

# Culture and Welfare State



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Values and Social Policy in Comparative  
Perspective

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# 1. The culture of the welfare state: historical and theoretical arguments

**Wim van Oorschot, Michael Opielka and  
Birgit Pfau-Effinger**

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Some would deny that paying attention to welfare values and beliefs is contributive to our understanding of social policy. The idea that moral ideas and debates have a significant influence on the design of welfare has been equated with the idea that the party and gossip on deck determines the course of the ship (Schoor, 1984). Baldock (1999) has argued that culture, as a set of common values, norms and attitudes shared by the majority of a national population, is not a missing variable in understanding social policy. However, those who deny any significant relationship between culture and welfare policy take a lonely position. Much more often than not the opposite view is expressed in the literature. For instance it is broadly accepted that the early development of Western welfare states can be understood as resulting from, partially, industrial and economic growth (Wilensky, 1975), a power struggle between the interests of classes and risk categories (Baldwin, 1990), and a struggle between such various ideologies as conservatism, liberalism and socialism (George and Page, 1995). In addition, it is acknowledged that Catholic and Protestant religious cultures have had influence on the formation and design of European welfare states (Kersbergen, 1995), and that a political culture of neo-liberalism has been steering the restructuring of Western welfare states during the last two decennia (Bonoli et al., 2000). Many more examples could be given to illustrate that relations between culture and welfare state do exist, not only at the macro-level, but also, for instance, at the level of the interaction between service institutions and their clients (Chamberlayne and King, 2001). And not only does culture influence social policy, but the converse relationship is also argued by those, for instance, who claim that welfare benefits undermine people's work ethic and family values (Murray, 1984).

All this does not mean, however, that at present the relationship between culture and welfare state has developed into an adequately theorized, coherent field of study. Decidedly the contrary seems the case, since in recent years quite a few complaints have been expressed about the underdeveloped

state of the cultural analysis of social policy in comparison to economic and political analyses (Aaron et al., 1994; Chamberlayne et al., 1999; Schmidt, 2000; Lockhart, 2001; Clarke, 2002). Although pessimistic in tone, these recent complaints do indicate, however, that the interest in culture and welfare state is growing. Why one would otherwise be bothered? But what is more, in most cases the complaints function as preludes to theoretical and empirical studies into the various relationships between culture and welfare, which means that the field is developing.

The present book takes the increased interest in the relationship between culture and welfare state as a starting point, and aims to contribute theoretically and empirically to the field. Since the interplay between culture and welfare state takes place at various levels and in different policy fields, and because it involves the ideas and interests of a number of actors, the aim of the present book is far from that of a comprehensive and complete perspective on the issue. It is necessarily focused, for now, on a few of the most interesting areas.

As a general point of reference we opted for the welfare states as they have developed in Western Europe. Within the wider context of welfare analysis, these welfare states have been studied extensively. Particularly in studies of cultural factors they are regarded as the countries where ideological struggles and moral debates have been moulding the basic conception of the welfare state from its beginnings in the late-nineteenth century. A second focus regards the comparative perspective, which we think is particularly suited for studying relationships between welfare values and beliefs on the one hand, and welfare institutionalization and reform on the other. Both an historical and an international comparative perspective are applied in the four parts of the book, which reflect a distinction between four levels of analysis. At a first level we are interested in the historical and cultural foundations of the European welfare states, as they are reflected in the competing ideologies, and the related 'ideas of the good society' of liberalism, conservatism and socialism. The role of religious values in the development of European welfare states is also part of this level. At a second level we are interested in the question how the Western-European welfare model relates to other 'worlds of welfare culture', like those in North America, Asia and the Eastern parts of Europe. At the third level the attention shifts towards the relationships between cultural change and welfare reform within the welfare states of Western Europe, while at the fourth level, the socio-political legitimacy base of these welfare states is at issue. Thus, the chapters in the four parts of the book offer comparative and new insights into the relationships between culture and welfare, addressing some of the general basic ideas of the good society, the cultural differences between global welfare models, the relationships between culture and

welfare-policy change, and the cross-national differences and similarities in popular welfare values and beliefs.

Although informative on their own, the various contributions gain significance when put into a wider perspective on the cultural analysis of welfare. Therefore, we start by briefly discussing the academic and societal background to the increased interest in the relationship between culture and welfare state. This will help us understand that, although relatively new and still not very coherent, the cultural perspective does have a history on which it can build further. Moreover, we introduce a distinction between four levels of interplay between welfare cultures and welfare state.

## BACKGROUNDS OF AN INCREASED INTEREST IN THE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON WELFARE

The increased interest in the cultural analysis of welfare can be seen partly as one aspect of a larger ‘cultural turn’ that took place in the social sciences some years earlier, as renewed attention began to be paid to the agency of individuals within and against the structures and dominant cultures they are part of, as well as to the related idea that reality is a social construction. For another part, we believe that this growing interest stems from the welfare state crisis and increased international comparative research on topics related to it.

### **The Cultural Turn in Social Sciences**

Although the founding fathers of social science such as Emile Durkheim and Max Weber recognized the relevance of ideas and values in social life, by the 1960s a situation had developed which led anthropologist Clifford Geertz to lament the one-dimensionality of modern social theory. His point was that social theory no longer seemed to integrate symbolic interpretations that could be derived from philosophy and the humanities (Geertz, 1964). Since then the situation has changed substantially. Jeffrey Alexander could speak with good reason of an extraordinary ‘cultural turn’ in the social sciences (Alexander, 1988), by which is meant, most generally, that the cultural dimensions of ideas, meanings, discourses, and symbols became (re-)conceptualized as subjects and interpretative frameworks for the social sciences. Being nourished from different disciplines this cultural turn is by no means a uniform phenomenon. Its character, place in, and significance for social science cannot be described unambiguously. However, the cultural turn can be seen as taking form in at least four different dimensions (Reckwitz, 2000). There is the epistemological dimension, where language theory,

hermeneutics, pragmatism, and the sociology of sciences pushed forward a 'post-positivistic' concept of the production of meaning by theories themselves. This scientific revolution, as Thomas Kuhn labelled it, discovered theories as symbolic orders. The second dimension is marked by more qualitative methodological innovations such as texture analysis and ethno-methodology (Swidler, 1986). A third dimension regards new topics and research fields which go beyond the classical analysis of social structure and focus on lifestyles and symbolic practices. Research on mass media and organizational and consumer cultures, and the new research agenda of 'cultural studies' appearing in the 1980s, can be mentioned here (Grossberg et al., 1992). Fourth, there is the dimension of social theory, where the cultural turn manifests itself in the development of perspectives that try to overcome traditional controversies, such as those over micro- and macro-perspectives, the issue of agency and structure, unity or conflict, and integration or differentiation. The cultural turn in this dimension can be recognized in, for instance, the introduction and development of the phenomenological sociology of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the French neo-structuralism of Michel Foucault, the 'practice theories' of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens, and the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas.

Not only have theoretical advantages nurtured the 'cultural turn' in social sciences, but far-reaching social and political developments as well, especially since the breakdown of the Iron Curtain in the years after 1989 and the processes of globalization emerging since then. They frame the welfare-state debate on a cultural level. Samuel P. Huntington's famous, although disputed, prospect of a clash of civilizations in the twenty-first century can be viewed as an indicator that 'culture matters' (Harrison and Huntington, 2000). The cultural impact of religious beliefs and institutions comes to mind as a problem of diversity within – and not only between – religions (Wuthnow, 2005), or as that of 'multiple modernities' and 'multiple religions' characterized by internal pluralities (Eisenstadt, 2000). At least, the renewed interest in culture-conflicts has nurtured those research traditions in the social sciences which favour a broad comparative approach transcending the Western situation and the established focus on social-structure variables stemming from economics and politics.

The cultural turn in social theory has also affected analyses of welfare and social policy, be it with some delay. It is not that cultural factors were not studied before the cultural turn had its impact. As early as 1975, in his book *The Welfare State and Equality*, Wilensky analysed both the structural and ideological roots of public expenditure from an international comparative perspective. And the moral effects of social policies have been questioned ever since the welfare state began, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But, what is relatively new in the analysis of social policy is the claim that a

new perspective on the cultural factor is needed to fully understand the relation between culture and welfare (see for example, Edgar and Russell, 1998; Chamberlayne et al., 1999; Ullrich, 2003; Clarke, 2004; Pfau-Effinger, 2005). Inspired by the wider cultural turn in social science, with its emphasis on agency and social construction, the claim is that 'traditional' perspectives on the cultural factor over-emphasize the unitary, static and deterministic character of culture, while, in reality, culture is constantly contested, (re-) produced and manipulated. In its weakest interpretation this claim asks for a shift towards the view that any analysis and explanation of developments in social policy and its outcomes falls short if it does not pay attention to the values of the actors involved, the meaning they give to the situation they are in, and to the symbolic codes they use and exchange. In its strongest interpretation, however, the cultural turn advocated in social-policy analysis is seen as a new, critical approach aiming at the emancipation and empowerment of vulnerable groups in society by deconstructing the reality created by elites. Typical for a cultural analysis of social policy from this perspective is that it rejects scientific analysis as a politically indifferent undertaking. Doing research, and particularly the results of it, should foster and improve the well-being and power of vulnerable groups in society. Or, as Freeman et al. (1999) describe the starting point of the cultural turn approach: 'subjects and citizens must have a voice'.

In our view the differences between the two approaches to the cultural perspective on social policy should not be exaggerated. First, because the weak interpretation of the 'cultural turn' is fully compatible with the essence of earlier approaches, which is to analyse the relationships between (outcomes of) policies and the values, norms and beliefs of the various actors involved. Second, in real life, culture is external and enforcing only to a degree, and is not a totalitarian force; it is, as well, open to manipulation, negotiation, variety and change. Thus seen, both approaches are not in competition, but complement each other. In the general framework for the analysis of culture and welfare that we present later, the two perspectives will be combined.

### **Welfare state Crisis and the Cultural Perspective**

In addition to the cultural turn in social science, the interest in the cultural factor in relation to welfare and social policy was stimulated by the economic downturn of the 1980s. In response to the related fiscal crisis of the welfare state, the basic moral welfare question of 'who should get what, and why?' came to the fore again. Particularly, the austere 1980s saw a rise of debates on the moral aspects of poverty and welfare dependency, as well as on the moral effects of welfare.

While in America the debate concentrated on the question whether poverty is the result of a culture of poverty (Mead, 1986), a view popular among victim-blamers, or is based in the backward structural position of the poor (Wilson, 1987), a view that blames society, in Europe the focus was more on the morals and public image of the unemployed. Opinion research showed that an unfavourable image of unemployed people exists among the European public. There are not only doubts about their willingness to work, but they are also seen on average as less intelligent, responsible, and reliable (Golding and Middleton, 1982; Fridberg and Ploug, 2000). On the other hand however, studies of the unemployed themselves revealed that most such images could be regarded as myths, because the work ethic and willingness to work of the unemployed, on average, is no less than among employed people (Gallie and Alm, 2000).

The moral questions that came to the fore due to the new scarcity were not confined to the actual or alleged behaviour and character of the poor and unemployed. More generally, the criticism arose that the welfare state created social problems instead of helping to solve them, by undermining its own constituting virtues of responsibility, solidarity and community spirit. In the literature quite a few alleged demoralizing effects of social policies have been discussed and listed: that citizens have developed a calculative and careless attitude towards benefits, leading to abuse and misuse; that they have lost their sense of mutual responsibility and social commitments, leading to an erosion of civil society and the family; and that they are mainly preoccupied with their social rights while systematically neglecting the obligations that go with them (Murray, 1984; Mead, 1986; Wolfe, 1989). In the light of empirical evidence however most of this critique has been shown to be highly normative and based on theoretical reasoning, anecdotal evidence and ad hoc interpretations. It is shown, for instance, that in Europe unemployment benefits do not corrupt the work ethic (Gallie and Alm, 2000) nor inhibit unemployed people from looking for a job or accepting one if offered (Atkinson, 1989; Barr, 1992); social expenditures targeted at elderly people do not undermine intra-family and inter-generational solidarity feelings and behaviour (Attias-Donfut and Arber, 2000); voluntary work is not less present in well-developed welfare states than in others, but to the contrary (Rothstein, 2001); family cohesion and fertility rates do not drop because of active family policies (Opielka, 1997; Strohmeier, 2002); and a European comparative analysis of people's trust in welfare-state institutions, civic morality and social networks has confirmed that these aspects of social capital are positively – not negatively – related to welfare state comprehensiveness and levels of spending (Oorschot and Arts, 2005).

More recently, a new idea of a possible welfare crisis has been formulated, not related to economic and fiscal problems this time, but to the problems

that go with the increasing cultural diversity of European welfare states due to the increasing influx of migrants. Again, cultural factors are seen as a possible danger. Although from a demographic perspective some point to the positive effects of larger numbers of immigrants in European countries (Brochmann and Hammar, 1999), there seems to be a rather dominant concern that, in the longer run, immigration seriously threatens the sustainability of the European social model and its national varieties. American scholars, who draw a parallel with the American situation, articulate strong warnings in this respect. If in European countries, they argue, immigrants come to be the largest group of welfare users, and become the subject of negative stereotypes and related perceptions of undeservingness – already the case of African-American and Hispanic people in America – then the societal legitimacy of welfare arrangements as a whole may diminish quickly and the welfare state may weaken (Freeman, 1986; Alesina and Angeletos, 2002). The empirical question however – whether it is true that cultural diversity leads to less welfare support and spending – is not yet completely answered. Empirical studies do suggest that there is a negative relation between diversity and welfare spending if one compares countries on a global scale, including countries of South America and Asia (Alesina and Glaeser, 2004). And there is also a negative relationship within the group of American states (Hero and Tolbert, 1996). However, within the group of European countries there is no relation at all. Thus far, empirical evidence seems to suggest that the European social model is able to cope with cultural diversity, due, in particular, to the influence of social-democratic politics (Swank and Betz, 2003; Taylor-Gooby, 2005).

### **International Comparison**

At the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, the economic crisis and resulting poverty and unemployment was only one of the phenomena most European welfare states faced. Other common problems are the ageing of populations, changing gender patterns and the increasing female labour-market participation, low birth rates, the decreasing participation of older workers, increasing global competition, the flexibilization of labour markets, etc. (Sainsbury, 2001). These common processes and experiences induced governments, international organizations like the ILO and OECD, and not least, the EU, to commission international comparative research on common problems, countries' welfare policies and practices, and their outcomes. This increase in comparative research has contributed considerably to the awareness that cultural factors may be significant to understand differences and trends in social policy. It has shown that cultural factors operate at the level of policy elites, as for

instance when in the 1990s, at the EU level, the earlier focus on poverty as the major welfare problem, under French influence shifted towards that of social exclusion (Room, 1997); or, by the fact that neo-liberal ideas have come to dominate much elite thinking on the future of the European welfare states (Bonoli et al., 2000). But cultural factors have also been shown to play a role at the level of citizens, where for instance differences in the amount of parental leave taken has been found to be less determined by variations in types of schemes, than by differences in motherhood culture, which is especially strong in the Netherlands and Germany compared to that in the Nordic countries (Den Dulk et al., 1999; Pfau-Effinger, 2004). In other words, increased international comparison has thrown light on culture as a missing variable for understanding the preferences and behaviour of welfare actors.

International comparison and sensitivity for cultural factors has increased not only in consequence of growing policy demand. The methodological possibilities for comparing cultures in Europe was extended significantly by several new national and comparative surveys from the 1980s onwards, while Esping-Andersen's comparative regime approach stimulated the search for cultural factors as explanations for differences in welfare state design.

As for the surveys, there are the European Values Survey (EVS), the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), the International Social Justice Project (ISJP), the Eurobarometer surveys, and most recently, the European Social Survey (ESS). What these surveys have shown principally is that the values, attitudes and preferences of the European public basically approve of the comprehensive character of European welfare states. Contrary to what theories of the legitimacy crisis of the welfare state had predicted, there is widespread support for welfare all over Europe (Pierson, 1991; Ferrera, 1993; Pettersen, 1995). Even more relevant here, however, is that most crisis theories have assumed that welfare support is basically class related, reflecting the perceived personal interests of respondents. The assumption was that the middle and higher classes would oppose welfare, because, as taxpayers they have to pay for it and suspect that they will get little in return. Putting these theories to the test, however, national- and European-wide surveys showed that people's support for welfare is based on a mixture of personal and group interests on the one hand, and on valued principles on the other hand, regarding issues such as social equality, social justice, solidarity, mutual obligation, collective responsibility, etc. (Pettersen, 1995; Bowles and Gintis, 2000; Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003).

Finally, an important stimulus for paying attention to cultural factors was given by the 'ideal-typical' welfare-regime approach of Esping-Andersen (1990). His typology of liberal, conservative-corporatist and

social democratic welfare states is well known, but it is important to note that it basically assumes that each type has a different ideological, or cultural base. Underlying the liberal welfare state are values of personal responsibility and freedom, a related reluctance to accept state intervention, and market-led social organization. Conservatism, with its emphasis on society as an organic whole cherishing hierarchical group relations and professional, communal and family bonds in particular, underlies the type of the conservative-corporatist welfare state. And social-democratic values of social equality, labour-market participation and mutual responsibility are those underlying the social democratic welfare state.

This explicit linking of broader ideological perspectives to welfare state types has introduced a line of debate and research which further emphasizes the role of the cultural factor. Thus we have seen amendments to Esping-Andersen's theory of the role of Christian-democratic ideas and values in the development of European welfare states (Kersbergen, 1995; Hornsby-Smith, 1999), where Manow distinguishes even between Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinistic influences (Manow, 2002). And there has developed a rather large literature on the cultural particularities of non-Western welfare states, be they Asian or Confucian (Goodman and Peng, 1996; Walker and Wong, 2005), Arabic or Islamic (Clark, 2004; Heyneman, 2004), or African (Olivier and Mpedi, 2002).

## CULTURE AND WELFARE STATE FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

As stated in the first section the interplay between culture and welfare state takes place at various levels, in different institutional contexts and policy fields, and it involves the ideas and interests of a number of actors. Due to this complexity, the aim of the present book cannot and will not be to offer a comprehensive and complete picture. Given the developmental state of the cultural perspective on welfare, we have opted to focus exclusively on the core relationships, such as the interplay between welfare cultures and welfare-state policies.

What does 'culture' mean in this context, and what does it not mean? In the early anthropology of the nineteenth century, culture was used in order to define the total societal and symbolic order of 'traditional' band societies. Still today it is sometimes common for researchers in social sciences to include into their definition of 'culture' the habits, language, artefacts and so on of a society and to use it therefore as another term for 'tradition' or 'society' (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1963; Smelser, 1992). However, it turned out that such a comprehensive concept was not very fruitful for

empirical research and was therefore later substituted by more specific concepts, also in anthropological research (Wimmer, 2005).

In more specific approaches it is common to define 'culture' as the ideational part of society, including cultural values, models and stocks of knowledge. 'Culture' is in different ways seen as related to the social system. Those authors who are more based on a 'materialist' tradition, such as Marx, Durkheim and in part Bourdieu, treat culture mainly as a reflection of the social system and as something that is dominated by and derived from the social system. In this perspective, the independent analysis of cultural development does not make sense. Those thinkers who emphasize 'idealistic thinking', on the other hand, such as Parsons, Sorokin und Lévi-Strauss, argue that culture determines via symbolic orientations and socialization the action and social structures. Such theories are often based on the assumption that a cultural consensus in society exists – what Margaret Archer has called 'The myth of cultural integration' (Archer, 1996). In such a view, an independent analysis of the development of action seems to be unnecessary. We argue that such theories are more or less problematic for analyses of the relationship of welfare state and culture, for they overestimate or underestimate the role of culture and leave little space to analyse the dynamics of the cultural system and its interrelation with action and social structures (Pfau-Effinger, 2004; Wimmer, 2005).

Giddens in his theory of the 'duality of structure' (Giddens, 1986) and Baumann (1998) in his approach to 'culture as practice' tried to avoid these problems in that they did not give culture priority over the social system or the other way round. However, they conceptualize the relationship as an inseparable mingling of culture and social structures in which both levels constitute each other. Therefore, there is no space left for empirical analysis of the relationship of both.

Another strand of theories is based on the work of Max Weber (1972, 1981), Shmuel Eisenstadt (2000), Jeffrey Alexander (1988, 1990), Margaret Archer (1996, 2000) and Rainer Lepsius (1990, 1995). In this type of theory, culture and the social system are seen as interrelated and at the same time relatively autonomous. Neither level is seen as having a dominant influence over the other. Accordingly it is possible to analyse the mutual influences and the dynamics of change in the relationship of culture on one hand, action and social structures on the other (Alexander, 1990; Archer, 1996; Pfau-Effinger, 2004). The concept of 'culture' used in this book relates to this strand of theories.

This approach is in principle related to the macro and meso level of society. However, it is also possible to establish a link with the micro level. In this respect, it matches with constructivist, micro-social approaches in which cultural values and models are seen as cultural constructions which

are the immediate result of social interaction (Grossberg et al., 1992). The approach that we are introducing here and that was developed by Pfau-Effinger (2005) is however more comprehensive, compared with such constructivist approaches, in that it links the short-term effects of social interaction at the micro level with the more enduring cultural values and models at the macro level of society. The concept of 'welfare culture' on which our approach in this volume is based relates to the relevant collective meanings in a given society surrounding the welfare state, and to the way the welfare state is embedded in society. The welfare culture comprises doctrines, values, and ideals in relation to the welfare state and thus defines the ideational environment to which the relevant social actors, the institutions of the welfare state and concrete policy measures refer (see Pfau-Effinger, 2005). Welfare culture is not necessarily ordered and logically consistent. According to this approach it is important to assume that collective constructions of meaning are produced and reproduced by the social practices of social actors. Through conflicts, negotiation processes and discourses between social actors, welfare cultures can also change. Various groups in society may have their specific perceptions of the actual or preferred welfare culture, and welfare cultures may contain ambiguous and even contradicting elements. The cultural values and ideals that predominate in welfare cultures do tend to restrict the spectrum of possible policies of a welfare state. This is why, for instance, studying welfare cultures at the national level may contribute to understanding policy differences between national welfare states. Not only the basic values of a welfare culture, but also the degree of coherence of the cultural basis of a welfare arrangement may vary in the context of time and space. Note however, as Pfau-Effinger (2004, 2005) argues, that welfare culture does not simply exert a determining influence on politics, or vice versa. Instead, their mutual, dialectical impact is influenced and modified by the interaction of institutional and structural factors in the respective 'societal context'.

In this book the interplay between welfare cultures and welfare-state policies will be discussed from historical and international comparative perspectives, which will be applied to four levels of analysis: the ideological ideas of the good society; welfare models and cultures; welfare state change in relation to cultural factors; and the popular legitimacy of welfare. Each level is elaborated upon in a separate part of the book.

### **Part 1: Cultural Foundations of the Welfare State: Ideas of the Good Society**

From a historically comparative perspective a central question about the cultural foundation of welfare states regards the influence that competing ideas

of 'the good society' have had on welfare state formation, especially in Western Europe where the modern welfare state had its cradle. Ideas of 'the good society' stem from more or less coherent value-structures that are embedded in wider ideologies, which in a European context typically include liberalism, conservatism and socialism. It is common knowledge that many characteristics of the welfare states in Europe nowadays can be traced back to the relative influence each of these ideologies have exerted in the political struggles that have led to the well-known variations within the European social model. To a degree, these are based on dominant conceptions of either one of the three ideologies, but to be sure, mixtures of them have always existed. As in recent times, 'social-liberalism', a guiding concept in the reframing of the British welfare state under New Labour; or, 'neo-conservatism', a fusion of liberal and conservative ideas guiding the US welfare reforms of the 1980s under Ronald Reagan. It is also known that in the historical process of European welfare-state formation, the 'outer-worldly'-oriented ideologies have always been challenged by the 'inner-worldly'-oriented religious value-systems of varieties of Christianity, notably Protestantism and Catholicism. However, questions remain as to the degree to which central values like 'freedom', 'equality', 'solidarity' and the like are exclusively typical for any of the ideologies, and if not, what then are the basic differences between the different ideas of 'the good society'. A further important question is whether, and to what degree the traditional 'inner-worldly' orientations have a religious, Christian, background themselves, and how this compares to non-Western religious and welfare contexts.

Regarding liberalism, Julia O'Connor and Gillian Robinson argue that the tenets of liberal thinking have influenced the development of all Western welfare states, irrespective of their usual regime categorization. On the other hand, its influence has never been without competition from other intellectual streams. Despite the dominance of neo-liberal thinking at present, this is as true today as it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century where contemporary welfare has its roots. In their contribution O'Connor and Robinson examine the distinction between classical and social liberalism and discuss the liberal conception of citizenship and the implications of the ideology of 'neo-liberalism' for welfare state restructuring. They especially point to ambiguities in the uses and meanings of the concept of liberalism, for instance how a failure to distinguish between, on the one hand, political liberalism (O'Connor and Robinson speak of 'social', 'new' or 'reform' liberalism) with its emphasis on individualism, moral egalitarianism, universalism and most of all citizenship rights, as the core elements of welfare states, and on the other hand, economic liberalism with its emphasis on free-market exchange and capitalist modes of production and property (or possessive) rights, easily leads to

confusion about liberalism's cultural message for welfare-state development. Another ambiguity of liberalism they point to is that in practice, liberalism is mainly focused on the economic and political citizenship rights of the 'white male possessive individual', thereby historically excluding groups like women, the poor, and ethnic minorities. Finally, they argue that the discourse on globalization is strongly marked by neo-liberal thinking, but they show that contradictions in modern discourses, such as the British 'New Deal' policies – in particular the abundant 'workfare' policies – are less problems of liberalism itself than conflicts between liberal ideas of freedom and (neo-) conservative and sometime social democratic notions of responsibility and duty.

The contribution of Steinar Stjernø on the basic values of social democracy also shows ambiguity and overlap with other ideologies. In an historical study of social democratic party platforms and programmes throughout Europe, Stjernø demonstrates that European social democratic parties of today have adopted a common language based on what they see as social democratic values, notably freedom, justice, equality, and above all, solidarity. However, what Stjernø's study shows is that these basic values have been contested by similar values from competing political camps and philosophies, like liberalism and conservatism. One example is the 'negative' conception of freedom in the 'old' liberalism, whereas the labour-movement conception always emphasized freedom through collectively organized social rights. Another example is the history of the controversial concept of equality. Stjernø shows that equality of outcome never was a clearly-held basic value in social democracy because equality was closely linked to a concept of social justice, which over time came to stand for less redistribution and more inequality. From a sociological point of view the changing foundation of the basic value of solidarity has been most striking. Its boundaries have been broadened, from meaning, at first, the fellow industrial worker, to a universalistic and sometimes vague inclusion of 'almost anyone who is less privileged or underprivileged'. As did O'Connor and Robinson, Stjernø points out that, usually, there has been a rather loose and ambiguous coupling of basic values and practical politics: Just like 'freedom', the concept of 'solidarity' may be implemented in many different, and not rarely, even in contradictory ways.

In their analysis of the impact of conservatism on the modern welfare state Kees van Kersbergen and Monique Kremer take a slightly different route than the first two contributions discussed. They try to explain why conservatism succeeded in establishing the continental welfare states as 'conservative, preserving projects' and argue that it was realism, pragmatism and, unexpectedly, the very absence of an idea of 'a good society' or utopia which made conservative welfare policies so successful. With

authoritarianism, paternalism, an organic view of politics and society, corporatism and familialism as central values, conservative social thinking aims at the preservation of a natural state. Although critical of state intervention, conservative thinking approves of it, as far as it is necessary to preserve what has been proven to be good. Social policy should not try to alter basic facts of human nature and culture, but should take into account, and reproduce, natural differences between genders, classes, etc. Two case studies of the formation of childcare policies in Flanders, with its intergenerational extended families, and in the Netherlands, with its gender care-sharing nuclear families, show how conservative thinking influences practical policies. These policies differ in substance, but are similar in that they both aim at preserving the natural order of family life. The influence of conservatism on welfare formation was especially strong in the continental European welfare states where it aspired importantly to prevent fundamental changes in the social order as advocated by other competing ideologies in their utopian ideas of 'the good society'.

Michael Opielka broadens the debate into the sphere of the religious. The main questions he addresses are whether Christian foundations of the welfare state exist; whether in a global comparative perspective other religious traditions exist that are relevant for social policies; and how important the influence of religions is compared to that of political value-orientations. His analysis of the body of research on the subject, ordered along analytical lines inspired by 'new institutionalism', leads him to argue that behind elaborated political and ideological values one always finds a realm of religious values. In the European context these values have been both Christian and Humanist, whereby the latter obtained a proto-religious character, especially in the Marxist tradition, but Opielka also shows that Christian values have likewise clearly influenced American social policy. After this first step, Opielka introduces a comparative typology of world religions, including their typical welfare values. In Opielka's view, welfare cultures are both political and religious symbolizations which bind this-worldly and other-worldly experiences through institutions and practices.

## **Part 2: Worlds of Welfare Culture**

Although the modern welfare state had its cradle in Western Europe, today the European type of welfare state is only one in a world where economic and political developments have created conditions for welfare state formation elsewhere. An interesting question from our cultural perspective is whether, and to what degree there are basic differences between the welfare cultures of welfare states in Western Europe and those outside it. If there

are different worlds of welfare culture, then what are their particular cultural differences, how fundamental and consistent are they, and how are they related to differences in welfare approaches and arrangements? The chapters in this part of the book address questions like these with regard to three different non-Western-European welfare states: the North-American welfare state, the post-socialist welfare states of Central and Eastern Europe, and the Asian welfare states of Japan and South Korea.

A cultural comparison of the American welfare state with a selection of European welfare states is the explicit aim of the contribution by Robert Walker, who distinguishes three levels of welfare culture: the federal/EU level, the level of states/nations, and the level of public opinion. Comparing policy statements and documents, he finds at the first level that America and Europe clearly differ in terms of beliefs, norms and welfare institutions. American welfare culture expounds the work ethic, economic success, individualism, individual opportunity, and liberal notions of self-help. Provision is limited, frequently means-tested and often viewed as a brake on economic progress. In Europe, comprehensive welfare provision is believed to be an integral component of economic progress. The core values of social citizenship and social cohesion are expressed as political goals and pursued actively by governments, often with the constructive engagement of employers and trade unions. However, within these two general models, there are differences in the welfare cultures within America and Europe at the level of states and nations, which is demonstrated by an analysis of reforms of cash benefits in America, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Germany.

Although all the reforms were inspired by the same OECD 1994 Job Study proposing the extension of personal responsibility in the welfare systems (OECD, 1994), the way ideas were put into practice differed remarkably in function of differences in welfare cultures. Using data from the World Values Survey, Walker finds – at the level of public opinion – that the differences in national welfare cultures in Europe and North America, albeit comparatively weak, are broadly replicated by public opinion. It would therefore appear from opinion polls that national welfare cultures largely reflect the values held by electorates.

The issue of welfare culture has been raised in recent years explicitly with regard to the situation in the post-socialist societies in Central and Eastern Europe. In her contribution Zsuzsa Ferge takes a position against the common accusation that the populations of these countries, after the political transformation, represent a type of citizen that was created by the totalitarian socialist governments. According to that argument, this '*Homo Sovieticus*' is characterized, among other things, by a learned helplessness conducive to total reliance on the (welfare) state. Ferge argues that this idea

is misleading, as the socialist state did not create substantial changes in the welfare orientations of citizens. Instead, the roots of the welfare-cultural orientation of the citizens of the post-socialist states lie much deeper in history, having started to develop long before World War II, as in the Western-European welfare states. Using comparative public-opinion data she shows that in the recent decade in Central and East-European countries the orientation towards social protection is in line with the orientations of people in Western Europe. The appeal to equality and public responsibility may be somewhat greater in East-Central European countries, but between-country variation is significant in both blocs, and basic values are rather similar in the East and the West of Europe.

In the East Asian societies, welfare state policies are a relatively new phenomenon. The interesting question is here, in how far these welfare states follow their own development path, based on specific, notably Confucian, cultural and religious values, or, in how far they are in a process of convergence towards Western-type welfare states. In her chapter Ito Peng starts by pointing out that, although certain features of East-Asian welfare systems – such as the lack of state provision for family and personal social services, and policy emphasis on the elderly rather than on children – do appear to cohere with some tenets of Confucian principles, these features are, on closer examination, by no means unique to East Asia. They can be found, for instance, in Southern-European welfare states too. With this in mind, she analyses recent welfare reforms in East Asia since the 1990s, and asks, in how far these were based on changes in the cultural basis of social policies. For her two cases, Japan and South Korea, she shows how the cultural underpinnings of social policy shifted, from an approach that saw social welfare as a subsidiary aspect of the developing state towards one that sees it as a new source of labour-market activation and demographic rejuvenation under post-industrial social conditions. This ideational shift especially has led to the introduction of women-friendly family policies and social care arrangements, which means a clear departure from the traditional Asian welfare path. From Peng's chapter we learn that, in the field of family policy, but also more broadly, in terms of general approaches to welfare, a convergence towards the Continental and Nordic European welfare states is taking place.

### **Part 3: Cultural Change and Welfare Reform**

The economic, social and demographic changes that present challenges to contemporary welfare states, as well as the ways in which welfare states react to them by means of welfare reform, are much-debated issues (for an overview see for example, Sainsbury, 2001). European welfare states in

particular, are the subject of study here, because of their comparatively high levels of social expenditure, which raise questions of sustainability in an era of globalization. Up till now, however, the relationships between cultural changes or challenges and welfare reform have hardly been studied. Most generally, it can be assumed that a welfare arrangement can be firmly established and coherent, to the degree that its cultural foundations are anchored as norms in the institutions of the welfare system, and guide social actors' behaviour more or less uniformly. However, welfare cultures themselves may change in terms of substance and/or coherence, as well as may do elements in the wider socio-cultural context. Both may alter and erode the cultural and social integration of a welfare arrangement, as a result of which the constellation may change character and be transformed (see also Pfau-Effinger, 2005). However true this may be in a general sense little is known about the specific conditions under which such change can happen. The aim of the chapters in this part of the book is to contribute to such knowledge.

Starting with an extended theoretical discussion of the question whether, and under what circumstances, cultural change can be a cause of 'path-breaking' change, Birgit Pfau-Effinger in her chapter analyses empirically how in Germany and Austria changes in family values have led to related reforms and path departure in family policies, while this has not been the case in Switzerland, despite the fact that family values did change among the Swiss population in the same way, and despite large similarities in the work and care patterns among the three populations. The explanation suggested by Pfau-Effinger is that in Switzerland, in contrast to Germany and Austria, there is a competing element in the overall welfare culture, which includes strong liberal values, according to which the welfare state is not responsible for supporting the realization of a new family model. Hence, there has been no family policy reform in Switzerland. The general lesson is that cultural changes may cause path-breaks in welfare state development, and thus break through mechanisms of 'increasing returns' which are often seen as causal for a path-dependent welfare reform (e.g. Pierson, 2001). However, the impact of a specific cultural change not only depends on the relative strength of such mechanisms, but also on other cultural elements in the welfare arrangement.

Using the concept of 'activation culture' as an example, Bjørn Hvinden demonstrates that the welfare values of policy elites are by no means stable over time, and their impact on actual reform may depend on the degree to which they deviate from the values of other social actors. His example also shows that such impact may vary also with the degree to which policy elites themselves are dedicated to their values. Hvinden starts with pointing out that 'activation culture' is not a uniform and unambiguous concept, not

even in the Nordic welfare states, where the value of activation has been recognized from the early days of welfare state development. His discussion of the way in which activation values and policies have developed over time in the Norwegian welfare state shows that after a period of relative relaxation, from the late 1980s onwards, the Norwegian policy elites gained new interest in activation and subsequently introduced related reforms of benefit and re-insertion practices. However, the real impact of the revival of activation values among the policy elites depends on how the reforms are received by other actors. According to Hvinden the revival appears to have resonated reasonably well with shifts in the work culture of the implementing agencies, while it remains more of an open question whether corporate cultures have become more accommodating in the recruitment and retention of marginal sections of the labour force. The prospects for people at the margins of the labour market – except for lone parents – stand in stark contrast to the substantial escalation of activation efforts. Hvinden concludes his chapter with a plea for research that adopts a longer time perspective than usually applied in comparative and cross-national welfare research, in order to be able to assess the relationships between (changes in) welfare cultures and their impact on welfare policies.

The cultural change which John Clarke and Janet Fink address in their chapter is of a rather fundamental nature, since it regards changes in the images of national identity and citizenship, which images, in Europe, traditionally seemed closely linked to the borders of national welfare states. In fact, national models of welfare were shared by most western societies in the twentieth century, resting on an assumed unity of people, place and political institutions. Recently, however, different tendencies have come together to undermine or destabilize this territorial and national view of the welfare state and its citizens. These include the greater internationalization or globalization of economic processes; the rise of supra-national political institutions (such as the European Union); the associated growth in significance of regional or sub-national levels of governance; and, of course, the increased movement of people across national borders. Clearly, the disruption of relations between people, places and policies induce welfare states to reform. Clarke and Fink see such reforms basically as attempts to institutionalize new alignments of welfare, state and nation. These attempts range from corporate neo-liberalism seeking to ‘liberate’ people from the confines of ‘old’ systems and states; through resurgent nationalisms; to efforts to articulate a ‘European’ identity, located in a ‘European social model’ that would provide an alternative to the anti-welfarist and anti-statist drive of corporate neo-liberalism. With illustrations from the United Kingdom, they stress that in this process, welfare policies construct and reconstruct the ‘people’, as well as the populations

in different ways. This is not without risks for those families whose national identity and citizenship claims are most provisional. For instance, the emphasis on ‘vulnerable groups’ and ‘hard-working families’ in New Labour’s modernizing agenda does not acknowledge the diversity of family practices at the beginning of the twenty-first century, nor does it address their implications for welfare. This means that some groups are marginalized or policed by welfare practices that fail to acknowledge the differential effects of class, religion, ethnicity or sexuality.

#### **Part 4: Popular Welfare Values and Beliefs**

The socio-political legitimacy of the European type of extended welfare state was questioned immediately when the numbers of benefit claimants surged in the economic crisis of the early 1980s. Since then, the question of who should actually be entitled to what form and degree of social protection, and on what grounds, has been central to the European debate on welfare reform. Because, as Steffen Mau (2005: 78) puts it so nicely, ‘the chain of legitimation reaches back to the single citizen’, from the 1980s onwards popular welfare cultures have been studied in quite some detail. In the end the socio-political legitimacy base of welfare policies and reforms depends on the values, beliefs, attitudes, and resulting preferences that European citizens have regarding the various aspects of the choices to be made in relation to social protection provision. With help of European-wide surveys it has been shown that popular welfare cultures in the main resonate with the comprehensive character of European welfare states, which means the latter have never witnessed a fundamental legitimacy crisis. But apart from this, many studies have focused on the co-variances between popular ideas and specific social policy arrangements in detail, in order to gain insights in the societal legitimacy of these arrangements. The contributions in this part of the book each contribute in new ways to the knowledge of popular European welfare cultures.

The contribution by John Gelissen fits into a tradition of studies on public preferences for welfare intervention by the state, and newly introduces characteristics of the region people live in as possible determinants of people’s scope-of-government beliefs. In his chapter he links up with the new trend towards multi-level analyses, but gives some good reasons why regional cultural and structural aspects could add to the explanation, alongside characteristics of the respondents themselves and the countries and welfare states they live in. His analysis of Eurobarometer data leads him to conclude that the societal legitimacy of welfare state intervention depends most strongly on individual characteristics (e.g. lower levels of legitimacy, not surprisingly, among people with higher incomes, higher

educational level, and right-wing political orientation), but also on regional and national characteristics. In particular, people living in regions with a higher average level of education and more left-wing orientation, and people living in poorer regions, with more long-term unemployment, are more in favour of state intervention. In a 'Europe of the Regions', specific regional welfare cultures appear to exist which have an impact on the socio-political legitimacy of national welfare policies.

Whereas Gelissen's chapter asks one central question regarding welfare-state legitimacy – what role the public sees for the state to play in the area of social protection – the contribution of Wim van Oorschot focuses on the other central question regarding the public's view on who should get what, and why. He takes as a starting point the fact that in all welfare states social protection is unequally divided: it is more easily accessible, more generous, longer-lasting, and involves fewer obligations for some groups than for others. It is assumed that such differential treatment partly reflects the impact of popular deservingness perceptions on policy-makers' rationing decisions. Using data from the European Values Survey 1999/2000, the chapter examines the European public perceptions of the relative deservingness of needy groups. In a first step it finds that all the 23 European countries studied share a culture in which elderly, sick and disabled people are seen as the most deserving, while immigrants are seen as the least deserving. The position of unemployed people is situated between these. In a second step the chapter adds new research to the field by looking specifically into the degree to which people are selective, i.e., why some people see larger differences between how deserving vulnerable groups are, and others less. In other words, who are selectivists, and who are universalists? The findings show that in the total sample of Europeans, older, less educated, politically rightist people and those expressing less trust and stronger anti-welfare sentiments are more selective. Particularly strong were the effects of attitudes towards immigrants: the more prejudiced people are against immigrants, the more selective they are regarding the rationing of welfare.

The contribution by Lück and Hofäcker is highly significant in the context of current concerns about family formation and its relation to work and welfare arrangements (see for example, Esping-Andersen, 2002). In many European countries low birth rates are a matter of concern with a view to the future sustainability of welfare provisions. Apparently, the overall increased labour-market participation of women is not matched adequately with structures that allow them to combine motherhood and economic self-sufficiency. The question, important in this context, about what factors shape women's attitudes towards work and care is analysed by Lück and Hofäcker on the basis of data from various rounds of the

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). Their analysis focuses on the degree to which women support the male breadwinner model, and stands out as one in which, in a systematic way, the influence is measured by structural and cultural factors, at both individual and national levels. What they find is that work- and care-related attitudes of women have been highly dynamic in the last two decades. Apart from Eastern European countries, support for a male-breadwinner idea among women has markedly decreased in Europe, and remained on a low level in Scandinavian countries. Another central finding is that the institutional arrangements of the country women live in matters for their gender-related attitudes. Women in countries that have introduced new and more equally-paid jobs in the service sector reveal a higher rejection of the male breadwinner idea. Similarly, women in countries that have substantially invested in family-vs.-employment resolution policies such as early childcare are found to be more antipathetic to a traditional division of labour. However, women in countries with a tradition of long paid leave arrangements show less aversion towards the male breadwinner model. Especially in the previously male-breadwinner-oriented Central and Southern European countries there is a trend towards more gender equality, despite the fact that in many of these countries structural conditions have remained largely breadwinner-oriented. This 'temporal lag' between structural and cultural conditions may be an obstacle to raising birth rates in future.

With these four parts, we hope that the book may contribute to the further development of the cultural perspective on the welfare state and its development. We have seen that there are various reasons why this perspective has gained attention in the recent past, and one of the general conclusions that this book may lead to is that in the foreseeable future this attention will not dwindle away. Processes of Europeanization and globalization will continue to evolve and raise questions regarding the role of welfare cultures in facilitating or hindering policy options of national governments. Value shifts that have taken place, like shifts from an emphasis on collective to personal responsibility, or shifts in family values and related ideas on gender differences in work-care responsibilities, have not come to an end in (all of the) European welfare states, and will have a continuous impact on policy development. Although there seems to be a European convergence in that activation and freedom of choice have become central concepts in the mind maps of most policy-makers, there are still large differences in ideational approaches to the understanding of and production of social welfare. For these reasons we are confident that the present book will not be the last one in the category addressing welfare-culture relationships. We are looking forward to further contributions to this highly interesting field.

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## PART I

### Cultural Foundations of the Welfare State: Ideas of the Good Society



## 2. Liberalism, citizenship and the welfare state

**Julia S. O'Connor and Gillian Robinson**

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Liberalism defines a variant of *the* welfare state as in the liberal welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990) but has a much broader relevance to welfare state development. This chapter is based on the argument that aspects of liberalism have influenced the development of *the* welfare state irrespective of regime categorization. The negative influence of neo-liberalism in restructuring welfare states since the 1980s has been widely identified and is discussed in this chapter but is situated within the context of a discussion of the key tenets of liberalism that still have, a sometimes positive, sometimes negative and often contradictory influence on western welfare states. The economic dimension of liberalism, with its emphasis on the primacy of the market, is one dimension of the configuration of ideas embodied in liberalism that have relevance to welfare state analysis. This configuration includes individualism, moral egalitarianism and universalism although the particular liberal denotation of these concepts has to be borne in mind and their implications for social policy examined in the context of the dual character of contemporary liberal democracies. The twin pillars of these societies are a capitalist economic system and a democratic political system. The central issue that must inform analysis of welfare states in such systems is the balance between these pillars and the extent to which inequalities associated with the market are modified through the democratic system.

Citizenship rights are the core element of all welfare states and the rights approach to citizenship derives from the liberal tradition.<sup>1</sup> The development of *the* welfare state can in large part be characterized as the development of social citizenship rights, such as rights to health, education and social services. The range and quality of social rights varies cross-nationally and welfare state analysis is focused to a significant extent on the explanation of this variation. Differences across welfare states reflect the political choices made in different countries in response to the problems of reconciling production and distribution and the public and private spheres. These choices are manifested not only in differences in the scope and

quality of social rights but in the divisions of responsibility for the provision of benefits and services between the state, the market and the family.

This chapter is concerned with the role of ideas in social policy development but does not assume that ideas or the associated discourse<sup>2</sup> are independent of social and economic context or are the sole explanatory variable in social policy development and change. Ideational change occurs within institutional and/or interest-based contexts and the relative importance of ideas varies in intensity over place and time. As Keynes argued ‘the gradual encroachment of ideas’ may have a significant influence long after they were initially articulated (Keynes, [1936] 1942: 383).

The structure of the chapter is as follows: the first section identifies the key tenets of liberalism and distinguishes between classical or market liberalism and new or social liberalism. The second section focuses on liberalism and the welfare state, including the liberal conception of citizenship. The third section is concerned with the implications of the ideology of neo-liberalism for the welfare state. The concluding section summarizes the argument.

## LIBERALISM AND ITS VARIANTS

Constructive discussion of liberalism has to identify which of the many meanings of the term is being used. These meanings vary not only over time, as in classical liberalism, social or reform liberalism and neo-liberalism, but can also vary geographically at any one time. The most noteworthy example of the latter is the difference between the conventional usage of the term in the United States and elsewhere in the contemporary period. Whereas generally liberalism has the connotation of a commitment to individual rights, economic liberalism and a relatively limited role for the state vis-à-vis the market and private institutions in general, in the United States it usually connotes social liberalism, that is acceptance of varying degrees of state intervention to achieve certain social objectives, and is contrasted with ‘conservatism’ which in social terms is akin to neo-liberalism, as used elsewhere, to refer to a minimal role for the state not only in the economic but in the social sphere. At a more general level it is important to note that in the contemporary period some liberal political parties are described as being socially liberal in the sense of acceptance of state intervention to ensure individual rights and economically liberal in the sense of a minimal role for the state in the economy. But in this regard it is important to stress that the commitment to individual rights reflects rights of access to services, whether this be in the market or elsewhere, rather than rights to publicly provided services. This points to a relatively stronger emphasis on civil as opposed to social rights.

Some scholars point to the roots of classical liberalism in classical Greece and Rome but it is more generally spoken of as a relatively circumscribed body of thought that emerged in response to economic and social developments in seventeenth-century Europe and was at its height from the eighteenth century up to the late nineteenth century. Variants of Liberal thought can be identified in several European countries (Rimlinger, 1993). The defining dimension of classical liberalism is its emphasis on freedom and the rights of the individual, in particular property rights. The role of the state is to protect these rights. This is captured most strongly by Macpherson (1962) in his identification of possessive individualism as the unifying assumption of the liberal tradition and the basis of the central difficulties of the liberal-democratic state.

Its possessive quality is found in its conception of the individual as essentially the proprietor of his own person or capacities, owing nothing to society for them. . . . Society consists of relations of exchange between proprietors. Political society becomes a calculated device for the protection of this property and for the maintenance of an orderly relation of exchange. (Macpherson, 1962: 3)

But the emergence of a class conscious working class, who could envisage alternatives to this system, and the struggle for universal suffrage undermined the conditions for a theory of political obligation based on the inevitable subordination of all to market relations (*ibid.*: 271–7). The combination of a democratic political system and a capitalist economic system that emerged out of the struggle for civil and political citizenship rights created the conditions for the democratic class struggle which, to varying degrees cross-nationally, was a strong influence on the development of the welfare state.

Macpherson acknowledges that the seventeenth-century concepts of freedom, rights, obligation, and justice were not ‘entirely derived from this concept of possession, but . . . they were powerfully shaped by it’ (*ibid.*: 3). This shaping is still evident and is strongly reflected in the policy prescriptions of the neo-liberal reforms of the welfare state over the past several decades, although neo-liberalism cannot be linked exclusively to classical liberalism.

Despite significant changes since its origin in the seventeenth century, Gray argues that all variants of liberal thinking share a conception of ‘man and society’ which is distinctively modern in character. It is appropriate to use ‘man’ in this context since the classical liberals were focusing on the male possessive individual in the public sphere although even in this connotation the term should be qualified since it did not encompass all men. In addition to individualism, reflected in the primacy of the individual over the social group, Gray identifies three other unifying tenets of liberalism:

egalitarianism reflected in its accordance of the same moral status to all persons and the assertion that differences in the 'moral worth' of human beings has no relevance to legal or political standing; the universalism of the human species as opposed to the particularism of 'specific historical associations and cultural forms'; and meliorism of social and political institutions through human effort (Gray, 1986: xii). To grasp the significance of these principles, in particular their significance for social policy development, it is crucial to bear in mind the implications of the liberal emphasis on individualism and the particular liberal meaning of egalitarianism and universalism and to situate them within the context of the divide made between the public and private spheres of activity and the primacy and independence of the market that are central to liberal thinking. Liberalism focused on the public sphere and the liberal citizen was the sovereign subject, that is, the white male possessive individual. While contemporary liberalism is often identified as a set of ideas committed to political rights and self-determination, classical liberalism allowed for exclusion from self-determination based on what was considered to be the non-realization of human capacities for liberty and so justified exclusion based on class, race and gender; it did not recognize the barriers in the private sphere of the economy and the family to the realization of the capacities it valued in the public sphere. Despite the commitment of classical liberals to freedom of the individual, their conception of 'the other' with a perceived lesser realized capacity for liberty allowed them to justify imperialism (Mehta, 1999).

In our discussion of citizenship the historical exclusion of certain groups from full citizenship and the limitation of the liberal conceptions of egalitarianism – moral egalitarianism, not social egalitarianism – and universalism will be outlined. For the present context, suffice to note that the relative emphasis of the four dimensions of liberalism varies over time and depending on the conception of liberalism being considered. For example, economic liberalism – laissez-faire – exaggerates individualism and universalism and undermines the meliorist tenet by its intense distrust of the role of the state (O'Connor et al., 1999: 45). In social policy terms this is exemplified in the principle of 'less eligibility' associated with the English Poor Laws of 1834 and parallel developments in other English speaking countries (Orloff, 1993). While the worker was free and independent this meant loss of 'any claim to the protective arm of the state' (Rimlinger, 1993: 32) and survival depended on market relations. In contrast to classical liberalism, the social liberalism or 'New Liberalism' of the early twentieth century reflects a greater attention to the moral egalitarian and meliorist tenets of liberalism.

Before discussing Social Liberalism, it is important to recognize what Polanyi in his analysis of the social history of the nineteenth century

describes as 'a double movement', in which the spread of the market in commodities geographically and in magnitude was paralleled by the development of 'a network of measures and policies . . . designed to check . . . the action of the market relative to labour, land and money' (Polanyi, [1944] 1957: 76). This was necessary because a modicum of de-commodification of labour is essential for its reproduction and the survival of the market economy.<sup>3</sup> From a social policy point of view the key point is that liberalism accepts inequality associated with market position and values it as a reflection of individual freedom and a spur to economic activity. What varies between classical and social liberalism is the extent to which state intervention can be countenanced to address the negative impact of the market. For classical liberals such intervention was highly constrained, social liberals are less reluctant to accept it.

Social liberalism, New Liberalism or Reform Liberalism, is generally identified with developments in the early part of the twentieth century in English speaking countries. For example Rimlinger (1993: 57–9) argues that 'New Liberalism' in Britain reflected a challenge to traditional liberal views from a range of sources including the growth of organized labour, the role of activist intellectuals such as Fabian Socialists including Beatrice and Sydney Webb, the research of Booth and Rowntree on living conditions and the changing attitudes of the middle and upper classes. Others have pointed to the influence of the Christian Socialists, in particular the thinking of T.H. Green and Arnold Toynbee (Richter, 1964). In this regard Elizabeth Wilson (1977) points to the Settlement Movement experience of Attlee and Beveridge.<sup>4</sup> Freedon (1978: 32–5) argues that by the end of the 1880s the *laissez-faire* credo was more likely to be associated with conservative politicians and there was an explicit attempt by New Liberals not only to dissociate from it but that 'socialism in its general ethical sense had become part of liberal terminology' (ibid.: 35–6). The key policy manifestation of the changed liberal focus in Britain was the Old Age Pension Act of 1908. The pensions introduced were minimal but paid as a matter of social right, without a means test. Traditional liberal ideals were more strongly evident in health and unemployment insurance measures. Both were made contributory on the argument that this enhanced personal responsibility. While this refers to the English situation similar developments were taking place in other English-speaking countries and there was considerable cross-national fertilization of ideas (Orloff, 1993: 161–7).<sup>5</sup>

The timing and strength of Social Liberal developments varied cross-nationally depending on the strength of the liberal tradition and the context within which the liberal break with traditionalism had occurred (Rimlinger, 1993: 35–88). The break with classical liberalism reflects a response to changing economic conditions in the nineteenth century, in

particular the impact of the Industrial Revolution, by key liberal thinkers such as John Stuart Mill, who is a key link between classical and social liberalism. Significantly, he, and later the New Liberals, were strongly influenced by socialist analysis of the capitalist system. Mill's critique of laissez-faire and his acceptance of a distinction between production and distribution in economic life legitimized state intervention (Gray, 1986: 31). Intervention to ameliorate the excesses of the market was a major change from the classical liberal position. While the large economic and social disparities that characterized the nineteenth and early twentieth century economic systems were not acceptable to New Liberals, even the most progressive amongst them accepted 'significant inequalities of income and wealth' (Keynes, [1936] 1942: 374).

Freeden argues that 'the new liberalism was a pervasive set of ideas that . . . flourished during a period of English history in which ideology was unusually significant' (1978: 195). Acknowledging the common social reform elements identified by the British Liberal and Labour Parties in the early 1900s, he makes the important point that 'an ideology is judged not only by its originality but by the construction it puts on the facts and ideas it is confronted with. Ideologies are often distinguishable by the different ways they employ to process a common fund of ideas' (ibid.: 196). This issue of the differential processing of common ideas and also the cross-fertilization of intellectual streams of political and social thought is a thread running throughout this chapter. This cross-fertilization was enhanced by the struggle for, and achievement of, a democratic political system not only in those societies characterized by strong liberal streams of thought and Liberal political parties, but in all western societies.

The essential difference between Social Liberalism and Classical Liberalism in terms of the four tenets outlined by Gray is one of relative emphasis. New Liberalism retained the classical liberal focus on the freedom of the individual and the primacy of the market over the state. While it continued to focus on negative freedom, that is, freedom from the purported encumbrance of the state, it recognized the positive freedom of opportunity and acknowledged a modest role for government in supporting the conditions for its exercise. It recognized the negative consequences of the unfettered market and some new liberal adherents advocated a range of interventions that established the basis for a particular variant of the welfare state. This was characterized by (i) means-tested social assistance – a modification of the 'less eligibility' principle of the old poor laws – which entailed state intervention when the market failed, and (ii) universal social insurance, preferably market-based but often publicly-based, which 'pegs entitlements and benefits to employment, work performance and contributions' (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 43). Esping-Andersen makes the important

observation that under certain conditions the acceptance of social protection measures actually strengthened the commodity status of labour. For example old-age pensions facilitate the exit of older workers from the labour market; unemployment insurance also facilitates labour market flexibility.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, publicly run schemes, such as compulsory national social insurance, are consistent with the universalism which is a key tenet of liberalism. The need for unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation and industrial regulation were accepted as justifiable responses to the fall-out of the functioning of the labour market. It sanctioned measures benefiting the majority, mainly the working class but consistent with its universalism principle this was done as the expression of common rather than class interest (O'Connor et al., 1999: 50).

New Liberalism responded to the old age pensions needs of women in terms that were in some respects equal to those of men (see Orloff, 1993:176–7 for US, Canadian and British proposals and Shaver, 1999: 109 for Australia). Despite this, and the fact that some Social Liberals, following John Stuart Mill, discussed the rights of women (for example Hobhouse, 1911: 18),<sup>7</sup> the familial assumptions of classical liberalism and their gendered consequences were not challenged. The most noteworthy example is the assumption of the male-breadwinner household not only as the norm but as normative with the consequence that women's employment was marginalized (Pederson, 1993: 49–52). It is important to bear in mind that the male-breadwinner family model historically cut across established typologies of welfare states, for example the liberal, conservative and social democratic as identified by Esping-Andersen (1990). Lewis has pointed out that all countries reflected elements of this ideology and some countries adhered somewhat strongly to the model until relatively recently (Lewis, 1992).<sup>8</sup> The marginalization of women associated with the male-breadwinner family model was reflected in low female labour force participation, gender segregation in the labour market and male–female wage differentials in all countries.<sup>9</sup> Familial assumptions were not confined to liberalism, they were pervasive in this period and are reflected in support by women for trade union demands for a family wage sufficient to allow mothers to leave the labour force and for protective labour legislation (O'Connor et al., 1999: 51).

In summary, social liberalism is characterized by a reluctant collectivism to use the terminology of George and Wilding (1985), that is, it accepted the need for state intervention to compensate for the negative consequences of the unregulated market economy, but it adhered to the individualism and primacy of private enterprise that characterized classical liberalism and while it argued for a lessening of the consequences of inequality it favoured inequality on economic incentive grounds. For liberals this is not

inconsistent with a commitment to civil and political rights, rather it is seen as an affirmation of individual freedom.

## LIBERALISM, *THE* WELFARE STATE AND WELFARE STATE REGIMES

While the roots of many contemporary social programmes were planted between the 1880s and 1920s in Western Europe (Flora and Alber, 1981) and state intervention in response to the ravages of the market goes back several centuries, the welfare state as we know it today in western developed capitalist countries was developed primarily in the post-World War II period. The welfare state, narrowly conceived as referring to expenditure on health, education, personal social services and income maintenance programmes such as pensions, unemployment insurance, and welfare or social assistance, exists to varying degrees in all western capitalist countries. The term is sometimes used in an even broader sense to characterize all post-World War II western capitalist interventionist states – the ‘Keynesian welfare state’ (KWS) (Offe, 1984). This refers to states in which governments intervene in the economy in a counter-cyclical way as advocated by John Maynard Keynes in the 1930s (Keynes, [1936] 1942). The most significant aspect of Keynes’ argument was the recognition that economies were not automatically self-correcting and could reach equilibrium at less than full employment. A counter-cyclical approach implies stimulation of the economy in times of recession, for example through unemployment insurance and public works programmes, and the dampening down of demand through taxation and control of the money supply in times of potential inflation. It is noteworthy that the Keynesian ideas underlying state action to stimulate the economy were premised on the argument that the extension of the traditional functions of government could be achieved without undue loss of the scope for individualism, private initiative, and personal liberty and was seen by Keynes as ‘the condition for the successful functioning of individual initiative’ (Keynes, [1936] 1942: 380, 372–81). While this statement is a strong affirmation of liberal premises it is important to recognize that the most assiduous followers of Keynesian policy prescriptions in the post-World War II period to the 1970s were the social democratic welfare states. What strongly differentiated these states from the liberal welfare regimes was the commitment to full employment and the configuration of policies adopted relating to the scope and quality of social rights.<sup>10</sup> This illustrates that the processing of ‘the common fund of ideas’ that are Keynesianism varied depending on the institutional and political context within which they were adopted.<sup>11</sup>

Explanations of the development of the welfare state over the past several decades cover a wide theoretical spectrum (Olsen and O'Connor, 1998; Pierson, 1998); irrespective of the dominant explanatory factor stressed it is noteworthy that intellectuals and politicians from within new or reformist liberalism, notably Keynes, Beveridge and Marshall, are recognized as contributing significantly to the development of the post-World War II welfare states. Keynes and Beveridge are characterized as reluctant collectivists by George and Wilding (1985). They are distinguished from nineteenth century liberals and twentieth century anti-collectivists such as Hayek and Friedman by their pragmatic acknowledgement of problems associated with the unregulated free market; rather than a purely negative conception of freedom from the arbitrary power of governments they identify freedom from poverty as a prerequisite for true freedom; like other liberals they stress individualism and free enterprise; while arguing that inequality is beneficial to the functioning of society they accept measures such as progressive taxation to modify the excesses of market inequality (George and Wilding, 1985: 44–68). But it must be recognized that not all of their prescriptions were unique to liberalism or exclusively implemented as a liberal programme. While it is a truism that liberal welfare regimes (O'Connor et al., 1999: 55–61), are characterized by a policy configuration that is liberal, a social liberalism influence is evident to varying degrees in all welfare regimes; in particular, it is reflected in the dominant rights-based approach to citizenship.

### **The Welfare State, Gender and Citizenship**

The development of welfare states can be seen as a process of the transition from access to services and benefits entirely on the basis of class position and associated resources to access to certain categories of services and benefits, for example health care, on the basis of citizenship. While the scope and quality of social citizenship rights is one of the key factors differentiating welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990), the concept of citizenship in its various dimensions underpins all welfare states. However, the degree to which the taken-for-granted conception of citizenship is equally encompassing of all members of society varies across welfare state regimes and over time in particular regimes.

Most contemporary discussions of citizenship take as their source the essay 'Citizenship and Social Class' presented by T.H. Marshall in 1949 (Marshall, [1949] 1964: 65–122). On the basis of British history, Marshall divided the development of citizenship into three stages: Civil citizenship, relating to liberty of the person and property rights, is dated from the eighteenth century with the development of the judicial system and legal rights

and is an essential element for the effective functioning of the capitalist system. Political citizenship, relating primarily to the right to vote and to organize, for example in trade unions, is dated from the nineteenth century. Social citizenship, which relates to rights to economic welfare and security, is dated from the twentieth century with the extension of the educational system and the development of the welfare state. Social citizenship rights were seen as essentially different from civil and political rights being directed towards the modification of 'the whole patterns of social inequality' within capitalist society (ibid.: 96).<sup>12</sup> This is achieved through the extension of social services – a means of distribution which operates outside the labour and capital markets: 'social rights imply an absolute right to a certain standard of civilization which is conditional only on the discharge of the general duties of citizenship' (Marshall, 1964: 94).

None of these rights evolved naturally, they were achieved through collective struggle. In the case of social rights this collective struggle was possible because of the existence of civil and especially political rights. Marshall's analysis and periodization relates to the British situation and it is problematic even when applied there because of its assumption of a universal category of citizens all of whom equally benefit from achieved citizenship rights. The timing of political citizenship rights was different for women and men, varied for men depending on ownership of property, and the ability to exercise citizenship rights was, and to some extent still is, influenced not only by class position (Barbalet, 1988), but also by gender and race.

Reflecting the liberal universalism tenet over particularities of association and culture, Marshall portrays citizenship, which is 'bestowed on those who are full members of the community', as an undifferentiated status:

All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed. There is no universal principle that determines what those rights and duties shall be, but societies in which citizenship is a developing institution create an image of an ideal citizenship against which achievements can be measured and towards which aspirations can be directed. (Marshall, 1964: 84)

The problem with this is that not all those to whom citizenship now applies were active political participants or even active participants in the public sphere when 'an image of ideal citizenship' was being developed. This raises the issue of the conceptualization of citizenship and what constitutes taken-for-granted citizenship activities. The image of the ideal citizen which is evident in Marshall and which emerges in comparative analysis of welfare states and social rights is that of the paid worker, generally the organized white male paid worker. But not all members of society have

equal access to the labour market nor do they enter it on the same terms. An individual's position vis-à-vis the labour market may constrain the quality of her/his social rights and ability to realize in practice their formal civil and political rights. This brings into play the traditional liberal focus on the public sphere. This means that market constraints associated with position in the family and/or labour market are not taken into account.

There is a fundamental contradiction in the universalist, gender-neutral conception of citizenship rights, particularly social citizenship rights, in that they must be exercised within a gender-structured labour market where the traditional ideal worker is full-time and assumed to be without domestic or caring responsibilities. But this kind of contradiction is not confined to gender. It may also arise in relation to other areas of stratification such as class, race, ethnic minority status and disability. Furthermore, dimensions of stratification interact with the result that individuals in particular categories are highly disadvantaged in terms of the exercise of citizenship rights, particularly social citizenship rights. These rights are based on an equality principle but must be exercised within an economic and social system structured on a principle of inequality.<sup>13</sup> These contradictions are associated with citizenship in all liberal democratic capitalist societies not just in those societies we characterize as 'liberal'. The term liberal democracy is being used here following Holden as 'a political system in which the people make the basic political decisions, but in which there are limitations on what decision they can make' (Holden, 1993: 17).<sup>14</sup> The twin pillars of these societies are a capitalist economic system and a democratic political system. This duality means that economic and political power constrain one another. What varies across countries is the balance of this constraint and associated with this, what varies across their welfare states is not the existence of citizenship rights but the degree to which the scope and quality of social citizenship rights compensate for inequalities associated with ones position vis-à-vis the market and how state, market and family relations are reconciled.

## NEO-LIBERALISM, GLOBALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP IN WELFARE STATE RE-STRUCTURING

The policies established under classical liberalism are now consigned to historical analysis but its key tenets underpin neo-liberalism which became increasingly pervasive over the last two decades of the twentieth century. Neo-liberalism describes the variant of capitalist economic thinking articulated by Hayek (1944) and Friedman (1962), the 'anti-collectivists' in

George and Wilding's (1985) terminology,<sup>15</sup> and the associated economic and social policies that developed in Britain and the United States in the Thatcher and Reagan era. These have subsequently spread and can be identified, to varying degrees, in economic and social policy initiatives in much of the world over the past decade. Like classical liberalism the principles of individual freedom, universalism as opposed to social and cultural particularisms, the primacy of the free market and small government characterize neo-liberalism. Above all else it reflects the unifying assumption of classical liberalism, namely, possessive individualism and the absolute primacy of market relations. The associated policy prescriptions encompass economic deregulation, including labour-market deregulation, privatization, reduced public expenditure and more stringent criteria for access to social services often including individual work obligations.<sup>16</sup>

Several reasons can be identified for the emergence of these ideas as a force for policy influence in this period. The economic challenges associated with the oil crises of the 1970s, the collapse of communism and the more visible manifestations of globalization provided a favourable context for neo-liberalism. The coincidence of high inflation and high unemployment during the 1970s was associated with an undermining of confidence in the counter cyclical economic responses associated with Keynesianism; this provided fertile ground for the New Right and neo-liberal challenge to the welfare state.

The label New Right refers to at least two strands of opinion: 'a liberal tendency which argues the case for a freer, more open, and more competitive economy, and a conservative tendency which is more interested in restoring social and political authority throughout society' (Gamble, 1988: 29). Both elements are hostile to the welfare state on the grounds that (i) its methods of allocation are inferior to the market, (ii) it is morally objectionable for sponsors and recipients of welfare; (iii) it denies choice to welfare recipients and (iv) it is ineffective in eliminating poverty (Gamble, 1988: 27–60 as summarized in Pierson, 1998: 39). Maurice Roche (1992) distinguishes between 'radical' and 'mainstream' Right positions, identifying the former as New Right or 'neo-liberal' and the latter as 'Neoconservative' comprising centrist 'sceptical liberal' and more radical 'social libertarian' wings. The difference between the radical and mainstream Right is 'the degree of antagonism they show towards the role of the state and government vis-à-vis civil society and the capitalist economy'. The former are very antagonistic and the latter more tolerant particularly relating to the state's welfare role (Roche, 1992: 74–5). The neo-liberal philosophical argument against the welfare state is well illustrated by the following statement of Milton and Rose Friedman on welfare programmes in the United States: 'They weaken the family; reduce the incentive to work, save and innovate;

reduce the accumulation of capital; and limit our freedom' (Friedman and Friedman, 1980: 158).

The important point for this chapter is that New Right thinking in all its variants is part of the overall package of ideas that are associated with the neo-liberal economic challenge to the welfare state since the early 1980s.

### **Neo-liberalism and Globalization**

Neo-liberalism is often loosely bracketed with globalization, for example Ramesh Mishra argues that 'economic globalization has been shaped essentially by the politics and ideology of neoliberalism, so that it could almost be characterized as neoliberalism writ large' (Mishra, 1999: ix). The increasing global organization of production and the globalization of financial markets are the key elements of economic globalization. Market liberalization increases the political power of mobile capital relative to labour but its impact and the associated constraints on government activity vary in different states depending not only on the size and composition of their economies but on the policy choices made within the changing and more constrained context (Kitschelt et al., 1999). A further factor that needs to be borne in mind in this analysis is the interaction between the impact of globalization and supra-national organizations such as the European Union. On the one hand the European Union may be seen as committed to a liberal market agenda that despite the tempering of a social agenda constrains social policy (Taylor-Gooby, 2003). On the other hand European integration and the associated Europeanization may be seen as a defensive strategy in the context of globalization and the associated neo-liberalism. This is not to deny the evidence for neo-liberalism in the EU but to recognize that globalization can be seen as a threat to the European social model.

One of the important characteristics of globalization in terms of its consequences for public policy is that it is not only a fact in terms of economic, social and political elements it is also a discourse, that is a set of policy ideas and values and their usage (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004).<sup>17</sup> The discourse of globalization is framed to a significant extent by neo-liberal thinking. In an analysis of globalization and European integration focusing on Italy, Britain, France and Germany, Hay and Rosamund (2002) demonstrate that the ideational structures associated with the appeal to such external economic constraints 'may become institutionalized and normalized, thereby coming to delimit conceptions of 'the possible' among political actors' (Hay and Rosamund, 2002: 1466). But it must be recognized that the use made of the discourse of globalization is not homogeneous across countries. Several studies have demonstrated variation in response to globalization depending

on welfare state regime (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Pierson, 2001). This is not to downplay the greater interdependence and mutual awareness amongst economic, political and social units identified by Guillén (2001: 236). It is recognition of the possibility of differences in response to changing conditions.

### **Neo-liberalism and Citizenship**

The centrality of citizenship for welfare states is reflected in the prominence of the critique of citizenship rights in recent decades. This critique centres on the balance between citizenship rights and obligations and is not confined to neo-liberals.

The resurgence of interest in the civic republican tradition of citizenship since the 1980s reflects a reaction against what was seen as a one-sided liberal informed citizenship paradigm with a focus on rights and the pursuit of individual interests. The civic republican approach emphasizes civic duty, the submission of individual interests to that of the common good and the primacy of the public sphere in which the citizen is a political actor (Oldfield, 1990).

The New Right argues for the primacy of work obligations and the contingency of social rights on the fulfilment of such obligations (Mead, 1986; Novak, 1987). Neo-liberals argue that the gaining of personal freedom is the individual's responsibility and do not acknowledge barriers to the exercise of such responsibility, nor do they see an obligation on proponents of freedom through labour market participation to ensure that the necessary employment is available. Drawing on the civic republican citizenship tradition, communitarians have argued for the re-balancing of the obligations and rights of citizenship (Etzioni, 1993). The latter has been a theme in British Labour policy since its election in 1997: For example, the Green Paper on welfare issued by the Department of Social Security in 1998 states that 'We need a new "contract" between citizen and state, with rights matched with responsibilities. We will rebuild the welfare state around a work ethic: work for those who can; security for those who cannot' (DSS, 1998: 1).

Some analysts characterize the British 'New Deal' policies, in particular the workfare policies, as neo-liberal. For example Robert Salais points to the role of incentives and penalties to force the development of individual responsibility. He argues that neo-liberals do not recognize a positive and dynamic interaction between work and welfare and see work as a commodity (Salais, 2003: 321). As part of a broader analysis of illiberal social policies in the USA and Britain, King (1999) makes a related argument about workfare in the USA and Britain in the 1990s. Workfare fits his

classification as illiberal because it treats those affected differently from other citizens; it aims to modify behaviour and targets the relevant population irrespective of their willingness.<sup>18</sup> King argues that such policies violate the two core principles of liberalism, that is, equality of treatment and respect for individual freedom (King, 1999: 1–27). Lister points to significant differences between workfare as implemented in the United States and the British ‘New Deal’ both in terms of the intensiveness of the kind of work tests and sanctions applied and in its extensiveness, for example in how it treats lone parents (Lister, 2003: 20–1, 91). What is important about this issue in the present context is not the classification of the British New Deal policies but the recognition by all analysts that these policies reflect an increase in contractualism, and for some analysts a strong influence of US policy approaches (Daguerre and Taylor-Gooby, 2004). Whether or not this reflects a break with social democratic principles of social justice or a break with policies previously pursued is an empirical question. A commitment to activation and the development of individual capacities to participate in the labour market is not necessarily neo-liberal or illiberal. This approach has been part of the Nordic social democratic framework for decades (Esping-Andersen et al., 2002: 5). In their examination of social democratic welfare policies in Denmark and the Netherlands in the 1990s, Green-Pedersen et al. (2001: 309) conclude that what changed in these countries in response to changing economic conditions are the policies not the principles, the means of achieving, not the end, of high rates of labour market participation. Consistent with this, they argue that one can legitimately speak of a ‘third way’ in the sense of ‘a set of social democratic policies and policy intentions . . . that are different from both old-style social democracy and neo-liberalism’. This is consistent with the range of studies that demonstrate persisting differences across welfare regimes and within different regimes in the responses to the challenges posed by globalization, demographic and social change and the associated new social risks. There is considerable evidence that such challenges are addressed differently in terms of the balancing of market demands and social citizenship rights depending on welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Kauto and Kvist, 2002; Jaeger and Kvist, 2003).

The reforms have ranged from restructuring to retrenchment and have related not only to what the welfare state should do, that is the formal policies, but also to operational issues (van der Berkel and van der Aa, 2005). These changes have variously been referred to as a shift to social investment (Giddens, 2000) or an enabling state emphasizing ‘a market-oriented approach that targets benefits that promote labour force participation and individual responsibility’ (Gilbert, 2002: 44). The key factor is the centrality

of activation and labour market participation. What varies is the supportive framework within which such approaches are situated and whether or not they are part of a proposed 'new welfare state architecture' that is grounded on a preventative approach and that sees 'the minimization of poverty and income insecurity [as] a *precondition* for an effective social investment strategy' (Esping-Andersen et al., 2002: 5).

The key point for the social policy framework in liberal democratic societies, based on the twin pillars of democracy and capitalism and the associated conflict between the principles of equality and inequality, is how constraints and challenges are addressed. The existence of a liberal influence is not at issue, the issue is how the three dimensions of citizenship are balanced, in particular the extent to which social citizenship rights have parity with civil and political rights not only in theory but in practice. The implications of the neo-liberal conception of citizenship and approach to the welfare state imply an increasing emphasis on contractualism that does not take into account the implications of inequality of market position and is not matched by a commitment to adequate income maintenance. This reflects the pervasive contradiction of liberalism irrespective of the era considered, that is the public private division and the primacy of the market. But the fulfilment of obligations including labour market obligations is dependent on social rights and the enhancement of rights is dependent on participation not only in the labour market but equal participation in the public sphere where the image of the ideal citizen is created.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The prominence of the key tenets of liberalism – freedom of the individual, moral egalitarianism, universalism, as opposed to particularism, and meliorism – have varied over time and in the extent to which they were positive influences on welfare state development; the primacy of the market is constant, the degree to which state intervention to compensate for the negative consequences of the unregulated market is acceptable, varies. Social liberalism with its relatively strong emphasis on moral egalitarianism and meliorism was a strong influence on welfare state development particularly in some countries. But liberalism has not flowed through history as an isolated stream of thought. It has been cross-fertilized by other streams of thought including socialism and social democracy and it has in turn exerted an influence on them. This is not to deny the dominance of a particular strain of political thought in several countries. It merely recognizes that pure cases are non-existent and this has to be borne in mind in welfare state analysis particularly cross-national analysis.

Neo-liberalism is now a pervasive influence on welfare state restructuring in general and retrenchment in some welfare states. Reflecting the dominance of the individualism and universalism tenets of liberalism and the possessive basis of the former, neo-liberalism in its economic and particularly in its ideological dimension is at minimum a strong brake on the development of services to meet the changing family and labour market context and at maximum a force for retrenchment. But the extent to which it is either of these depends on the model of capitalist development concerned, on the welfare regime and on the policy choices made.

The implications of this analysis of liberalism in its various dimensions are that a cultural dimension is an essential component of an explanatory framework for cross-national welfare state research and that the contemporary influence of liberalism is not confined to neo-liberalism; a positive liberal influence on policy development, if considerably modified by other streams of thought, may be more pervasive than is often assumed.

## NOTES

1. The balance between the rights approach, deriving from the Liberal political tradition, and obligations tradition of citizenship which derives from the civic republican participatory tradition is a significant dimension of the contested nature of citizenship and is discussed in the second and third sections of this chapter.
2. Discourse refers here to a set of policy ideas and values and their usage (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004); see discussion of neo-liberalism in the third section.
3. Classical or market liberalism – laissez-faire liberalism – was the high point of commodified labour; yet, as Esping-Andersen points out the ‘pure and undiluted labor commodity that we associate with laissez-faire probably never existed in real life’ nor was it proposed by laissez-faire proponents such as Adam Smith and Nassau Senior (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 41). Yet, some laissez-faire advocates did argue for the absolute primacy of the market.
4. It is noteworthy that R.H. Tawney, the author of *Equality* (1931) and a leading socialist and influence on the British Labour Party, was at Toynbee Hall with Beveridge and was married to his sister.
5. Ann Orloff points to the cross-national debate amongst liberal thinkers and the similarity of the social policy prescriptions in Britain, Canada and the United States by the 1870s. Classic or laissez-faire liberalism favoured deterrent poor relief to encourage the work ethic and avoid dependency. Scientific charity advocated a social work approach to distinguish between the deserving and undeserving and to develop expertise in rehabilitation of the former (Orloff, 1993: 161–7).
6. It is important to note that Germany introduced compulsory old age pension insurance in 1889 and was the first country to do so (Flora and Alber, 1981: 59).
7. It is noteworthy that Hobhouse’s discussion comes under the heading of ‘Domestic Liberty’ and focuses on women’s and children’s rights.
8. It is now strongly challenged by the adult worker family model but the range of care options to reconcile this with gender equality is not available in most countries (Lewis and Giullari, 2005).
9. It was institutionalized in the wage determination system of Australia (Macintyre, 1985: 54–8).

10. These differences across welfare states all broadly committed to Keynesian policies are well illustrated by Goran Therborn in his study of unemployment. Writing in the mid-1980s he argued that low rates of unemployment over the long term were as dependent upon the establishment of an 'institutionalized commitment to full employment' as on labour mobilization, although these factors are usually closely linked. This explains why Japan, where labour was not strong, had one of the most successful employment records in the industrialized world in the 1960–80 period (Therborn, 1986).
11. We are using Freedon's terminology in his discussion of the Liberal and Labour Parties processing of the common reform ideas discussed in the early part of the twentieth century in Britain.
12. Indeed, he identifies civil rights as necessary to the maintenance of class inequality (Marshall, 1964: 88). Political and civil rights ensure negative freedom in the sense of protecting the individual from interference by the state and society.
13. In addition to these contradictions between dimensions of liberalism it is also important to recognize that while liberal principles have been used historically for illiberal ends such as justifying racial discrimination in the United States and elsewhere they have also been the principles which inspired the Civil Rights movement which challenged such discrimination (Powers, 2001).
14. We are conscious of the voluminous debates about types of democracy and the contradictions between liberalism and democracy but are not going to address these here. Holden's definition reflects a distinction between the location of control of a state's power, 'that is in the hands of the people, whereas "liberal" refers to the limitation of a state's power' (Holden, 1993: 17).
15. This contrasts with the 'reluctant collectivists'.
16. Despite the strong rhetoric it is noteworthy that neither the Regan or Thatcher regimes were as successful in changing the scope and direction of the British and US welfare states as they envisaged (Pierson, 1994).
17. The key question underpinning this analysis is not: do ideas and discourse matter?; it is, when do ideas and discourse 'exert a causal influence on policy change, say by redefining interests as opposed to merely reflecting them (see Schmidt, 2001; 2002), and when are other factors more significant?' (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004: 185).
18. The other social policies considered are eugenics in the 1920s and 1930s and work camps as a response to unemployment in the 1930s.

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### 3. Social democratic values in the European welfare states

**Steinar Stjernø**

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Key contributions to research on the welfare state direct the reader's attention to the hegemonic and alternative sets of values that are reflected in the political cultures of differing social and political alliances that created different welfare regimes. Esping-Andersen (1990: 30) and Baldwin (1990: 33, 50–94) link the universal and redistributive Scandinavian welfare states to the alliance between the working class and farmers, and to risk-sharing and solidarity. Kersbergen (1995: 62–96) analyses how social Catholicism and its values influenced Christian democratic parties and their conceptions of the welfare state in different nations (also Huber and Stephens, 2001: 144–62).

This chapter seeks to depict the establishment and development of one aspect of the political culture of social democracy – its basic values – and the challenge of deducing political actions from those values. To identify these values, it is necessary to contrast them briefly with the values of another type of party that has been a protagonist in the development of the welfare state in Europe – Christian democracy. It goes without saying that to analyse the relationship between the declared values of a political party and its political practice would be quite another task.

#### **APPROACH: FROM BASIC VALUES TO POLICY INSTRUMENTS**

Several authors have drawn attention to the values of socialism and social democracy. Marquand (1993: 53) points to an ethic that emphasized cooperation, community and solidarity. Thomson (2000: 9) suggests that what 'unites social democrats is their value system of equality through social justice and social welfare around cooperation and community with a form of government that employs collective action'. Pierson (2001: 56) maintains that what unites all social democrats is the attempt to confront the problem of reconciling three things: 'economic efficiency, social justice and individual liberty'.

However, very few authors have systematically analysed the values of social democratic parties. First of all, as Pierson argues, social democracy is a much more diverse tradition than both its admirers and its critics have imagined. A corollary to this insight is that studies of social democracy must be comparative. Second, values may be analysed along different axes. The horizontal axis shows the relationship between a concept and other concepts at the same level of abstraction. Freedon (1996: 60–91) – whose study of political concepts can be applied to the study of values – suggests a model that distinguishes between core concepts, adjacent concepts and peripheral concepts. In a parallel manner, we may distinguish between core or (as I prefer) basic values, adjacent values and peripheral values. Basic values are those values that the political party has declared to be exactly that, as indicated by the use of the terms ‘basic’, ‘fundamental’, ‘core’, ‘central’ or equivalent adjectives in the party programme. Adjacent and peripheral values are other values that are mentioned in the programmes without the same accolade. Basic, adjacent and peripheral values are what Gallie (1956: 169–72) sees as being essentially contested concepts. Their meanings are not given and they are the object of continuous struggle, interpretation and re-interpretation by contesting participants. Values are identified by terms such as freedom, justice, equality, solidarity, responsibility, human dignity, subsidiarity, love of one’s neighbour, etc. When a set of basic values are linked together and defined in a stable way, we have a complete political language.

The vertical axis shows how to differentiate between values, policy goals and policy instruments or means, and how a basic value is concretized in practical policy measures, for example, within a proposal to establish a welfare provision. Equality may be made more operational by formulating goals like reducing poverty, creating equal opportunities or greater access to higher education and to health and social services. Finally, there are policy instruments or means which are the concrete measures that are proposed to achieve a policy goal, i.e. a specific change in the tax system, new rules defining the criteria for access to health and social services, new ways to calculate pensions or social benefits, etc. This is illustrated in Table 3.1.

*Table 3.1 A hierarchy of values, goals and means*

<b>Basic values</b>	Defined as basic or with an equivalent term in the party programme
<b>Subordinate values</b>	Other values mentioned in the party programme
<b>Policy goals</b>	The goals of the party as described in the party programme
<b>Policy instruments</b>	The concrete policies and means proposed in the party programme

As it is not possible to conduct an analysis of all these levels within the limits of this chapter, I shall concentrate on an analysis of basic values. I have chosen to study social democratic party platforms and programmes. Values expressed in party platforms and programmes may be considered to be institutionalized, since these documents are negotiated and officially sanctioned texts. At the same time, they are prescriptive – they indicate the values that *should* govern in politics and society.<sup>1</sup> The parties included are specified in Table 3.2.

## BACKGROUND: THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC VALUES

In nineteenth-century Europe, the labour movement developed within a fragmented working class. Different sectional interests, regional cleavages – and in some countries – religious and linguistic differences, helped to make the working class culturally and ideologically divided. To overcome this fragmentation a common culture of the working class had to be developed so that it could constitute itself as a collective actor for social and political change (Kjeldstadli, 1994: 133). In each nation, the new socialist and later social democratic culture and ideology that developed was marked by particular historical and national contexts, which included specific social and religious constellations. These contexts and the particular strategy that these parties adopted determined to what extent the values of the labour parties left their mark on the welfare-state institutions.

In the period from 1890 to 1940, and to varying degrees in different nations, the labour movement parties succeeded in creating a political culture in which a distinct ideology and social practices were woven together. They developed a political language that was different from that of other parties, established choirs, theatre companies, athletic organizations, temperance societies, organizations for women, youth, etc. In some countries, developments led to a ghetto-like quality in the daily life of party activists. Almost all of their time could be spent within labour movement institutions.

Marquand (1993: 53) emphasizes that a central characteristic of socialism was that it prescribed ethics and values. He fails to mention the fact that Marxists and socialists, for a long time, were reluctant to give ethics and values a place in their theoretical reasoning. The emphasis on Marxism as a science had an impact upon many socialists who were unwilling to be explicit about values in their theoretical and strategic texts. The German SPD and its *Erfurt programme* in 1891 came to serve as an example for many of the early labour parties in Europe. This programme was based

Table 3.2 Basic values identified in party programmes, 1998–2005

			Freedom	Justice	Equality	Solidarity
<b>SPD</b> (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands/ Social Democratic Party of Germany)	Germany	2005	✓	?	?	✓
<b>SPÖ</b> (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs/ Social Democratic Party of Austria)	Austria	1998	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>SAP</b> (Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetspartiet/The Swedish Social Democratic Party)	Sweden	2001	✓		✓	✓
<b>SD</b> (Socialdemokratiet/ Danish Social Democratic Party)	Denmark	2004	✓		✓	✓
<b>DNA</b> (Det norske arbeiderparti/The Norwegian Labour Party)	Norway	2005	✓	✓	?	✓
<b>The Labour Party</b>	UK	2005		✓		
<b>PS</b> (Parti Socialiste/The Socialist Party) <sup>1</sup>	France	2005	✓		✓	✓
<b>DS</b> (Democratici di Sinistra/ Democratic Left)	Italy	2003		✓	✓	✓
<b>PSOE</b> (Partido Socialista Obrero Español/Spanish Socialist Workers' Party)	Spain	2004		✓	✓	✓

Note: Based on 'La Declaration de Principe, accessed 30 September 2007 at [www.parti-socialiste.fr/tiki-index.php?page=declaration.principe](http://www.parti-socialiste.fr/tiki-index.php?page=declaration.principe).

upon scientific Marxism and it was marked by the Marxist dislike of morals. The programme did not express values directly, although its description of the misery and exploitation of the working class clearly indicates a concern with underlying values such as the need for universal suffrage, freedom of speech, etc.

The socialist revisionists and ideologues of social democracy were the ones who integrated values and ethics into socialism. In 1910, Eduard Bernstein published his book *Die Arbeiterbewegung* [*The Labour-movement*], where an entire chapter was devoted to ethics – a theme that had thus far been alien to Marxist theory. Bernstein wrote that socialist ethics consisted of three core ideas, equality, solidarity, and freedom. The problem was that these ideas had to be balanced with one another. Equality and solidarity had to be weighed against individual freedom and individual autonomy (Bernstein, 1910: 118–36). The same year, the Nestor of Swedish social democracy, Ernst Wigforss, published ideas that were similar to Bernstein's. In the UK, Richard Tawney formulated a social philosophy that furnished the Labour Party with a set of ethical elements, and in France, Jean Jaurès did the same, albeit with a somewhat different accent. In the next decades, socialists in other countries contributed their own articulations.

The breakthrough for a modern social democratic discourse on values is undoubtedly the German SPD programme of 1959 – *the Bad Godesberg programme*. This document demonstrates a strong connection between the abandonment of public ownership in socialist programmes and the introduction of a discourse about values. The basic values of socialism – *Grundwerte des Sozialismus* – were introduced and identified as being freedom, justice, solidarity and responsibility. This was done in a manner that is strongly reminiscent of the way Bernstein formulated his thesis almost 50 years earlier.

Scandinavian social democratic parties introduced values into their party programmes before the German SPD because they had evolved into social democratic parties earlier. On the other hand, these parties did not develop a complete language of social democratic values as the SPD did in 1959. A complete social democratic language is not to be found in the Swedish SAP, the Norwegian DNA or the Danish SD until the 1970s. The socialist/social democratic parties in Southern Europe were even later to adopt a language of social democratic values. The reason is probably because the socialist parties there were slow to abandon more traditional Marxist principles and language in their competition with large communist parties which enjoyed strong support from the working class. The mainstream social democratic language of basic values was not adopted in the programmes of the Spanish PSOE until the congresses in 1981 and 1989, parallel with a de-radicalization of economic policies. The Italian DS (previously the Partito comunista

italiano) followed suit when it became a member of the Socialist International in 1992. The Italian PSI never integrated into the mainstream values of European social democracy and was dissolved after the corruption scandals in the early 1990s.

The gradual establishment of a new language of values was due to three different factors. First, social democratic parties needed to extend their appeal to the growing middle class. Second, they needed to renew their political profiles after the student revolt of 1968. They could not afford to be isolated from the new waves of educated young people who were entering into the electorate. Third, the ideological renewal that took place within the Socialist International, in the 1970s, influenced member parties to establish a new and complete language of values.

The role of values in the social democratic struggle for social welfare was an ambiguous one. On the one hand, equality and greater social justice were values underlying struggles for social reform. Reforms were aimed at providing individuals and families with better social protection against the risks and the contingencies of life. As we shall see below, social reforms should create a material basis for greater freedom as well. On the other hand, we should be careful and avoid creating *post hoc* explanations that are based upon present-day social democratic ideology. Baldwin (1990: 134–57) has shown that in Scandinavian welfare states, pension policy universalism was introduced not because it was a logical corollary to social democratic solidarity, but because of the demands of farmers and smallholders and the parties representing them. Generally, social democratic parties were late to apply the concept of solidarity to welfare state issues in their programmes. This was done first in Scandinavia in the years after World War II, in Germany in 1959, and in Southern European social democratic parties only after 1980 (Stjernø, 2004: 179).

## THE PRESENT CONFIGURATION OF BASIC VALUES

As may be seen in Table 3.2, today, social democratic parties declare their basic values to be different mixtures and combinations of freedom, justice, solidarity and equality. A few parties add other values to this list. The British Labour Party and the French PS add responsibility, the PS adds human dignity and welfare as well, and the Italian DS adds social rights.

It is fair to claim that European social democratic parties have adopted a common language of basic values – with freedom, justice, equality, and solidarity as the constituting concepts. Even so, we may note some variations. Solidarity is the basic value that is shared among all other parties apart from the British Labour Party. The absence of justice and equality as

basic values in the German SPD programme might be accidental, but we can also speculate that this absence reflects the traditionally hierarchic German culture and/or the Schröder government's problem of combining calls for equality and cuts in welfare programmes.

The British Labour Party has for most of its history been different from the other social democratic parties in Europe in terms of programme language. The programmes of the Labour Party have been written in a more down-to-earth style, avoiding Marxist language in the early phase of its development from 1900 to World War II, and, in recent decades, the declaration of any set of values as 'basic'. Labour has never adopted the standard values that make up the languages of other European social democracies. The reasons for this must be sought in the hegemonic Liberal tradition in the UK. When the Labour Party once again came to power in 1997, it was with a programme that lacked traditional and highly valued terms such as justice, equal rights and equal opportunity in the party election manifesto. Instead, a mixture of communitarian discourse and the language of modernization characterized the party platform.

The present British Labour Party programme avoids explicit formulations about basic values. However, in the introduction, Tony Blair sketches some ideals: 'extend opportunities for all, demand responsibility from all, secure justice for all' and invites the readers to 'make the values of social justice and a fair deal for all the governing idea of our country not just for some time, but for all time' (Blair, 2005: 9). In this programme, justice is the positive word that is most frequently mentioned – much more often than freedom and equality of opportunity.

Let us turn now to each of the basic values of social democracy.

## INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

In European history, the concept of freedom had an important place in natural law and was made a key concept by liberal political philosophers. Until the birth and development of the labour-movement in the early nineteenth century, the political aspect of freedom was predominant. In the 1830s, German socialists developed a social concept of freedom, arguing that political freedom could not exist without societal equality (Conze, 1972: 536), and that freedom must also include material living conditions that make choice a real possibility in everyday life. After 1848, the labour movement formulated social democracy as a description of their party. The redistribution of wealth was a prerequisite for social freedom, socialists argued. Marx took this line of argument further and maintained that complete freedom required the abolition of the private ownership of the

means of production. Thus, freedom was not possible in a capitalist society.

Nevertheless, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, socialists were in the forefront of the political struggle for democracy, often in alliance with liberal parties or other parties (Sassoon, 2001: 54). During World War II, socialists fought together with liberals and conservatives, and with communists – who were often more active than the former in the struggle against fascism and for the re-establishment of political democracy. After the war, socialists argued for freedom and political democracy and were in opposition to communism.

Generally, what has distinguished socialists and later social democrats from liberal, Christian-democratic and conservative conceptions of freedom is the insistence that freedom is not merely a question of formally equal rights, but that it is necessary to establish a material base for the exercise of those rights. The working class and the underprivileged needed economic security permitting them a decent standard of living without constant struggle, and working hours making possible an active life outside the workplace. They needed educational opportunities enabling them to command the resources necessary to participation in the political life of society, etc. These goals were to be achieved by establishing individual rights and guarantees, and the provisions addressing those rights and guarantees – including fixed and standardized rules for allocating benefits – collectively organized by the state. Thus, whereas the old bourgeois conception of freedom had been a negative one, emphasizing freedom *from* state intervention, the labour movement conception was a positive one which emphasized the freedom *to* enjoy a decent life.

Even if there can be no doubt that socialists and social democrats have valued political freedom highly, social democrats were gradually driven onto the defensive on this issue during the second half of the twentieth century. Political freedom could now be taken for granted. The majority of people enjoyed the fruits of economic growth, a higher standard of living and individual, but collectively organized social rights. Margaret Thatcher's rise to political power in Britain in 1979, Ronald Reagan's rise to power in the USA, and the German government of Helmut Kohl in succeeding years inaugurated a transatlantic campaign for greater individual freedom and more personal choice. 'Freedom' now referred to the freedom of the individual to make choices on the market, and the collectively owned and standardized services provided by the welfare state were questioned. The claim was made that private parties could provide those services at a higher standard and lesser cost if they were allowed to compete with one another as they did in other markets.

Social democracy was taken by surprise by this ideological turn in segments of the electorate and had no strategy to counter the new situation. Gradually, concern for the individual – or more literally translated as the

concern for 'each one' (i.e., person) – began to appear in German and Scandinavian social democratic party programmes. This first occurred in those nations where welfare and collective social rights were most fully developed. In the programme of 1969, the Norwegian DNA emphasized that within the confines established by society 'each human being shall be free to choose a way of life and develop his or her own personality'. In the next decades, similar formulations about *each one* (person, individual) and personal freedom entered into the programmes of other social democratic parties. This did not apply to the Swedish SAP which, longer than most other socialist parties, has resisted introducing concessions to neo-liberalism into its party programmes, and which may have seen this concern as a concession to neo-liberalism. Even today, freedom – defined as personal choice – continues to be a weak spot in social democratic welfare ideology. This is particularly true in social democratic welfare regimes, where government and municipalities deliver the social services.

## EQUALITY

The idea of equality can be traced back to antiquity and particularly to the Judeo-Christian idea that all human beings are equal in the sight of God. The modern idea of equality developed with the growth of cities, when new and 'bourgeois' social strata struggled against the feudal system in the Middle Ages. These social groups became the bearers of a concept of equality that implied that all citizens were legal subjects with the right to be treated equally and fairly by the law. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a more social and political concept of equality developed, especially in France where Rousseau criticized social inequality as being the main cause of misery in society (Dann, 1972: 1015–6). During the French Revolution, equality was linked to freedom and solidarity. Ever since the French Revolution, maintains Norberto Bobbio ([1994] 2004: 87, 118), the demand for equality has been the dividing line between the left and the right in politics. However, as Bobbio also writes, it has never been clear what the exact meaning of the demand for equality should be.

Whereas in France equality became a central concept in the early stages of radicalism, in Germany this was not so to the same extent (Dann, 1972: 1020). Marx argued that the idea all human beings were equal was a part of bourgeois ideology and that the idea of equality before the law should be confronted with the real and existing social inequality in capitalist society. The polemics advanced by Marx and Engels against the concept of equality made many of their followers reluctant to apply this concept in their theoretical texts.

Even so, equality came to have a key place in labour movement agitation. Unequal rights to participation in politics and society, enormous differences in living and working conditions, differences between women and men, etc., were considered unjust and illegitimate, and the labour movement parties could hardly manage without making less inequality and more equality key slogans. The labour movement struggled for equality by demanding suffrage and equal pay for equal work – but did not do so unconditionally. For a long time there was acceptance of the idea that women might be paid less than men. The labour movement struggled for equality of opportunity. Everyone should have access to public education and to positions for which they were qualified, although, once again, there was some reluctance in demanding equal opportunity for women. Finally, especially after World War II, social democrats were in the forefront in the demand for equal access to education, health and social services.

However, equality of outcome never was a clearly held value. Socialist and social democratic parties have not demanded equal pay for unequal work or that those who work less should have the same wage as those who work more. The concept of equality was closely linked to a concept of justice. Wage inequalities, in some cases, might be accepted as just, since the concept of justice was intimately linked to the work ethic. Those who contributed more and were skilled should be rewarded for their contributions. Today, there can be no doubt that social democracy accepts inequality, particularly when differences in income are under discussion. As Anderson (1998: 77) argues against Bobbio, social democracy has adapted to the theory of productive inequality, even if it has done so by embracing a modified version. The ambiguity of equality, however, is never a great problem if differences in society are perceived as *too* great. Contemporary social democratic parties have no difficulties in demanding redistribution and greater equality.

While equality was not a declared basic value in the Bad Godesberg programme, the programme did argue for a more just distribution of income and wealth, for equal life-chances, equal opportunities and equal rights for women and men. After the establishment of a common social democratic language of values during the last part of the 1970s, social democratic parties – with one exception – made the reduction of inequality a central theme in their programmes. The German SPD's election platform in 2005 states that increased social equality (*Ausgleich*) will continue to be a main task for the welfare state. The Spanish PSOE 2004 programme declares that PSOE wants to create a Europe based on equality and human rights.

Concerning the value of equality, two social democratic parties stand out and are distinct from one another and their sister parties in Europe. On the

one hand, no other party has given equality such a prominent place in the hierarchy of values as the Swedish SAP. It has continuously argued that a more equal distribution of resources is a prerequisite for individual freedom. At the same time, it has been more frank about the limits of equality. SAP programmes presented after World War II explicitly stated that the SAP accepted differentiation based on differences in effort, skill or competency in the work-world, or differences due to greater responsibility or initiative. Thus, the conception of justice constituted the limits of redistribution and equality (cf. the 1944 and 1960 programmes). On the other hand, the British Labour Party is different from other European social democratic parties in that it has never given equality an important place in party programmes – except in regard to ‘equality of opportunity’, which it perceives to be a key aspect of justice (see below).

However, the definition of equality seems to be undergoing change. First, the redistribution of resources is not as strongly emphasized as before, whereas equality of opportunity and equal rights has become more predominant (cf. the DNA 2005 programme). Second, insistence on equality is more often associated with a parallel emphasis on the values of difference and personal freedom (cf. the SPD platform of 1998; the SD 2003 and DS 2003 programmes). The potential implication for the welfare state is clear, as this may legitimate less redistribution and increasing inequality.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Justice has been a key concept in moral philosophy since the early days after the birth of philosophy in Greek antiquity. Justice was the persistent rallying cry, and its absence the primary accusation made by successive Hebrew prophets in the Old Testament. Justice was made a value in Catholic natural law, and was discussed by British liberal philosophers and the most prominent philosopher of the Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant. In the labour movement, Friedrich Engels harshly attacked the concept of justice because it had been restricted to the idea of equality before the law (Engels, [1846] 1998: 22), and the law, for Engels, was an agent of bourgeois control. Marx was full of contempt for all people who believed that capitalism could be abolished by the appeal to an abstract value such as justice. As a consequence, many socialist parties, for a long time, avoided the term and refused to apply the concept of justice or the adjective ‘just’ or its antonym in their programmes. It is not found in an SPD programme until 1952. The Norwegian DNA only began to use the term from 1933, and the Swedish SAP did not introduce it until 1975.

Even so, the general feeling that society was unjust became a forceful resource in the agitation fomented by the early labour movement. Labour movement activists were able to exploit the widespread feeling industrial workers shared that they were not getting their due for their contributions in the workplace – compared to the privileged economic conditions of employers and civil servants. Gradually, the concept of justice found its way into party programmes. The Danish SD formulated the widespread feeling of injustice in its early programmes and argued that society was unjust in three central ways. First, capitalism prevented the just social organization of society. Second, capitalism made it impossible to justly distribute the wealth of society. Third, the distribution of burdens and taxes favoured a privileged few. Later, these and other aspects of justice/injustice were included in the programmes of other parties. Demands were expressed for equality of opportunity, the abolition of unjust differences between women and men and between blue and white-collar employees, etc.

The first programme of the new Socialist International, in 1951, declared that social justice and a higher level of welfare should be a goal of democratic socialism, and with the Bad Godesberg programme, the SPD made justice one of the basic values of socialism. Justice was now closely associated with the dignity of human beings, their autonomy and personal responsibility, the right of an individual to develop his or her personality and to take part in the formation of society. Today, the concept of justice is found frequently in all social democratic programmes.

However, the social democratic party that most consistently has applied justice and its equivalent fairness as a key concept in its programmes is the British Labour Party. The 2005 manifesto, as earlier ones, abounds with the terms ‘just’ and ‘fair’. In the introduction, Tony Blair (2005: 9) invited the voters to ‘make the values of social justice and a fair deal for all the governing ideal of our country, not just for some time but for all time’. This concept of justice is primarily defined as being equality of opportunity. No one should be discriminated against on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, etc. The manifesto proudly proclaims that ‘We are winning the argument that economic dynamism and social justice must go hand in hand’ (ibid.: 16). This phrase expresses Tony Blair’s ambition to combine a competitive and innovative market economy with welfare measures tailored to suit the market economy. In this connection, redistribution is not seen as an important aspect of justice.

The problem with the concept of justice is sorting out exactly what it means. Does it mean that everyone should have the same portion of the goods that life can provide? Does it mean that everyone should have what he or she deserves, in accordance with the contributions that they make?

Should everyone be provided with enough to satisfy their needs? Generally, social democratic parties are not very clear about these distinctions.

However, we can note a general tendency in the meaning of justice in social democratic welfare policy. The meaning of justice is shifting from referring to greater redistribution and equality, to a balance between personal contributions and individual benefits. This development can be most clearly observed in employment and pension policies. For example, an analysis of the 1994 Swedish pension reform concludes that it represents a shift from a substantial to a formal conception of justice (Lundberg, 2003: 293). Thus, the social democratic conception of justice is evolving into the Christian democratic conception of justice. This may bring social democratic welfare policy closer to the principles of Catholic-Conservative welfare regimes.

## SOLIDARITY

The idea that workers should stick together was fundamental to the creation and development of the labour movement. This idea was expressed by many different terms – brotherhood, fraternity, unity, solidarity, etc. (see my book *Solidarity in Europe: The History of an Idea*). Although solidarity and equivalent terms have been part of a language of values since the establishment of socialist parties, the breakthrough to a complete language of solidarity came with the German Bad Godesberg programme. Other social democratic parties followed suit in the following decades – particularly after the student revolt of 1968. The student revolt reintroduced Marxist language, and from this language, social democratic parties picked what suited them.

Some social democratic parties at that time felt the need to renew their ideological profile. Social democratic leaders looked for ways to attract young, educated and middle-class voters. The concept of solidarity was particularly suitable for that purpose. It had historical roots in the labour movement, at the same time as it could be used to communicate with the new groups of young and educated people. From the 1970s to the early 1990s all the social democratic parties included here made solidarity a basic term and value in their programmes, again, except for the British Labour Party. The social democratic parties of Southern Europe were the last ones to do so.

The contemporary social democratic concept of solidarity is quite different from the meaning it had during the early days of the labour movement. A careful analysis of the idea of solidarity in the programmes of social democratic parties reveals that the foundation of the concept has

changed, from the interests of the working class, to ethical responsibility, empathy, human interdependence and to the equal worth of all human beings. The boundaries of solidarity have been made considerably wider. Whereas the old working-class idea of solidarity referred to industrial workers and perhaps other working people, the modern concept of solidarity in the first decade of the twenty-first century has very unclear boundaries and may include almost anyone who is underprivileged or disenfranchised or suffers from discrimination, e.g. women, the handicapped, Third World, ethnic and sexual minorities, and the next generation. The modern concept is rather vague, but it is also more open and reflects a greater concern for others who are in some way different from oneself. In terms of social welfare, the contemporary social democratic concept of solidarity implies universal social benefits and the provision of social services, the redistribution of economic wealth and more equality in society. Social democracy has pursued these goals more coherently and with greater success in Scandinavia than on the Continent or in the UK.

## THE AMBIGUITIES EMBEDDED WITHIN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC VALUES

We have seen above that, although most social democratic parties declare themselves to be founded on the same basic values, their basic concepts are ambiguous ones. Freedom may refer to political rights, to material conditions that create the basis for personal choice, or to increased choice in the marketplace or between public and private services. Equality may refer to the absence of legal discrimination, to equal choice in education, health and social services, or to economic redistribution in order to bring about equal living conditions. Justice may refer to a host of conditions and situations, including both equal outcome and social benefits according to one's personal contribution. The meaning of solidarity can only be established when we define who is included and how collective loyalty and personal freedom will be reconciled.

These values have no fixed meaning, and their definitions can only be ascertained in the specific contexts in which they are found. These contexts often differ within each programme. By and large, basic values cannot be understood isolated from one another. Not only does each value have several different meanings, but the meaning of one value can change depending upon how it is related to other values. For example, the combination of freedom, justice and solidarity as basic values (in the German SPD) may convey a different message than does that of freedom, justice, equality, and solidarity (Swedish SAP, Danish SD, Italian DS), or only

freedom and justice (British Labour Party). If and when the conception of justice shifts, from meaning ‘more redistribution’ to a ‘more direct relationship between personal contributions and benefits’, the shift will have clear implications for the conceptual meaning of equality and solidarity. Thus, the inherent ambiguities of each of these values are further increased by the configuration in which it is a part. All in all, these complex inter-relationships add to the essential contestability and flexibility of social-democratic values.

## THE BASIC VALUES OF COMPETING PARTIES

The situation is even more complicated because there is no longer any clear-cut division between social democratic values and the values of other political parties. Freedom and justice have become common values of all major political parties. Solidarity has been declared a basic value in the political programmes of Christian democratic parties.<sup>2</sup> The ideological demarcation lines between opposing parties are further blurred by the fact that some social democratic parties have recently begun to apply key concepts from the Christian democratic language of values to their own party programmes. This first happened when the Italian DS applied the concept of *subsidiarity* in its programme in 2000. A similar application is found in the German SPD programme of 2005. The concept of the *person* is found in the Swedish SAP programme of 2001 and in the Italian DS programme of 2003. Thus, there is an increasing overlapping of the values of social democratic and Christian democratic parties.

How does the contemporary scene affect Bobbio’s claim that equality can be considered the primary dividing line between the left and the right in European politics? Equality is a basic value in most social democratic parties, but has not been assigned the status of a basic value in most Christian democratic parties. The most important Christian democratic party, the German CDU, has previously given equality a prominent place in its programmes, but in the 2005 CDU-CSU government programme equality has a less prominent and ambivalent position. Besides, the CDU revealed its mixed feelings about the value of equality when, in the 1994 platform, it polemically rejected *Gleichmacherei* – the idea that national policy can or should aim at making everything the same. Such formulations cannot be found in any social democratic programme. Besides that, an analysis of recent party programmes does demonstrate that social democratic parties are more inclined to demand redistribution through the tax system than are Christian democratic parties. Thus, we can support Bobbio’s claim at least partially. The demand for more equality – or, less

inequality – distinguishes the rhetorical positions of parties on the left and right.

Finally, although some social democratic parties have adopted some key Christian-democratic values, the set of values in social democratic programmes may still be distinguished from the configuration of basic Christian democratic values – primarily by Christian democracy's linking of subsidiarity, the person,<sup>3</sup> and personal responsibility to freedom, justice and solidarity.

## FROM VALUES TO POLITICS

As touched upon above, the vertical axis in any analysis of values reveals itself to be as problematic as the horizontal one. The relationship between values, policy goals and policy instruments is a strongly contested one. The problem is not only that those values can be concretized in different and some times contrasting ways, but also that the relationship between goals and policy instruments is often contested as well. In Table 3.3 this is exemplified in a core sector of the welfare state – pension policy.

The relationship between values, political goals and policy instruments is further complicated by the problematic relationship between short and long-term effects of political choices. For example, a policy of cuts and retrenchment of social welfare benefits and services may, in the short run,

*Table 3.3 Basic values, policy goals and policy instruments – potential conflicts. Pension policy as an example*

Basic value	Policy goals 1	Policy goals 2
Freedom	Create material conditions and economic safety for the elderly, so that they can choose a way of life that suits their individual needs and desires	Create more freedom in the choice of alternative pension schemes
Justice	Prevent great differences in the standard of living among the elderly	Harmony between pension contributions and pension benefits
Equality	More equitable living conditions among the elderly	Equality between present and future compensation rates
Solidarity	Increased redistribution in the pension system	Reduce pensions now in order to secure pensions for the elderly in the future

increase poverty and unemployment, but in the long run the policy may stimulate the economy, increase employment and reduce poverty. The same policy elsewhere may result in the stabilization of unemployment rates and the level of poverty at a higher level than existed before the policy was implemented. Thus, parties present their values – defining them more or less clearly – and struggle over whether their goals and policy instruments in fact do represent these values in the short and/or in the long run.

Seeleib-Kaiser et al. (2005: 128), in a study of social democratic and Christian democratic programmes from the 1970s, concludes that in regards to economic and social policy the differences between these parties have largely faded away because of changes in social democratic programmes. Even so, this does not mean that these parties have become totally alike or that social democratic parties are completely free to interpret their values. First, parties are constrained by the preferences of their potential voters, and social democratic voters generally view redistribution and income equality as more important and emphasize the egalitarian aspect of justice more than Christian democratic voters do (Stjernø and Johannessen, 2004: 22). Although social democratic parties in Germany, Scandinavia and Italy have agreed with conservative and Christian democratic parties to make pension systems less redistributive, to cut social benefits and to introduce market-like mechanisms in the provision of social services, they still do confront parties farther to the right on welfare issues – using solidarity, equality and social justice as key values, as was done in election campaigns in Germany and Norway in 2005.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter must conclude that, at the nominal level, a general agreement does exist on basic values – both within the family of social-democratic parties and between this family and the Christian-democratic family of political parties. Today, as Freedon (2001: 195) has noted, most party ideologies are of a hybrid character. Ideological boundaries are weak and blurring, and social democracy shares values increasingly with the Christian democratic parties. As Sassoon says (2001: 56), social-democracy was triumphant because it shared values with other political groups. The gradual dissolution of socialist rhetoric and the blurring of ideological constraints in relation to other parties at the political centre have made social democracy more attractive to broader groups of the electorate. Besides that, the relationship between values and practical politics is often loose and ambiguous, as has been demonstrated above, and this aspect of

political life makes it easier to attract voters that do not necessarily share the party's ideology.

This does not mean that it is impossible to identify social democratic values. On the contrary, because, first of all, social democratic basic values can be distinguished from Christian democratic values because values and concepts are related to each other in different ways in these two dominant and rivalling political families. To freedom, justice and solidarity, social democracy often adds equality, whereas Christian democracy adds personal responsibility and subsidiarity. The differences in their configurations of values and concepts constitute the differences between, and the identities of, social democratic and Christian democratic parties. The contemporary configuration of concepts and values constitutes the bridge between past and future. Current configurations give these opposing families some identity, while the shifting positions and the continual redefinition of values and concepts allow these parties to adjust to the changing constraints forced upon them by the societal and global context and by the mood of their electorates. The values and political languages of both social democracy and Christian democracy are flexible enough to allow for considerable differences of actual welfare policy within the party families. Thus, the identity of social democracy cannot be established solely by analysing values – we must compare concrete policies in terms of employment, redistribution, pensions etc.

Second, the battles for justice, solidarity and equality have to be fought at a level even more concrete than that of basic values. Social democratic decisions on pension policy, family policy and labour market policy must, at least to some degree, express commonly-held basic values in a way that is credible to those who vote for social democratic parties. A party's credibility is established in its concrete political struggles with other parties. Thus, social democratic calls for solidarity, equality, etc., are always relative with respect to liberal, conservative, Christian democratic and left wing calls for the same, as these are expressed in the practical and concrete formulations of policy. Even when concrete and specific social democratic policies do not appear to be in harmony with the basic values of social democracy, voters may accept the situation. They may do so as long as they continue to believe that social democracy is actually more in favour of equality and solidarity than the other parties, even if, for particular reasons at this point in time – e.g. the scarcity of economic resources – it implements policies that do not fit together well with its basic values. However, basic values do create a general frame of reference that sets some limits on the kind of social policy that is possible without damaging credibility and support among core voters. If and when social democracy transgresses these limits, most European countries have political parties to the left that profess the classic labour-movement values of equality, social justice and

solidarity, and seek to constitute themselves as an alternative choice for social democratic voters.

Today, the basic values of social democracy are confronted by several challenges: First, social democratic parties are increasingly concerned about the globalization of economic and political life. Basic values, like justice and solidarity, cannot be realized solely within the confines of the nation if they are to have credibility. Second, another political language has infiltrated social democratic programmes. The German SPD calls for more innovation, mobility and education, arguing that ‘policies good for the economy are good for the middle class’. At the same time, the party assures the electorate that there is ‘no conflict between economic prosperity and social justice’ (2005). The Italian DS criticizes neo-liberalism, but argues for innovation, modernization, privatization and the liberalization of financial markets (2003). The pressures of a global economy have resulted in a new language to cope with the new challenges. This new language allows meanings to be transformed into new values that, at least in the short run, may be in conflict with the traditional basic values of social democracy. Third, freedom, defined as the personal choice of social and health services, challenges traditional social democratic conceptions of solidarity. Fourth, as we have noted above, basic values like justice and equality are, in their conceptualizations, gradually and almost imperceptibly being transformed and begin to have new meanings that will have implications for welfare policy – less emphasis on redistribution and more emphasis on the balance between contributions and benefits. These conceptual redefinitions of core social democratic values do not threaten the welfare state *per se*, but the changes may mean that social democratic parties are preparing for a gradual transformation of social democratic welfare regimes – in a direction that will make them more similar to welfare regimes that have been created by Christian democratic parties.

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## NOTES

1. For a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of party programmes as source, see Stjernø (2004).

2. See Stjernø (2004: 10–5) for an analysis of the basic values of three Christian democratic parties – the German CDU, the Italian DC and its successors, and the Norwegian Kr.F.
3. In Catholic social ethics, the concept of the *person* means that a human being is dependent upon other human beings and becomes a person through the social relationships that he or she enters into within the family, and in other social networks entered into within the local community and in society. The concept of the *person* is in contrast to, on the one hand, the liberal concept of the autonomous *individual* and, on the other hand, to the lack of emphasis upon personal responsibility in socialism. In the Catholic understanding – a person has the responsibility to provide for her/himself and the responsibility to take care of others who are in need.

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## 4. Conservatism and the welfare state: intervening to preserve

**Kees van Kersbergen and Monique Kremer**

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### INTRODUCTION

Conservatism, whether understood as a cultural trait of norms and attitudes, a disposition (Oakeshott, 1981 [1962]), or a political ideology, is intimately related to the welfare state. The latter historically can be seen as an answer to two problems of development: ‘the formation of national states and their transformation into mass democracies after the French Revolution, and the growth of capitalism that became the dominant mode of production after the Industrial Revolution’ (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981: 22). This immediately clarifies why conservatism is related to the welfare state: its set of political ideas and cultural disposition has the origin in the political critique of the French Revolution of 1789 and the social critique of the capitalist industrial revolution.

The main characteristics of the conservative social model are authoritarianism, paternalism, an organic and hierarchical view of politics and society, corporatism, familialism, and a stress on the importance of status reproduction in social policy. Does this add up to any coherent vision of the ‘good society’? Associating a utopian vision of a future good society with conservatism seems to be at odds with what we understand as the meaning of conservatism. Conservatism is a set of ideas and attitudes that has its basis in a central conviction about the fundamental limits of the human condition, and that opposes ideologies that do not take into account human imperfection and fundamental social differences and tensions, such as between men and women (second section).

Historically, conservatism in its critique of the French Revolution developed a political theory that ultimately embraced democracy and in its critique of industrial capitalism elaborated a corporatist and familialist theory of social protection. In the third section, we describe how the conservative welfare-state regime came about and how it can best be interpreted. In the fourth section, the central question is how change is possible in conservative familialist regimes. Our thesis is that conservative social

intervention aims at preserving what is natural and therefore worth preserving. We chose to look at Flemish and Dutch childcare policies to exemplify this point: what appears to be a radical transformation of women's work, and the modernization of two conservative welfare states. The rate of employment for Dutch mothers is nowadays nearly as high as the Scandinavian one, while many Flemish mothers have always worked. Yet, both welfare regimes are 'typically' conservative, also in their familialist features. How, then, does change, for instance in the position of women on the labour market, combine with the conservative culture within such welfare regimes? We show how the conservative elements preserving traditional family life – whether in terms of an intergenerational extended family as in Flanders or the gender care-sharing nuclear family in the Netherlands – determine the contents of social policy. In policy *change* one still clearly recognizes the conservative disposition *to preserve*.

## IS THERE A CONSERVATIVE IDEAL OF THE 'GOOD SOCIETY'?

The very word 'conservative' stems from the Latin word *conservare* which means 'to preserve'. So, if anything, the 'good society' that conservatives seek to establish cannot be some romanticized yet possible world of the future, but must refer either to an ideal society that once existed in the past or to those institutions in the present world that together form a legacy that is worth preserving. However, since a fundamental conservative conviction is that some institutions show a capacity to survive over time and space, thus proving their worth, the type of institutions conservatives have defended has also varied greatly over time and space (see Muller, 1997). It is not specific institutions that conservatives seek to preserve. Moreover, neither are conservatives against change as such. So, what is it that conservatives wish to change and conserve, or change in order to preserve?

Conservatism has its basis in a central conviction about the fundamental limits of the human condition, limits that the heritage of the Enlightenment, in both liberal and socialist forms, denies. The Enlightenment ideologies offer projects for the good society that are doomed to failure because they involve denying or overcoming the basic tensions that are characteristic of the human condition. These modernist ideologies are unrealistic and utopian and necessarily lead to disaster. The hubris of trying to eliminate human imperfection had forcefully come to the fore in the French Revolution. The conservative critique of the French Revolution was that the revolutionaries attempted to destroy precisely those institutions – the church, the family, absolutism – that were built to guarantee order and social integration and

that had historically proven themselves capable of organizing and moderating the fundamental tensions inherent in the human condition.

Conservative thinking searches for principled realism by taking into account conflicting dualities such as those ‘between spirit and matter; between us and nature; between the individual and society; between governors and the governed; between free enterprise and state regulation; between different groups within society; and between different states’ (O’Sullivan, 1993: 51), and between men and women. The error of the Enlightenment projects was that they denied that there were deeply embedded limits to the extent to which such tensions could be overcome. The imperfection of the human condition is that we simply have to live with these fundamental tensions, and conservatism, to protect society, resists all the ill-conceived utopian attempts to ban them. This conviction explains why conservatives are such passionate defenders of the limited state: for them the worst thing is for state power to be exploited to impose a utopian ‘good society’.

The protection of traditional gender relations is one of the icons of the conservative societal view. Conservative thinking starts from a conviction about the natural differences and tensions between women’s and men’s destiny and character. Attempts to change the natural gender roles can disrupt the equilibrium in society. In this ‘two-sphere ideology’ women and men are predestined for different and separate societal tasks, for which they each have special talents. As a biological gift from Nature or God, men are more active and rational and therefore their destiny is the public arena, as workers, soldiers or citizens. Women’s gift is that they are more emotional and passive. Women are defined by their ability to bear and raise children, and their destiny is therefore the household and marriage, as mothers and wives. This does not imply however that ‘two-sphere’ conservative thinking has necessarily led in every conservative welfare-state regime to women’s limited labour-market participation, or the low-level provision of public childcare. In France, for instance, the struggle between secularists and the Catholic Church in the late 1900s ‘spilled over into programs for the care and socialization of young children. The scramble to bring children into the Catholic or secular system as early as possible spurred the creation of services for young children that previously had been viewed as the responsibility of the family’ (Morgan, 2002: 140; see also below).

For conservative politicians change was not only undesirable but also impossible and – if nevertheless attempted – ultimately dangerous. Abraham Kuyper for instance, the founding father of the Dutch Protestant Anti-Revolutionary Party, wrote, in 1914, *De eerepositie der vrouw* (The honourable position of women). This essay was not presented as a pamphlet but as a ‘scientific’ analysis of the existing gender order. It reminds us

not to interfere in the natural harmonious order given by God. Kuyper: 'And it is on the basis of this state of affairs – which we ourselves did not invent, but which was dictated by God – that women in the public domain are not equal to men (in Plantenga, 1993: 15, our translation).

For conservatives, women and men are not necessarily seen as 'better' or 'worse': they are different yet equal. Together they form a harmonious relationship, as they are complementary. This peculiar form of 'equality in difference' does not preclude, of course, a hierarchical view of gender relations as such, because the male public sphere can be – and usually is – seen as more important than the female private sphere. Still, the relationship *within* the private sphere is seen as harmonious, while the outside world is viewed as a hostile one. The homely sphere is a source of love and peace compared to the outside world (Plantenga, 1993). The 'two-sphere ideology' is the basis of another natural given: the family as a bulwark against the capitalist, cruel, lonely and exhausting outside world.

The critique of capitalism that contributed to the conservative attitude had at its kernel a fierce anti-modernity (Berlin, 1979: 20). It attacked the Enlightenment for its ideas of rational solutions to human problems and the unshakable trust in progress, both of which denied the realities of the human condition. The emerging industrial society became the enemy of conservatism and conservative ideas on social policy were influential well into the nineteenth and twentieth century (Moody, 1953; Rütger, 1986). The social critique had as its central object the impoverished masses. It wished to replace the contemporary 'atomized society' by a society classified, arranged and divided by 'estate' in order to restore the supposed unity of feudal society (Bowen, 1971; Görner, 1986). This basic conviction resulted in an attempt to force upon the newly establishing industrial and social reality the order of bygone times (Gottschalch et al., 1969: 336). In the eyes of conservatives, the new spirit of rationalist individualism, the erosion of traditional bonds and the predominance of the pursuit of self-interest constituted the root cause of the 'social question'.

The contents of the conservative social critique varied considerably. There existed no coherent set of ideas constituting a doctrine. Nevertheless, some binding elements can be distinguished. The conservatives initially favoured an 'organic' order of society, in which the estates are arranged and function equally as parts of a larger living organism to whose survival they all contribute. Social problems would find communal solutions without the risk of the state becoming all-powerful and omnipresent.

Conservatives opposed all types of experiments with state-led social policy to moderate the excesses of developing capitalism. Since the goal was the replacement of the economic and social order of liberal capitalism by an organic society, social policy organized and implemented by the state

within the limits of liberal society could only strengthen this objectionable order. Social policy simply obstructed the smooth transition to an organic society (*ibid.*: 387).

Conservatives loathed the evolving bitter class struggle in capitalism. The reaction consisted of attacking capitalism as a morally revolting social system. Capitalism, moreover, had brought about the equally appalling and objectionable idea of socialism. As an alternative, the reorganization of the estates could produce the capacity to transcend the chaos of capitalism and provide a viable barrier to the lure of socialism. The conservatives were both anti-socialist and anti-liberal (*ibid.*: 388).

Well into the second half of the nineteenth century conservatives tended to understand the social effects of modernization as a problem of religion and morality. The disruption brought about by capitalism was seen as an effect of a society that had given up its values and had let 'egotism', one of the characteristics of the human condition, rule (see Görner, 1986: 159). The 'social question' was essentially a moral (religious) question. Since moral decadence and the de-Christianization of the masses were the cause of social misery, it was the task of the morally righteous and the church to provide the solution through charity and moral teaching. This solution should consist in the renewal and deepening of the moral spirit, because the suffering of the masses was caused by the absence of right spirit and conviction. The proposed solution naturally reflected this perception. Conservatism's early approach was to aim at the root of the problem: the spiritual betterment of man (Gottschalch et al., 1969: 344).

However, in line with the conservative disposition, it gradually became clear that capitalism was a new historical order with a capacity to endure, and feudalism and the guild system were not supra-historical forms. Moral appeal did little to put a halt to the capitalist advance. Moderate conservatives came to understand that they were making the same mistake as the liberals and socialists, namely pursuing utopian ideals that did not take into account human imperfection. The result was a reorientation that reversed the causal relationship between moral degeneration and industrial capitalism. Corporatist ideas were modernized and a possible new role for state intervention became feasible, and these combined produced the idea of compulsory insurance under the leadership of employers. If moral and religious decay were not the cause but an effect of the excesses of capitalism, then social policy could provide material relief. This, in turn, would have the beneficial effect of restoring traditional relations of authority in the economy and revitalize the family.

In conclusion, conservatism does not have an ideal of the good society. But the conservative welfare model does embody a criticism of the ideal society of social democracy and liberalism. Conservative social policies

must be in accordance with the human condition of imperfection. Moderate conservatism wishes a limited state (otherwise state power becomes too dangerous in the hands of imperfect men) and a social policy in accordance with the real facts of human nature and natural differences (such as between employers and workers, and between men and women). Social policies that aim to transform natural aspects of human life are opposed, as is direct state intervention.

## MODERNIZATION, INDUSTRIALISM AND THE CONSERVATIVE WELFARE STATE

The welfare state and its development are effects of modernization (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981). The welfare state catered to the demands for socioeconomic security in a system of industrial capitalism that dislodged masses of people and made them dependent on the whims of the labour market, thus rapidly destroying traditional forms of social security. Welfare-state development was related to the single most important concern for conservatives, namely the problems of social order and integration created by modernization (Flora and Alber, 1981: 38).

Modernization caused social disintegration and reinforced the necessity for intervention by social organizations and the state. Modernization generated pressing social problems: rapidly changing working conditions, the emergence of the free labour contract, the loss of income security among weak groups in the market, and unemployment. The market did not provide the collective goods needed to cope with these problems. At the same time, large parts of the population were mobilized and organized as a consequence of the increasing concentration of people in factories and cities and the extended means of communication. Mobilization was expressed in public protest and violence and in social and political organization, thus making the spectre of disorder and disintegration directly visible and perceptible to conservatives. In addition there emerged a pressure generated by the power of organization itself, especially the organization of workers.

How did conservatives respond? Crucial is that the conservatives abhorred the commodification of labour power. Workers in capitalism have nothing else to sell but their labour power and therefore depend for their subsistence entirely on the labour market. Social protection is essentially protection against the market, by making labour less dependent (decommodification). Conservatism employed four strategies to counter the commodification of workers. The first strategy was reminiscent of feudalism, referring to the paternalistic and clientelistic arrangements of quasi-reciprocal obligations

of workers and patrons found in early employer-led insurances. The second strategy was an updated version of the logic of pre-capitalist, pre-commodified corporate societies of guilds and fraternal associations – status organizations existing for the welfare of their members. This logic was transferred to the mutual societies. The corporatist model was a ready-made strategy for conservatives because they ‘perceived it as a way to uphold traditional society in the unfolding capitalist economy; as a means to integrate the individual into an organic entity, protected from the individualization and competitiveness of the market, and removed from the logic of class opposition’ (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 40).

The third strategy was to develop familialistic policies. Due to the social question – the capitalist modernization of the industrial world – the preservation of family life gained more rather than less attention. Conservative notions about the family and women’s pivotal role within it (for instance for properly raising children) were emphasized. It is no accident that labour legislation in the early twentieth century aimed at the protection of women and children. Later, for instance in Germany and the Netherlands in the 1930s, active policies were introduced to discourage women’s work, to sustain the natural order of the family and to stress women’s natural task: to build a haven, a warm bulwark against the vagaries of the market and the public arena outside. In both countries laws were proposed to prohibit women from working. In the Netherlands, however, this failed, but in Germany the National Socialist regime did place direct barriers to women’s employment, that is, until women were forced to be employed in the war economy. Active intervention to preserve family life re-emerged and continued in the 1950s and 1960s, when the family was seen as a bulwark against rapid social change (Plantenga, 1993; Pott-Buter, 1993; Ostner, 1993). Making sure women could stay at home was seen as a necessary intervention to preserve the natural division of labour and family life.

Women were thus included in social policy as protectors of family life. They were to preserve the natural, biological, God-given family relation through their maternalism, but also on the basis of new specific rights and duties to preserve the family. This was not only the dominant mode of thinking in typical conservative welfare regimes, but also in the UK. ‘She has other duties’ was the pivotal sentence in the Beveridge report, legitimating the fact that in social security, women were not obliged to pay for the unemployment benefit (the so-called Married Women’s Option). In many European welfare states the ‘two-sphere ideology’ was reproduced in the ‘two-channel’ welfare state, in which insurances were aimed at men (as workers’ compensation) and women could opt for widow’s pensions. Their rights were based on the absence of men, while men’s rights were based on the absence of work (Bussemaker, 1993). This ‘two spheres’ approach – or

the difference principle – is nowadays seen as discriminatory or unfair, but it was often the women's movements in Europe (and the USA) itself that put forward such 'maternal thinking', so as to gain social rights (Skocpol, 1992; Koven and Michel, 1993; O'Connor et al., 1999).

The fourth strategy was the etatist approach of direct state intervention to grant social rights in order to enhance the integration of hierarchical society, forge a bond between workers and the state, maintain traditional relations of authority, and provide an opposing power to the modernist forces of liberalism and socialism. This led to the principle of 'monarchical socialism': 'an absolutist model of paternal-authoritarian obligation for the welfare of its subjects' (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 40).

However, the etatism, as found in Bismarck's anti-socialist policies, in the political intention of his social policies and in his proposal for a centralized state administration of the social schemes, may be viewed as somewhat at odds with the preferred corporatist and familialist solution of the conservatives and the conservative commitment to a limited state. As Esping-Andersen correctly noted:

When Bismarck promoted his first social-insurance schemes, he had to battle on two fronts: on one side against the liberals, who preferred market solutions, and on the other side against conservatives who sponsored the guild-model or familialism. Bismarck desired the primacy of etatism. By insisting on direct state financing and distribution of social benefits, Bismarck's aim was to chain the workers directly to the paternal authority of the monarchy rather than to either the occupational funds, or to the cash nexus. (1990: 59)

Etatism was strongly linked with the state-building efforts of conservatives, such as Bismarck in Germany. The pioneering Bismarckian social policies, the major model for other countries on the European Continent, were explicitly designed to stop democratization (still a dangerous utopia in conservative eyes at the time) and to attach the politically alienated working class directly to the state in order to tone down its revolutionary potential. Social policy was crucially linked to the process of national state-building through unification, repression (as in the case of Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* and anti-socialist laws) and political integration.

The idea was that once the security of a worker's income depended on the stability of the state, he would recognize that revolutionary action was in fact contrary to his own real interests. This demanded state compulsory insurance and state subsidy so that a worker would realize where the money came from (Rimlinger, 1968, 1971; Beck, 1995). Bismarck saw a real political danger in a corporatist path, because he was convinced that to safeguard social order and control the working class, it was necessary to let the state's presence be felt in the workers' life in a direct and clearly recognizable way.

Unlike Bismarck, the upper bourgeoisie favoured stateless corporatism, as this offered the perfect moral model: social policies would not alter the status or income differentials and would at the same time reaffirm the hierarchical relationship between employers and employees within one institution under the control of the employers. Faced with opposition from his closest allies, Bismarck understood that his pure etatist set-up would never receive enough support. The model was then adjusted somewhat in the corporatist direction. Employers were given the right to administer the social insurance schemes, but the state was to supervise. In the case of pensions, Bismarck managed to introduce his politically crucial state subsidy (Rimlinger, 1968: 414).

Conservatism emerged as a general cultural attitude that embodied a critique of capitalist class relations and developed anti-utopian ideas that revolved around the preservation of hierarchy, corporatism and the family as the smallest unit in an organic society. What these models had in common was their stress on the need to uphold or restore traditional relations of authority and status, starting in the family, via the 'corpora', and all the way up to the national state. It is for this reason that the importance of insurance in Bismarck's social policies so obviously fitted the conservative ideal, for it helped reproduce existing status differentials and relations of authority. Eventually, a typical and recognizable model evolved that we label the corporatist-etatist or conservative welfare-state regime type, a model found in Austria, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy and (with some nuances) the Netherlands (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 27).

In sum, the central problem for conservatives was the problem of social order and integration that resulted from modernization. Conservatism opposed the political movements associated with modernity: liberalism and socialism. With regard to the conservative welfare model, we need to distinguish between corporatism and etatism. The former was directly linked to the conservative attitude, while the latter was more an aspect of the state-building of conservatives. Both aspects, however, became typical elements in the existing corporatist-etatist model as it historically developed in continental Europe. The main general features of conservative thinking on social policy were paternalism, an organic and hierarchical view of gender and class relations, a theory of different spheres for men and women, and a stress on the importance of status and sphere reproduction in social policy.

## INTERVENING TO PRESERVE: CHANGE IN CONSERVATIVE POST-WAR WELFARE STATES

Conservatism has been a crucial inspiration in the past and has had an important impact on the welfare regimes in continental Europe. But is

conservatism still strong in Europe? And is it still helpful to look at conservatism to understand change in social policy? In practice, class and especially gender relations seem to have changed drastically. Path dependency is still important – in the sense of historical *institutional* legacies – but can we also speak about a path dependency of culture and ideology? In other words: does the conservative disposition still have an impact on today's modern welfare states? And can we still speak about conservative models now that welfare states are undergoing rapid change?

Among the many issues that have been raised in the literature, a critical case relating to our questions is the drastic increase in women's employment in continental welfare states. All European governments are bidding farewell to the once-popular ideal of full-time motherhood. Except for in Scandinavia, this model has sat firmly in the welfare-state saddle since the Second World War. But in the new millennium, the governments of Europe no longer expect women to be full-time mothers. The icon of the happy housewife is fading. Two countries are especially interesting in this respect: the Netherlands and Belgium. Both welfare regimes are typically conservative, especially in terms of gender relations (see Bussemaker and Kersbergen, 1994; Knijn, 1994; Cantillon, 1999). The Dutch welfare state is characterized by a lack of childcare provision and a tax and social security scheme that encouraged housewives to stay at home. While in the 1980s the Dutch employment rates for mothers were among the lowest in Europe, they are nowadays high in the European employment figures: 70 per cent of mothers with children (aged 0–2) work. This is similar to Scandinavian rates. However, nearly all mothers do so on a part-time basis (Eurostat, 2005).

In Belgium, mothers' employment rates have been moderate, although much higher than in the Netherlands (Pott-Buter, 1993). Belgium is holding a middle position with 63 per cent of mothers (children aged 0–2) at work in 2003. Many of them work full-time, although part-time work is becoming more popular. Unlike in the Netherlands, Belgian state intervention in childcare was early and developed well. The Flanders region occupies a high place in the childcare ranking. In 1988, 23 per cent of children under 3 were attending state-subsidized childcare; by 1993 this number had risen to 31 per cent, and by 1999, to over 40 per cent. These Flemish rates (as well as those for Belgium in general) are also much higher than rates in France (23 per cent in 1995, 39 per cent in 2000). In fact, the Belgian level in general and the Flemish level in particular is nearly as high as the level in Sweden (ECNC, 1996; Kind en Gezin, 2001).

In both the Netherlands and Belgium state policy is nowadays aimed at promoting women's work. Does this mean that there has been a radical break with the conservatism of the regimes, both in terms of policies and

in culture? Have conservatives changed their conviction that stress the limits of the human condition? Or to put it differently: how is change possible in regimes with strong conservative legacies?

### **Flemish Gender Policy**

In Flanders, the state started to provide childcare early in history and there has never been any thought of preventing women from working. Still, conservative gender notions were very much in place. What explains this paradox? The people and state were simply not rich enough to bear the costs of implementing policies based on the conservative position. Belgian families were relatively poor, especially in urban areas (Plantenga, 1993; Pott-Buter, 1993). The first state-funded childcare organization was set up in 1918 to assist women who had to work to save their families from poverty. This organization wrote in 1940: 'The kribbe (kindergarten) is just a real necessity. Many mothers work outside the home, but we hope that this situation will improve and in the future they will not have to leave the homely hearth' (Lambrechts and de Dewispelaere, 1980: 38). But the situation did not change. The subsidizing of childcare has increased continuously since the 1960s. Daycare was still considered bad for children but legitimate for parents on a low income (Deven, 1998). The microeconomics of households forced the state to intervene.

This shows that the Catholic concept of subsidiarity does not by definition oppose intervention: it also indicates when the state has to intervene (Kersbergen, 1995). Salemink (1991), a Flemish theologian, points out that many Catholic politicians and thinkers have argued that, according to *Quadragesimo anno* (1931), the state has the duty to support low-income families to protect them from poverty. In other words, the ideology of the separate spheres has been temporally given up to preserve another institution cherished by conservatives: the family.

By the 1970s and 1980s, most women no longer financially needed to work, but rather, wanted to work: they wished to be part of the public sphere (Pauwels, 1978). Two other alternatives to home-based mothers' care were put forward. Both had strong conservative features: intergenerational care, and surrogate motherhood. Until the 1970s, the dominant type of state-subsidized childcare in Flanders was the child daycare centre. These centres were mostly an urban phenomenon, catering to working-class families, and part of a medical-hygienic regime. The institutions were large, the staffs were nurses, and the places in them were labelled 'beds' (Hermans, 1984). Not surprisingly, they were seen as cold and formal. As an alternative, organizations of daycare mothers developed, and the Catholic Agrarian Women's Movement (KVLV) was the first of these to

call for childminding services, and they became the 'founding mothers' of this system.

These mothers argued powerfully that organized daycare mothers would energize family and neighbourhood life rather than diminishing it, and the KVLV women stressed that this particular type of childcare would strengthen it (KVLV, 1977). Moreover, daycare mothers were an attractive bargain. The state intervened only to make sure that people would support each other. The KVLV cleverly aligned itself with Christian Democratic interests by pointing out the advantage of low costs and social cohesion, while at the same time expressing concern for the quality of children's care. This ideological alliance was rewarded in 1975 when the government decided to subsidize daycare mothers and set up a service. The mothers were paid fees and thus did not have to pay taxes or social security premiums. They were not employees, let alone professionals, but neither were they protected by social security (KVLV, 1977).

From then on, daycare mothers were embraced by the Christian Democratic Party and the ministers in charge of childcare. This state-subsidized childminding is now a widespread practice in Flanders and is no longer a Christian Democratic phenomenon only. Since the 1980s, the bulk of Flemish state subsidies has gone to family daycare (Kind en Gezin, 1997). Around the year 2000 more than 11 000 children were in daycare centres and 19 000 in family day-care: 35 per cent of the children thus stay with daycare mothers who are associated with services for family daycare, while 24 per cent go to public childcare centres (Vanpée et al., 2000).

This intervention has also conservative features, as it is stressed that caring is still done best by a mother, even if she is not the mother of the children. These childminders can be seen as surrogate mothers and they are called '*onthaalmoeders*' (referring to a 'warm welcome'). This kind of transformation stresses the importance of home-based, family-like care and does not attack the idea that women have different qualities, talents and characters to men. Women – the childminders – also received fewer rights (and did not have to pay social security premiums) because they were supposed to be financially dependent on their husbands, and received derived rights via their husbands.

Flemish welfare-state change also stresses intergenerational care as an alternative to the traditional male breadwinner model. The basic idea is that the first generation (grandmothers) cares for the third generation (children). In return, the second generation (the daughters who are now mothers) will care for the grandparents when they become frail (Van Haegendoren and Bawin-Legros, 1996). This is not just a calculated system of family exchange. It also guarantees good childcare, because who could care better than the mother's mother? She is not only experienced and can

be trusted more than anyone else, but will also love the children the most. The ties that bind are familial and the extended family is regarded as a haven that protects its members from having to seek care in the outside world, whether through the market or the state. The ideal of intergenerational care is not only built on the natural qualities of women, but also on the importance of family life.

Tax deductions reflect the promotion of intergenerational care. When in 1987 the childcare law was discussed, which offered tax relief for state-recognized childcare, the influential 'Organization for Big and Young Families' (BGJG) and other family-minded forces argued that this would discriminate against those families in which grandparents do the caring. The amount they eventually gained, however, was less than in the case of childminders or crèches, but has an important symbolic meaning. Belgium is one of the few countries that financially support intergenerational care for children directly. Related to this, 84 per cent of very young children are cared for by the grandparents, or more precisely, they are cared for by grandmothers – often those from the side of the mother. This is a very high percentage compared to that of other European welfare regimes. About 60 per cent of grandparents are regularly involved in caring for their grandchildren, on average for nearly 26 hours a week (Vanpée et al., 2000).

In sum, by making use of conservative notions which preserved the family and community, but also accommodated the demands of parents, and precisely because the childcare is gendered, the Flemish policy was one of the first and most successful in Europe and can continue to be so. The mammoth alliance of women in the Flemish welfare state indicates its conservative features. Alternative childcare policy came at the right time and in the right place because gender hierarchies as well as intergenerational relations could be perpetuated through it. By this kind of intervention institutions such as the family could be preserved and the natural qualities of women sustained. This may also explain the moderate level of women's employment today: gender relations are not undermined.

### **Dutch Gender Policy**

In the Netherlands a change in the conservative care ideal only took place in the 1990s when women were asked to participate in the labour market for macroeconomic reasons: it became too expensive for the welfare state to support such a large inactive population (WRR, 1990). Another alternative emerged: women's participation in the labour market can best be supported when both fathers and mothers share the care at home. The substitute to full-time motherhood is thus parental sharing, labelled the 'combination scenario', in which men and women share the available paid and unpaid

work equally (Commissie Toekomstscenario, 1995). Parental sharing came to mean two things: part-time rather than full-time employment should be the norm; women should not reduce all their caring activities and men should become more involved in caring.

The Combination Model is an idea of women's organizations in alliance with women in academia, and was already put forward by the Emancipation Council in the late 1980s. It tries to find a balance between the Dutch culture of 'self care' and improving women's position in the labour market. It aims for gender equality outside and inside the home. To a certain extent, this is siding with strong anti-Scandinavian sentiments, stressing that parents should do the bulk of the parenting themselves. At the same time it is stressing the need of women's employment. Dutch policy is built on the assumption that if *he* does more in the home, *she* can work more outside the home.

The Combination Model is built on two legs. The first is that men should have the opportunity to be fathers. Since many studies show that Dutch men want to work less and care more, allowing time for fathers to care is seen as an important policy intervention. Hence the individual right to unpaid parental leave. The importance of part-time work is the second leg. In the 1990s, part-time work was embraced by individuals, state and trade unions. In 1990 trade unions argued for part-time employment and thereby backed the wishes of many female workers (but see Visser, 2002; Plantenga, 1996; Hakim, 2000).

The Combination Model is also based on the assumption that men are just as able to care for children as women are. Its advocates sometimes go as far as to argue that an increase in fathers' care would be better for children, who would then have another role model on top of the more feminine one. It may also be more just for women, who could now work outside the home too, if men also took up their responsibilities: thus it contributes to gender equality. In that sense this ideal is not conservative at all. It stresses that men's behaviour – if engaged only in the public domain – is not natural or God-given at all. Men and women have the same qualities inside and outside the home. The Combination Scenario is thus subversive in a sense, because it de-genders care-giving and working outside the home. What is still conservative is that good childcare is home- and (nuclear) family-based. It is best when children are not cared for too much by strangers. Parental sharing emphasizes the harmonious bond between men and women in private life. The nuclear family is the best place to be in and raise children.

This conservative dimension was necessary to force a breakthrough in the Dutch welfare state. But it also reinforces the notion that full-time work is not appropriate, and women are especially sensitive to this moral message. Women, not men, are more likely to work on a part-time basis.

And more recently a backlash in women's employment is visible: many mothers only want to spend a small number of hours at work (SCP, 2006). Men are less adaptive: they still usually work full-time in the Netherlands. Only a very small percentage of (mostly higher educated) couples – 9 per cent (Knijn and Wel, 2004) – really share work and care. The ideal of parental sharing has had difficulty coming into practice fully because it takes two to share – and men seem more difficult to change.

Women's increase in employment rates can at first sight be seen as undermining the conservative welfare state: it debunks the idea of a duality of women and men, or the 'two-sphere ideology'. But a closer look shows that this transformation could only happen with the use of conservative notions, albeit more so in Flanders than in the Netherlands. In Flanders women's entrance into the labour market went along with a policy that preserved the intergenerational family as well as women's gift to society: their caring nature. In the Netherlands, modern gender policy undermines men's natural absence of care-giving features – although the practice still lags behind this policy notion – but stresses the importance of the family, the second dimension of conservative gender-policy. As a consequence, in Belgium mothers work less than in Scandinavia, while in the Netherlands, mothers do not want to work full-time.

## CONCLUSION

In our analysis of conservatism we stress realism, pragmatism and the absence of an ideal of the good society. The conservative disposition is fear of the ideologically inspired attempts to impose upon society utopian images that do not take into account the natural order of things as expressed in relations of power and authority, in a social division of labour (between employers and employees, men and women), and in the enduring institutions of society in the public and private sphere. Moderate conservatism points to the danger of a too-powerful state precisely in order to preclude that imperfect man might force his utopia upon society. State intervention however is necessary to preserve what has been proven good. Social policy should therefore not try to alter basic facts of human nature and culture, but should take into account, yes reproduce, natural differences.

Conservatives have always been interested in social policy, because modernization, and nowadays a continuously and rapidly changing society, poses problems of social order and integration in the public and private sphere. The conservative welfare-state model reflects the main features of the conservative disposition, as it downplays the direct role of the state by promoting self-financing, self-administration and societal representation in

social security (corporatism), still promotes an organic and hierarchical view of gender and class relations, different spheres for men and women, and stresses the importance of status and sphere reproduction in social policy.

Social intervention is seen as necessary, precisely to preserve what is worth preserving. Our analysis of Flemish and Dutch childcare policies was presented to illustrate exactly this point. We note that Flemish childcare policy was one of the first to develop in Europe and that its ultimate goal was indeed a preservation of the gendered family and community. By promoting an intergenerational model the extended family could be supported and the natural qualities of women sustained. The Dutch envisage a caring role for men/fathers and a working role for women. This might seem to hollow out the conservative position, but conservatism is reaffirmed in the fact that childcare is realized fundamentally in the family at home, even though also men are encouraged to care and work part-time.

What lessons are implied? Continental welfare states emerged as the result of conservative projects of preservation. The conservative disposition was a crucial factor in the development of these welfare regimes, not so much because of any utopian view of a good society, but rather because of its critique of existing attempts to improve the world with dangerous ideological projects such as liberalism and social democracy. This explains why the core element of conservatism is its critique of any attempt to discard the natural order, natural differences, or the limitations of human behaviour. This does not mean that state intervention is unwanted. In fact, conservatism legitimates intervention by its intention to preserve the natural order. Of course, there is no single best way of doing this, because historical circumstances require different solutions, as is well illustrated in the various strategies that conservatives have employed, or in the different policy trajectories of the Netherlands and Flanders. The conservative disposition still has an impact on the welfare state.

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## 5. Christian foundations of the welfare state: strong cultural values in comparative perspective

**Michael Opielka**

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The cultural analysis of the welfare state up to now has concentrated mainly on political values. It is highly elaborated in the theory of welfare regimes developed by Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1990). There, the value dimension of social policy is conceptualized on the classical left–right axis of social democracy (or socialism), liberalism, and conservatism, perpetuating the French Revolution’s well-known value-triad of equality, freedom, and fraternity/solidarity. These ‘basic principles’ of welfare-state policies come combined with structural and institutional dimensions, for example, the role of the welfare state versus the market, or gender roles and the family.

However, a twofold, religiously-based reasoning about the process of modernization has accompanied the seeming limitation to the study of political values since the founding years of social policy. Therefore the questions followed in this chapter are: do Christian foundations of the welfare state exist; are, in a globally comparative perspective, other religious traditions relevant for social policies; and, how important is their influence, besides being political value-orientations? The two controversial perspectives on the influence of religion on the modern welfare state are the starting point for my analysis. First, on a more concrete, structural level, advocates of a ‘natural’ order have argued that the welfare state has contributed to the dissolution of the family by promoting individual rights and labor market integration of women: ‘The family is the original and natural institution which provides basic provision’ (Koslowski, 1997: 365). Religion, in this perspective, has been viewed as the true haven of a *Gemeinschaft* society, with the family as central part of religious lifestyle, despite contrary theoretical and empirical evidence (Opielka, 1997; Dobbellaere et al., 2003). Second, on a more ideational level, an important strand of secularization theory has made the point that the modern welfare state should be interpreted as the true heir of religious values. That

could have happened either by religion becoming superfluous and dissolved into a civil religion of democratic legal institutions (Rokkan, 1999; Meyer, 2005), or by integrating and transforming religion into 'public religions' (Casanova, 1994).

Both the structural and the ideational argumentation broaden the cultural analysis of social policy beyond the conventional wisdom of political sociology, and both have gained momentum since the 1960s and still more since the 1990s, as class politics as a basis for welfare-state analysis waned and cultural politics increased, as Michael Hechter (2004) has analysed convincingly. He argues that the rapid expansion of direct democratic rule since the 1960s has promoted status politics along lines of ethnicity, religion, nationalism, gender, and sexual orientation. One may add that the breakdown of the Communist bloc has, since the 1990s, accelerated this process of 'cross-cutting principles of group formations' (ibid.: 404). Status, understood as *Stände* or style of life in the sense of Max Weber, is obviously linked to culture much more than to economic affinities such as class (Lepsius, 1990). Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu's core concept of the political field and his influential analysis of the practices and institutions involved in the paradoxical phenomenon of political representation contributed to a cultural perspective (Wacquant, 2005).

Following the method of Birgit Pfau-Effinger, my analysis of welfare cultures will not extend to the whole complex of values, institutional traditions and practices of welfare states, but be limited to the 'relevant ideas' surrounding welfare policies, comprising a 'stock of knowledge, values and ideals' (2005: 4). There are practical reasons for this limitation, but theoretical ones as well, especially when analysing the religious dimension of modern welfare states. The practical reason is simply that, for the comparative analysis of welfare states, a comprehensive cultural perspective – such as that developed within the anthropological tradition (Wimmer, 2005) – still lacks adequate methodologies. A comprehensive cultural analysis has to include qualitative data, which have to be integrated into a kind of a typology of 'ideal types' in the Weberian sense in order to be comparable. But such typologies, as for example the welfare-regime approach mentioned, need theoretical clarifications which cannot be derived directly from empirical data, whether qualitative or quantitative. The few efforts to analyse the religious foundations of modern welfare states by quantitative comparisons (e.g. Castles, 1994; Hornsby-Smith, 1999) have not succeeded in explaining causal links. Therefore I concentrate in the following on the level of religious ideas within welfare state development.

Religious ideas are embedded within the multi-dimensional reality of social policy. My analysis will take three steps to cover this complexity. In

the first step I take the recent theorizing on the ‘new institutionalism’ as a heuristic device, starting with a distinction developed by Ellen M. Immergut (1998), which will be modified. The body of religious analyses of welfare states can be distinguished according to four types of idea foundation (micro-, meso-, macro-, and meta-). This systematic perspective underlies my limitation to the legitimizing meta-level idea foundation (‘cultural institutionalism’) affording a qualitative perspective (discourse analysis). The second step picks up on some controversies within Christian social-policy discourses which reflect not only political values and camps, but can also be traced to distinct traditions within Christianity. In the third step the perspective becomes broadened to a comparative typology of world religions and their respective welfare values. This broad perspective sheds light on the quite singular position of Christian religion in the development of welfare states. It makes clear, however, – following Talcott Parsons’ analysis of ‘secular humanism’ – that only a specific combination of Christian and secular humanist traditions helped the modern welfare state into existence. In the final section of the chapter the view is turned back to the future role of Christian foundations in legitimating the modern welfare states.

## WELFARE-POLICY PROBLEMS AND RELIGIOUS LEGITIMATION: FOUR THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Even in 1989 Franz-Xaver Kaufmann could still argue that the role of Christianity has been a mostly neglected topic in research on the development of the modern welfare state. Yet he pointed to three aspects of its influence: first, the idea of human godlikeness, in which are combined the institutionalized equilibrium of monarchical and papal authority, the foundations of human rights, modern differentiation of societal subsystems, and welfare state inclusion; second, the role of religious protest and its socio-ethical relevance, especially in England; and third, the interplay between a conservative Protestant concept of the state and Catholic-influenced Christian-social movements, as shown in the German case where those movements in particular, gained central importance for the practice of German social policy (Kaufmann, 1989).

Since then the state of research has impressively improved. In order to systematize this research I employ and extend a theoretical frame developed by Ellen M. Immergut in her much-cited 1998 article on ‘the theoretical core of the new institutionalism’. This theoretical movement started with a critique of the political-behaviour movement of the 1950s and 1960s

and led to three assumptions – ‘that preferences or interests expressed in action should not be conflated with “true” preferences, that methods for aggregating interests inevitably distort, that institutional configurations may privilege particular sets of interests and may need to be reformed’ (ibid.: 8). Basically, the ‘institutionalist tradition seeks transcendent or overarching norms to guide political behavior’ (ibid.: 11). Immergut distinguishes three separate branches of scholarship of the ‘new institutionalism’: rational choice, organization theory, and historical institutionalism. I would add, as a fourth branch, cultural theory as an institutional theory (similarly Grendstad and Selle, 1995).

To analyse the Christian, and by extension, religious dimension of welfare policies, I concentrate on the cultural dimension within all four theoretical branches, thereby (with Immergut) neglecting the competing paradigms of behavioralist/utilitarian and social determinist/Marxist thinking. Interestingly the three branches discussed by Immergut can be traced to three classical levels of sociological analysis: micro-, meso-, and macro-. I will add as a fourth the meta-level, the level of symbolic legitimation.

### **The Rational Choice Approach and Micro-level Analysis**

The rational choice approach conceptualizes institutions as decision rules, discusses preferences as strategic choices, sees the aggregation problem as the cycling of preferences, and considers normative standards impossible. The level of analysis is micro-. If the most advanced scholarship in this field researches ‘rationally’ grounded values as ‘ultimate’ values in religious life, these are thought of as ‘cognitive expectations’ (Esser, 2003: 185). The (subjective) micro-perspective is theoretically based in psychological thinking (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004), and its application to the sociology of religion employs economic rationality on a broad scale to explain the role of Christianity in the development of modern society in general (Stark and Finke, 2000; Stark, 2005).

Of course, the micro-perspective is not limited to rational choice theory in its strict sense, but forms the methodological basis for the impressive array of survey research on religious values and attitudes, such as the World and European Values Studies (Halman and Riis, 2003b; Norris and Inglehart, 2004; for a broader sociological perspective on values see Joas, 2000). Within the research on the religious dimensions of welfare policies authors like Francis G. Castles (1994) or Michael Hornsby-Smith (1999) employ aggregated (micro-)survey data to explain the relevance of Catholic and Protestant population proportions, and the continuity of a chiefly religious divide in post-Reformation Western Europe.

### **Organization Theory and Meso-level Analysis**

The organization theory approach focuses on the meso-level of sociological analysis. It considers institutions as information-processing routines and classification systems, preferences as bounded rationality and interpretative frames, the aggregation problem as standard operating procedures, and the problem of norms as organizational learning. Within research on the religious dimension of welfare policies this perspective focuses on parties and organizations (*Verbände*), for example in the path-breaking study of Kees van Kersbergen (1995) on the role of Christian democratic parties and movements within the development of a 'social capitalism'.

However, van Kersbergen extends his analysis to the macro-level by taking into account the varying historical, economical and political conditions under which parties and organizations act. Contrary to Esping-Andersen's 'absence of an independent "Catholicism" effect after 1950' (1990: 118; similarly Therborn, 1994: 106), van Kersbergen identified such an effect by distinguishing between the 'grand tradition' of Roman Catholicism, embodied in faith and Vatican doctrine, and the 'lesser tradition' within Christian democracy, with only the latter and the organizational institutionalists' perspective making the difference.

### **Historical Institutionalism and Macro-level Analysis**

The branch of the historical institutionalists draws in particular on the work of Max Weber. They take a macro-approach, focus on rules, procedures, norms and legacies, and see preferences as 'alternative rationalities' and the construction of interests. The representation of economic and political interests in their perspective is shaped by the collective actors and institutions that have left traces in their own history. More recently they include, since the 'interpretative turn' in the social sciences, constructivist and 'postmodern' elements: 'the role of ideas has been given greater weight' (Immergut, 1998: 17).

Analysts of the religious dimension of welfare policies such as Theda Skocpol (2000) for example argue that the American welfare state does not appear as a 'laggard' of the European social democratic model but as a unique configuration of programmes and agencies forged from political struggles within political institutions and fed by religious motives as well. Frank Nullmeier and Friedbert Rüb (1993) remark that the Catholic tradition played a more important role in German pension policy than previously recognized. And in the Weberian tradition it is the school of Stein Rokkan and Peter Flora which has analysed the importance of culture and religion for the European welfare state (Rokkan, 1999; Fix, 2001).

### Cultural Institutionalism and Meta-level Analysis

The fourth approach, in part included in historical institutionalism by Immergut, cultural institutionalism – as one could label it – pins down endogenous preference formation and rehabilitates concepts like functionalism from the sociological heritage of Talcott Parsons, especially that of his late works (Parsons, 1972; 1978). In this perspective culture is conceptualized as the independent variable. Accordingly, this approach focuses explicitly on the meta-level of society, on the legitimizing role of culture and religion (Opielka, 2007). Historically, the ‘political culture’ approach developed by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba in their famous 1963 study *The Civic Culture* marks the starting point for policy analysis, although little explicit research in this tradition has focused on welfare policies up to now.

From Parsons’ action-theory, the components of culture can be thought of as systems of ideas and beliefs, value systems, and systems of expressive symbols, although Parsons sometimes referred to culture exclusively as symbolic systems. Culture, in this perspective, is shared, transmitted, and learned (Eckstein, 1996: 491). The concept of ‘civil religion’ (Bellah and Hammond, 1980) has been a practical application of this theorizing. Against repeated criticism (Johnson, 2003), the culturalist approach gained momentum through the ‘cultural turn’ in the social sciences (Reckwitz, 2000). Jeffrey C. Alexander’s ‘cultural sociology’, as ‘a kind of social psychoanalysis’ (Alexander, 2003: 4) concentrating on the unconscious spheres of society and building on Parsons’ and Robert Bellah’s ‘symbolic realism’ as well as on the newest developments in anthropological research, makes an important point: ‘If we are to understand how the insights of Weber’s *Religionsoziologie* can be applied to the nonreligious domains of secular society, we need a cultural sociology’ (ibid.: 8). I will draw on this agenda for the next parts of this chapter. This does not neglect insights from the three other approaches, but refers to them where needed.

The four levels of analysis: micro- (rational choice), meso- (organizational analysis), macro- (historical institutionalism) and meta- (cultural institutionalism), can be viewed as logical (ontological) distinctive (see Opielka, 2006). It should be noted that the distinctions proposed find some equivalent in the debate on secularization within the sociology of religion. Karel Dobbelaere argued that one should speak of secularization only when referring to all three dimensions – micro-, meso-, and macro. He mentioned first: individual secularization (‘religious involvement’), organizational secularization (‘religious change’) and societal secularization (Dobbelaere, 2004). Eventually, the fourth, meta-level could be added to his inclusive argument, although Dobbelaere and, following him, Mark Chaves (1994)

thought that the sociology of religion should emphasize the structural changes more than the analysis of meaning systems. Secularization on this level would mean that secular religions are gaining importance. I will pick up this option in the third section of the chapter, but concentrate next on controversies within the Christian discourses on welfare policies.

## CHRISTIANITY AND WELFARE POLICY CONFLICTS

Cultural institutionalism interprets cultural codes and symbols embedded in institutions. The oldest and up to now best-organized institution within Christianity is the Catholic Church. In his first Encyclical Letter *Deus caritas est*, published at Christmas 2005, Pope Benedict XVI, the German theologian Joseph Ratzinger, starts by focusing on the centre of Christian faith: “‘God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him’” (John, 4: 16). These words from the First Letter of John express with remarkable clarity the heart of the Christian faith: the Christian image of God and the resulting image of mankind and its destiny.’ The larger, Part II of the Encyclical Letter is devoted to ‘Caritas – The practice of love by the church as a “community of love”’ featuring the welfare activities of the Roman Catholic church itself (as *opus proprium*) and the promotion of welfare policies through their laity: ‘The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society, on the other hand, is proper to the lay faithful’ (Chapter 29, see [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va); Benedict XVI, 2006). Consequently the papal document refers in central passages to Saint Augustine (‘If you see charity, you see the Trinity’), which is interesting in two directions. Augustinian doctrine has been extremely influential in the development of Christian thinking. The dissertation of the Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt on Augustine’s concept of love is a remarkable document for its influence on individual ethics (Arendt, 2005). The second influence, on political ethics, is shown for example in Ratzinger’s dissertation (from 1951) on Augustine’s concept of the Church as ‘Civitas Dei’, and in the firm stand within the patristic doctrine of the ‘two states’ where the Church ‘itself cannot become something like a state’ (Ratzinger, [1951] 1992: XVII; translation by the author). In this Augustinian perspective – taken up as well by Martin Luther – the ‘limits of politics’ and the enduring, conflicting existence of ‘the good, the bad, and the ugly’, ‘*caritas* locked in combat with the contending force of *cupiditas*’ (Elshtain, 1995: 34, 36) design the reality of social life and therefore, that of today’s welfare policies. I shall take as an example of this the current welfare discourse in the USA.

The first of a series published as 'Pew Forum Dialogues on Religious and Public Life', endorsed by Jean Bethke Elshtain, brought together two prominent American welfare-policy theorists, Mary Jo Bane and Lawrence M. Mead (2003). Both present explicitly the religious basis of their very different approaches to poverty and welfare-policy decisions. Their controversy demonstrates strongly the legitimizing role of religious thinking within Christianity on central social-policy topics like the work ethic, or subsidiarity and solidarity as concepts of legitimating state intervention. Bane rests her arguments on a reading of Social Catholicism which asserts a 'preferential option for the poor'. She speaks of her 'Catholic sensibility', 'shaped every day by prayer and worship' (ibid.: 48), and that develops, in part, from her 'Catholic imagination', that 'at its best is hopeful rather than despairing, trusting rather than suspicious, more generous than prudent, more communitarian than individualistic' (ibid.: 14). It leads her to such principles as 'basic human rights' or a 'limited support for a market economy' (ibid.: 15). However, she is not critical of work requirements because of an 'argument voiced by many welfare recipients themselves: that they needed the push of a work requirement to overcome their own lack of initiative in finding jobs or training experiences' (ibid.: 47). But she avows 'generosity', especially with regard to the time limits imposed by the 1996 welfare reform (ibid.: 48–9). Mead, a well-known critic of welfare 'as we know it', argues from a quite individualistic reading of the Gospels stemming from a history of membership in a small Protestant denomination. For him work is neither a right that society must guarantee nor mainly even just a chance to participate in society as Bane argues, but an obligation that the poor owe to society in return for what it gives them. 'There is no preference for the poor' (ibid.: 9), so Mead, who calls for 'tough love' and borrows a phrase, found in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer that 'those who would be free must first be bound' (ibid.: 10).

The Catholic and the Protestant legitimation of welfare policies as presented by Bane and Mead shed a light on differences in practical politics. Bane labels herself a Democrat 'somewhat left-of-center', while Mead belongs to the Republican camp of policy advisors. The question: 'Who will provide?' (Bane et al., 2000) lies at the heart of the religious-value discourses which have characterized American social-policy debates since the nineteenth century (Skocpol, 2000). The theme of the 'transformation of the welfare state' (Gilbert, 2002) with a religious focus can be found in the ongoing national welfare debates. While in the United States the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in their famous 1986 letter on 'economic justice for all' still put the welfare-rights perspective in the foreground (Adloff, 2006) – as did the German Catholic and Protestant churches in their 1997 ecumenical document 'For a Future in Solidarity and Justice'

(*Für eine Zukunft in Solidarität und Gerechtigkeit*), the German Catholic bishops endorsed the 'activation' policies of the former German 'red-green' government in a controversial paper, *Impulswort*, published at the end of 2003 (Opielka, 2004b; Liedhegener, 2006).

One may wonder whether these religious intimations are anything more than a complimentary cultural echo to a shift in mainly political values, away from rights and towards obligations, in the politics of social assistance and unemployment, the fusion of religious and welfare-politics serving mainly politically to secure a conservative clientele in elections, as an element of 'moral politics' (Lakoff, 2002). Although this might be the case to some degree, it can be viewed, too, as part of a 'desecularization' movement – as Peter L. Berger (1999) has called it – with many recent examples and not only in the USA. The Bush administration offers federal employees a 'Catholic health plan' that specifically excludes payment for contraceptives, abortion, sterilization and artificial insemination as part of a \$1 billion project to involve religious organizations in all types of federal social programmes (*New York Times*, 25 September 2004). A 50-state study, the 'Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy', supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts, pointed to a mostly supportive environment for the 'Faith-Based Initiative' of the Bush administration, which promotes contracting between government agencies and religious charities without obliging them to neglect their religious identities (Ragan et al., 2003). As Frank Adloff (2006) remarks, the increasing structural and cultural impact of the Catholic Church and its charities on American social policy has been poorly researched up to now. The basic affirmation of social rights, egalitarianism and empowerment, and the strong alignment with trade unions since the beginning of the twentieth century, became characteristics of American Catholicism, while American Protestantism is much more split among political camps: 'On the national level, religious conservatives were the strongest advocates of charitable choice provision, political and religious liberals being its most vehement opponents. This mirrors a long-standing division within American religion' (ibid.: 21; see, too, Smith, 2000 and Wuthnow, 2005).

Religious reasoning emphasizes an important task for welfare-state analysis. Kees van Kersbergen demonstrated in his study of the long-overlooked role of Christian Democracy for the development of the welfare state in Europe that the debates within Catholicism between charity and social justice contributed immensely towards legitimizing a modern concept of social citizenship (Kersbergen, 1995: 192–204). In Germany, family policy was until the end of the 1990s the domain of the Christian Democrats. Both major reforms of the past 20 years – the introduction of parents' allowances in 1986 and the reform of the laws for the help for

young people in 1993, which came with a guarantee of kindergarten placement for every child over three years in Germany – have been more or less the accompanying result of new abortion regulations. Both reforms liberalizing abortion were heavily disputed, especially from within the Catholic Church. The new benefits for families have been viewed as kind of a complementary deal, improving the situation of families in order to lessen the need for taking advantage of the liberalized abortion law. The ‘structural neglect of the family’ in German social policy, as Franz-Xaver Kaufmann has criticized, may be tackled eventually only by religious legitimation (Kaufmann, 1989). In the meantime the Social Democrats and Greens have gone ahead and formulated explicit family policies (Bleses and Seeleib-Kaiser, 2004; Opielka, 2004a). The conservative-communitarian promotion of family labour (respectively, care work accomplished in families mainly by women) and family values has been pushed strongly by both Christian churches, not only in Germany but in other European welfare states as well (Fix, 2001).

## THEORETICAL DIMENSIONS OF RELIGIOUS WELFARE VALUES

If we take a deeper look at what legitimates the complex solidarity of modern welfare states we find a broad literature mainly focusing on two aspects: conceptions of justice and interest configurations. In recent times some scholars see, under the term ‘ethics of the welfare state’, value-legitimations. However, little research exists reflecting the religious foundations of welfare states. With the exceptions of Franz-Xaver Kaufmann’s analysis of the Christian roots of the European welfare state (Kaufmann, 1989; 1997), Elmar Rieger and Stephan Leibfried’s work on the development of welfare states in East Asia (Rieger and Leibfried, 2003; 2004), van Kersbergen’s study already mentioned, Ka Lin’s exploration of the ‘Confucian welfare cluster’ (Lin, 1999), and Philip Manow’s discussion of the Protestant roots of Swiss and Scandinavian social policies (Manow, 2004; for Scandinavia see also Lin, 2005), most researchers seem to avoid treating religion as an external variable of decision-makers or national cultures, or even as an independent variable belonging at the centre of social policy analysis. Up to the early 1990s this seemed a quite negligible problem because cultural or religious factors have seldom played a role in comparative research on the welfare state. Moreover such a theoretical perspective has been restricted to Europe with the running assumption that in the rest of the world – with the exception of the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – there are no welfare states at all.

The theory of welfare regimes developed by Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1990) distinguished three types of welfare regimes – the conservative, liberal and social democratic or socialist type – but all three were taken exclusively from the European, or respectively, the Anglo-Saxon world. In the 1990s the picture changed. Mainly as a consequence of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the following globalization debate, researchers realized that in all parts of the world welfare-state arrangements have been rapidly developing, in part for dozens of years, in part for shorter periods. One realized, for example, that nearly all Arab-Islamic states had installed social policies, some of them – like Iraq under Saddam Hussein – on a fairly large scale (Loewe, 2004; Heyneman, 2004), and one could observe more and more extended social policies in Asia (Aspalter, 2001; Gough and Wood, 2004; Croissant, 2004; Walker and Wong, 2005).

Additionally Samuel Huntington's (1996) thesis of a 'clash of civilizations' stimulated a broadening of the comparative perspective. He employed a typology of 'civilizations' grounded in the world religions. Half of its eight types are based on the Christian tradition, at least since the advent of modernity and colonialism: Western, Orthodox, Latin-American, African (versus the Islamic, Hindu, Sinic and Japanese). However, Huntington's types fuse quite unsystematically the religious and other cultural levels, which is astonishing because in his empirical analyses, for example on the consequences of Latin-American immigration into the USA, he shows intriguing insights into the tensions between religion and politics (2005: 81–107). Interestingly he, as most students of government in the political sciences, ignores social policy and therefore cannot contribute directly to our topic. But his culture-clash hypothesis has become itself an empirical, ideational fact in academic social sciences, and may, if unreflected, mislead comparative research. Huntington's essentialist conflation of culture and religion abuses categories as stereotypes.

The methodological problem of discriminating the role of religion in welfare-state analysis has been discussed in a controversy between Francis G. Castles and Göran Therborn over the question of whether a 'Catholic family of nations' exists in Western and Southern Europe. Castles argues carefully that a 'prima facie linkage between measures of Catholic adherence and a wide variety of policy outcomes' can be shown, but 'without any detailed account of the actors involved in the policy-process or the channels through which policy outcomes are determined' (Castles, 1994a: 20). Therborn (1994) doubts whether Catholicism as an independent variable holds for the results, especially concerning female labour-force participation (as policy outcome), because other variables – for example regional differences – do not count less. Castles' reply, however, points towards possible future research by focusing on a deficit in welfare-state research, on

‘the great body of those who have contributed to the battle between protagonists of the industrialization and “politics matters” paradigm in comparative public policy analysis . . . without noticing that other things matter as well’ (Castles, 1994b: 112).

One may doubt whether patterns of covariance are the most promising research path to explaining religious influences in contemporary welfare states. A broad body of research and discussion has emerged in comparative social-policy analysis on identifying dependent and independent variables, and especially on explaining welfare state reform. Stiller and van Kersbergen (2005: 17–18) made the argument that the concept of ‘ideational leadership’ can help explain why welfare states do experience at least some far-reaching reforms – although the advocates of the ‘path-dependency’ paradigm, and other policy analysts, doubt whether such reforms are possible at all. Against the ‘implicit conservatism’ of this paradigm (Beyer, 2005), the concept of ‘ideational leadership’ – characterized by a rejection of the status quo – advocates the legitimation of new policy principles, an appeal to reform critics, and efforts to build political coalitions. Overcoming institutional and electoral obstacles is a complex task which cannot be evaluated without accurate qualitative research methods. As mentioned, historical institutionalism, which focuses on the ideational processes in social-policy development, has emerged as an influential theoretical perspective in social-policy studies (Béland, 2005; Lieberman, 2002). Concerning the value programmes of the leading actors in those processes, it may be helpful to focus on religious dimensions as well. It is obvious that these dimensions cannot be restricted to the classical European religions: to Catholicism and Protestantism have to be added Orthodoxy, Judaism and atheism, making a quintet.

There is therefore the need for typologies of religion in order to combine them with the classification of welfare regimes. ‘Multiple modernities’ contain, as Shmuel Eisenstadt has theorized, ‘multiple religions’ (Eisenstadt, 2000). The growing awareness of the complexity and plurality of religions in the sociology of religion and in the sciences of religion has diluted the traditional quintet or septet of world religions – Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism, plus Confucianism and Daoism (Juergensmeyer, 2003). Some scholars even argue that political ideologies such as Communism or Fascism should be included because they represent values as strong as those of traditional religions (Hoffmann, 2003; Steigmann-Gall, 2003). Others such as Danièle Hervieu-Léger start out more sceptical towards an extended concept of religion and would limit it to those ‘chains of memory’ which constitute ‘religion as a particular form of belief and one that specifically implies reference to the authority of a tradition’ (2000: 4). But she also realizes that the conceptually indispensable

length of those chains is not easy to determine. Therefore it seems to me more fruitful to build on an inclusive but theoretically grounded typology of religions.

Recent developments within welfare regime theory have shown a tendency moving from the underlying and sometimes hidden assumption of convergence, towards divergence or diffusion, which has resulted from the use of more qualitative research methods, and the development of welfare 'clusters'. 'Though the regime theory originally focused on social stratification, social rights and labour market, it fosters the birth of the cultural study' (Lin, 1999: 21–2). Lin proposed, in his study of the 'Confucian Welfare Cluster', a more phenomenologically structured typology of welfare clusters, or types of welfare regimes, and their normative foundations (ibid.: 177). I will concentrate on the question whether certain religious 'clusters' are related to certain types of welfare regimes and their founding ideas concerning ideas of work, family and solidarity. I propose thereby a distinction between *thin* and *thick* concepts of religion, or, as was noted by Richard Madsen and Tracy B. Strong in a reader on pluralist ethics, between 'procedural' (classical liberalist, critico-theoretical or feminist) and 'perfectionist' (religious) concepts of values (Madsen and Strong, 2003: 2–3).

Parsons argues that religion is the social subsystem which organizes, through 'ultimate values', the society's relations to an 'ultimate reality'. For Parsons the religious subsystem however is part of the 'culture' system, which is not part of society but a system of meanings – external to society, such as the personality or biological system (Parsons, 1978) – relying upon an epistemology ('eternal objects', as derived by Alfred N. Whitehead) (Opielka, 2006). Religion in this perspective is mainly viewed as a symbol system (Cassirer, [1944] 1992; Vogl, 1999). Such a concept makes sense because religious texts or world views bear an inner structural logic not directly reducible to social actors and systems, although, as Randall Collins has shown, the development of ideas and values is always connected to social actors and systems (Collins, 1998). It seems important to identify those parts of the social system which are the bearers of religion and other cultural phenomena: the individual, organizational, and societal structures and institutions as discussed in the first part of this chapter. But, aside from the technical critique, Parsons' focus on 'ultimate values' is striking. It is worth mentioning that a definition of the social subsystem religion by 'ultimate values' must include both a systems perspective on the meaning derived from an 'ultimate reality', and an action-perspective on religion as ritualized practice towards this reality and evoking thereby those values (Pollack, 2003). Berger described the societal result of religions: 'The fundamental "recipe" of religious legitimation is the transformation of human

products into supra- or non-human facticities. The humanly made world is explained in terms that deny its human production' (Berger, 1967: 89). One could view this focus as basis for a thick definition of religion (opposing the narrow definition of traditional religious studies): religion is theory and practice, doctrine and ritual of ultimate values. In this way doctrine and meaning is dialectically coupled to the complex web of institutional practices as discussed in the first section of the chapter.

The argument for such a dialectical view may become clearer if we look upon the institutional side of society. What could be the criteria for judging which religion may be acknowledged as one, with all the attendant privileges? Welfare conceptions of religions are one indicator of their social relevance; I refer thereby to Hanegraaff's (1998) distinction between 'religions' – having societal impact – and 'spiritualities' – as individualistic manipulations of magic. I endorse a broad concept of religion, a theory of multiple religions (more details in Opielka, 2003b; 2007). It starts from the definition that religion organizes societies' relations with 'ultimate values', and the communication with those spheres of the world which are taken to be the source of those values. Corresponding to a Neo-Parsonian theory of the fourfold division of society (Opielka, 2006), one may distinguish four logically different types of religious foundations:

1. the *scientific religions* (for example, Marxism) (Level 1 – grounding ultimate values in the material sphere of nature);
2. the *subjective* (or *psychological*) *religions* (for example, psychoanalysis or Nietzscheanism) (Level 2 – grounding ultimate values in the subject/individual);
3. the *communitarian religions* (for example, Confucianism) (Level 3 – grounding ultimate values in the social sphere itself);
4. the *spiritual religions* (for example, Christianity, Buddhism or Islam) (Level 4 – grounding ultimate values transcendentally, beyond nature, person, and society).

It is very important to mention that a logical hierarchy in the Parsonian tradition is by no means a valuing hierarchy, because the four levels are logically irreducible.

As we can see in Table 5.1 the reference areas of the four levels are four: the material world for the scientific religions; the subject and its inner world for the subjective religions; the particular community for the communitarian religions; and the spiritual world for the spiritual religions. Within the latter one can find the same analytic order again, and expect that the logic can be found within every cell itself, just by looking at the enormous differentiations within the (traditional, spiritual) world religions, for

Table 5.1 Functional types of religion and social policy

Functional type of religion	Scientific religion (L1)	Subjective religion (L2)	Communitarian religion (L3)	Spiritual religion (L4)			
Specified religions	Marxism (materialism)	'Psychoanalysis' 'Nietzscheanism'	Confucianism	Daoism (L1)	Islam Judaism (L2)	Christianity (L3)	Buddhism, Hinduism (L4)
	Secular humanism						
Subsystems of reference in differentiated societies ( <i>ethical values</i> )	Science	Human rights	Civil religion	religion			
	( <i>Truth</i> ) <i>Freedom</i>	( <i>Human rights</i> ) <i>Equality</i>	<i>Solidarity</i>	( <i>spiritual</i> ) <i>justice</i>			
Image of god	Natural logic	'Übermensch' (Super Human; Nietzsche)	Holiness of the worldly (Tao)	Tao (Way)	Monotheism	Monotheism	Nirvana ('a-theos'), spirit
Types of justice	Need	Achievement	Status	Spiritual (divine) justice			
Ideologies of social policy	Socialism	Liberalism	Familism ('Xiao')		Self-help, paternalism	Social market	
Types of welfare states	Communism, strong welfare state	Minimal state	'Confucian welfare state'			Social insurance state	

Note: The abbreviations L1 to L4 mark the four analytical levels of social action within a sociological approach developed mainly from Talcott Parsons' so-called AGIL-theory: Level 1 marks the adaptive, Level 2 the strategic, Level 3 the communicative and Level 4 the meta-communicative mode of action and system building (Opielka, 2006).

Source: Modified from Opielka (2003a).

example Shia and Sunna or Protestantism and Catholicism, as mentioned in the controversy between Bane and Mead above.

I pick out three of the presumably most uncommon elements of this functional perspective, which will help categorize not only religion and welfare policies on a global scale, but also shed new light on the heritage of cultural values in Europe (Joas and Wiegandt, 2005).

First, why are scientific and subjective ('existentialist') world views included in a typology of religion? For most researchers of religion, Marxism and other world views which are or claim to be based on scientific knowledge (such as socio-biological Nazi ideology) do not count as religions but merely as agnosticism, atheism, or nihilism. Marxism, in its strong variant of Stalinism (Hoffmann, 2003), as well as in its weaker version of critical theory (Mendieta, 2005), insists on the this-worldly nature of redemption which can be scientifically understood ('historical materialism') and politically promoted, with the final goal of the strong welfare state in a Communist society. Concerning the inner-worldliness of their value foundation, Communism and Fascism seem close, although with remarkable differences. The Nazi effort to establish a kind of religion to overthrow Christendom by combining some of its elements with a mixture of neo-paganism and racial theories (Steigmann-Gall, 2003) must be put among the scientific religions. Recent research by Götz Aly (2005) has shown that the German form of fascism combined racist political religion systematically with a strong social policy. All scientific religions also tend to be active in the formation of societal structures for inner-worldly redemption; they develop complex doctrines and ritualized practices.

When Parsons argued that secularization has to be viewed as the internalization of religious values into societal institutions, norms and values, he focused on the Judeo-Christian tradition (Parsons, 1978: 240–1). Marxist and humanist traditions he labelled as 'secular humanism'. Scientific and subjective (or 'psychological') religions both argue that 'ultimate reality' is to be found either in the empirical (material) sphere or within the individual (their will). Both religions count as 'secular' world views. For adherents of 'subjective religion', as secular adherents of psychoanalysis (Rustin, 1999; Black, 2006), human rights have the quality of 'ultimate values' because they see within the individual the final source of all values. They neither understand nor accept that, for believers in 'spiritual religions' – who identify not the individual but rather God (or different conceptions of God) as the 'ultimate' source of human rights – human rights may be extremely important in the social, and especially, political sphere (Spickard, 1999). The only real agnostics or nihilists – and so far the only non-religious and truly 'secular' world views – would be those who simply refuse *any* search or hypotheses concerning 'ultimate values'. Such

hedonistic, or extremely pragmatic, ‘procedural’ theories exist, but in an overview of the history of philosophy they make for only a small fraction of societally relevant world views. The great advantage of such a broad concept of religion – well in line with such recent debates in the sociology of religion as Thomas Luckmann’s concept of ‘invisible religion’ (Luckmann, [1967] 1991; 2002) and the sciences of religion (Kippenberg and Stuckrad, 2003) – lies in its eye-opening competition between all theories and – making it important to speak of ‘religions’ and not just philosophies or ethics – practices of ‘ultimate values’.

The second element which may seem innovative is the functional order within the spiritual religions themselves. We distinguish the common ‘world religions’ – Confucianism being excluded, with some reason, from the spiritual religions – by the same logical system of functional references and modes of action. To employ a more metaphorical use of the logical references, one could say that Daoism views the spiritual world as spiritual economy; Judaism and Islam conceptualize the spiritual world as God-ridden, as a world of God’s laws or spiritual politics (see Khoury, 2006 for Islam); Christian religions put emphasis on the community of God and mankind (which goes beyond the Jewish ‘bond’ between God and His chosen people) created by the basic similarity between God and Human, and – especially in Catholicism – the concept of spiritual community with Christ (within liturgy), with the saints and as a community of believers; and the more esoteric religions which see the whole world as spiritually driven (Hinduism, Buddhism) or which gravitate between the methodologies of religion and sciences (such as Anthroposophy or, mixing humanist philosophy and esotericism, Freemasonry) (Opielka, 2007).

Jan Assmann has developed a theoretical perspective on religion as ‘cultural memory’, which transcends and permeates particular traditions, symbols and rituals (Assmann, 2006). However, any inclusive typology lacks the differentiations needed for a vivid picture of reality and, moreover, it should be viewed as showing only ‘ideal types’ in the sense of Max Weber (Kippenberg, 2002). The reality is, by contrast, mixed. The need for such typologies is obvious: they are, as part of a grounded theory, an unavoidable tool for empirical research which otherwise remains phenomenological and could not permeate to an explanatory level.

The last point concerns the social-policy side of the typology. The indicators in the left column of Table 5.1 cover the meaning dimensions of the religious-value basis of welfare policies, without going into depth on their structural and institutional features. Insofar as they may not be self-explanatory, I refer to other publications (Opielka, 2003a, b; 2007). One of the most striking aspects of this analytical typology may be the fact that at the lowest logical level (1 – scientific religions) appears the most utopian

idea of a welfare state, while the highest level (4 – the spiritual religions of Buddhism and Hinduism, as well as the Western esotericism of freemasonry, anthroposophy, and the ‘New-Age religions’) seems to represent the least-developed welfare-state conceptions. The shaded fields reflect not only a lack of research but probably a ‘lack of modernization’ of those world religions which have a marginal input of ‘ultimate values’ for the development of modern welfare states. Of course this may change, and one can observe already some inspiring contributions among those shaded areas, an example being the Buddhist concept of compassion as a basis for a social and environmental ethics which bridges the gap between social and environmental policy. Also promising are always the mixtures of different religious strands, as in Buddhism and Marxism in Taiwan and East Asia (Pye, 1989; Jones, 2000); Confucianism and Marxism in China (Chow, 1987; Bell and Chaibong, 2003; Wong and Wong, 2004); or Christianity and Marxism respectively in social democracy (Kaufmann, 1989; 1997; Kersbergen, 1995). The question, why within the Christian tradition the welfare state has been developed first and foremost, cannot be answered by a typology alone, of course. But we may argue that the Western combination of secular humanism and Christianity was the catalyst for combining, in turn, democracy, work and welfare ethics, and the legal state as the structural and ideational basis for the modern welfare state.

Up to now there have been few studies focusing on welfare regimes on a world scale (Esping-Andersen, 1997; Jones, 1993; Lin, 1999; Gough and Wood, 2004; for an overview see Arts and Gelissen, 2002). Still fewer studies exist which focus explicitly on the value-basis of welfare regimes (Merkel, 2002). A fruitful analysis of this basis requires a theory of the multiplicity of religions in order to avoid being overwhelmed by an incredible amount of theoretical and empirical data. With the 1999–2000 waves of the European and the World Values Surveys exists an impressive array of cross-national empirical data on the attitudes of over 80 per cent of the world’s population towards values and beliefs (Norris and Inglehart, 2004; Arts et al., 2003). Although the findings on religious change have not yet been evaluated sufficiently (Halman and Riis, 2003b), the data promise at least some plausibility for the use of religious clusters as proposed in the typology here. But to explain why some values systems could, up to now, develop different types of welfare regimes, and others not, such as Buddhism or the Hinduism, will scarcely be explained by the attitudes of the populations alone. It must include an analysis of the attitudes (and interests) of the respective elites, and of the overall institutional design of the societies (Welzel et al., 2003).

The discussion of Table 5.1 may have shown that there exist good reasons, first, to employ a broad concept of religion, and second, to conceptualize a systematic theory of multiple religions. It should be noted that

an 'ideal-type' typology as discussed here does not assume conformity within the ideal types. Indeed, the culture clash hypothesis of Huntington has been rebutted strongly because of this assumption. Several authors have proved empirically that inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts within Huntington's 'civilizations' account for nearly all armed conflicts since 1989 (Henderson, 2005). One could question, going much further, the strict separation of those religions which the 'civilizations' are supposed to be based on, and look into the mixtures of religions within families, within individuals themselves, and within an all-encompassing 'world ethic' (Küng, 1991). Additionally, it may turn out that the 'civilizations' themselves change their religious core culture. Aikman (2002) supposes that by the 2030s, one-third of China's population could be Christian, which would change the global position of China markedly. The same would hold true if today's European Muslim minority grew into one-third of the population after an EU integration of Turkey, and demographic changes as well as migration stayed on their present course (Gerhards, 2005).

## RELIGION AND WELFARE POLICIES: AN OUTLOOK

Although Christian concepts such as the Catholic principle of 'subsidiarity' or the Protestant principle of 'Preference for the Poor' (Bedford-Strohm, 1993) have penetrated into secular political discourses, one may wonder which institutions in Europe would be able to compete with the Christian churches in the anchoring of ultimate welfare values.

The broad typology of religions discussed in this chapter shows that the religions of 'secular humanism' – the scientific religions like Marxism, or the subjective religions of aesthetics and self-expression – are robust and well-established frameworks for the development of 'ultimate values'. From a Christian point of view this may sound heretical, or at least agnostic. That scientific and psychological explanations of the empirical world could gain the respect of, especially, the Catholic Church, required a long battle. Ever since Georg W.F. Hegel's discussion of 'Belief and Knowledge' (first published in 1802) and Jürgen Habermas' reappraisal of a new coexistence of both modes of evaluation (Habermas, 2005), any Christian foundations of the welfare state have had to be conceptualized in the context of competing value formulations. The European heritage of cultural values brings pluralism of value systems alongside the Christian tradition and into complex combinations with it (Eco and Cardinal Martini, 1997; Joas and Wiegandt, 2005).

What may be the fruits of this conceptualizing for a comparative analysis of social welfare? In a handbook of comparative social policy, James

Midgley lamented the lack of a clear analysis of welfare values. He argues that 'mainstream comparative social policy inquiry has neglected normative and practical issues, preferring instead to pursue classificatory and explanatory activities . . . because the implicit normative preferences in mainstream scholarship reflect the dominance of Western ideologies, they are of limited use in assessing social welfare in societies where different cultural and social traditions are valued' (Midgley, 2004: 218). In this chapter one may have found some of these normative issues – reflected perhaps through a Western bias, but perhaps also in spite of it.

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## PART II

### Worlds of Welfare Culture



## 6. European and American welfare values: case studies in cash benefits reform

**Robert Walker**

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The main title above, 'European and American welfare values', is intimidating in its scope and level of generality. With welfare and values broadly defined, it seems to demand a comprehensive account of the culture and lives of a sixth of the people on the planet. The subtitle, 'Case studies in cash benefits reform', defines a more manageable task that can still inform broader issues. The intention is to explore similarity and difference and to engage the reader in attributing meaning to any differences revealed. The focus on reform is deliberate since it is at times of reform that values are most likely to be made explicit in policy proposals and legislation, and for culture to be exposed in the limits to reform, both in terms of the opportunity sets of reforms considered and in the opposition engendered by them (Walker, 2005). The concentration on cash benefits is pragmatic. Defined to include contributory, means-tested and citizenship benefits, but restricted to those aimed at persons of working age, this focus reveals important fault-lines in cultures, culture being defined as a term 'summing up beliefs, norms, institutions and traditional ways of "doing things" in a society' (Zetterholm, 1994: 2).

Cultures are constantly evolving and differentiated products stemming from the actions and interactions of individuals, with some groups having the power to influence cultural processes more than others (Clarke, 2004). In federal systems of governance, the influence of culture may be evident at all levels from that of the individual voter to actors operating at federal level (Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003). There will be cultural congruence and dissonance between these different levels of governance but, observed over time, it may be possible to judge which sets of values gain ascendancy or lose out as cultures, ways of doing things, diffuse and coalesce. For simplicity's sake, evidence here is drawn from just three levels: individual citizens as revealed by responses to opinion surveys and the top two tiers of federal (or, in Europe, quasi-federal) governance. Data availability determines the time horizon, namely the last decade.

## EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN SOCIAL MODELS

### **Federal Perspectives**

In the global competition for influence, members of the European policy elite explicitly use the European Social Model to differentiate the European way of doing things from others especially that of the USA. The European Trade Union Confederation argues that the Social Model 'is what distinguishes Europe, where post-war social progress has matched economic growth, from the US model, where small numbers of individuals have benefited at the expense of the majority. Europe must continue to sustain this social model as an example for other countries around the world' (<http://www.etuc.org/a/111>).

Likewise, Anna Diamantopoulou (2003: 1), speaking as the European Commissioner responsible for Employment and Social Affairs opined, in 2003, that 'many see the notion . . . [of the European Social Model] . . . as a way of saying that EU work and welfare policy is not the same as, for example, US policy in these fields' (Diamantopoulou, 2003: 1).

Academics in the USA also often use the term as shorthand to signal the more generous benefit systems, more egalitarian wage and income distributions and greater incorporation of the labour movement in the policy process (Trubek and Mosher, 2001). American polemicists are apt to use the model as a form of abuse, castigating Europe for its comparative economic failure (Smadja, 2005).

At the European level, the Social Model is inherently aspirational, hinting, in Diamantopoulou's words, 'at a progressive real convergence of views among Member States on the broad objectives which they seek to achieve in employment and social policy' (2003: 3). As enunciated at an informal meeting of social security ministers at Nafplio, Greece in January 2003, it comprises four 'common principles' that might sound like apple pie from a European perspective but might cause the average US politician indigestion. Europe's success must not exclude anyone. Solidarity should be linked to economic success. There is neither dilemma nor contradiction between economic and social progress; and the welfare state is a factor of production not a luxury or a by-product of economic development.

The European reality differs radically from these aspirations, in part because the European Union is still primarily an economic institution and the subsidiarity principle means that social policy remains within the competence of Member States rather than being the responsibility of European institutions. Indeed, it might be argued that the Nafplio formulation of the Social Model is rhetorical rather than aspirational, partly special pleading to increase the visibility of social issues within the European agenda.

Nevertheless, the Social Model finds embryonic form in the Social Chapter of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty that implemented the Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights, and in the Lisbon Strategy of March 2000. After Lisbon, Europe was 'to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth *with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*' (EC, 2000, emphasis added). It is more clearly evident in the Open Method of Coordination applied to social inclusion and pensions, especially in the social indicators used to assess developments with respect to the former (Atkinson et al., 2002).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Social Model has gradually been strengthened by case law established through judgments of the European Court of Justice particularly in relation to equal opportunities. However, revisions to the Lisbon strategy in 2005 may have shifted priorities away from social issues (Euractiv, 2005), although, at the time of writing (January 2006), it is unclear whether this will prove to be a long-lasting cultural shift.

The European Social Model was originally employed as a generalized description of the national welfare provisions of European countries. Such provisions typically embrace: social citizenship – rights to education, health and cash benefits; economic citizenship – rights to employee representation, trade union recognition; employment rights governing conditions of service and providing for sickness and unemployment payments; and a commitment to significantly curbing social inequalities perpetuated by the labour market and wealth holding (Wickham, 2002). Inherent in such an account is the role of the national state as guarantor of social cohesion (a concept meaning more or less the opposite of American individualism and minimal government) and social inclusion, the un-American notion that no-one should be left too far behind whatever their reason for lagging.

As already implied, the values espoused by the US political elite are very different from those that underpin the European Social Model. Former President Clinton spoke often of three fundamental American values, namely those of 'ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives; expecting every citizen to shoulder the responsibility to seize that opportunity, and working together as a community to live up to all we can be as a nation' (Clinton, 1996).

Across the political spectrum, itself narrow and skewed to the right in European terms, one finds this pervading commitment to individualism, the work ethic and liberal notions of self-help. The individualism is *laissez-faire* to varying degrees, differing over time and between Democrat and Republican, while Clinton's reference to community is likely to conjure up to Americans images of the family and the immediately locality, nostalgia for homestead and Thanksgiving Day, rather than collective action. As individuals, Haveman (1988: 17) writes, 'Americans tend to be a generous

and helping lot' but 'it is difficult to argue that [they] have a deep and long-standing national commitment to social justice and equality'. Freedom is generally defined negatively as 'freedom from' interference rather as the liberating 'freedom to' made possible by resources and guaranteed opportunities. Consequently, government's 'interference' is minimized except when aimed to correct market imperfections. Indeed, Handler and Hasenfeld (1997: 20) argue that the history and structure of the US welfare state serve to reinforce 'dependence on the private labor market rather than providing alternatives to paid employment'.

As Americans, Handler and Hasenfeld are unusual in referring to a US welfare state. The term 'welfare' is generally reserved for two means-tested programmes: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF; formerly AFDC, Aid for Families with Dependent Children), payable predominantly to lone parents; and Food Stamps, means-tested coupons to reduce food expenditures that assist farmers as well as poor people.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, it was concerns about these programmes that generated the pervasive sense from the 1960s onwards that US welfare was in crisis (Weaver, 2000). Jimmy Carter, campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1974, stated to applause that 'The word "welfare" no longer signifies how much we care, but often arouses feelings of contempt and even hatred' and later complained that 'Welfare waste robs both the taxpayers of our country and those who really and genuinely need help. It often forces families to split. It discourages people from seeking work' (Carter, 1977).

Moreover, those on the radical right, such as Charles Murray (1984), were later to convince legislators that these deficiencies were an inevitable consequence of public provision and, while total abolition was never seriously considered, Clinton was able to capitalize on such sentiments with his election winning slogan 'Ending Welfare as We Know It' (Wiseman, 2003).

In sum, America and Europe differ in terms of beliefs, norms and welfare institutions. American welfare culture prioritizes the work ethic, economic success, individualism, individual opportunity, and liberal notions of self-help. Provision is limited, frequently means-tested and often viewed as a brake on economic success. In Europe, comprehensive welfare provision is believed to be an integral complement to economic progress. The core values of social citizenship and social cohesion are expressed as political goals and pursued by proactive governance, often with the constructive engagement of employers and trade unions.

### **Nations and States**

But the above is not to suggest that national welfare culture is homogeneous any more than one would assert lifestyles in New England are the same as

those in California or that Munichers do not differ from the residents of Hamburg. As long ago as 1996, Elazar distinguished three different political cultures in the USA that underpinned welfare provision at state level; distinctions that Mead (2003) maintains remain generally applicable today. The origins of the moralist culture prevailing in northern New England, the upper Midwest, parts of the West and Northwest and California, Elazar traced to their early settlement by Protestants from Britain, Scandinavia, and Germany. From the start, they sought to assist the poor but on condition that adults did all that they could to help themselves. A community commitment to enhancing the common good produced strong effective government underpinned by a public service ethos. This, in turn, delivered comparatively generous benefits that were nevertheless often conditional; in recent years strong work and child support enforcement has been introduced.

Individualism, the presiding value of which is tolerance, predominates in the Mid-Atlantic states and the lower Midwest, both areas that were originally settled by diverse groups from Germany, Britain and elsewhere in Europe who accepted democracy but prioritized capitalism and personal self-interest. Politics, itself, became an arena for the practice of this self-interest with politicking and compromise justified or rationalized by reference to the public good. In US terms, this resulted in comparatively generous benefits and large, but somewhat inefficient, government staffed by careerists supported by patronage rather than by persons motivated by public ideals.

The political culture of the South and South West, that Elazar characterized as traditionalist was, and remains, very different. Politics is practised by an elite united in the aim of maintaining the status quo that, in earlier years, meant a racial caste structure (Mead, 2003). Personalized faction is often more important than party. Moreover, there remains a broad failure to accept social responsibility for the poor, witnessed graphically in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005. Benefit levels are low, sanctions are rigorously enforced and the underlying ethos is to minimize public expenditures on welfare.

Different welfare cultures are also evident in Europe. Precisely how they are characterized depends on which dimensions of difference are prioritized and whether reliance is placed on theoretical or empirical models (Arts and Gelissen, 2002). Ferrera (1996) takes four dimensions (eligibility criteria, benefit formulae, financing regulations and organizational and managerial arrangements) and divides the European 15 into four types: Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, Bismarckian and Southern.<sup>3</sup> In terms of Zetterholm's (1994) characterization of culture introduced above, Ferrera, therefore, prioritizes institutions and methods over beliefs and norms which need to be inferred. Scandinavian countries (defined in this chapter to include Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) afford social protection based on citizenship

rights and provide a generous and universal coverage of risk. Equality and employment are prioritized and the state accorded a major role as both provider and regulator.

Anglo-Saxon culture, as practised in Britain and Ireland, shares premises with the US federal model. The market is the prime allocator of resources and there is a presumption of self-reliance and a preponderance of means-testing with low (in European terms), flat-rate benefits to minimize work disincentives. Unlike the USA, both Britain and Ireland have comprehensive state-funded health systems, benefits to part cover the costs of child-care and a rights-based, publicly funded safety-net.

The five European member states that continue the legacy of Prussia under Bismarck (the Benelux countries, France and Germany) emphasize social cohesion that is achieved through a hierarchy of defined responsibilities from families to the federal state at the top, underpinned by compulsory insurance funded by employees, employers and the state. Like moralist state welfare in the USA, the Bismarckian culture emphasizes collaboration and compromise to benefit the common good. However, it assigns a greater role than moralist welfare to the labour movement working in partnership with employers and government balancing the pursuit of economic efficiency against social objectives.

Earlier analysts tended to include the four countries comprising Ferrera's fourth welfare culture, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal with Bismarckian countries. They did so because of the important legacy of the Catholic Church and the primacy given to the family. However, while basic health care is generally available, other social insurance is more fragmentary and social assistance, prior to engagement with the European Union, was largely non-existent. Moreover, resonant of the politics of the traditional states in the USA, there is evidence of welfare and employment being used to solicit and retain power.

Ferreira and Figueiredo (2005) have recently expanded Ferrera's analysis to 22 of the current 25 Member States based on six statistical factors, the main two indexing inequality in opportunity and outcomes and educational achievement respectively. Their work blurs the first three of Ferrera's cultural types, leaves intact the southern, Mediterranean group, and adds a third comprising the majority of accession member states but including Ireland. The suggestion is that cultural fault lines between the north and south and east and west in Europe are even more marked than those between the Scandinavian, Bismarckian and Anglo-Saxon welfare states.

It is apparent, therefore, that distinctive welfare subcultures exist within Europe and the United States, the products of a complex interplay between history, geography, religion, ethnicity, accident and path dependency. There may even be a degree of congruence between welfare cultures in parts of

Europe and America, and almost certainly a historic legacy of cultural and policy transfers westward across the Atlantic that may recently have been reversed (see Lødemel and Trickey, 2001 and below).

### **Public Opinion**

The logic of democracy suggests that one would expect a degree of coincidence between public opinion and the welfare cultures evident at national and federal level. Equally, though, not all policy actors and opinion leaders are subject to the discipline of the ballot box and political elites may paternalistically move beyond public opinion or even pursue their narrow self-interests. Empirical evidence, albeit comparatively weak, suggests that the differences found in national welfare cultures in Europe and North America are broadly replicated by public opinion.

Inglehart and Welzel (2005) plot national attitudes on two major dimensions derived from responses to ten indicators administered in surveys in 83 countries (the World Values Survey).<sup>4</sup> A horizontal dimension differentiates industrial and pre-industrial societies from post-industrial ones; in the former, issues concerned with survival remain paramount, whereas in the latter relative affluence allows populations to focus on self-expression and to give voice to aspirations for political participation, diversity and environmental protection. A vertical, and statistically more important, dimension distinguishes traditional societies, where religion is often central, from those that emphasize secular-rational values. In 'traditional' societies, respondents ascribe to absolute standards, show deference to authority and stress the importance of traditional family values while rejecting divorce, abortion or euthanasia.

These contrasting norms find expression in an adherence to particular institutions. A rising sense of subjective well-being is associated with 'an atmosphere of tolerance, trust and political moderation', an attachment to individual freedom and self-expression and to active political engagement. This contrasts with societies in which there is 'an overwhelming emphasis on economic and physical security', where hard-work is prioritized and less attention is paid to the need for open, accountable political institutions.

Countries of pre-accession Europe and North America congregate in and towards the top quadrant of Inglehart and Welzel's plot, indexing moderate to high scores on self-expression and secular values. Protestant Europe especially but excluding Britain, appears more secular and committed to self-expression than Catholic Europe, while the English-speaking world, the USA and Ireland in particular, though prioritizing individual freedom and self-expression, nevertheless espouse traditional values especially in relation to the work ethic. Respondents from ex-communist

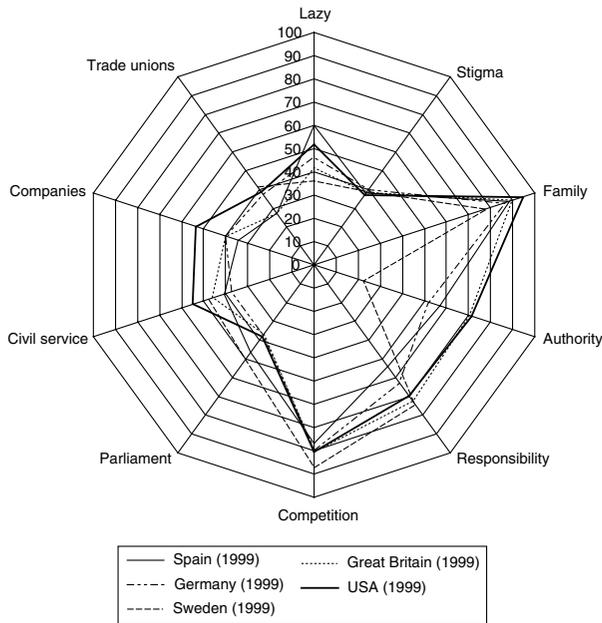
Europe share secular values with the rest of Europe but focus more on issues of basic survival.

These public attitudes echo the institutional welfare cultures described above; evidence that democracy can give practical realization to (or shape) the values of self-expression upon which it is founded and nourished. In terms of commitment to self-expression, American respondents have values that fall well within the pre-accession European range. However, Americans' commitment to traditional values, the family and the work ethic provides a popular basis for the fault line already identified between US welfare and the European social model. However, while the degree of traditionalism in the USA is akin to that in India, respondents in Ireland and Portugal were even more traditionalist (similar, in fact, to Catholic Latin America). Indeed, the difference in the attachment to traditional values observed between Sweden and Ireland exceeds that between Russia and Bangladesh or between Finland and Tanzania.

The different values of American and European respondents do not necessarily result in large or consistently different responses to specific issues. Figure 6.1 compares public opinion recorded in the 1999 World Values Survey on ten issues in five countries, the United States and one European country representing each of Ferrera's four welfare cultures. The plots for each country are of a similar size and shape indicating a communality of views with the only major discrepancy being the Swedes' refusal to respect authority.

Large majorities in each country wanted more emphasis placed on family life, were individualistic in prioritizing individual responsibility over government support and believed competition to be beneficial in stimulating hard work and innovation. There were diverse views within each country concerning the degree of confidence that people had in the institutions of governance, parliament and the civil service, but scepticism was generally the norm<sup>5</sup>. Confidence in big business, though not widespread, exceeded the faith that people had in trade unions.

Between-country differences were largely matters of degree rather than kind. More Americans and Britons emphasized the traditional values of family, authority, personal responsibility and competition than was the case elsewhere, although large numbers of Swedes also stressed the value of competition and personal responsibility. In fact, American and British respondents generally had very similar views except that Americans placed more faith in big business and the civil service than Britons did. Some national differences were evident in attitudes to welfare and poverty. Although similar sized majorities in each country rejected the suggestion that it was 'humiliating to receive money without having to work for it', the proportion of respondents believing that 'people who don't work turn lazy'



*Notes:*

The plot charts responses to the following questions, as shown in brackets:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

**Stigma:** It is humiliating to receive money without having to work for it

**Lazy:** People who don't work turn lazy ('Agree' and 'Strongly agree')

I'm going to read out a list of various changes in our way of life that might take place in the near future. Please tell me for each one, if it were to happen, whether you think it would be a good thing, a bad thing, or don't you mind?

**Family:** More emphasis on family life ('A good thing')

**Authority:** Greater respect for authority ('A good thing')

**Responsibility:** 1: People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves 10: The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for (Scores 1 to 5).

**Competition:** 1: Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas 10: Competition is harmful. It brings out the worst in people (Scores 1 to 5).

I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

**Parliament:** ('A great deal' and 'Quite a lot')

**Civil service:** ('A great deal' and 'Quite a lot')

**Companies (major):** ('A great deal' and 'Quite a lot')

**Trade (labour) unions:** ('A great deal' and 'Quite a lot')

*Source:* Derived from the World Values Survey, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>

Figure 6.1 Public opinion in selected countries, 1999

*Table 6.1 Views on the causes of poverty, 1999*

Why are there people in this country who live in need? (percentages)	Great Britain (1999)	Germany (1999)	Spain (1999)	Sweden (1999)	USA (1997)	What is the bigger cause of poverty today?
Injustice in society	32	45	48	49		
Part modern progress	23	17	10	33	44	Circumstances beyond control
Unlucky	16	11	20	11		
Laziness/lack of willpower	25	24	20	8	39	Insufficient effort
None of these	4	3	2	0	17	Both (volunteered)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	

*Source:* World Values Survey and Weaver, 2000.

varied from 37 per cent in Sweden to 60 per cent in Spain. There are national differences, too, in the explanations that people give for poverty (Table 6.1). Swedes were more likely to attribute need to modern progress and injustice than Britons and probably Americans were. (A different question was asked of Americans.) Two-fifths of Americans suggested that insufficient effort was to blame; four times as many as in Sweden and twice the number of Spaniards who blamed laziness or lack of willpower.

It would therefore appear from opinion polls that national welfare cultures largely reflect the values held by electorates. Equally, though, Americans and Europeans share many core values relating to the importance of the family and the benefits of hard work and competition. They are also similarly sceptical about the effectiveness of government institutions. This suggests that the relatively marked differences in welfare cultures reflect quite small variations in basic values which may be because policies are a product of the competitive democratic process that encourages differences in values to be exaggerated.

## CASE STUDIES OF WELFARE REFORM

During the last decade or so, many countries have undertaken reforms in response to the perceived threat of globalization and associated concerns

about falling profit margins, increased unemployment and the need for labour market flexibility. The reforms have often followed, or paid lip-service to, the same policy prescription: the 1994 OECD *Jobs Study* (Cebulla, 2005; Andersen, 2002; Walker, 2001). This report, which strongly reflected US thinking, advocated that 'countries should legislate for only moderate levels of benefit, maintain effective checks on eligibility, and guarantee places on active programmes as a substitute for paying passive income support indefinitely' (OECD, 1994: 48). Reforms in four countries are discussed below in terms of what they reveal about welfare cultures.

### **US Reform: 'Ending Welfare as we Know it'**

The 1996 reform of US welfare and subsequent attempts at further restructuring, while driven by purely domestic concerns, were nevertheless consistent with the Jobs Study paradigm. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) replaced Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the major social assistance programme that had been claimed largely by lone mothers of whom disproportionate numbers were African-Americans. States were given greater freedom in programme design but federal funding for TANF was made subject to a 60-month lifetime limit for any individual, and states were given targets for the enrolment of benefit recipients in work-related activities. In so doing, the USA became the first major democracy to eliminate individual entitlement to the social safety net. Following the reforms, the numbers of claimants fell by more than half, the proportion of lone parents working increased and poverty rates fell (albeit largely the consequence of a buoyant economy (Ziliak, 2003)). However, in the five years following the reforms, 29 states reduced or failed to increase the nominal value of benefits, take-up declined, the proportion of poor families receiving TANF or food stamps reduced and the incidence of lone parents combining work with welfare decreased (Wiseman, 2003). US commentators are largely agreed that the reforms were an overall success, albeit a qualified one (Walker and Wiseman, 2003a).

The consensus among policy-makers prior to reform was that AFDC encouraged dependency (long-term usage as the principal source of income), rewarded irresponsible behaviour and invited abuse (Wiseman, 2003). Murray (1984) argued that the very existence of AFDC provided a rational alternative to work and marriage and, together with crime, fuelled the economy of the urban ghetto. Others (e.g. Haveman, 1988 and Ellwood, 1988) resisted the wholesale dismantling of welfare believing that people at times needed financial assistance and that the disincentives problem could be addressed or, as Mead (1997) proposed, support could be accompanied by directing people to work and imposing order on their lives. The Clinton

administration originally intended to time limit unconditional welfare receipt but not conditional packages of support and work experience. However, Clinton lost control of the policy agenda with the radical right being rampant (Weaver, 2000).

The influence of the political right is evident in the formal objectives of the legislation, two of which had to do with sexual morality and one of which imposed an unconditional limit on the duration of benefit receipt:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
2. End the dependence of needy families on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-person families.

(From Section 401(a) of the Social Security Act; WMCP, 2000)

Nevertheless, there was cross-party support for the reform, echoed in opinion polls. A survey in 1995 showed that 69 per cent of the public agreed that 'the welfare system does more harm than good, because it encourages the break up of the family and discourages work' (Weaver, 2000: 174). Another, in August 1996, showed that 83 per cent approved the final reform package and that only 14 per cent were against (*ibid.*: 193). AFDC clearly offended against the American public's attachment to individualism and the work ethic, while antipathy to welfare was reinforced by the racialized nature of poverty and welfare receipt (Gilens, 1999). This consensus that any reform was better than the status quo gave politicians scope to shape the policy agenda. However, while work obligations appealed to the public, there was less support for time limits without a guarantee of work or for being harsh on teenage mothers given that their children might suffer (Weaver, 2000).

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), the legislation underpinning TANF was due to be re-authorized in 2002 but this had not proved possible even by early 2006. Stalemate occurred for many reasons (Wiseman, 2003) but aspirations of the Bush administration to curtail federal spending, prioritize sexual abstinence programmes and enforce increased participation were thwarted by concern that spending by states would have to increase, by liberal resistance and, ironically, by prior success. Public opinion in the 1990s had rejected AFDC rather than spending on welfare *per se*. Now, welfare is only available to those who work (or so the policy rhetoric claims<sup>6</sup>) and opposition

to it has reduced, especially in the context of the post 9/11 economic slow-down and rising unemployment (JFF, 2001). Nevertheless, the importance attached to the work ethic remains paramount. In 2001, the American public were split almost 50:50 in support for temporarily abandoning the five-year time limits on welfare on account of the recession; most Democrats supported the proposition while the majority of Republicans were against. However, 83 per cent, including majorities from Republicans, Democrats and independents, favoured Swedish-style job creation which was anathema to the Bush administration (JFF, 2001).

### **UK Reform: 'Work for Those who Can, Security for Those who Can't'**

In the last decade, Britain's benefit system for persons of working age has been substantially reformed beginning, in 1996, with the replacement of Unemployment Benefit with Jobseeker's Allowance. This initial reform, contextualized by the OECD Jobs Study, established a new contract between individual and state in the form of a Jobseekers Agreement signed by claimants; this itemized the actions required of them to receive benefit and find work.

This contract, which made explicit the behavioural conditionality inherent in benefits, was strengthened by the incoming New Labour government in 1997 with the introduction of the 'New Deals', a family of activation measures aimed at different groups, with services brokered and policed by personal advisers. The flagship programme was compulsory for persons aged 18 to 24 who had been unemployed for six months, and comprised intensive job-search followed by participation in specific activities ranging from full-time education to work experience. Other programmes, for older unemployed claimants, lone parents, partners of unemployed claimants and disabled people, were in varying degrees voluntary but subsequent reforms have increased the degree of compulsion applied. The activation measures were accompanied by the introduction of a minimum wage and a series of refundable in-work tax credits to increase work incentives (to 'make work pay'), enhanced benefits for children and the implementation of a national childcare strategy.

Although the Labour government was much influenced by the Clinton reforms, the rationale and objectives differed in ways that made Swedish and Australian experiences equally relevant (Cebulla, 2005). There was no rejection of welfare benefits per se. There was concern about cost, inherited from the preceding Tory government. But, there was more worry about the under-use of human resources, skill deficits among younger workers, and the emerging divide between 'work-rich' and 'work-poor' households where in the latter no adults work and the risk of poverty is very high. Later,

research ostensibly showing the 'scarring' effects of child poverty on outcomes in adulthood informed, or was used to justify, the introduction of a goal to eradicate poverty within a generation (Blair, 1999).

The juxtapositioning of Labour's welfare policy and public opinion is complex. For example, Labour was much influenced by the labour market analysis of Richard Layard (1999) (see also Layard et al., 1991) suggesting that employment is not fixed but increases with the supply of labour (justifying enforced job search) and that subsidies to the long-term unemployed would be neither inflationary nor cause others to lose their jobs (justifying New Deal employment subsidies). This counter-intuitive analysis, the basis for compulsory activation, was nevertheless consistent with the growing proportion of people believing that 'most unemployed people could find a job if they really wanted one' (Hills, 2002). Whereas with the introduction of TANF, the US prioritized getting people into work over building human capital, the British Labour government invested heavily in training especially for the youngest unemployed as an integral part of their overall economic strategy (Walker and Wiseman, 2003b).

While Labour could rely on public support to move unemployed claimants into work, the negative reaction to lone parents evidenced in the US was missing. In 1998, about half the population still believed that lone parents should be allowed to choose whether to work and 44 per cent thought that it was their duty to stay at home to look after a pre-school child (Williams et al., 1999). Moreover, an initial attempt to impose benefit cuts on lone parents proposed by the preceding Tory government generated much political controversy. At the time of writing, Labour is proposing to impose work requirements for lone parents with children over 11, a Tory proposal made in 2000 (Willets and Hillman, 2000).

Labour's own polling suggested that there was little support for improving benefits. Certainly, in 1996, only 3 per cent of the population named social security benefits as their top priority for expenditure compared to 54 per cent and 28 per cent who respectively prioritized health and education (Hills, 2002). Moreover, the proportion believing that more should be spent on the poor had fallen consistently from 1989. Perhaps for this reason, the largest redistribution in favour of poor families undertaken since the 1940s was achieved by the Labour government through the provision of tax credits without fanfare and possibly went unnoticed by its natural supporters.<sup>7</sup>

This case study suggests some degree of dissonance between national political actors and the citizenry with recent Labour governments giving greater priority to anti-poverty programmes than that which might have been accorded by the electorate. Certainly, as the World Values Survey showed, British people share many of the values of their US counterparts. Also, European concepts such as social cohesion and social inclusion have

little purchase on the national debate. However, over 40 per cent of Britons continue to believe that benefits are too low (empirically they are low by European standards but higher than in the USA) and that more should be spent on welfare benefits, while only slightly fewer think that the government should redistribute income to the less well-off (Hills, 2002). Arguably, New Labour could have been bolder in trumpeting its achievements; perhaps in the age of political polling, elites may be tempted to aspire to welfare cultures defined in terms of the values of the marginal voter.

### **German Reform: 'Courage for Change, Promote and Challenge'**

The political response to the corresponding welfare reform package in Germany, the Hartz Reforms,<sup>8</sup> was sufficient to bring down the Social Democrat government headed by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (HoC, 2005). The four-part reform was part modelled on the British reforms (Dingeldey, 2005). Following the lead of the OECD Jobs Study, the overall aim was 'to increase employment in Europe's biggest but slowest growing economy, whilst avoiding the financial collapse of its social systems' (Lohse, 2005: 1). This was to be achieved by '*Fordern und Fördern*', promoting and challenging, carrots and sticks.

Hartz I involved measures to create work including provision of temporary jobs. Hartz II established job centres similar to those in Britain, and 'mini-jobs' with reduced social insurance payments for employers. Hartz III began the assault on longstanding institutions by introducing the legal framework that restructured the Federal Employment Service as the Federal Employment Agency but Hartz IV provided the principal catalyst for opposition. In January 2005, federal insurance-based unemployment assistance was merged with social assistance, traditionally a discretionary system administered by municipalities, resulting in reduced benefit levels for unemployed claimants, especially those with savings and/or an employed partner. It introduced an integration agreement (analogous to the UK Jobseeker's Agreement) with the threat of benefit sanctions for non-compliance, caseworkers (similar to New Deal personal advisers in the UK), and a requirement for claimants to accept any job that they were physically and intellectually able to do.

Although the overall package of reform, dubbed Agenda 2010 (IOFG, 2004), included tax cuts and provision for childcare by way of compensation, street protests focused on benefit cuts and the workfare-like elements of Hartz IV that challenged the Bismarckian welfare culture. Social insurance is a constitutional right in Germany that applies to almost the entire working population and, with payments for dependents, cements social cohesion. Social assistance, in contrast, is a highly stigmatized safety net

that has traditionally provided much lower cash benefits and support based on a family means-test. Hartz IV blurred the distinction between the deserving and undeserving, tarnishing the 'respectable' unemployed with the stigma of social assistance. Eighty-five per cent of the public in the East and 67 per cent of those in the West reputedly supported those attending weekly protests against the reforms in as many as 200 cities and towns in 2004.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, in contrast with both Britain and the USA, where welfare beneficiaries generally supported the principles of reforms, there is some evidence that claimants affected by the Hartz reforms challenged its rationale. Seventy-five per cent of beneficiaries (45 in a small random sample of 60) using a training establishment in Berlin thought that the reforms 'would have a negative effect on the general situation in Germany' and 59 per cent considered that the reforms had hindered them in their efforts to find work (Golbeck, 2005).

The loss of the state of North-Rhine Westphalia to the Christian Democrats on 22 May 2005, after 39 years of continuous Social Democrat rule, is widely attributed to the reform process. It led, in turn, to the federal elections which resulted in the election of a Christian Democrat, Angela Merkel, as Chancellor heading a Grand Coalition of parties. The coalition is, if anything, more in favour of the Hartz IV reforms than was the previous government suggesting that the political elite is positioned differently from the electorate and perhaps more sensitive to Germany's economic obligations under the Lisbon strategy. Popular protest against Hartz may have been culturally symbolic, a warning against tampering with major welfare institutions such as pensions, health and education. These are not only institutional manifestations of shared values but directly affect the lives of the majority of Germans, whereas comparatively few experience unemployment and social assistance.

### **Swedish Reform**

Sweden is the exemplar of a social democratic welfare culture based on the core values of universalism and solidarity underpinned by public or non-market provision. Long committed to a high employment-high benefits model, elevated levels of economic participation generate a large tax base from which to fund universal, high quality public provision. Hit by a prolonged recession in the early 1990s, voters briefly deserted the Social Democratic Party (in power virtually continuously since 1932) for the Liberal Party. The latter initiated significant reforms, though not a fundamental restructuring, which some believe initiated a continuing period of economic growth (FT, 2004). Public attitudes are more secular and committed to self-expression than those of any other society.

Swedish commitment to universalism does not mean an absence of obligation, targeting or means-testing. Indeed, as already noted, Britain's New Deal policies, recently emulated by Germany, were as much based on Swedish experience as on Clinton's reforms in the USA. Active labour market policy – the so-called Rehn-Meider model – was developed as early as the 1950s; it originally consisted primarily of vocational training schemes but government relief work was quickly added and participants paid at union rates. Conditionality has always been a strong component in the Swedish model, as illustrated by the integrated delivery of social work and social assistance (*socialbidrag*) in almost 300 municipalities.

The 1990s recession put pressure on the Rehn-Meider model, as it did on the generous unemployment benefit system. By 1994, nearly 4 per cent of the labour force was on various employment or training programmes at a cost equivalent to a similar percentage of GDP (Calmfors et al., 2001). To create sufficient placements, subsidies were introduced to encourage employers to recruit from amongst the long-term unemployed, and work experience schemes launched that paid participants benefit rather than a normal wage. In addition, earnings-related unemployment benefit was reduced from 90 per cent of former earnings to 80 per cent, and briefly to 75 per cent, and a four-day waiting period introduced. But despite the deliberations of 'a remarkably long series of committees', the structure of support remained largely unchanged (Björklund, 2000: 151); some of the Conservative government's reforms, such as time limits on receipt of unemployment benefit or employment measures were never implemented and others, reduced replacement rates, were reversed.

The most substantial change to prove long-lasting was the old age pension, drawn up by the Liberal pension's minister, Bo Könberg, but only introduced in January 2001. This reduced the role of the universal flat rate pension, supplementing it with a pay-as-you-go earnings-related pension and a fully funded component (*premiereservsystem*). The net result was to replace a defined benefit scheme with a defined contributions one, while increasing the contribution made to the total cost by employees (FT, 2004; Walker, 2005).

As Table 6.2 shows, many more Swedes believe that the state should definitely both provide 'a job for everyone' and 'a decent standard of living for the unemployed' than is the case in Germany and Britain, let alone the United States.<sup>10</sup> Even so, most Swedes are quite equivocal about labour market policies and in the 1990s it was the trade union movement – with its close links to the Social Democratic Party – that emerged as the principal defender of the unemployment benefit system that it part-administered.<sup>11</sup> The increased conditionality, that attracted the interest of British policy-makers, was readily accommodated within the social democratic welfare culture through recourse to the reciprocity of social rights and obligations:

*Table 6.2 Views on the responsibility of governments, 1996*

Should it be the government's responsibility to provide . . .	Percentage replying 'yes, definitely'			
	Sweden	Great Britain	Germany	USA
A job for everyone who wants one	35	29	28	14
A decent standard of living for the unemployed	39	29	17	13
A decent standard of living for the old	69	73	47	38

*Source:* Svallfors, 2004, based on analysis of the International Social Survey Programme

if a government makes real the citizenship right-to-work, surely citizens should be prepared to accept any reasonable offer of employment? Increased targeting was justified by prioritizing the goal of solidarity above that of universalism.

If the trade unions exploited benign public apathy to defend employment measures, it is less clear that the political consensus on pension reform that emerged after almost a decade of wrangling tapped into public sensibilities. Sixty-nine per cent of Swedes believe that the state should provide the aged with a decent standard of living yet the recent reforms left most future pensioners worse off than before. The political elite seem, in a somewhat paternalistic way, to have prioritized international competitiveness over both the principle of universality and the sectional interests of future pensioners (Ryner, 1999). It probably succeeded in doing so by phasing in the changes slowly and because the most contentious reforms were so complicated that they escaped public scrutiny (Cox, 2004).

## CONCLUSIONS

Culture, defined as 'beliefs, norms, institutions and traditional ways of "doing things"', is an inherent attribute of any society. Welfare culture, the negotiated expression of the way a society cares for itself and its members, is historically somewhat rarer, a luxury born out of a material freedom from basic wants and the political freedom to formulate and realize collective aspirations. Although the World Values Survey suggests that this luxury is still denied to much of the world's population, it is generally enjoyed by the people of Europe and North America where multiple welfare cultures are evidenced.

In global terms, the welfare cultures of Europe and the United States share much in common: they congregate around the same quadrant in Inglehart and Welzel's world values plot. Moreover, there is a broad compatibility of values and aspirations at the three levels of governance considered that may be the result of democracy underpinning the political process. Nevertheless, there are substantial differences between the American commitment to individualism, self-help and a strong version of the work ethic and the European social model, be it interpreted as the aspiration of a political elite working towards European federalism or as a description of national aspirations that give weight to inclusion, social cohesion and universal welfare. Likewise, there is much variation in the ways that things are done on both sides of the Atlantic.

There is also evidence, as revealed by the four case studies, that while national welfare cultures may be underpinned by shared values, there is not necessarily congruence either between or within the tiers of governance. Rather, at least during periods of reform, there is a complex dynamic in which the beliefs and values of the each group variously set bounds on the aspirations, actions and beliefs of the others in accordance with the relative power or influence at their disposal.

In all four examples, reform was driven by the political elite. Moreover, it was only in North America, where the abolition of AFDC was profoundly ideological, that change was even inspired by popular opinion. Because ADFC was so widely despised, federal government had freedom to implement radical reform that not only changed institutions but shifted values, replacing a rights-based scheme with one founded on conditionality and discretion. The reform was one that no sectional group wanted but one that all could live with, at least temporarily. However, apparent success limited the scope for future reform. When, in 2001, the White House met with opposition from state governors as well as liberal politicians, it could no longer appeal to popular opinion because the public and media had, by then, lost interest in welfare.

In Britain, the political system affords governments elected with large majorities essentially unfettered power to implement reform. That implemented by the 1997 Labour government was pragmatic and, in political terms, strategic. Labour knew from opinion polling that to win a second term in office it had to convince the electorate that it could manage the economy effectively. The New Deals were part of this strategy because, according to the OECD Jobs Study orthodoxy favoured by advisers, they would improve the flexibility of the labour market and increase skill levels as well as reducing poverty. Labour was helped by being able to leave in place policies inherited from the outgoing Conservative government, thus avoiding the need to implement reforms that might have additionally alienated its

core supporters. It was also able to exploit the rhetoric of rights and responsibility known to appeal to marginal voters. Thus, Labour's entire strategy was shaped to fit with the sensibilities of the electorate although the public was probably largely disinterested in the specifics of policy reform. Indeed, as noted above, Labour possibly underestimated its own degree of manoeuvre and might have been able, before the Iraq war undermined the authority of the Prime Minister, to secure public support for more re-distributive policies that favoured the poor.

Why the German policy elite encountered so much opposition to broadly the same policy package as in Britain is partly explicable with reference to different welfare cultures. Social insurance is itemized in the German constitution as a right of citizenship. Through its near universality, it fosters social cohesion by giving all social groups a personal stake in the same collective institutions. Many people, not only within the trade union movement and on the political left, saw the Hartz reforms as an attack on social insurance which, if not resisted, might allow materially more important components of social security to be threatened. While the government recognized the domestic political risks, not least the relationship between the federal government and the new and old *Länder*,<sup>12</sup> it had intellectually bought into the need for OECD-style labour market flexibility epitomized by New Labour's reforms in Britain. Moreover, it felt constrained by its obligations to the European political project or, at least, used these to justify reform. However, growing antipathy to Europe became linked in the public mind with both the Hartz reforms and the sluggish economy. Schröder, like Clinton in the USA, lost control of the political agenda, but while the American public got more of the policies that they quite liked, in Germany the gulf widened between the welfare cultures of the political elite and the general public.

The parallels between the German and Swedish reforms are instructive. In both cases, the political elite chose economic strategies that necessitated social security reform unpalatable to the electorate. The reforms challenged long understood norms shaping their respective welfare cultures. They reduced the commitment to high replacement rates which had served as a social reward for previous labour, maintained living standards and facilitated rational choices about any return to work. They also reneged on the social contract and reciprocity inherent in benefit payments linked to contributions. Trade union-orchestrated opposition was vocal and, in the Swedish case where unions had greater leverage, partially successful. Governments were voted out of office, partly because of the reforms that nevertheless largely remained intact in statute. In Sweden, economic success, arguably linked to the reforms, means that a welfare culture with slightly lower benefits, higher contributions and an increased role for market-linked

provision has become accepted, or at least not actively resisted, by the public as well as by the elite. Enhanced living standards for the many may, even in egalitarian Sweden, have outweighed losses for the few and overshadowed the likelihood of significant losses for future pensioners. Whether economic success will make the elite-led transition to a more divisive, slightly more Anglo-Saxon welfare culture palatable to German voters, time will tell.

## NOTES

1. The Open Method of Coordination is an objective orientated procedure to coordinate and advance the policies of Member States in areas in which the European institutions have little competence. The process is fuelled by international peer review of national performance.
2. It should be remembered that there is a substantial insurance old age pension scheme in the USA, that attracts popular support and which, to date, has proved resistant to attempts by conservatives to curtail it. Its existence, however, emphasizes the difference in perception between those seen as 'deserving' (the elderly) and those of working age, the focus of this chapter, who are generally regarded less sympathetically.
3. Bonoli (1997) reaches a very similar classification via a different route.
4. The two dimensions explain 70 per cent of the cross-national variation and are strongly correlated with scores of other important orientations.
5. A majority of Americans had 'a great deal' or 'a lot of' confidence in the civil service.
6. Participation in employment and especially work-related programmes is not high which is why the Bush administration wished to see it increased (Wiseman, 2003).
7. Labour's share of the vote dropped markedly in the 2005 general election but it is difficult to factor out the effect of the opposition to the second Iraq war.
8. Named after Peter Hartz, Volkswagen's Director of Human Resources, who chaired a commission tasked with devising 'Modern Services in the Labour Market'.
9. These statistics should be treated with care since they are cited by the PDS, the one party in the Bundestag opposed to the Hartz reforms (PDS, 2005).
10. Note that the response of Americans to this question is very different to the specific one asked four years later about job creation in the context of a recession. Question wording matters but it may also be that respondents interpret their values with respect to circumstances applying at the time.
11. Unemployment insurance is administered by the trade unions in Sweden under the supervision of the National Labour Market Board (*Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen*).
12. The 'new *Länder*' refer to the states of former East Germany where the Hartz reforms played out differently not least because of higher levels of unemployment and social assistance.

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## 7. Is there a specific East-Central European welfare culture?

**Zsuzsa Ferge**

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### INTRODUCTION

To analyse the question whether there is a specific East-Central European (ECE) welfare culture this chapter focuses on three issues.<sup>1</sup> At the level of attitudes it discusses the thesis that the totalitarian system created a new type of person, ‘Homo Sovieticus’, who is characterized among other things by ‘learned helplessness’ conducive to total reliance on the (welfare) state. My arguments against this thesis are that historical forces shaping people go much further back than a few decades, and that a need for security is part of modern European culture, and not specific to ECE countries. Accusations about learned helplessness serve a liberal agenda to cut back welfare expenditures. The second section takes a historical look at social security. It discusses the role of the state in, and its relationships with, the civilization process and social security development in Western and Eastern Europe. The state was heavily involved in the civilization process in the nineteenth century. But it assured protection and full citizenship to the propertyless only with the emergence of ‘common social property’ (social insurance) as a counterpart to private ownership. Socialist dictatorship found a tragic solution to the dilemma of assuring security to propertyless people by abolishing private property altogether. Yet even in this truncated form, security promoted norms of ‘civilized’ coexistence that ultimately may help democratic attitudes. The third section discusses ‘welfare culture’ on the societal level as it appears in the relationship to some values. It takes a stance against the thesis of a ‘bloc culture’ in ECE. The appeal of equality and public responsibility may be somewhat greater in ECE countries, but between-country variation is significant in both blocks, and basic values are rather similar in the East and the West of Europe.

## THE *HOMO SOVIETICUS*

A wide range of writings has dealt with the legacy of the Soviet totalitarian system. Some of these analyse how it marked and distorted the personality of people under totalitarian rule. The authorship of the term *Homo Sovieticus* itself is under debate. It is usually credited to Józef Tischner, a Polish priest and important Catholic philosopher. Others trace the authorship to Aleksandr Zynoviev, a Soviet philosopher. Clearly, the term is not value-free, whoever coined it. Its use is double-faced, and its overall legitimacy is dubious.

The list of alleged character defects of the *Homo Sovieticus* is long. Very early after the regime change, M. Marody (1992) put forward the thesis that the morality of people was seriously undermined by the totalitarian system, and that learned helplessness was a main feature that created obstacles to entrepreneurship, weakened individual responsibility, and made people expect everything from the state. Some years later a study by Sztompka (2000) summarized quite a few of these defects under the term 'civilizational incompetence'. This incompetence supposedly distorted the economy by paralysing entrepreneurship, politics by blocking the emergence of citizenship, and everyday life by stifling all concerns for the everyday virtues of civility. It was believed to result in what was called 'primitive egalitarianism', and in demands for welfare and social security from the state. According to Sztompka, coercion also led to 'opportunism, blind compliance, reluctance to take decisions, avoidance of personal responsibility', adding up to a syndrome of 'prolonged infantilism matched by state paternalism' (also Rose and Haerpfer, 1992; Mueller, 2000).

There is some truth in the above analyses. Forty-five, let alone 70 years of totalitarian or authoritarian rule certainly marked people. This may be at the root of many psychological or socially ingrained attitudes. In our view, the most painful of all is the much-invoked democratic deficit in people's attitudes. Nevertheless, generalizations of this type are trite and unjust. The term 'civilizational incompetence' seems to me particularly inappropriate. It is a variant of traditional Eurocentrism. It implies that all societies outside the heart of Europe are barbarians. As for personal traits like opportunism or blind compliance, the political system might have imposed them on many people (or at least they simulated compliance). Still, these character defects have certainly not been the privilege of only those living in East-Central Europe. Moreover, inasmuch as Eastern attitudes are specific, and there is a civilizational deficit there, 'communism' is certainly not the only culprit to have created them.<sup>2</sup>

Historical heritage is complex. The pre-war history of Central and Eastern Europe represents a varied and often heavy legacy. The borders of

Europe – what was regarded as its centre and what was periphery – varied over the centuries. As Wiarda (2002) puts it, the barrier, even if moving all the time, has been ‘a cultural wall, a religious wall, and a socio-psychological wall as well as an economic and strategic one’. It meant for the periphery – with exceptions – a longer lasting feudalism, belated and more vulnerable democratic institutions, and a widening economic gap between core and periphery. Thus if there were significant differences in 1990 between a Hungarian and a French farmer, or between a German and a Polish mechanic, who knows how much of these can be ascribed to ‘communism’ and how much to former centuries (let alone to presumed national or ethnic character traits)? Meanwhile, there have always been islands of commonality. Alongside the aristocracy that was always international, many traditional and modern professional groups have had shared civilizational codes before as well as after the Second World War.

I would also argue that the socio-psychological upshot of decades of ‘communism’ is not exclusively negative. Before 1945 in most Eastern countries, social relationships had a feudal character with practically unbridgeable social distances, and asymmetrical social relationships between upper and lower strata, men and women, and people of high and low status. Unequal relationships were deeply ingrained, manifesting themselves not only in forms of communication and addresses, self-humiliating words, but also in body language (deep bows, kissing the hands of the master, etc.) These asymmetries have been radically reduced since the Second World War. Most of these changes are probably irreversible: interpersonal attitudes were not imposed from above but have evolved spontaneously on the basis of post-1945 societal changes that finally shattered feudal structures. The new generations have been socialized according to new behavioural codes. By now these codes are ingrained at least in a majority, are in line with the new democratic institutions, and are even safeguarded by law, for instance in the case of women or children.

Some of the character defects mentioned above merit special attention here as they relate to values and attitudes toward the welfare system. Accusations of primitive egalitarianism, or demands for welfare and social security from the state because of learned helplessness have a direct bearing on the issue. I shall focus first on allegations concerning a pampered population relying entirely on a profligate and paternalistic state.

Ironically enough, these allegations are not new. Identical or similar arguments were used, for example, to prevent the institutionalization of social security in the French Parliament at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Hatzfeld, 1971), or to attack welfare arrangements in Sweden in the 1960s, in the UK during the Thatcher era, or for decades in the USA (Segalman and Marsland, 1989). All this was duly analysed and

ridiculed long ago by Hirschman (1991). Similarities over time and space are uncanny. A text published in 1971 by a British author is almost word-perfect: 'The moral fibre of our people has been weakened. A State which does for its citizens what they can do for themselves is an evil State; and a State which removes all choice and responsibility for its people and makes them like broiler hens will create the irresponsible society' (Boydes, 1971, introduction).<sup>3</sup>

The thesis of the lack of individual self-reliance caused by communism forgets at least two facts. It ignores the history of public social protection in the so-called core European countries where public demand played a large role. And it forgets that in the second half of the nineteenth century East-Central Europe was closely integrated into Europe, and was then adopting similar public policies. The beginnings of social security in the last third of the nineteenth century were largely contemporaneous in East and West, or at least there was no startling lag. To give just one example: within the Bismarckian social insurance system, the first law on health was enacted in Germany in 1883, and that on accidents in 1884. The respective Hungarian laws were enacted in 1891 and 1907 (Szikra, 2004). It may be worth noting that even well-known and respected studies of European welfare systems like that of Flora and Heidenheimer (1981) or Hugh Heclot et al. (1984) talk about Europe while overlooking developments in East or East-Central Europe.

After an early start, social protection developed slowly in ECE countries until the Second World War due to conservative politics, slow industrialization, and rigidity of the social system. It remained restricted to a minority. Czechoslovakia was in many respects a significant exception. After 1945, or rather, from the 1960s onward, the institutions of social security developed rapidly all over the region in a sort of welfare competition with the West. Development was motivated by the idea of social catching up with the West, by the need for political legitimacy, and by a real or rhetorical ideal of assuring mass well-being. Yet even after several decades of state socialism, the 'communist' social protection system never approached Western standards (Therborn, 1995).

Thus despite early acceptance of the 'European model', the socialist paternalist state is a legend. The main missing elements were democracy (its legal basis, civil participation), a lack of the spirit of care and compassion, and lack of concern about levels of adequacy. There remained in each country large uncovered areas of social risk. Hungary for instance was relatively effective in family policy, but help with obtaining first homes was missing, social work was practically banned, and provision for the unemployed was non-existent. The Hungarian state was very far from the paternalism of typical Western welfare states.

Learned helplessness seems to be a convenient myth and prolonged infantilism a malevolent one. People had to have many skills to organize everyday life under conditions of a shortage economy, and do it on a shoestring. Moreover, people had to cope with countless problems on their own because the welfare system was defective and rigid. They had to find more or less unconventional solutions not only for housing, but also for all the individual or family problems that did not quite fit the public system tailored to mass needs. They had to cope on their own without public help, social work, market solutions, or supportive civil organizations. Many collective coping instruments open to citizens living in a free society – from strikes to opting out from wage-work – were also legally unavailable. Only inventiveness – the opposite of learned helplessness – helped people to find solutions. Though illegal resistance like strikes and underground collective opposition was rare, unconventional behaviours were ubiquitous and probably played a part in preparing the collapse of the system.

Accusations of a pampered population eager to have security have never been politically innocent. The need to abolish the causes of learned helplessness – that is, the need to cut back the caring state – was spelt out long ago. By the early 1990s the economist Kornai had already criticized the oversized, allegedly premature welfare state that was detrimental economically and morally. He and many in his wake opted against putting the premature being in an incubator that would have been the logical consequence of the metaphor. They rather opted for its dumping. ‘The main problem with the welfare system inherited from the communist regime is that it leaves too wide a sphere of action, and a corresponding range of resources, in the hands of the government rather than with the individual. This infringes on such fundamental human rights as individual sovereignty, self-realization, and self-determination’. In this view people should be responsible for themselves: ‘They must give up the habit of having the paternalist state think for them, and must be assisted by reformers in this “detoxification”’. The freedom to choose and be responsible for it is, according to Kornai, ‘a trivial requirement’ in the United States. However, ‘for generations that came to maturity under the communist system, a different principle was instilled: that the ruling party-state was responsible for everything. . . . Since the state provided for any unforeseen eventualities (e.g. illness, disability, death of the breadwinner), there was no need to prepare for the uncertainties of tomorrow’ (Kornai, 1997: 287). A similar argument was advanced by the dean of Warsaw University: the state should be only the ‘facilitator of private transactions’ and not the benevolent protector of the people: ‘Poland must modernize and demystify the state in order to throw off the inherited inertia of the socialist era’ (Krol, 1997).

To conclude on the *Homo Sovieticus*: while admitting that there may be differences in the psychological make-up of people's attitudes towards state protection in core and peripheral European countries, I would argue that: (1) The historical roots of differences go back much further than socialist dictatorship; (2) The need for social protection and the demand that the state assume responsibility for these needs are not specific to the ex-socialist countries: the European model of social protection is embedded in modern European culture; (3) Accusations of learned helplessness and similar character traits have long formed part of a liberal political-economic agenda aiming at undermining the legitimacy of the social functions of the state, in Western as well as in Eastern European countries.

## THE NEED FOR, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SECURITY IN THE WEST AND EAST: SECURITY AND CIVILIZATION

### The West

Security as we understand it at present may be a social construct, but its importance seems to be paramount for individuals as well as for societies. Security of course has many meanings. One of its modern faces is the security of civil freedoms, ownership included. Another is protection against threats and risks that may undermine normal everyday existence. Modernity based on the individualization of society needed both types of security. However a conflict pitting everybody against everybody else nips any such development in the bud. Hence the need for a new collective protective agency, some form of 'the Leviathan'.

The modern state had, indeed, as its first function the protection of the life and property of its free citizens in a social environment based on rights. The Universal Declaration of Human and Citizens' Rights of 1789 declared property a sacred and inalienable right. In the interpretation of Castel (2003), property at this point was understood as ownership of self, the foundation of a free and autonomous individual. The conception of individual independence 'was constructed through the valuation of ownership, coupled with the rule of law'.

The security of the individual was rooted in this autonomy protected by the state. But for propertyless individuals freedom and autonomy were hollow concepts. The protection of autonomy and hence security became meaningful only if there was property to be protected. That is why Castel's observation is of seminal importance. He points out – and this is rarely if ever done – that 'This construction should have considered a central

question the status, or the lack of status of the individual having no ownership' (Castel, 2003: 26). Indeed, if protection is related to property, what happens to the propertyless individual?

This central question was not raised. Security for those having no property to assure their independence was 'forgotten' for a long time. The old forms of protection based on proximity – family, village, lord, church, and guild – were shattered and splintered as a consequence of modernization. Under the new conditions it was assumed that those without property should live from their day-to-day work. But work was totally insecure, and the meagre resources it assured stopped altogether when work was lost, when illness or death struck, when one became too old or too weak for labour. Thus the majority could enjoy neither social independence nor an autonomous life, and did not have any well-defined status in the new society. The lower classes living in dire poverty did not have any hold on their present, let alone their future. Their life was overshadowed by the basic insecurity of their everyday existence. The insecurity of the poor represented physical, social and even moral dangers, as well as a constant threat to the rule of law and order in the new civilization that was emerging (Elias, 1939, 1969, 1982). The attempts to deal with these dangers were numerous, including repressive state policing (poor laws, etc.) and individual charity. None of them worked effectively or on a large scale. Thus the community – ultimately, the state – was forced to take on new proactive functions.

The new state functions are usually called welfare functions, which add up to a welfare state. I propose to split them in two – civilizing and welfare functions – even if the dividing line between the two is not always clear-cut. The story of their unfolding is well known. I take up the issue only to bring out some differences between East and West.

De Swaan (1988) describes in detail the emergence of such new activities and institutions like the enforcement of a common national language, literacy, and also behavioural codes through (for instance) compulsory schooling, or the fight against contagious diseases through sanitation and public health measures. Large urban projects that made towns more liveable or the development of transport and communication through public efforts could be added to these. All these developments created protection against the dangerous poor by improving general infrastructure, by advancing public safety, by alleviating the worst aspects of poverty that hurt new sensibilities. Much of the state's effort in the nineteenth century was aimed at handling the aspects of poverty most disagreeable to the non-poor, namely public squalor. These efforts meant sanitation and increasing orderliness of the environment as well as the inculcation into the poor of many aptitudes, attitudes, and norms promoting a modern, 'civilized' lifestyle.

I propose to distinguish these civilizing attempts from the genuine protective or welfare functions aiming to abate private squalor. In fact the first public attempt to civilize the poor did not solve the original dilemma spelt out by Castel: how to assure social protection and fulfil the original promise of the Enlightenment to protect the property and life of citizens while assuring for all full citizenship. The solution to this dilemma was found at the end of the nineteenth century or only in the twentieth century. It consisted in inventing labour law and social law, in giving strong legal protection to work and the security of those having no property. Social insurance based on a new type of property, 'common social property', created a stable social status and identity (Castel, 1995; 2003). Together with a strong economy and more resources, these new securities promoted 'civilizational' standards. Thereby they could also strengthen the operation of modern (mass) democracies. They allowed growing segments of society – at least in a number of countries and for ever longer periods – to live together according to modern rules of law.

## THE EASTERN SOLUTION

The need for security existed in countries situated in the East of Europe, too. Dictatorial state socialism however found a different solution to the dilemma between the lawful sanctity of ownership as the basis of security, and the impossibility of assuring the security of propertyless people living from their work. It cut the knot in a way completely opposite to that of the West, using a despotic shortcut feared already by Hobbes. The state became all-absorbing ruler. The rule of law was violated: private property was almost totally abolished, all or most property was transformed into allegedly common, but in practice, state ownership. At one stroke civil rights and civil and political freedoms were to a large extent abolished (substantively, if not formally). The tragic consequences of totalitarian rule are only too well known to need to be discussed here. Yet state ownership opened opportunities that were not necessarily harmful.

Private property being abolished, no open resistance opposed the reduction of income inequalities or use of public (state or cooperative) ownership and public resources for state purposes. The list of these goals is long and varied. Many of them were neither reprehensible in themselves nor incompatible with modernity. They included full employment, that is, easy access to secure waged work for practically everybody. The construction of 'nationwide, compulsory, collective institutions' (de Swaan, 1988) in a social protection system was also on the agenda. In the course of rapid (even forced) modernization, the state's civilizational and welfare functions

merged. An all-encompassing school system and practically universal health and social protection systems were built up in some decades. The price paid for them was extremely high in terms of real autonomy and freedom. Yet, for the majority who in pre-war society enjoyed neither freedom nor security it did not seem so: as many contemporary and current surveys testify, people valued social security. Also, security promoted many types of habitus in line with attitudes conforming to 'European' civilization. I venture therefore to argue that the reduction of the civilization gap between East and West, men and women, and higher and lower echelons of society was probably the most positive outcome of socialist dictatorship. In most countries these efforts 'paid off', even if in a way largely different from their original intentions. More literacy, insight into the relationship between present and future, and information about modernity probably improved the chances of people adjusting, later, to the requirements of political democracy and a market society. After the political transformation the new political class had a huge responsibility in handling this inheritance. They had the option of attempting to protect the inherited human assets or of squandering them away.

The switch from dictatorial state socialism to capitalism in its rather wild form took its toll. In some cases the shock was so strong as to reverse (at least for a while) the civilization process. Elias warned about this danger when he wrote: 'The armour of civilized conduct would crumble very rapidly if, through a change in society, the degree of insecurity that existed earlier were to break in upon us again, and if danger became as incalculable as it once was' (Elias 1939: 307, 1969, 1982). Apparently in some of the countries (parts of the former Soviet Union or Yugoslavia) the change was too rapid to maintain that armour.

Even in countries where there was no major disaster, transition rapidly ended the feeling of security. The new system restored the rule of law, private ownership and the market, and also increased massively the number of people with no property. In the first years of transition undeniably many, if not all, collective arrangements built up under the former system continued to protect those who could remain on the labour market or had acquired entitlements related to their former labour. It did not occur to anybody though that collective social property could play a lasting role in protecting the new propertyless outside the labour market. Everyday security crumbled for those who had lost their jobs and livelihood, despite new arrangements to handle unemployment. Labour rights weakened; vulnerability and insecurity reappeared on a massive scale. Under these conditions the maintenance and strengthening of former arrangements should have been a first priority to prevent a civilizational setback harming the whole social fabric.

The new political classes did not manage their heritage well. With the diminishing economic functions of the state there was a historical opportunity to concentrate on its civilizational and welfare functions. This opportunity was missed. The fate of the Roma in the ECE countries is blatant proof of this. In Hungary for instance, at the end of the 1980s over 80 per cent of Roma men had a full-time job; now almost 80 per cent are without a job. For decades they climbed the civilizational 'ladder' with tremendous effort, only to fall with dizzying speed after transition (Kemény, 2003).

The need for collective defences has been rapidly mounting in other respects, too. We live not only in a 'risk society' (Beck, 1992), but in a society genuinely threatened by harms and dangers including destabilizing insecurities, environmental disasters, and ultimately various forms of chaos. Most threats are largely related to the operation of an uncontrolled global market. New dangers make imperative the creation of powerful and legitimate global institutions, and, ultimately, perhaps also a global state (Soros, 1998; Stiglitz, 2002). But these institutions will have to be financed. In all probability, still-existing nation states will be compelled to foot the bill for this emerging new state or institution working for peaceful international co-existence.

In the so-called new democracies not enough was done to prevent the weakening of social security of propertyless people, or to face the already visible need for collective arrangements against new dangers. The main gains in social policy are connected with what may be called Europeanization, including more democratic procedures, institutionalization of social work, re-emergence of civil organizations, and new concerns with poverty (Guillén and Alvarez, 2004). The efforts of the Union to put poverty and exclusion firmly on the agenda have been relatively successful. Still, anti-poverty efforts have remained insufficient, and civil society is still too weak to put genuine pressure on the state, or to control it (Ferge and Juhász, 2004).

Meanwhile many interest groups have pushed East-Central Europe towards the American solution of social protection, or just a downsized version of it. Strong attempts have emerged to Americanize, instead of Europeanize, ECE countries. Supranational monetary agencies (e.g. IMF, World Bank, WTO) have had a major role in shaping post-socialist societies, particularly where the countries have been indebted (Deacon et al., 1997). The main elements on their social-policy agenda were the strengthening of individual responsibility and the weakening of public responsibility in social matters; the promotion of privatization and marketization in all spheres; the emphasis on targeted assistance to the truly needy at the expense of universal benefits; and the scaling down of social insurance, allegedly to assure work incentives. In short, a leaner state in general, and a diminished welfare state in particular. These ideas have found powerful

supporters in most ECE countries. Many have gone further in the privatization of pensions or health-care, or in introducing flat-rate taxation, than West European countries. The privatization of pensions for instance has made such headway in the last years that East-Central Europe has often been presented by liberal spokesmen as a social-policy model to be followed by all members of the Union.<sup>4</sup> And of course this may happen.

To conclude, a relatively civilized way of life and peaceful social coexistence evolved mainly in the decades following the Second World War, simultaneously and in interaction with the collective arrangements of social protection. This process occurred in East and West with similarities and differences. The weakening of universal arrangements may undermine hard-won civilizational gains. This danger may be greater in new democracies than in old ones.

## PUBLIC CULTURE AND SECURITY

At present, liberal pressure on the welfare state is ubiquitous. And unfortunately the European Union does not offer unconditional support to the European social model. The social components of the original Lisbon commitments are wavering, and pressure from the EU to increase competitiveness at the expense of social cohesion is strong. The welfare gap between Western and Eastern Europe may inevitably increase if – as observed by the European Commission (CEC, 2004) – ‘economic convergence criteria and budget deficit reduction goals (appear to) take precedence over social cohesion goals’ (ibid.: 35). Meanwhile, convergence criteria and budget-deficit goals seem to be more strictly enforced, and failure to implement them more readily sanctioned by the Commission itself and by many other supranational or global forces, than are social cohesion goals. This hits particularly harshly poorer countries in dire need of combating poverty and social exclusion partly for the sake of competitiveness.

Meanwhile in all ECE countries public opinion appears to continue to support the welfare state, the European social model and its basic values. Whether this is a common European feeling, or whether it is a specific cultural trait of the (allegedly) pampered Eastern countries remains to be seen.

The thesis of *Homo Sovieticus* assumes that there was a bloc culture in ECE that could not absorb modernity. According to Sztompka (2000), ‘the Communist system succeeded in creating a common cultural framework, over and above distinct national cultures, and relatively isolated from wider global culture: the unique syndrome of values, rules, norms, codes, standards typical for the bloc as a whole, the *bloc culture*’. Primitive egalitarianism, and demands for welfare and social security from the state, as Sztompka

*Table 7.1 Hungary: Changes in income inequalities and agreement or disagreement with the opinion that income inequalities are too large, 1987–2003 (Percentage distribution of answers) (fully disagree = 1, fully agree = 5)*

	1987	1992	1999	2003
<b>Indicators of income inequality</b>				
Gini coefficient	0.24	0.27	0.31	0.32
Multiplier between top and bottom decile	4.6	6.0	7.6	8.1
<b>Opinions about income inequality: inequalities too large</b>				
Fully or slightly disagree:				
not large	11	8	3	3
Unsure	12	8	4	6
Slightly agree: somewhat:				
too large	36	39	26	26
Fully agree: much too large	41	45	67	66
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>N</i> =	2498	1213	1199	3956

*Sources:* Income: TÁRKI 2005, p. 37. Opinions: TÁRKI Monitor 2003.: (<http://www.tarki.hu/adatbank-h/kutjel/pdf/a134.pdf>).

adds, belong to this culture. Thus we have to search for empirical evidence of egalitarianism and statism in ECE and West-European countries.<sup>5</sup>

A cursory look at Hungarian opinions on equality over time would confirm Sztompka's thesis about egalitarianism, except that the opinions do not seem to be primitive or un-reflected at all: the condemnation of excessive inequality is strengthening over time, simultaneously with the increase in the country's income and wealth inequalities (Table 7.1).

The assumed bloc culture is not very uniform, either: the Czechs seem to be less worried by large income inequalities, which, in fact, were smaller in their country than in the others both before and five years after the transition. The other transition countries perceived the significant increase in income inequality and did not quite like what they saw (Table 7.2).

It should be noted that structural differentiation, usually highly important in determining welfare opinions, is not very significant in the case of the rejection of inequalities. For instance, it is almost uniformly high in all educational groups, with the significant exception of Czechs with higher education (Table 7.3).

The high valuation of equality goes hand-in-hand with a very high valuation of newly-gained freedoms. In the SOCO study of 1995 (Ferge et al.,

*Table 7.2 Four countries in ECE: distribution of opinions about the acceptability of income inequalities (Percentage distribution of the answers of the respondents)*

	Czech Republic	Poland	Hungary	Slovakia
Income inequalities are:	Opinions for around 1990, 5 years before the survey			
Too small	25	19	5	17
Acceptable	65	65	74	73
Too large	10	16	21	10
	100	100	100	100
	Opinions for 1995, at the time of the survey			
Too small	9	7	3	15
Acceptable	24	13	8	11
Too large	67	80	89	74
	100	100	100	100

*Note:* The opinions for 1990 are *ex-post*. The comparison between 1990 and 1995 may not reflect therefore 'reality'. It captures, though, the feelings of the respondents about the changes caused by the transition. *N* = around 1000 in all the countries.

*Sources:* Ferge et al. 1995, SOCO survey, Table V.23, p. 316.

*Table 7.3 Four countries in ECE: ratio of respondents who think that income inequalities are too high, within groups of different educational level of head of household (percentage; 1995; only heads of household under 60)*

	Primary	Vocational	Secondary	Higher	All respondents	<i>N</i> (total under 60)	Sign. Level
Czech Republic	82	67	67	44	67	691	***
Poland	82	77	82	72	80	663	n.s.
Hungary	89	92	90	84	89	651	*
Slovakia	69	74	76	74	74	589	n.s.

*Note:* \*\*\* = significant at the 0.01 level; \*\* = significant at the 0.05 level; \* = significant at the 0.1 level.

*Sources:* Ferge et al., 1995., SOCO survey, Table V.24, p. 317.

1995) a series of questions attempted to gauge the value of various aspects of freedom, from the free choice of a doctor to freedom of opinion or the press. On a seven-point scale all civil and political freedoms got very high scores in all five countries covered. (The average for these freedoms was around six.)

When it comes to preferring freedom to equality, the population of ECE countries as a group seems to prefer freedom a bit more than their Western counterparts. The European Value Survey for 1999/2000 shows in the pooled data set of 23 European countries that 54 per cent of the population valued freedom more than equality. In seven out of the 14 Western countries the ratio was higher than average, while this was the case in six out of nine ECE countries.

However, the trade-off between freedom and security is also important. Do people think that freedom can be enjoyed without basic securities? Data are scarce on this issue, but the SOCO survey of 1995 gives some clues. People were asked separately about the importance they attached to various types of freedoms and security. The importance of security on average scored clearly higher than that of freedom. The security of the future of children, housing, health care, income, public safety and of jobs got an average score between 6.6 and 6.8 out of a maximum of seven in all five countries covered.

A variable was constructed based on the difference between the average valuation of all freedoms and securities. This seems to be a very artificial and indirect variable. It proved to be very robust, though. We conducted several surveys after 1995 in Hungary, asking the same set of questions as in the SOCO survey. The results showed a high degree of steadiness in this respect. In all surveys only about one-fifth of the sample valued freedom more highly than, or at least as highly as, security. Meanwhile over one-fourth valued security much more highly, and over half, more highly than freedom (Table 7.4).

Results for the other ECE countries covered in 1995 showed some between-country variation. The proportion of those who valued freedom more than security varied from 14 per cent (Hungary) to 30 per cent (Poland). Security was valued more highly than freedom in all the countries, but the intensity of the longing for security was different (it was strongest in Hungary, weakest in Poland). While security seemed to be regarded as more important than freedom, the relationship between freedom and security depended strongly on how much security one had. Those who are better off, i.e. more educated, with higher income and with more secure jobs tend to value freedom more than, or at least as much as, security. The reverse is true for the poor or insecure strata: security may become all-important at the expense of freedom. The differences were

*Table 7.4 Hungary: Percentage distribution of the scores of the derived variable about the comparative importance of freedom and security*

	1995	1997	2000
Freedom is more than, or as important as, security (score 1)	14	16	18
Security is more important than freedom by maximum 1 grade (score 2)	33	27	29
Security is more important than freedom by 1,0 to 2 grades (score 3)	26	28	27
Security is more important by more than 2 grades (score 4)	27	30	26
Total	100	100	100
<i>N</i> =	1000	1200	974

*Note:* Method of calculation: the difference between the average score of all securities (7-point scale) and of all freedoms (7-point scale) varies between -6 and +6. This new score was compounded in the four groups presented in the table.

*Sources:* For 1995, Ferge et al, 1995; for 1997 the Hungarian Panel Survey, TÁRKI; for 2000: an Omnibus survey of Sonda-Ipsos. Support from the Hungarian Research Foundation gratefully acknowledged.

significant in all five countries covered. Some examples regarding the effect of people's educational level may prove the point. The rate of those for whom security was much more important than freedom was 27 per cent in the Czech Republic among those with only primary education, and 2 per cent among those with higher education. The respective data were 18 and 3 per cent for Poland, 41 and 8 per cent for Hungary, 28 and 8 per cent for Slovakia. The rates for freedom-lovers, by contrast, ranked between 19 and 43 in the Czech Republic, and 7 and 27 per cent in Hungary, with higher values for the more educated. These results suggest that increasing insecurity may jeopardize democracy.

Thus security, and the role of the state in social matters, seems to be very important indeed for people in East-Central Europe. It has still to be answered whether they form thereby a 'bloc culture' far removed from European culture. Available evidence does not support this thesis, and certainly not on welfare issues.

The commitment to equality is far from being an East-European phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a typical core European value. Table 7.5 summarizes this point. In all the surveyed countries at least two-thirds of respondents think that income inequalities are too large. The bias of ECE

*Table 7.5 Geographic coverage: European countries that were members of the European Union in 2005. Percentage distribution of responses in the 1999 survey to the statement: 'Differences in income are too large'*

The countries are ranked according to the rate of those who strongly agree.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree and agree together	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree or strongly disagree	Total
Portugal	82	14	96	2	2	100
<i>Slovakia</i>	74	20	94	4	2	100
<i>Hungary</i>	69	25	94	3	3	100
<i>Czech Republic</i>	61	27	88	6	6	100
France	60	27	87	7	6	100
<i>Latvia</i>	58	39	97	2	1	100
<i>Slovenia</i>	50	41	91	5	4	100
<i>Poland</i>	49	42	91	6	4	100
<i>Germany (East)</i>	45	49	94	4	2	100
Austria	41	45	86	9	4	100
Spain	36	54	90	7	3	100
Great Britain	30	50	80	13	7	100
Sweden	29	43	72	18	10	100
Germany (West)	21	56	77	14	10	100
Northern Ireland	18	51	69	22	9	100
Cyprus	12	54	66	21	12	100

*Note:* There are no more recent comparative data on the issue. The next survey on social values is planned for 2009 (<http://www.issp.org/data.shtml>). The separation of the two Germanies in the 1999 survey served comparability with former value surveys. The splitting of the UK into Northern Ireland and Great Britain is not explained in the available documents. ECE countries are in italic.

*Source:* ISSP, 1999, Survey on Social Inequality III-ZA no. 3430.

(preference for equality) appears mostly in the ratio of those who strongly agree with the statement. The quotients cover an unusually wide range, between 12 and 82 per cent. Three of the seven former socialist countries are above 60 per cent. Meanwhile Portugal and France are also in this group. A similar pattern emerges in the case of all those who 'agree': the ECE countries are over-represented among the egalitarians, but they do not form a separate bloc. Only a more profound analysis could show the respective role of such factors as former dictatorship, poverty level of the country,

shock of the rapid increase in inequality, deception over unfulfilled expectations, current level of inequality, and so forth.

The ISSP survey of 1996 also contains information about people's opinions on the state's responsibility. Respondents were asked whether the state should assume responsibility in the case of health care, benefits for the elderly, decent housing for all, jobs for all, provision for the unemployed, price control, the growth of industry, control of industrial damage to the environment, and reduction of income differentials. The answers show a preference for statism all over Europe. The ratio of those who agree (strongly or at all) that the state has a role in these matters is a majority in almost all cases. On only one question – provision for the unemployed as a public duty – are there countries where agreement is under 50 per cent. Otherwise, in all the cases and countries at least 60 per cent accept state responsibility or regard it as important. The data of the European Value Survey for 1999/2000 confirm a bias towards statism in many countries and in the case of several issues, particularly on the issue of assuring basic needs for all. It has to be added that, in this battery of questions, there was one question evoking less strongly statist answers. People had to place themselves on a scale from one to ten, one meaning that individuals should take more responsibility for themselves, and ten meaning that the state should provide for everybody. The mean for the 22 countries covered was 5.14, a very slight statist bias. Out of the 13 'core' or old countries only three were above this level, but out of the nine new countries, seven were above it, that is, leaning towards statism.

The role of the state is considered important also in the case of income inequalities. A sizeable majority all over Europe would like to see state intervention even in this particularly delicate matter. The majority of respondents in all European countries (with the exception of Denmark) covered by the 2002 ISSP survey think that the state should curb income inequalities. They agree more or less strongly with the statement that 'the government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels'. The ratio of those who 'agree strongly' varies between 8 and 45 per cent (Denmark and Greece) among the 14 old member states, and between 22 and 40 in the four ECE countries covered by the sample. The total rate of those who consent is relatively very low in Denmark (43 per cent) but very high – over 75 per cent – in six Western and three Eastern countries.

Out of all the questions we analysed in the cross-country surveys only one showed a clear bloc impact: whether the state should assure jobs for all. The range of those who agree varied between 70 and 90 per cent, but in all ECE countries this was over 80 per cent, and in all others, under it. Past experiences seem to colour these answers: state responsibility played a similar role everywhere in most fields (or was stronger in the West than in

the East). Only massive job creation by the state was a specific trait of state socialism in the East.

Briefly, then, there seems to be no deep gap between Western and ECE countries in Europe, as regards the strong adherence to basic European values of freedom, equality, and also security. There are between-country variations in both sets of countries, and the sets are to a large extent overlapping. Statism is slightly stronger in the East than in the West but we did not find evidence for the thesis of a bloc culture.

## CONCLUSION

Popular welfare culture does not seem to be very different in the East and West of Europe. Attacks on it are also ubiquitous. In East-Central Europe it is based on allegations of a pampered *Homo Sovieticus*, 'learned helplessness', and 'primitive egalitarianism'. These seem to be clichés used at various times and in various places to discredit social security and to make a case for cutting back public expenditure. Indeed, historical forces shaping the character of people go much further back than just a few decades, and the demand for state-provided security is part of modern European culture, not specific to the East of Europe. In the 'core' of Europe, the social security of people without property (workers, employees) was achieved at the end of a long gestation period with the creation of 'common social property' (essentially social insurance based on strong labour rights) as a counterpart to private ownership. Socialist dictatorship found a tragically different solution to the dilemma of assuring security to propertyless people by abolishing private property altogether. The price was extremely high in terms of the violation of the rule of law and of freedoms. Yet even in this truncated form, this security promoted norms of 'civilized' co-existence even in the worst-off social strata (in Hungary, the Roma) that, ultimately, helped the rapid adjustment to new societal rules and norms. Everyday security was probably instrumental in facilitating the emergence of democratic attitudes.

Unfortunately the new political classes did not deal well with this social heritage. They totally missed the opportunity offered by diminishing economic functions of the state to concentrate on civilizational and welfare functions. (Their irresponsibility is only partly explained by the circumstances of globalization and the pressure of supranational agencies.) As a consequence of indifference on behalf of the ruling political and economic groups, at least half of the citizens – among them Roma in countries where their number is high – are still losers in the transition. Meanwhile, the safeguarding of political and social security, and state action to curb increasing

inequalities within the limits of the rule of law, is probably unusually imperative in ex-communist countries. The basis of democracy may be weakened if the expectations of the majority meet with an unresponsive state.

It seems that the contradiction between two basic aims of the European Union as formulated in Lisbon – an increasingly competitive economy and an increasingly cohesive society – has to be approached in a more innovative and more humane spirit than is actually done. The issue is not whether social disasters will ensue if the wise recommendations of scholars to curb global market forces are not followed. These threats are real but they relate to an invisible future. The present chapter has a shorter perspective. It argues for societies that are liveable here and now – East and West.

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## NOTES

1. The part of Europe covered by the chapter is alternatively called Central and Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, 'Mittel-Europa'. Here I use the term East-Central Europe, ECE for short. This area corresponds roughly to the new EU member states and the candidate countries.
2. I put 'communism' in inverted commas because I find the term a misnomer. It is by now too widely used to attempt to change it to something politically more appropriate like 'dictatorial' or (for later decades) 'authoritarian state socialism'.
3. I thank Adrian Sinfield and John Veit-Wilson who drew my attention to the parallels, and to Adrian Sinfield who found the Boydes text.
4. A compulsory, privately-funded pillar was introduced in Central and Eastern Europe between 1997 and 2002 in Hungary, Poland, Latvia and Croatia. The scheme was on the agenda in 2000 in Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and also in Russia and the Ukraine (Lindeman et al., 2000). The Czech Republic and Slovenia seem to resist all pressures.
5. Unfortunately there are few comparative data over time and space. We shall use some Hungarian sources, the SOCO survey of 1995 covering five ECE countries, the European Values Study (EVS) and various waves carried out within the ISSP, that is, the International Social Survey Programme. The World Values Survey could not be used for these particular issues.

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## 8. Welfare policy reforms in Japan and Korea: cultural and institutional factors

**Ito Peng**

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Scholars engaged in comparative welfare state research on East Asian countries face two critical problems. First, the mainstream understanding of East Asian welfare states often takes superficial notion of East Asian culture as a theoretical platform from which to examine these welfare regimes. Indeed, frequently notions such as Confucian values have been used to explain what are often thought as the unique characteristics of East Asian welfare systems – a strong sense of work ethics, emphasis on education and self-discipline, filial piety, gender role division, and respect for the elders and authority (Jones, 1990, 1993; Sung, 2003).<sup>1</sup> Although there is no denying that certain features of East Asian welfare systems, such as the lack of state provisions for the family and personal social services, and policy emphasis on the elderly rather than children, do appear to cohere with some tenets of Confucian principles, these features are, on a closer examination, by no means unique to East Asia, nor is there clear evidence of causal relationship between Confucian values and policy outcomes.<sup>2</sup> The second problem associated with comparative welfare state studies of East Asia, and particularly for those who are interested in examining the impacts of culture on welfare states, is that the current understanding of culture is too unclear and amorphous. As a result, even though many scholars do recognize the influence of culture on political processes and policy preferences (Lipset, 1990), many eschew overt cultural explanation.

In this chapter, I define welfare state culture as ideational frameworks used to define welfare and the relationships between the state and citizens in achieving individual and societal welfare. Because ideas are contested and institutionally embedded, the ideational framework underpinning welfare state is also subject to change. I use the cases of social policy reforms in Japan and South Korea (henceforth Korea) during the decade of the 1990s to illustrate how changes in ideational frameworks concerning family and family relationships, gender relationships, and the role of the state in ensuring

individual social security, have affected policy transformations. In both Japan and Korea there have been noticeable shifts in ideational frameworks underpinning social policies. In both countries, public and political perspectives of social policies shifted from one that saw social welfare as a subsidiary aspect of the developmental state to an expression of new citizenship and human rights. Simultaneously, social welfare is also viewed as a new scheme for labour market activation and demographic rejuvenation under a post-industrial social context. As a result, in both countries, expansions in social welfare were observed in the 1990s, particularly in the areas of women-friendly family and care policies. I argue, first, that Japan and Korea are good cases of close relationships between structural changes and welfare state culture shift. Second, ideas are important in the shaping of social policies, and we can attribute changes in social policy trajectories in these countries to ideational shifts.

The following section will briefly discuss new theoretical perspectives about culture, ideas, and social policy change. I point to Sewell's (1992) argument about interdependent relationships between structure and culture, and Lieberman (2002) and Somers and Block's (2005) work that analyse roles of culture/ideas and institution in social policy changes. The third section of the chapter will illustrate the relationships between the ideational regime shifts and social policy changes in Japan and Korea. I will focus on the expansion of social welfare, particularly the women-friendly and family care policies in these two countries in the 1990s, to illustrate how both ideational and institutional factors have shaped policy changes. The final section of the chapter will consider the value of embedding culture in comparative welfare state research.

## CULTURE, IDEAS, AND SOCIAL POLICY CHANGE

It is now widely accepted amongst comparative welfare researchers that welfare state configurations are shaped by the regime typologies of a given nation. While research has shown a variety of structural determinants shaping the regime typologies – for example, political institutional arrangements, labour mobilization, interest group politics, and the nature of the industrial labour–management relationship – very little attention has been paid to the role of culture and ideas. One reason for this is the empirical difficulties associated with researching culture and ideas. How would we identify and document cultural or ideational shifts, and how do we establish causal relationships between culture and ideas on the one hand, and policy changes, on the other? Because cultural and ideational changes are difficult to measure, it is difficult to establish causal links between them and policy

changes. Researchers are therefore more likely to emphasize more tangible and measurable factors such as institutions and political competitions, and stay away from analysis the impact of culture and ideas on social policy.

In recent years, however, new debates on culture and ideas have emerged amongst comparative welfare state scholars not satisfied with the traditional institutional and political analyses (Pfau-Effinger, 2004; 2005; Chamberlayne et al., 1999). They point to the limitations of the existing mainstream comparative welfare state research's reliance on rational economic models and disregard of cultural influence, and call for more in-depth analyses of ideational/cultural factors in policy-making. A number of studies have made important contributions to theoretical and methodological approaches to analysing idea and culture's role in policy change (Lieberman, 2002; Campbell, 1998; Somers and Block, 2005; Korteweg, 2005; Beland, 2005). In his theory of structure, Sewell (1992: 27) contends that structure is 'constituted by mutually sustaining cultural schemas and sets of resources that empower and constrain social action and tend to be reproduced by that action'. Unlike the traditional views that see structure as predetermined and shaping cultural patterns, Sewell sees structure as a profoundly cultural phenomenon, and moreover determined by character and distribution of resources. For Sewell, structure is not static, but rather is continually evolving and forming the matrix for social interaction. Because of this, structure can only be sustained and transformed by constant human agency (with resources). Put another way, social structure is sustained and transformed by social actors transposing their cultural schemas or ideational frameworks. Structure and culture/ideas are thus mutually interdependent and constantly influencing each other; transformation of one would lead to reconfiguration of the other.

Unfortunately, as Lieberman (2002) points out, ideational changes in politics, such as shift from Keynesianism to neo-liberalism, are not always adequately captured by institutional analysis. To explain developments that involve basic conflicts and transformations of political ideas and values we would therefore need to take ideas seriously as a causal factor in accounting for political action, policy development and institutional change. The point here is that:

(t)hese change processes . . . occur at the intersection of ideas and institutions, and any fully convincing theory of political or institutional changes must incorporate both as constituent elements with reasonably equal weight. (Lieberman, 2002: 700)

Somers and Block (2005) offer an explicit example of comparative social policy that takes on the causal role of ideas in social policy reforms. Their comparison of the English Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and the 1996 US reform of Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), illustrate, in both cases, shifts in ideational

regimes vis-à-vis social policy – from understanding the structural causation of poverty to the neo-liberal idea of perversity. By demonstrating ways in which the perversity rhetoric gained public and political attention and replaced the mainstream idea about social welfare, Somers and Block show, in both cases, how the ideational transformation from poverty to perversity led to radical policy changes. In order for ideational regime transformation to occur, the authors argue, three essential external conditions must exist: (1) a severe crisis under the reigning welfare regime, creating opportunities for an ideational competition to take place; (2) a battle of clashing ideas fought out in the public arena; and (3) the extremist position gaining new mainstream legitimacy by establishing itself as the only possible solution.

In Japan and Korea, we see similar ideational shifts occurring in the 1990s with respect to social welfare. In Japan, the idea of a ‘Japanese-style welfare society’ (*nihongata fukushi shakai*), which served as a powerful theoretical and rhetorical base for limited state role in social welfare, was revised and replaced by the idea of social investment within the context of low fertility and an ageing society in the 1990s. As a consequence, welfare state expansion followed along with the introduction of family support programmes, gender equality policies, and increased provision of social care. In Korea, the mainstream developmental state idea that relegated social welfare to a subsidiary role was also seriously challenged and revised after the 1997 economic crisis. Here, the so-called ‘pro-developmental’ vision was eclipsed by the ‘pro-welfare’ vision. As a consequence, in Korea too, a significant welfare state expansion ensued after 1998. In Korea, new policies are emphasizing the state’s role in social welfare provision, in promoting gender equality and family support. In both cases, we can identify three conditions that made the ideational regime shift possible. In both countries, the reigning mainstream welfare regime faced crises in the 1990s as a result of societal and economic changes. These were then followed by battles of ideas in which opposing views about causes and explanations of and solutions to crises were offered in the public arena. In both Japan and Korea, these public battles over ideas also led to political regime shifts. Finally, in both cases, the new perspectives vis-à-vis the welfare state eventually gained mainstream legitimacy by establishing themselves as the only possible and reasonable solutions. Once the ideational shifts occurred, policy reforms followed relatively smoothly.

## IDEATIONAL REGIME SHIFTS IN JAPAN AND KOREA

Both Japan and Korea have long been known as welfare laggards. As indicated by the OECD public social expenditure database (OECD, 2004),

*Table 8.1 Public social expenditure as a percentage of GDP among selected OECD countries*

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2001
Australia	11.3	13.5	14.2	17.8	18.0
Canada	14.3	17.4	18.6	19.6	17.8
Ireland	17.0	22.1	18.6	19.4	13.8
Japan	10.2	11.0	11.2	13.5	16.9
Korea	n/a	n/a	3.1	3.6	6.1
USA	13.3	13.0	13.4	15.5	14.8
UK	17.9	21.1	19.5	23.0	21.8
Germany	23.0	23.6	22.8	27.5	27.4
Denmark	29.1	27.9	29.3	32.4	29.2
OECD-21	17.7	19.6	20.5	22.5	21.9
EU-15	20.6	22.9	23.4	25.6	24.0

*Sources:* OECD, 2004; Social Expenditure Database, SOCX, [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure).

Japan and Korea were amongst the lowest public social spenders of all the industrialized nations, well below the OECD-21 and EU-15 average, and slightly below liberal welfare states such as the USA, Canada, Australia, and Ireland (see Table 8.1). The mainstream explanations for Japan and Korea's residual welfare regimes can be divided broadly into two types. The traditional 'cultural explanation' commonly attributes the lack of welfare state development in these countries to a Confucian underpinning (Jones, 1990, 1993; Branegan, 1991; Chan, 1996; Sung, 2003). According to this explanation, East Asian welfare regimes are shaped by Confucian values that emphasize, among other things, filial piety, respect for authority, industry, self-help, and mutual support. The lack of state welfare in these countries is thus a result of Confucian values that stress the importance of family and community-based mutual support, and non-dependence on the state. To be sure, the sustained economic growth seen in these East Asian economies has frequently led advocates to argue that Confucian values have not only enabled these countries to achieve high level of welfare without the state but that they have also facilitated the developmental state conditions (see for example, discussion on the Confucian basis of the developmental state by Lee Kuan Yew in Branegan, 1991).

In contrast to the traditional cultural explanation, political institutional explanations often emphasize the role of the developmental state in shaping the East Asian welfare regime. According to this view, the success

of East Asian economies over the second half of the twentieth century can be accounted by strong and well functioning states staffed by capable bureaucrats that see the nation's economic development as their priority. In developmental states such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, the state takes a proactive role in managing markets (Johnson, 1982; Amsden, 1989; Wade, 1992; Haggard, 1990). While authors differ in their specific emphasis of what developmental states do, they all agree that by intervening in the economy, these states have played an important role in ensuring the country's economic success (World Bank, 1993). Because of the developmental state's policy priority on economic and industrial development, social policies are relegated to a subsidiary role. East Asian welfare regimes tend to have low social expenditure because they are fundamentally productivist in nature: it puts priority on protecting core workers in key industries, leaving social protection of the less 'productive' sectors to the family and communities. The lean welfare states that we see in countries like Japan and Korea are thus logical extensions of the developmental state thinking that sees the state's primary role in economic development, not in ensuring equal social citizenship to all.

While both cultural and political institutional perspectives shed important light on East Asian welfare regimes, they are both much better at explaining continuities than changes. In both cases, culture and institutions are usefully applied to explain the persistence of particular East Asian welfare regime characteristics, and because of that it leaves very little room for any explanation of changes that may take place. The evidence suggests, however, that in both Japan and Korea social policy is frequently contested, and that these welfare states have undergone some significant changes, particularly in the 1990s. For example, both Japanese and Korean welfare states have expanded noticeably since the beginning of the 1990s, while many western welfare states have been retrenching or resisting expansion. In Japan, public social expenditure as a percentage of GDP rose from 11.2 per cent in 1990 to 16.9 per cent in 2001, while in Korea, it increased from 3.1 per cent to 6.1 per cent, respectively. True, even with the expansions, Japan and Korea are still low social spenders compared to European welfare states. But considering where they started at the beginning of the decade, the rate of expansion is remarkable. What is more, these welfare state expansions have also occurred along with a qualitative shift in policy emphasis, from what may be characterized as a corporatist productivist view of welfare to a more universal view of welfare. While these changes may not result in convergence with western welfare states – certainly not in the near future – they nevertheless indicate breaks from the past. How did Japan and Korea make such a dramatic about turn in their social policies? Analytically, neither Confucian cultural values nor

the developmental-state-focused institutional explanation would have predicted such a qualitative policy shift in these two countries; on the contrary, both these perspectives would have predicted the opposite – a continuing low public social expenditure. To answer this, it is important to look at the intersections of culture/idea and institution.

### **Japan: Post-industrial Changes and Policy Regime Shift**

The Japanese politics and social policy at least during the first couple of decades after WWII were significantly influenced by the Americans. Under US occupational government supervision, the postwar Japanese constitution and much of social welfare legislations were written in the late-1940s and early 1950s by incorporating the existing policies with the American model of participatory democracy and liberal social welfare. The social welfare system introduced after WWII Japan integrated traditional practice of a local community mutual aid system and the liberal welfare regime's principle of limited state intervention. On the political front, the success of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party in managing sustained economic growth throughout most of the postwar era and its ability to cast itself as a catch-all party representing interests and visions of the mainstream voters had led to its 38 years of political dominance in the parliament, from 1955 to 1993.

In Japan, there was only one other moment in the postwar era prior to the 1990s when a significant ideational change in welfare policy had occurred. However, this change was short lived because of the economic crises that followed shortly afterwards. It was in the early 1970s, and the combination of increased economic prosperity and burgeoning student and new social movements in Japan had created opportunities for new ideas about social welfare to gain hold. Throughout the end of the 1960s to the early 1970s, urban local politics in Japan turned decisively to the Left, as voters elected mayors and local councillors who challenged the LDP government's economy-first welfare later policies. The change culminated in 1973 when the then conservative LDP Prime Minister Tanaka launched the 'First year of social welfare' (*Fukushi Gan'nen*). This was a significant policy break from the past because claiming that Japan had finally entered the league of the developed industrial societies, the conservative LDP government was promising to transform the nation into a welfare state like other developed industrial societies in the West. What followed was a series of welfare reforms, including the doubling of national pension benefits, the indexation of pension benefits to the cost of living, free universal health care for the elderly, a universal child allowance, general upgrading of social welfare, and the introduction of a number of environment protection

policies, hitherto neglected by the same government during the preceding decade and a half. Factors that contributed to the policy turnaround were a combination of economic growth, Japan's entry into the OECD, public recognition of demographic ageing (Japan became officially an ageing society in 1970, when the proportion of people over the age of 65 reached 7.1 per cent of the total), and changes in public sentiments toward social welfare as reflected by public opinion and the rise of grassroots welfare and environmental movements, shift in voting patterns, and growing public support for pro-welfare politicians. A huge jump in social expenditure followed. Between 1965 and 1975 the total social security expenditure increased by nearly tenfold, and the public applauded the government promise of more social welfare. Unfortunately for the supporters of welfare state expansion, the First Year of Social Welfare was soon quashed by the oil shock of 1974, and just as the new era of welfare state began, the government had to start looking for ways to rein in the rising social expenditures.

In the wake of the fiscal crisis that followed the 1974 oil shock, the Japanese-style welfare society rhetoric supported by fiscally conservative politicians and policy advocates took over the public debate. Against the neo-liberal prescriptions the pro-welfare position was unable to come up with more credible policy alternatives. The new reigning welfare regime from the mid-1970s to the 1990s therefore shifted back to the idea that Japan never was, and never will be, a *welfare state*. Rather than aping western welfare states, the argument went, Japan should create its own unique *welfare society* based on its cultural tradition that valued family and community support and, above all, individual work ethics (Baba, 1978). Although the government was not able to fully roll back welfare promises made in the First Year of Social Welfare, it did manage to contain expenditure to the minimum throughout the 1980s.

This reigning welfare regime, however, was faced with a fresh and unexpected crisis in the early 1990s. In 1989 the total national fertility rate registered an all time low of 1.57. The so-called '1.57 shock' set an alarm as demographers forecasted a long-term demographic trend of low fertility and rapid population ageing. When the percentage of the elderly reached 7.1 per cent in 1970, it also prompted the government to consider health care reforms (Campbell, 1992), but this on its own was not enough to cause a widespread concern. The total fertility rate then was 2.13 and the economy had been growing at an enviable rate of approximately 9 per cent per annum throughout the previous decade. There was no reason to believe that demographic ageing at the time would cause immediate or mid-term economic concern. After the policy about-turn in the mid-1970s, debate on demographic ageing advanced by the Ministry of Health and Welfare was mooted

by the conservative politicians within the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Ministry of Finance as they focused their attention on fiscal control and welfare retrenchment. Any welfare-related concerns in relation to the elderly were thus passed onto the family. Despite the rising concerns over economic insecurity and social care for elderly people voiced by the media and some NGOs, the idea of fiscal restraint prevailed. As Prime Minister Miki claimed in the prelude to welfare restructuring in 1975, 'The government is neither a magician nor a Santa Claus. Citizens must take their share of burden of welfare cuts.' Given the context of economic crisis following the oil shock, the public accepted the government's fiscal rationale.

The 1.57 shock of 1989, however, was a different story, and it suddenly created an opening for the public to unleash their concerns and frustrations over the Japanese-style welfare society policy of the previous decade. The projection of long-term fertility decline raised the questions, first, of its direct implications for demographic ageing and the sustainability of the social welfare system, and second, social costs of the Japanese-style welfare society regime. The reigning welfare regime came under even more serious crisis in the early 1990s when Japan's economic bubble that had lasted throughout the 1980s, burst, and with it came the economic projections of long-term economic decline for the country. The combination of demographic changes and economic decline proved that the Japanese-style welfare society regime's economic rationale of zero-sum between economic growth and social welfare was wrong. What the crisis showed was that the Japanese economy was no longer able to sustain the kind of developmentalist economic growth as before, given the changes in its economic, social, and demographic conditions. The fertility crisis thus served as a powerful metaphor for the idea that Japan had reached the limit of the developmental state.

At the institutional level, the ideational battle to explain and solve the crisis of the Japanese-style welfare society took place between the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) and the Ministry of Finance (MOF). MOHW set up an emergency research group in 1990 to study causes and policy alternatives to address the issue of low fertility and an ageing society.<sup>3</sup> The group brought together academics, experts and policy-makers in areas ranging from population demography, family anthropology, social psychology, to comparative social policy. Over the next three years the group held study sessions, research tours, and conferences, and commissioned research papers on economic, social, and policy issues related to low fertility and ageing society (Nippon Aiku Research Institute for Maternal Child Health and Welfare, 1991). The outcome of their work was a strong endorsement of family and work reconciliation policy that had already been introduced

in many EU countries. The research group recommendation, when brought to the parliament in 1993, however, did not receive immediate support. MOF and some governing LDP politicians continued to resist the idea of social welfare expansion, insisting that the government could not afford the kind of welfare state expansion suggested by MOHW.

As the battle of ideas between pro-welfare expansion and pro-fiscal conservatism was taking place within the government, a similar ideational battle was also taking place in the public. First, a series of political scandals had rocked the government in the early 1990s, leading to three consecutive resignations of LDP party leaders by 1993. The public confidence in mainstream politicians dropped. At the same time, concerns about declining economic growth and the ageing population had affected public opinion, causing it to swing in favour of more government support for social welfare. The public opinion surveys since 1992 show that, after the economy, social welfare was the most significant concern for Japanese voters (Mainichi Shumbun, 1992–2000; Prime Minister's Office, 1994). To make matters worse, by the end of 1992, the collapse of the bubble economy had become all too evident. Jitters over the political scandals and changes in voting preferences led to party defections and shifting political alliances amongst younger LDP politicians. At the same time, there was growing evidence that individual behaviour and ideas about the family and gender relations were changing, particularly amongst the younger people in Japan. The proportion of three or more generation households has been declining steadily throughout the 1980s and the divorce rate had been rising (see Tables 8.2 and 8.3). Public opinion polls revealed more people believed that women should continue to work even after marriage and childbirth (Japan – Cabinet Office, 2005). Indeed, by 1990, dual working couples were the majority rather than minority in Japan.

The 1993 national election proved a watershed point for Japanese politics. Mired by political scandals and public frustration over the government's handling of economic and social policies, the public voted down the LDP in favour of the opposition coalition party headed by the leader of the Japan New Party, Norihiro Hosokawa. This marked the first political regime shift in Japan since the LDP took power in 1955, and the end of the so-called 'political structure of the 55' (*55-nen taisei*) – the policy stranglehold by business, economic bureaucrats, and LDP politicians. With the change of government and public opinion favouring more state support for social welfare, the new vision of family-friendly policies also gained an upper hand from the welfare retrenchment perspective. In 1994, under the new coalition government headed by Socialist Prime Minister Kamimura, the government announced the launching of the new social policy agenda, *21st Century Welfare Vision: The Basic Policy Plan to Support Child Rearing*. This Plan,

*Table 8.2 Family structures in Japan and Korea, 1980–2000*

	1980	2000
Japan		
Nuclear	60.3	58.4
Three + generation	19.7	13.6
Single person	18.1	24.1
Korea		
Nuclear	76.8	75.0
Three + generation	17.0	8.4
Single person	4.8	15.5

Sources: MHWL, *White Paper on Health, Welfare, and Labour* 2001; KNSO, *Future Household Projection*, 2003.

*Table 8.3 Divorce rate (crude divorce rate/1000 population), 1980–2002*

	1980	1990	1992	1995	1999	2000	2001	2002
Japan	1.22	1.28	1.45	1.60	2.00	2.10	2.27	2.30
Korea	0.6	1.1	1.2	1.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	3.0

Sources: NIPSSR, *Population Statistics*, 2004; Yeong-Ran Park, 2005.

commonly known as the Angel Plan, paved the way for social care and social welfare expansion in Japan from the 1990s.

The Japanese case illustrates how the old welfare idea based on the Japanese-style welfare society became increasingly untenable under new socio-economic conditions marked by the end of the bubble economy, low fertility, and rapid ageing. The crisis of the old social welfare regime thus created opportunities for an ideational competition to take place. The ideational battle between the old Japanese-style welfare society idea and the new welfare perspective based on social investment and family and work harmonization took place in the public arena as well as within the government. With the combination of a political regime shift and a clear shift in public opinion in favour of social welfare, the new perspective was able to gain new mainstream legitimacy and established itself as the only possible solution. Once the new perspective gained the mainstream position, policy reforms followed relatively easily. Since 1994, public childcare has expanded along with the introduction of a wide range of supportive programmes such as enlargement of after-school programmes and childcare drop-in centres. In addition, new labour legislation was introduced to help

workers with family responsibilities, including the expansion of maternity and parental leave, care leave, and flexible working hours. In 2001, the LDP Prime Minister Koizumi even went public to guarantee childcare spaces for all families needing them. Maternity and parental leaves have been expanded allowing parents to take up to a year of leave with 40 per cent income replacement. The child allowance, which was abolished in 1983 under the Japanese-style welfare society policy, was reinstated in 2000 (Peng, 2003a). In addition to the family support policy for families with children, social care for the elderly has also expanded over the 1990s, the most important reform being the introduction of the Long-Term Care Insurance scheme in 1997 (see for example, Peng, 2003b, for discussions on this).

### **Korea – Economic Crisis and Policy Regime Shift**

In Korea, although the democratic consolidation did help mainstream social policy, the dominant idea about social welfare systems did not change much until the economic crisis of 1997. As Wong (2004) points out, like Taiwan, Korea's democratic transition in 1987 was followed by electoral competition along social policy lines. However, for much of the early 1990s, social policy reforms focused on universalization of social insurance schemes, such as health and pensions (see Table 8.4). Important as they were, these did not entail the same kind of ideational shift when compared with what followed after 1997. The mainstream idea about social welfare for the first part of the 1990s remained basically productivist in orientation. Social welfare and family support remained marginal because in principle it was considered that the state's welfare role was to protect employment-based social security and that individuals should rely on the family for basic social welfare. While public sentiments were supportive of increased state support for social welfare, in practice, public expenditure on social welfare remained low.

During the democratic consolidation period under the first two presidents, Roh Tae Woo (1988–93) and Kim Young Sam (1993–97), a number of political and economic reforms were introduced. In addition to introducing electoral and party systems reforms, the Kim Young Sam government also pushed forward on policy of structural adjustment through economic liberalization. Through the policy of globalization (*Segyewha*), the Kim Young Sam regime introduced labour and economic reforms, including labour market deregulation, to open Korea to international trade. The structural adjustment led to increases in business bankruptcies; the labour legislation reforms enabled employers to hire more irregular workers, and *chaebols* began to downsize to readjust to the new and more

*Table 8.4 Welfare reforms in Korea, 1987–2003*

	Roh Tae Woo (1987–92)	Kim Young Sam (1993–97)	Kim Dae-Jung (1998–2003)
Introduction of new programmes	Expansion of pension, health, injury insurance (1988) Minimum wage (1988) Legal retirement pay (1989) Employment Promotion Law for the Handicapped and Retired (1991) Infant Care Law (1991) Old Age Allowance (1991)	Pension for Agrarian and Fisheries workers (1995) Expansion of Injury Insurance (1996) Unemployment Insurance (1995) Home care service for the elderly (1995) Expansion facilities for the handicapped (1997) Productive Welfare Project (1995)	Pension for the self-employed (1999) Integration of Health Insurance Administration (1998) Separation of drug prescribing and dispensing roles between doctors and pharmacists (2000) Expansion of unemployment insurance (1998) Labour market flexibilization policy (1998) National Basic Livelihood Security Law (2000) Motherhood Protection Law (2001) Cash benefit for the Elderly (1998) Paid maternity leave (1999) Paid sick leave (2001) Implementation of productive welfare policy (1999)

*Sources:* Ministry of Health and Welfare, White Papers and homepage; Song, 2005.

competitive economic condition (Lee, 2000). In the midst of this, the Asian economic crisis struck Korea in 1997.

The Korean economy suffered a huge setback as a result of the economic crisis. The foreign capital flight left the government with no reserve in foreign currency. Stock markets plunged. The economy halted. Business

bankruptcies rose and the unemployment rate shot up. By 1998, the number of unemployed had reached 1.8 million, the unemployment rate went up to 6.5 per cent from 3.1 per cent the previous year. Finally, in what the President Kim Dae-Jung called 'the country's second humiliation' (the first was being colonized by Japan from 1910 to 1945), Korea had to turn to the IMF for an emergency bailout. Ironically, the economic crisis also created an opportunity for an ideational regime shift to take place. Frustrated with the devastating social and economic conditions, voters turned to the reformist Kim Dae-Jung in the 1997 presidential election. As an outside candidate, not connected to any previous regimes or to business interests, people hoped Kim Dae-Jung would bring in a new vision to politics and social welfare. Under the Kim Dae-Jung presidency, the ideational contest between the 'pro-welfare' (those advocating for welfare expansion) and 'pro-business' (those advocating for traditional developmental state) views began almost immediately. The pro-welfare advocates consisted of bureaucrats in the Ministry of Social Welfare and the newly-created Ministry of Gender Equality, some bureaucrats from the previous Economic Planning Board (now the Ministry of Finance) who saw market liberalization and *chaebol* reform as a way to refashion Korea's political economy in line with neo-liberal reforms (Hundt, 2005), and civil society groups which were given entry into national policy debate under the new regime. The economic crisis had resulted in a large number of people being unemployed and family and human suffering was regularly reported through the media. The public trust in the old developmental state regime approach to the economy and welfare dropped sharply. With Kim Dae-Jung as the president, civil society groups that backed him made a further push for welfare expansion (Lee and Peng, 2005). Responding to the dramatic changes in the government's and the public's idea about social welfare, the Kim Dae-Jung administration proceeded with social welfare reforms.

Song (2005) claims that with Kim Dae-Jung government's shift to a pro-welfare position, politicians and bureaucrats began to pay greater attention to the importance of social policy in managing social problems. As he argues:

For the first time in modern Korean political history, social policy gained a status and importance of its own. The Kim government focused on four policy areas: labour market policy, poverty policy and public relief, inequality and social insurance programs. Because of the rising unemployment rate, unemployment policy occupied center stage early on in the administration. (Song, 2005: 14)

Unemployment insurance was reformed and expanded and measures such as job creation, job training, and job replacement were introduced in 1998. The government budget for unemployment alone rose by approximately

tenfold within a year. As a result of the unemployment insurance and economic recovery, the unemployment rate began to decline after 1999. But once the ideational framework based on a more active state role in social welfare was established, further social welfare expansion followed. Poverty alleviation became the next focus of welfare reform. Although the Livelihood Protection Law and Public Assistance (LPLPA) Program had been in existence since 1965, it was extremely limited and only the very poor and needy without family support qualified. By 1998, it had become evident that the number of working poor had grown, and that a reform of this programme was necessary. This perspective was also widely shared amongst civil society groups as well. At the inauguration of the Kim Dae Jung government, one of the largest civil society groups in Korea, the People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), filed a lawsuit against the Minister of Health and Welfare for failing to announce the official poverty line. Calling themselves the 'distributional coalition' and focused on pushing the government to expand the welfare budget, the PSPD and 45 civil society groups, including the Korean Women's Association United (KWAU or *Yah-Yun*), the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, the Confederation of Teachers Unions, the Coalition for People's Welfare, the Korea Poverty Research Institute, residents associations, labour unions, poverty groups, and homeless groups had put forward a legal challenge to the government to define the idea of poverty and poverty relief (Lee and Peng, 2005). Put simply, the lawsuit was the public challenge to the state over the idea of poverty relief. The message to the government was clear: Korean people had a very different idea about what constituted poverty and what the state's role in poverty alleviation should be. In 1999, the NBLs Act was introduced replacing the old LPLPA programme. The new legislation expanded the scope of welfare support as a social right. As shown in Table 8.5, the budget rose rapidly over the next couple of years.

Korea made an astounding recovery from the economic crisis within a matter of a couple of years. By mid-1999 the GDP growth rate had hit 13

*Table 8.5 Korea: NBLs budget by year (unit: 0.1 billion won, per cent)*

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
MOHW(a)	28 512	30 570	38 968	53 100	74 581	77 495
NBLs(b)	9 008	10 901	18 479	23 321	32 696	34 034
(b)/(a) (%)	31.6	35.7	47.4	43.9	43.8	43.9

*Source:* Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2002.

per cent, up from minus 8 per cent only a year earlier (Lee, 2000). Despite the return to the earlier economic growth mode, however, the expansionary welfare reforms continued. As Korea entered the new millennium and with its economic recovery fully on track, its social policy reforms have become increasingly influenced by the idea of changes in demographic patterns and family and gender relations. Policy debates on the elderly and childcare expansions since 2000, for example, mirror the Japan family policy debates. As early as 1999, the Secretary to the Minister of Finance and Economy, Lee Hyun-Seung (1999), noting Korea's parallel trajectory to Japan, expressed in his paper, 'Korea's aging population', that Korea needs to pay more attention to its demographic changes, and needed new ways of thinking in the future. Similarly, the Vice-President of the Korea Institute of Health and Social Affairs (KIHASA), Cho Namhoo (2000), also alerted Koreans to the country's low fertility rate and suggested a similar policy reform to the Angel Plan in Japan may be called for in the future in Korea as well. Indeed, significant societal and behavioural changes have been noted in Korea. Like Japan, the proportion of households of three or more generations has declined dramatically over the last couple of decades, at the same time that of single-person households – most of them headed by single unmarried or single elderly people – has risen substantially (see Table 8.2). The divorce rate in Korea has also increased, particularly since the mid-1990s (Table 8.3). Public opinion polls and voting patterns also show widening gaps between young and older generations with the younger generation pushing for changes on almost all fronts. Clearly values are changing. Demographic ageing and low fertility have now become a priority issue for the government, despite the fact that the Korean population is still comparatively young (Park, 2005). Furthermore, the new ideational regime building on the earlier foundation laid by the distributional coalition and now focused on social investment and rethinking of social welfare has been advanced by both the government policy-makers as well as by the media (Park, 2005; *Korea Times*, 2004, 2005; *Chosun Daily*, 2005). These concerns have led to a number of family-friendly and gender-sensitive policies, including expansion of public childcare, support for families with small children, and family registry reform.<sup>4</sup>

Like Japan, the Korean case illustrates a major shift in ideas about social welfare in the 1990s. In Korea, the economic crisis of 1997 created opportunities for an ideational competition to take place. The ideational battle between those who supported the old developmental state approach and the new pro-welfare approach took place within the government and in the public arena. In response to the social and economic crisis following 1997, the developmental state perspective was not able to offer new or convincing solutions. The Kim Dae-Jung administration thus opted for the new

pro-welfare approach. Korea's ability to make a rapid recovery from the economic crisis further strengthened and legitimated the pro-welfare perspective as the correct solution to the problems. Once it was able to gain new mainstream legitimacy, policy reforms in favour of social welfare expansion followed relatively easily.

## CONCLUSION

The experiences of Japan and Korea in the 1990s illustrate how ideational and institutional changes can affect policy changes. In both countries, the crises of existing welfare regimes created openings for ideational contestations to take place within the government and public arenas. In both cases, new perspectives on social welfare gained mainstream legitimacy because they were more able to provide convincing explanations of causes of the crises and hence solutions. In Japan, the crisis of the Japanese-style welfare society came to be understood in terms of its disconnection from the reality. Whereas the Japanese-style welfare society expounded the centrality of the family's role in providing individual personal care and welfare, most families and women were unable to take on such burdens. The three-generation households had become the minority, and increasing numbers of elderly people were living alone or only with their spouses. A growing proportion of Japanese have also come to expect the state to take on a greater role in providing social welfare. The imperatives arising from social and demographic transformations provided a new understanding for welfare regime crisis. New social investment and family-friendly policies then became solutions to correct the failures of the previous regime approach. This new vision was partly informed by evidence of structural changes (changes in demographic patterns and labour market participation); but also importantly, by the understanding of normative shifts that were taking place – for example, value shifts amongst the younger people about marriage, family relations and gender roles. Policy changes that followed were therefore not merely adjustments to the existing system. They emerged from a different theoretical perspective to understanding issues confronting Japanese society. These in turn shifted policy and public discourses from one that focused on economic and industrial development to social and demographic exigencies.

In Korea, a similar change in normative approach to social welfare can be seen. The economic crisis of 1997 became the watershed allowing the pro-welfare vision of social policy to gain mainstream legitimacy. Here, the existing developmental state view of social welfare came into disrepute because the crisis exposed the fragile basis of Korea's economic develop-

ment and the existing welfare system's inability to address the needs of the thousands who were hit by the shock. Battles of ideas were waged in both political and public arenas. In some ways, ideational battles in Korea were much more fierce than was the case in Japan, where the nature of the crisis was not as immediate and explosive, political and economic stakes for changing one's idea were not as high, and the evidence of demographic and ideational shifts were well understood. In the case of Korea, the crisis was urgent and required immediate responses. It caused not only political regime change, but also a radical rethink amongst government bureaucrats and Korean public about the meaning of social welfare and the role of the state vis-à-vis welfare. In short, welfare state reform in Korea was an ideational reform as well as institutional.

These cases also reveal how structure and ideas are mutually reinforcing and interdependent. As illustrated the experience of social welfare reforms in Japan and Korea shows ideas and values are not simply bound by structures and institutions. Rather, at any given time, multiplicity of ideas and values exist, however, only one or a few are accorded mainstream legitimacy. The social policy framework tends to cohere to the mainstream idea. In time of crisis or rapid social transformation, however, discursive space becomes open to ideational contestations. Under such conditions, ideas that can best explain causes of the crisis, and hence lead to effective strategies, will have a better chance of gaining mainstream acceptance. What this suggests is an interplay of ideas and structure. Whereas ideas emerge out of specific structural contexts, structure is in turn shaped by policies and behaviours based on a powerful ideational framework. By exposing the interplays between ideas and structural/institutional changes, this chapter highlights the importance of cultural underpinning of the policy regime shift.

## NOTES

1. It should be pointed out here that both Buddhism and Christianity have had important impacts on the development of social policy – particularly in the form of early charity and community-based mutual aid supports – in both Japan and South Korea. We cannot deny that some of the Marxist ideals and, in the case of South Korea, anti-Communism sentiments after 1955, also have had some influence on the two countries' social policies in the post-WWII era. However, within comparative welfare state scholarship, Confucianism has been pointed out frequently as the dominant value principle shared by these East Asian welfare systems.
2. Features such as the lack of state support for the family and personal social services and the emphasis on the elderly over children can also be seen in the case of Southern Mediterranean welfare states. For further discussions on the Southern Mediterranean welfare states, see Ferrera, 1996, 2005; Sacchi and Bastagli, 2005; Arriba and Moreno, 2005.

3. The research group was headquartered at the MOHW's Nippon Aiiiku Research Institute for Maternal Child Health and Welfare. The research group was further subdivided into two project teams, one focusing on sociological and social policy concerns of low fertility, another focusing on population and economic aspects of low fertility. Each team consisted of about 20 researchers and policy-makers and they met regularly over the next three years to discuss issues. I participated in the social policy team of this research group from 1991 to 1993 as a foreign researcher.
4. The family registry system (*Hojuje*) is a national registry system in which all citizens are registered under male-headed households. This system has long been opposed by civil society and women's groups because it makes male members of the household, regardless of their age, to take precedence over female members as the head of the household.

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## PART III

### Cultural Change and Welfare Reform



## 9. Cultural change and path departure: the example of family policies in conservative welfare states

**Birgit Pfau-Effinger**

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### INTRODUCTION

The impact on the development of European welfare states of recent social and economic change in European societies and of processes like EU-integration and globalization is a contested issue. Often it has been argued that welfare state policies follow path dependent trajectories in the ways they adapt to the new challenges. However, in some policy fields change is characterized by path departure. This relates for example, to family policies in conservative welfare states.

The path dependence concept is often used in cross-national analyses of the development of welfare state policies. The path dependence, and correspondingly, path departure of welfare state policies have often been explained by endogenous factors of institutional change, mainly by the mechanism of 'increasing returns' (Pierson, 2000). There have been relatively few attempts to include external factors of the society surrounding the welfare state into the explanatory approach. In this chapter it is argued that a narrow approach to the explanation on the basis of 'increasing returns' is not adequate for the variety of factors that can influence path dependent development of welfare states, or path departure. Instead, it is argued that a broader approach is needed that includes the role of cultural factors outside the specific institutions of the welfare state. The example of family policies in the conservative welfare states of Germany and Austria, and in the liberal-conservative welfare state of Switzerland, is used to show that change in the cultural values and notions in the population can contribute to path departure in family policies. However, as the example of Switzerland shows, cultural change does not necessarily lead to policy change.

I define culture as a system of collective constructions of meaning by which human beings define reality. Such a system includes stocks of knowledge, values and ideals, in sum: ideas, and it can be relatively stable

over longer periods of time. At the same time, it is realized that collective constructions of meaning are produced and reproduced by the social practices of social actors, and they can be the subject of conflicts, negotiations and compromises between social actors, with cultural change as a result (Pfau-Effinger, 2005a).

### **The Limits of the Path Dependence Concept: Institutions without Society**

In how far does history shape human choice? Concepts of path dependence stress the constraining role of the past for present development, in contrast to concepts in which change is mainly seen as the outcome of purposive action (Garud and Karnoe, 2001).

The concept of path dependence was originally developed in the economic sciences where it was introduced by David (1985) in order to describe the fate of technological innovations. It contradicts the assumption, made by neo-classical economists, of optimal choice, according to which technological innovation is introduced if a new technology is more efficient than the old one. Instead, it is argued, a traditional technology can be preferred to a more efficient solution because a comparative advantage is caused by the fact that it has been established for a long time. A deviation from the traditional solution may also cause substantial transfer costs. From this perspective, it may be more 'rational' to keep the old version.

Douglass North (1990) has suggested using this concept for the analysis of social institutions. Because of high costs, it may be particularly difficult to implement a new institution in the same way as a new technology. This does not mean that the institutional structure is static. However, institutional change is not the sudden introduction of a new institution for an old one simply because it is more efficient (North, 1990: 99–105).

Paul Pierson (2000) has adopted the concept of North and introduced an elaborated version of it for the social sciences, including social policy analysis. In his approach the mechanism of 'increasing returns' is the main cause of path-dependent development. This means that 'the costs of switching from one alternative to another will in certain social contexts increase markedly over time' (ibid.: 251) which can cause a 'lock-in' situation of the institution. Accordingly Pierson defines path dependence as 'a social process grounded in "increasing returns"' and argues that 'increasing returns are likely to be prevalent' (ibid.: 251). The concept of path dependence deserves the merit to have brought history back into the analysis of welfare state restructuring. The insight that the restructuring of welfare states is substantially influenced by their past provides us with a view of political actors being temporally located and socially embedded. This is important in explaining the lasting differences between welfare

states, even if they seem to be influenced by similar processes like globalization and EU integration. Path dependence has been usefully employed in social-policy analysis, mainly in analyses of the restructuring of retirement pension systems (Pierson, 2000). Such studies are excellent accounts of the high relative stability of the institutional orders of welfare states.

However, it is not convincing that 'increasing returns' is the only mechanism that causes path dependence. Also, in more recent works in the economic sciences it has been outlined how path-dependent development of technological innovation can also take place in economic spheres where the situation is not characterized by 'increasing returns' (Ruttan, 2001). It is plausible that there are also, even to a considerable degree, path-dependent processes caused by other mechanisms.

Moreover, there is a shortcoming in the conceptualization of the interrelations between the path-dependent development of a specific institution, such as the welfare state, and the surrounding societal context. The societal context enters the narrow concept of path dependence only when it comes to a 'critical juncture' (David, 1985; Pierson, 2000). In such a situation, a path-dependent process starts which is conceptualized mainly as an endogenous institutional process where rational decisions of the actors are based on the 'lock-in' situation, and costs are connected with increasing returns instead of actual efficiency costs. However, the institution is not insulated against society, but what takes place inside the welfare state, and through the agency of its actors, is always interrelated with the development in the broader societal context.

Recently, some more comprehensive approaches have been introduced that consider the influence of factors outside the institution (Ebbinghaus, 2005; Mahooney, 2000; Beyer, 2005). However, the concept 'external factors' is too unspecific. The societal context in which the welfare state is embedded, and the contribution of the different types of factors in the societal context that can have an impact on institutional development, should be more precisely conceptualized (Pfau-Effinger, 2005a). This includes the role of cultural values and notions which may also have an impact on institutional change and on whether it is path-dependent or not. The concept of path dependence also leaves open the possibility that path-departure is taking place. So far there have been few attempts to conceptualize path departure (Garud and Karnoe, 2001: 6; Ebbinghaus, 2005). I suggest using Peter Hall's distinctions for the classification of policy changes. Peter Hall (1993) has introduced a model for the analysis of policy change that conceptualizes its magnitude in the following way: (1) A first-order change is change of level; (2) a second-order change is characterized as change of instrument; and (3) a third-order change is based on a shift of goals. I suggest using this concept to distinguish

between path-dependent and path-breaking changes in welfare-state policies. As far as first- or second-order changes take place, this can be characterized as path-dependent development. As long as change is restricted to the change of levels and instruments, it can take place within the framework of the present type of welfare state and its developmental path. I argue that we can talk about path departure mainly in terms of the third-order change: when welfare states change the goals of their policies in general, or in a specific field.

### **Embedded Path Development: the Interplay of Culture and Welfare-state Change**

How can the relationship of the welfare state and the development of cultural values and notions in the population as part of the societal context be conceptualized? I have elsewhere (Pfau-Effinger, 2005a) suggested a multi-level model for a sufficient understanding of the relationship between welfare state policy and culture. Accordingly, it is necessary to differentiate between three levels of welfare culture:

#### **Level 1: Cultural values and models on which policies are based**

The various policies are embedded in cultural values and models and on that basis are also justified and legitimized. One has to take into account the fact that inside the cultural system divergent or even contradictory values and ideals may exist (Kluegel, 1989; Wegner, 1992). It is the role of the political elites to legitimize political regulation or to change it if this is no longer possible.

#### **Level 2: Cultural values and models in the population**

In the population and among various social groups, specific cultural values and models exist in relation to the welfare state. In this respect, predominant and challenging ideas (see also Kluegel, 1989) as well as marginalized ideas can be distinguished. Political elites are dependent on basing their policies on such values and models as are shared by majorities of the population if they want to continue being elected. The level of cultural values and models to which policies are oriented, and the values and models which predominate in the population may change in a contrary manner relative to one another and with varying levels of dynamism over time.

#### **Level 3: Discourses**

Social actors may use discourses about values and notions in relation to the welfare state to exert influence on welfare state policy. Conversely,

discourses may also be exploited by political elites to alter values and models in the population so that unpopular political measures gain acceptance.

In all cases, culture and welfare state policies are connected via the present or former practices of social actors, who, through their ideas, are related to the level of welfare culture. These include collective actors – political parties, NGOs and social movements – and the ‘primary actors’. Major groups in the population can have the role of ‘primary actors’. The term was introduced by Margaret Archer (1995) and refers to (potential) groups of actors who have similar social positions but do not organize or express themselves as collective actors due to lack of resources or because expressing deviating interests is politically suppressed. They are therefore not strategically involved in the attempts to bring about change but are nevertheless socially active (Archer, 1995: 259). If actors of similar social position react to the societal context in a similar way, the aggregate effects of their behaviour may exert a strong enough influence on society. In particular, their role as voters is of basic importance for welfare state policies.

Change can be path-dependent if level 1 and level 2 change gradually, but not substantially in relation to the main values of the welfare culture. Or, a dynamic of change is possible which contributes to fundamental changes in the welfare culture at level 2, and where new discourses (level 3) are established by some social groups in order to exert change at level 1, where however the existing power relations prevent its success. In that case it is possible that contradictions and tensions remain which at a later stage of development may contribute to a new start of the same process.

Cultural change can contribute to processes of path-departure in welfare state policies if there is a fundamental cultural change at level 2 leading to the establishment of new discourses by social groups who wish to exert change at level 1 and are able to mobilize enough resources to initiate path-departure from welfare state policies.

It should be noted that such processes can take place in specific parts of welfare state policy without taking place in other parts. Therefore, welfare states should not be treated as a coherent unity in cross-national comparison and classification when processes of change are analysed.

## **FAMILY POLICIES IN CONSERVATIVE WELFARE STATES: PATH-DEPARTURE AND PATH DEPENDENCE**

In this chapter, the example of family policies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland is used to show how and under which conditions cultural

change can contribute to path departure in family policies. It is common to classify the welfare states of Germany and Austria as 'conservative' after the 'welfare regime' approach of Esping-Andersen. The Swiss welfare state in contrast has often been described as a 'liberal-conservative' welfare state. At the beginning of the 1990s Esping-Andersen (1990: 75) placed the welfare state of Switzerland in the 'liberal' category. However, it has been more recently argued by social-policy researchers that since then, development towards a liberal-conservative welfare regime has taken place. This is often explained by the existence of a relatively strong public pillar of retirement pensions and the introduction of a relatively generous social insurance against unemployment (Carigiet, 2001). However, in relation to policy fields like pensions, the nature of the Swiss welfare state is contested. Carigiet and Opielka (Carigiet and Opielka, 2006; Opielka, 2004) have therefore suggested characterizing the Swiss welfare state as a type of its own, at least with regard to pensions and health policy, which they call a 'mild guarantist' model.

In relation to their family policies, all three welfare states are usually classified as conservative welfare states or strongly 'male-breadwinner'-oriented welfare states, on the premise that they strongly support the housewife model of the male-breadwinner family (Lewis, 1992; Lewis and Ostner, 1994; Mósesdóttir, 2001; Siim, 2000). The problem with the way this classification is applied is that it is often taken as given, and little attempt has yet been made to analyse the adequacy of this typification.

### **Criteria for Analysis of Change in Family Policies in a Cross-national Perspective**

In this chapter I analyse family policies related to the organization of 'care' and the gender division of temporary responsibility for care within the family, and of family and employment responsibilities, on the basis of the following indicators:

- The quality and degree of the social right to childcare and long-term care for the elderly provided or organized by the welfare state (see also Knijn und Kremer, 1997). The degree to which this social right is developed is also important for the possibilities of women participating in the labour force;
- The quality and degree of the social right 'to give care' with respect to childcare and long-term elderly care (Knijn und Kremer, 1997); these are mainly, or include, leave schemes for those who temporarily take over care responsibility within their family, as well as elements of pay and social security for this group;

- The option of parents/relatives acting as financially autonomous carers during times of hold;
- the degree of support for equal sharing of employment and family care between women and men.

Change in the welfare states of Western Europe since the 1990s has in general been characterized by extended spending, the establishment of new social rights and the extension of existing social rights in the field of family policies, while the development of other parts of the welfare state has instead been more characterized by retrenchment policies (Pfau-Effinger, 2005b; Geissler and Pfau-Effinger, 2005). This applies to the welfare states of Germany and Austria, whereas the family policies of the Swiss welfare state have been practically unchanged in the last couple of decades. The main focus of family policies in the Swiss welfare state is traditionally some degree of financial support for low-income families. Prevention of poverty of families with children is still at the centre of family policies, though the issue of whether policies should react in some way or other to the change in the family values of the population has recently become a contested issue (Gerlach et al., 2004: 85; Stutz, 2006; Wecker, 2006). In the following section I analyse the development of family policies in these three welfare states in relation to the main criteria introduced above.

### **Social rights to receive care**

In Germany and Austria, the individual right of children of three to six years to be cared for was established, and in this field today nearly full coverage exists. However, in West Germany public childcare is to a substantial degree organized as [only] part-time care, while many parents would prefer care provision from half to full-time. Moreover, public childcare provision for children under three and for school children is rather limited in both countries, though the demand for it is also far from comprehensive (Esch and Stöber-Blossey, 2002). However, since 2005 some states of the FRG have an individual right for children from two years of age to publicly-funded childcare. In general it is evident that both welfare states are actually still in the process of extending public childcare provision and related social rights (Kreimer, 2005; Pfau-Effinger et al. forthcoming). Family policies in East Germany are in part different, for public provision of childcare is fulltime and covers the demand for childcare for all groups of children. This difference is due to the specific policies of the *Neue Länder* and municipalities in East Germany which date back to the specific traditions that developed in the former GDR (Pfau-Effinger and Geissler, 2002). Also, in Austria and Germany a social right for frail elderly people

to publicly-financed care services was introduced (Behning and Leitner, 1998; Kremer and Schiffbänker, 2005).

The case is different for Switzerland, where the share of public provision of childcare is still rather small, and social rights to care are not established. Only 4 per cent of all public financial transfers in the field of family policies is spent on public childcare provision (Stutz, 2006). External childcare is now more common than before, and the share of parents using it for children under 15 years has doubled since 1991 (Eidgenössisches Department des Inneren, 2003: 87). However, external childcare is in most cases informal childcare given by relatives and only in some part are market-based solutions like 'daycare mothers' used. Only 16 per cent of those who use external childcare also send their children to some kind of public childcare, and 60 per cent of these children are there a maximum total of only one day per week (Eidgenössisches Department des Inneren, 2003: 11–12, 87–8). There are some regional differences at the cantonal level, with a higher degree of provision of public childcare in the French-speaking parts of Switzerland (*ibid.*: 48–49).

### **Social rights to 'give care' within the family household**

In Germany and Austria new social rights of temporarily caring parents and relatives have also been established and existing rights extended. In both societies, parental leave schemes with elements of pay and social security exist (Pfau-Effinger, 2005a; Geissler and Pfau-Effinger, 2005; Opielka, 2003; Kreimer and Schiffbänker, 2005). In Germany, until 2006, a childcare allowance of 300 euros is paid for two years, or alternately 450 euros for one year. In Austria, the scheme is more generous with 436 euros paid for two years. It is also possible to combine the pay with part-time employment.

In the Swiss welfare state in contrast, social rights connected to in-family care have not existed until recently. Before 2005 there was not even a maternity-leave scheme for employed women. Therefore parental leave and part-time employment were only possible in the framework of financial redistribution within the male-breadwinner marriage. In the year 2005 a paid maternity-leave of 14 weeks with 80 per cent of the former income was introduced, which is a first small step in catching up with the other welfare states of Western Europe, of which the majority had already introduced maternity-leave schemes by the 1960s or 1970s (Wecker, 2006; Gerlach et al., 2004). Moreover, in the framework of the pension system, a period of three 'baby years', that is, years in which mothers care for their children has been included into the number of years which are the basis for calculating pensions (Gerlach et al., 2004).

**The promotion of the concept of the financially independent family caregiver**

The amounts of childcare allowance actually paid in the parental leave-schemes in Germany and Austria are below poverty-line levels and cover only some parts of the period in which women usually reduce their working time in order to take over care responsibility in the family household. Accordingly, in-family care in most cases means that women are financially dependent on a male breadwinner, or else on social assistance, which is rather stigmatizing. However, on the basis of the part-time law introduced in 2000 by the Red-Green government in Germany, it is possible to combine the income from part-time employment with the childcare allowances, which together may add up to an income above the subsistence level. A similar regulation exists in Austria (Kreimer and Schiffbänker, 2005: 174). Moreover, in 2006, the German government introduced a substantially new scheme of childcare allowances starting in 2007 to be paid as an income substitute. During the first year of parental leave a parent will receive two-thirds of his or her former employment income for one year, and for 14 months if the father takes over for at least two months. The minimum amount paid is 300 euros. The proposal is crucial in that it is a departure from the male-breadwinner principle in parental leave schemes, and as such is an important step towards the model of the financially independent care provider.

In Germany in the mid-1990s a paid 'long-term care insurance' was also established providing pay for caring relatives and thus supporting the model of the financially autonomous care provider in the family household. If the amount of time spent caring is relatively low, this income can be combined with income from formal employment. In those cases in which comprehensive care is needed, the size of the allowances is considerably above the subsistence level.

In Switzerland by contrast, schemes with pay for family care – apart from 14 weeks of maternity leave – do not exist. Therefore, the possibility of providing family care is for the most part restricted to persons who are financially dependent in the framework of a male-breadwinner marriage.

**Promotion of the equal sharing of childcare**

The welfare states of Germany and Austria have recently started to promote the participation of fathers in family care, in that they have introduced special periods for fathers in the parental leave schemes (Kremer and Schiffbänker, 2005; Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend 2006). This is an active measure to support a more equal sharing of family responsibility and employment. Traditionally in both countries it is mostly women who take parental leave and the responsibility for caring for their frail elderly relatives (Kreimer and

Schiffbänker, 2005; Schneekloth and Leven, 2003). The experiences of the Nordic welfare states show that the introduction of 'Daddy months' into the parental leave scheme can be a successful instrument for increasing considerably the rate of parental leave taken by fathers (Eydal, 2005). In the Swiss case, even a gender-neutral parental leave scheme does not exist; the maternity leave regulation which has existed since 2004 is explicitly restricted to women.

## PATH DEPENDENCE OR PATH DEPARTURE IN THE FIELD OF FAMILY POLICIES?

I classify the differing family policies on the basis of the cultural model of the family which they support.<sup>1</sup>

### **Type 1: Strong Promotion of the Housewife Model of the Male-breadwinner Family Model**

This type of family policy matches that characterized as the 'conservative' type according to the regime approach of Esping-Andersen, and as the 'strong male-breadwinner model' according to Lewis (1992) as well as Lewis and Ostner (1994). This type of family policy supports the traditional division of labour in the family on the basis of the housewife model; it promotes unpaid work in the family and does not support the participation of women in employment.

### **Type 2: Moderate Promotion of the Housewife Model of the Male-breadwinner Family Model**

This type of family policy in principle supports the participation of women in waged work, but also when they are mothers. However, public childcare provision is not comprehensive, so that women, if they are mothers, mainly have the option of parental leave and part-time work. Those who take over family responsibility for a certain period of time are in principle financially dependent on the framework of the male-breadwinner marriage, or on social assistance.

### **Type 3: Promotion of an Employment-based Equality Model**

This family-policy type exists as the massive promotion of the full and full-time employment of women supported by the creation of public jobs for women as professionals mainly in the field of social services. The

comprehensive provision of public social services thus also promotes the commodification of women.

#### **Type 4: Promotion of a Dual-option Equality Model**

Such family policies promote full-time employment of women on the one hand by offering comprehensive public childcare and connected social rights, and on the other hand, professional employment for women in the social service sector. In addition they also create the option, for those who take over temporary family care, of financial autonomy.

I characterize change as path departure if the main focus of family policies has shifted away from Family Model 1, – the main reference model of family policies in all three welfare states in the 1960s and 1970s – towards another type of family policy. In the welfare states of Germany and Austria, a substantial transition within family policies from Type 1 – support of the housewife model of the male-breadwinner family – towards Type 2 – support of the dual-breadwinner/female part-time carer model – has taken place. On the one hand, new social rights for children and elderly people have been introduced related to the individual right to receive care, together with an extension of public childcare provision and the provision of services for frail elderly people. These measures have also contributed to the commodification of women through supporting their participation in formal employment. Also, the new social right to give care to parents and relatives was introduced which is based on leave schemes as well as pay and social security for those who temporarily take on informal family-care tasks. However, until recently, those who assume family care during parental leave, or on the basis of part-time employment, were often not able to act as autonomous care providers. Instead, they had to rely in part on financial redistribution from the male-breadwinner marriage, or on social assistance. More recently in Austria, and even more so in Germany, policies developing further dual-option equality models after Type 4 have been introduced, even though this is not yet the central priority of family policies there. Family policies of the Swiss welfare state, in contrast, still resemble Type 1 of the typology and have developed only very marginally since the 1960s. Table 9.1 gives an overview of the findings.

## **PATH DEPARTURE AND THE MODERNIZATION OF FAMILY VALUES IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA**

In this section I ask how far change in family values within the population has contributed to path departure in the family policies in Germany and

*Table 9.1 Family policies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, 2006*

	Social right to receive care/ public provision of care	Social right to give care	Option of financial autonomy for parents and relatives who provide temporary family care
Germany	medium	medium	medium in relation to childcare; high in relation to long-term care of the elderly
Austria	medium	medium	low to medium
Switzerland	very low	low	very low

Austria. The time sequence is important in this respect. An impact can be assumed if change in the dominant model of the family in the population has taken place before policy change, and discourses have developed that mediate between the new family values in the population and policy elites. Family values in Germany and Austria have had similar central features and these have changed in similar ways since the second half of the twentieth century. In both societies the housewife marriage was the main cultural basis of the family in the 1950s and 1960s. This model is based on the premise of a fundamental separation of the 'public' and 'private' spheres, and a corollary location for both genders: the husband's proper work is in the 'public' sphere, while the housewife is responsible for the private household and childcare; her financial security exists on the basis of his income. This model is linked with the cultural construction of 'childhood', according to which children need special care and comprehensive individual tutelage of the mother in the private household.

Since then, a fundamental cultural transformation has taken place which exhibits a relatively high dynamic. In both societies, a process occurring from the end of the 1960s to the end of the 1990s considerably weakened the central cultural position of the traditional family model. This transformation began principally towards the end of the 1960s when a fundamental contradiction at the cultural level had come to a head: the incongruity between the cultural construct of the autonomy and equality of members of modern industrial societies on the one hand, and the construct of the inequality and dependence of women in the housewife model on the other. In addition, at this point alternative family models emerged on the level of family values, made possible by the newly forming international and national feminist movements that seized upon these contradictions (Pfau-

Effinger and Geissler, 2002). As a consequence, the old housewife model of the male breadwinner family as dominant cultural image was increasingly replaced by the 'male-breadwinner/female part-time carer model'. This type rests essentially on the vision of full integration of women and men into paid economic activity. At the same time however, it presupposes that women as mothers may interrupt their economic activity for a few years, after which they combine employment and responsibility for childcare through part-time work, until their children are no longer considered requiring particular care. The new cultural models for family and gender relations are characterized in both countries by the idea that the mother should be employed, but also that 'private' childhood should still play an important role in family life (Kreimer, 2005; Kreimer and Schiffbänker, 2005; Pfau-Effinger, 2004a, 2005a).

This cultural change in the family values was interrelated with general processes of cultural change which led to an overall positive reassessment of the value of individual autonomy (Beck, 2000). Yet the new cultural 'male-breadwinner/female part-time carer model' is still contradictory at its core. The financial dependence assumed by a woman who cares for her own children stands in contrast to the high cultural esteem enjoyed by autonomous financial security. This problem has been resolved in part by welfare-state policies establishing a new 'social right to provide care'. The policy shift towards a model of the 'autonomous family-care provider' that has taken place in some areas of the German and Austrian welfare states can be seen as a further step towards a legislative solution to this problem.

In consequence of these cultural transformations, the main features of the gender division of labour have changed considerably in Germany and Austria. Employment of mothers has broadened greatly, and a sequence of employment interruptions and part-time work is now the norm (Kreimer, 2005; Pfau-Effinger, 2004a). In this respect, women have been in the role of 'primary actors' contributing substantially to change in family structures. Austria and Germany are currently amongst those countries in the EU where the percentage of women working part-time for family reasons is highest (in both countries 24 per cent). Part-time employment in these countries means in general a half-day's work or less. Correspondingly, Austrian and German households are those most likely in the EU to care for children and other dependants at home rather than use paid services (European Commission, 1998: 12; Kilpeläinen, 2005).

Together with change in family values and family policies, informal family care has also significantly been disconnected from the traditional notion of the housewife marriage. A new type of parenthood has developed based on the expectation that parents – until today this has meant mainly mothers – who are otherwise oriented towards full participation in working

life, for a limited period take over informal childcare in their own family household, full- or part-time (Geissler and Pfau-Effinger, 2005; Kreimer and Schiffbänker, 2005).

In sum it can be shown that in both countries, cultural change has been ahead of change in family policies. Also, discourses were established that mediate between the different levels of cultural change. In a first step, in the 1970s and 1980s these discourses, mainly established by the feminist movement, were directed towards the issue of a just gender division of labour and women's right to participate in the labour force. Since the late 1990s a new type of discourse has developed that focuses on the issue of demographic change and the need to increase fertility rates. In this context it is also a popular argument that efforts should be strengthened to motivate more well-educated middle-class women to have children (Olk, 2006).

It should be mentioned that Germany, with respect to family values, is clearly split. In East Germany, the family tradition of the former GDR still influences the family values of the majority of the population in East Germany. In contrast to the West, a family model that I call a 'dual-breadwinner/state care-provider model' is dominant here. It is based on the idea of full employment of both parents and full-time public childcare provision. As pointed out above, this is also reflected in the family policies of the Federal Republics and municipalities (Pfau-Effinger and Geissler, 2002).

## PATH DEPENDENCE AND STAGNATION OF FAMILY POLICIES IN THE SWISS WELFARE STATE

In this section I discuss possible explanations for why family policies in the Swiss welfare state – unlike the welfare states of Germany and Austria – have hardly changed since the 1960s.

A possible explanation might be that the housewife model of the male-breadwinner family is still the dominant model of the family in the population, and that external childcare and the employment of mothers contradicts the family values that are broadly accepted.

However, such an assumption is not supported by the findings of empirical studies. These indicate instead that in the Swiss society of the last decades of the twentieth century, a similar cultural transition has taken place in the field of family values, towards a 'male-breadwinner/female part-time care-provider model' as in the other two societies (Bühler, 1996, 2001; Pfau-Effinger, 2006). Bühler (2001) shows on the basis of attitude data for Switzerland that the employment of mothers today is broadly accepted in the population, mainly on the basis of a family break and part-

time work, and gender equality is much more established as a cultural value than it was some decades ago.<sup>2</sup>

Correspondingly, the family structures relevant to the participation of women in waged work have changed in Swiss society, mainly also because of change in the labour-market behaviour of women who exerted substantial influence in their role as 'primary actors'. The employment of Swiss women who are between 15 and 64 years old has substantially increased, from 54.4 per cent in 1991 to 70.9 per cent in 2003 (Eidgenössisches Department des Inneren, 2004: 48), and largely on the basis of part-time work: the share of part-time working women to all employed women is 45 per cent and considerably higher than the EU average (25 per cent; see Wecker, 2006).

Another explanation for the lack of family-policy change might be that, even if considerable cultural change has taken place, the social groups who aimed to change family policies were not powerful enough to influence the decision-making process of the political elites. Such asynchrony in development between the cultural and political level might for example be caused in the strongly decentralized federal organization of the Swiss welfare state. In that case one would expect considerable discrepancies between the dominant attitudes in the population and those of the political elites towards family policies. However, it seems that the efforts to establish a discourse on the issue of further development of family policies have not been very effective, being restricted to the debate surrounding the introduction of a few weeks of maternity leave (Bender et al., 2005). It seems that, despite the substantial change in family values having taken place in Swiss society, a majority of the population does not think that the contradiction between their own family values and the traditional family policies is an important issue, or that family policies should be substantially modified.

But it seems that the main reason why the crucial change in family values has not resulted in a further development of family policies can be found in the ambiguity of the cultural values themselves. So far, the main focus of my analysis has been on change in family values. However besides family values, welfare values also exist in a population; these are related to the general role of the state vis-à-vis the market and the state (Pfau-Effinger, 2005b). In this respect, particular differences exist between the conservative welfare states of Germany and Austria on one hand, and the Swiss welfare state with its hybrid character on the other. Whereas in conservative welfare states like Germany and Austria – as also emphasized by Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999) – the state is given a relatively strong role in shaping social change in the attitudes of the population, this is not the case in liberal welfare states where the 'free powers of the market' are given priority. It can

be assumed that this argument relates also to Swiss society where, in relation to the role of the welfare state in general, to a considerable degree, liberal values are dominant. Accordingly, the state is not seen as the institution responsible for shaping change in family structures.

This argument is, for example, supported by an analysis of the discourses that emerged in the context of the referendum on the introduction of paid maternity leave for employed women in 1999. Of those who voted, 61 per cent were against the introduction of this scheme. What is interesting in this context is how the group that successfully mobilized opinion against the referendum – the ‘Swiss Committee No to the Subvention of Maternity’ – argued not against the employment of mothers but rather the further extension of the welfare state, which was seen as a threat to the existing welfare organizations and to economic prosperity. The financing of maternity leave was seen as an improper intervention of the state into the private sphere (Bühler, 2001: 81). With respect to the liberal basis of family policies therefore, a great part of the population seems to conform to the thinking of the policy elites who themselves characterize these policies as liberal (Wecker, 2006).

The fact that Germany and Austria are members of the EU and Switzerland is not may also to some degree contribute to the explanation as to why Germany and Austria, in contrast to Switzerland, started much earlier to modernize their family policies. However, it is not possible to explain family-policy change in Germany and Austria during the last decades mainly by EU policies. There were no explicit EU guidelines forcing these countries to develop their family policies on the direction of those they now have. Instead, family policies were to a great degree a reaction to endogenous change in these countries (see also Anttonen and Sipilä 2005; Kreimer and Schiffbänker, 2005).

To conclude, it seems that a main reason family policies in the Swiss welfare regime have been changed much less since the 1960s than the family policies of Germany and Austria have, is the strong role of liberal values in the Swiss population, according to which the welfare state is not responsible for shaping the direction of family change, or for supporting the realization of a new family model.

## CONCLUSION

Cultural change in relation to the cultural values and notions that are dominant in a population can be an important explanatory factor if change in welfare-state policies is characterized by path departure. However, cultural transformation does not per se create policy change, the lack of which can,

for example, be caused by an ambiguity in the cultural change itself, as in the example of Swiss family policies.

In general, it will improve our understanding of processes of welfare-state development if we use broader concepts of path dependence and path departure which take into account the interrelations between the institutional development of the welfare state and its cultural context.

## NOTES

1. I have in earlier publications introduced a theoretical framework for a classification of cultural models of the family; see Pfau-Effinger, 1999; 2004a.
2. In the French-speaking parts of Switzerland, family values are based more on full-time employment of mothers than in other parts of the country, and in this respect they are similar to those found in France (Bühler, 1996).

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# 10. Cultures of activation: the shifting relationship between income maintenance and employment promotion in the Nordic context

**Bjørn Hvinden**

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## INTRODUCTION

Culture and activation are both elusive concepts with different meanings. Core elements of culture are shared values, norms and perceptions of reality. As a first approximation, activation refers to the idea that income maintenance and employment promotion should be linked to each other. Income-maintenance provision ought to be used to stimulate labour market participation, instead of being seen as an alternative to such participation (Hvinden, 1999; Drøpping et al., 1999). The rationale for activation is that it is better both for the individual and society that the individual be 'active' (employed) rather than 'passive' (solely receiving public income transfers). This rationale may for instance be expressed when the granting of social assistance is linked to efforts to stimulate recipients to find paid work. These efforts can involve providing job counselling, guidance, training or other measures to improve employability, requiring recipients to take part in such measures, or setting other forms of conditions for continued receipt of money.

The term 'culture of activation', however, suggests something more and wider than the enforcement of an activation rationale in one or a few parts of a country's social protection system. I propose that the concept 'activation culture' should be reserved for situations where an activation rationale characterizes the overall policy effort and where we find this rationale expressed in more or less all parts of the country's social protection system for people of working age. The idea of activation should be widely accepted, institutionalized in legal and administrative arrangements and reflected in the practices of relevant actors.

Hence the concept of activation culture favoured here is a fairly absolute one: either you have an activation culture or you don't. Obviously it is

possible to argue for a more gradualist position, implying that we can talk about an activation culture, albeit a weak one, if one or a few cash benefits require active efforts. The main problem with this position is the well-known tendency towards benefit substitution. Experience shows that if policy-makers tighten up one part of the overall cash benefit system for people of working age (e.g. unemployment insurance), for instance by introducing stricter activation requirements, more people will claim other available benefits (e.g. sickness, disability, early retirement benefits or social assistance). The net result can easily be that the total take-up of cash benefits will remain more or less the same (or even increase). Thus many welfare reformers have realized that they need to introduce similar and coordinated changes in several cash benefit schemes in order to prevent substitution processes and achieve an overall impact.

## HOW DO WE RECOGNIZE AN ACTIVATION CULTURE WHEN WE SEE ONE?

Activation is an ambiguous concept in the sense that it is often used to refer to (i) providing additional resources to improve the capacity, knowledge and skills of recipients; (ii) setting conditions for continued receipt of cash benefits and other resources; as well as (iii) partial withdrawal of resources through cuts in replacement rates and/or the duration of cash benefits. The justifications for these elements (or combinations of them) differ. The rationale for providing additional resources through education or training is that long-term unemployed people and others at the margins of the labour force tend to have low levels of qualifications or skills, or those that they do have do not match those required for vacant jobs. The rationale for setting activity requirements is usually that there may be problems of (at least) initial motivation or discouragement that need to be overcome. The rationale for partial withdrawal of resources is that the level and duration of cash benefits – in interplay with wage levels in relevant parts of the labour market – create disincentives to work, and that cuts are necessary to ‘make work pay’. There may also be budgetary considerations; cuts in cash benefits reduce public expenditure, while providing new resources for capacity-building increases public expenditure, at least in the short term.

Previous research indicates that the number of European countries that tightened up their cash benefit arrangements in the 1990s was larger than the number of countries providing new resources for capacity-building (Hvinden et al., 2001; Hvinden, 2003). Some would argue that this does not really matter; ‘making work pay’ and ‘investing in capacity-building’ are

two sides of the same coin or different ways of achieving the same goals. Scholars like Esping-Andersen (2002), Barbier (2004, 2005) and Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) have suggested that it is possible to identify two alternative 'regimes' of activation, depending on whether governments favour the former or latter of these two options; a Social Democratic regime (a Nordic and universalistic model) and a Liberal regime (an Anglo-Saxon model) respectively. The two options are, however, not fully equivalent in their overall consequences. Cuts in income maintenance schemes, even if partly compensated for through in-work benefits or tax credits, may stimulate employment for those who are able to get a job, but do not necessarily prevent poverty or improve the long-term labour market prospects of those affected. The risk of poverty increases among those who cannot find work, but even among those who succeed in getting a job, many may be near or under the poverty line.

Stimulated by efforts of the OECD and the EU, most governments in Europe today pay lip-service to the importance of active social (protection) policy and activation. But does this mean that we have witnessed a clear shift towards a culture of activation in all these countries? Aggregate data on resource input collected by the OECD suggest that between 1993 and 2003 only three of 19 European countries experienced significant increases in the input of resources for capacity-building measures, when seen in relation to their level of unemployment (OECD, 1995, 2005). The three countries were Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands. The only country with a clear reduction in the relative amount of resources spent on active measures was Sweden. The correlation between relative resource input for active measures in 1993 and 2003 (Pearson coefficient = .63) indicates relative stability rather than a shift with regard to practical emphasis on activation. Differences between countries in relative resource input for active measures remained stable in this period (the standard deviation changing slightly from 0.08 in 1993 to 0.11 in 2003). Although fairly crude, these data do not suggest a trend towards one common activation culture in Europe.

## ONE SHARED CULTURE OF ACTIVATION WITHIN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES?

Previous research also illustrates the great diversity of experience within the group of countries usually associated with the Social Democratic welfare regime or the Nordic welfare model. The historical legacy of active social policy, as well as the timing of the worsening of labour-market conditions, the duration and impact of this deterioration and governments' policy responses to it, varied considerably among these countries in the period

after the first oil crisis in 1973. Let us outline the situation in the three Nordic EU member states.

Sweden is widely regarded as the international pioneer in active social policy under the label *arbetslinjen* (the work line) and the inventor of ‘active labour market policy’ (ALMP). There was a strong policy emphasis on the activation rationale in the original design of the overall social protection systems of Sweden. For a long time the country had a substantially higher resource input for active measures than other Nordic (or European) countries, seen in relation to their level of unemployment in this period. When hit by a serious recession in the early 1990s Sweden did not manage to keep up this high level of relative resource input (Benner and Bundgaard Vad, 2000; Hvinden et al., 2001). Arguably the de facto policy emphasis shifted towards providing income maintenance and renewing unemployed people’s rights to cash benefits. Even if still belonging to the more activist countries of Europe, Sweden did not regain its uncontested position as world leader in active social policy. More specifically, Johansson (2001) has analysed the shifting weight given to rights to benefits versus activation requirements in the provision of social assistance in Swedish municipalities. He shows that there was a notable movement towards a rights-to-basic-income-orientation in the local administration of the social assistance system in the Sweden of the 1980s. The pendulum later partially swung back to an emphasis on activation in the 1990s. To a considerable extent these processes were mediated by a combination of legal changes and administrative court decisions.

In Denmark, problems with high and persistent unemployment date back to the 1970s. Although Denmark also had an official emphasis on active social policy and ALMP, the institutionalization and implementation of this was weaker than in Sweden (Esping-Andersen and Korpi, 1987). When unemployment reached persistently high levels after the first oil crisis, unemployment benefit or social assistance became close to a de facto basic citizens’ income for a considerable group of people at the margins of the labour market. Denmark also tried to handle its labour-market difficulties with generous temporary and voluntary leave arrangements (*‘orlovs’*) and a fairly accessible early-retirement benefit (*‘efterløn’*). The generous leave arrangements were phased out after the millennium shift, while the early-retirement benefit is still in operation. As a consequence of the latter, Denmark not only had one of the highest relative resource inputs for active measures in 2003; it also had some of the highest relative spending on what OECD calls ‘passive measures’ (i.e., income-maintenance provision for people without work). From the early 1990s, Denmark introduced a number of major labour-market and income-maintenance reforms based on a consistent activation rationale, leading to

a breakthrough in what was called '*aktivlinjen*' (the active line). Proposals to phase out the *efterløn* have been put forward but the fate of this benefit has remained a hot potato in Danish politics (Ploug, 2004). Unless this scheme is abandoned, it could mean limiting the otherwise impressive shift towards a culture of activation in Denmark.

Before 1990 Finland was among the countries with the highest relative resource input for active measures in Europe. Then the economic recession, reinforced by the breakdown of the export trade to the former Soviet Union, hit Finland harder and longer than Sweden. The level of unemployment remained high throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium. Like Sweden, Finland did not manage to increase its activation efforts to counteract the growth in the unemployment rate (Hvinden et al., 2001). Partly because of this it was not until 2001 that Finland introduced its major activation reform aimed at people on the margins of the labour market (Keskitalo and Mannila, 2004; Sakslin and Keskitalo, 2005). This activation reform was directed toward social-assistance claimants and long-term unemployed people, but the government then had the benefit of being able to draw on innovations made internationally. The reform involved an integrated approach in which staff from the employment services and staff in local authority social services department were mandated to work closely together in formulating individual action plans together with the unemployed citizen. Evaluations of the reform suggest that this approach has been implemented successfully, and especially, that the methodology of individual action plans has functioned better in Finland than in Norway and Sweden. Yet the evaluations also indicate that these new measures have had relatively limited impact on the employment prospects of the participants, given the overall difficult labour market situation in many parts of Finland. One may therefore ask whether Finland – despite its many other achievements in technological innovation and renewal of governance and organizational structure – has yet fully re-established a culture of activation.

This overview of the diverse experience of the three Nordic EU member states since the late 1980s suffices to indicate that it is quite open as to what is gained by conceptualizing *one* culture of activation, whether labelled 'Nordic', 'Social Democratic' or 'Universalistic'. Moreover, reforms to tighten up the income-maintenance system for people out of work were undertaken in all the countries, but in different ways and to a different extent (Hvinden et al., 2001). For instance, in Finland this system came to rely more on means-tested benefits than in the other countries.

Actual cultural practices in a country are likely to be much more 'messy' – variable, complex and multifaceted – than the 'clean', ideal-type categories of regimes would suggest. We should seek to capture the complexity of

unique national constellations of economic, institutional and cultural settings (Rokkan, 1970; Ellingsæter, 1998). Thus we have to undertake detailed and historical analyses of what has characterized the overall social protection systems of different national welfare states and in this context examine whether it is possible to identify an activation culture of sufficient pervasiveness and continuity over time.

## ELITE CULTURES OF ACTIVATION IN CONTEXT

In the rest of the chapter I will focus on the extent to which policy-makers – members of government cabinets, parliaments and the top layers of the civil service – were consistently committed to an activation rationale in Norway after the Second World War. I will illustrate the general point that an elite culture of activation is difficult to sustain over time unless it – to a reasonable extent – resonates with other relevant cultures in the society in question, and more specifically with the cultures of:

- Agencies responsible for putting activation objectives into practice and their staff;
- Enterprises and other work organizations and their managers;
- The population at large; and
- The sections of the population most likely to be out of work and/or receiving public income-maintenance benefits.

If agency staff, employers or the citizens who are the target for activation efforts are indifferent, able to effectively resist them, or only comply with them because they are forced to do so, an elite culture of activation loses much of its wider relevance. In this case the elite culture is likely to be exposed to gradual erosion or be replaced by a new set of values, norms and perceptions of reality.

In recent years researchers have given substantial attention to how agency cultures, and the work cultures of their staff, affect policy implementation. That aspects of work-related cultures can impede or distort the achievement of policy goals is most clearly illustrated by Lipsky (1980) in his research on the adaptations and coping strategies in 'street-level bureaucracy'. Lipsky (1991) has later argued that policy-makers can restructure the work conditions and organizational contexts of agencies in a way that makes the cultures of staff more supportive of the achievement of policy goals, for instance, activation objectives. In a later section I will consider how the organizational cultures of implementing agencies affected the impact and robustness of the official activation culture in Norway.

Participants in the public debate often state that the work ethic has weakened in recent decades. Some retrospective studies based on life history data lend support to this claim. Earlier generations subscribed to a greater extent to a strict and traditional work ethic, emphasizing the moral virtues of hard work and the fulfilment of one's duties (Almås et al., 1995). Ramsøy (1987) identifies a transformation 'from necessity to choice' in people's orientations towards work. Greater affluence in the majority of the population has created a level of consumption and leisure activity that previously was the privilege of a small minority. For many of us work is important largely because it enables us to consume and obtain gratification in the short-term, rather than because we feel work to be a moral duty or fate to be endured. According to interview surveys, most citizens express verbal support for a modernized work ethic (e.g. Svallfors et al., 2001; Fridberg and Ploug, 2000; Andersson and Kangas, 2005). Hence a majority of those interviewed support more stringent measures regarding unemployed persons who turn down a job offer. This indicates that there is also at least a wide latent popular support for activation policies, that is, a potential mass culture of activation. Similarly, these findings suggest that a shift in elite perceptions would resonate with the attitudes of most citizens, although the direction of causation could be less clear.

Both scholars and politicians have claimed that a 'dependency culture' among people receiving public income-maintenance benefits effectively contradicts official aims of making people independent and economically self-sufficient through their own work. On a basis of a large survey Dean and Taylor-Gooby (1992) conclude that the social security system in the United Kingdom did not foster a dependency culture, and that most recipients were 'reluctant dependants'. Some research findings do, however, indicate that people out of work, to a lesser extent, subscribe to the official work ethic than the population in general (Svallfors et al., 2001). Andersson and Kangas (2005: 122) find that while a majority of their employed respondents in Finland favoured more stringent measures towards unemployed persons turning down job offers, only a minority of those out of work did. By contrast, in a European survey, Gallie and Alm (2000) found that employment commitment was stronger among unemployed than employed persons. In this context it is also significant that a substantial proportion of people in receipt of long-term income-maintenance benefits, e.g. disability benefits, state that they would work if it were practically feasible, for instance, if they were given appropriate forms of practical accommodation in the workplace (e.g. Olsen and Van, 2005). Yet, without appropriate longitudinal data it is difficult to judge whether expressed support of pro-work values has any significant effect on people's efforts to find and keep jobs.

## THE CHANGING FATE OF A CULTURE OF ACTIVATION – THE NORWEGIAN CASE

We have previously seen that a number of countries have found it difficult to uphold a commitment to the activation rationale in practice, especially when hit by high and persistent unemployment and the associated pressures on public budgets. But high unemployment and financial constraints are not sufficient to explain the changing fate of activation cultures over time. In addition several other factors may generate internal tension, inconsistency and erosion within a political culture. To ensure electoral support, politicians sometimes are tempted to introduce provisions that to some extent compromise or contradict the activation profile of the overall social protection system. Policy designs presupposing strongly coordinated activation efforts can conflict with a divided implementing apparatus of semi-autonomous agencies and practitioners. We can find a partial mismatch between the values and perceptions of reality underlying official policy and the professional values of the employees in the implementing apparatus (e.g. medical doctors, psychologists and social workers). Finally, the organizational capacity (or effectiveness) of this apparatus can be deficient in relation to the workload involved in activation efforts, especially in periods of rising unemployment. We have to assess the actual impact of these factors through detailed empirical investigation of the historical development of welfare states. I will use the Norwegian case to highlight the potential impact of these factors (Hvinden, 1994). We can identify four main phases of the policy development from the end of the Second World War to the present day (see Table 10.1). The overlaps between the first three phases is caused by the uneven speed of the planning and implementation of reforms in different parts of the social protection system.

### **Phase 1: Policy Design, Adoption of a Generalized ‘Work Line’ and Commitment to the Linking of Income Maintenance and Employment Promotion (ca. 1945–64)**

Norwegian activation policy found its early modern form in the two decades after 1945. The political elite were concerned to prevent new periods of high unemployment and achieve full and effective use of available labour resources. Policy-makers had already in the interwar years put forward plans for lifting the needy population out of the old Poor Law system and into a national social insurance system providing more generous, rights-based and dignity-promoting protection against specific risks. Coming to power in 1935, the Social Democratic party started to enact these plans. Among the most important reforms were general and means-tested old-age

Table 10.1 The development of activation policy in Norway 1945–2005

	<b>Phase 1</b> (ca. 1945–64)	<b>Phase 2</b> (ca. 1947–71)	<b>Phase 3</b> (ca. 1960–89)	<b>Phase 4</b> (ca. 1990–2005)
	<i>Policy design: adoption of generalized 'work line' – commitment to linking of income maintenance and employment promotion</i>	<i>Enactment of policy design – establishment of an implementing apparatus (division between central and local agencies)</i>	<i>Routinized implementation and growing signs of policy erosion and co-ordination deficiency in the implementing apparatus</i>	<i>Revival of original policy design, stricter enforcement of activation – modification of the implementing apparatus</i>
<b>Unemployment</b>	Strong commitment to active labour market policy (ALMP)	Employment Measures Act (1947)		Tightening of unemployment benefit, shorter duration, stricter activity requirements
<b>Disability and reduced work capacity</b>	Strong commitment to medical and vocational rehabilitation; no long-term benefit granted before rehabilitation attempt	Amendment of Provisional Act of Help to the Blind and Crippled (1956) Acts on Rehabilitation and Disability Benefit (1960)	Sickness benefit, providing 100% compensation for one year (1978) Attempts at strengthening early intervention, employer responsibility and coordinated public–private efforts	Tightening of sickness benefit scheme (not reduced compensation level), stricter rehabilitation requirements and eligibility rules for work-incapacity benefits
<b>Single parenthood</b>	Efforts to make single parents economically self-sufficient to be	Widows' and Unmarried Mothers' Benefit Act (1964)	Mandated cooperation between national insurance offices and	Tightening of the transitional allowance scheme (shorter

Table 10.1 (continued)

	<b>Phase 1</b> (ca. 1945–64)	<b>Phase 2</b> (ca. 1947–71)	<b>Phase 3</b> (ca. 1960–89)	<b>Phase 4</b> (ca. 1990–2005)
	balanced against their caring responsibilities	Provisional Divorced and Separated Parents' Benefit Act (1971)	local authority social services	duration), strengthened efforts to make single parents economically self-sufficient
<b>Social assistance</b>	Strong emphasis on the principle of providing 'help to self-help' through counselling and referral to employment services	Social Care Act (1964)	Efforts in many local authorities to streamline and standardize the granting of social assistance payments, strengthen rights and accountability for claimants	Social Services Act (1992) codified the possibility of 'work-for-benefit', setting activity requirements – many local authorities provide job-placement services – local pilot 'one-stop' offices for claimants

pension (1936), employment insurance (1938) and a provisional scheme for people with visual or mobility impairments (1936). The government then in office had to postpone the introduction of other social insurance benefits (e.g. a general disability benefit), largely for reasons of economics and the coming war.

After the war, all political parties supported the goal of introducing a comprehensive national system of universal social insurance covering all major risks of loss of income. The Beveridge report and subsequent reforms in Britain, as well as reforms already introduced in Sweden were important inspirations. The project was ambitious, given that Norway faced a large-scale and expensive reconstruction of the economy after the war. The Social Democratic leadership argued, however, that an all-encompassing national insurance system would be financially feasible because it was to be closely linked with an extensive system of services providing what was then often called ‘help to self-help’. This would involve systematic efforts to maximize the prospects for employment and economic self-sufficiency for all claimants of working age. These efforts would include employment guidance, job-placement services, education and training courses, medical and vocational rehabilitation and support in relocating to other parts of the country offering vacant jobs. The policy-makers claimed that these efforts would serve as an effective threshold, preventing an unlimited influx of people receiving public income-maintenance for longer periods.

As in Sweden, the government labelled the general linking of income maintenance to work-oriented services the ‘work line’ (in contrast to ‘the benefit line’). The work line was to be an instrument for mobilizing a greater part of the (potential) labour force and improving its qualifications, as well as hastening the restructuring of working life with the aim of increasing total productivity. Finally, policy-makers and professionals expressed a strong ‘therapeutic optimism’; believing in their ability to help people at the margins of the labour market improve their functional capacity, job qualifications and motivation, on the basis of the apparently promising results of post-war rehabilitation and retraining programmes for wartime personnel.

## **Phase 2: Enactment – Setting up an Implementing Apparatus (ca. 1947–71)**

Over the next two-and-a-half decades the political elite pursued these goals and principles in a step-wise and piecemeal way by introducing a number of new acts and amendments to existing acts. At first glance these reforms seemed to add up to a fairly disparate mosaic of provisions. On closer look it becomes clear that the reforms expressed the same basic ideas and common underlying rationale, and that they together made up a line of

progression. The first step focused on provisions for unemployed people, linking in particular, unemployment insurance and labour-market services on the basis of a new National Employment Services Act. The next decades saw the introduction of comprehensive national insurance arrangements for people with impairments and reduced work capacity, and a modernized but still locally administered social assistance scheme. The government based all these reforms on the principle that nobody should be granted income-maintenance benefits on a longer-term basis before all possibilities for making the person economically independent by means of education, training and other practical support had been exhausted.

The government set up a complex and divided organizational apparatus of different agencies and practitioners, giving them an explicit mandate to work closely together and coordinate their efforts to realize the goal of self-sufficiency. The responsible minister admitted that the administrative capacity to handle this task was not sufficient, but promised that he and his successors would see to this later. Local authority social-service departments were to be professionalized and their capacity strengthened through a state-subsidized development programme. Social workers had the task to work closely with staff in the expanding state employment service to find suitable work or training courses for their claimants.

In the early 1960s the government also introduced a new social insurance act for widows and lone mothers (later to be extended to lone parents in general). In this case the aim of promoting self-sufficiency was modified out of consideration for the care needs of the child. A male breadwinner model still dominated, and kindergartens were rare at this time. Lone parents (in practice largely lone mothers) could receive a transitional allowance (set at the level of the minimum pension in the national insurance scheme) until the youngest child was ten years old. Staff in national insurance offices were to keep in close contact with the social workers in local authority social services to get assistance from the latter in motivating the lone mothers to prepare for the day the transitional allowance would be terminated, for instance through vocational training with support from the national insurance system.

### **Phase 3: Routinized Implementation – Policy Erosion and Deficient Coordination (ca. 1960–89)**

It is remarkable that the basic policy or institutional design established in the first two decades after the war remained largely unchanged until very recently, even though the implementing apparatus of agencies and practitioners never succeeded in fulfilling the legislators' ambitions regarding the high priority of activation and closely coordinated efforts. Already in the first years after 1960 it became clear that the implementing agencies struggled to

maintain the activation rationale in practice. The influx of disability pensioners was much higher than the government had expected. Administrative capacity continued to be insufficient while the relations between the national insurance administration and the employment services were often characterized by conflicting priorities, tensions and evasion strategies. The national insurance administration pursued a traditional bureaucratic rationale based on subsumption under detailed rules, whereas the employment service emphasized an instrumentalist means–ends rationale. The former asked what people were entitled to, while the latter, what measures were likely to bear practical results. Many general practitioners were more concerned with their patients' need for sufficient and secure income than with the official expectation that they would see themselves as gatekeepers and protectors of public funds. Even staff in national insurance offices sometimes felt that it was their responsibility to ensure that people 'had something to live on'.

Moreover, one could find various 'rejection chains', where staff in the employment services anticipated rejection from potential employers, while staff in national insurance offices anticipated rejection from the employment services and thus abstained from referring claimants. Partly as a result of these processes the number of vocational rehabilitation cases was for many years smaller than the number of newly awarded disability pensions, and the total number of disabled pensioners grew more or less continuously, except for a temporary decrease after the standard retirement age was reduced from 70 to 67 years in 1973.

Similarly, difficulties also appeared in co-ordination between municipal social service departments and the state employment service. When social workers referred their claimants to the employment services for help in finding suitable jobs or training courses, the response from the employment services was often that these claimants were 'too distant from the labour market' or 'not genuine job applicants'. Especially during the early 1980s, when the overall unemployment rate increased, a growing number of people were granted social assistance for prolonged periods, although a number of local authorities also initiated their own training measures. Many social workers resented the official activation rationale in this period; rather than pushing their claimant to go to one training course after another, they rather saw their task as guiding the claimant in coping with life without paid work. Especially in the 1980s many social service departments were keen to provide more standardized amounts of social assistance, procedural rights, predictability and accountability for claimants, that is, a shift towards a rights-oriented rationale rather than the instrumental means–ends rationale of activation.

In line with their professional ideals many social workers in municipalities engaged in 'welfare advocacy' vis-à-vis the national insurance

administration, for instance, by helping long-term recipients of social assistance claim disability pension (which incidentally would also represent financial savings for the municipality). Many social workers also resented their mandatory role of encouraging lone mothers prepare for the termination of their transitional allowance, and they more or less evaded this task (especially as they felt that national insurance staff also expected them to 'keep an eye' on lone mothers to check whether they had taken up relations with the child's father or other men).

All in all, this phase was characterized by a combination of insufficient administrative capacity or effectiveness, weak co-ordination of efforts of the diverse agencies and practitioners responsible for the implementation of the activation rationale, conflicting agency cultures and priorities, and evasion and substitution strategies made possible through the considerable relative de facto autonomy of each agency and the discretion enjoyed by their staff.

At the level of policy design, the introduction in 1978 of a near-universal sickness benefit providing 100 per cent compensation for one year, and fairly wide scope for continuing medical rehabilitation benefits after that, challenged the overall work orientation of the social protection system. Attempts to institutionalize early intervention for recipients of sickness benefit and give employers a more active role in measures to facilitate a return to work could only to a limited extent compensate for this. Similarly, an early retirement scheme for employees in workplaces with collective agreements, established in cooperation with the state in 1988, provided widened opportunity for leaving the labour force (as of 2005, from the age of 62).

#### **Phase 4: Policy Revival – Stricter Enforcement of Activation (ca. 1990–2005)**

From the late 1980s Norway witnessed a fairly dramatic shift in the elite discourse on these issues. Policy-makers were concerned with the growing number of people of working age benefiting from various forms of public income maintenance. Again policy-makers invented the work-line, but without acknowledging that they were reviving what had been formulated as one of the foundations of the Norwegian social protection system a generation earlier. The Conservatives in particular, suspecting widespread benefit abuse and fraud, called for activation in the form of 'workfare' measures to monitor and discipline the marginal labour force. On the Social Democratic side the main emphasis was on the need to: ensure that the social protection system did not (unintentionally) contribute to social and economic exclusion; prevent detrimental personal effects of long-term

unemployment and 'passivity'; facilitate a reciprocal 'give-and-take' between society and the individual; remove administrative obstacles to effective and coordinated efforts to assist people to become employed and economically self-sufficient; and generally to avoid the 'opportunity costs' of excessive use of public resources for the income-maintenance of people of working age. From these considerations resulted a number of inter-related reforms from 1990 and onwards.

### **Disability**

Eligibility criteria for disability pensions were tightened, for instance by requiring that the reduced work capacity should be directly and causally linked to a recognized medical condition, and not to problems of social adjustment or poverty. The former requirement – that appropriate and necessary vocational rehabilitation should have been tried before a person was granted disability pension – was made more explicit and monitorable. A new division of tasks between the employment services and the national insurance was introduced, giving the employment services the main role in vocational rehabilitation, workplace-oriented measures and guidance to employers (this reorganization was later partially reversed). New public management techniques, like management-by-objectives, were introduced in both services. Considerably more resources were provided for vocational rehabilitation measures. The duration of medical rehabilitation allowance (effectively a time-limited disability benefit) was reduced to one year. The routes to disability pension were the target of special measures, e.g., better procedures to ensure early invention during temporary sickness benefit. Later, in 2001, the then outgoing Social Democratic minority government initiated a tripartite agreement between the state, employer federations and the main trade unions to promote 'an inclusionary working life'. For private and public work organizations, where the partners signed a corresponding agreement, work-oriented support was made more accessible.

The Centre Right government, taking over after the 2001 general election, introduced a temporary disability benefit (four years) to serve as an alternative to the regular disability pension. An explicit prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of disability (and other grounds) in employment was enacted as part of the Norwegian shadow legislation to the November 2000 Framework Directive of the European Union. In the spring of 2005 the parliament decided to undertake a complete restructuring of the public agencies responsible for national insurance and employment services. The aim is to promote the work-line through organizational integration of services, involving the establishment of a new joint state agency for work and national insurance, with 'one-stop shops' co-localized with municipal social services, in the period from 2007 to 2010.

**Social assistance**

A modernized Social Services Act codified the legal scope for local authorities to demand a particular activity or work effort in return for social assistance payments (Lødemel, 2001). Many municipalities practised this work-for-benefit in the 1990s, but usually only with a minority of their claimants (Vik-Mo and Nervik, 1999). Yet more important than legal changes were changes in practical approach, undertaken *within* the available legal scope for setting other priorities and operational goals for social-service departments' work with social-assistance cases. Departments now put stronger emphasis on active measures with most of their claimants. A number of local pilot projects with joint 'one-stop' offices were set up in cooperation between municipalities and the employment service. Follow-up studies of the experiments indicate that the employment service became more willing to take on social assistance claimants (e.g. Schafft et al., 2005).

**Lone parents**

In the early 1990s the maximum duration of transitional allowance was reduced to the period up to the youngest child's third birthday. At the same time the compensation rate of payments was increased and more emphasis put on encouraging lone mothers to participate in vocational training with the aim of becoming employed and self-sufficient. The availability of affordable kindergartens was also improved (Skevik, 2001).

Moreover, the maximum duration of the unemployment insurance benefit was reduced. The Centre Right government set the maximum duration at two years in 2003 (though this is likely to be reversed by the new Centre Left government that took over from the autumn of 2005). The Centre Right government also emphasized claimants' participation in active measures but with more concern for the possible 'locking-in' effects of the longer-lasting measures. That government, also focusing on parental choice, introduced a cash-for-care allowance for parents with children below three years of age, a circumstance widely believed to weaken the work incentives of mothers, at least temporarily.

How did the revival of elite activation culture resonate with the cultures of implementing agencies and corporations? The answer is somewhat mixed: As already mentioned, notable changes have taken place in the priorities and operational goals of social workers in Norwegian municipalities. A much higher proportion of people with reduced work capacity are referred to vocational rehabilitation and participated in rehabilitation measures in the first years of the new millennium than in the early 1990s. More lone mothers are participating in active measures than before (Skevik, 2001). Some research suggests that Norwegian managers, compared with their European peers, are not particularly advanced in giving

*Table 10.2 Reciprocity rates: the number of beneficiaries of selected income-maintenance benefits as a percentage of the population of Norway aged 16–66 years (1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2004)*

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2004
Disability pension	7.0	8.4	8.3	9.9	10.7
Social assistance	3.7	5.6	5.6	4.5	4.7
Transitional allowance lone parents	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.4	1.0
Unemployment insurance benefit	1.9	4.2	4.7	2.2	3.2

*Note:* Some persons received more than one kind of benefit in the same year.

*Sources:* Disability pension and transitional allowance: [www.trygdeetaten.no](http://www.trygdeetaten.no), social assistance: [www.ssb.no](http://www.ssb.no); unemployment insurance benefit: [www.aetat.no](http://www.aetat.no).

systematic attention to the recruitment and accommodation of work for employees with impairments (Nordhaug, 2004). Admittedly, a considerable number of Norwegian managers have signed agreements on inclusionary measures on behalf of their organizations. A recent survey indicates that employment of people with impairments in organizations with an inclusionary agreement has increased slightly in comparison to organizations without such an agreement (Olsen and Van, 2005).

Similarly, other indicators of the impact of the revival of activation culture give a mixed picture. As Table 10.2 shows, the reciprocity rate for disability pension stabilized in the first half of the 1990s, but increased again after that; the reciprocity rate for social assistance decreased after the mid-1990s but has stabilized thereafter; the reciprocity rate for transitional allowance for lone parents returned to the level of the mid-1980s; the reciprocity rate for unemployment insurance benefit increased until the mid-1990s, and remained at fairly low levels after that time.

All in all, seen as an elite political culture in Norway, activation regained much of its earlier strength, in the sense that shifting governments after 1990 pursued the activation rationale systematically and pervasively through a number of reforms. As indicated in the previous discussion, activation is a moving target in Norwegian politics, in the sense that continuing reforms of the income maintenance system recently have been complemented by decisions about reorganization of the implementing apparatus. The revival of the elite culture of activation since 1990 appears also to have resonated reasonably well with shifts in the work culture of the

implementing agencies, while it is more of an open question whether corporate cultures have become more accommodating in relation to recruitment and retention of marginal sections of the labour force. The prospects for people at the margins at the labour market, except for lone parents, appear bleak, despite the substantial escalation of activation efforts. One possible scenario is that the major organizational redesign to be undertaken in the coming years, together with the great ambitions of the new Centre Left government, may alter these trends. Another possibility is that accumulated experience of the limited practical impact of the activation rationale will result in discouragement and cynicism in the implementing agencies and perhaps even on the part of policy-makers, implying that the pendulum may again move towards an erosion or weakening of the activation rationale.

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# 11. Unsettled attachments: national identity, citizenship and welfare

**John Clarke and Janet Fink**

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National identity and citizenship have become increasingly visible and contentious issues in recent years as established alignments of people, places and policies have become unsettled. In this chapter, we explore some of the ways in which a cultural analysis can illuminate these processes in relation to the politics and policies of welfare. We begin by discussing the problems and possibilities associated with foregrounding questions of culture. We then examine how questions of citizenship and national identity have been bound up with the formations of welfare, state and nation associated with the ‘golden age’ of the welfare state and nation state (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Leibfried and Zürn, 2005). The destabilization of these formations has made the relationship between national identity, citizenship and welfare appear more fragile and contested. We consider how contemporary processes – including new transnational flows of people – have contributed to this unsettling. Finally, we consider whether such contemporary unsettling might make us rethink the assumed unity of people, places and policies in older formations of nation, state and welfare. In this we share Sharma and Gupta’s aspiration that ‘new insights might be gained from treating states as cultural artifacts while simultaneously framing them in transnational dynamics’ (2006: 5–6).

## THE (RE-)DISCOVERY OF CULTURE

Culture has been a marginal or residual concept in the social sciences, particularly in those disciplines that have laid claim to analysing welfare states – economics, political science and social policy. A concern with the ‘hard’ analytics of structural or institutional regularities and differences has dominated the study of welfare systems. By contrast, culture has usually been identified as a ‘soft’ term, hardly adequate to the demands of rigorous social analysis. There have been attempts to operationalize ‘culture’ in ways that would turn it into a usable independent variable in

social analysis, for example, by quantifying the elementary characteristics of different cultures – national cultures, organizational cultures and so on. In this chapter, we take a rather different approach to cultural analysis – one which draws on developments in anthropology, cultural studies, social history and a variety of forms of post-structuralist theorizing (see, for example, Clarke, 2004; Sharma and Gupta, 2006; Steinmetz, 1999).

Calhoun (2005) has argued that there are two main views of culture in the social sciences. One treats culture as a specific and delimited social field – the domain of values or aesthetics that can be distinguished from other fields (the economy, politics, etc.). The alternative view sees culture as saturating society. Here, culture denotes the practices of meaning making, and all domains of social life involve social agents in the production, distribution and consumption of meaning. Our analysis starts from this latter view. Culture leads to questions of how meanings are made, contested and institutionalized, taking us to our second starting point – the study of culture as articulated formations rather than unitary totalities. The attempt to define distinctive cultures has always been at risk of essentializing, naturalizing and de-historicizing them. For example, the study of organizational cultures tends to focus on the dominant, official, and formal cultural elements of organizations. In the process, other dimensions – the subordinate, the unofficial and the informal meanings of the organization – tend to disappear. As a result the dynamics that shape the organization as a cultural formation – the unity of different, disparate and sometimes contending elements – also disappear from view. National cultures also merit being treated as formations: the (temporary) unity of disparate and sometimes contending elements.

Our other starting points flow from these. We share the view developed in the editors' introduction that culture, rather than being a property that people possess (or that possesses people), denotes the social practices in which meanings are produced, distributed and consumed. This view of culture as meaning also implies dynamics of contestation. It is linked to questions about the relationship between meanings and power, or between meanings and the construction, consolidation and challenging of relations of domination and subordination. In the context of this volume, we want to emphasize a view of culture as socially endemic; as articulated in specific formations; as the product of social practices; and as contested and changeable.

## **FIXING THE CITIZEN: FORMATIONS OF WELFARE, STATE AND NATION**

The citizen is located at the centre of formations of welfare, state and nation in the West. Citizenship has become predominantly associated with

the 'Westphalian' nation states of Europe and North America, particularly in their post-Second World War 'Golden Age', and forms of social citizenship have been tightly bound up with questions of national membership, even though the conditions and meanings of being a citizen/member have been constructed differently in particular nation states (Castles and Davidson, 2000). This association of citizenship with welfare provision has been a critical element of modern western conceptions of being a citizen (Leibfried and Zürn, 2005). Welfare added a substantive social content to the status of being a citizen: processes of education, health and social care, as well as the array of social protection benefits. At a time when discussions of welfare and welfare states are often narrowed to questions of labour market policy and income transfer systems, it is important to remember that the experience of citizenship is also located in relationships, processes and practices of service provision (Lewis, 2004). This social dimension of citizenship has been exposed to processes of retreat, retrenchment and reform in the complex conflicts associated with remaking the relationship between welfare and the state (Clarke, 2004, 2005c).

We suggest that the figure of the citizen can be viewed as triangulated in formations of welfare, state and nation as in Figure 11.1 (borrowed from Clarke, 2004).

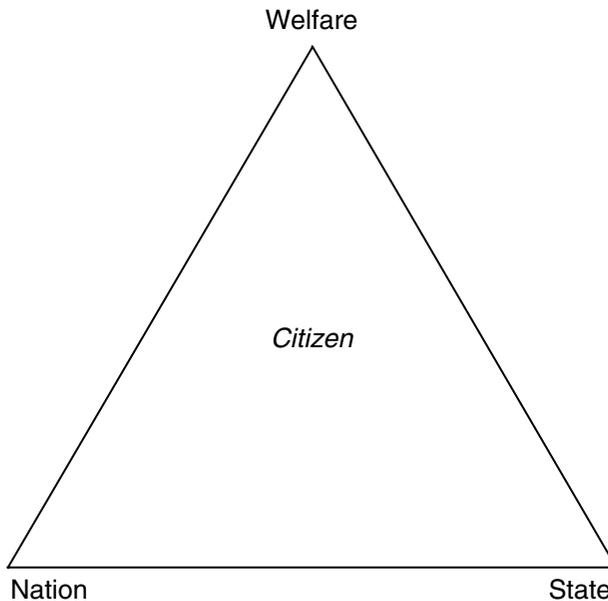


Figure 11.1 *Locating the citizen*

Different national welfare systems have articulated specific conceptions of welfare, state and nation. This is rather different from saying that there are different welfare states (a founding conception of comparative social policy). Rather, different forms of welfare systems are connected with different state formations in the service of specific imaginaries of the nation/people and its needs. Each of the three terms – welfare, state and nation – is the focus of conflicting imaginaries: ideas and ideals of what welfare, state and nation should mean and how they might be brought into alignment. For example, Castells and Himenan's (2002) study of Finland identified a distinctive nation-building role for the Finnish state through expansive and interventionist forms of economic and social policy. In contrast, the limited welfarism of the UK has been articulated with a more disciplinary model of the state, and with concerns about how to manage the future of a 'post-imperial' nation. We want to emphasize here the importance of thinking about the (different) assemblages of welfare, state and nation – rather than treating nation as merely the territorial basis on which different welfare states are constructed. 'Nation building' is a term usually associated with 'developing' societies, but all societies are concerned with how to manage, regulate and 'improve' the nation/people. This view treats nations as 'imagined communities' or 'political imaginaries', rather than pre-existing entities whose 'character' is expressed or reflected in its political institutions or cultural forms (Anderson, 1983; Eley and Suny, 1996; Puri, 2004).

For most western societies, national identity was also the condition for what Morris (1998) calls 'legitimate membership of the welfare community': being part of the nation was the basis for claims on the state. Such national identity has been bound up with imagined communities of shared racialized or ethnicized identities, where the test of 'legitimate membership' has often been closely associated with the apparent difference between 'nationals' and 'others' (Castles, 2000). As a consequence, nation states have engaged in the business of how to tell the difference between 'legitimate members' and 'others': trying to identify 'aliens', 'illegals', and other people who 'do not belong'. This business of marking difference ranges from the most formal statements of nationality and entitlement in legislation down to the everyday practices of public agencies 'sifting' people. As a recent study by Morissens and Sainsbury (2005) indicates, such nationalizing systems of welfare entitlement have profound consequences for the social rights of migrants, producing 'large disparities between how migrant and citizen households fare in welfare states' (2005: 654).

This 'national' model of how welfare, state and nation are articulated was shared by most western societies in the twentieth century, resting on an assumed unity of people, place and political institutions: what has been

called the territorial or container view of the nation state (Clarke, 2005a; Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). Recently, different tendencies have come together to undermine or destabilize this assumed unity of people, place and political institutions. These include the greater internationalization or globalization of economic processes such as flows of capital, goods and manufacturing processes (Yeates, 2001); the rise of supra-national political institutions (such as the European Union), and the associated growth in significance of regional or sub-national levels of governance, whose combined effect is sometimes described as the 'hollowing out' of the nation state (Rhodes, 1997; see also Ferrera, 2005). Equally significant are the multiple movements of people across national borders. Such migrations across and around Europe compound different dynamics: 'postcolonial' diasporas along Europe's colonial lines of force; or the flows from Eastern to Western Europe, from Southern to Northern Europe, and across what Balibar (2002) calls the 'Euro-Mediterranean ensemble'.

Such tendencies have produced an outburst of what might be called 'epochal' scholarship, announcing both the end of the welfare state and the death of the nation state. Much effort has also been expended on demonstrating the counter view – that both welfare states and nation states persist (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 1996; Kuhnle, 2000; Taylor-Gooby, 2001). But the binary structure of these debates obscures what ought to be the most interesting questions: in what ways have these processes unsettled the established formations of welfare, state and nation; and what new formations are being constructed in their place? Such questions refocus our attention around a different conception of the current period, seeing it as marked by profound political uncertainty and conflict about:

- What welfare should mean, especially about its relationship to independence and dependence; its costs; and to whom it should be provided;
- What the role of the state should be, especially in relation to markets and the private realm of families/households; and
- What the nation is and should be, especially in relation to supra-national institutions and processes; and to migration and the 'multi-cultural' question.

Such issues intersect: what sorts of welfare, organized through what sorts of governance systems are needed to secure the future of the nation? Who are the people who should receive welfare, and under what conditions? We have seen different political-cultural projects seeking to create new settlements in the face of these uncertainties: attempts to imagine, institutionalize and naturalize new alignments of welfare, state and nation. These range

from the globalizing demands of corporate neo-liberalism seeking to 'liberate' people from the confines of 'old' systems, states and processes; through resurgent nationalisms, aiming to restore the imagined unities of people, place and political institutions; to efforts to articulate a 'European' identity, located in, and sustained by, a 'European social model' that would provide an alternative to the anti-welfarist and anti-statist drive of corporate neo-liberalism. European 'welfare states' are being remade in these encounters where drives towards 'liberalization', 'flexibility' and 'activation' meet commitments to promoting 'social protection' and 'social inclusion' in local, national and supra-national settings (see for example, Fink et al., 2001; Newman, 2005; Sykes et al., 2001).

## TRANSITIONS AND TRAJECTORIES

These unsettling times have called into question the apparently fixed relationships between nation, state and welfare that formed the taken-for-granted embodiments of the 'social' in Western societies (Clarke, 2004). The sense of stability has been replaced by uncertainty as multiple transitions coincide. Each element of these formations – nation, state and welfare – has been subject to contending forces, struggling to define its future direction. These may not always sit comfortably together, for example where attempts to sustain social democratic or expansive conceptions of welfare encounter political projects intended to diminish or roll back the state (and its fiscal and operational capacities). While we can see some general tendencies here, they tend to be most visible in terms of welfare and the state. After three decades of neo-liberalism, we can recognize the sorts of connections that it makes between anti-statism and anti-welfarism, such that programmes of marketization, privatization and deregulation go hand in hand with encouraging 'entrepreneurial' flexibilities and 'enabling' people to be active producers and consumers. We can see the efforts to define and defend the 'European social model' and its variants in which the state and welfare are institutionally embedded and co-constitutive (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Taylor-Gooby, 2001).

Such tendencies are easier to see if we limit ourselves to how welfare and the state are aligned. They become more problematic if we add 'nation' to the analysis. New Labour's quest to 'modernize' Britain, the German project of unification, the Finnish nation-building project, the Hungarian entry to the EU, and other national trajectories intersect in complex ways with the remaking of welfare and states. How the nation is understood, who forms its membership, how its historical arc is narrated (the representation of its past, present and future), and how its relationships to many other

places (to 'Europe' or to the USA, for example) are framed: all of these bear on political and cultural imaginaries of welfare and of the state. For example, the dynamics of migration to European societies are often viewed through a 'welfare lens'. Are migrants a 'drain on the welfare state'? Are they, by contrast, a productive and tax-generating rescue from the problem of an ageing national demography and the accompanying 'pensions crisis'?

At this point, we will consider these issues through the example of the UK, although a similar analysis could be developed for any Western/Northern society (relations of dependence and subordination – historic and continuing – change the frame of analysis for societies of the South). In the UK, the national question has been a difficult one, with England/English tending to dominate and subsume the other elements of Britain/British (Wales and Scotland), and with (Northern) Ireland a continuing site of contestation and conflict. Currently, the UK is being reinvented as a 'multi-national nation', with different forms of devolved government for the 'nation regions' of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (Mooney and Williams, 2006). Controversies about different sorts of national identity persist (with continuing conflicts over language, culture and space). Englishness – once the dominant, normalized and taken-for-granted identity – is now exposed as a site of uncertainty, anxiety and reinvention, with public discussion of 'what it means to be English' taking place alongside debate about 'what it means to be British'.

In political terms, New Labour has persisted with a vision of a 'modern British People' (Clarke and Newman, 1998; 2004) in whom tradition and a future-oriented dynamism are happily combined. This People is understood as committed to traditional virtues (though tolerant of 'alternative life styles') while having the capacity to be forward-looking, innovative and entrepreneurial. They form the 'hard working families' who are the focus of New Labour's most recent policy initiatives and, as a result, are the beneficiaries of tax cuts, and tax credits in relation to employment and child care (Brown, 2005). At the same time there are also particularly 'vulnerable' groups (for example, younger children and older people) who are seen as being in greater need of welfare intervention and support.

However this emphasis on 'vulnerable groups' and 'hard working families' in New Labour's modernizing agenda does not acknowledge the diversity of family practices at the beginning of the twenty-first century nor does it address their implications for welfare. There is an assumption that family members organize and understand their responsibilities to each other and the state through shared values and attitudes. Such a situation is not unique to the UK. Across Europe, family policies are shaped by normative assumptions about the meanings of care (Pfau-Effinger and Eissler, 2005; Chamberlayne, 1999) or the transition of young people to adulthood

(Bynner et al., 1997). This means that some family groups are marginalized or policed by welfare practices that fail to acknowledge the differential effects of class, religion, ethnicity or sexuality. Within such differences it is those families whose national identity and citizenship claims are most provisional who are assiduously positioned outside the symbolic boundaries of the nation and who, as a result, have differentiated access to welfare systems and provision (Castles, 2000; Dunkwu, 1993; Morissens and Sainsbury, 2005).

Here the long histories of Europe's policies of immigration and settlement come into play. To meet the demands of economic growth in the period following the Second World War, large numbers of workers were recruited from the colonies and former colonies of Britain, France and the Netherlands. Germany, Switzerland, Belgium and Sweden recruited 'guest workers' whose stay was permitted only as long as their labour was required. By the 1960s, migrant labour had become a structural feature of West European labour markets and many workers settled permanently, formed new families or were reunited with existing family members. Yet the presence of these families was often only tolerated and usually in ways that emphasized their difference, their subordination and their 'minority'ness. Such tolerance is always conditional, subject to being revoked for inappropriate behaviour on the part of 'the guests' (Rosello, 2001). For members of migrant families, where gendered and racialized restrictions have long been applied both to their entry to a nation state and their access to welfare systems and labour markets, their difference is simultaneously inscribed with relations of hierarchy, of projected superiority and inferiority. Their membership as (national) citizens is in doubt, because the dominant 'imaginative geographies' (Said, 1995) through which we map the world persistently associate 'other people' with 'other places'. The notion of 'hard working families', identified by New Labour as the cornerstone of social order, responsibility and security, struggles to include families with histories of migration because their presence is always imagined as temporary or conditional.

Such issues are closely linked to the dominant narratives of Britain's 'historical arc', linking pasts, presents and futures. These national narratives characteristically name past glories and virtues; delineate present troubles; and lay out the necessary line of development to a better future. The British past has been framed through some characteristic tropes, combining images of power (industrial, economic, imperial) with a distinctive value set that has defining institutional embodiments. In a characteristic speech, the then Home Secretary David Blunkett claimed that:

Britishness is defined not on ethnic or exclusive grounds – but through our shared values, our history of tolerance, of openness and internationalism, our

commitment to democracy and liberty, to civic duty and the public space. These values, embodied in our great institutions – such as the NHS, the BBC, The Open University – tell a national story that is open to all citizens. (2005: 4)

Diagnoses of the present's troubles have been more varied – and more politically contested. They have centred on conceptions of modernity and modernization with the dominant political-cultural projects since the 1970s addressed to the problem of how to undo the 'blockages' that prevented the nation from achieving modernity and its pleasures. Modernity is, in part, defined by having a place in a new world that is primarily understood as a global economic order. Many political and policy initiatives – from challenging 'trade union power', through labour market activation policies, to 'modernizing' public services – are located and justified within the logic of adapting to these 'new realities'. This historical arc – connecting the nation's past, present and future – often links the apparent opposites of tradition and modernity. In this sense, 'tradition' is constantly being revised and revitalized as it is put to work in the construction of new futures. At the 2005 Labour Party conference, Tony Blair insisted that: 'The challenge we face is not in our values. It is how we put them into practice in a world fast-forwarding to a future at unprecedented speed' (27 September 2005).

Identifying this new world (and how to be modern within it) involves triangulating Britain in relationship to some critical spatial reference points. One of these remains 'Empire' as a series of 'other places', as processes of colonial internationalization in the metropolis, and as the persistence of what Gilroy has called 'postcolonial melancholia' (2005). A second geographical axis concerns 'Europe' – a site of persistent British ambivalence and anxiety, not least the stress of trying to make Europe an economic and political space that more closely fits the way Britain imagines global modernity. Finally there is the persistently problematic relationship with 'America': filled with fantasies of power, yet also the focus of fears about the emasculating effects of dependency and the dangerous consequences of choosing the wrong modernity. These are profoundly *cultural* geographies: imaginative mappings of economic, political and social relationships. Each involves distinctive poles of attraction and repulsion; each is profoundly contested, yet centrally constitutive of the possibilities of a 'modern Britain'. At stake in them are contested conceptions of affinities, alliances and antagonisms (what Gregory calls the 'Architecture of Enmity', 2004: 17–29). Although we have taken Britain as an example here, it is important to distinguish between the example and the approach. This way of looking at Britain and Britishness as cultural formations involves an analytic framing that is about the construction of nations. Each European nation is the focus of such (contested) national stories whose purpose is to name and

claim the future. Nations (and their trajectories) are always constituted *transnationally* through such imagined relations with ‘other places’.

## DE-CENTRING THE NATION

In some ways, we think that one of the most significant contributions that cultural analysis can make to the study of welfare states is this double movement around the issue of the nation. First, it enriches the concept of the nation, moving it from being a territorial container: no longer merely the box in which economic, social and political processes take place. Instead, it treats the nation as the object of processes of social construction (and reconstruction) expressed in attempts to produce and stabilize the imagined unity of people and place. Welfare states have played distinctive roles in producing, and reproducing, nations, and their internal distinctions. Each nation is both an imagined unity – the People – and an imagined system of differences – a population (Chatterjee, 2003).

Second, cultural analysis de-centres the nation. Rather than the stalled debate about the death or persistence of the nation and its state, this version of cultural analysis is concerned with the changing ways in which nations are constituted. It foregrounds questions about the transnational conditions through which nations are imagined, institutionalized and destabilized. This process takes the nation out of its territorial ‘box’ and offers instead a view of the relationship between people and places (and politics) as contingent and constructed. This destabilization of the nation has consequences for the relationship between nation, state and welfare condensed in ideas and practices of citizenship:

Diasporic movements point to how the space of the nation, or ‘home’, and the affective ties that bind this imagined community are expanding across the boundaries of the nation-state. . . . For this reason, citizenship too is being imagined, practices, and regulated transnationally and flexibly. . . . Citizenship is unevenly experienced and spatialized – both transnationally and nationally. . . . People inhabiting different circuits of the global capitalist economy are subjected to different regimes of rights and citizenship. (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 26)

Citizenship is the focus of such disturbances because of its place at the intersection of state and nation. But transnational movements of people also intersect in complex ways with formations of welfare (Morissens and Sainsbury, 2005). For example, ‘global care chains’ are part of new welfare processes in which migrant women perform care work in the first world as a means of sustaining families in the third (Hochschild, 2001; Yeates, 2004). Such chains change the social architecture of care (who performs care,

under what conditions, in what relationships) in both first and third world locations.

In the present, it seems particularly easy to take up this view of the nation as constructed, and to see how it is located in transnational conditions. So many transnational conditions and processes and their effects on the established formations of nation, state and welfare are so visible, that it becomes possible to highlight the constructed and contingent, and unsettled and unstable, character of national formations. But there are some risks attached to this focus on the present. There is a danger of making epochal distinctions: for example, between the institutional density of the 'Golden Age' and the present liquidity in which people, places and policies appear more 'loosely coupled'. We are sceptical about such simplifying contrasts of past and present. They take place in what we think of as 'sociological time' where distinctions between past and present persistently offer over-unified accounts of a stable and settled past against which can be set a view of the present as dynamic, mobile, and fluid. Instead, we think there may be some merit in 'historicizing the present'. Rather than stressing the difference of present, we might look for continuities in the conditions, relations and processes that underlie the construction, destabilization and reconstruction of nation-state-welfare formations (and their forms of citizenship).

## ANTI-CITIZENS AND FALSE CITIZENS

To explore these continuities we might return to the long histories of national welfare states and view them as part of projects to construct and stabilize nations, and institutionalize the relationships between people and places through policies and practices of welfare. We might trace the shifting imaginary unities of nation-peoples and their internal differentiations as populations and consider how welfare is deployed as a way of making these imagined unities and differences come true. Here we might understand in a better way Beveridge's view of 'housewives as mothers' who had 'vital work to do in ensuring the adequate continuance of the British race and of British ideals in the world' (Beveridge, 1942: 117). We might locate the shifting definition of 'labour', who is supposed to perform it and who is legitimately excused from it. As Susser argues:

We need to consider what in fact constitutes a labor force at different historical periods with different effects on inequality, poverty and social welfare. Nation states, employers and working class movements define the categories of people available to work differently over time. As social programs and regulations shift, so too do those people who can be viewed as labor. . . . Alternatively,

constructions of legitimate dependency and community responsibility, institutionalized in state regulations, entitlements and cultural expectations of age, gender and other social identities, protect some members of the population from accepting the lowest wages. (2001: 230–1)

Here we can see the intersection of formal categories and everyday practices in the production of citizenship (Lewis, 2004). Everyday practices highlight the binary distinctions embedded in meanings of citizenship, including notions of ‘anti-citizenship’ (Matless, 1998) and the ‘false citizen’ (Paul, 1998), and their consequences for processes of inclusion and exclusion. In the 1940s, for example, welfare was concerned with not only social inequalities but also the making of ‘new’ men and women (Lewis and Fink, 2004). Moral norms and assumptions have been embedded in welfare policies, practices and relationships and how they work to legitimate constructions of a seemingly inclusive nation. The obverse was the designation of individuals and groups as ‘anti-citizens’ when they resisted exhortations to develop ‘the *right* attitude towards health’ (BMA, 1946: 74, emphasis added); or when they refused to accept that work ‘means doing what is wanted, *not* doing just what pleases one’ (Beveridge, 1944: 16); or when they took their recreation in the countryside – their *national* heritage – without the ‘appropriate’ knowledge for appreciation of its beauty (Matless, 1998: 182). Everyday practices reveal the normative dimensions of citizenship and national belonging, and vividly foreground the ‘imagined community’ of Britain that linked nation, state and welfare. They also demonstrate how such ‘anti-citizens’ were constituted as people who were ‘out of time’: their behaviour, moral codes and social commitments had not adapted to the ‘new’ conceptions of national character that were being brought into play through welfare.

A longer history of welfare might also make visible the ‘problem’ that mobile people have persistently posed for attempts to institutionalize and settle the relationship between people and places. Exploring the shifting politics of citizenship, through legislation concerned with national identity, belonging and migration through the twentieth century, would reveal changing constructions of citizens. For example, the British Nationality Act, 1948 portrays critical aspects of how the nation-people was being constructed in the immediate post-war years. The Act was intended ‘to make provision for British nationality and for citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies’ in which no distinction was drawn between British subject and Commonwealth citizen since they were held to ‘have the same meaning’ (Part I, 2). Here we can see a particular formation of a tolerant and inclusive nation that recognized its obligations as an imperial power and, as a result, kept an ‘open door’ to citizens of the Commonwealth.

However, from the early period of European capitalism when ‘welfare’ laws and systems attempted to control landless and displaced people,

through to the contemporary 'welfare' anxieties about refugees and migrants, mobile people have been a disturbing presence for institutions built on expectations that people will 'know their place'. The British Nationality Act was built on expectations that Commonwealth citizens would equally know their place, which, despite the rhetoric, was not within the boundaries of the 'Mother Country'. The subsequent 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act sought to restrict the entry of black and Asian migrants (despite being British passport holders) and transformed the Commonwealth citizen into the colonial migrant. These exclusionary legal practices identified migrants from the Commonwealth not as British subjects but as different from the British people and not 'of Britain'. Through these processes Commonwealth citizens became 'false citizens', making their claims to welfare subject to suspicion and challenge since their citizenship identity was located in their country of origin (Paul, 1998). Here welfare policies and practices constitute the distinction between 'real' citizens with 'genuine' claims to a national identity and 'false' citizens and claims. Binaries of belonging and not belonging, of deserving and undeserving are constantly worked and reworked in such processes of national inclusion and exclusion.

The efforts to unify people and place through welfare policy and practice, might be examined through notions of anti-citizenship and false citizens, and through ideas that migrant people are 'out of time' and 'out of place'. To illustrate the contradictory elements in such struggles, we turn to the recent attempts to introduce (National) Identity (ID) Cards in the UK to tackle 'terrorism and organised crime' and to affirm 'entitlement to draw down on [welfare] services' (Blunkett, 2005). The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee examined witnesses in 2004 about the financial, technical and legal implications of the proposed ID Cards. The following exchange took place between the Chairman of the Committee and Nicola Roche (Director, Children, Identity Cards and Coroners at the Home Office):

**Q38 Chairman:** Can I just go back on the question of access to public services? . . . Is it an inevitable consequence of the ID card system that every GP and every headteacher will have to become responsible for being a gatekeeper into those services and for checking a system they do not at the moment?

**Nicola Roche:** In respect of schools, I do not think there is any expectation that there will be checking of ID to enable a child to start school. Children under the age of 16 will not have an ID card but, of course, their parents or carers would.

**Q39 Chairman:** So if you have a family here who are here illegally, their children do not have ID cards, so there would be no question of checking their children's entitlement to education? They would get free education even though their parents were not here legally and the children were not here legally?

**Nicola Roche:** There is no expectation that the card would be used to check children starting at school and we talked that through with the DFES [Department for Education and Science].

**Q40:** Perhaps we will ask the DFES, but if the aim of the system is to prevent people who are not entitled to expensive public services getting access to public services, it seems a bit odd that that would not apply to schools.

**Nicola Roche:** Well, in terms of the parents being here illegally, there will be other ways of highlighting their presence here through other services.

**Q41 Chairman:** But unless the parents were picked up in some other way, the DFES have no objection to children getting free education in this country, even though they and their parents have no right to be here?

**Nicola Roche:** That is clearly a matter for the DFES, but this is about the adult population, this is not about children.

This brief exchange demonstrates some of the tensions in the formations of welfare, state and nation. We can trace the insistent use of 'here'; illustrating that ID cards are expected to identify those who should be 'here', rather than 'there' (or somewhere other than 'here'). In such ways migrant people continue to be defined as 'out of place' within the boundaries of 'this country' and as 'false citizens' whose claims to public services are invalid. Yet, the children of migrant families *are* understood to have claims, not least to 'free education', irrespective of the alleged illegality of their presence. Their status as children constitutes their rights in different ways to those of their parents and welfare policy constructs the place of children in 'modern' Britain in relation to education rather than through their familial associations with 'elsewheres'. This is one example of how the population of the nation comes to be constituted through the hierarchies of difference that are formulated and enacted in welfare policies, practices and relationships.

In political and policy arenas, education has increasingly been regarded as central to meeting the challenges of the 'modern' world. As a result, those people ('nationals' and 'others') who fail to grasp either their rights to education or their obligations to be educated could be categorized as

anti-citizens. However 'illegal' migrant parents, defined as false citizens because their status 'here' cannot be validated, cannot also be identified as anti-citizens when they present their 'children at school'. Undertaking this everyday practice denotes recognition of their responsibilities as citizens even while their rights are under question. Such twists and turns point to the instabilities in conceptions of the nation/people relationship. As Sharma and Gupta argue '[t]he sphere of everyday practices is the primary arena in which people learn something about the state' (2006: 11).

## CONSTITUTING NATIONS, PRODUCING PEOPLE

In the end, we might attain a fuller view of the transnational conditions of European imaginaries of nationhood by emphasizing the continuous processes of nation-state-welfare formation. Rather than associating the present with instability and uncertainty, it may be more productive to see the longer historical processes of nation formation, destabilization and re-formation as continuing dynamics involved in the attempt to make nations. We would highlight three such processes that are intimately associated with the apparently integrated and stable European model of nation state. First, everywhere nations had to be imagined and brought into being: tutored into a 'shared' national identity and language. Such unifications still encounter challenges from the not quite compliant peoples and places being incorporated. For example, subordinated, but not settled, counter-nationalisms persist as alternative imaginaries to the dominant formations of modern European nations – from Catalonia to the Celtic others of the more or less United Kingdom.

Second, it is important to keep sight of the ways in which borders – the territorial markers of national space – have a long history of both mobility and permeability. There is no European nation whose 'space' has not changed or been displaced during the era of Westphalian 'stability'. Even when turned into 'facts on the ground' through border posts, checkpoints and controls, national borders have always been traversed by processes, relationships and mobile people. Borders are the focus of persistent political anxiety and innovation as nations work to fix them and sometimes to move them. Borders are the means through which nations attempt to make the myth of national territorial sovereignty come true in practice. But Europe's nations and Europe itself are shape-changing entities (Leontidou, 2004).

Finally, the European mythology of the integrated 'container' of national space is a piece of myth-making that conceals its colonial conditions. Most European nation states were constructed economically, politically and

culturally through their colonial relations. European modernity, as Gregory and others have argued, is an intrinsically *colonial* modernity.

Modernity produces its other, *verso to recto*, as a way of once producing and privileging itself. This is not to say that other cultures are the supine creations of the modern, but it is to acknowledge the extraordinary power and performance force of colonial modernity . . . this process of colonial transculturation is inherently asymmetric, and colonial modernity's productions of the other *as* other, however much they are shaped by those various others, shape its constitution of itself in determinate and decisive ways. (Gregory, 2004: 4)

The apparently enclosed space of the modern nation state was, in fact, traversed by multiple lines of flow and force, involving the movement of material objects and subjects (trade and the trade in people), and the symbolic work of imagining metropole and colony (Hall, 2002). The national space was constituted by transnational relations and systems of power that traversed the globe. The effects of those 'forgotten' colonial conditions continue to haunt Europe's contradictions and confusions about nationality and racialized/ethnicized identities.

In such ways, cultural analysis brings into view complex and shifting alignments of nation, state and welfare. It opens up the possibility of a different comparative form of study – one that would explore how different societies have articulated formations of nation, state and welfare. Such an analysis would be attentive to the dynamics of such formations – their transitions and trajectories. The current problematic politics of citizenship might be easier to grasp if located at the intersection of these changing and contested formations. Such an approach might also open up a more complex view of what welfare states (or welfare systems) do in producing and reproducing 'nations'. Earlier, we noted Chatterjee's distinction between 'people' and 'population' (2003). It clarifies what is at stake in the relationships between welfare and nation. Welfare policies are shaped by political-cultural projects that aim to reflect, create and secure the 'people' – the imaginary unity of the nation (sharing character, values, culture, ways of life and the territory). Debates about citizenship, membership, entitlement and dimensions of culture/ethnicity are the site of contemporary struggles about what unities can be imagined. But welfare policies also seek to produce, reproduce or improve *populations* – imagined aggregates of differentiated groups. Nations have different 'demographies' in terms of the categories of people that they recognize. How the national population is divided up, named and addressed through social and other policies is itself a process of construction (see for example, Kertzer and Arel, 2002; Lopez, 1996 and Nobles, 2000, on the legal and census constructions of racialized categories). Struggles for 'recognition' have engaged with such population categorizing processes, bringing

disability or ethnicity to visibility, for example (see Miller, 2003, on 'indigenous peoples'). Finally, we believe that Sharma and Gupta's concern for viewing states through their 'everyday practices' as well as their formal statements is one focus for research in which questions of nationality, identity, categorization and welfare might be productively examined. They suggest that 'the state as an institution is substantiated in people's lives through the apparently *banal* practices of bureaucracies' (2006: 11). It is in such banal practices that categorizations of identity, belonging and entitlement are made real. Cultural analysis can provide ways of studying 'welfare states' that are attentive to the relationship between different sites and can link policies, programmes and practices. It also enables ways of thinking transnationally about the shifting alignments of global, national and local domains of welfare (Stubbs, 2002). For all these reasons, we see the 'cultural turn' as long overdue in the study of welfare states.

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## PART IV

### Popular Welfare Values and Beliefs



## 12. European scope-of-government beliefs: the impact of individual, regional and national characteristics

**John Gelissen**

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### INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research on popular scope-of-government beliefs constitutes a major aspect of the study of the role of values and culture within welfare states. This field of research seeks to describe and explain people's values, beliefs and preferences regarding the types and degrees of state intervention in matters of citizens' social and economic security. Earlier studies in this field have paid considerable attention to individual- and country-level determinants of such beliefs. We will discuss their main findings later. However, research that additionally includes regional differences within nation states as potential explanations of welfare state beliefs is lacking thus far. The inclusion of regional characteristics can be important for several reasons. In the first place, Stewart (2003) shows that there exist important regional disparities with respect to poverty and inequality, unemployment, education and health. Countries which spend much on social protection include regions which lag behind in their socio-economic development, and there are also relatively prosperous regions in countries which have relatively low social expenditures. Presumably, such structural regional disparities contribute to attitude and preference formation; that is, people hold certain beliefs about welfare state policies because of the immediate surrounding socio-economic conditions. Second, regions differ considerably in terms of cultural characteristics. As Beugelsdijk and van Schaik (2003) point out, regional identity is a key element in the construction of regions as social and political spaces and systems of action. One measure of regional specificity is provided by the existence of different values, norms, and behaviour among regions within the same nation state. Keating (1998) argues that the most common sources of regional specificity are religion and language. Another reason for examining effects of regional characteristics is that

within nation states, important regional differences exist in political preferences and voting behavior (Hearl et al., 1996). Such cultural differences can correlate with welfare state beliefs. A number of member states have also decentralized significant elements of policy down to the regional or provincial level (Moreno, 2003; Stewart, 2003). Thus, when individuals are asked about government's role, regional rather than national government may come to mind. Regional governments can differ in terms of success and this can also have a bearing on people's welfare state beliefs. Finally, even where such de-centralization has not occurred, incorporating the regional level allows accounting for an additional source of variation within countries, because countries do not only differ with respect to the composition of social background characteristics of their citizens, but also with respect to the composition of regional characteristics, such as regional wealth.

In this contribution, we investigate whether a series of possibly relevant regional and national characteristics help explain differences in beliefs about the scope of government. Our test is based on three-level multilevel analysis. In short, we attempt to provide an answer to the following research questions: (1) which socio-structural and ideological characteristics of individuals explain their scope-of-government beliefs? and (2) which regional and national contextual characteristics are contributory in explaining such beliefs?

## THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

### **Regional Characteristics and Scope-of-government Beliefs**

We examine four contextual characteristics which can be defined at the regional level: the average duration of educational attainment and the political climate as regional cultural indicators, and regional wealth and regional (long-term) unemployment as regional structural indicators. We focus on these four characteristics because in prior studies their analogues, defined at the individual or national level, have been found important predictors of scope-of-government beliefs. Presumably, they also play an important and theoretically meaningful role at the regional level.

We expect first of all, that on average, individuals who live in regions with a higher average duration of educational attainment are more supportive of government intervention than individuals who live in regions with a lower average duration of educational attainment, holding other variables constant. A twofold explanation can be given for this presumed association. Following the so-called enlightenment hypothesis, prolonged educational attainment causes extended socialization to democratic values, which in its

turn evokes greater commitment to equality and social rights (Hasenfeld and Rafferty, 1989: 1031). Thus, if regions are characterized by publics with such prolonged educational attainment, then, presumably, such beliefs about equality and social rights are also more widespread and affect all individuals living in the region, regardless of their own educational attainment. Another explanation could be that prolonged educational attainment at the regional level means that relatively many people within the region have benefited from the educational system. Consequently, if these persons see the educational system as a positive outcome of government intervention, the region is probably characterized by relatively positive opinions about government intervention, irrespective of people's own level of educational attainment.

Next, we consider the political climate that prevails in a region. Hearl et al. (1996) found important and systematic differences in party voting both among regions themselves and with respect to the state in which they are embedded. We expect that such systematic regional differences in the political climate are related to people's beliefs about government intervention. We anticipate that on average, individuals who live in regions with a relatively leftist political climate – in which solidarity between the rich and poor and an active role of the state in the area of social policy is usually emphasized – are more supportive of government intervention than individuals who live in regions with a relatively conservative political climate.

Our next two hypotheses pertain to the effect of variables which indicate directly the socio-economic conditions in a region. An important argument holds that as the level of economic development rises, the proportion of people who can take care of their own welfare – and are prepared to do so – increases. On the basis of this marginal utility hypothesis, it is usually expected that frequent or increasing demands for government intervention in welfare provision are a feature of poorer rather than richer societies (Borre, 1995: 377–8). Here, we argue that this marginal utility argument also holds for the regional level. Presumably, richer regions are characterized by a more individualistic culture, in which self-sustenance is emphasized and preferred more strongly. Consequently, we expect that on average, individuals who live in relatively wealthy regions are less supportive of government intervention than individuals who live in relatively poor regions.

A related variable is the level of (long-term) unemployment. Not only between, but also within countries, substantial differences exist in the degree to which governments are able to provide people with gainful employment. Blekesaune and Quadagno (2003: 418) explicated several mechanisms by which the unemployment rate at the national level might affect public support for welfare policies benefiting the unemployed. Their reasoning can also be applied to the unemployment rate at the regional

level. In particular, if people live in a region where unemployment is widespread, this could very well shape people's beliefs about the importance of government intervention in providing welfare, because people from such regions are likely themselves to be directly confronted with the adverse effects of high and/or enduring unemployment, for example via unemployed individuals in their social network. Moreover, the unemployment rate of a region can affect the perceived probability of becoming unemployed oneself and this also promotes greater support for government intervention. A final explanation could be that in times of high unemployment, politicians and other elites tend to place unemployment high on the agenda, and this also promotes stronger endorsement of welfare-related policies. Thus, our expectation concerning the effect of this contextual characteristic can be stated as follows: on average, individuals who live in regions with a relatively high percentage of long-term unemployment are more supportive of government intervention than individuals who live in regions with a relatively low percentage of long-term unemployment.

### **National Characteristics and Scope-of-government Beliefs**

Several explanations have been offered for cross-national differences in welfare-state beliefs. For example, Wilensky (1976) and Kangas (1995) proposed that the level of support for government intervention is highest in countries where the tax system has low visibility. This may be the case in countries where least reliance is placed on direct income or property taxes and more reliance on sales or value-added taxes to finance the welfare state. Also, welfare effort may matter. Forma (1997) proposed that redistributive government policies are advocated less in those countries which show high levels of expenditures on social protection. Finally, it has also been argued that the living standard and inequalities explain cross-national differences. Huseby (1995) found that the public of wealthy societies with high welfare standards shows less support for government intervention, while Roller (1995) suggested that the lowest levels of support for government intervention are found in countries with the highest levels of income equality. These hypotheses are based on the theory of diminishing marginal utility of increasing redistribution. When a high level of income equality or high welfare standard is already achieved, the public is less supportive of government policies aiming to achieve an even higher level.

The hallmark study which has influenced most strongly recent comparative research on welfare-state beliefs is *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* by Esping-Andersen (1990). Esping-Andersen's theoretical arguments have led students of welfare state beliefs to propose the hypothesis that social democratic regimes tend to engender high levels of support

for government intervention, whereas liberal regimes induce much lower levels. Conservative regimes should be somewhere in between. This hypothesis was extended by distinguishing a Mediterranean regime, for which is expected that the publics of countries belonging to this regime show relatively high levels of support. Empirical studies (Gelissen, 2002; Gundelach, 1994; Papadakis and Bean, 1993; Peillon, 1996; Svallfors, 1997, 2003) have found differences between regime clusters of countries, but on the whole there is little substantive evidence for this 'institutional structure hypothesis' (Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003).

Recent empirical studies (Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003; Meier-Jaeger, 2005) adopt a multilevel perspective in which it is assumed that the formation of public beliefs toward welfare state policies is simultaneously an individual- and country-level phenomenon. Public beliefs are measured at the individual level, and they are expected to vary not only between individuals, but also between nations. Furthermore, national variation in beliefs is assumed to reflect national differences in both individual- and national-level characteristics. The effect of a 'welfare regime' can be assessed by operationally defining regimes in terms of regime clusters of countries, but this approach is problematic in that the differences observed capture not only effects of institutional structures, but also of other unmeasured national characteristics. Real welfare states are only approximations of theoretical ideal types. To overcome such problems, Blekesaune and Quadagno (2003) and Meier Jaeger (2005) successfully use nation-level structural and cultural characteristics to approximate individual countries' degree of membership of the different regime types, instead of classifying countries according to a regime typology.

A methodological problem which occurs when testing the hypotheses discussed above is that the relevant national characteristics are often very highly correlated (Oorschot and Arts, 2005), which hampers ascertaining their independent effect. Therefore, in our analyses we investigate only two hypotheses, namely the diminishing marginal utility hypothesis – on the basis of the effect of welfare expenditure – and the welfare regime or institutional structure hypothesis.

### **Individual Characteristics and Scope-of-government Beliefs**

In cross-national studies with a multilevel design, accounting for individual characteristics can be particularly important. First, apart from differences between countries regarding beliefs toward welfare state policies, individual beliefs need to be predicted by individual-level characteristics. Second, by including individual-level characteristics, one controls for compositional effects (Snijders and Bosker, 1999). If individual characteristics explain an

individual's beliefs and if these individual characteristics are unequally distributed across regions and countries then they also explain, to some extent, the differences in beliefs across regions and countries (Hox, 2002). Only if such compositional differences have been accounted for, can one more safely conclude that contextual effects are real.

Effects of individual background characteristics are usually interpreted in terms of either a utilitarian perspective or an ideological perspective (Oorschot, 2002). The first type of explanation emphasizes self-interest as the prime motivating factor in supporting welfare policies. In particular, the self-interest or utilitarian hypothesis says that there is a direct relationship between one's position in the social structure and one's beliefs (d'Anjou et al., 1995; Durant and Legge, 2001). In the stratification structure, the wealthier are less prone to argue for the necessity of government intervention. However, frameworks of interpretation and ideological commitments are related to raw self-interest: on the one hand, one's socio-structural position – which roughly reflects self-interest – affects one's ideological beliefs, but on the other hand, reporting self-interest beliefs could also be the outcome of one's ideological position. Thus, both self-interest and ideology play a role (Oorschot, 2006). The ideology or value-orientation hypothesis (d'Anjou et al., 1995; Durant and Legge, 2001) refines the self-interest thesis. It holds that the relationship between people's position in the stratification structure and their scope-of-government beliefs is explained by their ideological position.

Most research has focused on the direct impact of various indicators of self-interest and ideology on scope-of-government beliefs. Below, the main determinants identified in these studies are briefly discussed.

First of all, the importance of class is emphasized. According to Svallfors (1997), resources – i.e. money or qualifications and credentials – as well as the risks of unemployment, sickness or poverty – are systematically connected to positions in the labour market. Therefore, they constitute links between positions in the class structure and welfare policies. Managerial and professional workers are better able to protect themselves against the vagaries of the market, due to the nature of their work or contractual relationships with private or government organizations (Kluegel and Miyano, 1995). Furthermore, self-employment encourages greater opposition to government intervention (de Swaan, 1988; Wilensky, 1975), whereas unskilled workers – exposed to higher risk levels in life because of their precarious position in the labour market – are more supportive of government intervention.

Furthermore, income clearly defines who pays for or who benefits from social security provisions. People with higher incomes are better able to provide for themselves and consequently are less dependent on the state.

Education also functions in this way. The higher educated – because of their higher average income – expect to benefit less from welfare policies than lesser-schooled persons, and they are also more self-sustaining due to their higher incomes. However, Hasenfeld and Rafferty (1989) formulated a competing hypothesis which states that socialization to democratic values – as measured by years of formal education – evokes greater commitment to social equality and social rights. This ideological component of education, in turn, leads to more support for the welfare state, independent of income.

It is also often argued that certain groups seeking government assistance have a potential collective interest in ensuring that the level of social transfers is not eroded. Therefore, their beliefs significantly differ from those who work. These groups of non-gainfully employed individuals – generally labelled as ‘transfer classes’ (Alber, 1984) – include old-age pensioners, the disabled, unemployed persons and those with low incomes due to dependence on welfare provisions. We note that research shows that a substantial movement of people entering and leaving these groups characterizes the latter two groups. Differences in welfare state beliefs between gainfully employed persons and members of these groups may therefore not be very pronounced (Oorschot, 2000).

Men and women also differ in their degree of dependence on welfare state programmes. This difference is usually expected on the basis of two differing theoretical perspectives (Gutiérrez, 2003). According to the structuralist approach, women are more supportive of welfare state policies because, on average, men’s position in the socio-economic structure tends to be more privileged than women’s. The socialization perspective predicts a stronger endorsement of welfare state policies by women because ‘caring’ is a much more strongly instilled norm in women than in men. This difference in gender norms related to the ‘caring role’ could also be translated into support for the ‘institutionalized care’ as provided by the welfare state (Gutiérrez, 2003; Svallfors, 1997).

Furthermore, age may affect the likelihood of being dependent on welfare-state programmes. Kluegel and Miyano (1995) argue that younger workers run greater risk of unemployment due to lack of seniority. They also lack accumulated savings or other resources that soften the impact of market fluctuations. Retirees are out of the market and many of them are dependent on welfare services. Other older workers may anticipate being outside the labour market soon.

In accordance with the ideology thesis, socio-political beliefs are also stressed in many studies. Generally, a more right-wing or conservative political orientation – either in terms of market justice or economic individualism – or a right-wing party identification, is expected to lead to

weaker endorsement of welfare state efforts. Typically, the new-right views the welfare state as an uneconomic, unproductive, inefficient, ineffective and despotic institutional arrangement that denies freedom (Pierson, 1997: 48). Left-wing political views imply a trust in the welfare state to reduce social inequality and foster social integration. Other ideological characteristics that are often included in analyses predicting welfare state support are post-materialism (Inglehart, 1977), and social justice beliefs (Andress and Heien, 2001; Lewin-Epstein et al., 2003; Lippl, 2003).

The determinants of welfare state beliefs that have been discussed above do not include variables indicating how immediate a person's financial problems are concerning the provision of the basic necessities of life. From the perspective of simple self-interest, we expect that as people report more financial problems concerning the basic necessities of life, they take a more positive stance towards an active role of government in providing such necessities. We furthermore expect that those who evaluate their immediate living area as lacking good social qualities are also more supportive of government intervention. On the other hand, we expect that those individuals who are generally satisfied with their living conditions are less favourable towards government intervention, because for these individuals there is presumably less need to improve their immediate conditions.

Finally, because in this contribution we are particularly interested in how characteristics of one's everyday surroundings relate to beliefs about welfare policies, we add as a control variable, the type of place of residence. People in rural areas or villages often differ from those in towns in their socio-economic conditions, and this could result in differing scope-of-government beliefs in the two groups.

## DATA, MEASUREMENTS, AND METHOD

### **Data**

To test our hypotheses we used data from the Eurobarometer 56.1 (Commission of the European Union, 2001), conducted in 15 European countries between 17 September and 26 October 2001. This wave of the Eurobarometer survey series – with a standard sample size per country of  $N = 1000$  – included several batteries of questions to measure beliefs relating to the role of government as well as the respondents' social background. More information about the technical details of the Eurobarometer survey series is available at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/epo/>. These data enabled us to use the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS). The goal of the hierarchical three-level NUTS classification is to

provide a single uniform breakdown of territorial units for the production of regional statistics for the European Union. We used a regional variable which was included in the data and which was defined at the NUTS II level. The EU-15 at the moment distinguishes a total of 214 NUTS II regions. On the basis of the '30–30 rule' suggested by Kreft (1996), who recommends using at least 30 level-2 units with at least 30 individuals within each unit for multilevel analysis, we selected 140 regions for analysis.

## **Measurements**

### **Dependent variable**

In this study we seek to explain variation in the dependent variable 'support for government intervention'. This variable was measured with five items; a full definition of the dependent variable appears in Appendix 12A.

### **Independent individual level variables**

We included several measures of social location: duration of educational attainment, household income, employment status, political self-assessment, self-reported size of locality of the respondent's place of residence, age, and gender. Also included were measurements of people's self-reported satisfaction with living conditions, self-reported financial problems, and their perception of the social quality of the area where they live. A full definition of these individual-level independent variables is also reported in Appendix 12A.

### **Independent contextual-level variables**

At the regional level, we included two characteristics which are aggregated from individual-level variables: the average politically left/right-wing self-placement per region, and the average duration of education per region. Furthermore, we included the percentage of long-term unemployment (12 months and more) at NUTS level 2, as well as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), market prices at NUTS level 2. Both measures are calculated as averages over the years 1999 to 2001. These data come from Eurostat (2005). Finally, at the country level we include the average total social protection expenditure as a percentage of GDP (1999–2001) as a measure of national welfare effort (from: European Commission, 2005).

## **Method**

A three-level design, with levels pertaining to individuals, regions, and nations, was applied using the HLM 6 software (Bryk et al., 2004). This technique was specifically developed to examine which part of the variance

in a dependent variable is attributable to individual as opposed to group-level characteristics. Such three-level multilevel models can easily become very complicated, because all parameters in principle could vary across units of the second (regional) and third (national) level. To make the problem manageable, we restrict our analyses to a model in which only the intercepts are allowed to vary randomly, but not the slopes. This is the so-called random intercept model (Luke, 2004).

Note that all reported regression coefficients are unstandardized coefficients. These are thus not mutually comparable. For all models, we report the estimated variance components for each level of analysis. We also report the model deviance, which indicates how well the model fits the data, and the estimated number of parameters. Because we use the Full Maximum Likelihood estimation method, we can use the deviances to formally test whether a more general model fits significantly better than a simpler model when models are nested. The difference between deviances approximates a chi-square distribution with as degrees of freedom, the difference in the number of parameters of both models (Hox, 2002: 51).

## RESULTS

In Table 12.1 we present the unstandardized regression parameters from successive models predicting individuals' supportiveness for government intervention.

We see from the baseline Model 1 that most of the variance in beliefs about government intervention is at the individual level. Inspection of the variance components and related intra-class correlations indicates that about 6 per cent of the total variance is between regions and about 10 per cent of the total variance is between countries. A  $\chi^2$  tests for the hypotheses that all regions or countries have the same mean level of support was rejected (for the country-level:  $\chi^2 = 198.6$ ,  $df = 14$ ; for the regional level:  $\chi^2 = 200.6$ ,  $df = 125$ ). Note that the estimated overall level of support is high, namely 4.09.

When holding differences in individual background characteristics (Model 2) constant, we see that not only the individual-level variance drops (a reduction of 5 per cent), but also that the variance components of the regional and national level are reduced (reductions of 10, or otherwise 9 per cent), which is evidence for compositional effects. Holding these compositional effects constant also leads to a better fit of the models, the global chi-square test of model improvement (Model 1–Model 2) being highly significant ( $\chi^2 = 689.3$ ,  $df = 18$ ). The findings from this model indicate that women are more supportive of government intervention than men.

Table 12.1 Three-level random intercept regression of support for government intervention on individual and contextual variables (unstandardized regression coefficients)

Independent variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Individual level</b>				
Gender (ref.=men)		.044***	.044***	.044***
<i>Age-group (ref.=15–25 years)</i>				
26–44 years		.038**	.038*	.039**
45–64 years		.026	.026	.026
65 years or older		–.057***	–.057***	–.057***
<i>Size of locality (ref.=rural area or village)</i>				
Small town		–.000	–.001	–.001
Large town		–.012	–.010	–.012
<i>Income (ref.=lowest quartile)</i>				
2nd quartile		–.062***	–.061***	–.061***
3rd quartile		–.122***	–.120***	–.121***
4th quartile		–.162***	–.161***	–.162***
Income not reported		–.107***	–.106***	–.106***
Politically left/right-wing self-placement		–.045***	–.044***	–.044***
Politically left/right-wing self-placement missing		.005	.005	.005
Educational attainment		–.161***	–.163***	–.163***
<i>Employment status (ref.=not gainfully employed)</i>				
Self-employed		–.180***	–.180***	–.180***
Employed		–.115***	–.114***	–.114***
Satisfaction		.046***	.048***	.049***
Problems		.122***	.123***	.123***
Area perception		.024***	.022***	.022***
<b>Regional level</b>				
Average politically left/right-wing self-placement			–.119***	–.121***
Average level of education			.535***	.569***
Long term unemployment			.005***	.005***
Regional GDP			–.012***	–.011***
<b>National level</b>				
Total social protection expenditure			–.037***	–

Table 12.1 (continued)

Independent variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Welfare regime type (ref. = liberal)</i>				
Social-democratic				-.342*
Conservative				-.230
Southern				-.086
Intercept	4.090***	4.211***	5.189***	4.444***
Variance component level-1	.446	.423	.423	.423
Variance component level-2	.030	.027	.018	.018
Variance component level-3	.054	.049	.029	.035
Deviance	26753.3	26064.0	26016.9	26020.4
Df	4	22	27	29

Note: \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*  $p < .10$  (two-tailed test).

Own calculations on the basis of Eurobarometer data.

Concerning age differences, we see that those aged 26–44 years are more supportive of government intervention than those aged 15–25 years. In contrast, those belonging to the oldest age-group are less supportive than the youngest age group. As one's income increases, one is less supportive of government intervention; this also holds for those individuals who did not report their income. Finally, people who consider themselves as right-wing politically oriented, people with higher levels of educational attainment, and (self-) employed people are less supportive of government intervention. This is all in line with prior expectations.

Turning to the analysis of the effects of people's level of satisfaction and needs, we find a positive effect of the level of satisfaction: the more satisfied with general living conditions, the more one is supportive of government intervention. This is contrary to expectation. However, more economic problems and a more negative perception of the social quality of the immediate living area are, as expected, positively related to supportiveness for government intervention.

Model 3 shows the effects of regional and national characteristics on supportiveness for government intervention, holding compositional differences constant.<sup>1</sup> The results indicate that all these characteristics are directly related to support for government intervention. In particular, we see that a more right-wing political climate in a region is, as expected, negatively related to support, whereas a higher average educational attainment makes for more supportiveness. Moreover, as the long-term unemployment rate in a region is higher, individuals are more prone to demand government inter-

vention. On the other hand, and in line with the diminishing marginal utility argument, those people who live in wealthy regions appear to be less supportive of government intervention. Evidence in favour of the diminishing marginal utility argument is also found at the national level: as spending on social protection increases, people are less willing to endorse government intervention. The importance of these regional and national characteristics for explaining beliefs about government intervention is also reflected in the substantial reduction of the variance components when they are compared for Model 2 and Model 3: Model 2 variance at the regional level is reduced by about 33 per cent, whereas at the national level, by 59 per cent. Holding regional and national characteristics constant also significantly improves the fit of Model 2 (chi-square test of model improvement Model 2 – Model 3 is highly significant:  $\chi^2 = 47.1$ ;  $df = 5$ ).

In the final Model 4, we evaluate the predictive power of the regime typology for beliefs about government intervention, as compared to the linear effect of social protection expenditure in Model 3. We find only very little evidence in favour of the regime hypothesis: adding welfare regimes does reduce the national-level variance in beliefs about government intervention (a reduction of about 29 per cent in comparison to Model 2), but then again those differences found are contrary to our expectations: individuals who live in social-democratic welfare regimes actually endorse somewhat less strongly government intervention, compared to individuals living in liberal welfare regimes. This finding is also positive evidence for the diminishing marginal utility hypothesis. The remaining effects of regime-type are not significant.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this contribution, we address the following two research questions: (1) Which socio-structural and ideological characteristics of individuals explain their scope-of-government beliefs? and (2) Which regional and national contextual characteristics are contributory in explaining such beliefs? Provisional answers to these questions were given as hypotheses about the effects of national, regional, and compositional differences on popular endorsement of government intervention, which were tested through the examination of large-scale survey data from 15 European countries, including 140 regions.

Concerning the first research question, we found positive evidence for the ideology hypothesis and even more so for the self-interest hypothesis. In particular, people's politically left/right-wing self-placement, as an indicator of one's ideological stance, was found to be directly and positively related to popular scope-of-government beliefs. The finding corroborates Taylor-Gooby's (1985) contention that people's political convictions are an

important predictor of their beliefs about welfare-state policies. In addition, most background variables usually associated with self-interest were found to be directly related to welfare-state beliefs: overall, those individuals with higher incomes and prolonged educational attainment, and (self-)employed individuals were found to be less in favour of government intervention. On the other hand, women were found to be more in favour of government intervention than men, but it is not immediately clear whether this is due to motives of self-interest, because we held one's socio-economic position constant. Consequently, the effect could also be interpreted as the outcome of women being more compassionate about the socio-economic conditions of their fellow citizens than men. Interesting differences were also found between the youngest and oldest age groups in our sample: those individuals belonging to the oldest age group were significantly less in favour of government intervention.

Three variables more directly measured people's socio-economic needs and levels of satisfaction with their living conditions. Individuals who reported relatively large economic problems and a negative perception of their neighbourhood were more favourable towards government intervention. Individuals who are satisfied with their socio-economic circumstances were – somewhat surprisingly – more in favour of government intervention. An explanation for this latter association is not immediately clear. It could be that individuals who are more content with their socio-economic conditions feel that state intervention is a way to prevent social evils, which might infringe on their own current socio-economic position.

An innovative aspect of our study was that we also used structural and cultural characteristics of regions to predict beliefs related to welfare-state policies. Here, most of our hypotheses were corroborated. In accordance with the diminishing marginal utility hypothesis, regional wealth was negatively related to welfare-state beliefs. Long-term unemployment was positively related to support for government intervention. The political climate in a region – which was operationally defined as the average politically left/right-wing self placement in a region – was negatively related to people's welfare state beliefs, holding their own political stance constant. Because we included the contextual effect of political climate in the composition of the left/right-wing self-assessment, it can be considered a true contextual effect. The same holds for our finding of a positive direct relationship between average educational attainment in a region and welfare state beliefs: individuals who live in regions with high educational attainment are, on average, more supportive of government intervention, regardless of their own educational attainment. Note that the individual-level effect of educational attainment was negative, in contrast to the contextual effect of educational attainment. The latter might be interpreted as either

the outcome of the experienced quality of government intervention (i.e. provision of educational facilities) in a region, or the fact that positive beliefs about equality and social rights are more widespread in highly educated regions, or both simultaneously.

Finally, we tested the diminishing marginal utility hypothesis and the welfare regime hypothesis at the national level. The results indicated positive evidence for the diminishing marginal utility hypothesis, but negative evidence was found for the welfare regime hypothesis. Higher levels of welfare expenditure were negatively related to popular endorsement of government intervention, holding differences at the individual and regional level constant. This corroborates earlier findings by Gelissen (2002). To the extent that differences between individuals from different welfare regimes were found, these were relatively weak and actually also in support of the diminishing marginal utility hypothesis: individuals from countries belonging to the social democratic regime type were less in favour of government intervention than individuals from liberal regimes.

Before we reach our final conclusions, we must also note some limitations of the current research. One limitation relates to the issue of what constitutes a 'region'. By necessity, we used a well-known classification of statistical regions, which makes it relatively easy to match attitudinal data to meso- and macro-level statistical indicators such as welfare expenditure and regional GDP. However, such a classification does not necessarily cover systematic differences between regions concerning such aspects as ethnicity, historical experiences, and language, or in other words 'regional culture' (Barrington, 2002). To the extent that such factors play a role in the definition and understanding welfare state beliefs, they are important to incorporate into future research. Moreover, we note that due to the design of this study, small regions were of necessity excluded from the analysis. This may have led to an underestimation of the variation in welfare-state beliefs that exists between regions. Furthermore, we note that the construction of derived indicators for regional characteristics, such as political climate, is somewhat problematic, because what being 'on the left' ('right') means may depend on the region where one lives. Finally, because we used secondary data, we were limited with respect to holding the effects of relevant values and ideological variables constant, such as post-materialism and social justice beliefs.

Summarizing, our results indicate that substantial effects of regional characteristics on people's scope-of-government beliefs exist, even after compositional and national characteristics are taken into account. A promising line of enquiry concerning beliefs related to welfare-state policies could be pursued in the systematic study of the more immediate structural and cultural contextual conditions surrounding individuals, keeping the impact of their own socio-economic and demographic characteristics constant.

Contextual characteristics which might be theoretically meaningful in relation to such beliefs could be found at the level of neighbourhoods, places of residence or regions. Such an approach would also allow the examination of hypotheses predicting how the effects of individual-level background characteristics depend on contextual characteristics (i.e. cross-level interactions). Finally, this study found no evidence for the welfare-state regime hypothesis that types of welfare regimes systematically relate to popular beliefs about government intervention. If we take stock of the accumulated evidence from past research, the conclusion for the moment must be that the tenability of the ideal-typical welfare-state regime hypothesis – at least for the study of popular welfare-state beliefs – must be questioned.

## NOTE

1. Readers might be concerned that collinearity between the regional-level variables in this and the following models might affect the precision of estimation of parameters. However, the highest correlation was .381 between regional wealth and average duration of educational attainment. Hence, we conclude that collinearity does not seriously affect the precision of estimation of parameters in our analyses.

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## APPENDIX 12.A OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL RESEARCH VARIABLES

Variable	Operational definition	Range of values	Cronbach's alpha
Support for government intervention (index based on mean score of item-ratings)	<p>The government should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all children have a decent standard of living</li> <li>• Provide everyone with a guaranteed basic income</li> <li>• Provide decent housing for all who cannot afford it</li> <li>• Provide a job for everyone who wants one</li> <li>• Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed</li> </ul>	<p>1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree</p>	<p>Average per country = .75 (sd. = .04)</p>
Educational attainment	<p>How old were you when you stopped full-time education? Respondents who were still in education and younger than 28 years were given their current age as the year in which they finished their education</p>	<p>9 ordered categories ranging from 0='6 through 14 years of education' to 1 '22 or more years of education'</p>	
Income	<p>We also need information about the total income of this household per month. Please give the letter of the income group your household falls into before tax and other deductions</p>	<p>1 = Lowest income quartile 4 = Highest income quartile 5 = did not report household income</p>	
Political orientation	<p>In political matters, people talk of the 'left' and the 'right'. How would you place your views on this scale?</p>	<p>1 = Left 10 = Right</p>	

## APPENDIX 12.A (continued)

Variable	Operational definition	Range of values	Cronbach's alpha
	For those individuals whose left-right self placement was missing, we imputed the average left-right self-placement per country and identified these individuals by a dummy variable		
Gender	The sex of the interviewee	0 = Male 1 = Female	
Age	How old are you?	1 = 15–25 years 2 = 26–44 years 3 = 45–64 years 4 = 65 years or older	
Self-reported financial problems (index bases on mean score of item-ratings)	In the last 12 months, have you, or any member of your household, had problems in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying the rent or mortgage</li> <li>• Paying the water, gas, electricity or heating bills</li> <li>• Paying for food</li> <li>• Repaying loans</li> </ul>	1 = No problem 4 = Enormous problems	Average per country = .84 (sd. = .06)
Satisfaction with living conditions (index based on mean score of item-ratings)	I am going to ask you to talk to me about different aspects of your daily life. For each of these aspects, could you tell me if you think this aspect of your life is very good, etc.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Area where respondent lives</li> <li>• Income</li> </ul>	1 = Very bad 4 = Very good	Average per country = .82 (sd. = .04)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard of living</li> <li>• Travel facilities</li> <li>• State of health</li> <li>• Time available for chores</li> <li>• Medical services</li> <li>• Social entitlements</li> <li>• Consideration shown by other individuals</li> <li>• Shopping facilities</li> <li>• Job opportunities</li> <li>• Level of noise</li> </ul>	<p>Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area in which I live has buildings in a bad state of repair</li> <li>• There is a lot of unemployment in my area</li> <li>• There are problems of drug abuse in my area</li> <li>• There are problems of vandalism and theft in my area</li> <li>• There is a lot of violence in my area</li> <li>• The area in which I live has not a good reputation</li> </ul>	<p>1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree</p>	<p>Average per country = .84 (sd. = .04)</p>
Perception of the social quality of living area	Would you say you live in . . .	1 = Rural area or village 2 = Small or middle size town 3 = Large town	
Size of locality	What is your current occupation?	1 = Employed 2 = Self-employed 3 = Not working	
Employment status			

# 13. Popular deservingness perceptions and conditionality of solidarity in Europe

**Wim van Oorschot**

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## INTRODUCTION

In all welfare states social protection is unequally divided, that is, it is more easily accessible, more generous, longer lasting, and/or less subjected to reciprocal obligations for some groups than for other groups. For instance, elderly people and disabled people can usually rely more strongly on less stigmatizing benefits than unemployed people; widows are usually better protected by national benefit schemes than divorced women; core workers can mostly rely on more generous and comprehensive social insurance schemes than peripheral workers, etc. Such differential treatment may reflect various considerations of policy-makers. These may be economic (less protection for less productive groups (Holliday, 2000)), political (better protection for groups with stronger lobbies (Baldwin, 1990)), or cultural (better protection for 'our kind of' people, or for 'well-behaving' people (Deacon, 2002)). Obviously, policy-makers who ration welfare rights and obligations act in an economic, political, and cultural context. By now, a large academic literature exists on the economic and political factors affecting welfare policy-making (Barr, 1992; Pierson, 2001), but the analysis of cultural influences has only recently been given more attention.

Here we aim at contributing to an understanding of the popular cultural context of welfare rationing by examining European public perceptions of the relative deservingness of needy groups and variations in conditionality among Europeans.

We examined public deservingness perceptions by analysing the degree to which the citizens of European welfare states show different solidaristic attitudes towards four different groups of needy people: elderly people, sick and disabled people, unemployed people, and immigrants. Using data from the 1999/2000 European Values Study survey, we set out to answer our first question: what the public's deservingness rank ordering of the four groups

is. In other words, to what degree does the public feel an informal solidarity with each of these groups, and what is each group's relative position on the solidarity scale? Our second question concerned how fundamental the rank ordering is. Does it differ (much) between European countries, or between various social categories of their populations, or not? In addition to the rank order itself, we also analysed to what degree people actually differentiate between the four groups. The solidarity of those who apparently attach greater importance to constituting such a difference is more conditional than that of others who show more equal solidarity with all four groups, and who are more relaxed about deservingness differences. Finally, how can individual differences in conditionality be explained? Are people's structural position, or their cultural values and attitudes, of importance here?<sup>1</sup>

Before analysing these questions, we reviewed the literature on how and why the public at large constitutes differences, and we formulated some hypotheses.

## MAKING THE DIFFERENCE: HOW AND WHY?

That the public at large differentiates between (support for) various groups of needy people is well documented. In particular, differential public support for schemes directed at different target groups has been examined. Coughlin (1980) was the first to carry out an international review of public opinion studies on this issue, and found remarkable stability over time, and similarity across countries. All over modern Western welfare states, in various decades, the public was found to be most in favour of social protection for old people, closely followed by protection for the sick and disabled, while the public supports schemes for needy families with children less, and schemes for unemployed people even less again, and support is least for social assistance schemes. The findings of more recent studies corroborate this 'universal dimension of support', whether they regard cross-sectional data from different European countries (Pettersen, 1995; Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003) or (time-series) data from single countries, for instance, the UK (Hills, 2002), Finland and Denmark (Forma, 1997; Larsen, 2002), the Netherlands (Oorschot, 1998), Belgium (Debusscher and Elchardus, 2003), and the Czech Republic (Rabusic and Sirovatka, 1999). In some recent studies, support for social protection of immigrants was also analysed, and found to be at the bottom end of the support dimension (Oorschot, 1998; Appelbaum, 2002). Apparently, the support dimension found by Coughlin is a truly universal element in the popular welfare culture of present Western welfare states. This culture may

have a longer history, because the support dimension coincides strongly with the chronological order in which different types of schemes were introduced in these welfare states from the end of the nineteenth century onwards: first the schemes for those considered to be the most deserving categories of old, sick, and disabled people, then family benefits and unemployment compensation, and lastly (if at all) social assistance for those considered to be the least deserving (Kangas, 2000).

In order to explain differences in support, some point to institutional factors and others to cultural factors, such as public images of target groups and popular deservingness perceptions.

The institutional character of schemes seems to play a role, since it has consistently been found that universal schemes have greater support than selective schemes (which is true even for the category of highly supported pension schemes (Forma and Kangas, 1997)). Also, contributory insurance schemes usually have greater support than tax-financed schemes (Coleman, 1982). This may be explained by people's perceived self-interest, because more people benefit from universal than from selective schemes (Skocpol, 1991; Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003), and paying contributions is associated more strongly with building up a personal entitlement to benefits than paying general taxes. In addition to self-interest, trust may play a role, because the public usually has less trust in the fair operation of selective, means-tested schemes than in that of universal and contributory schemes. Selective schemes tend to give more opportunity for abuse (Overbye, 1999), and their administrative practice may be seen as less impartial (Rothstein, 2001). Furthermore, support for a scheme may depend upon people's perceptions of the fiscal burden of the scheme, which is related to perceptions of the scheme's generosity and its numbers of claimants (Hills, 2002).

As for target groups, especially in the USA, various studies have provided evidence that normative images of categories of poor people play an important role in the support for welfare and social security schemes. The public is less supportive of programmes targeted at groups with a negative public image. There is very low support for the highly selective American 'welfare' scheme (now TANF), because people perceive that it is mainly used by teen and single mothers ('welfare queens'), who are morally looked down upon, and by those people who are assumed to be lazy, unreliable, and/or addicted to drugs and alcohol (Gordon, 2001; Rein, 2001). Programmes targeted at groups without a negative image, like widows, elderly people, and the physically disabled, are supported well by the American public (Katz, 1989; Huddy et al., 2001). Gilens (1999) convincingly shows that there is a strong racial element in 'why Americans hate welfare': Americans tend to think that blacks are lazier and less responsible than whites, and that for that

reason welfare is taken up mostly by black people. Racial stereotyping is a central element in the difference between North American and European public images of social policy target groups (Alesina and Glaeser, 2004). Instead of images of the (black) poor, European studies have concentrated more on public images of unemployed people. (Which may reflect the different outcomes of the American and the European social model: the first generates more poverty, the second more unemployment). What has consistently been found is that images tend to be negative. There is widespread doubt about unemployed people's willingness to work and about proper use of benefits (Golding and Middleton, 1982; Halvorsen, 2002), even in a universalistic welfare state such as Sweden (Furaker and Blomsterberg, 2002). When people were asked to compare unemployed people to disabled people (Maassen and de Goede, 1989), or to employed people (Ester and Dekker, 1986), it was found that the unemployed are more often seen as having less character, less self-responsibility, and less perseverance, and as being less trustworthy. Support for unemployment benefits is usually lower among those who have more negative images of unemployed people.

Why images of target groups are related to programme support can often be understood by recognizing that they are linked to more basic criteria that people use to assess a person's or a group's deservingness. People tend to be more supportive of schemes, which are targeted at groups they perceive as more deserving. Based on the findings of several studies on the issue, van Oorschot (2000) concluded that there are five central deservingness criteria. The first criterion is 'control over neediness', that is, people who are seen as being personally responsible for their neediness are seen as less deserving (if at all). The second criterion is 'level of need', that is, people with greater need are seen as more deserving. Third is 'identity': needy people who are closer to 'us' are seen as more deserving. The fourth criterion is 'attitude': needy people who are likeable, grateful, compliant, and conforming to our standards are more deserving. Finally, there is the criterion of 'reciprocity': needy people who have contributed to our group before (who have 'earned' our support), or who may be expected to be able to contribute in future, are more deserving. Of these criteria, control seems to be the most important, closely followed by identity. De Swaan (1988) regards 'disability', or lack of control, even as a necessary condition for deservingness, implying that once the public feels that a person can be blamed fully for his or her neediness, other criteria become irrelevant. In all empirical deservingness studies on the topic, perceived personal responsibility or control stands out as the most important determinant of people's attitudes towards poor or otherwise needy people. The criterion of identity seems to play an important role, too, especially where neediness is related

to ethnic or national minorities. There is a strong racial element in American welfare support, as mentioned earlier. In Europe, Appelbaum (2002) found that the degree to which the German public perceived various groups of minorities to be deserving of social benefits depended almost exclusively on how 'German' the groups were seen to be, and a Dutch study showed that migrants were seen as the least deserving group among 29 different groups of needy people (Oorschot, 2000).

In many cases in which the public constitutes a difference between support for needy groups, it is difficult to determine which of the three main factors discussed is decisive. There may be more explanatory variables (like aspects of scheme coverage, generosity, claimant numbers, institutional character, target group images, perceptions of deservingness and/or of procedural justice) than schemes to be compared (Gilens, 1996), and factors are sometimes interrelated. Nevertheless, in our view, deservingness perceptions are often crucial. They usually form the basis of negative images of target groups: as we have seen, the reluctance of Americans to support welfare is based on their view that welfare is mostly used by black people, who are regarded as lazier than whites, and can, therefore, be blamed for their neediness. In Europe, the relatively negative image of unemployed people is also connected to doubts about whether they can be blamed for being unemployed. Deservingness criteria may explain differentiation in people's attitudes towards certain segments in a category of needy people. For instance, older unemployed people and disabled unemployed people are usually seen as more deserving than unemployed people as a group, because they are considered less responsible personally for their neediness, and these are social risks we can all be confronted with (Oorschot, 1998; Saunders, 2002). In addition, changes in target group images and related scheme support may be explained by deservingness criteria: for instance, in times of high unemployment the public perceives unemployed people as more deserving of benefits, and supports unemployment benefit more because then unemployed people are seen as having less personal responsibility for their situation, and more 'people like us' will be unemployed (Gallie and Paugam, 2002). As Rein (2001) shows, twentieth-century American welfare policies for single mothers became worse owing to changing normative perceptions of lone mothering: from the deserving widow to the undeserving single parent or 'welfare queen'.

Regarding our first research question, we expected that the overall rank order of solidarity with the four groups analysed here would be, in declining order, elderly people, sick and disabled people, unemployed people, and immigrants. Given its universal character, we also expected that the rank order would not differ much, if at all, between European countries.

A question was whether there would be country differences in ‘distances’ between the four groups, which might reflect differences in the degree to which specific groups are seen as more strongly, or as more weakly, deserving in a particular country. Our comparative survey was the first to look into this issue. We did not expect great differences in the positions of the ‘elderly’ and ‘the sick and disabled’. We expected these groups to be relatively close to each other in the rank ordering in all countries, because we felt that both are seen as strongly deserving on the basis of the criteria of control (not personally responsible) and identity (can happen to us all). We also expected that the rank order would not differ much between various social categories. This was found to be the case in the UK (Taylor-Gooby, 1985), and might be the case in other European countries as well, given the universal character of the rank ordering.

## MAKING THE DIFFERENCE: TO WHAT DEGREE?

That the public differentiates between social policy schemes and target groups, and the grounds on which this is done, is well documented. This is not the case, however, for the degree to which people constitute a difference. Apart from the findings of a study conducted on Dutch opinion data (Oorschot, 2000), little is known about whether some people’s solidarity is more conditional upon the characteristics of needy groups than other’s. That is, it is not clear whether some people differentiate more strictly than others between the deservingness and un-deservingness of groups. We addressed this issue of conditionality in detail and analysed how differences in conditionality are related to characteristics of people and of the country they live in.

In van Oorschot’s Dutch study, it was found that more conditional people tend to be older, to be less well educated, to have a lower socio-economic position, and to be politically more rightist. In addition, they are persons with a stronger anti-welfare sentiment, that is, they more strongly believe that benefits are too high and widely misused, and that social security makes people lazier and less caring. Clearly, as is so often found in welfare opinion research, opinions appear to depend upon a mixture of interest-related factors and factors concerning values, beliefs, and ideology. The Dutch findings regarding age, educational level, and socio-economic position were interpreted as interest-related. That is, older people, people with a lower level of education, and people with a lower socio-economic position can be regarded as being in a more risky social position generally, which might induce them to prefer stricter conditionality in the rationing of welfare in order to prevent the social protection they might need in

future from being available to people who do not really need it. The fact that rightist people tend to be more conditional may be related to the more meritocratic and less egalitarian character of right-wing ideology. That conditionality is related to anti-welfare sentiment does not come as a surprise. Many studies have shown that explaining poverty in individualistic terms, and holding needy people personally responsible for their need, is associated with a reluctance to support welfare (Kluegel et al., 1995; Oorschot and Halman, 2000).

We tested these relations to see whether they also hold for other European countries. Regarding age, educational level, views of welfare, and political preference, our hypotheses were in line with the Dutch findings. Our data contained less extended measures of welfare sentiment than did the Dutch study, but there were some items regarding personal responsibility for social protection, welfare rights and duties of unemployed people, and the alleged effects of welfare on work ethic that tapped people's beliefs in this respect. Our data also allowed inclusion of some extra explanatory variables, which may aid understanding of differences in conditionality. First were people's attitudes towards immigrants. We expected that the more negative this attitude, the more people would want immigrants to be treated less generously than other groups of needy people, and the more conditional they would be on our measure. Second, we explored the effect of trust. Our data allowed us to measure three types of trust: people's trust in other people, people's trust in (welfare) state institutions, and people's trust in democracy as an overriding political system. Our hypothesis was that people with less trust would be more conditional, because they would regard a strict and selective welfare system as a means to control and regulate untrustworthy people (who would otherwise misuse welfare), as well as untrustworthy politicians and state (which would otherwise respond too generously to lobby and voters' pressure). Third, religion was included. The effects of being religious or not, of denomination, and of church attendance on views of welfare and solidarity were considered. It has often been found that religious, Christian people show more solidarity with needy people than non-religious persons (because of the Christian dogma about 'loving thy neighbour') (Hoge and Yang, 1994; Bekkers, 2003), that Protestants are more solidaristic than Catholics (Regnerus et al., 1998; Bekkers, 2003), and that, within the group of religious people, frequent churchgoers are more solidaristic than people who attend church less frequently, because they are more subjected to peer group pressure (Arts et al., 2003; Bekkers, 2003). Our data allowed us to include these variables and to see what their relative effects are. Our hypothesis was that religious people and frequent churchgoers would be less conditional. We explored differences between Catholics, Protestants, and people with other religions.

Fourth, we included meritocracy as a possible determinant of people's conditionality. We expected that people who are more strongly in favour of a society that rewards those with the highest merits most would be more conditional.

An effect of gender on conditionality was not found in the Dutch study, but we included the variable here. Neither were effects found of people's work status (employed, on benefit, pensioner, other) and people's income level on their conditionality. This corroborated other findings in welfare opinion studies and was seen as fitting the idea of a fading away of class boundaries, as well as the idea that the dynamics of employment and unemployment might mean that there is no large attitudinal difference to be expected between unemployed and employed people. Over time, there is a substantial movement of people entering and leaving these groups (Leisering and Walker, 1998). We included income and work status in our analysis, and examined whether they also lack an effect in a wider European context. Regarding values and attitudes, effects of work ethic and of equality ethic were not found in the Dutch study. Apparently, Dutch people's conditionality regarding the support of needy people does not depend on their work ethic, nor on whether or how much they favour social equality. However, these findings could be particular to the Dutch, who are a European people with a high work ethic and strong egalitarian attitudes. We included both types of ethic in our analysis to determine whether this interpretation of Dutch exceptionalism would hold.

## DATA AND METHODS

### **Data**

Our data source was the 1999/2000 round of the European Values Study (EVS) survey, which provided unique data from nationally representative samples of almost all European societies. The EVS questionnaire contains standardized cross-national measures of people's attitudes and beliefs in a broad range of important societal domains. The survey was fielded in 33 countries throughout Europe ([www.europeanvalues.nl](http://www.europeanvalues.nl)). We confined our analysis to the 23 countries we had adequate data for at the time of analysis: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom. The country samples consisted of at least 1000 and at most 2000 respondents each. Our pooled dataset contained 28 894 cases.

## **Dependent Variables**

Our central dependent variables consisted of respondents' informal solidarity with four groups of needy people, operationalized using the EVS survey question:

'To what extent do you feel concerned about the living conditions of:

- elderly people in your country
- unemployed people in your country
- immigrants in your country<sup>2</sup>
- sick and disabled people in your country'

(1=not at all, 2=not so much, 3=to a certain extent, 4=much, 5=very much)

Our assumption was that respondents' concern would reflect their perception of the deservingness of the four groups. The rank order of concern thus reflects the rank order of deservingness.<sup>3</sup> The degree of conditionality was measured using the sum of absolute differences between respondents' answers to the above question. People who were equally concerned about the living conditions of all four groups (either at a high or at a low level) had a zero score on conditionality. The conditionality score of people whose solidarity differed for the groups concerned was some figure above zero. The higher the score, the more conditional the people, that is, the more they differentiated among the needy groups.

## **Independent Variables**

### **Personal characteristics**

Gender was a dummy variable (0=male, 1=female); age was measured in years since birth; level of education was measured using the highest level of education reached (8 categories); household income was measured using self-rating in the deciles categories of a net household income scale; political stance was measured using self-placement on a 10-point left-right scale; religion was indicated by denomination (Catholic, Protestant/Evangelical, other (Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist), and none) and frequency of church attendance; work status distinguished between employed, retired, housewife, unemployed, and other. Meritocratism was measured using people's opinions on whether, in order to have a just society, it is important to recognize people's merits. Egalitarianism was measured using opinion on whether it is important for society that big income inequalities between citizens are eliminated. Work ethic was measured using a summative scale of five items tapping people's attitudes towards the importance of work for their personal lives and for society (alpha reliability=.70). Views of welfare were measured using three separate items: whether individuals should be

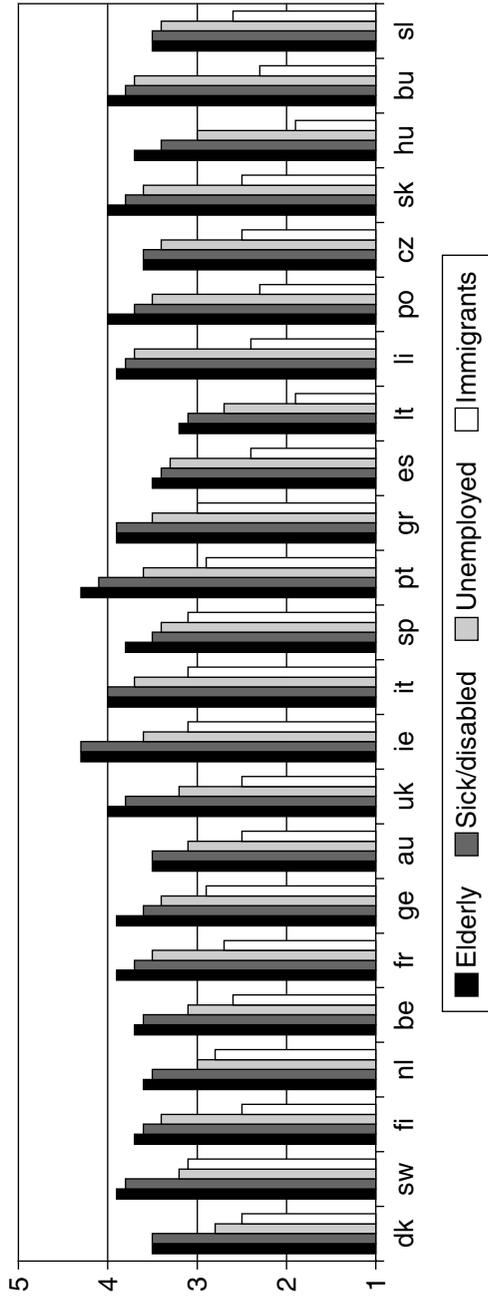
held more responsible for providing for themselves or the state should take more responsibility (scale of 1–10); whether unemployed people should have to take any job or should be able to refuse a job they do not want (scale of 1–10); and whether people who do not work become lazy (scale of 1–5). Interpersonal trust was measured using respondents' answers to the following question: 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?' (no–yes). Institutional trust was measured using a summative scale measuring people's confidence in the (welfare) state institutions of 'the police', 'the social security system', 'the health care system', 'parliament', 'the civil service', and 'the justice system' (alpha reliability = .80). Trust in democracy was measured using a summative scale of people's opinions on the economic effects of democracy, its effectiveness in maintaining order, its decisiveness, and its overall quality relative to other political systems (alpha reliability = .79). Attitudes towards immigrants were measured, first, by using a measure of feelings towards immigrants combining answers to the questions whether people would like to have immigrants as neighbours and whether they agreed that in times of scarcity employers should give priority to nationals over immigrants. The second measure was a question about whether people would like to place strong restrictions on the inflow of new immigrants, or not have any restrictions at all.

## RESULTS

### **Solidarity Rank Order by Country and Social Categories**

Our hypothesis was that the public would show most solidarity with elderly people, closely followed by sick and disabled people; that solidarity with unemployed people would be less strong, and that solidarity with immigrants would be lowest. As Figure 13.1 shows, this is exactly what was found in 16 of the 23 European countries examined. In all seven other countries (Denmark, Austria, Ireland, Italy, Greece, the Czech Republic and Slovenia), the difference with the universal rank order is that the solidarity with elderly and sick and disabled people is at an equally high level. This is a marginal deviance from the general pattern.

There is substantial variation between the countries in the relative positions of the groups of needy people. In some countries, especially in the highly developed welfare states of Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands, solidarity mainly seems to be differentiated along two groups: elderly, sick, and disabled people, on the one hand, and unemployed people and immigrants, on the other. In most other Western and Southern European



Source: Own calculations on the basis of the European Value Survey.

Figure 13.1 Informal solidarity by country (national averages)

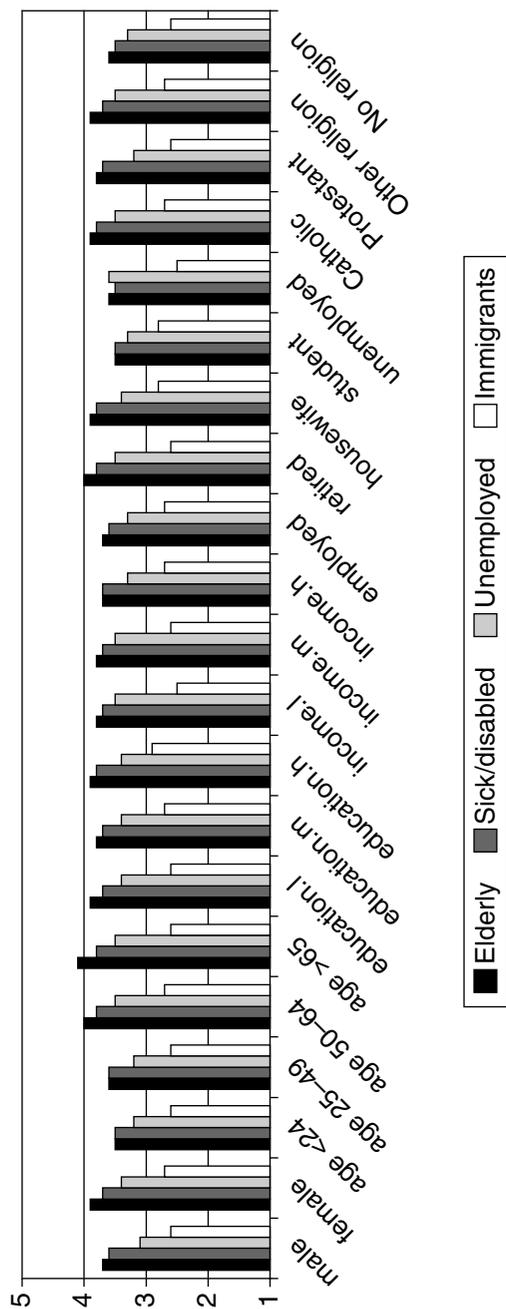
countries, the scores for elderly, sick, and disabled people are quite close, but there are larger differences between unemployed people and immigrants. A typical pattern for Central and Eastern European countries seems to be that the scale distance between immigrants and the other groups is relatively large, while the distances between the other three needy groups are relatively small. How these differences can be explained is unclear. One could speculate that where national resources for social protection are low, as is the case in Central and Eastern European countries, people tend to differentiate more strongly along the criterion of identity in terms of 'us' and 'them' (in order to preserve the little there is for 'ourselves'), while in a context of affluence people tend to differentiate more along lines of incapacity, i.e., the control criterion.

The fact that the solidarity rank order is basically the same for all European countries indicates that the underlying logic of deservingness has deep roots. This is supported by our findings regarding the rank ordering by different social categories. Figure 13.2 shows that the rank order is the same among men and women, among different categories of age, educational level, and income, among people with different social positions, and among people from different religious denominations. These findings are in line with Taylor-Gooby's (1985), who found no differences between the opinions of various categories of UK citizens in how they favoured benefits for pensioners, disabled people, widows, unemployed people, and lone parents. There is one exception in our data: unemployed people's solidarity with unemployed people is slightly higher than their solidarity with disabled people.

### **Conditionality of Solidarity: Individual Level**

To analyse why some people's solidarity with needy groups is more conditional than that of others, we carried out regression analyses, the results of which are shown in Table 13.1. We analysed the effects of personal characteristics in the pooled data set of all European countries. Note that additional analyses showed that the directions and sizes of the effects of all personal characteristics do not essentially differ between the four regions of Europe: North, West, South, and East.<sup>4</sup>

What, then, is this common pattern? Regarding people's socio-demographic characteristics, Figure 13.2 shows that conditionality is slightly higher among women, and is higher among older people and among people with less education. No difference exists between employed and unemployed people, or between people with higher or lower income. Except for the findings for gender, these results are the same as those of an earlier study in which Dutch opinion data was used (Oorschot, 2000). As



Source: Own calculations on the basis of the European Value Survey.

Figure 13.2 Informal solidarity by social category (average scores)

Table 13.1 Factors explaining European people's conditionality of solidarity

Gender (male–female)	.022
Age	.040
Educational level	–.034
Household income	n.s.
<b>Work status</b>	
– retired	.052
– housewife	n.s.
– student	n.s.
– unemployed	n.s.
– other	n.s.
(ref. category = employed)	
<b>Religion</b>	
– Catholic	n.s.
– Protestant	.039
– other	n.s.
(ref. category = none)	
<b>Church attendance</b>	n.s.
<b>Political stance (left–right)</b>	.042
<b>Meritocratism</b>	n.s.
<b>Egalitarianism</b>	–.027
<b>Work ethic</b>	n.s.
<b>Welfare sentiment</b>	
– responsibility (individual-state)	.024
– unemployed must accept any job (no–yes)	.028
– no work makes people lazy (no–yes)	.031
<b>Trust</b>	
– interpersonal trust	–.048
– trust in institutions	–.055
– trust in democracy	–.090
<b>Attitude to immigrants</b>	
– feelings (negative–positive)	–.139
– inflow of immigrants ok? (no–yes)	–.155
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.126

Note:  $p < .05$ ; n.s. = not significant.

Source: Own calculations on the basis of the European Value Survey.

suggested earlier, older people and people with less education can be seen as being in more risky social positions, and might, therefore, be more critical of the allocation of support which they themselves might need in future. In addition to this self-interest-related argument of competition,

images of needy groups may play a role. It is often found that those in lower socio-economic positions have more negative views of, for example, unemployed people and people on benefit (Golding and Middleton, 1982; Schneider and Ingram, 1993), which might lead to stronger conditionality. That unemployed people do not differ in conditionality from employed people might have to do with the fact that, owing to the dynamics of entering and leaving either category, the attitudinal differences between the two are not large generally. In the case of income, the lack of an effect might be the outcome of two counteracting trends. On the one hand, assuming that it is easier to be unconditional when having larger resources, people with higher incomes could be expected to be less conditional. On the other hand, however, if richer people were to regard social protection less as being in their strictly personal interest, they would want to contribute less, and as a result be in favour of a more restrictive, conditional approach towards other people's neediness.

Regarding ideological characteristics, Table 13.1 shows that, as in the Dutch study, rightist people are more conditional, and people's work ethic makes no difference. Apparently, the effect of political stance is not based on leftist and rightist attitudes towards equality, since egalitarianism has an independent effect. People who are more in favour of social equality are less conditional, regardless of whether they are more leftist or rightist. The fact that work ethic and meritocracy have no effect is harder to explain. One would expect that people with a stronger work ethic and who are more in favour of society rewarding merit would be stricter and more conditional towards needy people (for instance, because they may have more doubts about whether needy people try hard enough to provide for themselves). Additional analyses showed that both variables have a positive bi-variate correlation with conditionality. Apparently, these relations are suppressed by other variables in the multivariate models. In any case, there is no Dutch exceptionalism involved here, as suggested above.

Regarding attitudinal characteristics, Table 13.1 shows strong effects. As expected, people with more negative attitudes towards state welfare, welfare dependency, and welfare dependants are more conditional. The same was found for people with less trust in others, in (welfare) state institutions, and in democracy. Particularly strong are the negative effects of attitudes towards immigrants. Clearly, leaving out immigrants in our conditionality scale would have led to different results, but we did not opt for this since populations of immigrants are increasingly among the core poverty groups in European countries.

With regard to variables of religion, Table 13.1 shows that, contrary to expectations, religious people are not generally less conditional than non-religious people. What we did find was that Protestants as a group have

higher conditionality. This is irrespective of their possibly greater Calvinistic work ethic, since this variable was controlled for.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

We aimed at contributing to an understanding of the popular cultural context of welfare rationing by examining European public perceptions of the relative deservingness of four different needy groups, as well as variations in conditionality among Europeans. Based on data from the European Values Study survey 1999/2000, we found a common pattern for all 23 European countries involved that informal solidarity with elderly people is highest, closely followed by sick and disabled people; next is solidarity with unemployed people, and solidarity with immigrants is lowest. This pattern is exactly what was expected based on the results of earlier empirical studies on popular support for types of welfare schemes, on popular images of target groups, and on popular deservingness criteria. That the solidarity rank order is basically the same for all European countries indicates that the underlying logic of deservingness has deep roots in popular welfare culture. This was supported by our finding that the deservingness rank order is the same among men and women, among different categories of age, educational level, and income, among people with different social positions, and among people from different religious denominations.

The results of our study confirm those of other studies regarding the rank ordering. Our study is among the first, however, in which explicit attention was paid to the conditionality of solidarity, that is, the degree to which people differentiate in their solidarity with different groups of needy people. We explored conditionality and its determinants at the individual level.

We found that the directions and sizes of the determining effects do not essentially differ between regions in Europe; the pattern of explanatory personal variables is to a large extent equal all over Europe. This is another indication that popular deservingness thinking has deep roots. We found that conditionality is slightly higher among women, among older people, and among people with less education. No difference exists between employed or unemployed people, or between people with higher or lower income. Except for those for gender, these results are the same as those of an earlier study on conditionality in which Dutch opinion data was used. Regarding ideological characteristics it was found that, as in the Dutch study, rightist people are more conditional, while people's work ethic makes no difference. Additionally, it was found that people who are more in favour

of social equality are less conditional, regardless of whether they are more leftist or rightist. Regarding attitudinal characteristics, it was found that people with more negative attitudes towards state welfare, welfare dependency, and welfare dependants are more conditional. The same was found for people with less trust in others, in (welfare) state institutions, and in democracy. Particularly strong were the negative effects of attitudes towards immigrants. Finally, as in studies on giving to charity, religion played a role. Whether people claim to be religious or not, or what denomination they belong to, is irrelevant; it is church attendance that makes a difference: people who attend church more frequently are less conditional in their solidarity with needy groups. We speculated above on some interpretations of our results regarding conditionality, but we stress that they need further testing in future research, since our study is one of only two that we know of on the issue of conditionality.

The role played by the immigration factor is noteworthy in the findings on both rank order and conditionality. Needy immigrants are at the bottom of the deservingness rank order, and negative views of immigrants and their numbers are associated with higher conditionality of support. This may be of significance for the popular support of European welfare states in future, where there is currently strong debate on whether welfare benefits and services should be provided to immigrants to the same degree and on the same conditions as to non-immigrants (Boeri et al., 2002). There is a risk that this kind of discussion and ensuing policy measures may ultimately put ever more pressure on the solidarity with immigrants, since it stimulates thinking in terms of 'Us versus Them'. Measures might easily create poverty traps from which immigrants would have difficulties escaping, which in turn might enforce negative public images about immigrants. Going even further, as Alesina and Glaeser (2004) speculate, if welfare becomes negatively associated with 'immigrants' in Europe, as it is with 'blacks' in the US, the legitimacy of the total welfare system might be affected, with as a likely longer-term outcome a reduction of its level of generosity. In our view, the future legitimacy of state welfare in European countries does not only revolve around the deservingness criterion of identity. There is also a trend visible in Europe related to the criterion of control. That is, in neo-liberal and communitarian thinking about welfare, which is popular among policy elites at European and national levels, the individual responsibility of citizens is strongly stressed (George, 1996; Taylor-Gooby, 1997; Forma, 1999; Schmidt, 2000). Citizens are nowadays increasingly expected to be active and to provide for themselves. This is a message that in our view quite easily may form a basis for the general idea that those who are in need do not take up their responsibility well, and can, therefore, be blamed for their neediness. If people are blamed, they do not

deserve support, and there is no need for a comprehensive welfare state. Here, also, the future legitimacy and character of the European welfare states might be recognized in the present day US welfare state.

## NOTES

1. Please note that the analysis of determinants did not concern people's informal solidarity with any of the four groups separately. This kind of analysis is presented in Van Oorschot and Arts (2005). Please note too that we did not analyse differences in national levels of conditionality. This would certainly be interesting but space limitations did not allow for it.
2. Admittedly, 'immigrants' is an unspecified category. It may be associated with very diverse groups, like migrant workers of different generations, asylum seekers, refugees, non-Europeans, or people born abroad. No specification of the type of immigrants referred to in the question was given in the survey.
3. An alternative interpretation is that expressed concern reflects the degree to which people perceive the living conditions of group A as problematic, which problem awareness may be related to the perceived or actual level of social protection for group A offered by the state. This 'problem awareness' interpretation assumes that, if the social protection of group A in a country is less than that for other groups, more people will claim to be (more) concerned about the living conditions of group A than about the other groups, and group A will get a higher score on the variable. However, the findings of this study show that this is not the case: informal solidarity is consistently higher with elderly people and sick and disabled people, which are the groups to which all European welfare states offer better protection, than with the groups of the unemployed and immigrants.
4. North = Denmark, Finland, Sweden; West = Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, UK; South = Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain; East = Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, East = Estonia.

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# 14. The values of work and care among women in modern societies

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## INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

After a strong cultural shift towards gender equality in the 1960s, and a series of laws and social policies designed to eliminate discrimination against women, there remains surprising stability in the actual gendered division of labour, especially in the division between paid and unpaid work, and particularly after the birth of the first child (Schulz and Blossfeld, 2006; Mühling et al., 2006). Explanations for this persistence have mostly referred either to lingering structural obstacles to women's equality (e.g. Becker, 1996), to culture (e.g. Inglehart, 1997), or to women's individual *preferences* (Hakim, 2002). Few authors have analysed the way in which these dimensions are interrelated.

We approach this interrelationship by studying women's attitudes towards work and care as one dimension within this interrelationship, and by explaining it with reference to the others. This chapter, based on a cross-national comparison of the most recent data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), asks which preferences women have regarding the choice between paid employment and responsibility for the family. As two oppositional landmarks, these two orientations correspond to two ideals regarding the division of labour within a couple. These are, on the one hand, the support for a 'male breadwinner model,' characterized by a full-time earning husband responsible for the financial well-being of the family, and a care-giving housewife in charge of all household-related tasks. Its counterpart is the support for a 'dual career' or 'adult worker model' (Lewis, 2001; 2004) where paid work tasks are distributed equally between both spouses and household tasks are either shared or externalized. In the first part of our chapter, we will describe these attitudes of women towards work and care. We analyse to what degree women in different societies are oriented towards employment and to what degree towards responsibility for the household and raising children. We compare patterns and trends in women's orientations from a broad international

perspective, looking at developed industrial societies in Western Europe and in overseas countries, as well as at the transition states in Eastern Europe. And we study whether and how these orientations have changed over time.

But what shapes these attitudes towards work and care? Undoubtedly, there are significant influences from the characteristics of women themselves, e.g. their education or current family cycle situation. However, we argue that not only these micro-characteristics are of central importance for explaining women's attitudes, but also that collective cultures and societal institutions will need to be considered. With regard to gender relations, many modern societies have undergone a series of cultural and political changes such that, nowadays, only a minority of couples still follow a strict 'male breadwinner model'. However, there are significant cross-national variations in the extent to which couples have moved towards dual earning (OECD, 2001). Modern societies are nowadays characterized by a wide variety of 'modernizations' of the breadwinner idea, or by different types of 'dual breadwinner models' (Lewis, 2001) fostered by the differing designs of nation-specific family policies. These cultural and structural macro-conditions create differential frameworks within which women develop their attitudes, and they may therefore represent an equally strong predictor of their attitudes and preferences as micro-variables. Hence, in the second part of our chapter, we supplement the descriptive perspective by a differentiated explanatory one, asking why women with specific characteristics in specific societies show specific orientations towards paid work and caregiving.

## WOMEN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORK AND CARE: THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

For the explanation of women's attitudes towards work and care, we take a multidimensional perspective in a twofold way (see Table 14.1):

1. We will simultaneously consider both characteristics at the level of the individual and at the level of the society individuals live in.

*Table 14.1 Structural and cultural explanation at different analytical levels*

	Structure	Culture
Society (macro-level)	Institutions and policies	Ideologies and norms
Individual (micro-level)	Location within social structure	Socialization

2. We revert to structural characteristics as well as to explanations drawn from culture, assuming that only the consideration of both concepts, which together form a 'gender arrangement' (Pfau-Effinger, 1996; 2005), allows for an adequate analysis of values held towards paid work and care-giving.

At the macro-level, nation-specific institutions such as family- or labour-market-related policies influence women's values. But ideologies or norms shared in a given society may be equally important. Likewise, at the micro-level, the personal structural characteristics of a woman, such as her family situation or material circumstances, shape her values. But cultural socialization influences, as mediated through an individual's social class or religious background, are of similar importance.

## CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS AND WOMEN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORK AND CARE

It is known that gender-related attitudes of women vary across countries (Gerhards and Hölscher, 2003; Gomilshak, Haller and Höllinger, 2000). But why is this so?

Ronald Inglehart provides a first explanation for this cross-national variation with his 'values map' (Inglehart and Carballo, 1997; Inglehart, 1997) in which countries are sorted by two broad value dimensions in which gender issues play a role. The belief that it is important for women to have children appears among other attitudes that show concern about survival issues. In contrast, support for the women's movement appears among attitudes related to issues of well-being. These two groups of attitudes mark the starting and ending point of a shift in values in Western societies, known as the 'silent revolution' (Inglehart, 1977), or 'post-modernization' (Inglehart, 1997), caused by the fact that post-war generations grew up without severe worries about physical needs and security, and have therefore developed 'post-material' values (Inglehart, 1977). Once a society has reached a high level of social security and, in the absence of war, generations are thought to grow up favouring values such as tolerance for individualized lifestyles and gender equality. As a proxy-indicator of these phenomena, we can expect a country's level of economic development to reflect its position within a process of change, from a culture of acceptance of a male breadwinner system, in which women are likely to aspire to care-giver roles, to a culture of egalitarianism, in which women are likely to seek their own employment careers.

The predominance of a Protestant tradition in a society may also foster this development (Inglehart, 1997). Referring to Max Weber, Inglehart

partly explains this empirical finding by the impact of Protestantism on economic growth – which again is a main cause of value change. But a Protestant heritage shows a positive effect on the change in values, on top of the effects of economic well-being. The Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox churches in particular, have promoted the family as the central unit of society, and a rather classical division of labour between men (as breadwinners) and women (as mothers and housewives). In contrast, we can ascribe to Protestantism a role in fostering the change in gender-related attitudes because of its encouragement of reflection (as described already by Durkheim, 1999) and of fostering modern rationalism as a whole (Weber, 1988). The Protestant church has regulated the relationship between work and family less strictly (Gerhards and Hölscher, 2003), resulting in a more liberal opinion towards a dual-earner model. We can therefore expect a large share of Protestants (including Anglicans) in a country to foster support for female employment.

### **National Institutions and Women's Attitudes Towards Work and Care**

Inglehart's approach is, however, very broad and abstract and leaves room for alternative explanations. Here, the combination of cultural and structural explanations can help. The central structural argument for the expectation of cross-national variation in gender-related attitudes is based on findings from both life-course sociology and comparative welfare research. According to the former, individual life-courses in modern Western societies do not follow coincidental patterns of devolution, but are nowadays strongly influenced by societal institutions such as welfare policies or modes of labour-market regulation (Kohli, 1985; Mayer and Müller, 1989; Leisering, 2003). Previous research has shown that the intensity with which state institutions intervene in individual life-courses (and thereby structure and integrate them) significantly varies between countries, resulting in different outcomes in terms of life-course patterns (Leisering, 2003; Mayer, 2004). We assume that these differential influences of policies and institutions on individual life-course patterns profoundly shape women's attitudes towards work and care.

Previous research has interpreted cross-national differences as effects of a set of policies and institutions in terms of 'welfare regimes' (Esping-Andersen, 1990). These have been advanced to more detailed and work-family-sensitive classifications, distinguishing different variations of a 'breadwinner model'. Birgit Pfau-Effinger's concept of 'gender arrangements', finally, combines the structural criteria for a classification with a cultural perspective. According to her model, each national society can be characterized by a specific 'gender arrangement,' i.e. a specific 'interplay of

culture, institutions, social structures and agency in relation to gender' (Pfau-Effinger, 2003: 5). A specific 'gender order', referring to the actual 'pertinent structures of gender relationships, as well as the relations between different societal institutions with reference to gender structure' (ibid.: 5), is contrasted by a society's 'gender cultural system', comprising institutionalized norms regarding the 'desirable, correct form of gender relation' (ibid.: 5) and the division of labour between women and men.

In this chapter, we will investigate in more detail what particular institutions are influencing women's attitudes. We distinguish two different types of institutional determinants: structural factors that create job opportunities (demand-side factors) and those that put women in a position to make use of these labour-market opportunities by stimulating their labour supply (supply-side factors). And we compare the impacts of these structural factors to influences of the cultural background.

### **Demand-side factors**

First, we expect that in countries where demand for women's employment has been highest and, consequently, women's employment has risen most strongly, women will have developed a positive evaluation of an employment-oriented role, so that a high female labour-force participation rate itself should foster women's support for female employment. For the same reason, women's unemployment level should have the opposite effect. The successful integration of women into the labour force was particularly fostered through the creation of jobs in the tertiary service sector. We therefore expect that countries with a large tertiary sector have particularly encouraged women's employment orientation and reduced their compliance with a traditional division of labour. In contrast, the extent of women's discrimination in the labour market, represented by a low gender-wage ratio (below 100 per cent), may have discouraged women from working for pay and weakened their employment orientation.

### **Supply-side factors**

On the one hand, state policies may help women to combine family and work responsibilities. Hence we expect a country's high overall expenditure on family policies to have influenced women's positive orientation towards employment. The same should be true for the effect of a high level of child-care provision for infants (0–3 years) on women's employment orientation. Furthermore, we expect the length of paid parental leave schemes to have a negative effect: Long paid parental leave schemes often provide an alternative to employment as they financially compensate women for labour-force withdrawal (Hofäcker, 2004). In addition to family policies, educational policies have put women into a position to successfully perform on the

*Table 14.2 Expected effects of institutional macro-variables*

	Variable	Effect on support for male breadwinner idea
Labour-force demand	D1. Female labour-force participation	Negative
	D2. Female unemployment rate	Positive
	D3. Gender–wage ratio	Negative
	D4. Tertiary sector share	Negative
Labour-force supply	S1. Family-related expenditure	Negative
	S2. Childcare coverage	Negative
	S3. Paid parental leave	Positive
	S4. Educational attainment	Negative
General cultural background	G1. Protestant background	Negative
	G2. Economic development	Negative

labour market. A high educational attainment of women relative to that of men should improve support for female employment.

Table 14.2 summarizes our assumptions regarding structural and cultural macro-indicator effects on women's support for a male breadwinner idea.

## WOMEN'S INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORK AND CARE

In addition to the influence of the national context, we expect that women's attitudes towards gender roles will depend on individual characteristics.

As in most social diffusion processes, value change takes place through the succession of generations: while older generations show rather traditional gender-related values, younger generations who have experienced the rise of female employment and the feminist movement while young, and have not experienced the threat of war, will tend towards more liberal gender attitudes (Inglehart, 1977, 1989). Gender-attitudes can therefore be expected to correlate with the birth cohort, with a notable gap between war and post-war generations, whereby war-generation women are more likely to be supportive of a male breadwinner concept than women of the post-war generation.

The hypothesis of generational value-change competes with a hypothesis of individual value-change over the life-course. Specific life-course stages such as establishing an independent household and economic independence are related to specific experiences of the individual as well as to the expectations of significant others. Individuals therefore may be socialized through

their current life-course situation, resulting in value shifts during central stages of their life-course. With reaching full responsibility in adulthood, individuals are likely to become more pragmatic about the division of labour within the partnership and less ambitious about resisting norms and structures based on a male breadwinner concept. This should lead to age effects of a notable gap between youth and adulthood, and adult women being more supportive of the female care-giving role than adolescents.

The empirical distinction between generational and life-course effects will need to focus on major gaps: For a generational effect it should be found between cohorts born in 1935 and 1945, with respondents having spent their childhood (say, up to age 12) either in periods of wartime destruction or in times of economic prosperity. For a life-course effect the gap should be found between respondents aged 23 and 33 – which in a 2002 survey means between cohorts born in 1975 and 1985.

Analogously to the life-course hypothesis, we expect that the actual family situation shapes the attitudes of women. We expect women with children to be more family-oriented than women who are not confronted with the responsibility of raising children. This argument can be formulated in a structural way, referring to restrictions or options provided through specific life situations (Becker, 1996). However, the influences might also work through socialization as an interactive process (Mead, 1934), since with the family situation the group of ‘significant others’ changes. We expect that attitudes towards gender roles show variation in relation to the education an individual has received. Education may exert an ‘enlightenment effect’ (Robinson and Bell, 1978) in so far as higher education may cause a greater affinity with certain civilizing values such as gender equality. Furthermore, women with higher education have spent longer time spans accumulating human capital to be used in labour-market activity (Becker, 1996). From both viewpoints, we may expect women with higher education to show a stronger orientation towards female employment than those with lower educational degrees.

From a more structural viewpoint, the couple’s employment situation should, of course, matter. Women experiencing their own employment (which mostly implies a dual-earner household) will be much more reluctant to support a male breadwinner concept than women who currently are housewives in a male breadwinner constellation. This can be formulated as an effect of socialization or of reducing cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

We furthermore expect that household income may have an important effect on attitudes. This prediction, again, is deducted from value change theory. Developing ‘post-material’ values, including liberal attitudes regarding gender roles, requires the absence of concern for physical survival.

*Table 14.3 Expected effects of micro-variables*

Variable	Effect on support for male breadwinner idea
Post-war birth cohort (born after 1940)	Negative
Adulthood (born before 1970)	Positive
Presence of children	Positive
Education	Negative
Couple's employment situation: male breadwinner (reference: dual earnership)	Positive
Relative household income	Negative
Religious denomination: Protestant	Negative
Religious denomination: atheist	Negative
Church attendance	Positive

Analogously to the country's economic development, the wealth of an individual's household should foster support for female employment (Inglehart, 1977). For reasons of comparability the household income is measured relative to the society a woman lives in (in quintiles).

Individual religious confession may be expected to have an influence on gender-related values. Analogous to the macro-hypotheses described in the previous section, we expect Protestant women to show more support for gender-equality and female employment than Roman-Catholic and/or Eastern Orthodox women.

Also, religiosity in general may significantly shape gender-related attitudes. Max Weber (1988) describes secularization as a dimension within the process of modernization or rationalization which questions traditional authority such as the patriarchy supported by most churches. Therefore atheists should favour gender-equality even more than Protestants. We expect that atheist women will show less support for a traditional division of labour than women of any religious denomination. And we expect religious women (measured as frequency of church attendance) to show more support for a male breadwinner idea than non-religious women.

Table 14.3 summarizes our assumptions about individual-level effects on women's support for a male breadwinner/female homemaker arrangement.

### **Data and Methods**

To describe women's attitudes towards work and care, we draw from three waves (1988, 1994, 2002) of the ISSP ('International Social Survey Program') containing the module 'family and changing gender roles.'

(GESIS/ZA, 2001) but concentrate our explanatory analyses on the most recent wave, ISSP 2002. Data are weighted (as far as the individual country samples include a weight). The sample was reduced to a sub-sample, including European and overseas welfare societies that we can compare straightforwardly according to our hypotheses. This includes 27 European societies,<sup>1</sup> the USA, Australia and New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> For the causal analyses eight further societies<sup>3</sup> needed to be excluded, either because they did not participate in the wave 2002, or due to missing values in the explanatory macro-variables. Within the remaining 21 societies, for the causal analyses only women are included. In the descriptions (where age is not controlled for) only women aged 20 to 50 are included who are most likely to be confronted with employment- and family-related life-course decisions.

The ISSP 2002 (like most similar surveys) contains questions about attitudes, in which respondents are asked to evaluate rather situation-specific normative statements. In order to get to a situation-independent indicator, we use a factor combining the shared explained variance of several related attitude indicators. Factor analyses identify one major homogeneous value dimension.<sup>4</sup> The indicator we use is a Likert summation of the four strongest items in this factor as recommended by reliability analyses ( $\alpha = .658$ , range from 0 to 16, mean = 7.7, SD = 3.485):

1. Do you agree or disagree? . . . A husband's job is to earn money; a wife's job is to look after the home and family;
2. A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children;
3. Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay; and
4. People who have never had children lead empty lives.<sup>5</sup>

Surprisingly, it turns out that not only attitudes favouring a 'traditional' division of work within couples (items 1–3) correlate highly with each other, but they also correlate with beliefs regarding the value of children (item 4). This means that attitudes are organized in ideologies that support or disregard an entire concept of family life: some favour the nuclear family ideal as Talcott Parsons (1973) described it, in its formation as well as in the ideal-typical roles ascribed to its members; others feel more inclined to a post-modern individualization, neglecting fixed gender roles and allowing more freedom in the choice of a child. The fact that attitudes come as a belief-system can be explained by the aspiration of humans to reduce cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) and allows us to focus on one broad value dimension. We refer to it as support for a male breadwinner idea because this is the major aspect of the dimension most items refer to.

The use of a derived factor combining single indicators that co-vary systematically does not rule out that the actual extent of support for the items may vary, reflecting different levels of accordance with a male breadwinner idea. While, for example, some women may be more sceptical regarding the 'strict version' of the male breadwinner model, one-sidedly assigning women a role within the household (item 1), they may be more open to a 'relaxed version' (items 2 and 3) allowing a possible combination of market-based work with care-giving tasks in the household (or vice versa). In the descriptive part, we will therefore describe results for single indicators in more detail. However, we will use the factor as a core indicator and as dependent variable in the causal analysis.

In the explanatory part, we first include only micro-level indicators (see Table 14.3) to explain women's attitudes. When additionally testing the effects of macro-indicators (Table 14.2), these micro-level indicators are always controlled for. We then refer to the model, containing only micro-indicators, as the 'reference model 1'. All other models, containing additional macro indicators, will explain more variance than this reference model if women's opinions are affected by the country they live in. The quality of a model can then be evaluated by how much more variance it explains compared to reference model 1. As a second reference for evaluating the effects of macro indicators we use a model, containing all micro indicators above plus the dummy variables for the society the respondent lives in. We refer to this model as the 'reference model 2'. It statistically explains all variance across societies that exists in the data-set (without answering which attribute of societies, cultural or structural, causes the variance). Therefore all other models, containing different macro-indicators (see Table 14.2), must explain less variance than this reference model. The quality of a model can be evaluated by how close it is in explaining variance compared to reference model 2. The variance explained by every model (measured by the corrected  $R^2$ ) should therefore lie between reference model 1 and reference model 2. The closer it is to reference model 2 the more relevant are its explaining variables in order to understand cross-national differences; the closer it is to reference model 1 the less relevant are its explaining variables.

As measures of individual micro-level effects, we include ten-year cohorts, the existence of children, a categorical measure for the education of women, a classification of different family employment situations, the household income measured in quintiles, dummies for religious denomination and the frequency of church attendance (with eight answer categories) as covariates. Cultural macro-influences are approximated by the overall GDP per capita as an indicator of a country's wealth and by the relative proportions of Protestants, including Anglicans, in a country's population.

Structural demand side-factors are measured by the labour-force participation and the unemployment rate of women, the gender-to-wage ratio (defined as the average wage of women as a percentage of that of men) and the relative size of the service sector. Finally, as measures of structural supply-side determinants, we include national public family expenditure (measured as a percentage of the overall GDP), the coverage rate of public care institutions for children aged 0–3 years, the length of paid parental leave (measured in weeks multiplied by the compensation rate) and the educational tertiary school attainment of women as compared to that of men.<sup>6</sup>

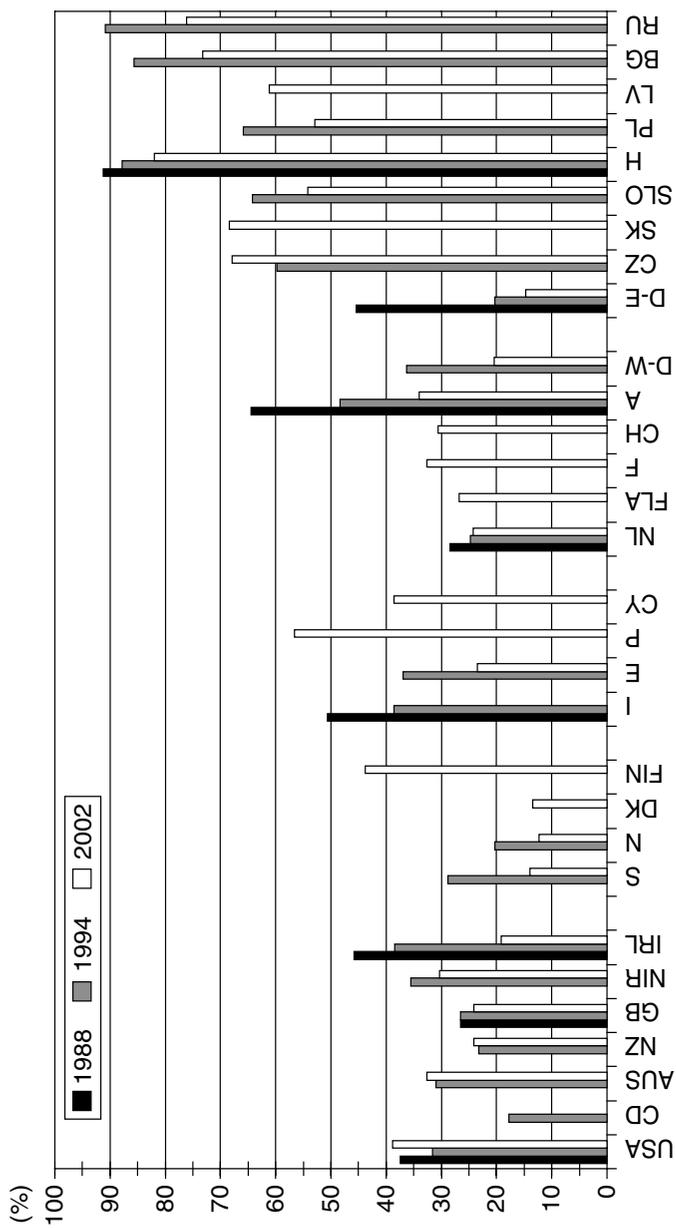
## RESULTS

### Patterns and Changes in Women's Preferences

Table 14.A1 (Appendix) gives a detailed overview of women's agreement with the various statements outlined above for the ISSP waves 1988, 1994 and 2002. Figure 14.1 is based on the indicator 'support for a male breadwinner idea' which sums the values from the single indicators. However, unlike the dependent variable used in the causal analysis later on, it is not based on the full Likert scale of 0 to 16, but on a binary variable distinguishing only strong support (1) from little support (0). The benchmark used to split the two categories is the median level of support across the entire sample of all countries in 2002.<sup>7</sup>

Our results reveal substantial cross-national differences. *Scandinavian* countries, but not Finland, display the lowest level of support for a traditional division of labour. On average, at the turn of the century, less than 6 per cent of all female respondents in these countries supported a traditional division of labour between spouses (item 1) and less than a third regarded even the relaxed version regarding care responsibilities as a woman's central locus of life that could be just as fulfilling as working for pay (item 2 and 3). Looking at the development of these attitudes over time, one sees that this low level of support in 2002 is partly due to visible decreases throughout the previous years, though even by the year 1994, the majority of Scandinavian females were already antipathetic to a classical male-breadwinner model.

What is, however, more surprising is that by the year 2002, support for a traditional division of labour is almost equally low among West-Central European and – though to a lesser extent – Southern European women. A comparison across time indicates that these surprisingly liberal gender-role orientations in countries assumed to be dominated by conservative ideologies and a male breadwinner orientation of public policies are a result of



Sources: Own computation. Data: ISSP, 1988, 1994, 2002, women, aged 20–50, weighted. Bars represent the share of strong supporters within each country. Own calculations on the basis of the International Social Survey Programme.

Figure 14.1 Development of support for a male breadwinner idea

significant decreases in public support for both a 'strict' as well as a 'relaxed' breadwinner idea. These decreases have been most pronounced in those countries where policies have for a long time been explicitly male breadwinner-oriented, namely Austria, West Germany, and the Southern European countries (see Hofäcker, 2004). These results for Central and Southern European countries point to a substantial shift of women's care orientations away from a classical gender-role model, though both welfare and labour-market structures still significantly foster this idea. This opening differential between a still largely traditional 'gender structure' and an obviously changing 'gender culture' may create increasing contradictions between the two dimensions in future years, which may promote a gradual altering of gender arrangements.

By the year 2002, support of women in English-speaking countries for a male breadwinner idea was comparable to that of most West-Central European countries. However, here these levels represent more an extrapolation of the traditionally weak support for this idea since the late 1980s, than the result of a recent value shift. Only in Catholic Ireland – which displayed fairly traditional values in 1988 when almost a quarter of Irish women still supported a strict male breadwinner idea – has support declined considerably throughout the last 14 years. Trends in the United States appear somewhat surprising. Here, male breadwinner support has, after a slight decrease in the mid-1990s, returned to its initial values so that by 2002, 16 per cent of women still feel in accordance with a strict version of a male breadwinner model. These results appear to show a still comparatively positive evaluation of the mother's role.

The greatest support for a traditional role model can be found in most of the post-communist countries where, by the mid-1990s, up to two-thirds of women generally agreed with the principle of a classical division of labour. Though support declined in the following eight years, even the strict version of the male breadwinner idea still receives approval from a third to a half of all working-age women. Notably, East Germany and Slovenia represent two deviating cases, with East German women showing clearly less support for a traditional division of labour, and Slovenian women showing less support only for the strict male breadwinner concept.

### **Explaining Women's Preferences by Micro-indicators**

As the ISSP is not a panel study, but a series of cross-sectional surveys, we can detect change only on an aggregate level, meaning that we can neither measure nor explain individual change of values. But we can explain attitudinal differences cross-sectionally. We do so using the most recent survey wave, the ISSP 2002. Using multivariate linear regression, we first look

*Table 14.4 Women's preferences and the effects of micro-variables*

Dependent variable: support for male breadwinner idea	Beta	Sign
Birth cohort: 1920/earlier	+ .069	.000
Birth cohort: 1921–30	+ .113	.000
Birth cohort: 1931–40	+ .092	.000
Birth cohort: 1941–50	Reference	
Birth cohort: 1951–60	(–.020)	.060
Birth cohort: 1961–70	–.051	.000
Birth cohort: 1971–80	(+ .004)	.721
Birth cohort: 1981/later	(–.009)	.350
Are/were there children?	+ .154	.000
Education: below secondary	+ .091	.000
Education: secondary	Reference	
Education: university (completed)	–.126	.000
Employment situation: male breadwinner model	+ .062	.000
Employment situation: dual earner model	Reference	
Employment situation: other	+ .055	.000
Household income: lowest quintile	+ .072	.000
Household income: 2nd quintile	(+ .022)	.026
Household income: 3rd quintile	Reference	
Household income: 4th quintile	–.038	.000
Household income: highest quintile	–.032	.001
Religious denomination: Protestant	–.046	.000
Religious denomination: non-Protestant	+ .174	.000
Religious denomination: atheist	Reference	
Religiosity (church attendance)	+ .023	.007
Corrected R <sup>2</sup>	.239	

*Sources:* Own computation; Data: ISSP 2002, women, weighted. Dependent variable: see Methods section. Own calculations on the basis of ISSP data.

solely at the effects of micro-indicators on the ‘male breadwinner idea’ factor combining all four items (Table 14.4).

First of all, support for a male breadwinner idea is declining across birth cohorts. As outlined in the theoretical section, this could reflect a life-course effect, with support increasing by specific life-stages, such as economic independence from parents or motherhood. But for this interpretation we would expect a stronger effect in specific ‘typical’ stages of the life-course, especially in the transition to adulthood with the described changes of situation. In terms of birth cohorts, this would mean a gap between the cohorts

1971–80 and 1961–70. This gap however is not the biggest gap, and its direction is counter-intuitive.<sup>8</sup> Instead, we find the greatest gap between the cohorts 1931–40 and 1941–50: between the war and the post-war generation – the ‘classical’ generational value change, described by Inglehart as the ‘silent revolution’ (1977). We therefore interpret the age effect as an impact of a broad value change across generations, affecting gender-related attitudes as one aspect among many other orientations.

The effects of a woman’s religious denomination and religiosity provide further evidence for our cultural argument. Women attending church frequently, whom we assess as more religious than others, show more support for a male breadwinner idea. Protestant women tend to show little, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox women more support for it. This corresponds to our hypothesis regarding the different character of these denominations: Protestantism emphasizes and encourages the individual’s responsibility and duty to question given structures, other churches insist more on the necessity to respect traditional authority. It seems surprising that Protestant women show even less support than atheist women. However, this effect (and only this effect) reverses when macro-indicators are controlled for ( $\beta = +.038$ ), which means that any denomination supports traditional gender relations more than atheists do.

Among more structural characteristics, the effect of having children confirms our expectations. This indicator has a strong positive effect on the support for the male breadwinner arrangement. On the one hand, this confirms the importance of the concrete family situation (or the experience of parenthood), and, hence, of structures. On the other hand, this might (additionally) reflect an inverse causal relationship: Women who support a male breadwinner idea are probably more likely to have a family.

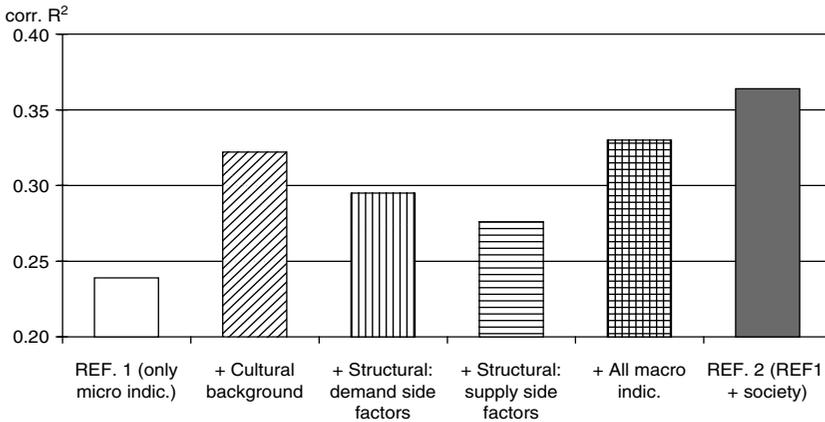
The educational effect confirms our hypothesis: the higher the educational level, the lower the acceptance of the male breadwinner idea. As outlined, this possibly reflects (at least) two theoretical explanations. First, it most likely is an effect of human capital (Becker, 1996): The more a woman invests in her educational attainment, the higher her incentive is to enter the labour market and not work at home. At the same time, it can be argued that the greater the ability and desire to reflect on given arrangements, the higher the chances are that they will be questioned. The effect of the employment situation, showing that women living in a male breadwinner arrangement show more support for such an arrangement than do women in a dual-earner couple, can be interpreted likewise: on the one hand, this may reflect a socializing effect of employment on women’s attitudes, but may also point to an inverse causal relationship: Women who support a male breadwinner idea are more likely to put this model into practice.

Increasing household income significantly decreases the acceptance of a male breadwinner idea. The effect can be explained by the theory of value-change: wealth means absence of survival concerns. This privileged situation allows an individual to develop post-material values (Inglehart, 1977), implying positive attitudes towards gender equality. Theoretical concepts of lifestyle argue in a similar way (Schulze, 1993; Hradil, 2001). Whereas the change of attitudes across generations can only reflect a societal increase in wealth, household income represents individual wealth and the absence of survival concerns. Therefore household income has a significant effect even when controlling for birth cohorts and the employment situation.

### **Explaining Women's Preferences by Macro-indicators**

Taking the micro-indicator models presented and their corrected  $R^2$ s as a reference, we now turn to a comparison of models, simultaneously considering both micro- and macro-indicators measuring the concrete influence of nation-specific institutions. The results of these models are shown in Figure 14.2. The far left and far right bars represent the reference models, marking the low and the high end of the scale of possible  $R^2$ s. A technical problem here is the strong intra-correlation of explanatory variables. From a theoretical perspective, they confirm the concept of a regime or gender-arrangement, where institutions and cultural backgrounds are interdependent and stabilize one another (Pfau-Effinger, 1996, 2003). Technically they make it difficult to isolate the effect of a specific indicator. If we insert too few indicators into a model and do not control for all of them at the same time, we may overestimate the effect of a specific indicator, as the measured effect might reflect a 'third variable influence' not represented in the model. If we, on the other hand, control for a maximum of indicators at the same time, they may be virtually collinear so that the measured effects become spurious. To evaluate these effects we estimate several models: Models with only one macro-indicator at a time, models with all indicators from one category (demand, supply, cultural background) as well as models controlling for all indicators simultaneously.

The figure displays the explanatory power of various regression models. The 'maximum' model that includes all macro-indicators simultaneously reaches an  $R^2$  value (.329) relatively close to that of the reference model 2 (.364) and by far higher than reference model 1 (.239). This means the combination of indicators we chose is able to explain most country-specific variance regarding women's support for a male breadwinner idea. Which of the indicators are more, which are less important? Taking only groups of indicators, the two variables representing the cultural background explain the most variance ( $R^2 = .322$ ). A little less variance is explained by the supply-side factors, as a group, ( $R^2 = .293$ ) followed by the demand-side



Sources: Own computation. Data: ISSP 2002, women, weighted. Dependent variable: see Methods section. Own calculations on the basis of the International Social Survey Programme.

Figure 14.2 Corrected R<sup>2</sup>s of different regression models to explain women’s support for a male breadwinner idea, support for different statements (1 = ‘agree’ and 2 = ‘strongly agree’ out of five answer categories available)

factors ( $R^2 = .276$ ). However, the fact that all single macro-indicator models reach satisfactory additional explanation levels, and the combination of all three yields yet another increase in explanatory power, indicates that the different approaches are at least partly complementary to each other and not necessarily redundant.

Do the macro-indicators affect women’s attitudes in the predicted directions? Table 14.5 summarizes 14 separate models explaining women’s support for the male breadwinner idea. It shows beta coefficients of one model testing all macro-indicators simultaneously (‘maximum model’), three models testing only indicators for demand, supply, or cultural background (‘groups of macro-indicators’) and models with only one indicator each (‘single macro-indicators’).

The results largely confirm the macro-hypotheses as outlined in the second section. We start with the series of models, taking just one macro-indicator in at a time (right column of table). Here, almost all effects are as predicted. Looking at demand-side indicators, a high unemployment rate among women seems to discourage, while a high female labour-force participation rate, a favourable gender–wage ratio and a larger tertiary sector share seem to encourage women to reject a male breadwinner idea.

Table 14.5 Effects of macro-variables on male breadwinner support

Variable	Hypothesis	Maximum model	Groups of macro-indicators	Single macro-indicators
D1 Female labour-force participation level	-	n.s.	-.072	.102
D2 Female unemployment rate	+	-.149	-.045	-.135
D3 Gender-wage ratio	-	-.031	-.106	-.120
D4 Tertiary sector share	-	n.s.	-.228	-.254
S1 Family-related expenditure	-	-.056	-.145	-.092
S2 Child-care coverage	-	n.s.	-.223	-.095
S3 Paid parental leave	+	+.153	+.241	+.151
S4 Educational attainment	-	-.050	+.098	n.s.
G1 Economic development	-	-.380	-.328	-.330
G2 Protestant religious background	-	.046	n.s.	-.206

Notes: + = significant positive effect, - = significant negative effect, n.s. = not significant (> .01).

Sources: Own computation. Data: ISSP 2002, women, weighted. Dependent variable: see Methods section. Own calculations on the basis of ISSP data.

As for supply-side indicators, the length of work absence with publicly paid parental leave in fact supports the approval of a male breadwinner idea. A sizeable monetary public engagement in family-friendly policies as well as child-care provision have the opposite effect. Surprisingly, the effect of educational attainment as compared to that of men is not significant. This is possibly due to the fact that, especially in post-communist countries – which we found to favour fairly traditional family values – women formally outnumbered men in higher educational participation, but often still remained disadvantaged in terms of labour-market chances, which fosters a partial revival of traditional gender values (Lück, 2006). Finally, as to cultural background variables, women in Protestant societies are, as predicted, less likely to support a male breadwinner idea, as are women in countries with a high level of economic development.

If we control for a group of related macro-indicators (middle column: all demand-side factors, all supply side-factors, or all indicators of general cultural background), then three effects change: the effect of women's educational attainment changes, from not significant, to now even counter-intuitively positive, probably for the reasons explained above. The effect of the female unemployment rate changes from positive to negative. This, however, may be plausible: if we simultaneously control for entry chances of women into well paid employment (as reflected in general female labour-force participation, entry chances in the service sector, and earnings opportunities through a favourable gender–wage ratio), then female unemployment rates reflect women's active search for labour-market activity which promotes their rejection of the traditional division of labour and care. Finally, when both cultural background variables are included, the effect for the Protestant religious background diminishes and becomes even insignificant. This result supports Inglehart's assumption of a strong interrelation between Protestantism and economic growth in fostering the development of post-material values, though through different mechanisms (well-being and religious gender ideology).

In the model that controls for all macro-indicators (left column) simultaneously, three indicators become insignificant, and the effect of educational attainment and religious background turns. These are probably effects of too high an internal correlation among the explaining variables, so that these additional findings remain hard to interpret.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In our contribution, we have described and analysed attitudes women from Western, industrialized countries have had towards work and care

throughout the last two decades. In contrast to many other fields of attitudinal research, these attitudes have proven to be highly dynamic. Our results confirm that, apart from Eastern European countries, support for a male breadwinner idea among women has markedly decreased, or remained stable at a low level. Our analyses have shown that this development can, on the one hand, be ascribed to cultural changes, in that the change from modern to post-modern value orientations, as well as increasing secularization, has encouraged the questioning of traditional gender-role models. On the other hand, we also have shown that, from a structural perspective, women who are increasingly (supported in) gaining access to educational degrees and positions on the labour market are increasingly rejecting the idea of a male breadwinner.

However, despite this universal trend that may lead to a cross-national convergence in Western societies, our analyses show that the country a woman lives in continues to have a significant influence on her gender-related attitudes. Women living in countries which have increased the demand for women's labour-force participation through the creation of new and more equally paid jobs in the service sector reveal a greater rejection of the male breadwinner idea than women in countries where these conditions cannot be found. Similarly, women in countries that have substantially invested in family-friendly reconciliation policies such as early child care, are found to be more antipathetic to a traditional division of labour than women in countries where this is not true. Women in countries which have promoted an – at least temporary – withdrawal of women from work through long paid leave arrangements show less aversion towards such a model. Though our results show that these institutions are clearly connected with cultural background patterns such as the religious background of a country, we could also show that a more detailed analysis of the concrete institutional materialization of the cultural backgrounds adds additional explanatory value to our analyses. An adequate analysis of gender roles should therefore explicitly take the overlap and interaction of structural and cultural influences at both the macro- and micro-level into account, in order to disentangle the interconnections that tend to be hidden behind 'mere regime differences'.

All in all, our findings can be interpreted as supporting a theoretical concept of gender arrangements (Pfau-Effinger, 1996, 2003): a concept of reciprocal influences of various structural and cultural factors, which tend to find balances and persist for longer periods of time. This situation can be found in several English-speaking and Scandinavian societies which have supported women's employment either through state or market support (Hofäcker, 2006). However, the balance found in previously male breadwinner-oriented Central and Southern European countries, is

increasingly deteriorating. The direction of cultural change in these societies is a turn away from the traditional male breadwinner concept towards more gender equality, despite the fact that in many of these countries structural conditions have remained largely breadwinner-oriented (Hofäcker, 2004). This ‘temporal lag’ between structural and cultural conditions may increasingly create greater imbalances in these countries, and may necessitate a re-negotiation of gender relationships and their institutional conditions in the future.

## NOTES

1. The UK and Germany are each represented by two samples: Great Britain, Northern Ireland, East and West Germany.
2. It excludes Japan, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, the Philippines, Taiwan and Israel.
3. New Zealand, Canada, Switzerland, Italy, Cyprus, East Germany, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Russia.
4. Principal components factor analyses (varimax rotation).
5. Answer categories in all cases: ‘strongly agree’, ‘not strongly agree’, ‘neither agree nor disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘strongly disagree’, and ‘can’t choose’ (set as missing value). In the US survey 2002 the categories ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’ are collapsed (GESIS/ZA, 2004).
6. Macro indicators were added to the data set, using statistical information from different official sources including Eurostat, OECD, and the UN Economic Commission of Europe, The German Statistical Office and other established scientific data collections. Sources were pooled to allow for a consideration of a possible maximum of countries, as far as they could be considered (approximately) comparable. Find more details on the authors’ websites: [www.staff.uni-mainz.de/lueckd/](http://www.staff.uni-mainz.de/lueckd/) or [www.uni-bamberg.de/sowi/soziologie-i/staff/hofaecker.html](http://www.uni-bamberg.de/sowi/soziologie-i/staff/hofaecker.html).
7. This means that in 2002 the share of strong supporters over all countries is 50 per cent and the share of weak supporters is 50 per cent. The share of strong supporters is more than 50 per cent in 1994 and 1988, as Figure 14.1 shows, since attitudes have shifted. Because the split marks the median split for the entire sample, any one country is likely to have a higher or lower proportion than the entire average (in 2002 like in any other year).
8. This is still true if the existence of children is not controlled for.

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## APPENDIX

Table 14.A1 Overview of working age women's attitudes toward a male breadwinner idea, 1988–2002

Country	(1) 'A husband's job is to earn money; a wife's job is to look after the home and family'		(2) 'A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children'		(3) 'Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay'		(4) 'People who have never had children lead empty lives'					
	1988 (%)	1994 (%)	2002 (%)	1988 (%)	1994 (%)	2002 (%)	1988 (%)	1994 (%)	2002 (%)			
<i>Answer categories: 1 = 'strongly agree' plus 2 = 'agree' (out of five available)</i>												
<b>English-speaking</b>												
USA	15.5	9.8	16.1	21.6	23.7	31.4	51.5	50.8	62.8	19.0	12.1	13.0
Canada	–	5.6	–	–	11.2	–	–	43.3	–	–	11.3	–
Australia	–	11.8	10.7	–	22.5	21.3	–	47.1	50.0	–	19.7	13.7
New Zealand	–	11.4	9.7	–	14.0	16.6	–	40.7	40.4	–	12.6	10.3
Great Britain	12.0	13.9	8.1	17.7	16.6	16.1	38.5	40.2	43.3	16.9	14.5	10.0
Northern Ireland	–	18.1	13.4	–	26.3	29.3	–	52.4	44.4	–	22.2	10.1
Ireland	25.9	18.1	7.5	42.9	37.0	27.9	60.1	53.5	41.7	25.4	19.9	11.4
<b>Scandinavian</b>												
Sweden	–	6.4	2.2	–	27.2	14.9	–	28.3	27.6	–	14.4	7.4
Norway	–	6.7	3.7	–	22.3	15.1	–	27.0	23.0	–	15.5	12.1
Denmark	–	–	5.9	–	–	20.6	–	–	35.3	–	–	8.8
Finland	–	–	4.5	–	–	40.3	–	–	40.3	–	–	46.0

<b>Southern Europe</b>												
Italy	28.4	20.0	—	42.6	39.3	—	33.3	18.1	—	44.7	42.4	—
Spain	—	18.3	9.8	—	37.8	28.9	—	34.6	32.4	—	35.1	20.8
Portugal	—	—	21.2	—	—	48.4	—	—	39.9	—	—	57.9
Cyprus	—	—	8.6	—	—	29.6	—	—	8.9	—	—	53.2
<b>Central Europe</b>												
Netherlands	14.1	8.8	6.2	26.2	21.4	26.2	40.3	33.7	21.6	10.5	9.7	6.5
Flanders (Belg.)	—	—	8.0	—	—	28.7	—	—	37.8	—	—	11.0
France	—	—	9.0	—	—	40.4	—	—	31.3	—	—	26.9
Switzerland	—	—	12.7	—	—	24.6	—	—	43.9	—	—	14.3
Austria	45.7	32.2	18.4	51.7	30.8	18.5	51.3	34.0	30.5	53.1	57.2	35.1
West Germany	29.3	19.8	12.2	29.4	24.3	15.7	40.7	33.9	24.1	35.7	42.9	35.0
<b>Eastern Europe</b>												
East Germany	—	6.1	11.1	—	14.5	9.5	—	11.5	15.4	—	61.6	50.5
Czech Republic	—	48.2	44.2	—	58.4	60.4	—	22.5	33.3	—	42.0	51.7
Slovakia	—	—	42.4	—	—	68.1	—	—	40.4	—	—	39.9
Slovenia	—	26.8	13.4	—	58.4	50.7	—	35.0	37.4	—	60.1	52.7
Hungary	29.9	40.4	30.1	71.7	68.1	63.0	89.7	51.5	50.0	85.2	79.4	75.4
Poland	—	53.1	32.5	—	58.1	42.6	—	53.9	50.5	—	36.8	26.1
Latvia	—	—	41.7	—	—	40.4	—	—	26.4	—	—	35.3
Bulgaria	—	61.9	34.0	—	76.1	54.8	—	60.2	43.3	—	77.7	68.9
Russia	—	63.4	56.7	—	59.9	48.2	—	87.8	38.2	—	57.3	57.4

*Notes:* Answer categories available: 1 = 'strongly agree', 2 = 'agree', 3 = 'neither agree nor disagree', 4 = 'disagree', 5 = 'strongly disagree'.

*Sources:* Own computation, weighted data, filter: women, aged 20–50. Own calculations on the basis of ISSP data.



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