

## Trajectories of Neoliberal Transformation

This book has both empirical and theoretical goals. The primary empirical goal is to examine the evolution of industrial relations in Western Europe from the end of the 1970s to the present. Its purpose is to evaluate the extent to which liberalization has taken hold of European industrial relations institutions through five detailed, chapter-length studies, each focusing on a different country and including a quantitative analysis. It offers a comprehensive description and analysis of what has happened to the institutions that regulate the labor market, as well as the relations between employers, unions and states in Western Europe since the collapse of the long postwar boom. The primary theoretical goal of this book is to provide a critical examination of some of the central claims of comparative political economy, particularly those involving the role and resilience of national institutions in regulating and managing capitalist political economies.

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**Trajectories of Neoliberal Transformation**  
*European Industrial Relations Since the 1970s*

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*Lucio: A Cosetta*

*Chris: For those I love and who, miraculously, love me back*

The simple reaction of ingenuous emotion is to adhere with trusting conviction to the publicly recognized truth and to base one's conduct and fixed position in life on this firm foundation. But this simple reaction may well encounter the supposed difficulty of how to distinguish and discover, among the infinite *variety of opinions*, what is universally acknowledged and valid in them; and this perplexity may easily be taken for a just and genuine concern for the matter itself. But in fact, those who pride themselves on this perplexity are in the position of *not being able to see the wood for the trees*.

– Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. 1991[1821]:  
preface, pp. 11–12, author's emphasis

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