeld's "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology"

Lazarsfeld tabled the history of social research as a topic in his report on a conference on the history of quantification that was held in 1959. He wrote about it in a retrospective article titled "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology" in 1973:

> In 1955 the U.S. National Academy of Sciences appointed a committee to explore topics common to the social and the natural sciences. [...] I was invited to represent sociology and my report was subsequently developed into a lengthy paper with the imaginative help of Anthony Oberschall.[26]

This paper was published in the *International Journal of the History of Science* (*ISIS*) in 1961.[27] In this paper, modestly titled "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology – Trends, Sources, and Problems," Lazarsfeld described the trajectory of the development of empirical research efforts across several generations of researchers in the social field in various European countries from the 17th through to the 19th century. Until the end of the 1950s, most researchers limited themselves to tracing the evolution of philosophical thought and to the development of the natural sciences. The social sciences were not included in this, with only a few exceptions.

[26] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology," in *Méthodologie de l'Histoire et des sciences humaines. Mélanges en l'Honneur de Fernand Braudel*, ed. Edouard Privat (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 290.

[27] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology – Trends, Sources, and Problems," in *The Varied Sociology of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, ed. Patricia L. Kendall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 97–170, 360–63.

In 1933, when Paul Lazarsfeld, Marie Jahoda, and Hans Zeisel published a study on an unemployed community in Austria, Hans Zeisel subtitled the afterword to the Marienthal study "Toward a History of Sociography."[28] In this relatively short summary, Zeisel referred to much earlier studies by William Petty and John Graunt, and even mentioned their British successors in the second half of the 18th century, Arthur Young and David Davies. He highlighted the methodological advances made by Sir Frederic Morton Eden, who was the first to use an "interviewer" in his research. An "interviewer" in his definition was someone who spent "more than a year traveling from place to place [...] obtaining exact information [...] to a set of Queries [...]."[29] In the second half of the 19th century, the reports of the British Parliament were already drawing on "reports from special commissions."[30] Zeisel also offered a brief description of the work of Charles Booth, which he concluded with the words: "By dividing the population into socio-economic strata, beginning at the bottom with the 'very poor,' the extent of poverty in London was shown with numerical and graphic precision, illustrated by a detailed set of maps and tables."[31] He devoted two pages to Adolphe Quételet, which made up a substantial portion of this brief summary,[32] and he assigned an equally significant place to the French social scientist Frédéric Le Play.[33] The summary also offers basic information on the German Verein für Sozialpolitik (Association for Social Policy) and Max Weber's empirical social research and mentions the study on workers carried out by Adolph Levenstein.[34] As a summary, Zeisel's 'Afterword' was very thorough, and it provided Paul Lazarsfeld with a solid starting point from which to proceed twenty-seven years later with his study on the history of quantification. Lazarsfeld commented on the importance of Zeisel's afterword in a retrospective article: "The *ISIS* article owes a great deal to an earlier work on the history of sociography reported in 1933 in the appendix of *Marienthal*. Hans Zeisel played a large role in this effort."[35] For a full quarter of a century no other work was produced that could rival Zeisel's study.

[28] Hans Zeisel, "Toward a History of Sociography," in *Marienthal. The Sociography of an Unemployed Community*, eds. Marie Jahoda, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and Hans Zeisel (London: Tavistock, 1972), 99–125.
[29] Ibid., 102.
[30] Ibid., 104.
[31] Ibid., 104–5.
[32] Ibid., 106–8.
[33] Ibid., 109–12.
[34] Ibid., 114–19.
[35] Lazarsfeld, "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology," 300.

Understandably, there are still many details missing from Zeisel's summary. In 1959 and 1960 Paul Lazarsfeld systematised this historical-methodological analysis. His study on the history of quantification is 83 pages long, so it is not an article-length work but a well-developed historical-sociological study that makes many references to work that was still little known at that time and to newly discovered sources, most of them from the 19th century. Lazarsfeld thus provided a "historical canvas" onto which his students and followers could either project summary histories of the development of different scholars' ideas or portray in depth the fates of entire scientific schools in this relatively long period. Lazarsfeld devoted the most space to the work of Adolphe Quételet and Max Weber. He also added more information on the extensive body of work of Charles Booth and dealt in depth with the work of Frédéric Le Play. However, he also paid some attention to the German history of social-scientific thought.

Lazarsfeld posed an unusual question in his study. Why did two distinct branches of statistics develop: classificatory statistics and probability statistics? He formulated the question directly in relation to Hermann Conring's system. Lazarsfeld was probably the only researcher working on the history of empirical social research to focus in depth on Conring's system, which might more accurately be called classificatory statistics. Lazarsfeld wrote: "The question can be raised why I consider the development of classificatory systems a legitimate part of the history of quantification in social sciences. I want to postpone my answer until I have described another effect of this kind by the Le Play school."[36] He then answered this question in the article's conclusion.

Lazarsfeld's "discovery" of Hermann Conring (1606–1682) was something entirely new within the context of historical considerations of social-scientific thought and particularly in relation to empirical social research. He was also the first to situate the work of this 17th-century German thinker in the context of the development and conceptualisation of statistics. Hermann Conring was a contemporary of William Petty and John Graunt. However, he worked most of his life (45 years) at the University of Helmstedt, which was in Brunswick, one of Germany's many traditional duchies, and he prepared his lectures in Latin, which at German universities remained the official language of learning for centuries. He began studying at Helmstedt

[36] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology – Trends, Sources, and Problems," in *The Varied Sociology of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, ed. Patricia L. Kendall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 119.

at the age of 14 and after that (from the age of 19 to 25) he went on to study at Leiden (1625–1631), where in 1630 he defended his doctoral thesis.[37] He was unable to obtain a position as professor in the Netherlands[38] so he returned to Germany. He became a professor of "natural philosophy and rhetoric" at the University of Helmstedt in 1832. He later also obtained doctorates in philosophy and medicine and in 1640 became a professor of medicine. He devoted considerable attention also to political philosophy and the law, and his most famous work is a history of German law.[39] Shortly after, he defended his doctorate in political science, in 1652 he obtained a professorship in political science.[40] He continued to teach at the University of Helmstedt until 1676, when he was 70 years old.

Hermann Conring described the state as a unit of action. He distinguished four elements in its functioning, which he referred to as *causa finalis*, *causa materialis*, *causa formalis*, and *causa efficiens*. The final cause (*causa finalis*) is the end goal of the workings of the state and the state system – which is the creation of a social order. The material cause (*causa materialis*) consisted of the economic system that exists in a country along with the human resources that create it and guarantee its continuation. Conring used the term formal cause (*causa formalis*) to refer to the constitution and laws, the legal order, the justice system, and the entire legislative system of a state. The efficient cause (*causa efficiens*) "is its concrete administration and the activities of its elite. Under each of these main categories, Conring systematically makes further subdivisions. The causa efficiens, for example, describes the concrete ways by which the state is governed."[41]

Conring's ideas were recorded by his students in Latin and preserved in a collection titled "Collegium Politicalstatiticum," and through this resource his system continued to be taught towards the end of the 19th century. Lazarsfeld wrote:

> By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Conring system was taught all over Germany. It had the advantage of being eminently teachable even by minor men and gave an academic frame of reference to the training of civil servants,

[37] Wikipedia, s. v. "Hermann Conring (Universalgelehrter)," last modified September 20, 2021, 12:35, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Conring_(Universalgelehrter).
[38] Lazarsfeld, "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology," 110.
[39] Hermann Conring, *De origine iuris Germanici* (Helmstedt: Mullerus, 1643).
[40] Alberto Jori, *Hermann Conring* (Tübingen: MVK, 2007).
[41] Lazarsfeld, "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology," 114.

which remained a common problem to all the little German states up to the end of their existence in the Napoleonic era.[42]

It was this "target group," namely students of law and students in a field that in the late 19th century was at German universities referred to as "Staatswissenschaft," who were extremely important for the functioning of the state. Graduates of this field of study then became state bureaucrats and officials and thus ran the country, and in the case of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation they were in fact the administrators of many independent larger and smaller states on the territory of what is now Germany. Lazarsfeld noticed this important function of Conring's system and wrote: "Conring wants to bring order into the available knowledge about various countries. His purpose is explicitly threefold: he looks for a system which should make facts easier to remember, easier to teach, and easier to be used by men in the government."[43]

Gottfried Achenwall introduced the Conring system in German at the University of Göttingen in 1749. He tends to be referred to as the founder of the German classificatory branch of statistics, perhaps because he was the one who translated Conring's ideas from Latin to German. He obtained the position of professor at the University of Göttingen, which had just been founded in 1737. The modern underlying concept of the school, its excellent new library, and the prestige of the methodological tradition the school inherited all contributed to the fame of the Göttingen School of Statistics, which continued to work with Conring's ideas.[44] Lazarsfeld interpreted "classificatory statistics" as occupying a parallel position alongside the "probability branch" of statistics. This concept of statistics, grounded in Conring's ideas, was taught at many German universities in the 17th and 18th centuries. Conversely, "probability statistics" was more commonly used at this time in Britain and France.[45]

In the closing part of his study on the history of quantification, Lazarsfeld compared Hermann Conring's model with that of Frédéric Le Play. In what way did the two differ? Each of them responded to different needs in social-scientific research. Their perspectives also differed in terms of historical circumstances, where each of them was responding to the "needs of the time." In the 17th century, Hermann Conring had to consider the interests of

[42] Ibid., 115.
[43] Ibid., 114.
[44] Ibid., 116.
[45] Ibid., 116–19.

the ruling dynasty that ruled the land and in order to do so needed educated officials who understood the entire structure of the state's administration and what all the functions of the state were in the historical circumstances of a disintegrated Germany. Frédéric Le Play (1806–1882) lived through three revolutions against the French system of rule over the course of his lifetime in the 19th century (1830, 1848, and 1871).[46] In his perspective, the primary role in holding society together was played by the family and morality.[47] His system of understanding society was therefore centred on "family monographs." Lazarsfeld explained in this connection what role families played in Le Play's model: "Le Play is not concerned with the families for their own sake. He is convinced that his case studies are the best means of understanding the working of the whole social system."[48] To illustrate the key role that Le Play deemed was played by "family budgets," he used an example that was cited by Lazarsfeld in English:

> Often a single figure says much more than a long discourse. Thus, for instance, one cannot doubt the degradation of a Paris worker after one has learned from the study of his budget that each year he spends 12% of his income to get drunk, while he does not devote a cent for the moral education of his five children of ages 4–14.[49]

In the conclusion to his study on the history of quantification, Lazarsfeld once again brought up the two major figures in the history of quantification – Conring and Le Play. He highlighted what was important in Hermann Conring's approach:

> The starting point for the Conring school was the state and the administrative tasks of the statesman. In a cameralistic system, he took it for granted that the welfare of the state depended upon the activities of the rulers. Their activities, therefore, were the starting point for the relevant categories: increase of population, defense against potential enemies, improvement of agriculture, monetary policy, and so on.[50]

[46] Ibid., 140–41.
[47] Le Play was searching for social cohesion, but in a slightly different way from Émile Durkheim. He considered it important to ensure the cohesion of societies whose macrostructures are constantly transforming. And he looked to family solidarity to achieve this.
[48] Lazarsfeld, "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology," 143.
[49] Ibid., 160.
[50] Ibid., 165.

He then immediately noted what was important for Le Play:

> The Le Play group took the reverse view. The welfare of the country depended upon the morality, the industry, and the submissiveness of the citizens at large and upon the sense of responsibility of the elite. These qualities were formed in the confines of the family. The system of categories, therefore, had to start out with a description of this primary group [...].[51]

He offered a very brief final comparison:

> Le Play, so to say, saw society from within outward. Conring and his school looked at society as a large social system, the main characteristics of which they wanted to describe; they paid attention to the primary group only to the extent to which it would affect the actor on the big scene.[52]

In this initial methodological analysis of the historical roots of both conceptual and quantitative social analysis, Lazarsfeld focused primarily on the social contexts in which different branches of the social sciences had emerged in the past. Although he wrote about the "history of quantification," he did not give one-sided priority to a quantitative focus. In the text we can find a rich and nuanced perspective and a wide point of view that takes in not just "numbers" but also other, non-quantitative representations of the empirical social world as revealed through the sociology of Frédéric Le Play and Hermann Conring's classificatory statistics.

3. Lazarsfeld's Comments and Critiques of Max Weber's Empirical Sociology

For his next publication, Lazarsfeld selected an important figure in the history of German sociology. He wrote an article for the *American Sociological Review* with Anthony Oberschall that was titled "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research."[53] The article offers a detailed account and analysis of Max Weber's involvement in empirical sociological research. Lazarsfeld and Oberschall describe Max Weber's important contributions to the development of the empirical study of social phenomena in a time when the conditions were such that real empirical social research did not yet exist. The

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid., 165–66.
[53] Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Anthony Oberschall, "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research," *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 2 (1965): 185–99.

study of social phenomena in the German lands was mainly the responsibility of the Association for Social Policy (Verein für Sozialpolitik), which was founded by a group of professors at different German universities in 1872 as a counterweight to the growing strength of Marxism.

Around 1890, the Association for Social Policy began organising activities that were designed to explore the conditions of work in agriculture in Germany. The professors each selected a different region of Germany to focus on and they read through the responses that landowners in their region had submitted in several dozen questionnaires. They then processed this empirical material into reports in the form of lengthy essays but with only a small number of descriptive tables. These were published in the association's journal, *Schriften des Vereins für Socialpolitik*. They were often hundreds of pages in length, and they tended to be very descriptive. The journal began to be published almost immediately after the association was founded, and volumes of the journal today fill the shelves of many German university libraries. Max Weber worked through the data for Eastern Prussia. At the association's annual meeting in Berlin in 1893, instead of speaking about the "descriptive tabulations" that he presented in his part of the 120-page "Report,"

> Weber placed the political implications of his material in the foreground. He created a sensation by pointing out that, for economic reasons, East Prussian landowners imported Polish agricultural laborers, thereby endangering the German character and the national security of this frontier of the German Reich.[54]

As a second issue, he criticised the content of the questionnaires, arguing that: "the *Verein* had put too much emphasis on the material condition of the laborers, whereas 'the problem which the condition of the rural laborers presents lies predominantly in the subjective area.'"[55]

The second study in which Max Weber was involved was "another survey of rural laborers on behalf of the Evangelical-Social Congress."[56] In this case, Weber remained closely involved in the study. The respondents in this study were rural Protestant ministers. In a methodological note that Lazarsfeld and Oberschall directly draw attention to, Weber questioned whether researchers would be capable of processing around a thousand completed

[54] Lazarsfeld and Oberschal, "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research," 186.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

questionnaires and thus a large amount of relatively standardised data. Lazarsfeld and Oberschall wrote: "In 1893 he made a remark that might apply to all the surveys of this period" (Max Weber wrote: "Nonetheless we face all this material as a puzzle, for we have not so far been able to find a way in which it is to be worked over [...].")[57] Max Weber presented the results of his work examining the conditions of agricultural labour at the World Congress of Arts and Sciences in 1906 in St Louis in the United States.

Several years later, when Max Weber was writing about research data that Adolf Levenstein had collected in a study in which Max Weber was also indirectly involved, providing advance and suggestions, he adopted a much more positive stance on using numbers and on the quantitative processing of data. Lazarsfeld and Oberschall describe Weber's methodology in very positive terms: "His thinking on the construction of empirical typologies was very modern [...]." They demonstrate this using Weber's own words: "One must approach this problem on the basis of numbers, that is to say, investigate differences in the frequency of certain styles of expression and of thought-orientation by age, income, and place of origin of the respondents."[58]

Other contributions by Max Weber to empirical social research focused on industrial workers in Germany. Weber was involved in the preparation of an ambitious project of the Association of Social Policy to study workers at large German industrial factories. He concentrated on the conceptualisation of this research. He also wrote up a 60-page "methodological introduction" for the survey.[59] He worked very thorough in preparing the design of the survey and the questionnaire, but once the field work was completed and the time came to report the results, he lost interest in the research. This disinterest contrasted sharply with the encouraging advice that he was giving to Adolf Levenstein at the same time on a similar type of survey that he was conducting. The question is: Why was this the case? It is possible to offer the following explanation. The research on German industrial workers that Max Weber had carefully prepared (in 1908–1909) ended in a fiasco during the data collection stage. Very few completed questionnaires were returned from the field. The ideas that went into preparing the research were good and it had a solid conceptualisation, but the problem was the technical execution of it. The field work was poorly executed, and there was little

[57] Ibid., 187.
[58] Ibid., 191.
[59] Ibid., 188.

response. While Levenstein's conceptualisation of his study on workers was not as well thought out, he had an excellent team of people to informally collaborate with – the members of the Social Democratic Party – and they enthusiastically organised the work of getting the questionnaires completed directly with factory workers in several industrial sectors. A large amount of data was collected, and the data were of a quality that basically conformed to contemporary standards. By that time, it was possible to process large volumes of information, but only using modest tools that were available then. Ultimately, the questionnaires that the Association for Social Policy fielded in its project (between 1908 and 1912), were largely not returned or were returned without being completely filled in, so they were only comparable to a very small degree. Weber was left disillusioned with data collection and consequently lost interest in this project and generally also in this kind of empirical research.

What experience and what lessons can we draw from Max Weber's participation in this empirical study of German industrial workers organised by the Association for Social Policy? It is important to have a very good conceptualisation of the research problem, which in this case Weber had. However, Max Weber was in the position of a "lone scholar." He did not work with trained collaborators. In this context, it is important to note that the university system in Germany and even the Association for Social Policy were not yet equipped with the know-how and means to carry out large studies like this. A crucial problem with the Association for Social Policy's study was that the plan and the responsibility for the field work were not defined before the project started and no one involved in the project had experience with distributing and collecting questionnaires. Nobody had any training as an interviewer. There was no user's guide or manual for practical things such as how to clean, control, and process the collected empirical data. Although some specialists in the country were knowledgeable in basic statistical methods, the project did not employ any system of statistical computation. At the start of the 20th century, there was no technical equipment that could be used to help count, compute, sort, and tabulate data on a large scale. In sum, the proper technological conditions for survey research were lacking.[60] In discussing Weber's experience in the context of Paul Lazarsfeld's long efforts to organise specialised training for staff and specialists at survey research

[60] Compare this with the evaluation by Allen Barton (see Barton, "Paul Lazarsfeld and the Invention of the University Institute," 20).

organisations, we have an excellent example of how necessary it is to have the right organisational setting in order to successfully conduct empirical social surveys.[61]

Lazarsfeld and Oberschall examined the advice that Weber gave to Adolf Levenstein and compared Levenstein's practical solutions for data collection and analysis with Weber's suggestions and criticisms. The discussion in the article focused solely on his research on attitudes.[62] Alongside Weber's other comments Lazarsfeld and Obserschall drew attention to his remarks on indicators and highlighted that Weber "recognized the probabilistic nature of indicators [...]."[63] They noted that Weber "specifically stresses that only in such probabilistic terms can the meaning of social relationships be caught. They cease to exist, he says, 'whenever there is no longer a probability that certain kinds of meaningfully oriented social action will take place.'"[64] Lazarsfeld and Oberschall introduced Max Weber to American sociologists as an empirical sociologist.

4. Lazarsfeld's Interpretation of Adolphe Quételet's Probabilistic Sociology

The second figure in the history of empirical research to whom Lazarsfeld devoted a special paper was Adolphe Quételet, a Belgian astronomer, natural scientist, and social scientist. Lazarsfeld accorded him the top position among the founders of empirical research, and even presented him as the founder of sociology. Lazarsfeld and David Landau together wrote a study on Adolphe Quételet and published it in an international encyclopaedia edited by David Sills.[65]

Europe first became acquainted with Quételet in the middle of the 1820s as a mathematician and an astronomer, and he soon developed a reputation as an outstanding historian of science. At the age of 23, on the basis of the innovative dissertation he wrote in the field of analytical geometry, he was appointed the head of the department of elementary mathematics at the

[61] Here we can see why the training was valued by David Morrison also in this context (see Morrison, "Paul Lazarsfeld: Marginality," 37).
[62] Lazarsfeld and Oberschal, "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research," 190–92.
[63] Ibid., 193.
[64] Ibid.
[65] David Landau and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Bd. XIII.*, ed. David Sills (New York: Collier-McMillan, 1968), 247–57.

Athenaeum in Brussels, and soon after he was elected a member of the Académie Royale des Sciences et des Belles-Lettres de Bruxelles. Elite scholars from around Europe descended on Brussels to attend his lectures in geometry, probability theory, physics, astronomy, and later also the history of science at the museum in Brussels where he was based.[66] In the early 1830s, he began to turn his attention to social phenomena and then published several short studies that dealt with what he called *statistique morale* (moral statistics). In 1835 he published his *Physique sociale*, in French, in which he set out the basic ideas behind his concept for studying society.[67] He claimed that similar laws can be applied to society as those that apply to the physical world, and he began to describe these laws.

Lazarsfeld understood that Quételet's epistemic principles and the discoveries he made using probability theory formed the foundation on which it then became possible to build the kind of empirical sociology that Lazarsfeld's school later advanced. Sociology's related discipline of demography ranked Quételet among its "founding fathers." Historians and sociologists recognised Quételet's instrumental role in organising and standardising census surveys in Europe. His "social physics" were what we would today call sociology.[68]

What were the central ideas that underpinned Quételet's statistically based studies from the 1830s and later? Quételet set out from the following premises: 1) social phenomena are extremely regular; 2) empirical regularities can be uncovered using statistical techniques; 3) observed regularities have their causes, and thus, in addition to physical laws, there also exist social laws. Quételet looked for these causes in the different social conditions that exist in different times and in different places.[69]

Quételet soon after published two basic methodological principles in his studies:

[66] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 247.
[67] Adolphe Quételet, *Physique sociale: Ou, essai sur le développement des facultés de l'homme* (Brussels: Muquardt, 1869). It was first published as *Sur l'homme et le développement de ses facultés: Physique sociale* in 1835. English translation: Adolphe Quételet, *A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties* (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1942).
[68] It is generally well known that Auguste Comte originally wanted to use the name "social physics" to refer to his new discipline, which in his view was located at "the peak of the pyramid of the sciences." However, he came up with this idea after Quételet and thus the term was already taken. Instead, he came up with a new name, "sociology," and it caught on.
[69] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 250.

1. "Causes are proportional to the effects produced by them";[70]
2. "Large numbers are necessary in order to reach any reliable conclusions [...]."[71]

Lazarsfeld and Landau wrote: "Quételet was greatly concerned that the methods he adopted for studying man in all his aspects be as 'scientific' as those used in any of the physical sciences."[72] Compared to the ideas of his contemporary, Auguste Comte, "Quételet believed that the use of mathematics is not only the *sine qua non* of any exact science but the measure of its worth."[73] "The more advanced the sciences have become," he said, "the more they have tended to enter the domain of mathematics which is a sort of center toward which they converge."[74]

A central concept in Quételet's ideas was that of the average man (*homme moyen*). We find it in all his writings. In *A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties*, Quételet wrote that "he had developed the idea that the characteristics of the average man can be presented only by giving the mean and the upper and lower limits of variation from that mean."[75] In *Letters Addressed to H. R. H. the Grand Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha*[76] which he wrote based on letters he sent at the request of Leopold I of Belgium to the king's nephews – who were Quételet's private students – he explained that "regarding the height of men of one nation, the individual values group themselves symmetrically around the mean according to [...] the law of accidental causes,"[77] and added that "for a nation the average man is actually the *type* or the standard and that other men differ from him, by more or by less, only through the influence of accidental causes, whose effects become calculable when the number of trials is sufficiently large [...]."[78]

Quételet formulated the "law of accidental causes," which he claimed was:

[70] Ibid.; Quételet, *A Treatise on Man*.
[71] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 250.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Quételet, *A Treatise on Man*.
[75] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 251.
[76] Adolphe, Quételet, *Letters Addressed to H. R. H. the Grand Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, on the Theory of Probabilities, as Applied to the Moral and Political Sciences* (London: C. & E. Layton, 1849).
[77] Quételet, *Letters*, viii.
[78] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 251.

> a general law that applies to individuals as well as to peoples and that governs our moral and intellectual qualities just as it does our physical qualities. Thus, what is regarded to be accidental causes, can be considered to be so when observations are extended to a considerable number of cases.[79]

The relationship between the concept of the average man and the law of accidental causes was primarily based on the repetition of mass phenomena, where it is possible to find a common average value. In the first of his writings on probability theory in 1831, as well as measuring the physical characteristics of man he predicted that it would be possible to observe similar averages and deviations in the moral and intellectual characteristics of man. The term "average man" was used for the first time in a study devoted to a comparison of shares of criminal acts, and he also included this study in his first summary publication.[80] This is also where he first described an average as a typical value, and the average representative of a nation as typical for that nation. In 1844 he stated for the first time that "his observations were symmetrically distributed about the mean [...],"[81] and he began to consider the likelihood that a similar distribution could apply to all physical characteristics. Using probability theory, he was able to derive the distributions for the height, weight, and chest measurements of different segments of the population, which strikingly corresponded with empirical data obtained for these diverse groups.

He first demonstrated the practical applicability of his theories when he estimated the number of conscripts that managed to avoid compulsory service in the French army. He discovered a "discrepancy between the distribution of height of 100,000 French conscripts and his prediction (i.e., the theoretical distribution, ...)" and "he came to the conclusion that some 2,000 men had escaped service by somehow shortening themselves to just below the minimum height."[82]

In his comments on the average man, Quételet limited himself "to calculating the means and distributions of only a few physical characteristics."[83] In 1848 Quételet formulated his "grand generalisation" in the publication *Du*

[79] Quételet, *Letters*, ix; Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 251.
[80] Quételet, *A Treatise on Man*.
[81] Adolphe Quételet, "Sur l'appréciation des documents statistiques, et en particulier sur l'appréciation des moyennes," *Bulletin de la commission centrale de statistique* 2 (1844): 205–86.
[82] Quételet, "Sur l'appréciation des documents statistiques"; Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 251.
[83] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 251.

systéme social et des lois qui le régissent.[84] Here he set himself the task of extending his theory to apply to people's physical features, calling this concept "social physics," and to apply to all moral and intellectual characteristics, calling this "moral statistics." Quételet extended his concept to the point where he planned to apply it to all collectives, regardless of their size, ranging from small groups to all humankind. The term "law of accidental causes" used by Quételet in this work is explained by Lazarsfeld and Obserschall as of the encyclopaedia entry as an indicator of his very modern outlook, similar to Lazarsfeld's own approach: "the 'law of accidental causes' [...] is simply the assertion that every human trait is normally distributed about a mean and that the larger the number of observations, the more closely the empirical distribution will coincide with the theoretical probability distribution [...]."[85] Lazarsfeld also found Quételet's notion of causality to be important, as well as the way he used multi-dimensional tables, in which lay the germs of later multi-dimensional analyses.[86] The authors of the encyclopaedia entry conclude by noting that Quetelet's "basic idea was that certain social processes (corresponding to his interplay of causes) would explain the final distribution of certain observable data."[87]

5. Lazarsfeld's Sorbonne and Columbia Seminars on the History of Empirical Sociology

In his article on Lazarsfeld and France, Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer wrote that seminars on the history of empirical research occasionally began to be organised at Columbia University at the start of 1960.[88] Lazarsfeld and Merton ran the seminars together. Because of these historical-methodological seminars and the subjects it dealt with, Lazarsfeld's admiration for Quételet was generally well known throughout Columbia University. So even before the 13th volume of the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* that contained the entry on Adolphe Quételet was published, the administration at Columbia University had bestowed the title of 'Quételet Professor of Social Sciences' on Lazarsfeld at Merton's suggestion.

[84] Adolphe Quételet, *Du systéme social et des lois qui le régisent* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1848).
[85] Landau and Lazarsfeld, "Quetelet, Adolphe," 252–53.
[86] Ibid., 252.
[87] Ibid., 254.
[88] Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, "Un grande figure francophile de la sociologie empirique, quantitative et mathématique et de son étude historique: Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)," *Mathématiques et sciences humaines* 40, no. 157 (2002): 65.

During the early stages of his work on the history of empirical social research, Lazarsfeld was assisted by Antony Oberschall. Lazarsfeld had worked with him before that on a study devoted to the history of quantification.[89] Oberschall was also the first of Lazarsfeld's doctoral students to focus on the history of empirical social research. The joint study on Max Weber mentioned above was one of their joint projects. In 1962 Anthony Oberschall defended his thesis titled "Empirical Social Research in Germany 1848–1914" at Columbia University. He published this thesis as a book in 1965.[90] A sign of this cooperation between US and French social scientists was the fact that this monograph was also published in Paris. Another of Lazarsfeld's doctoral students, Susan P. Schad, defended her thesis on German empirical social research. Schad focused on the history of empirical research in Germany after the First World War. She thus picked up where Anthony Oberschall left off. Her study, *Empirical Social Research in Weimar Germany*, was also published as a book in Paris by Mouton press, which had published Oberschall's book a few years earlier.[91]

5.1 The Sorbonne University Seminars and Lazarsfeld's Collaboration with French scholars

French sociologists were aware of Lazarsfeld's interest in the history of European sociology and his study on the history of quantification from 1961.[92] Thanks to the translation by Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, the study was published in French some years later.[93] After arriving at the Sorbonne in the autumn of 1962, Lazarsfeld began organising a seminar on the early history of empirical research in the social sciences, especially in Europe. The seminar at the Sorbonne regularly took place throughout the 1962/1963 academic year.[94] "Organised weekly, this seminar attracted dozens of figures, among them Raymond Boudon, André Davidovitch, Francois-André Isambert,

[89] Lazarsfeld, "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology," 290.
[90] Anthony, Oberschall, *Empirical Social Research in Germany 1848–1914* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1965).
[91] Susan P. Schad, *Empirical Social Research in Weimar Germany* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1972).
[92] Lazarsfeld, "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology."
[93] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Notes sur l'histoire de la quantification en sociologie: les sources, les tendances, les grands problemes," in *Lazarsfeld, Paul F. Philosophie des sciences sociales*, ed. Raymond Boudon (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), 75–163.
[94] Lécuyer, "Un grande figure," 65.

Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, Catherine Boddard, Michel Dion, Jean-Claude Passeron, and others."[95]

Particularly important was the published outcome that was then produced by the participants in this seminar, some of them earlier and others later on. Probably the first such outcome was the important study by Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, published internally within the Sorbonne, which focused on empirical social research in France in the 16th to 18th centuries and up to the French Revolution.[96] Later his summary article on the history of empirical research in France was published in *Epistémologie sociologique*.[97] Soon after, Raymond Boudon published a study on Gabriel Tarde.[98] Francois-André Isambert published a paper in 1969 devoted to the important French 19th-century statistician d'Ange-Michel Guerry (1802–1866).[99] An anthology of the writings of Le Play was published in English in Chicago in 1982 and Catherine Bodard was the editor.[100]

Probably the most-read work to come out of these seminars was the encyclopaedia entry published in 1968 in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* a joint publication produced by Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer and Anthony Oberschall.[101]

5.2 The Columbia University Seminars and Publications by Lazarsfeld's Colleagues

In the field of the history of empirical social research, Lazarsfeld's closest colleagues gradually came to include Anthony Oberschall, Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, and Terry Nicols Clark. After Lazarsfeld returned to the United States from Paris, Lazarsfeld and Merton's joint seminars on empirical

[95] Ibid.
[96] Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, *Le recherche social empirique en France sous l'Ancient Régime* (Paris: École practique des hautes études, 1963).
[97] Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, "Histoire et sociologie de la recherche social empirique," *Epistémologie sociologique* 6 (1968): 119–31.
[98] Raymond Boudon, "La statistique psychologique de Tarde," *Annales internationales de criminologie* 3 (1964): 1–16.
[99] Francois-André Isambert, "Les recherches statistiques d'Ange-Michel Guerry (1802–1866)," *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 47 (1969): 35–44.
[100] Catherine Bodard, *Frédérique Le Play. On Family, Work, and Social Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).
[101] Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer and Anthony Oberschall, "Social Research. The Early History of," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* ed. David Sills (New York: Collier-McMillan, 1968), 36–53.

social research became an official and permanent part of the work of the Department of Sociology and the Faculty of Political Science at Columbia University. Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer described this as follows: "Around 1963 the joint seminar of Lazarsfeld/Merton became officially and entirely devoted to the history of empirical social research."[102] Lécuyer became the seminar's organisational secretary for two years, from 1964 to 1966.[103] He wrote that participants in the seminar included Jonathan Cole, Terry Clark, and David Elesh, and from 1964 Catherine Bodard and others,[104] and listed the publications that came to be written over time by participants in the seminar. Thanks to Lazarsfeld's continuous interest in this historical subject and thanks also to Lécuyer's enthusiastic involvement, the history of empirical social research came to form a significant link between Lazarsfeld's work at Columbia University in New York and at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Oberschall was also instrumental in establishing a link between participants in both seminars through a publication he edited: *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology. Studies in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*.[105] Many of the people who had participated in the Paris and Columbia seminars on empirical social research contributed to this collective monograph. Stephen Cole presented an analysis of empirical social research in England in the 19th century.[106] Terry N. Clark, focused on Émile Durkheim and the role he played in the institutionalisation of French sociology in his chapter "Émile Durkheim and the French University: The Institutionalization of Sociology."[107] Waiter Goldfrank contributed an article on Le Play,[108] and the book also included two studies on developments in Britain. G. N. Dark contributed a chapter on the forerunners of British sociology, namely William Petty and John Graunt, and their successors in the era of

[102] Lécuyer, "Un grande figure," 65.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Anthony Oberschall, ed. *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).
[106] Stephen Cole, "Continuity and Institutionalization in Science: A Case Study of Failure," in *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, ed. Anthony Oberschall (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 73–129.
[107] Terry N. Clark, "Émile Durkheim and the French University: The Institutionalization of Sociology," in *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, ed. Anthony Oberschall (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 152–86.
[108] Waiter Goldfrank, "Reappraising Le Play," in *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization,* ed. Anthony Oberschall (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 130–51.

Isaac Newton. David Elesh focused on advances in statistics in Britain and particularly at the Manchester Statistical Society.[109]

Anthony Oberschall took up the task of putting together a clear picture of the evolution of empirical social research in the United States. He titled his well-written article "The Institutionalization of American Sociology."[110] This highly informative text, almost seventy pages in length, was probably the most reliable resource on the history of the early stages of empirical social research until Jean Converse's study was published.[111] Lazarsfeld likened Oberschall's article to Philip Abrams's monograph on the history of English sociology.[112] About Oberschall's text he wrote:

> The work on the United States was summarized and vastly extended by Oberschall to an extensive paper on the institutionalization of American sociology which is now included in his new collection. Because of the great influence American sociology has at the moment in other countries, it is important that this paper gets the attention of an international audience.[113]

As well as the publications by Anthony Oberschall listed above, two studies by Terry N. Clark relating to the history of social research are also mentioned in a paper by Lécuyer from 1972.[114] The first one offered English readers a thorough introduction to the communication research of Gabriel Tarde, one of the classic figures from the early period in French empirical research, with an anthology of selected writings by Tarde. The second one, published in 1973, was, as Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer points out, inspired by the ideas of Edvard Shils: "Terry Clark published his collection of selected texts by Tarde and in 1973 his major historical work, which was inspired not just by Lazarsfeld, but also by Merton, as well as the ideas about intellectuals."[115] However, as well as the two studies by Terry N. Clark that Lécuyer mentioned, Clark also published two articles in the *European Journal of Soci-*

[109] Oberschall, *Establishment of Empirical Sociology*, 15–72.
[110] Anthony Oberschall, "The Institutionalization of American Sociology," in *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, ed. Anthony Oberschall (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 187–251.
[111] Converse, *Survey Research in the United States*.
[112] Philip Abrams, *The Origins of British Sociology, 1834–1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
[113] Lazarsfeld, "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology," 294.
[114] Terry N. Clark, *Gabriel Tarde on Communication and Social Influence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Terry N. Clark, *Prophets and Patrons: The French University System and the Emergence of the Social Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).
[115] Lécuyer, "Une grande figure," 65.

ology. The introduction to the historical development of empirical social research in France that Clark offered European readers was important for the spread of interest in the history of empirical social research. The first of the articles dealt with the role of Émile Durkheim in the institutionalisation of sociology within the French university system.[116] The second article, which directly tied in with the first, analysed the role of Durkheim's *L'Année sociologique* in the French sociological world.[117] Given the subject matter of both articles, it is almost certain that these texts were the first version of one part of the text of a more comprehensive book published later in Chicago.[118]

The exceptionally prolific Terry N. Clark offered the English-speaking world a kind of window into French sociology. He certainly played a very instrumental role in introducing American sociologists to the history of French empirical sociology. I will not quote them here but will simply list four French social scientists, most of them from the time when sociology was emerging, whose works were introduced to American readers through the entries that Clark wrote for the international encyclopaedia mentioned above. The four social scientists were: Jacques Bertillon, Gabriel Tarde, Henri de Tourville, and René Worms. These entries, which are two, three, or six pages in length in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, did the necessary work of filling in the gap in information on the early stages of French sociology. And what about Clark's thesis? Although it was not published separately as a book, Clark abundantly made up for that by publishing dozens of articles and studies in respected books and sociological journals. His thesis is on the list of theses that were defended at Columbia University in 1967 and was titled *Empirical Social Research in France 1850–1914*.[119] It should certainly be included among the results of the work of the seminars on empirical sociological research that were organised between 1960 and 1970 at Columbia University in New York and occasionally also at the Sorbonne in Paris. All these works together rank Terry N. Clark alongside Anthony Oberschall and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer among Lazarsfeld's closest colleagues working on the history of empirical sociology. And the work of

[116] Terry N. Clark, "Emile Durkheim and the Institutionalization of Sociology in the French University System," *European Journal of Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1968): 37–71.
[117] Terry N. Clark, "The Structure and Functions of a Research Institute: The Année Sociologique," *European Journal of Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1968): 72–91.
[118] Terry N. Clark, *Prophets and Patrons: The French University system and the Emergence of the Social Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).
[119] Terry N. Clark, "Empirical Social Research in France 1850–1914," PhD. diss., Columbia University, 1967.

these three people and many others is an obvious reflection of the cooperation between France and Lazarsfeld during this period.

6. Conclusion: Three Evaluations: Lécuyer, Lazarsfeld and Neurath

In conclusion, it is possible to assess Lazarsfeld's opinions, activities, and results on the history of empirical social research with the words of Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, Paul Lazarsfeld, and one of Lazarsfeld's biographers, Paul M. Neurath. To mark the centenary of Lazarsfeld's birth, Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer wrote an article about Lazarsfeld's instrumental role in establishing cooperation between the United States and France.[120] In it he described Lazarsfeld as: "Un grande figure francophile de la sociologie empirique." As well as providing a great deal of important information on this cooperation, he also devoted space to the dispute between sociologists and historians over views on the history of the social sciences. The viewpoint of sociologists was mainly argued by Lazarsfeld, which he did in the Foreword to the collective monograph edited by Oberschall.[121] Lécuyer summed up the information on this dispute as the dispute between the so-called "presentists" and the alleged "historicists." According to Lécuyer, Lazarsfeld called some of the criticisms from anthropologists and historians insignificant and objected to their exclusive claim to interpreting historical facts on the evolution of sociology.[122]

A clear summary of Lazarsfeld's views on the history of empirical social research was provided in a retrospective study he published in a collection of work marking the 70th birthday of Fernand Braudel.[123] Lazarsfeld used to meet Fernand Braudel regularly at UNESCO events, where Fernand Braudel represented the French social sciences, in particular history and economics. In an article on the cooperation between Lazarsfeld and France, Giulianna Gemeli wrote that Lazarsfeld and Braudel bonded a great deal over the almost identical opinions they shared on the importance of specialised training for researchers in the social sciences:

[120] Lécuyer, "Une grande figure."
[121] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Foreword," in *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, ed. Anthony Oberschall (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), vi–xv.
[122] Lécuyer, "Une grande figure," 65–67.
[123] Lazarsfeld, "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology."

> It must equally be underscored that Lazarsfeld and Braudel shared the same idea about the professionalisation of the next generations of researchers, which required a training strategy that, going beyond specialisation, "exposes participants to a sufficiently wide variety of subjects and techniques," like that highlighted by Lazarsfeld himself.[124]

Lazarsfeld's main idea of the history of empirical social research can be summarised in three sentences: 1) Modern sociology has two roots: the great masters represented one mainspring; 2) "But there is a second root – the men, the teams and the organizations which built systems of political arithmetic, looked for regularities to prove divine order or societal laws, wanted to know what industrial society really did to people and what major changes in values were lying ahead.";[125] 3) "Empirical social research has its own history, going back as a systematic pursuit at least 300 years."[126] These ideas formed the axis around which Lazarsfeld based his research activities on the history of empirical social research between 1959 and 1973. And in a final retrospective paper Lazarsfeld reviewed the research goals of his colleagues in their analysis of the history of empirical research in Germany, France, Britain, and the United States from its beginnings in the 17th century until almost Lazarsfeld's time. Towards the end of the article Lazarsfeld responded to the words that Raymond Aron wrote in the Foreword to *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*. Lazarsfeld noted in his response that:

> the conventional university departments were never suited to the execution of research projects which required teamwork, division of labor, and a certain type of leadership which was different from the customary relation between an individual teacher and his disciples.[127]

And with Lazarsfeld's statement that "the training of students in advanced social research" is "indispensable" he united his lifelong efforts to establish the conditions for professional research with an in-depth exploration of the history of these efforts. He wrote: "The battle for and around these hybrid

[124] Giulianna Gemeli, "Paul Lazarsfeld et la France au milieu des annés soixante," in *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)*, eds. Jacques Lautman and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), 490.
[125] Lazarsfeld, "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology," 290.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid., 295.

centers and their financial support is still raging. My interest in the history of empirical research is part of this battle."[128]

The significance and importance of the history of empirical social research in the life and work of Paul Lazarsfeld has perhaps best been summed up by Paul Martin Neurath, the guardian of his legacy and founder of the Paul Lazarsfeld Archive in Vienna. In the conclusion to the large collection of papers published to mark the centenary of Paul Lazarsfeld's birth, which was published in Paris,[129] Neurath wrote:

> One of his pursuits during his later years was a long effort to put together the history of quantification in sociology, beginning with a big article in *ISIS* in 1960, then continued in seminars both at Columbia and at the Sorbonne, where he had students write major papers and eventually books on the subject – much of it perhaps in an effort to establish a respectable historical pedigree for the activity on which he had spent so many years of his life.[130]

Bibliography:

Abrams, Philip. *The Origins of British Sociology, 1834–1914.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Barton, Allen. "Paul Lazarsfeld and the Invention of the University Institute for Applied Social Research." In *Organizing for Social Research*, edited by Burkart Holzner and Jiri Nehnevajsa, 17–83. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publ. Co., 1982.

Bodard, Catherine. *Frédérique Le Play. On Family, Work, and Social Change.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Boudon, Raymond. "La statistique psychologique de Tarde." *Annales internationales de criminologie* 3 (1964): 1–16.

Boudon, Raymond. "Introduction." In *Paul F. Lazarsfeld: On Social Research and Its Language,* edited by Raymond Boudon, 1–29. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Calhoun, Craig, ed. *Sociology in America. A History.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007.

[128] Ibid.
[129] Paul M. Neurath, "The Life and Work of Paul Lazarsfeld," in *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)*, eds. Jacques Lautman and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), 505–18.
[130] Neurath, "Life and Work," 517.

Clark, Terry N. "Empirical Social Research in France 1850–1914." PhD. diss., Columbia University, 1967.

Clark, Terry N. "Emile Durkheim and the Institutionalization of Sociology in the French University System." *European Journal of Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1968): 37–71.

Clark, Terry N. "The Structure and Functions of a Research Institute: The Année Sociologique." *European Journal of Sociology* 9, no.1 (1968): 72–91.

Clark, Terry N. *Gabriel Tarde on Communication and Social Influence.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.

Clark, Terry N. "Émile Durkheim and the French University: The Intitutionalization of Sociology." In *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization,* edited by Anthony Oberschall, 152–86. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Clark, Terry N. *Prophets and Patrons: The French University System and the Emergence of the Social Sciences.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Cole, Stephen. "Continuity and Institutionalization in Science: A Case Study of Failure." In *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization,* edited by Anthony Oberschall, 73–129. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Conring, Hermann. *De origine iuris Germanici.* Helmstedt: Mullerus, 1643.

Converse, Jean M. *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence 1890–1960.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

Desrosières, Alain, *The Politics of Large Numbers. A History of Statistical Reasoning.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Donsbach, Wolfgang, Seymour Martin Lipset, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, and Robert M. Worcester "Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)." *Journal for Public Opinion Research* 13, no. 3 (2001): 225–28.

Gemeli, Giulianna. "Paul Lazarsfeld et la France au milieu des annés soixante." In *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)*, edited by Jacques Lautman and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, 465–97. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998.

Goldfrank, Waiter. "Reappraising Le Play." In *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, edited by Anthony Oberschall, 130–51. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Haas, Hannes, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen, eds. *The Early Days of Survey Reseaerch and Their Importance Today.* Wien: Braumüller, 2012.

Haas, Hannes, and Rudolf Richter. "Preface." In *Early Days of Survey Reseaerch and Their Importance Today*, edited by Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen, ix. Vienna: Braumüller, 2012.

Isambert, Francois-André. "Les recherches statistiques d'Ange-Michel Guerry (1802–1866)." *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 47 (1969): 35–44.

Jeřábek, Hynek. "Six Examples of Collaboration Between Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton." In *The Early Days of Survey Reseaerch and Their Importance Today*, edited by Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen, 2–27. Vienna: Braumüller, 2012.

Jeřábek, Hynek. "Empirical Social Research, History of." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, edited by James D. Wright, 558–66. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2015.

Jeřábek, Hynek. "How Empirical Social Research Gained Ascendancy in Post-War France." *Czech Sociological Review* (forthcoming).

Jori, Alberto. *Hermann Conring.* Tübingen: MVK, 2007.

Landau, David, and Paul F. Lazarsfeld. "Quetelet, Adolphe." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Bd. XIII.*, edited by David Sills, 247–57. New York: Collier-McMillan, 1968.

Lautman, Jacques, and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, eds. *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) La sociologie de Vienne a New York.* Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology – Trends, Sources, and Problems." In *The Varied Sociology of Paul F. Lazarsfeld,* edited by Patricia L. Kendall, 97–170, 360–63. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "Survey Analysis: The Analysis of Attribute Data." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Bd. 15*, edited by David Sills, 419–29. New York: Collier-McMillan, 1968.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "An Episode in the History of Social Research: A Memoire." In *The Varied Sociology of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, edited by Patricia L. Kendall, 11–73, 351–60. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "Notes sur l'histoire de la quantification en sociologie: les sources, les tendances, les grands problemes." In *Lazarsfeld, Paul F. Philosophie des sciences sociales,* edited by Raymond Boudon, 75–163. Paris: Gallimard, 1970.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "Foreword." In *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, edited by Anthony Oberschall, vi–xv. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "Toward a History of Empirical Sociology." In *Méthodologie de l'Histoire et des sciences humaines. Mélanges en l'Honneur de Fernand Braudel*, edited by Edouard Privat, 289–301. Paris: Gallimard, 1973.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F., and Anthony Oberschall. "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research." *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 2 (1965): 185–99.

Lécuyer, Bernard-Pierre. *Le recherche social empirique en France sous l'Ancient Régime.* Paris: École practique des hautes études, 1963.

Lécuyer, Bernard-Pierre "Histoire et sociologie de la recherche social empirique." *Epistémologie sociologique* 6 (1968): 119–31.

Lécuyer, Bernard-Pierre. "Un grande figure francophile de la sociologie empirique, quantitative et mathématique et de son étude historique: Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)." *Mathématiques et sciences humaines* 40, no. 157 (2002): 49–104.

Lécuyer, Bernard-Pierre, and Anthony Oberschall "Social Research. The Early History of. Section III in article 'Sociology.'" In *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, edited by David Sills, 36–53. New York: Collier-McMillan, 1968.

Madge, John. *The Origins of Scientific Sociology.* New York: The Free Press, 1962.

Morrison, David. "Paul Lazarsfeld: Marginality, Migration and the Institutionalization of Research." In *The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today*, edited by Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen, 28–42. Vienna: Braumüller, 2012.

Neurath, Paul, M. "The Life and Work of Paul Lazarsfeld." In *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)*, edited by Jacques Lautman and Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, 505–18. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998.

Oberschall, Anthony. *Empirical Social Research in Germany 1848–1914.* Paris: Mouton & Co., 1965.

Oberschall, Anthony, ed. *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization.* New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Oberschall, Anthony. "The Institutionalization of American Sociology." In *The Establishment of Empirical Sociology in Continuity, Discontinuity and Institutionalization*, edited by Anthony Oberschall, 187–251. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Oberschall, Anthony. "Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the History of Empirical Social Research." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 14 (1978): 199–206.

Petersen, Thomas. "The Art of Discovering Something Simple and New. The Role of Outsiders in the History of Social Research." In *The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today*, edited by Hannes Haas, Hynek Jeřábek, and Thomas Petersen, 213–30. Vienna: Braumüller, 2012.

Platt, Jennifer. *A History of Sociological Research Methods in America 1920–1960.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Quételet, Adolphe. *Physique sociale: Ou, essai sur le développement des facultés de l'homme.* Brussels: Muquardt, 1869.

Quételet, Adolphe. *A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties.* Edinburgh: Chambers, 1942.

Quételet, Adolphe. "Sur l'appréciation des documents statistiques, et en particulier sur l'appréciation des moyennes." *Bulletin de la commission centrale de statistique* 2 (1844): 205–86.

Quételet, Adolphe. *Du systéme social et des lois qui le régisent.* Paris: Guillaumin, 1848.

Quételet, Adolphe. *Letters Addressed to H. R. H. the Grand Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, on the Theory of Probabilities, as Applied to the Moral and Political Sciences.* London: C. & E. Layton, 1849.

Schad, Susan P. *Empirical Social Research in Weimar Germany.* Paris: Mouton & Co., 1972.

Stigler, Stephen M. *The History of Statistics: The Measurement of Uncertainty before 1900.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.

Wikipedia, s. v. "Hermann Conring (Universalgelehrter)," last modified September 20, 2021, 12:35, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Conring_(Universalgelehrter).

Zeisel, Hans. "Toward a History of Sociography." In *Marienthal. The Sociography of an Unemployed Community*, edited by Marie Jahoda, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and Hans Zeisel, 99–125. London: Tavistock, 1972.