A HANDBOOK OF COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY, SECOND EDITION
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David Bainton is a lecturer in Education at Goldsmiths College, University of London. After a chemistry degree Dave taught in secondary schools in London, Zimbabwe and Bhutan, before doing a PhD (Bristol) that looked at the effect of Western education on indigenous knowledge in Ladakh, Northern India. His current research interests are the effects of globalization on the educational experiences of children and communities in the Global South, and how translation might offer a way to be sensitive to the global reconfiguration of livelihoods and subjectivities.

Jaak Billiet, PhD, was a Professor in Social Methodology at the University of Leuven (Belgium) and is now Professor Emeritus. His main interest in methodology is with modelling of measurement error in social surveys. His substantial research covers longitudinal and comparative research in the domains of ethnocentrism, political attitudes and religious orientations. He was a founding member of the Central Coordination Team involved in the European Social Survey. Publications include Improving Survey Response (Wiley, 2010) in cooperation with Stoop, Koch and Fitzgerald); Cross-Cultural Analysis: Methods and Applications (Routledge, 2011) as co-editor with Davidov and Schmidt, as well as articles in Sociological Methods & Research (2008), European Sociological Review (2008), Social Science Research (2009), Survey Research Methods (2009, 2010) and Public Opinion Quarterly (2010).

Jonathan Bradshaw, CBE, FBA, is Professor of Social Policy at the University of York. He was founding director of the Social Policy Research Unit and served two terms as Head of Department. His main research interests are poverty, child well-being, family policy and comparative social policy. His most recent book is The Well-being of Children in the UK (Policy Press, 2011). He is the UK member of the EU expert group on social inclusion and works as a consultant to UNICEF. He is a partner in the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey 2012. He is a member of the Board of the Child Poverty Action Group and Chair of York Welfare Benefits Unit.

Jochen Clasen is Professor of Comparative Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. His research interests cover labour market policy, social security, welfare state theory and comparative methodology. Recent book publications include Investigating Welfare State Change: The ‘Dependent

Graham Crow is Director of the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science and is based at the University of Edinburgh where he is Professor of Sociology and Methodology. He is also Deputy Director of the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods. His publications include Comparative Sociology and Social Theory (Macmillan, 1997), Social Solidarities (Open University Press, 2002), and The Art of Sociological Argument (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). He is currently writing a book for Bloomsbury on community studies.

Ray Forrest is Chair Professor of Housing and Urban Studies at the City University of Hong Kong and Emeritus of Urban Studies at the University of Bristol. From 2001 to 2004 he was Head of the School for Policy Studies at Bristol and from 2004–08 was Associate, then Acting Director of the Centre for East Asian Studies. He was also Co-Director of the ESRC Centre for Neighbourhood Research (2001–05). He is a founding member of the Asia-Pacific Network of Housing Researchers. He is currently co-editor of Housing Studies and edits the Routledge Housing and Society series.

Norman Ginsburg has been Professor of Social Policy at London Metropolitan University since 1996. His research interests are the comparative impact of social policy on social injustice and inequality, and the social effects of urban regeneration and housing policy. He is the author of Divisions of Welfare: An Introduction to Comparative Social Policy (Sage, 1992). Recent publications include articles on globalization and the liberal welfare states, social policy in Sweden, social aspects of urban regeneration, the demise of council housing, and on globalization and racism.

Ian Gough, AcSS, FRSA, is Emeritus Professor at the University of Bath and Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics, where he is currently researching climate change and social policy. He is the author of numerous books, including The Political Economy of the Welfare State; A Theory of Human Need; Global Capital, Human Needs and Social Policies; and Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Linda Hantrais is Emeritus Professor of European Social Policy in the Department of Politics, History and International Relations,
Loughborough University, UK, and an academician of the Academy of Social Sciences. Her research interests span international comparative research theory, methodology, management and practice, with particular reference to public policy and institutional structures in the European Union, and the relationship between socio-demographic trends and social policy. She has coordinated several European research projects and has acted as consultant for an ESRC-funded Researcher Development Initiative for a training programme in International Social Research Methods. Her more recent publications on these topics include: *Family Policy Matters: Responding to Family Change in Europe* (Policy Press, 2004); *Social Policy in the European Union* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 3rd edition); *Cross-National Research Methodology and Practice* (editor, with S. Mangen, Routledge, 2007); *International Comparative Research: Theory, Methods and Practice* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).


**Patricia Kennett** is Reader in Comparative Policy Studies at the University of Bristol. Her research interests involve exploring cross-nationally the interrelated dynamics of space, place, power and policy, and the processes and differentiated nature of inclusion and exclusion. Her particular geographical focus is on Europe and East Asia. Patricia is currently leading an ESRC project on the uneven impact of the economic downturn on cities and households in Bristol and Liverpool, which follows the recent completion of a three-year qualitative research project on Governance and Citizenship in East Asia (funded by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, China). Recent publications include an edited collection *Women and Housing: An International Analysis* (with Chan Kam Wah; Routledge, 2010), as well as journal articles on gender justice, and choreographies of governance and citizenship in East Asia.
Huck-ju Kwon is Professor and the Deputy Director of Asia Development Institute, Graduate School of Public Administration, Seoul National University. He was previously Research Coordinator at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). He serves as East Asian Editor of Global Social Policy (Sage). His recent publications include The Korean State and Social Policy (Oxford University Press, 2011), Transforming the Developmental Welfare State in East Asia (Palgrave, 2005), and ‘Economic crises and the welfare state in Korea: reforms and future challenges’, in Korea Journal of Policy Studies (2010).

Noemi Lendvai is a Lecturer in Comparative Social Policy at the School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol. She has done extensive research on the post-communist transformation and Europeanization of welfare in New EU Member States. Her theoretical focus is on translation as a critical comparative social policy method as well as various typology works around forms of variegated or varieties of welfare capitalisms in Eastern Europe. As a Max Weber Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence in 2010, she has also done some work on East–West migration and emerging practices of social citizenship in a hyper-mobile European Union.

Steen Mangen convenes the MSc in European Social Policy at the London School of Economics. His main research interests have included contemporary Spanish and German welfare states, qualitative methods in cross-national settings and urban regeneration policies in Western Europe. Spanish Society After Franco: Regime Transition and the Welfare State was published by Palgrave in 2001 and Social Exclusion and Inner City Europe: Regulating Urban Regeneration, also by Palgrave, was published in 2004. With Linda Hantrais he co-edited Cross-National Research Methodology & Practice, published by Routledge in 2007, and contributed to A Companion to Europe since 1945, edited by Klaus Larres and published by Blackwell in 2008. He is currently completing a cross-national research project on the changing role of faith-based organizations in Western European welfare states.

James Midgley is Harry and Riva Specht Professor of Public Social Services and Dean Emeritus of the School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley. He has published widely on issues of social policy, social development and international social welfare. His most recent books include Social Security, the Economy and Development (Palgrave, 2008) (editor with Kwong-leung Tang); The Handbook of Social Policy (Sage, 2009) (editor with Michelle Livermore); Grassroots Social Security in Asia: Mutual Aid, Microinsurance and Social Welfare (Routledge, 2011)
Contributors


Ramesh Mishra is Emeritus Professor of Social Policy at York University, Canada. His areas of interest are comparative welfare states, globalization and social protection, and social rights. He has published extensively in these areas and his books and articles have been translated into many languages. His books include The Welfare State in Crisis (1984), Globalization and the Welfare State (1999) and Modernizing the Korean Welfare State (co-editor, 2004). Among his other publications are ‘Globalizing social rights’ in Man & Development (December 2002), ‘Globalization and welfare states’ in Welfare States and the Future (Macmillan, 2005) and ‘Social rights as human rights’, International Social Work, 48(1) (2005).

David Nelken, PHD, LLD (Cambridge), is Distinguished Professor of Legal Institutions and Social Change at the University of Macerata in Italy and Distinguished Research Professor of Law at Cardiff University, UK. He is also the Visiting Professor of Criminology at the Oxford Centre of Criminology (teaching a masters course on comparative criminology and globalization). An academician of the UK Academy of the Social Sciences, he received a Distinguished Scholar award from the American Sociological Association in 1985, the ‘Sellin–Glueck’ career award from the American Society of Criminology in 2009, the ‘Adam Podgorecki’ career prize from the International Sociological Association (RCSL) in 2011 and the 2013 international prize from the (USA) Law and Society Association. His latest books are Comparative Criminal Justice: Making Sense of Difference (Sage, 2010); Comparative Criminal Justice and Globalisation (Ashgate, 2011); and Using Legal Culture (Wildy, Simmonds and Hill, 2012).

Julia S. O'Connor is Professor of Social Policy and a member of the Institute for Research in Social Sciences at the University of Ulster. Her main area of research is welfare states in comparative perspective, focusing on OECD and EU countries. Current research projects include a study of employment insecurity, regulation and social protection and a study of state transformation and gender equality. Recent publications include articles on socioeconomic policy and outcome convergence in EU countries; gender, citizenship and the state; and non-standard employment and EU employment regulation.
Andrés Pérez-Baltodano is a Professor of Political Science at Western University in Canada. He is a former director of the Nicaraguan Institute of Public Administration. Between 1983 and 1988 he worked with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada, where he organized a multinational research programme in public policy and participation. He has published extensively in the areas of globalization, human security and the state, with special emphasis on Latin America. His most recent book is entitled La Subversión Etica de la Realidad: Crisis y Renovación del Pensamiento Critico Latinoamericano, published by the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica (IHNCA), Universidad Centroamericana in 2009.

Alan Walker is a Professor of Social Policy at the University of Sheffield. He was Director of the ESRC Growing Older Programme 1999–2004, the European Research Area in Ageing 2004–12 and the FUTURAGE Project 2010–12, and is currently Director of the New Dynamics of Ageing Programme and two European projects, INNOVAGE and MOPACT. He has a long-standing interest in social policy in China and East Asia, and has edited a collection on this topic with Chack-kie Wong, East Asian Welfare Regimes in Transition (Policy Press, 2005). Other recent publications include Fighting Poverty, Inequality and Injustice (with A. Sinfield and C. Walker) (Policy Press, 2011) and Social Quality: From Theory to Indicators (with L. Van Der Maesen) (Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

Chack-kie Wong is a Professor in the Department of Social Work and Associate Director of Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Currently he is a member of the Central Policy Unit of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. His research interests are in the areas of comparative social policy, welfare attitudes, poverty and Chinese social welfare. He has published articles in Social Policy and Society, Journal of Social Policy, Social Policy and Administration, and International Social Work.
I would like to thank the authors for their willingness to contribute to the *Handbook*, for the time and effort put into producing and revising their individual chapters and for their patience during the editing process. I am also grateful to the publishers for their advice and support.
Introduction: the changing context of comparative social policy

Patricia Kennett

The field of comparative social enquiry has grown dramatically since the 1960s, in terms of the number of studies being undertaken, the range of approaches used and the countries analysed. The analytical emphasis on the notions of modernization and convergence, and social expenditure as a proportion of GNP as the measure of welfare effort, whilst still evident in contemporary cross-national research, ceased to dominate the comparative landscape from the 1980s. There is now much more interest in recognizing and explaining qualitative as well as quantitative differences in types of welfare systems, addressing the role of institutions and ideas; acknowledgement that formal social policies are only one element in the arrangement of welfare and that social policy is not just about ameliorating the impact of social inequality or altruism but itself contributes to social divisions in society. There has been a greater recognition of diversity and the importance of analysing context, processes, culture and the outcomes of social policies across countries and their impact on different groups.

The changing discourse around social policy and the welfare state can also be associated with the economic and political conditions of the 1980s, which were in marked contrast to what had gone before. In many OECD countries, post-1945 was an era in which the notion of Keynesian welfare capitalism, in its various institutional forms, incorporated a commitment to extended social citizenship and a certain minimum standard of life and security as a matter of right. National welfare regimes helped to underpin a global system of interacting national economies characterized by mass production and mass consumption. This model of institutionalized, bureaucratic provision and social rights was perceived as the inevitable outcome of a ‘modern’ or developed society. By the 1980s it was the political rhetoric of deregulation, privatization, the efficiency of the ‘free market’ and rolling back the frontiers of the state that had become the global economic discourse influencing both national and international policies. As Taylor-Gooby (2001) argues in a European context, ‘Keynesianism (the view that state intervention is the best way to promote growth and employment) is quite simply dead, a result of the general acceptance that governmental capacity to manage investment within its borders is
limited’ (p. 19). At the same time many of the fundamental assumptions associated with the national welfare state and the social rights of citizenship have been discredited and renegotiated, and the discourse about the role of the state in welfare has moved in a new direction (Kennett, 2001; Taylor-Gooby, 2001). According to Harris (2002) the ‘new’ welfare of the 1980s and 1990s centred on personal and community relationships (Etzioni, 1995; Driver and Martell, 1997), community governance and the notion of active membership, in contrast with the ‘old’ welfare of the post-war period which emphasized society, universal citizenship rights and statutory state provision (King and Wickham Jones, 1999; Rose, 1999). More recently, fundamental to the ‘new’ welfare is a re-balancing of the social contract between the state and the individual, between rights and responsibilities, work and welfare (Kvist, 2000; Barbier, 2001).

The current context then is one in which many of the old certainties of the past have been eroded and there has been a recognition of the emergence of ‘new’ social risks (Jenson and Saint Martin, 2002; Taylor-Gooby, 2004; Bonoli, 2005). The predominantly inward-looking, domestic preoccupation of social policy has made way for a more integrated, international and outward approach to analysis (Kennett, 2001, 2010; Hantrais, 2009), and a recognition of the importance of scale (Brenner, 2001). Central to this endeavour is a reassessment of the place of the state in contemporary social policy analysis. The pre-eminence of the national scale, the national state and the national citizen has been weakened by internationalization, the growth of multi-tiered networks and partnerships and the re-emergence of the regional and the local within national states. There has been a proliferation of scales, channels, projects and social networks through which social interaction and active participation can be pursued. Thus, within the modern world system, the notion of unfettered state sovereignty has become problematic and contradictory (Clapham, 2002; Weiss, 2003; Kennett, 2008, 2010) and has presented new challenges for comparative analysis in the social sciences.

These challenges have been captured in recent academic work relating to processes of globalization and transnationalism that have contributed to a de-centring of the state in social policy analysis. The burgeoning literature reflects the multi-faceted nature of global processes, and indeed the vagueness and inconsistencies in the use of the concept (Geschiere and Meyer, 1998; Giddens, 1999; Held and McGrew, 2000, 2002). General debates have been concerned with the economic, cultural, technological, social and political dimensions of globalization. In addition, the relationship between globalization, social policy and the welfare state has generated interest amongst commentators (for example, Deacon et al., 1997; Midgley, 1997; Mishra, 1999; Yeates, 2000; Scharf, 2000; Swank, 2002;
Kennett, 2010). This interest emerged in the context of the retrenchment and reorientation of welfare mentioned earlier and the changing role of the state as its dominant position has increasingly been challenged by stronger and more influential transnational and supranational institutions and the assertiveness of subnational governments. Global and transnational processes are said by some to have contributed to the erosion of the functions of nation-states and deprived national governments of their ability to establish and maintain an autonomous welfare model. Clearly there are differing opinions on the nature, extent and impact of global processes on social policy and welfare systems. What is more certain is that the current context of social policy is one that looks beyond the boundaries of the state in terms of incorporating transnational and subnational activities, and is sensitive to the nature of the mixed economy of welfare, the range of conduits through which policies are made and delivered and the changing relations of space and power within, across and between states and societies (Macrae, 2006; Kennett, 2008). As Geschiere and Meyer (1998) argue, ‘The inspiring capacity of the notion of globalization is precisely that it forces social scientists to critically reflect upon how they construct their objects, and to seek for more appropriate fields of investigation which take account of people’s actual entanglement in wider processes’ (p. 603). So, in de-centring the state the researcher is encouraged to reconsider established structures of ‘boundedness’ and seek out alternative orientation points and identify reconstructed boundaries as individuals, communities and societies seek to make sense of a changing world.

It is in this context then that this *Handbook* brings together the work of key commentators in the field of comparative analysis in order to provide comprehensive, but by no means exhaustive, coverage of contemporary debates and issues in cross-national research. The collection explores the contextual, conceptual, analytical and processual aspects of undertaking comparative international social research. The collection is divided into five themes. The first part – ‘The State and Social Policy in a Globalizing World’ – is concerned with extending the epistemological framework through which comparative international analysis is explored by emphasizing the need to look beyond the boundaries of the state not only in relation to transnational activities, but also in terms of the mixed economy of welfare and cultural political economy (Sayer, 2001; Jessop and Oosterlynck, 2008; Kennett, forthcoming) within different societies. The three contributors to this section explore the future of the nation-state and the nature of governance, debates that have been, according to Jessop (Chapter 1 this volume), reinforced with the recent global financial crisis and global climate change; and the implications for human security and social protection in different societies and for different groups of people.
Bob Jessop in Chapter 1 identifies the transfer of powers previously located at the national level to a more diverse, multi-level and multi-sector range of actors and institutions. In addition, he stresses the importance of conceptual distinctions and complexity in order to understand the future of national and/or nation-states. The differential impact of globalization on the states and societies of the North and the South is also a concern of Andrés Pérez-Baltodano in Chapter 2. He argues that global interconnectedness has generated new forms of human insecurity that require a range of social policy responses beyond national boundaries. He outlines the formation and development of the democratic Western European state and, drawing upon this ‘universalist’ model, considers the different levels of ‘stateness’ achieved by countries in the North and the South. He argues that an understanding of the varying capacities of states to respond to global pressures is vital in order to fully comprehend the varying conditions of human security across societies.

In the final chapter in Part I, Ramesh Mishra focuses on Australia, Japan and the post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the former USSR as representative of societies with institutional patterns defined as ‘social protection by other means’. He argues that these were developed during an era of relatively closed and insulated national economies and considers the extent to which they have been undermined by the opening up of national markets to international competition.

The reassessment of the role of the state in social policy analysis forms part of a fundamental reappraisal of the assumptions embedded in social science research that has been underway since the 1980s. The rationality, essentialism and universalism of policy discourse and practices through which the welfare state was established have been called into question. The emphasis on diversity, difference and contingency and the notion of spatial and temporal variation challenged many of the assumptions on which the theoretical and epistemological traditions of social policy have been built. The universalism of social policy discourse was, in reality, exemplifying the experience of the white, able-bodied, heterosexual worker and was unable to capture the ‘particular’ experiences and social needs of diverse ethnic, cultural, sexual and gender interests.

Parts II and III of this volume – ‘Concepts and Definitions’ and ‘Comparing and Categorizing Social Policy Provision and Redistribution’ – focus on the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for analysing social policy cross-nationally. In Chapter 4 Jochen Clasen begins by exploring the distinctive features of and the meanings applied to comparative social policy over recent years. For comparativists the unit of analysis has traditionally been different national contexts. However, as the boundaries of state and society are becoming increasingly blurred the concerns for
Graham Crow in Chapter 5 are ‘What do social scientists compare? Are the concepts of state and society still relevant in cross-national analysis?’

Chapters 6 and 7 question the dominance of the Western social research paradigm in comparative analysis. Alan Walker and Chack-kie Wong in Chapter 6 critically assess the way in which the concept of the ‘welfare state’ has been utilized in cross-national analysis. They conclude that the Western ethnocentric construction of the concept has resulted in the exclusion of large sections of the globe from comparative research. Noemi Lendvai and David Bainton in Chapter 7 draw on the concept of ‘translation’ to capture the ‘mobility of the policy process’ and frame a more ‘equitable dialogue between divergent cultural and epistemic communities’ (p. 116 this volume).

Attempts to categorize and typologize different aspects of welfare systems across countries have been an extremely popular feature of comparative social research (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Ferrera, 1996; Bonoli, 1997; Holliday, 2000, 2005). The four chapters in Part III are concerned with extending and broadening the analytical, conceptual and substantive aspects of categorizing and typologizing welfare states. In Chapter 8 Julia O’Connor links the contested concepts of gender, citizenship and welfare regimes to explain the variations in the range and quality of social rights. She urges that gender, race and class and their interaction must be integral parts of comparative analysis. This is echoed by Norman Ginsburg in Chapter 9 who adopts a ‘critical structured diversity’ approach to explore cross-national developments in social policy. For Ginsburg this approach enables the research to retain the specificity of each national context, whilst also incorporating elements ‘beyond the state’ within the analysis. It also incorporates consideration of the relationship between the welfare state and the social divisions of race, class and gender.

The final two chapters in this part are concerned with the relevance of classificatory and explanatory models for analysing social welfare in the South. James Midgley in Chapter 10 points to the urgent need for ‘appropriate normative frameworks that can address the persistence of global poverty, deprivation and oppression’ (p. 183 this volume). He suggests that the social development perspective offers one alternative discourse on social welfare with the potential to enrich the study of comparative social policy. In Chapter 11 Ian Gough has sought to ‘radically recast’ the welfare regime paradigm. He provides a variegated, middle-range model that can facilitate fruitful and integrated analysis across the North and South of the globe.

In Part IV – ‘The Research Process’ – the focus is, as the title suggests, on the processual and practical day-to-day realities of carrying out cross-national social policy analysis. It is concerned with recognizing and
exploring the issues that emerge from carrying out research in more than one country. In Chapter 12 Linda Hantrais discusses the relevance and implications of recognizing and understanding different research cultures and disciplinary traditions when carrying out comparative research. In Chapter 13 Steen Mangen undertakes the task of defining ‘the qualitative’ and explores a range of significant innovations in qualitative methods. He discusses the opportunities and challenges created by the growing availability of web-based and electronic sources. In Chapter 14 Jaak Billiet’s focus is on quantitative approaches and research design, focusing particularly on cross-country survey data. As well as considering conceptual, theoretical and epistemological issues associated with this research strategy, he also considers the challenges presented by the equivalence of samples, response rates, measurement scales and the translation of questions.

The contributions in the final part of this collection – ‘Themes and Debates’, by Jonathan Bradshaw, Ray Forrest, Huck-ju Kwon and David Nelken – highlight specific areas of comparative social policy including child poverty and well-being, patterns of housing provision and housing inequalities, social protection in East Asia following the global economic crisis in 2008–09, and finally crime and criminology in a global context. These chapters are intended to highlight continuing and emerging themes and issues that are of particular relevance to understanding and responding to the needs of the contemporary social world.

REFERENCES

Introduction 7


PART I

THE STATE AND SOCIAL POLICY IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD
Lively debates over the nation-state resurfaced in the 1980s as scholars and politicians suggested that it had become too small to solve the world’s big problems and too big to solve its little ones. These debates have continued into this century and, indeed, the recent global financial crisis and worries about global climate change (juxtaposed to issues of micro-finance and local emergencies) reinforce these points. Problems noted include: (1) the rise of global capitalism, growing global economic imbalances and the failures of global economic governance; (2) the emergence of a global risk society, especially regarding anthropogenic changes in the environment; (3) the growth of identity politics and new social movements based on local and/or transnational issues; and (4) the threat of new forms of terrorism and dispersed network warfare. But it is unclear what these problems imply for the future of the state.

More radical predictions include: the hollowing out of the nation-state through the re-scaling of the nation-state’s powers upwards, downwards, or sideways, the rise of the hollow state, the internationalization of the state, the fragmentation of the modern system of nation-states into a convoluted and tangled ‘neo-medieval’ system; the rise of medium-sized ‘region-states’ that organize dynamic regional economies across national frontiers; and a world or global state or, at least, a Western hemispheric state under American hegemony. More modest predictions include ‘holed power containers’, ‘perforated sovereignties’, the ‘unbundling’ of national state powers, an uneven ‘denationalization–renationalization’ of the state, growing intergovernmental cooperation based on the continued primacy of nation-states, or incremental changes in secondary aspects of the nation-state that leave its core intact. Compounding this confusion, others have suggested that the powers of the territorial state are being replaced on all scales by non-hierarchical forms of coordination with highly variable territorial geometries. This is generally seen to involve a shift from state-based government to network-based governance. This development is often discussed in terms of ‘governance without government’ and the network state. Yet others suggest that the nation-state remains vigorous. Indeed, they argue that the nation-state was never as strong before and is
not now so weak as ‘hollowing out’ implies; and/or that state managers continually re-design the state to ensure its survival in response to new challenges.

FIVE CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

An adequate response to this conceptual confusion (and its associated contests about the appropriate future direction of the state) requires five clarifications. First, all forms of state rest on the territorialization of political power. A formally sovereign national state that effectively controls a large territorial area is a relatively recent institutional expression of state power. It results from a specific, socially constructed demarcation of the political system and divides the latter into many territorially exclusive, mutually recognizing, and mutually validating, sovereign states. This configuration structures the distinction between domestic and international politics and orients struggles in these terms. Other modes of territorializing political power have existed, new expressions are emerging, others can be imagined and, indeed, are being actively promoted by different forces. Earlier modes include city-states, empires, the medieval state system, absolutism and modern imperial-colonial blocs. Emerging modes, not necessarily mutually exclusive, include cross-border regions, regional formations (e.g., the European Union), a Western conglomerate state, intercontinental blocs (e.g., the BRIC summits, which link Brazil, Russia, India and China) and even an embryonic but as yet ineffective world state.

Second, we should distinguish the national state from the nation-state. Whereas territorial statehood has become almost universal, nation statehood has not. Even when national identity is the basis of state formation, it can have different, potentially overlapping, sometimes antagonistic bases. These include ethnic identity, based on a socially constructed ethnonational community (e.g., Germany); a cultural nation based on a shared national culture that may well be defined and actively promoted by the state itself (e.g., France); and a civic nation based on patriotic commitment to the constitution and belief in the legitimacy of representative government (e.g., the USA). These three forms can reinforce each other (e.g., Denmark), be combined in a hybrid multinational state (e.g., mainland Britain), or provoke conflicts over the proper basis of the nation-state (e.g., Canada, New Zealand). Pressures exist to grant significant autonomy to regionally based national minorities (e.g., Spain) or create ‘conso- ciation’ forms of government to share power between nations in a given state (e.g., Belgium).
Third, the state does not exist in isolation but is part of an encompassing political system with its own history. It also has complex relations to other institutional orders (e.g., the economy, religion, science, education, art) and from civil society. Indeed, ‘[t]he essence of modern politics is not policies formed on one side of this division [between the state and society] being applied to or shaped by the other, but the producing and reproducing of this line of difference’ (Mitchell, 1991, p. 95). Thus, state transformation involves redrawing this ‘line of difference’ (or demarcation) as the state redefines its priorities, expands or reduces its activities, and is dis-embedded or re-embedded.

Fourth, while all sovereign states may be formally equal, some are substantively more equal than others. They face different problems at home and abroad; have different histories; have different capacities to address these problems and reorganize themselves in response; and, in international encounters, they are involved in tangled hierarchies of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ power. This rules out any simple theoretical or rhetorical claims about ‘states’ as subjects or objects in a changing world and requires nuanced empirical analysis.

Fifth, relatedly, it is highly misleading to conceive of the relation between globalization and the power of national territorial states in zero-sum terms. For this would involve treating the current, partly globalization-induced crisis of the territorial national state – whether in its post-war Atlantic Fordist form, developmental statist, national security state, or other forms – as signifying the present and future impossibility of any other institutional form(s) for the territorialization of political power. Attempts were made early on to re-design the national territorial state in response to the latest wave of globalization that took off in the 1970s and/or establish new territorial scales as the primary node around which state power would or could be exercised. And, tellingly, the global financial crisis has revived state intervention in economic and social life, including sometimes massive bailouts, radical austerity packages, resort to emergency powers and rediscovery of the virtues of regulation. Increasing recognition of the growing problems of climate change is also triggering many debates and initiatives on how to address them from the local to the global level.

THE KEYNESIAN WELFARE NATIONAL STATE

This contribution cannot consider all forms of national territorial state in the post-war international state system. A more comprehensive account would consider developmental states with their neo-mercantilist policies to
promote export-oriented growth and their limited welfare regimes linked to economic objectives (e.g., some East Asian economies); predatory states that extract revenues from economic activities and subjects; state socialist and post-socialist political regimes; sultanistic states organized around dynastic or personalistic rule; different forms of failing, failed, or collapsed state; and so on. However, here we focus on changes in Keynesian welfare national states (or KWNS) because these have provided the primary reference point in discussions of ‘hollowing out’ and the development of multi-level governance. These states emerged in North Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand during the 1950s to 1970s and were closely linked with the post-war Fordist growth dynamic based on mass production and mass consumption. While they are far from identical, for reasons noted above, they have enough commonalities to provide a benchmark for assessing changes in the state in advanced capitalist economies over the last quarter century or so.

Each of the four terms in the ideal type KWNS refers to a major aspect of state involvement in promoting capitalist expansion and, in this sense, it develops a broadly economic interpretation of the state. Adopting alternative entry points would highlight other aspects of state transformation or, indeed, reveal certain continuities in the state. But a broadly economic approach illuminates many of the issues noted above and can be complemented by other approaches.

First, in promoting the conditions for profitable economic growth, the KWNS was distinctively Keynesian insofar as it aimed to secure full employment in a relatively closed national economy and did so mainly through demand-side management and national infrastructural provision. Second, in contributing to the day-to-day, lifetime and intergenerational reproduction of the labour force, KWNS social policy had a distinctive welfare orientation insofar as it (1) instituted economic and social rights for all citizens so that they could share in growing prosperity (and contribute to high levels of demand) even if they were not employed in the high-wage, high-growth Fordist economic sectors; and (2) promoted forms of collective consumption favourable to the Fordist growth dynamic. Third, the KWNS was national insofar as these economic and social policies were pursued within the historically specific (and socially constructed) matrix of a national economy, a national state and a society seen as comprising national citizens. Within this matrix it was the national territorial state that was mainly held responsible for developing and guiding Keynesian welfare policies. Local and regional states acted mainly as relays for policies framed at the national level; and the leading international regimes established after World War II were mainly intended to restore stability to national economies and national
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states. And, fourth, the KWNS was statist insofar as state institutions (on different levels) were the chief supplement and corrective to market forces in a ‘mixed economy’ concerned with economic growth and social integration.

There was never a pure case of the KWNS (it is an ideal type) within the international economic and political framework of Atlantic Fordism. Nor was there a generic crisis that affected all such states identically. Nonetheless, they all faced similar pressures from changes generated by internal crisis tendencies and external developments. The first signs of crisis in Fordist growth emerged in the mid-1970s and the situation worsened in the 1980s. In addition, the structured coherence of national economy-national state-national society was weakened by changes associated with globalization, internationalization, the rise of multi-tiered global city networks, the formation of triad economies (such as European Economic Space), and the re-emergence of regional and local economies. The unity of the nation-state was also weakened by the (admittedly uneven) growth of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies and of divided political loyalties (with the resurgence of regionalism and nationalism as well as the rise of European identities, diasporic networks, cosmopolitan patriotism, etc.).

SIX TRENDS IN THE RESTRUCTURING OF NATIONAL STATES

The reorganization of the national state and of the modalities of state power in response to such pressures involves six interrelated trends. These apply to the Keynesian welfare national state and other types of state as well. Each trend has a countertrend that both qualifies and transforms its significance for the state’s form and functions. These are presented as countertrends because they are specific reactions to the new trends rather than survivals of earlier patterns.

Denationalization of Statehood

Powers previously located at the national level are being transferred upwards to supra-regional or international bodies, downwards to regional or local states, or outwards to relatively autonomous cross-national alliances among local metropolitan or regional states with complementary interests. New state powers have also been allocated to various scales. This de- and re-territorialization of specific state powers is reshaping national states qua mutually exclusive, formally sovereign,
spatially segmented instantiations of the modern interstate system. Given the primacy of the national scale in the KWNS and developmental states, this trend is sometimes called the ‘hollowing out’ of the national state. In all cases, it reflects attempts by state managers on different territorial scales to enhance their respective operational autonomies and strategic capacities.

**De- and Re-statization**

The internal demarcation between state and non-state apparatuses within the political system is being redrawn as activities are re-allocated across this divide. While denationalization concerns the territorial dispersion of the national state’s activities (hence de- and re-territorialization), de-statization redraws the ‘public–private’ divide on whatever territorial scale(s) the state acts. In other words, some of the technical-economic, juridical, administrative, narrowly political, and ideological functions performed by states (on any scale) have been transferred entirely or partially to other (that is, parastatal, non-governmental, private or commercial) actors, institutional arrangements or regimes. This is especially associated with the development of neo-liberalism and its privileging of the market and, secondarily, civil society (or the third sector) over the state. But it is certainly not confined to neo-liberal regimes. The general trend is often described as a shift from government to governance. This slogan misleads in depicting a one-way shift, for there is also reverse traffic as states on different scales gain new responsibilities that were previously ascribed, if anywhere, to the market or civil society. Overall, this increases the importance of quite varied forms (and levels) of partnership between official bodies, parastatal organizations and NGOs in managing economic and social relations in which the state is often only first among equals. This blurs the division between public and private, expands and reinforces the principle of subsidiarity, strengthens the informal sector as well as private enterprise (especially in delivering welfare and collective consumption), and reinforces mechanisms such as ‘regulated self-regulation’ and ‘private interest government’. It is also linked to the state’s growing involvement in de-centred societal guidance strategies based on growing recognition of functional interdependencies, the division of knowledge and the need for mutual learning, reflexivity and negotiated coordination between state and non-state actors. This need not entail a loss in the overall power of government, for resort to governance could enhance the state’s capacity to project its influence and secure its objectives by mobilizing knowledge and power resources from influential non-governmental partners or stakeholders.
The Retreat of the State

This involves the growth of modes of exercising power that (1) do not rest on imperative coordination by a sovereign state and (2) are formally independent of its, possibly re-scaled, borders. This process weakens territorial ‘power containers’ on any scale relative to non-territorial forms of political power. This differs from the shift from government to governance because it dissociates the exercise of political power from imagined political communities whose interests are tied to territorialized state power. Whereas de-statization involves public–private partnerships in which the state devolves responsibilities to the private sphere but attempts to remain *primus inter pares*, state retreat – perhaps at the behest of state managers themselves – hands responsibility directly to autonomous functional agencies, bypassing or circumventing direct top-down state intervention. The increasing importance of international regimes for the relative stabilization of a globalizing economy and the rise of cybernetworks in an extra-territorial, telematic space allegedly beyond state control are two contrasting examples of this third process.

Re-articulating the Economic and Extra-economic

The boundaries and division of labour between the political and economic systems are being redefined to take account of changed understandings of the economy and the conditions making for sound economic performance. The economy is no longer interpreted in narrow terms but has been redefined to include many additional factors, deemed ‘non-economic’ under the KWNS regime, that affect economic performance and competitiveness. This has two paradoxical effects on states and politics. First, whilst it expands the potential scope of state intervention for economic purposes, the resulting complexity renders the typical post-war forms of top-down intervention less effective – requiring that the state retreat from some areas of intervention and re-design its institutional forms and functions in order to intervene more effectively in other areas. And, second, whilst it increases the range of stakeholders whose cooperation is required for successful state intervention, it also increases pressures within the state to create new subjects to act as its partners. Thus, states have been actively involved in attempts to transform the identities, interests, capacities, rights and responsibilities of economic and social forces so that they become more flexible, capable and reliable agents of the state’s new economic strategies – whether in partnership with the state and/or each other or as autonomous entrepreneurial subjects in the new knowledge-driven economy.
Re-ordering Political Hierarchies

Political hierarchies are also being re-ordered. The nested hierarchy of state power within territorially exclusive sovereign states and formal equality among such states was never fully realized in the modern interstate system, but it did provide the institutional framework within which forces struggled to control state power and/or modify the balance of international forces. Many of the changes discussed above have tended to undermine the coherence of this nested hierarchy and to produce increasing unstructured complexity as different scales of economic and political organization proliferate and different scale strategies are pursued. This is reflected in, inter alia, the internationalization of policy regimes. This means that the international context of domestic state action (whether national, regional or local) has expanded to include a widening range of extra-territorial or transnational factors and processes; that the international context has become more significant strategically for domestic policy; and that key players in policy regimes have expanded to include foreign agents and institutions as sources of policy ideas, policy design and implementation. This trend is evident in responses to a wide range of global issues, from trade and finance through education and poverty reduction to energy and environmental issues. It affects local and regional states below the national level as well as supranational state formations and international regimes. It is also evident in the development of the interregional and cross-border linkages connecting local and regional authorities and governance regimes in different national formations.

Re-imagining Political Communities

The political communities (or publics) around which social forces orient their actions are being re-imagined in various ways. They include new ‘imagined nations’ seeking autonomy within and/or control of a defined territory below, above, or transversal to existing national states; a global civil society based on cosmopolitan patriotism, the primacy of human rights over national citizenship, or some other global identity; new ‘communities of fate’ defined by shared risks regardless of specific territorial location and, perhaps, global in character (e.g., global warming); and new communities of interest defined by shared identities, interests and values regardless of specific territorial location (e.g., cybercommunities and other forms of transnational social network). Such new territorial or extra-territorial conceptions of political community are linked to struggles to redefine the nature and purposes of the state, find alternatives to territorialized forms of political power, and redefine the imagined general interest that political power, whether it remains territorial or not, should serve.
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AND SIX COUNTERTRENDS

Countering the denationalization of statehood and the re-ordering of political hierarchies are attempts by national states to control the articulation of different spatial scales and the transfer of powers between them. There is no simple continuity of function here because the lost primacy of the national scale introduces a major discontinuity in two respects. It enhances the need for supranational coordination and opens the space for subnational resurgence. Conversely, it extends the scope for the national state itself to mediate between the increasing number of significant scales of action. Thus, while the national state may have lost some formal sovereignty through the upwards, downwards and sideways transfer of powers, it seeks to play a central role in interscalar articulation. This can be seen not only in the forms and scope of functional networks and cyberspace(s) and their associated activities but also in the re-articulation of terrestrial and territorial scales. Thus, national states have an important role in producing and regulating extra-territorial spaces, such as offshore financial centres, export processing zones, flagging out and tax havens. They are involved in developing and institutionalizing the new lex mercatoria governing international economic relations in the effort to benefit their own economic spaces. The same holds for the governance of cyberspace and its associated lex cybertoria. More sinister are recent attempts to monitor, censor, or block the Internet and social networking in periods of political upheaval. States on other political levels may also try to engage in interscalar management, of course, but even the European Union, the most highly developed supranational political apparatus, still lacks the powers and legitimacy to do this to the same extent as national states – especially its larger member states. This does not exclude strategic alliances among states on various scales to steer interscalar articulation or an eventual new scale of territorial state that has gained the necessary powers and legitimacy to coordinate the proliferating scales of action and to institutionalize new spatio-temporal fixes around this new primary scale.

Regarding the dual shift from government to governance included in the second and third trends noted above, which can also be understood in terms of multi-level governance (see below), we must resist the idealistic fallacy that expansion of non-governmental regimes renders the state redundant. It retains an important role precisely because of these trends. It is not only an important actor in many individual governance mechanisms, but also retains responsibility for their oversight in the light of the overall balance of class forces and the maintenance of social cohesion. This can be described in terms of a countertrend in the form of a shift from government to meta-governance. The latter term refers to the organization
of the institutional framework and rules for individual modes of governance and the collibration (re-balancing) of different modes of governance. Thus, even as states cede their claim to formal juridical sovereignity in the face of growing complex interdependence and seek to enhance their political capacities by participating in public–private partnerships or delegating public responsibilities to private institutions and actors, they are also becoming more involved in organizing and steering the self-organization of partnerships, networks and governance regimes. This shift from governance to meta-governance should neither be confused with the survival of state sovereignity as the highest instance of government nor with the emergence of some form of ‘mega-partnership’ to which all other partnerships are subordinated. Instead, it involves a shift from the top-down hierarchical political organization characteristic of sovereign states to an emphasis on steering multiple agencies, institutions and systems that are both operationally autonomous from one another and structurally coupled through various forms of reciprocal interdependence. It falls to the state to facilitate collective learning about functional linkages and material interdependencies among different sites and spheres of action. And it falls to politicians – local as well as national – to participate in developing the shared visions that can link complementary forms of governance and maximize their effectiveness. Such tasks are conducted by states not only in terms of their contribution to particular state functions but also in terms of their implications for political class domination and social cohesion.

The expanded definition of the economic at the expense of the extra-economic clearly involves a key role for states (on whatever scale) in mediating this re-articulation, steering the resulting commodification and re-commodification of social relations, and dealing with the effects of the increasing dominance of capitalist logic on social cohesion and social exclusion. Moreover, whereas the promotion of the micro-social conditions for capital accumulation in these changing circumstances may well be better handled at levels other than the national, problems of territorial integration, social cohesion and social exclusion are currently still best handled at the level of the large territorial national state. For the latter is still currently irreplaceable given its fisco-financial powers and its scope for redistributive politics in rearranging spatio-temporal fixes. The global financial crisis provides many examples of this revival of the national state. The emergence of new imagined political communities is too complex to discuss in detail here because it is shaped by processes ranging from technological change and economic globalization to crises of class and national identity and the rise of new social movements. Nonetheless, it has led states to introduce policies to counteract the newly perceived problem
of social exclusion and to seek new bases of legitimation to counteract threats posed by growing political disenchantment with the prevailing forms of state. These policies are being pursued across different scales and involve multiple agencies but the national state generally retains the leading meta-governance role in these areas.

MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNMENT OR MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE?

In the 1990s scholars and politicians introduced the idea of ‘multi-level governance’ (MLG) and, from the mid-1990s, others referred to meta-governance. The former concept captures the denationalization of statehood, the de-statization of politics and the re-articulation of territorial and functional powers – especially as these trends were unfolding in the European Union. Its use to describe the interaction of three analytically distinct trends (each with its countertrend) or, at least, to characterize their combined impact, suggests that the concept may obscure as much as it discloses about recent changes. There are both state- and governance-centred approaches to MLG and this distinction is also helpful in understanding meta-governance.

State-centred approaches adopt the sovereign national state as their benchmark. In the case of the European Union, for example, some commentators identify a tendential, emergent, upward re-scaling of the traditional form of the sovereign state from the national to the supranational level. This re-allocation of formal decision-making powers allegedly leads to multi-level government based on joint decision-making among different tiers of government under the overall authority of a supranational superstate. Other observers note the emergence of a new supranational arena for sovereign states to pursue national interests. This arena is a site of intergovernmental (here, international) relations rather than one to which important sovereign powers have been uploaded. In the former case, then, we have multi-level government that could lead to a federal United States of Europe; in the latter case, we have multi-arena government, leading at most to a confederal United Europe of States or Europe des patries.

Governance-centred approaches argue that the legitimate monopoly of violence and the top-down modes of intervention associated with the modern nation-state are becoming impotent, irrelevant, or even harmful in an increasingly complex global social order. They therefore focus on the de-statization of politics rather than the denationalization of statehood and emphasize the enhanced role of reflexive self-organization
in solving complex coordination problems. This provides two ways to distinguish government from governance. For some, the sovereign state is the quintessential expression of hierarchy (imperative coordination) because it is, by definition, the political unit that governs but is not itself governed. Hence, beyond the sovereign state lies the anarchy of interstate relations or a self-organizing international society. In contrast, governance is based on self-organization (networks, negotiation, negative coordination) rather than imperative coordination. For others, the sovereign state is primarily concerned with governing activities within its own territorial domain and defending its territorial integrity against other states. In contrast, governance manages functional interdependencies, whatever their scope (and perhaps with a variable geometry), rather than activities occurring in a defined and delimited territory. In this regard, the EU is an emerging centre of governance that involves a plurality of state and non-state actors on different levels that are concerned to coordinate activities around a series of functional problems rather than in exclusively territorial terms. In turn, state actors would cooperate as negotiating partners in a complex network, contributing their sovereign authority and other distinctive capacities to help realize collectively agreed aims and objectives on behalf of the whole network. Other stakeholders would contribute other symbolic media or material resources (e.g., legitimacy, money, knowledge, organizational capacities) to the solution of coordination problems.

One sign of the development of MLG is the rise of tangled hierarchies and complex interdependence. This contrasts with the case of multi-level government or multi-tiered intergovernmentalism – where states operate directly as immediate holders of sovereign authority within a hierarchical command structure and assert their supremacy vis-à-vis non-state actors. For scholars of European governance, the key question thus becomes how state and non-state actors organize their common interests across several territorial levels and/or diverse functional domains. The emerging consensus is that the principal trend for some years is the development of multi-level governance, with the open method of coordination being one of its major expressions. The EU functions less as a re-scaled, supranational sovereign state apparatus than as a nodal point in an extensive and tangled web of governance operations concerned to orchestrate economic and social policy in and across many different scales of action with the participation of a wide range of official, quasi-official, private economic interests, and representatives of civil society.

A close examination of the EU nonetheless reveals that the same countertrends operate here as elsewhere. In short, there is a struggle between national (and regional and local) states to shape the emerging forms of
multi-level governance, including what governance powers are re-scaled and to which levels of governance; there is a struggle over the governance of governance (meta-governance) to shape the rules of the game and likely outcomes for different participants in governance arrangements; and there is a struggle between the relative primacy of territorial and functional identities and interests in the development of multi-level governance arrangements. Thus, much of what goes under the rubric of multi-level governance in the EU domain is actually multi-level governance in the shadow of (multi-level) hierarchy (or government). It involves the strategic use of multi-level governance by states at one or more levels to realize aims and objectives that can no longer be resolved primarily through imperative coordination. The same holds for their resort to meta-governance (i.e., the governance of governance). Responses to the Eurozone crisis illustrate this well as different member states struggle to redefine the rules of the monetary and financial game and contest recent proposals for deeper fiscal and political integration to overcome that crisis.

This conclusion fits the general analysis of state transformation given above. For, if the national state is changing in the ways suggested in the third and fourth sections, changes in the EU must be considered as part of a re-territorialized, de-statized and internationalized political system. What is occurring is the re-scaling of the complexities of government and governance rather than the re-scaling of the sovereign state or the emergence of just another arena in which national states pursue national interests. The development of multi-level governance is only one aspect of the overall reorganization of statehood and politics in the conditions of contemporary capitalism. It is best understood, therefore, in relation to the growth of multi-tiered government; the proliferation of arenas for intergovernmental relations (involving various tiers of government, not just the national state); the redefinition of the boundaries between the political and non-political and the economic and extra-economic as state intervention changes in response to changed understandings of economic competitiveness and the demands of social cohesion; and the development of a growing number of interest groups, stakeholders, lobbying activities, and so on, on a growing range of scales and in an expanding range of policy fields. A key feature of this complex re-articulation of statehood is the redistribution of competencies away from the sovereign national state – but not necessarily at the expense of its operational autonomy and capacities to pursue state projects. In short, the national state is being reinvented rather than superseded but needs new ways of operating to meet new challenges.
THE SCHUMPETERIAN WORKFARE POST-NATIONAL REGIME

In the 1990s there were signs that the Keynesian welfare national state (KWNS) was being tendentially replaced by a Schumpeterian workfare post-national regime (SWPR). This can be presented in ideal-typical terms along the same lines as its predecessor. Thus, first, the new state form is Schumpeterian insofar as it tries to promote permanent innovation and flexibility in relatively open economies by intervening on the supply side and to strengthen their competitiveness. This notion invokes Schumpeter, the theorist of innovation, entrepreneurship and competition, rather than Keynes, the theorist of money, employment and national demand, as its emblematic economist. Second, as a workfare regime, the SWPR subordinates social policy to the demands of labour market flexibility and employability as well as economic competition. This includes putting downward pressure on the social wage qua cost of international production but, given the economic and political limits to welfare cuts, it is especially concerned with the re-functionalization of the inherited welfare state to serve economic interests. The state also attempts to create subjects to serve as partners in the innovative, knowledge-driven, entrepreneurial, flexible economy and its accompanying self-reliant, autonomous, empowered workfare regime.

Third, the SWPR is ‘postnational’ insofar as the national territory has become less important as an economic, political and cultural ‘power container’. This is associated with a transfer of economic and social policy-making functions upwards, downwards and sideways. On a global level, this is seen in the increasing concern of a growing number of international agencies (such as the IMF, World Bank, OECD and ILO) and intergovernmental forums (such as the G8 and G20) with the shaping of current social as well as economic policy agendas. In part, the European Union acts as a relay for these agenda-shaping efforts and, in part, is playing an active role in developing its own agenda for countries beyond its borders, whether near neighbours or further afield. The EU level is also seeking to impose more numerous and tighter restrictions on national economic and social governance, especially through the norms of the Single Market and the economic policy and performance criteria of the Eurozone. This is reflected in the tendential Europeanization of labour market policies, the transformation of national corporatist and bargaining arrangements to allow for greater local and regional differentiation, and the development of ‘social pacts’ that bundle economic and social policies together to advance worker, business and national interests. Needless to say, these are not always successful. What is emerging in this context is a
series of multi-level government and/or multi-level governance regimes oriented to issues of the interscalar re-articulation of the economic and political – with the EU just one among many such emerging regimes. At the same time there are tendencies to devolve some economic and social policy-making to the regional, urban and local levels on the grounds that policies intended to influence the microeconomic supply side and social regeneration are best designed close to their sites of implementation. In some cases this also involves cross-border cooperation among regional, urban, or local spaces. Paradoxically, this often leads to an enhanced role for national states in controlling the interscalar transfer of these powers – suggesting a shift from sovereignty to a *primus inter pares* role in intergovernmental relations.

The *post-national* moment of economic and social policy restructuring is complex because of the proliferation of scales and the relativization of scale with which it is associated. There are clear differences among the triad regions here. The EU provides the only example among the three of a clear commitment to economic, political and social integration and, more ambivalently, to the development of supranational state structures. Nonetheless, all three regions/triads are involved in the internationalization of policy regimes not only in economic but also in the juridical, political, social fields, and so on. The rise of the G20 to supplement the G8 is one sign of this trend. Nonetheless, continuing differences within and across regions indicate that one should not push globalization too far as a general explanatory framework of recent changes.

Fourth, and finally, the SWPR relies increasingly on governance to compensate for market failures and inadequacies. There is an increased role for non-state mechanisms in shaping and delivering state-sponsored economic and social policies. One aspect is the increased importance of private–public networks to state activities on all levels – from local partnerships to supranational neo-corporatist arrangements. The shift from *government* towards *governance* means that traditional forms of intervention are less important now in economic and social policy. This does not mean that law and money have disappeared, of course; instead, active economic and social steering now tends to run more through soft regulation and reflexive law, additionality and private–public partnerships, organizational intelligence and information-sharing, and so on. A key role is also played by meta-governance (see above) both in normal times and in response to major shocks and crises.

As with all ideal types, there are no pure cases. Indeed, advanced capitalist economies have developed along two lines in the past 20 years in regard to the Schumpeterian dimension. Some have focused their efforts on promoting the knowledge-based economy; others have promoted
finance-dominated accumulation, regarding deregulated financial innovation as useful productive activity. The global financial crisis has called this into question and encouraged renewed concern with boosting industrial competitiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

This contribution has emphasized the complexities of the recent structural transformation and strategic reorientation of the modern national state. Any hypothesis or prediction about its future that can be expressed in a simple formula is likely to be one-dimensional and one-sided, and simply adding such hypotheses or predictions together risks eclecticism and contradiction. The conceptual distinctions introduced above aim to cut through the theoretical morass and to guide more sophisticated (but also, necessarily, more complicated and dialectical) analyses of the future of the modern state in post-war advanced capitalist societies. Even this account neglects different traditions and trajectories as well as important differences among variants of KWNS and SWPR (on which see Jessop, 2002). Nonetheless, enough has been said to indicate that the future of the national state involves more than hollowing out and multi-level governance.

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INTRODUCTION

Increasing global interconnectedness has generated new forms of human insecurity that demand the formulation of strategies that transcend national boundaries. This is one of the arguments contained in the influential United Nations Development Report of 1994 entitled *New Dimensions of Human Security* (see UNDP, 1994). In this report, the UN defined human security as ‘safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression’ and ‘protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of our daily lives – whether in our homes, in our jobs, in our communities or in our environment’ (ibid., p.3). This definition of human security has become ‘central to several global initiatives, has been picked up by national governments and is reflected in the agendas and policy debates of regional intergovernmental organizations’ (UNDP, 2010, p.17).

The link between globalization and human insecurity can be found in both rich and poor countries. The internationalization of production, for example, has reduced job security in many sectors of the national economies of the North. At the same time the globalization of Western values – perceived by many as a process of ‘Americanization’ – has increased ‘cultural insecurity’ in many societies of the South. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, added a new dimension to the relationship between globalization and human security. On that day, the distance between the quasi-medieval spaces within which Al Qaeda forces operated in Afghanistan and the post-modern spaces of New York disappeared amid the ghostly smoke of the destroyed Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. As Janice Gross Stein has pointed out, ‘the network of terror that perpetrated the attack is enabled by conditions unique to our times’ (Stein, 2001, p.229).

More recently, the global financial crisis caused by the sub-prime housing problem and the collapse of several major financial institutions in the United States in September of 2008, revealed the interdependent nature of the global economy and its capacity to generate conditions of
human insecurity all over the world. By the end of 2008 the South Centre reported:

the credit freeze has severely hit developing countries through increasing risk premia and a severe cut in financing, even of short-term commercial lending; capital outflows from developing countries have generated a collapse of stock markets and exchange rates and a loss of reserves; and commodity prices have plunged and export orders are being cut worldwide. Even developing countries that were seen as relatively invulnerable to a recession in the industrial world are now feeling the strain. (South Centre, 29 October, 2008)

This chapter explores the phenomenon of globalization as a historical process that challenges the capacity of the state to generate conditions of human security. Moreover, it examines the theoretical rationale behind some of the most common global social policy strategies designed to contribute to the generation of human security in the world today. Finally, it advocates the need for academics and policy-makers interested in the promotion of global human security to avoid universal recommendations that do not take into consideration the historical specificity of the countries of the South.

The first section of this chapter reviews the formation of the democratic Western European state as an institutional arrangement designed to spatialize history and ‘to overcome contingency’ (see Luhmann, 1982, 1993; Taylor, 2003). The ‘universalization’ of this model will also be reviewed to provide a general characterization of the different levels of ‘stateness’ achieved by countries in the North and in the South. The second section analyses the differential impact of globalization on the states and societies of the North and the South. This analysis will be used in the third section to assess the framework of historical possibilities and limitations within which alternative global social policy strategies are being formulated and implemented to respond to the crisis of security affecting the world today.

PROCESSES OF STATE FORMATION AND SOCIAL POLICY: NORTH AND SOUTH

The North

The Great Crisis of the mid-1500s in Europe expanded the territorial scope of social life beyond the precarious boundaries of the ‘natural societies’ of the Middle Ages (Ortega y Gasset, 1946, p. 75). In these new circumstances, the construction of social order required the institutionalization of expectations (see Luhmann, 1990, pp. 21–79) in abstract space (rather
than in place), and the fostering of ‘relations between “absent” others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction’ (Giddens, 1990, pp.18–19). In turn, this required the centralization of power and the creation of a new foundation for authority. The historical answer to these requirements was the emergence and consolidation of monarchical absolutism (see Mann, 2003).

Monarchical absolutism recreated the territorial scope of social life by forming a centralized structure of political power that overran the political societies of the Middle Ages. The foundation of authority for this new structure of power was provided by the idea of sovereignty, which was best expressed by Hobbes in 1651 in *Leviathan*. The early modern idea of sovereignty involved a radical reconceptualization of medieval conceptions of territory, history and security, in that it created the foundation for the development of society’s capacity to generate ‘a strictly political history of chains of events’, with the capacity to replace ‘the archaic fusion of mythical and genealogical time’ that prevailed in the Middle Ages (Luhmann, 1982, p.333). In the creation of this new history, philosophy would gradually replace theology, and the ‘the omnipotent God’ would become ‘the omnipotent lawgiver’ (Schmitt, 1985, p.36). Moreover, with the emergence of the Great Leviathan, security would be not only politically created, but also planned and delivered by the state in a process guided by the doctrine of *raison d’état*, that is, by the subordination of public morality to state power (Koselleck, 1988, p.25).

The institutionalization of the modern state, then, was accompanied by the development of its capacity to regulate social relations within its territorial boundaries. In turn, this capacity made it possible for the state to regulate social relations across time. This is because continuous regulation of social relations across territorial space results over time in the institutionalization of ‘behavioural expectations’ (see Luhmann, 1990, pp.21–79). As such, the institutionalization of the modern state came to represent what Gross calls the ‘spatialization of time and experience’, which implies ‘the tendency to condense time relations – which are an essential ingredient for personal and social meaning – into space relations’ (Gross, 1981–82, p.59). Territoriality, from this perspective, should be seen as ‘a form of behaviour that uses a bounded space, a territory, as the instrument for securing a particular outcome’ (Taylor, 2003, p.101).

The role of the state as a synchronizer of social expectations and social experiences underwent significant change in the eighteenth century, when the Enlightenment introduced the idea of progress. An open future dissociated from the past represented a formidable challenge to society’s ability to achieve security and overcome contingency. This challenge was met by the ideas of popular sovereignty and representative democracy that
expressed a new faith in human beings’ ability to control their destiny. Democracy placed sovereignty not in the king or in the state, but in ‘the people’.

The democratic state responded to people’s needs and demands, not simply as the result of a passive reading of the people’s will, but as an active organizer of people’s aspirations and memories. Through its bureaucratic apparatus, the democratic state actively participated in the creation of ‘imagined communities’ (see Anderson, 1991) tied together by administrative and legal structures. These structures made the development of nationalistic values and identities possible.

The development of the administrative and regulatory capacity of the state required that the principle of sovereignty, as articulated by Hobbes in the seventeenth century, be redefined during the eighteenth century. These efforts were best illustrated by Jeremy Bentham’s concern for ‘the idea of rational rules as paramount standards of administrative behavior’ (Bahmueller, 1981, p. 186). The ultimate objective of these rules was to contribute to ‘the maximization of the Benthamite values of security, predictability, stability, and physical comfort’ (Long, 1977, p. 118).

The opportunities offered by the administrative and regulatory power of the sovereign state were fully realized with the emergence of civil society, that is, with the constitution of free associations that were not under the influence or control of the state. The emergence of these associations provided the state with an opportunity to use the organizational capacity achieved by society as an extension of its own regulatory power (see Rose, 1996; Holmer Nadesan, 2008). At the same time, the creation of ‘reproduction circuits’ that connected society with the state provided people with an institutional mechanism to ‘determine or inflect the course of state action’ (Taylor, 1990, p. 4; see also Giddens, 1984).1 This new relationship between the state and society created the conditions for the emergence and consolidation of citizenship rights.

Citizenship rights not only represented a challenge to the state, but also to national class structures. In this sense, the concept of class has a relative meaning vis-à-vis citizenship and, conversely, citizenship is a category that has an explanatory value that is intimately linked with that of class. Citizenship, T.H. Marshall points out, should be seen as ‘the architect of legitimate social inequality’ in class-divided societies (Marshall, 1983, pp. 48–9). From this perspective, both class and citizenship constitute evolving historical realities associated with the struggle over the distribution of power within sovereign political spaces. In England, according to Marshall’s gender-blind characterization of this struggle, citizenship rights evolved from civil rights in the eighteenth century, to political rights in the nineteenth century, to social rights in the twentieth century (see Marshall,
From this perspective, the welfare state can be seen as the product of the consolidation of social rights, and more generally, as the institutional consequence of roughly 250 years of evolution of citizenship rights. Further expansion of these rights, according to Marshall, would continue to challenge and reduce social inequality.

Marshall’s optimistic analysis has been shattered by the globalization of capital, the transnationalization of the power of the state and the difficulties that societies in the North confront today to condition public policy priorities. The conquest of risk and contingency, which constituted one of the central objectives of the struggle for social rights and the welfare state in the North, is being challenged by an attempt to legitimate the forms of insecurity created by the market, and by the presentation of ‘risk aversion’ as a dangerous ‘ideology’ (see Neal, 2000).

The South

In Europe, the modern democratic state represented an institutional product generated by history. This institutional product was transplanted as a normative model to the rest of the world through a combination of exporting and importing mechanisms that included imperialism, colonialism, the institutionalization of relations of political and economic dependency, and development strategies and programmes (see Badie, 2000). The imposition/adoptions of the modern state as a normative model for the organization of the societies of the South facilitated the conformation of an international system of states. Through this system, states in the South became recipients of ‘a set of cognitive models defining the nature, purpose, resources, technologies, controls, and sovereignty of the proper nation state’ (Meyer, 1999, p. 123; see also Drori et al., 2006). These models include parliamentarism, bureaucracy, democracy, social policies and the welfare state. Many of the dysfunctional aspects of social life in Africa, Asia and Latin America are the result of the transfer of these models to societies that are the product of a historical dynamic that is fundamentally different from that of Europe. The legal principle of sovereignty that was formally attached to the states in the South by international law, for example, lacked the social and political significance it had for European societies.

Most states in the South never achieved the social regulatory capacity they required to spatialize history and to control social relations within their territorial boundaries. After almost two centuries of independent republican life in Latin America, the state power ‘fades off’ outside ‘the national urban centers’ (O’Donnell, 1993, p. 1358; see also Keck and Abers, 2006; Cárdenas, 2009). In countries like Colombia and Mexico, the
state is unable to displace drug cartels from the large swathes of territory that they control. In Africa, the regulatory weakness of the state is even more dramatic than in Latin America. The ‘juridical’ African state created by European colonial powers never developed the capacity to regulate social relations within its territorial boundaries. Most states categorized as ‘fragile’ by the international community are located in Sub-Saharan Africa (Cammack et al., 2006). In South Asia, the weakness of the state manifests itself more vividly in the persistence of ethnic and religious conflict. In India and Pakistan this situation exacerbates nationalistic feelings that can create conditions for the ultimate form of human insecurity: the nuclearization of conflict (Paul, 2010).

The low regulatory capacity of the state, the absence of effective state sovereignty, and the fragility – and in some cases virtual absence – of structures of citizenship rights with the capacity to domesticate the functions of the state, resulted in the restructuration and acculturation of the normative models of social policy and welfare institutions diffused by organizations like the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Social Security Organization, and the Ibero-American Conference on Social Security (see Collier and Messick, 1975; Drori et al., 2006). This process of assimilation and reconstitution generated two main types of social policy and welfare systems: clientelistic and residual. Generally speaking, these two systems correspond to the levels of state regulatory capacity and societal organization achieved by the countries of the South. Clientelistic welfare systems in the South developed within corporatist structures of state–society relations. Social policies in corporatist regimes are mainly formulated and implemented in response to the power of elites and special interest groups rather than to broad social or class demands. Therefore, the coverage of social policies in these systems expresses the levels of power that different sectors of society have to ‘colonize’ the state apparatus. Malloy illustrates this situation when he explains the genesis of social policy coverage in the corporatist societies of Latin America:

The first and best coverage went to groups like civil servants and the military who controlled parts of the state apparatus; coverage of high quality next went to groups in strategic economic activities in export products such as railroads, docks, maritime, etc; these were followed by groups in critical urban services such as banks, electricity, transport, etc; the last to receive coverage, and of a lower order, were manufacturing workers. . .the rural sector as well as the urban informal sector were excluded. (Malloy, 1993, p. 235)

Residual social policy and welfare systems emerged typically in the countries of the South where state power has been organized and exercised in a neo-patrimonial manner; that is, in the societies of the South that
never developed the legal, bureaucratic and political capacity required to institutionalize corporativist state–society relations (see Hartlyn, 1998; O’Neil, 2007). In neo-patrimonial countries, the power of the state is predominantly coercive and civil societies are rather weak or non-existent. Therefore, residual social policy and welfare systems are not generated by the constitutive force of citizenship rights. In fact, residual social policy and welfare systems can be seen as an alternative to citizenship. As in the case of the Elizabethan Poor Law in England, residual welfare and social policy systems are not designed to transform the structural conditions that generate poverty and insecurity; rather, they are designed ‘to preserve the existing one with the minimum of essential change’ (Marshall, 1965, p. 87). The Poor Law in England, Marshall points out, ‘treated the claims of the poor, not as an integral part of the rights of citizen, but as an alternative to them’ (ibid., p. 88).

In the neo-patrimonial regimes of Latin America – most Central American countries, for example – social policy functions as an alternative to citizenship. In these countries, social policies are designed to benefit segments of the population that suffer systematic forms of exclusion. The people in this category are citizens only in a formal manner. They are recognized as recipients of social policy by the same states that deny their rights and maintain their exclusion from effective political, economic and social participation. In Africa, the history of residual social policies goes back to colonial times. Akin Aina points out that social services were provided to African societies during the colonial period ‘to maintain law and order and a local low-level administrative cadre to exploit effectively the natural and other resources of the colonies and to create colonial markets for metropolitan export’ (Akin Aina, 1999, p. 76). For a short period of time after independence, African states expanded their capacity to provide social services in an effort to legitimize their power. However, by the end of the 1960s the African state was in crisis: ‘social services and social infrastructures either decayed from sheer neglect or, where they existed in rudimentary forms, were appropriated by local barons and misused for political patronage’ (ibid., p. 78). Social policy, in other words, became a component of the ‘politics of the belly’ whereby the state is used as a mechanism for the distribution of prebends and favours (Bayart, 2009).

Structural adjustment programmes, neo-liberal economic policies and targeted social spending severely reduced the regulatory capacity of the state. In Latin America, for example, all major international financial institutions worked to reduce the social functions of the state by promoting the privatization of health services and pensions. Privatization, as many studies point out, imposed a vision of social services ‘as commodities rather than fundamental human and social rights’ (Armada et al., 2001,
p. 753). In Africa, neo-liberal economic policies also reduced the social functions of the state. In South Africa, for example, these policies have limited the capacity of the national health system to respond to the AIDS epidemic that affects this country (Johnston, 2005). The weakening of the social role of the African state has also been linked to the brutal levels of ethnic violence and state coercion experienced by the populations of several Sub-Saharan African countries. As Adésina points out:

[I]n the absence of social policy-based engagement with the citizens, the coercive face of the state becomes the dominant (if not the only) area of interaction with citizens. . . From Sierra Leone to Rwanda, the fundamental questioning of the legitimacy of the state and the spilling over of difference into conflict, and conflict into genocide, occurred within this context of declining legitimacy of the state. (Adésina, 2007, p. 23)

Finally, in South and South-East Asia, neo-liberal economic policies frame and limit the social role of the state. The Asian regional associations, for example, ‘are economic in nature and there are major difficulties in extending their range to include a social agenda or dimension, except in terms of safety net provision in line with social liberalist orthodoxy’ (Yeates, 2003, p. 23).

GLOBALIZATION AND THE STATE: HUMAN INSECURITY NORTH AND SOUTH

Globalization constitutes a direct challenge to the preservation and expansion of human security in the North and in the South. In the North, the territorial and political spaces created by the modern state are undergoing radical transformations. Economic and political pressures against the welfare state, the increasing fluidity of labour markets, financial instability and the erosion of social rights, to name just a few of these pressures, have significantly reduced people’s capacity to control risk (see Mishra, 1999; Mittelman, 2010).

In the South, the pressures toward regional economic integration, the increasing power of transnational financial organizations and neo-liberal state reforms have reduced the chances for many developing countries to achieve the levels of state sovereignty and national identity that allowed societies in the North to shape their history. Furthermore, many of the fragile national territories of the South, especially in Africa, have been transformed in recent years into deinstitutionalized spaces in which life is ‘nasty, brutish and short’. The intensity and the nature of the challenge that globalization represents for human security at the national level vary
according to the different capacity that national states have to filter or adapt to external pressures without losing their domestic regulatory power and their capacity to respond to domestic needs and demands (see Yeates, 2001). In this sense, the notions of North and South are useful in that they represent categories for differentiating levels of institutional and regulatory capacity to create conditions of order and security at the national level.

Understanding the differential effect of globalization on the countries of the North and the South is essential to understand the different frameworks of historical limitations and possibilities within which social policy responses to the crisis of security created by globalization can be formulated. As Patricia Kennett points out:

Global processes are complex and contradictory. While opening up opportunities for some countries and people, others have been marginalized and excluded from the benefits of the information age. Each nation interacts in its own way with global, regional, national and local arenas. In the same way the nature of the welfare system and the form and content of social rights will vary. (Kennett, 2001, p. 145)

Unfortunately, the national differences that Kennett identifies in her analysis are not systematically considered by the bulk of the mounting literature dealing with globalization. Many academics in the North discuss global issues without taking into consideration the socio-political realities of the South. They show a propensity to assume the representation of ‘humanity’ without abandoning their own particular perspectives (see Bourdieu, 2000, pp.65–73). The perspective on globalization proposed herein emphasizes the differential effects of globalization as they are expressed in the diverse manifestations of the problem of security in different countries and regions around the world. In this sense, the crisis of security in the North appears as a consequence of the breakdown of the ‘symmetrical’ and ‘congruent’ relationship between state and society that resulted from the expansion of state power and the evolution of citizenship rights over the last 300 years (Held, 1991, p. 198; Aman, 2004).

The transnationalization of state power in advanced liberal democratic capitalist societies opened a gap between those who make policies and those who live with the effects of those policies (see Held, 1991). This gap has diminished the value of democracy in the North and its capacity to generate and reproduce security because people see themselves affected by decisions that they don’t make or control (see Luhmann, 1993; Sassen, 2007). The transnationalization of state power in the North creates tensions and contradictions between the liberal concept of the modern state – with its emphasis on domestic ‘responsiveness’ and
‘accountability’ – and the economic imperatives of the global market. The result is a crisis of authority arising from the state’s increasing inability to respond to society’s needs and demands (see Rosenau, 1992; Sassen, 2007). Therefore, the crisis of human security in the North is the result of a deficit of the democratic power of society to condition the functions and priorities of the state (see Kymlika, 1997). The solution to this crisis requires the democratization of the transnational power of the state. In other words, it requires the subordination of the functions and priorities of the transnational arms of the state to the needs and aspirations of ‘we the people’.

The crisis of human security created by globalization in the South, on the other hand, is the result of double bind: a deficit of state power, which manifests itself in the inability of the states in the South to influence the organization of the transnational space of power created by globalization; and a democratic deficit, which manifests itself in the inability of civil societies in the South to condition the power of the state and national policy-making processes. States in the South lack the capacity to influence the structures and processes that govern competition and cooperation within the transnational space of power created by global forces. As the United Nations Human Development Report *Globalization with a Human Face* points out, the structures and processes for global policy-making ‘are dominated by the large and rich countries, leaving poor countries and poor people with little influence and little voice, either for lack of membership or for lack of capacity for effective representation and participation’ (UNDP, 1999, p. 8; see also South Centre, 2008).

Furthermore, globalization encourages the isolation of important components of the policy-making process from the pressures of domestic politics, and frequently reduces the capacity of states to respond to society’s needs and demands, especially when they contradict the rationale of the global market. Therefore, it is ironic that the introduction of neo-liberal economic policies and state reform programmes coincided with the materialization of ‘transitions to democracy’ in the South. This double process of economic and political reform created profound tensions and contradictions between the principles of democracy and the principles that determine the formulation of neo-liberal policies.

Electoral democracy has survived and continues to dominate the political landscape of the South. Electoral democratic systems give people the capacity to choose the governments that administer states that are increasingly subordinated to the organizations that regulate the transnational space of power and conflict created by globalization. In these conditions, people can elect their governments but lack the capacity to effectively influence the policy-making process that affect their lives.
GLOBAL SOCIAL POLICY SOLUTIONS FOR THE RECONSTITUTION OF HUMAN SECURITY IN THE SOUTH

The deficit of state power and the democratic deficit confronted by the countries of the South need to be taken into consideration to assess the different global social policy strategies that have been formulated to confront the crisis of security faced by these countries. These strategies can be broadly classified as idealist and pragmatist. Idealist strategies typically propose the organization of a global governance system and a global civil society based on common moral grounds that can recreate, at the transnational level, the congruent relationship between state power and ‘we the people’ that generated democracy and security in the societies of the North. Pragmatist strategies, on the other hand, propose the formulation and implementation of transnational social policies to palliate some of the most urgent human needs experienced by the poor countries of the planet for the purpose of protecting the security of the North.

Cosmopolitanism and liberal internationalism are the two main theoretical approaches used in the formulation of idealist global social policy strategies. Cosmopolitanism is ‘a moral frame of reference for specifying principles that can be universally shared; and, concomitantly, it rejects as unjust all those practices, rules and institutions anchored in principles not all could adopt’ (Held and McGrew, 2000, p.401). Proponents of this position argue that the transnational space of power and conflict created by globalization offers opportunities for the realization of cosmopolitan ideals. This transnational space is perceived as a ‘new frontier’ that is virtually unconstrained by the historical structural conditions within which power has been unequally distributed among countries and regions of the world. ‘The challenge now’, Martin Albrow says, ‘is to escape the pessimism of the intellectual and to depict an age for all the people’ (1997, p.105). ‘World society’, he adds, ‘the sum total of human interactions, is now of a shape where its history leaves it with uncertain and unclear organization and its theory has yet to escape the confines of the Modern Age’ (ibid., p.113; see Unterhalter, 2008).

The idea of global citizenship and of a ‘world society’ that can function within the transnational space of power and conflict created by globalization tends to ignore the fact that the economic and political forces that control this transnational space are the same forces that reproduce the unequal power relations and the unequal distribution of ‘life chances’ that are responsible for the marginalization and the exclusion of the vast majority of the people from the South. The transnational space created by globalization has increased interaction and communication among transnational
actors and movements from the North and the South. However, these interactions and exchanges of information, ‘do not promote the expansion of a world that is intersubtively shared’ (Habermas, 1996, p. 292).

For a space to function as a political space, it has to be able to work as a ‘reference framework’, that is, as an existential framework that is created as a result of the collective experience of sharing a similar set of life chances (Werlen, 1993, pp. 3–8). In the absence of this framework, the intensification of ‘transnational politics’ does not necessarily translate into the construction of a democratic transnational political space and a ‘global city’ (see Magnusson, 2000). The social actors from the North and the South that participate in the transnational space of power and conflict created by globalization, and the people that they represent, do not share the same life chances. The statistical record could not be more revealing:

The richest 2 per cent of adult individuals own more than half of all global wealth, with the richest 1 per cent alone accounting for 40 per cent of global assets. The corresponding figures for the top 5 per cent and the top 10 per cent are 71 per cent and 85 per cent, respectively. In contrast, the bottom half of wealth holders together hold barely 1 per cent of global wealth. (Davies et al., 2008, p. 402)

Moreover, the possibility for social actors from poor countries to exercise power at the transnational level is limited by the gap that separates the states from the South from the space of power and politics created by globalization; and by the internal democratic gap that separates the state and society in these countries. In these conditions, the cosmopolitan vision of the world is beyond the reach of the weak and the poor. Proponents of cosmopolitanism recognize many of these challenges. Nevertheless, they continue to believe that globalization has created ‘cosmopolitan anchors to the world’ (Held, 2006, p. 310). They argue that ‘the stakes are very high, but so too are the potential gains for human security and development if the aspirations for cosmopolitan governance and social justice can be realised’ (ibid., p. 311).

The liberal internationalist position is a more instrumental version of the idealist position. It advocates the ‘globalization of ethics’ through the incremental democratization of the structures and processes that operate within the transnational space of power and politics created by globalization (see McGrew, 2000). The main UN global social policy response to the crisis of security generated by globalization is rooted in this position. The UN has identified key ‘global public goods’ as political and ethical imperatives that can guide the formulation of economic and social policy (see Artigas, 2001; UN, 2001). These public goods include equity and access to key basic social services that should be adopted as ‘universal rights’ (UN,
The construction of a global consensus for the integration of social and economic policy, according to the United Nations, requires, ‘inclusive consultations that involve government ministries and other social and economic partners, such as trade unions, employers and other civil society organizations. . . Open, transparent consultations and dialogues are important for consensus building and bridging communications gaps’ (ibid., p. 13). The institutionalization of universal rights, including the right to key social services, is highly desirable from an ethical point of view. Unfortunately, this approach is based on a voluntaristic view of history and social change that obscures the structural conditions that reproduce social inequality across the world.

Voluntarism denotes any argument or explanation ‘that stresses the place of choice, decision, purpose, and norms in human action’ (Cashmore and Mullan, 1983, p. xii). Voluntaristic arguments for the formulation of global social policies ignore the fact that the democratization and moralization of state power and of public policy-making have always been the result of political struggle for power. Social policies and welfare state institutions in the North – as previously indicated – were the result of the struggle between the elites who determined the nature and organization of society and the groups excluded from the decision-making process that affected their lives. The struggle was about the definition of citizenship rights, the constitution of the ‘social contract’, and the political mechanisms to change it. As a result of this struggle, social policies and the welfare state emerged in the North as an institutionalized ‘trade-off’ between social equality and economic efficiency (see Esping Andersen, 1994). From this perspective, the integration of social and economic policy within a global ethical framework, as a strategy designed to reduce the levels of human insecurity created by globalization, can only be the result of political action against the national and the transnational power structures within which neo-liberal economic policies are designed and enforced at the national and global levels. This kind of political action must overcome the democratic deficit created by the gap that separates states and societies in the South; the tendency for globalization to intensify this gap; and the limited capacity that states in the South have to condition the transnational space of power and conflict created by globalization.

Palliative Transnational Social Policy: The Pragmatic Argument

Pragmatic transnational social policies are based on self-interest. They are predominantly designed to placate the needs of the people from the South in order to protect human security in the North. Expediency determines
the nature of pragmatic transnational social policies (see Rorty, 1995, p. 4). Therefore, they can only generate false forms of security in the South because they are dependent on the changing will, interest and convenience of the states and governments of the North. The report *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe* (The Study Group, 2004) is an example of the pragmatic approach to global social policy. This doctrine recognizes that ‘in the new global context, the European Union’s security policy should be built on human security and not only on state security’. Human security, ‘means individual freedom from basic insecurities’ (ibid., p. 8). From this perspective, *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe* creates conditions for the formulation of global social policies designed to reduce human insecurity in the South.

The report identifies three reasons why the European Union should adopt a human security approach. The first reason, the report says, ‘is based on morality. It has to do with our common humanity. Human beings have a right to live with dignity and security, and a concomitant obligation to help each other when that security is threatened’ (ibid.). The second reason identified by the report is legal: ‘If human security is considered as a narrower category of protection of human rights, as proposed above, then it is now generally accepted that other states, and international institutions such as the EU, have not only a right, but also a legal obligation to concern themselves with human security worldwide’ (ibid., p. 9). It is the third reason identified by the report that permeates the entire rationale, objectives and recommendations of *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe*. This third reason is conceptualized by the report as ‘enlightened self-interest’:

> The whole point of a human security approach is that Europeans cannot be secure while others in the world live in severe insecurity. In failing states and conflict areas, the criminal economy expands and gets exported: the drug trade, human trafficking and the easy availability of small arms, and even the brutalisation of society are not contained within the conflict zone but felt beyond it, including in Europe. (Ibid.)

European self-interest is the principle within which moral and humanitarian considerations are framed. ‘European security policy’, the *Doctrine* states, ‘should be grounded in pragmatism’. This principle determines the factors identified by the report as operational guidelines to promote human security (ibid., pp. 11–12; see also Vankovska, 2007; Huish, 2008). In this sense, the idea of human security is used in *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe* to justify the creation of a ‘technology of government’ designed to protect the security of the North (see Duffield, 2005).
CONCLUSIONS AND A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW APPROACH TO HUMAN SECURITY

The task of making the reality of global human security explicit is incredibly challenging. It requires intellectuals to transcend the linear perspective — typically extrapolated from the North — within which the future of the planet is currently analysed. It forces us to embrace theoretically the disjointed, contradictory, and yet unified-in-destiny world that Picasso sensed before anyone else. Carl Einstein pointed out that the ‘wondrous harmonies’ in Picasso’s work were the result of ‘contrasting elements’ and that ‘truth’ in his paintings lay ‘in the identity which underlies the tension between opposites’ (Einstein, 1988, pp. 190–91). The ‘truth’ of globalization — its risks and opportunities — can only be established by creating a vision of humanity that is based on a theoretical recognition of the structural heterogeneity of the human condition, as well as of the tensions and contradictions generated by the increasing interpenetration between North and South in the times of global interpenetration that we live today.

From this perspective, the articulation of global strategies to confront the problems of human security in the South must be based on the recognition that there are no universal formulas to confront the ‘threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression’ that affect millions of people in the world today. Moreover, those strategies must recognize that no global initiative can substitute for the need for the countries of the South to develop their own domestic strategies and mechanisms to democratize relations between society and the state to promote real development, human dignity and security for their people. This means that global strategies to promote human security must recognize the right of every society to identify and implement the model of social organization that better responds to the fundamental needs and aspirations of their people. This is not a call for a relativistic approach to human security where every means to deal with hunger and poverty must be accepted as legitimate. It is a call to recognize the limits of pragmatism and global idealism and of the need to take into consideration the historical specificities and the social heterogeneity of the South.

NOTE

1. ‘Reproduction circuits’ are ‘cycles of routinized activities and consequences which are reproduced across time and space and between institutionalized locales’ (Cohen, 1989, p. 124).
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Globalization and the decline of ‘social protection by other means’: the transformation of welfare regimes in Australia, Japan and Eastern Europe

Ramesh Mishra

This chapter considers the consequences of globalization for patterns of welfare identified in the literature as ‘social protection by other means’ (SPM) (Castles, 1989). SPM refers to the fact that there are functional alternatives to the institutions typical of the Western welfare state, notably social insurance programmes for income security and medical care, and demand management policies to maintain employment. SPM, although not considered as a part of the formal system of social protection, nonetheless may perform broadly similar functions, viz. those of providing economic security and maintaining living standards.1

In this chapter the implications of globalization for SPM are examined in three different settings: Australia, Japan and the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Each of these represents a system of welfare that differs significantly from what may be called the ‘mainstream’ post-World War II Western welfare state. In other words what we are exploring here is the transformation of three different welfare systems or ‘regimes’, viz. the Antipodean or the ‘wage-earners’ welfare state represented by Australia, the East Asian or the productivist represented by Japan and the state socialist represented by the CEE countries, in the course of their encounter with globalization. Although post-socialist countries vary a good deal in terms of their economic, political and social conditions as well as the nature of transition from state socialism they have shared certain institutional patterns characteristic of state socialism. It is this systemic feature that justifies their being treated as a single category.

What form did SPM take in these three different sites? In Australia it involved (1) economic protectionism, including tariffs and strict control over immigration, meant to nurture domestic industries and ensure plentiful employment, and (2) a system of compulsory wage arbitration meant to provide the working man with a living wage (Castles, 1989). In Japan SPM took the form of full employment and job security maintained through a system of lifetime employment, and enterprise welfare
(Pempel, 1989). In the case of state socialist countries distinctive forms of social protection involved guaranteed employment for men and women and extensive consumer price subsidies to help maintain living standards (Standing, 1996). While the policies and institutions identified above do not necessarily exhaust all forms of SPM in these countries the chapter proceeds on the basis that these constitute the most important forms of SPM and have been recognized as such in the literature (Castles, 1989; Pempel, 1989; Standing, 1996).

The basic argument of this chapter is that these forms of SPM developed in conditions in which nation states could remain relatively insulated from the global economy. The opening up of national economies to market forces and international competition has tended to weaken, if not undermine, the foundations of these types of SPM. They have been dismantled to a large extent in Australia, virtually eliminated in former state socialist countries and have been in a state of relative decline in Japan. The result of these changes can be seen as a form of \textit{institutional} convergence of systems of social protection towards what might be described as the mainstream Western welfare pattern. For example, in former state socialist societies systemic full employment has been replaced by levels of employment determined largely by the market together with unemployment benefits. Targeted forms of income support, social assistance and other familiar Western-style welfare patterns, which were virtually non-existent in the past, have been instituted. From this viewpoint, economic liberalization and the greater integration of national economies into the global marketplace can be seen as a source of increasing uniformity and ‘Westernization’ of welfare patterns. It is important to keep in mind that what is being claimed here is a convergence in the \textit{institutional form} or structure of social welfare rather than policies. The assumption is that a useful, if analytic, distinction can be drawn between \textit{institutions} and \textit{policies}. The former refers to the structure or form of social provision, the latter to its substance. Although they are interrelated, change in one does not necessarily imply change in the other. Thus, whether policies, that is, the substance of social provision, are also converging is a different issue that we are not concerned with here. Much of the debate over the implications of globalization for social welfare has, of course, been concerned with policy, for example, whether globalization leads to the retrenchment or enhancement of social provision, rather than changes in the institutional \textit{form} or structure, which is the focus of this chapter.

Thus far we have used the term ‘globalization’ without defining it. It is time to clarify the meaning of the term as employed in this chapter. Essentially the reference here is to \textit{economic} globalization, that is, the closer integration of national economies into the global marketplace.
through the liberalization of trade and financial flows. However, the pro-
motion of economic liberalization by supranational agencies, notably the
International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) through their
influence on economic and social policies of nations, will also be consid-
ered as an aspect of globalization (Deacon et al., 1997; Mishra, 1999). One
problem of employing a broad-gauge concept such as globalization as, so
to speak, an ‘independent variable’ is the difficulty of demonstrating that
the change in question was in fact due to the influence of this particular
variable. Clearly what is offered here is an interpretation of the relation-
ship, an argument backed by evidence, and not, for example, a statistical
demonstration of the nexus between increasing economic openness and the
decline of SPM. Moreover, the transformation of SPM involves influences
other than that of globalization. For example, national responses to global
challenges differ and make a difference to the outcome. Thus, Australia
and New Zealand have responded quite differently to the problem of
dealing with SPM in the context of globalization (Castles, 1996). In New
Zealand the institutions of economic protection and wage arbitration, in
short SPM, were virtually eliminated outright. In Australia, by contrast,
the process of change was more gradual and elements of compulsory wage
arbitration have been retained. In general both endogenous and exog-
enous influences have been involved in the process of change. Essentially
the argument here is that globalization has been an important contextual
influence in the erosion of SPM in the countries under examination.2

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows. We consider the nature
of SPM and its transformation since the 1980s in Australia, Japan and the
post-socialist CEE countries. In each case the relationship between glo-
balization and the decline or demise of SPM is a key issue to be explored.
A concluding section summarizes the main arguments and evidence and
discusses their broader implications for the relationship between globali-
ze and social welfare.

AUSTRALIA

In Australia SPM comprised a strategy of economic protectionism
and a system of wage arbitration, both of which developed in the early
years of the twentieth century. Protectionism involved a high level of
tariffs to restrict foreign competition and a strict control on immigra-
tion designed to exclude low-wage labour and to maintain a tight labour
market. The system of compulsory wage arbitration was meant to secure
for the worker – typically a male wage earner with a dependent wife
and children – a minimum wage that met his ‘normal needs’, in short,
something like a ‘living wage’. These conditions sought to ensure a high level of employment as well as a reasonable family wage for the worker, which made the need for a comprehensive system of social protection along West European lines less pressing. Castles (1989) argues that this is what accounts for the apparently ‘residual’ form of income protection in the Antipodes. Thus, Australia never developed a system of social insurance, the essential core of income security provision in the welfare states of virtually every industrialized nation. Australia’s welfare state, which has been labelled the “wage-earners” welfare state’, remained a laggard in this respect with largely means-tested social benefits and low social expenditure (Castles, 1988, p. 31). Yet as Castles (ibid., p. 18) points out, in terms of welfare outcomes Australia was by no means a laggard nation. In short, SPM acted as a functional alternative to regular forms of social welfare provision.

The basic structure of SPM remained in place until the 1980s and seems to have provided an effective means of economic security and welfare down to the early 1970s (Castles, 1996). During 1960–73 unemployment remained below 2 per cent and the country posted high rates of economic growth. Australia was among the most prosperous of the OECD nations in the 1960s with a relatively low rate of poverty and egalitarian income distribution (Castles, 1988, pp. 14–18). However, in the 1970s the international economic situation began to change, making the policy of economic protectionism increasingly counterproductive. By 1975 Australia had become the third most closed economy, after the United States and Japan, in terms of trade (ibid., p. 43). High tariffs and protectionism had made Australian manufacturing, producing largely for the home market, relatively inefficient and uncompetitive. Moreover, following the OPEC price shock of 1973 and the resulting ‘stagflation’, unemployment had been rising. It averaged 5 per cent during 1974–79 and over 6 per cent during 1980–82. Overall, Australia’s macroeconomic performance in the 1970s was one of the worst among OECD countries. Despite some effort to reduce tariffs and make Australian industry more competitive, protectionist policies, which included subsidies to primary and secondary industries, continued into the 1980s (Castles et al., 1996).

By the early 1980s, economic protectionism was ceasing to be a viable option. Major developments were taking place internationally, with the USA and the UK in the lead, to open up Western economies in terms of financial flows and trade and extend the scope of market forces, nationally and globally. Instead of growth based primarily on domestic markets the new circumstances demanded trade-led growth in a globally competitive market. In short, the globalization bandwagon was on the roll and a relatively small nation such as Australia had little choice besides
trying to get on it. Isolationism could only mean further economic decline. Henceforth, becoming ‘internationally competitive’ became the new mantra in Australia as elsewhere (Castles et al., 1996; Wiseman, 1998). What all this amounted to was the need for a substantial deregulation of the economy, including the financial system and the labour market. The latter had to be made more ‘flexible’, with wages more responsive to market forces. Financial liberalization implied removing capital controls and allowing national currencies to float, which in turn meant far greater influence – direct or indirect – of global markets and global investors on national policies. The implications for the system of SPM were clear. As a part of the old protectionist and regulated economy it had to be scaled down substantially, if not dismantled (Wiseman, 1998).

The change came in the early 1980s when the Labour government decided to float the Australian dollar and deregulate the financial system. Reduction in tariffs followed in the late 1980s. Further falls in tariffs and industry assistance were projected in order to bring Australia in line with most other OECD nations (OECD, 1997a, p. 81). As Castles (1998, p. 28) remarks, the new economic strategy was based on the ‘need to strip away all those policies and practices’ that had insulated Australia from global trends and international competition. Growth was to come by way of reversing the decline of Australian manufacturing and creating a specialized export-oriented manufacturing sector.

The deregulation of the wage arbitration system followed a more circuitous path. The Labour government’s agreement with the trade unions (the Accord) ensured that change was gradual and consensual. In the mid-1980s the system was used to hold down wages in order to reduce inflation and follow a reflational policy of creating jobs and reducing unemployment. From the late 1980s the scope of wage arbitration has been steadily curtailed while that of free collective bargaining has been extended. By the end of the 1990s collective bargaining had also been very substantially decentralized, allowing more free play of market forces and a smaller role of the government in the determination of wages (Wiseman, 1998; OECD, 2001).

The result of economic liberalization and the dismantling of large components of SPM can be seen in changes in the labour market and income distribution. Unemployment rose to 10.6 per cent in 1992 before declining to 6.8 per cent in 2001 and then falling below the OECD average (OECD, 2010, p. 336). Wage dispersion also increased although post-transfer inequality increased far less (Garnett and Lewis, 2008, pp. 148–9). ‘Non-regular’ forms of employment, for example, temporary and part-time work at low wage, increased substantially. For example, casual employment grew from 17 per cent of the workforce in 1985 to 24
Globalization and the decline of ‘social protection by other means’

per cent in 1995, one of the highest in the industrialized world (Beresford, 2000, p. 196). It subsequently reached a plateau of 27 per cent (Garnett and Lewis, 2008, p. 172). On the other hand, the economy performed very well in terms of productivity and GDP growth following the reforms of the 1980s and has continued to do so.

As far as social welfare is concerned Australia has chosen to retain and strengthen its selectivist system of income maintenance. In this sense the legacy of the past continues. On the other hand, along with economic deregulation and liberalization, a public system of medical care was put in place in 1983, followed in 1992 by a mandated system of occupationally based superannuation – the Superannuation Guarantee – which covered virtually all employees (Bryson and Verity, 2009, pp. 76–7). These two measures are universal in nature and although not based on social insurance mark a move towards the Western welfare model.

In sum, of the three components of Australia’s SPM identified earlier, viz. economic protectionism, immigration control and wage arbitration, the first has been virtually eliminated, and the third has been very substantially reduced in scope. As regards immigration, economic liberalization in Australia, as in other countries, stops short of the free mobility of labour across national borders. Controls remain in place and immigration policy is largely influenced by economic and demographic (decline in fertility) considerations. But in this respect Australia is not very different from other industrialized countries. What we also find in Australia is that within the broader context of liberalization domestic politics has made a difference. Thus, unlike its Labour predecessor, the Conservative government of John Howard (1996–2007) pushed reforms – especially in respect of industrial relations and labour market deregulation – aggressively in a neo-liberal direction. By contrast the Labour government that took office in 2007 has sought to moderate and modulate these policies. Nonetheless, it is clear that Australia’s SPM has been largely dismantled as a result of changes in the international political economy and, in particular, the closer integration of the economy with the global market. As a result the “wage-earner’s” welfare state of Australia has morphed into a variant of ‘liberal’ welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Bryson and Verity, 2009) with a ‘flexible’ labour market, a selectivist system of income security, mandated occupational pensions and a universal programme of medical care.

JAPAN

In Japan, SPM, which took shape after World War II, comprised two main elements. First, there was a policy of full employment and job
security institutionalized through a commitment to ‘lifetime employment’ by employers and employees. What was distinctive about this pattern of full employment was that it sought to provide a job for everyone – or at least for all working age males – based on the preservation of private sector jobs, within a long-term relationship between the employee and the employer. Second, and related to the above, was a system of wide-ranging workplace benefits, for example, pensions and retirement allowances, housing, medical care, family allowance and family leave, provided by the employer. In fact, lifetime or long-term employment and occupational benefits formed a part of a broader system of industrial relations in which wages were based on seniority rather than ‘merit’ and unions were organized around the enterprise (Pempel, 1989; Peng, 2000). Although the system of lifetime employment, seniority pay and enterprise welfare was far more typical of the large firms, in a weaker form the norm of job security and workplace benefits also prevailed in medium and small firms. Significantly the obligation on the part of the employer not to dismiss regular employees save in exceptional circumstances was not merely customary but also upheld by the law (Schregle, 1993). Thus, the majority of the Japanese (male) labour force enjoyed de facto job security leaving about one-fifth of the workforce, including temporary, contractual and part-time workers, as ‘non-regular’ employees. The latter consisted largely of women, older workers (who may have retired from their regular employment) and immigrants. Although the non-regular workforce was not a part of the lifetime system of job security the national policy of maintaining full employment sought to ensure that there was little or no unemployment (Therborn, 1986; Schregle, 1993; Peng, 2000).

In sum the majority of Japanese employees (especially males) did have job security and access to a range of occupational benefits and the labour force as a whole enjoyed the conditions of full employment. To full employment and enterprise welfare we need to add another element, viz. strongly institutionalized extended family obligations to support and care for family members, which has been enshrined in family law (Peng, 2000). This last element can be seen as a cultural norm reinforced by law. Together these three elements made up what was distinctive about Japanese patterns of welfare, in short, SPM. All three have been under pressure since the collapse of the ‘bubble economy’ in 1990. However, globalization is mainly relevant to full employment and enterprise welfare and the chapter will focus on these. As we shall see below, economic protectionism, which has been increasingly challenged by globalization, has been important in maintaining these patterns.

Although Japan developed a safety net of social insurance and assistance, the role of state welfare remained limited. Japan’s social expenditure
was one of the lowest among OECD countries and remained so until the 1990s. Thus, in 1990 it was only 11.57 per cent of GDP compared with an average of 21.6 per cent for other OECD countries (OECD, 1994). Yet the Japanese did enjoy economic security, a high standard of living and an egalitarian distribution of income comparable to that of Scandinavian countries. Indices such as life expectancy, infant mortality and enrolment in tertiary education put Japan among the top nations of the world (Rose and Shiratori, 1986; Pempel, 1989). Clearly Japan had developed its own indigenous version of economic and social security, which, arguably, offered social protection comparable to the advanced welfare states of Europe. This worked well through the 1980s with the country enjoying full employment, relatively strong economic growth, low inflation and surplus budgets. At a time when most of the OECD countries were suffering from high unemployment, inflation and chronic budget deficits Japan seemed to be amply vindicated in its distinctive way of welfare (Mishra, 1999, p. 86).

However, the situation changed dramatically in the 1990s. Japan went through a period of speculative investment boom in the late 1980s (the so-called ‘bubble economy’) followed by a collapse of the ‘bubble’ in 1990 (Katz, 1998). For a decade thereafter the economy remained mired in stagnation and recession. Repeated stimulus by the government in the form of huge spending on infrastructure failed to set the economy on the growth path. Meanwhile the national debt soared to unprecedented heights. Despite the government pumping billions of yen to prop up the economy and maintain employment, unemployment kept on rising, exceeding 5 per cent by the year 2000. While this does not seem high by OECD standards it must be remembered that unemployment in Japan was exceptionally low, averaging 1.8 per cent during 1960–89 and reaching 3 per cent only in 1995. Moreover, in the 1990s unemployment was held down by keeping redundant workers on the payroll of companies and the government having to run up massive deficits. True, the proximate cause of Japan’s economic woes was the collapse of the bubble economy and the inability of the nation to deal with the ensuing problems effectively. But what the crisis also underlined was (1) the systemic nature of Japanese capitalism that was making reform difficult and (2) the economic costs of maintaining a relatively closed and regulated domestic economy in the context of increasing trade openness and competitiveness worldwide.

In order to understand the Japanese situation better it is useful to look at the distinctive character of the Japanese economy as it developed after World War II. It was a dual economy that combined a highly efficient and competitive export-oriented sector with a large and substantially less efficient domestic sector of services and small producers. The domestic economy was highly regulated – both formally and informally – justifying
the label of a ‘closed’ economy (Katz, 1998). Not only was domestic competition restricted but non-tariff barriers of various kinds also limited foreign competition very substantially. It was largely this relative insulation from the sway of market forces, domestic and international, that enabled Japan to maintain its pattern of enterprise-based full employment and welfare benefits. The less efficient but labour-intensive domestic sector of the economy helped maintain jobs, as did the ‘lifetime employment’ system of large and medium-sized firms. The broader social norm that employees will not be dismissed by the company as long and as far as possible meant that ‘millions of redundant’ workers remained on the company payroll even when profits were falling (Greider, 1998, p. 375). This in turn was made possible by the distinctive nature of the Japanese capital market and financial institutions that enabled corporations to work within a long-term perspective rather than seek short-term profit (Dore, 2000). In part, this was what made it possible for Japan to live through post-war recessions, including its longest in the 1990s, without making a radical break with traditional practices. Moreover, the inflexibility of the labour market in terms of employment was counterbalanced by a variety of ‘flexibilities’ (OECD, 1997b, pp. 112–17). For example, a part of Japanese wages consisted of biannual bonuses. These could be adjusted according to the financial health of the company. Employees could be redeployed within the firm or within the conglomerate. In addition, measures such as early retirement, restrictions on overtime, freezes on new hiring and dismissal of temporary staff provided employers with a great deal of flexibility in terms of overall wage costs, making it possible to avoid dismissal of regular employees. These were used extensively in the 1990s (Michito, 1998; OECD, 1999, pp. 33–4, 47–50).

The idea of the company as a community and a focus of loyalty of employees within a long-term relationship has been a distinctive feature of Japanese social and industrial organization for nearly half a century. During this time the Japanese economy grew to be the second largest economy in the world. Indeed, it was not so long ago that Japan was the envy of the industrialized world and Japanese management and labour practices were not only an object of admiration but also emulation. No wonder that Japan has been reluctant to turn its back on an economic and industrial system that has served the country, on the whole, very well in the past. SPM has been an integral part of this system. And to a large extent its future is tied to the viability of the Japanese form of capitalism itself. However, the protracted economic crisis of the 1990s has taken its toll. Open unemployment reached or surpassed that of many OECD countries, weakening Japan’s claim to remain a full-employment economy.³ The proportion of ‘non-regular’, that is, temporary, contractual and
part-time, workforce rose from one-fifth of the total in 1990 to one-third by 2008 (OECD, 2009, p. 12). These ‘non-regular’ employees have no job security and often no company welfare benefits (Peng, 2000, pp. 104, 109; OECD, 2009, p. 35). On the other hand, regular employees have continued to enjoy stringent employment protection (OECD, 2009, p. 36). Thus, labour market dualism has intensified although the core of lifetime employees has also been shrinking. As a result of the long recession many Japanese pension funds have been in serious financial difficulty (OECD, 2000, p. 129; Takayama, 2004, p. 253). Government reforms have sought to make occupational plans more viable, flexible and portable. Defined-contribution pension funds and American-style 401(K) type retirement accounts, which shift market risks to employees, have been legalized (Japan and Sakamoto, 2010). With the rising burden of insurance contributions for pensions and medical care, companies are cutting back on employee welfare in order to reduce non-wage labour costs and to prepare for a more competitive environment (Peng, 2000, p. 105; 2004, p. 406). The practice of basing pay on seniority rather than merit is one aspect of the old pattern that is being slowly phased out. In short, SPM has been in a state of relative decline since the late 1990s, especially in respect of security of employment and corporate welfare. True, a high level of employment is being maintained but at the cost of increasing dualization of the labour market and an insider/outsider divide, resulting in higher levels of poverty and inequality (OECD, 2006, Ch. 4).

However, along with the deregulation of the labour market the government has also provided some measure of social protection. Some ad hoc and temporary measures, for example, to help older displaced workers, have been adopted in order to soften the impact of redundancy and early retirement. Part-time workers have become eligible for unemployment insurance (OECD, 2009, p. 35). In some areas of need, for example, long-term care insurance for the aged and disabled, as well as child care, the state has made significant commitment although this has more to do with the ageing of the population, increasing participation of married women in the labour force and sharp fall in fertility rates (Peng, 2000). In general, there is an increasing – almost grudging – acceptance of the notion that the state will have to assume greater responsibility for social protection. In 2008 the government approved the goal of developing a ‘medium-level welfare society’, with a level of social expenditure somewhere between that of the USA and the European countries. Apparently this implies a level of expenditure higher than the 18.6 per cent of GDP reached in 2005 (a substantial rise from 12 per cent of GDP in 1990), which though above that of the United States was still below the OECD average (OECD, 2009, p. 320).

From a globalist perspective what is surprising is that in spite of
a decade-long economic stagnation followed by years of low growth not much has changed. Overall, Japan seems to be holding on to its past pattern of SPM although its long-term survival is questionable. Japanese-style welfare developed as an integral part of the country’s post-World War II economy, a developing economy dedicated to rapid industrialization via export-oriented growth. With its ‘strategic’ integration into the global market, Japan has been extremely successful in the venture of ‘catching up’, enjoying sustained high rates of growth for a long time. In part it was the protected domestic economy, but in part also the high rate of economic growth and the expectation that it would continue, that made the system of full employment and enterprise welfare affordable. Many of these assumptions underlying the Japanese economy are no longer valid. The continuing stagnation and recession of the 1990s has exposed the weaknesses of Japan’s financial system and capital market, which rely much more on the norms of trust and ‘accommodation’ rather than on the impersonal market criteria of performance, transparency and other ‘objective’ standards. With increasing ascendancy of market forces and competition worldwide Japan has been under pressure to open up its economy to international competition (Greider, 1998, pp. 374–9; Katz, 1998; OECD, 2006). Yet in spite of reforms undertaken since the 1990s Japan’s level of globalization and domestic competitiveness still remain quite low (OECD, 2006). In its effort to shore up the economic and financial system the government has racked up an accumulated debt close to 200 per cent of GDP. It is a rich country that has so far been able and willing to pay the cost of resisting pressures to liberalize and globalize its economy. But how long can it be sustained? Significantly, Japan’s welfare regime is closely tied to its production regime and that has not changed much so far. Moreover, change has been slow, uneven, path-dependent and system sustaining (Jacoby, 2005, p. 77). As with the production regime, changes in the welfare regime have also been largely ‘adaptive’ and parametric rather than ‘transformative’. The systemic features of the Japanese economic and industrial organization, the ‘institutional complementarities’ intertwined with politics, make the reform process difficult and slow. Moreover, Japan’s distinctive brand of capitalism with its unique configuration of institutions and values has many advantages that the country is loath to forgo (Jacoby, 2005, pp. 168–70; Nottage et al., 2008). In any case it appears that Japan has yet to tackle the problem of restructuring its economic system in order to make a successful transition to a mature post-industrial economy and to come to terms with globalization. It is likely that short of a serious ‘shock’ of some kind Japanese SPM will continue in an attenuated form while both the state and individuals/families take on a greater share of responsibility for social security. The large accumulated
national debt and the political difficulties of raising taxes may, however, limit the expansion of state welfare. In the coming years therefore we may see an increasing hybridization of the welfare system with an eclectic mix of old and new elements.

**POST-SOCIALIST SOCIETIES**

The post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the former USSR provide the most dramatic example of the collapse of SPM in late twentieth century and the transformation of a welfare regime. These countries, of course, vary enormously in many significant ways including how far they have moved away from their former social system. The shift away from socialist forms of SPM is most evident in the CEE countries, for example, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, the focus of this chapter. Although the decline of socialist forms of SPM has mainly to do with the collapse of state socialism, globalization has played a significant role in hastening the process.

In state socialist countries SPM comprised two basic elements. First, there was a policy of guaranteed full employment for both men and women of working age. Second, there was a system of consumer price subsidies for a wide variety of basic goods and services, which held down the cost of living for the general population very substantially. In addition these countries also provided a range of universalistic services, for example, education and medical care, as well as income security programmes, for example, pensions, sickness benefits and child allowances, broadly similar to those of Western countries. Given full employment and also the importance accorded to labour and production there was also an array of services and benefits based on the enterprises complementing and augmenting state welfare services. SPM together with the state welfare programmes formed the core of economic security and welfare under state socialism (Standing, 1996; Kapstein and Mandelbaum, 1997).

Guaranteed, indeed obligatory, full-time work and consumer subsidies formed a part of the political economy of state socialism, which entailed state ownership of the means of production, the virtual elimination of the market and control over the entire economy by a one-party state. The ‘right to work’, the emphasis on collective consumption, low wage differentials and egalitarian living standards were a part of the ideology of state socialism. In short, it aimed at ‘de-commodification’ on a grand scale. Unlike capitalism, it was not the market that determined wages, prices and employment. Thus, employment was more a ‘social’ than an ‘economic’ concept and many more workers remained on the payroll of enterprises
than was justified by market criteria. In the absence of the market forces of competition and profitability, productivity was low and the quality of goods produced was poor. Enterprises worked in order to fulfil production quotas for a captive domestic market in which consumers had little choice. Foreign trade was conducted largely with other socialist bloc countries and was guided by political rather than economic criteria (Kramer, 1997, p. 81). No doubt CEE countries, notably Hungary and Poland, did introduce elements of market in their economies and developed significant trading and economic relations with capitalist countries. But on the whole, it is true to say that the economies of state socialist countries were subject to very little competition, domestic or international. It was the subordination of the market and the insulation from the international economy – in terms of trade and finance – that enabled these countries to maintain full employment and to provide many basic necessities at a price far below not only what might represent a reasonable market price but below even the cost of production.

We need not rehearse the inherent weaknesses of state socialism as an economic, political and social organization that eventually led to its unravelling. By the end of the 1980s the communist regimes had virtually collapsed in Eastern Europe and by 1991 in the former USSR. Since then most of these countries have been in a process of transition towards some form of market-based economy and representative government. In the event, transition has meant integration into the global market economy. The exact timing, extent and process of integration has varied. Countries such as Poland and Hungary and some Baltic countries have led the process, followed, to a varying degree, by Russia and other former state socialist countries. Integration has meant opening up the economies fully to market forces – domestic and global – with free trade and financial flows and convertible currencies (Gowan, 1995). The dramatic change from conditions of relative closure and insulation from the international economy to full exposure meant the virtual elimination of SPM within a short space of time, which contributed to the rise of mass unemployment, economic insecurity, inequality and poverty (Standing, 1996; Ferge, 2001). Full employment became a thing of the past and consumer subsidies were drastically reduced, if not eliminated (Kolodko, 1999; Ferge, 2001). It is now the market forces – global and local – that largely determine employment levels. With the acceptance of unemployment as a part of the new economy, forms of unemployment benefits have been instituted. These did not exist under state socialism, which claimed to have abolished unemployment. Social assistance was weakly developed and means-tested benefits were practically non-existent. They now form an important part of the system of social protection. Old pay-as-you-go pension programmes have
been converted into multi-pillar schemes with funded elements in most countries. Partial privatization of other programmes has also been taking place (Standing, 1996; Ferge, 2001; Hacker, 2009). The post-socialist countries differ a great deal in respect of economic, political and social conditions and it is the CEE countries that have been more successful in transforming themselves into something like stable capitalist democracies. Their system of social protection now broadly resembles that of Western countries, at least in institutional form or structural characteristics if not also in policy or substantive content (Ferge, 2001, p. 135; Potucek, 2008; Hacker, 2009, pp. 164–7). In short, socialist forms of SPM have virtually disappeared and a gradual ‘Westernization’ of systems of social protection has been taking place. By 2007 ten CEE countries had joined the EU, enhancing the prospect of further ‘Europeanization’ of their social policies (Potucek, 2008, p. 80; see also Haggard and Kaufman, 2008, pp. 344–5).

How much of the socialist forms of SPM might have survived in the case of a gradual transition from state socialism towards some form of social democracy – as hoped for by many – is largely a hypothetical question. Arguably a policy of maintaining high levels of employment and retaining consumer subsidies in a modified form might have worked in more favourable international circumstances. However, the collapse of state socialism coincided with economic globalization and the ascendancy of the Washington Consensus in the West (Ferge, 2001). Thus, liberalization of trade and finance, deregulation of labour markets and the unleashing of market forces more generally were seen as providing the best conditions for growth for former socialist countries, as indeed for others. This translated into a policy of ‘shock therapy’, that is, a rapid marketization and globalization of the economy. This policy was followed, to a varying degree, by many post-socialist countries through a mixture of choice and necessity (Gowan, 1995; Standing, 1996). It meant a radical dismantling of SPM. Here the influence of international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the IMF and WB has been important. Apart from providing general policy advice, agencies such as the IMF and WB were directly involved in extending loans to many of these countries to help with problems of transition (Deacon et al., 1997, Ch. 4). These loans included various conditions, for example, that consumer subsidies be cut back drastically and market forces allowed maximum possible scope in determining prices and levels of employment if not also wages. The marketization of the economy was to be complemented by a social safety net to include unemployment benefits and means-tested social assistance. Partial privatization of pensions was also strongly urged upon these countries by the IMF and WB (Standing, 1996; Ferge, 2001).

Thus, the general context of economic globalization and the direct
influence of IFIs have both worked in the same direction – towards a rapid dismantling of SPM. In Hungary, for example, the first Structural Adjustment Loan of 1990 required consumer and housing subsidies to be reduced substantially. In the event they fell from 7.0 per cent of GDP in 1989 to 1.5 per cent in 1993. In Poland subsidies fell from 8.2 per cent of GDP to 0.7 per cent over the same period (Ferge, 2001, p. 133). Apparently the removal of subsidies was considered ‘absolutely necessary’ by the IMF, which was willing to back only those adjustment policies that would lead to the eventual liquidation of all subsidies (Kolodko, 1999, p. 162). The IFIs in fact favoured the rapid withdrawal of price subsidies without compensation (Ferge, 2001, p. 133). However, governments often found it difficult to implement such drastic measures, which were highly unpopular and imposed a great deal of hardship on people (Haggard and Kaufman, 2008, pp. 341–3). The extent to which countries compensated for the reduction of subsidies by way of wage increases, social assistance or other forms of protective measures varied a great deal (World Bank, 2000). Whereas the old practices continued longer in Russia and other countries of the former USSR, the CEE nations formed the vanguard of Westernization – phasing out old SPM and instituting the structures and forms of Western welfare (Ferge, 2001, pp. 132, 135; Potucek, 2008; Cerami, 2009).

DISCUSSION

This chapter has looked at SPM in three different settings and considered its transformation since the 1980s. One element common to all three forms of SPM has been a policy of full employment albeit in each case the approach has been different. In state socialist societies it took a systemic form entailing the virtual abolition of the market economy and the establishment of the ‘right (and duty) to work’ for men and women as an integral part of socialism. Employment became more a social than an economic concept. In Australia it involved conventional methods of economic protectionism within a capitalist economy and control over immigration to ensure plentiful employment though essentially for the male breadwinner. The Japanese approach to full employment stood somewhere in between. It has shared with Australia the practice of economic protectionism in a capitalist economy and the idea of full employment essentially for male breadwinners. But the means of economic protection have been very different, involving non-tariff barriers and a dual economy. Japan has also differed from Australia in having a far bigger and stronger economy with formidable export competitiveness and a
strong currency. It has therefore been in a much stronger position to main-
tain its strategy of ‘domestic defence’ and its relative insulation from the
global market economy. Moreover, full employment has been a key com-
ponent of Japan’s welfare regime in the context of a dual economy and a
distinctive production regime. Hence its effort to sustain employment has
been far stronger than that of Australia. Its SPM has not therefore suf-
fered a great deal of erosion thus far. What Japan has shared with state
socialist societies is a **systemic** or **quasi-systemic** feature that involves the
intertwining of economic, financial and industrial organization. It enabled
Japan to take an approach to employment that was, in part, ‘social’ rather
than economic – in the sense of being market-rational – echoing state
socialism. These systemic features also allowed Japan to maintain full
employment through periods of economic recessions and restructuring.
Unlike state socialism, however, Japanese capitalism has been a story of
economic triumph, at least until recently. The Japanese form of welfare
capitalism, which includes SPM, has on the whole served the nation well.
It also appears to have enjoyed a great deal of support in the country. Not
surprisingly, therefore, Japan is to a large extent holding on to its distinct
form of capitalism and SPM in spite of serious economic difficulties and a
long period of stagnation.

But can Japan be called a full employment country any longer? Since
the late 1990s unemployment has been above 4 per cent, a rate slightly
higher than or comparable to more than half a dozen OECD countries
(see note 3). And this has been achieved, among other things, by sub-
stantially enlarging the periphery of insecure workers. In any case the old
pattern of full employment, based on the assumption of a male breadwin-
ner and female homemaker family, is unlikely to return. Thus, it appears
that full employment as a part of SPM has ended in all three systems and
the countries concerned. The future seems to lie more in the direction of
the Western pattern, that is, largely market-determined unemployment,
together with systems of unemployment compensation and active labour
market policies although moves in this direction have so far been uneven
and limited in Japan.

Extensive subsidies were a feature of state socialist societies alone. It
was the socialist economy that allowed prices to be determined by social
and political rather than economic criteria. It should be noted, however,
that subsidies for food and other necessities of life as a form of social
protection have featured in many developing countries. Indeed, in a
limited form they also exist in many advanced capitalist countries, for
example, for housing and transport, and are by no means incompatible
with a well-functioning market economy. No doubt the retrenchment, if
not elimination, of subsidies in former state socialist countries was in part
due to the economic difficulties resulting from the sudden collapse of the system and the transition to a market economy. However, the context of globalization as well as the pressure from Western donors and IFIs such as the IMF and WB has been important in eroding subsidies. The IFIs have had considerable leverage in influencing the social policy of these countries, by way of conditionalities for loans and other assistance. Indeed, as Standing (1996, p. 230) observes, ‘the revolution that has been taking place in Central and Eastern Europe is the first in history in which social policy has been shaped and influenced by international financial agencies’. It is worth noting, however, that for many years Structural Adjustment Loans made by these IFIs to developing countries have included similar stipulations about the reduction, if not the elimination, of price subsidies. Restoration of market pricing, coupled with targeted assistance to the needy has been the preferred policy. Consumer price subsidies as a method of social protection have been very much out of favour with the Washington Consensus and the globalized market economy with their penchant for allowing market forces full play and limiting the nature and scope of state intervention in the economy.

Labour market ‘flexibility’, including wage flexibility, has emerged as a key requirement for competitiveness and growth in the global market economy. Australia’s system of compulsory wage arbitration made for considerable rigidity in the wage structure by making annual wage awards that formed the basis of wage determination throughout industry and beyond. Wage flexibility, on the other hand, requires that wages be responsive to the market situation of firms and to labour productivity. This is not to say that centralized forms of wage agreements – tripartite or bipartite – are necessarily dysfunctional for a national economy in the context of globalization. Flexibilities can be built around a basic agreement on wages as a number of European countries, in varying degrees and forms, have shown (Hirst and Thompson, 1999, Ch. 6; Rhodes, 2001). Indeed, the Labour government in Australia practised a form of centralized wage determination during its period of accord with the trade unions in the 1980s and early 1990s, which held down national wage costs while seeking to ensure fairness and protection for low wage earners. Australia posted good economic as well as job growth during this period. However, business and global investors were pressing for the decentralization of collective bargaining and the deregulation of wage structure. The Conservative government, which succeeded Labour in 1996, was more sympathetic to these objectives and took steps to decentralize bargaining and limit the scope of wage arbitration. Thus, changes in the Australian wage arbitration system cannot be understood in terms of globalization alone. National, including political, responses to the phenomenon must
also be taken into account. Indeed, as the somewhat different outcomes in Australia and New Zealand in this regard show, policy responses of governments and other major actors are important in deciding the specific outcomes. What we have argued, however, is that the changed context of globalization, which called for labour market flexibility, provided the rationale for scaling down the wage arbitration system.

Extensive occupational welfare linked with lifetime employment has been a distinctive feature of Japanese SPM. But occupational welfare per se is far from unique to Japan. It exists in many other countries and acts, in part, as an alternative to more comprehensive public provision (Shalev, 1996; Ellison, 2006, Ch. 7). For example, in the United States, health insurance benefits in the workplace have served as a partial substitute for public provision of medical care for the working population. Globalization pressures have weakened the nature and scope of such benefits in the United States too, eroding this type of SPM (Mishra, 1999, pp. 26–80; Alber, 2010, pp. 105–6). More recently the Obama administration has legislated health care coverage for virtually all Americans, thus extending the role of the state. Nonetheless, occupational provision continues to form a part of the health care mosaic. In Continental Europe again – as in Australia – we see examples of an enhanced role of occupational welfare, especially in regard to pensions (Ellison, 2006, Ch. 7). In Japan too occupational pensions are envisioned as a continuing feature of social security. Clearly the relation between globalization and occupational welfare is somewhat contradictory, variable and nationally specific.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main concern of this chapter has been to draw attention to the transformation of certain major forms of SPM (social protection by other means) at the end of the twentieth century and to highlight the relevance of globalization to the process. It was above all the relative insulation of national economies from the global market economy that enabled countries to fashion policies and institutions of social protection other than those typical of the post-World War II welfare state. At the close of the twentieth century it has proven increasingly difficult, if not economically untenable, for these countries to maintain their isolation from the global market economy. They have been under pressure, directly or indirectly, to open up their economies in terms of trade and financial flows and to compete internationally. This openness and integration into the global economy has meant scaling down or dismantling SPM. The process has been uneven across the countries examined in this chapter and Japan, in
particular, still remains a relatively closed economy with rather limited erosion of SPM. Speculations abound regarding the future of Japanese capitalism and its welfare patterns. A likely outcome is a slow process of change resulting in greater liberalization of the economy and increasing Westernization of welfare patterns.

Influences other than those associated with globalization have been at work in the process of change. Actors within the nation-state as well as without, including IFIs such as the IMF and WB, have played a part in the process. In any case it is clear that the imperatives of openness and closer integration with the global market economy have deprived nations of certain policy options available to them earlier. In this respect globalization does curtail the policy autonomy of nations.

This is not to say that countries have no choice regarding the social provision that might replace SPM. How far globalization influences such choice is a question that is outside the remit of this chapter. It appears, however, that a ‘mainstreaming’ of methods of social protection is taking place leading to the ‘Westernization’ of the form or structure of welfare systems. This is certainly evident in CEE countries and to a lesser extent also in Japan where we are witnessing greater state responsibility for social protection. In Australia too the universality of medical care and mandated workplace superannuation represent a shift towards the mainstream Western welfare pattern. Nonetheless, a broad institutional convergence on the Western model still leaves plenty of scope for diversity and choice in welfare.

NOTES

1. This raises the question of how to demarcate those arrangements that constitute ‘social protection by other means’ from those that do not. In our view there is no clear-cut divide between the two. Rather, there is a continuum of relevance of policies and institutions to social protection. It is a question of focusing on those that appear to be more directly relevant.

2. See Ellison (2006), especially Chapter 3, for a nuanced perspective on how globalization pressures influence welfare regimes.

3. For 1995–2001 the unemployment rate averaged 4 per cent (calculated from OECD, 2002, Annex Table 14, p. 220). In 2001 it stood at 5 per cent compared with 4.8 per cent in the USA. In that year 12 OECD countries had a lower rate of unemployment than Japan (ibid.). During 2002–09 it ranged from 3.9 per cent to 5.4 per cent. These rates were comparable to those of nearly a dozen other OECD countries (see OECD, 2010, Annex Table 14, p. 336).

4. For example, Japan’s annual rate of economic growth fell from 10.2 per cent during 1961–70 to 4.5 per cent in 1971–80 and to 4 per cent in 1981–90 (OECD, 1998, Table 1, p. 22). It dropped to 1.4 per cent during 1991–2001 and averaged less than 2 per cent during 2002–07, in each case falling below the OECD average (see OECD, 2010, Annex Table 1, p. 323). The growth rates of the 1980s now look highly unlikely.
5. According to one estimate (Kramer, 1997, p. 87), a quarter of the employed workforce in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia under the communist rule was redundant.

6. During 1993–2001 unemployment averaged 6 per cent in Czech Republic, 8.9 per cent in Hungary and 13.8 per cent in Poland (calculated from OECD, 2002, Annex Table 14, p. 220). In 2001 the respective rates were 8.2 per cent, 5.7 per cent and 18.2 per cent (ibid.). Unemployment remained highest in Poland, reaching a record 20 per cent in 2002 before falling to single digits in 2007 (OECD, 2010, Annex Table 14, p. 336).

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PART II

CONCEPTS AND
DEFINITIONS
Defining comparative social policy
Jochen Clasen

Any attempt to ‘define’ comparative social policy in just a few words is bound to run into trouble. This is not only because of the difficulty in characterizing a composite term, but also due to the contested nature of both of its elements, that is, the substantive focus of social policy and the comparative approach. Is social policy an academic discipline or a field of study? Which particular programmes should be regarded as social policy and which should not? What is comparative analysis and is it different from other qualitative or quantitative research strategies in social science? Is there any scientific research that is not, explicitly or implicitly, comparative in nature?

The first part of this chapter addresses some of these definitional problems. It does not make any claims to be exhaustive but aims to highlight instead the limitations of delving into an extensive definitional mapping exercise of what are ultimately ambiguous and amorphous substantive and methodological boundaries. A more helpful approach to appreciating what comparative social policy is about is simply to review some of the major contributions to the field. As will be seen below, comparative social policy has not only grown enormously over the past three decades or so, but has also progressed to a considerable degree.

BOUNDARIES

Unlike economic policy or environmental policy, social policy can be regarded as a ‘diffuse, residual category’ (Wilensky et al., 1987, p. 381). In academic discourse, the term tends to be confined to the publicly provided, or regulated, core programmes such as income maintenance (or social security), housing, health and social services. Yet beyond these generally accepted central areas, there is a range of other public policies that might legitimately be included in the definition given that they are aimed at securing or enhancing the well-being and the life chances of individuals. Tax allowances, tax credits or exemptions, for example, are in many ways simply alternatives to providing social security transfers in the sense that they raise the disposable income of certain social groups. Education, active labour market policies, occupational health and health and safety
issues impinge on an individual’s state of welfare by providing opportunities for, or by directly improving the level of social and material protection. Yet these areas have tended to be excluded from standard textbooks on social policy, while non-public forms of welfare production on the part of voluntary organizations, families or individuals are still given scant attention.

There is no consensus as to the academic nature of social policy analysis either. Is it a discipline in its own right, or rather a field of research that attracts scientists from different disciplines, such as sociology, political science, economics, history and legal studies, and is thus approached from within a number of theoretical perspectives, guided by different research questions, and subjected to a variety of methodological tools? The answer depends on the definition of ‘academic discipline’. With reference to the situation in the UK, Alcock (1996) regards social policy as an academic discipline because of its institutional recognition, indicated by the existence of university departments and undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in social policy, academic journals devoted to publishing studies of social policy and the existence of a professional association. By contrast, Spicker (1995) points to scientific criteria and argues that social policy ‘is not claiming to be a discipline’ because it has no ‘distinctive view of the world, or special methods or approaches. It is defined by what it studies, not by how it goes about it’ (p. 8). Similarly, Erskine (1998, p. 15) considers it to be a ‘multidisciplinary field of study rather than a discipline’ because it lacks a ‘unique set of methods, concepts, theories or insights’.

Clearly, social policy is not a sub-discipline of another more recognized discipline within social sciences, such as sociology or economics. Instead, the study of social policy shares certain interests and core concepts with these and other established disciplines. Indeed, in most countries in which the analysis of social policy has achieved a certain level of recognition and academic output, there are no separate university departments that offer undergraduate degrees in social policy. More typical are academics who have been trained in one of a range of disciplines, are employed in departments of sociology, political science or economics, and have developed an interest and become specialists in the analysis of social policy. They might offer specialist university units or modules on different aspects of social policy, be engaged in a research framework that might revolve around a particular question of social policy, or work in social policy research centres. Their number seems to have grown in the past decades, and so has (for a variety of reasons, see Clasen, 1999) the number of them who have become involved in analysing problems of social policy not only in their own countries but in a comparative cross-national perspective.

Given its complexity, the multi-disciplinary analysis of social policy
can pose methodological problems. Yet different perspectives of the same issue, say sociological and economic assessments of welfare to work policies, can be mutually challenging and, potentially at least, cross-fertilizing. The same applies to comparative social policy research. For example, between the 1960s and 1980s, the debate on determinants of welfare state change was dominated by scholars working within a macro-sociological frame of reference. Explanatory variables such as modernization, class and class alliances, risk groups and demographic change figured prominently. By contrast, influenced by Pierson (1994) the debate on change and stability in mature welfare states since the 1990s has concentrated on options and limitations for policy-makers to engage in processes of welfare retrenchment and welfare restructuring. This shift in focus might be attributable to the direction of welfare state change that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, that is, from expansion to consolidation. In any case, it has drawn more political scientists into the debate and introduced other core independent (and partly also dependent) variables, such as institutions, veto points and party constellations (Green-Pedersen and Haverland, 2002). The dispute between adherents of the ‘new’ and ‘old’ politics of the welfare state (Pierson, 2001) is partly also a debate between political science and sociology, which, potentially, benefits the analytical reflexivity and thus quality of contemporary scholarship of welfare state restructuring.

Central to social policy is the specific focus upon the trajectory and implementation of policies that influence the social circumstances, or well-being, of individuals. It is this focus on the process and substance of policy that makes social policy distinct from sociology and, in approach, similar to public policy. Indeed, comparative social policy might be regarded as akin to comparative public policy, which developed in the 1970s as a field of study within political science and comparative politics (Leichter, 1977; Landman, 2000). While many studies within comparative public policy cover policy fields that are only loosely connected to social policy, such as urban planning or environmental policy, several major texts and reviews in the area (Dierkes et al., 1987; Heidenheimer et al., 1990; Castles, 1998) include core social policy programmes such as social security, housing, health or education or cover ‘the welfare state’ as a whole. Depending on the particular aims and interests, that is, discussing what and how policies are delivered in different countries, why policies have developed similarly or seem to diverge, or what outcomes they produce, analyses will draw on different disciplines. These include comparative politics and public administration, which can inform studies interested in modes of policy delivery. Researchers investigating the causes for policy emergence and for variation in policy development tend to draw
on macro-sociology, political economy and history as frameworks that provide theoretical propositions or hypotheses. Others who are primarily interested in assessing the effects of social policies across countries might turn to evaluation and implementation studies, to economics and also to social philosophy. After all, social policy is based on redistribution and thus a contested terrain in which preferences, debates and strategies are, at least partly, informed by normative perceptions and values about ‘the type of society in which we like to live in’ (Heidenheimer et al., 1990).

COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY AS A METHODOLOGY

As Higgins (1986, p. 24) pointed out, ‘comparative analysis is a methodology, rather than a substantive area of study, and should be employed where it can illuminate specific questions and hypotheses’. In other words, rather than attempting to come to grips with the essence of comparative social policy via defining its ultimately ambiguous, contested and amorphous subject matter, its actual distinctive feature can be found in the adopted research strategy. However, this claim invites other types of boundary problems. All social science might be regarded as ultimately comparative in the sense that observed phenomena are compared against a certain point of reference, which is either explicitly stated or implicitly assumed, and which allows differences and similarities to be analysed, interpreted or evaluated. If that is the case, is there anything distinctive about cross-national research as opposed to other forms of research strategies? This question has been extensively deliberated on in texts on methods within comparative and cross-national social research (Ragin, 1987, 1991; Kohn, 1989; Oyen, 1990; Hantrais and Mangen, 1996; Hantrais, 2008). Without rehearsing the arguments made there, a conservative response might point to particular and compounding methodological problems when it comes to generating comparable data, identifying appropriate functional equivalents and achieving an adequate sensitivity towards the different historical and cultural contexts in which national social policies are embedded. In other words, as with other forms of comparative research, the distinctive feature of comparative social policy is to be found within its methodological aspects rather than its substantive nature.

Comparative social policy analysts should be explicit about the ways in which they conceptualize and operationalize countries as units of analysis. Comparisons might be made between two or more cases or cover a large number of countries, for example all member states of the UN. Analyses of the latter type are generally based on statistical methods, and thus tend
to conceptualize countries as representing a particular set of quantifiable variables, such as levels of GDP, social spending, income inequality or mortality rates. Hence, as Ragin (1991) points out, the analysis within these ‘large-N’ studies are constructed as co-variations between these generally few variables, while countries as entities beyond these variables tend to disappear. In contrast, ‘small-N’ studies tend to treat countries as multi-dimensional backgrounds for comparing the content of, or change within, particular social policy programmes or welfare states as a whole. In other words, the latter type of research conceptualizes national social policies as embedded within different, and not always quantifiable, social, political, economic, cultural and ideological contexts that impinge on the shape and impact of particular social policies.

Esping-Andersen (2000) has argued for ‘intentional and purposeful empiricism’ that combines ‘cross-sectional’ with what he calls ‘diachronic’ comparisons (that is, comparing the present with particularly distinctive time periods in the past) as the most useful research strategy in macro-societal investigations that are grappling with the emergence of new societal equilibria. The approach of ‘confronting extremes in the past with vanguards of the future’ (ibid., p. 75), he argues, is particularly appropriate at times like this, which, as is widely agreed, is a time of rapid social change that makes it hard to analyse the shape of society to come.

Indeed, it has to be noted that comparative social policy research, or other types of comparative social research, are not necessarily cross-national in nature. The provision of social services in a particular region, for example, might be compared over time rather than across countries. Also, the nation-state might be an inappropriate unit for a cross-sectional analysis. For some purposes countries might be too small (e.g., analysing the role of Catholicism on social policy formation), for others too large (e.g., studying the impact of cultural factors on the provision of social care within India). Depending on the particular aim of a comparative study, subnational entities (local authorities, regions, federal states) or supranational organizations (such as the EU) might be the more appropriate unit of analysis. Indeed, much research that has been labelled cross-national or cross-country is in fact a comparison of particular (and not necessarily representative) regions or towns within different countries. There are often good methodological reasons for such a strategy, and as long as these are made explicit there is no problem with such an approach.

In their review of the literature, Wilensky et al. (1987, p. 382) defined only those studies as comparative social policy that had systematically covered ‘the same phenomena in two or more countries’. Such an approach excludes comparatively oriented case studies and systematic investigations of social policies in single countries. Yet, as Ragin (1987,
p. 4) puts it with reference to major classical sociological texts by Alexis de Tocqueville or Emile Durkheim, ‘many area specialists are thoroughly comparative because they implicitly compare their chosen case to their own country or to an imaginary but theoretically decisive ideal-type case’. Indeed, particularly early texts on social policy arrangements in a country different from the author’s own have helped to broaden the horizon and inspired new reflections on domestic forms of social policy delivery, principles and impacts. However, over the past three decades the ease of accessing information – that is, in English – about national social policy arrangements and changes therein has considerably improved, due to comparisons of specific social policy fields in a small number of countries (e.g., Kautto et al., 1999; 2001; Bonoli, 2000; Clasen, 2005; Palier, 2010) as well as better systematic information and data made available by supranational agencies such as the EU or the OECD. Thus, while some single-country-based analyses of social policy will continue to be of scholarly value, their inclusion as a form of comparative social policy seems to stretch the notion too far.

At the same time, just because a study might cover data and information from more than one country does not make it comparative in any explicit sense. There are many books that describe, discuss or even analyse social policy instruments, outcomes and policy developments in a number of countries, with individual chapters devoted to particular countries. Although providing a flavour of recent national policy developments, often these texts lack criteria that would make them comparative in any analytical sense. For example, series of disparate country chapters often come without a common analytical framework, systematic structure or even set of common topics covered. There is little attempt to introduce central concepts or a discussion of how these have been operationalized throughout the book and, subsequently, little synthesis of the material or effort to draw comparative conclusions. On a positive note, the number of books and articles that are published each year and that meet these criteria has grown considerably. In part this has been assisted by the growth of outlets for comparative social policy writing. Within a European context, for example, a number of academic journals have now become established, such as the Journal of European Social Policy, the European Journal of Social Security, European Societies, or the Journal of European Social Work. In addition, in 2002 a European network for social policy analysis was established (ESPAnet), which has become a firm platform for the promotion of particularly comparative research across Europe, followed by the introduction of an East Asian Social Policy Research Network (EASP) in 2005. These developments have helped to raise the profile of comparative social policy and are indications of the growing internationalization of the field.
THE GROWTH OF COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

In the 1960s, and even the 1970s, the idea of producing a handbook on comparative social policy might have seemed strange. This was the time of early explicit comparative writing on, first, social administration (Rodgers et al., 1968) and later social policy (e.g., Kaim-Caudle, 1973; Rodgers et al., 1979), which devoted relatively little space to contemplating whether studying social policy across countries involved any specific conceptual, methodological or theoretical considerations. Instead, driven by the idea that there is considerable knowledge and insight to be gained from looking across countries, these pioneers of comparative social policy briefly designed an analytical framework and then proceeded with ‘constructive descriptions’ (Stebbing in Rodgers et al., 1979, p.xii) and intensive country-by-country discussions of social policy programmes, aims and delivery. This systematic empirical engagement with social policy principles and their manifestations in a range of countries was valuable at the time but, due to the dynamic nature of social policy, many aspects were quickly outdated. Also, there were very few comparative studies of a few countries that made any claims to theoretical advancement. Heclo’s seminal book (1974) on differences and similarities in the development of unemployment insurance and pension programmes in the UK and Sweden was one of the rare exceptions in the 1970s. Similarly intensive comparative accounts of social policy developments within developed welfare states followed only in the 1980s, now originating within collaborative research frameworks, such as the one developed by Peter Flora and colleagues, which produced landmark publications (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981; Flora, 1986).

The core explanatory variables in these studies were changes in national ‘welfare efforts’, that is, the relative share of the national product that is devoted to social policy programmes, as well as broad patterns of welfare state development indicated by the timing of social policy legislation and the growth in programme coverage. The interest in these dependent variables links them to earlier studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, which, based on statistical observations, argued that the emergence and development of welfare states has to be regarded as a response to socio-economic pressures developed within industrialized societies and growing capacities to meet demands (Cutright, 1965; Wilensky, 1975). In the 1970s and 1980s, this line of argument was superseded by those that pointed to political factors, and in particular the strength of organized labour, as a crucial variable of welfare state expansion (see Shalev, 1983).

None of the authors within this strand of social policy analysis felt the need to stress the comparative nature of their work. Instead, extending
the analysis of the causes for the emergence and growth of welfare states from single nation to a cross-national arena was treated as a method of testing and advancing the robustness of theoretical propositions. Indeed, for this distinctive tradition of macro-comparative welfare state research (for reviews see van Kersbergen, 1995; Pierson, 1998; Amenta, 2003), comparative social policy is neither a discipline nor a substantive focus or field of study as such, but a methodological device or necessity. As Esping-Andersen (1993, p. 124) put it, ‘the macro-comparison of welfare states immediately implies cross-national research designs’.

The current version of this ongoing debate about explanations of welfare state development points to diversity and the coexistence of several paths towards post-industrialism in accordance with the notion of welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990), and to the affinity and interdependence between national social policy arrangements and other policy sectors, such as industrial relations, labour market policy or financial markets, as well as other societal arrangements regarding the role of families and households (Esping-Andersen, 1999, 2009; Ebbinghaus and Manow, 2001). Pursuing similar questions but concentrating on a few countries, other studies have restricted themselves to comparative investigations of whole welfare states belonging to a particular type or regime (e.g., van Kersbergen, 1995; Kautto et al., 1999 and 2001; Palier, 2010) or to the development of particular social policy programmes over time, such as unemployment protection (Clasen, 1994), pensions (Bonoli, 2000) or health policy (Freeman, 2001).

In parallel to this focus on examining policy development, another strand of more evaluative cross-national analysis developed in the early 1980s. These were studies that investigated the impact of social policy on particular groups (e.g., Bradshaw and Piachaud, 1980) or focused on particular problems, such as poverty (Walker et al., 1983). Later, the developments of new and improved datasets, such as the Luxembourg Income Study or the European Community Household Panel, provided more robust empirical bases for comparative research in this sub-set of comparative social policy, spurning new studies on, for example, the impact of national income transfer programmes (Mitchell, 1991) or the effect of unemployment on individuals and families (Gallie and Paugam, 2000).

As Higgins (1986) pointed out at the time, in the 1980s these two types of comparative social policy research were still quite distinct from each other. However, what they had in common was their focus on industrialized countries with sizeable welfare state programmes, largely ignoring the, by the 1980s, growing amount of social policy research in developing countries. While much of contemporary comparative social policy might
still not have fully rectified this, the adoption of a ‘narrow rather than inclusive approach’ (Jones Finer, 1999) has become much more questionable due to the growth of research on social policy in countries outside of the OECD, some of which was already explicitly comparative in nature more than 20 years ago (e.g., MacPherson and Midgley, 1987). This emergence of several branches of comparative social policy analysis and the proliferation of cross-national analyses within social policy reached a level that already in the 1980s seemed sufficient to warrant textbooks in the field (e.g., Jones, 1985), as well as literature reviews (e.g., Wilensky et al., 1985), and that sparked off the adoption of explicitly cross-national perspectives within particular theoretical approaches on social policy, such as feminist writing (Dominelli, 1990).

In 1990 Esping-Andersen’s seminal book on welfare capitalism was published and impinged on much comparative social policy for subsequent decades. Building on earlier categorizations of welfare states (Titmuss, 1974), Esping-Andersen’s typology was original in the sense that it was derived from a systematic empirical investigation of similarities and differences across developed industrialized countries at the time. Praised as well as criticized on methodological, theoretical and conceptual grounds, it has remained a major reference point. Debates continue about the sense or nonsense of constructing clusters of welfare states, about the appropriateness of indicators for such typologies, about the number of categories, about the epistemological character of welfare regimes (ideal types or actual systems), about the assignment of particular countries to a particular welfare state type and about the dynamic or static nature of welfare regimes (see Abrahamson, 1999; Arts and Gelissen, 2002; and, unfortunately only for readers of German, the excellent collection by Lessenich and Ostner, 1998).

These debates have impacted on both the evaluative and the more theoretically inclined camps of comparative social policy. The notion of welfare regimes has made it more difficult to maintain social spending as the ‘proxy’ variable for social policy (Esping-Andersen, 1993) and the use of other indicators of welfare, such as social rights, has encouraged a debate on the appropriateness of different ‘dependent variables’ for measuring and capturing the nature of change across welfare states (Clasen and Siegel, 2007). At the same time, the publications of more in-depth but largely descriptive or evaluative accounts of national social policy programmes and their effects has become rather limited without making at least some attempt to justify theoretically the selection of countries, and to connect individual country analyses to a wider conceptual framework that would allow inferences about, for example, causes for social policy convergence or divergence. This is not to say that the boundaries between the two
strands have ceased to exist or that a sufficient degree of cross-fertilization has already been achieved. However, some convergence has occurred and methodological and conceptual progress has been made along the lines that Alber et al. (1987, p. 468) suggested in the 1980s. Databases for comparative social policy have been improved and much comparative work has accumulated that allows for a better mapping of similarities and differences in national paths of welfare state development. Equally, the focus on (path dependent or otherwise) welfare reform of social policy arrangements has provided a new theoretical impetus. Finally, the call for enhancing aggregate data analyses with more historically and contextually sensitive analyses and case studies seems to have been received by an increasing number of writers in the field.

CONCLUSION

Attempting to define comparative social policy seems somewhat fruitless. Sharp distinctions are difficult to make. Academics will continue to discuss what exactly might constitute social policy vis-à-vis other policy fields and whether it is an academic discipline or a field of study. The overlap with other areas of comparative analysis (particularly comparative public policy) is substantial, while the methodological problems of analysing policies across countries or over time are not particular to social policy but inherent in any form of comparative social research. Yet the difficulty of exactly mapping the boundaries of comparative social policy does not mean that it has little chance of developing. On the contrary, the chapter has tried to indicate that there are several parallel discourses and analytical frames of reference, aims and approaches that can broadly be subsumed under the rubric of comparative social policy and that have emerged and evolved over time.

Since the early 1980s, these strands have developed and thrived, as indicated by the emergence of literature reviews, textbooks and the diversification into even more branches in the field. Initially without much contact between them, to some extent comparative social policy analysis continues to co-evolve along different paths. But there is now more mutual recognition, more cross-references are being made and some attempts towards the bridging of gaps (e.g., by combining theoretical macro-analyses of welfare state reform with case studies, or by enhancing research on the development of particular programmes with evaluative comparative analysis). The distance between the different strands seems to have diminished, which can only be a good sign for the future of comparative social policy.
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INTRODUCTION

The practice of comparison in social science necessitates decisions about the unit of analysis to be adopted and the operational definition of that unit. The question, ‘What do comparative social scientists compare?’ may be met with the time-honoured answer, ‘societies’, but to do so is problematic for a number of reasons. Societies are notoriously difficult to define because their boundaries are fuzzy and are arguably becoming increasingly blurred. Furthermore, the economic, political, cultural and other dimensions of a society do not necessarily coincide, and as a result comparative social scientists have to ‘cope with the patterned mess that is human society’ (Mann, 1993, p. 4). Awareness of this problem is increasingly acute in an age of heightened international mobility and global interconnectedness, but it is not a new one. The distinction between ‘societies’ and ‘states’ can be traced back over several centuries, and Werbner (2008) has argued that it has been particularly influential in the discipline of anthropology. Anthropologists’ experience of colonial settings made them especially alert to states being institutions designed to administer, regulate and control populations whose members do not necessarily identify with the ideologies and agendas of those individuals and groups that occupy formal positions of power. States thus offer an alternative conceptualization of the social collectivities that social scientists seek to investigate comparatively, and their seemingly more concrete expression gives analytical advantages to approaches that focus on ‘states’ (or variants such as ‘nation-states’ or ‘welfare states’) rather than on the more amorphous and elusive ‘societies’.

The comparison of ‘states’ is by no means problem free, however. The comparison of states is sometimes referred to as ‘methodological nationalism’. The difficulties associated with it relate particularly to the arguments advanced by writers as diverse as Wallerstein (1999), Urry (2000), Beck (2006) and Walby (2009) that state power is being modified and possibly even superseded by increasingly successful challenges from other entities. It is readily apparent that there are considerable flows of people, goods, money and ideas across state boundaries that states have only limited powers to control. It is also evident that individuals do not automatically
give priority to the identity and loyalties derived from their membership of states. People’s status as citizens (or in some constitutions as subjects) exists alongside a range of other statuses that reflect their participation in the host of non-governmental organizations and associations to which the label ‘civil society’ has been applied (Deakin, 2001; Walby, 2009, Ch. 6). The institutions of the state and of civil society both have a bearing on the twin problems of scarcity and social solidarity that Turner (1999, Ch. 15) has argued are central to the understanding of citizenship. Market forces offer one mechanism by which the allocation of scarce resources among members of a society may be determined, and they go a long way towards providing an explanation of who gets what. There is only limited scope for market-based distributions to achieve legitimacy, however, and it is principally for this reason that the bases of social solidarity are found elsewhere (Crow, 2002). Welfare states involving redistribution offer one such basis, and they can be regarded as a mechanism that has been ‘used to integrate the masses into industrial societies’ (Mény, 2001, p. 267). The historical record casts doubt on their capacity to provide a sustained sense of common purpose among citizens, however, and this helps to explain the growing interest in social organizations that operate beyond the state. In many parts of the world this sphere of activity has been understood, and actively promoted, as the realm of ‘community’ (Craig and Mayo, 1995; Kingsbury, 2004) or the realm of ‘social capital’ (Hooghe and Stolle, 2003), but these terms are just as problematic as bases on which to found comparative analysis as are ‘society’, ‘state’ and ‘civil society’.

The existence of competing definitions of key concepts such as ‘society’ and ‘community’ reflects the essentially contested character of these terms. Rival understandings of the key concepts used in comparative social science are rooted in the different values held by researchers, as a result of which there is unlikely ever to be agreement about what these terms really mean. This problem is compounded by the more prosaic but no less important issue of how these concepts are operationalized in empirical research. If it is to be systematic, comparison must involve the generation and analysis of evidence relating to similarities and differences in patterns of social relationships, but the methodologies by which this task is undertaken are challenging (Ragin, 1987). The comparison of data collected about states and societies is hampered by the fact that there is relatively little uniformity in the way in which such data are generated. This is true of quantitative as well as qualitative data, as is noted by researchers in areas as diverse as cross-national analyses of poverty (Townsend, 1993), time use (Gershuny, 2000), violence (Walby, 2009) and the study of social policy (Kennett, 2001). In none of these cases has the need for caution in the use of data derived from different sources and
using different methodologies been an insuperable obstacle to valuable research being undertaken, but it has meant that certain questions can be answered with more confidence than others. It has also meant that efforts have been made to generate the data that will allow new questions to be answered. This point is nicely illustrated by the debate about welfare state regimes pioneered by Esping-Andersen (1990), among whose participants are feminists who argue that the contrasting positions of women in different regimes merit considerably greater attention (Sainsbury, 1999; Walby, 2009). The agenda of comparative research is continually enhanced by such debates over what the proper object of study ought to be, debates that are in turn influenced by changing perceptions of the world in which we live and of the long-term social trends that are unfolding.

THE COMPARISON OF STATES AND OF SOCIETIES

The history of the term ‘society’ is a long and complicated one, and it is unsurprising that it has not provided a ready-made concept for social scientific analysis. As Williams has noted, the term ‘society’ is frequently used to denote ‘the body of institutions and relationships within which a relatively large group of people live’. Alongside this definition there exists the rival meaning of ‘society’ as ‘our most abstract term for the condition in which such institutions and relationships are formed’. Whether it is used as a generalization or as an abstraction, the term ‘society’ retains something of the sense of ‘companionship or fellowship’ that Williams identifies as its ‘primary meaning’. A society is thus ‘that to which we all belong’ and ‘a system of common life’ (1983, pp. 291–4), although Williams goes on to observe that there has been a long-term decline in the extent to which this is attributed to the intentions of the individuals who make up ‘society’. By the nineteenth century a number of sociological theorists were able to counterpose ‘the individual’ and ‘society’, with the latter having analytical priority over the former. This was done most famously in Durkheim’s analysis of how individuals are involuntarily constrained by society, which he insisted it was important to treat as more than ‘the mere sum of individuals’ (Durkheim, 1982, p. 129). The idea of society as something existing over and above its individual members is by no means restricted to the Durkheimian tradition, however, and it became a key foundation of structuralist perspectives that have had an enduring legacy.

The notion that comparative social science involves the comparison of social structures led directly to evolutionary schema in which simpler forms of social organization give way progressively to more complex ones. In the modernization theory that was developed in the mid-twentieth
century the idea of social evolution was captured in the notion that a shift was taking place from traditional societies to modern ones. The former were characterized by subsistence, while in the latter the stage of high mass consumption had been reached and even surpassed. This basic focus on *societies* undergoing such a transition remains influential even though modernization theory has justifiably been extensively critiqued (Crow, 1997). Inglehart’s (1997) account of ‘postmodernization’ may have jetisoned certain elements of modernization theory (notably its determinism and ethnocentrism), but it is still a comparison of societies. Moreover, although he acknowledges the shortcomings of conceptions of society as economically, politically or culturally determined entities, Inglehart holds on to the claim that societies can be compared, and that the essence of this comparison can be captured in distinct sets of values. He does this by arguing that the various constituent parts of societies together form a coherent whole; his thesis is that ‘the relationships between economics and culture and politics are mutually supportive’ (ibid., p.10). In his subsequent work with Norris on what they call the rising tide of gender equality, the argument is restated that this is the result of cultural as well as political and economic forces that combine ‘in coherent ways’ (Inglehart and Norris, 2003, p.11). Others question this claim. Mann, for example, prefers to conceptualize societies as ‘multiple, overlapping and intersecting networks of interaction’ (2000, p.146), and the implication of this is that individuals may have considerable difficulty in identifying the ‘society’ to which they belong.

One category of people for whom it is particularly difficult to identify the society to which they belong is that of migrant workers whose employment means that they live and work in another country. Globalization has prompted the enormous expansion and diversification of migrant labour (Castles and Miller, 2003). Significant numbers of modern migrants are care workers and domestic labourers whose work commitments and loyalties to families in their home countries mean that they feel themselves to be both ‘here and there’ (Hochschild, 2001). Hochschild’s examples of Filipino and Latin American women living and working in the United States have parallels in many other parts of the world, and the question of belonging to a particular society is further complicated by the frequent denial of citizenship rights to migrant workers, either in principle or in practice (Castles and Miller, 2003). Against the background of the global movement of people on a grand scale it can be argued that the concept of ‘society’ has become redundant because this mobility has revealed the inappropriateness of the assumption that populations have discrete boundaries. The regularity with which people, resources and ideas now criss-cross the globe has led to the ‘fragmentation’ of societies, or at least
to the recognition that societies and nation-states cannot sensibly be treated as conterminous. Albrow’s argument that ‘Societies extend over time and space and it’s often difficult to say where they begin and end’ (1999, pp. 3–4) implies that the concept of ‘society’ is of limited value for comparative research, at least as it is conventionally understood.

The concept of society’s imprecision helps to explain why many researchers have preferred to focus their attention on the state, and in particular the nation-state. The idea of the state is less general than that of society because, as Williams notes, it ‘is the apparatus of power’ (1983, p. 293). In other words, the state has a definite institutional expression, allowing easier study. States not only have definite geographical boundaries marking out the extent of their jurisdiction, they also have constitutions that grant different rights and statuses to people according to precisely how their citizenship is enshrined. There has been a long-term tendency for the citizenship rights bestowed by states on their citizens to be extended, as Marshall (1963, Ch. IV) famously showed. Citizenship’s extension from civil rights, through political rights, to social rights may be understood as an evolutionary process, in the British case dating back to the eighteenth century in Marshall’s view. On the basis of such evolutionary thinking some commentators attempted to trace the emergence of the welfare state as a distinct form of the state. Marshall expressed doubt about this idea on the grounds that to speak of a standard welfare state involved a dangerous generalization, one that overlooked the fact that ‘social systems are deeply impregnated with the unique influences of the time and place in which they came into existence’. His preference was ‘to study the “British Welfare State” in the post-war period, and to compare it with the welfare systems of other countries’ (1963, pp. 91–2), and this agenda has been explored further by other writers seeking to avoid imputing more uniformity to welfare states than is warranted.

By far the most influential recent contribution to this debate has been that of Esping-Andersen. Acknowledging that welfare states have emerged in many countries to replace previous state forms in which governmental concerns with social welfare were much more limited, his central theme is that ‘welfare states are not all of one type’ (1990, p. 3). This is more than a matter of some welfare states having higher levels of spending than others, although this undoubtedly does happen. It is because Esping-Andersen wants to compare welfare states in terms of their structural characteristics that he puts forward the idea that three distinctive welfare state regimes can be identified in contemporary capitalism. It is in his view crucial to recognize that ‘state activities are interlocked with the market’s and the family’s role in social provision’ (ibid., p. 21), and that all of these factors play a part in determining the extent to which citizens’ welfare is an expression of their
social rights rather than a reflection of their economic power. Welfare state regimes can thus be compared according to the degree to which citizens’ welfare has been uncoupled from their market position, a process that Esping-Andersen calls ‘de-commodification’. Central to a welfare state regime in which de-commodification has been established is freedom from labour market dependence, expressed in terms of the ability of citizens to ‘freely, and without potential loss of job, income, or general welfare, opt out of work when they themselves consider it necessary’ (ibid., p. 23). On the basis of extensive analysis of statistical data relating to the configurations of state, market and family relationships in 18 advanced capitalist countries, Esping-Andersen goes on to argue that three distinct clusters can be discerned: liberal, conservative and social-democratic welfare state regimes. The United States, Germany and Sweden are then taken to be more or less ‘representative’ (ibid., p. 143), respectively, of the three types identified, and as such subjected to detailed cross-national comparison. Esping-Andersen’s (1996, 2001) subsequent work has continued to direct attention towards the diversity of national welfare state regimes, as has much of the debate generated by his ideas (Mabbett and Bolderson, 1999; Castles, 2004; Taylor-Gooby, 2004; Seeleib-Kaiser, 2008). The difficulties and controversies that have emerged in doing so along with discussions concerning an emergent ‘European welfare state’ make it clear that the conceptualization of what is being compared needs to be kept under review.

BEYOND THE COMPARISON OF STATES AND SOCIETIES

Contemporary criticisms of using the state or society as the unit of comparison have two broad strands to them. One strand emphasizes the increasingly globalized character of present-day life and argues on this basis that analysis at the national level is becoming redundant because so much traffic now crosses the frontiers of nation-states, which have only limited power to control it. Against the backdrop of this globalization, Urry gives serious consideration to the idea that ‘there is no such thing as society’, since global processes are constantly revealing the interconnectedness of human populations and thereby undermining the credibility of the belief that each nation-state constitutes a distinct ‘social body’ (2000, pp. 5, 23). This ties in with the theme in Urry’s earlier work in which he and Lash traced the decline of corporatism, the system of extensive intervention and planning by the state in twentieth-century capitalist societies that rested on the rationale that governments could and should bring the various parts of the social body together (Lash and Urry, 1987).
Alongside the point about the increasingly internationalized nature of the contemporary world lies the other strand of criticism of the focus of comparative social scientists on phenomena at the national level that emphasizes the processes of fragmentation to which individual societies are subject. Lash and Urry argue that ‘Societies are being transformed from above, from below and from within’, with one of the crucial results being that ‘collectivity...melts into air’ (ibid., p. 313). Esping-Andersen has noted how the impetus behind the establishment of welfare states in many countries lay in the desire ‘to foster national social integration’ (1996, p. 2), but the perceived failure to achieve this in practice has led several commentators to detect the progressive fragmentation of societies as their constituent parts come to compete with each other. The polarization of citizens into winners and losers from social and economic change poses a threat to social cohesion to which one response may be a more extensive role for the state in managing market, family and policy interconnections (Esping-Andersen, 2001). Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have used data on variations in levels of inequality between countries to make the case for policies to tackle social fragmentation by highlighting the social benefits such as longer life expectancy and lower prison populations that characterize more equal societies. The use of state power to moderate the process of economic and social polarization is politically contentious, however, and an alternative response has been the development of interest in the sphere of civil society or community with which it is argued people may more readily identify.

The criticism that focusing on national-level phenomena leads to the neglect of the international dimension carries considerable weight. Cohen and Kennedy (2007, pp. 180–81) demonstrate this point by showing that of the 120 biggest economic entities in the world in 2004, fewer than half were countries, the majority being transnational corporations. Sklair has argued that such data show ‘The balance of power between state and non-state actors and agencies is changing’ (2002, p. 37). Another way of putting this is to say that nation-states are progressively less able to exercise sovereignty over their territories and populations, although Wallerstein’s statement of this position attributes this change not to the power of transnational corporations but to ‘the declining legitimacy accorded to the states by their populations’ (1999, p. 75). Both positions are compatible with Urry’s argument that what is being witnessed is a fundamental shift in the nature of the state, away from an institution concerned with imposing ‘pattern, regularity and ordering’ to one with the far more limited brief of general regulation without taking any interest in or responsibility for the detail of day-to-day life, a contrast that he captures in the distinction (borrowed from Bauman) between ‘gardening’
and ‘gamekeeping’ states (Urry, 2000, pp. 188–9). It follows that there is much that is missed, both above and below the level of the state, by taking an exclusively state-centred approach. Sklair (2002, p. 204) provides a telling illustration of this perspective by noting that it is not unusual for the advertising budgets of transnational corporations to exceed state expenditure on education in those societies in which they operate. His description of states as ‘nominally sovereign’ (p. 5) conveys his sense that they function with very definite limits to their power.

If state-centred analyses are open to criticism for neglecting the global context within which governments act, they are also questionable for assuming that states have the capacity to control more local contexts. Scott’s survey of large-scale schemes to bring about improvements in people’s welfare that have failed includes analysis of Soviet collectivization, rural development in Tanzania and the construction of new cities such as Brasilia. On the basis of this survey he argues that the initiatives of modernist states were frequently flawed by the desire for standardization that paid no respect to local customs and traditions, but were instead driven by ‘planning for abstract citizens’ (1998, p. 345). What Scott calls ‘seeing like a state’ at best overlooked the various elements of civil society and at worst treated them as obstacles to be overcome and eradicated. The gulf between state officials and the people being administered has been greatest in authoritarian societies such as Stalinist state socialist ones in which citizens have little opportunity to organize autonomously (Crow, 1997, Ch. 5), but it is potentially an all-pervasive problem. Marshall was mindful of the danger of the state being too distant from the lives of ordinary citizens to engage meaningfully with them when he noted that welfare states were not in a particularly strong position to encourage dutiful citizenship. This is because the national community that is appealed to ‘is so large that the obligation appears remote and unreal’ (1963, p. 123). The same concern lay behind Durkheim’s promotion of intermediate bodies (such as occupational associations) that had the capacity to connect the individual to the wider collectivity, thereby reinforcing the sense of common purpose that he regarded as a crucial element of social solidarity (Crow, 2002).

In reviewing this debate it is worth remembering that Esping-Andersen’s approach to comparing welfare state regimes was developed in order to avoid the error of being ‘too narrowly preoccupied with just the welfare state’. Esping-Andersen is at pains to emphasize that ‘Society’s total welfare package combines inputs from the welfare state proper, markets (and especially labor markets), and families’ (2001, p. 136). A surprising omission from this list is the sphere of voluntary organizations, civil society or community, whose contribution long pre-dates the age of welfare
states (de Swaan, 1988) and that welfare states by no means supplanted. Marshall’s classic essay on citizenship and social class contains the observation that ‘The original source of social rights was membership of local communities and functional associations’ (1963, p. 81), and although the capacity of communities and associations to contribute to the welfare of their members became seriously circumscribed by the development of the market and of the state, it did not disappear. Esping-Andersen is thus overstating the case to suggest that the growth of markets brought with it a situation in which ‘the welfare of individuals comes to depend entirely on the cash nexus’ (1990, p. 21), and it is equally one-sided to go on to focus attention on the de-commodifying role of the state if doing so thereby neglects other responses to the spread of market relations. Much of the feminist critique of Esping-Andersen’s ideas has been concerned with the male bias implicit in his concept of the ‘average worker’ (ibid., p. 50). The insistence that women are much more likely than men to be employed part-time or to be engaged in unpaid work in the home (Sainsbury, 1999) can be extended to include the point that voluntary work and community activism are also highly gendered (Deakin, 2001). This highlights further the need to rethink Esping-Andersen’s focus on state–market–family interconnections.

The reassertion of the continuing significance of the community dimension of welfare is an important corrective to the expectation, once widely held, that it was in the process of being superseded by the expansion of state welfare. In many countries, particularly but not exclusively those of Western Europe, the period 1960–80 was one in which the ‘growth of social entitlements was explosive’ (Therborn, 1995, p. 92). This rapid welfare state expansion proved unsustainable, and much discussion now revolves around whether the trajectory has not only slowed but gone into reverse. Miller and Taylor (2009) have argued that an important development across the contrasting contexts of the UK, Bulgaria and Nicaragua has been the growth of non-governmental action alongside the state. Whether this development constitutes the rolling back of the frontiers of the state, which is an important component of New Right thinking, depends on the definition of the state that is employed. Pierson’s view is that the form of state welfare provision has certainly changed, but not by a straightforward process of privatization, because the services provided by government remain large, and ‘the state, in both its older and newer forms, is not going away’ (2004, p. 182). A similar analytical problem faces researchers exploring the dramatic changes that are involved in the emergence of post-socialist societies; what is underway there is a far more complex transition than a simple transfer of activity from state to civil society (Hann et al., 2002).
There are several reasons why the concepts of state and society have been subjected to critical scrutiny in recent years. The concept of society is frustratingly vague in terms of both the relationship between its constituent elements and the boundaries marking its extent. Economic, political and cultural relationships do not in practice operate as a coherent whole with easily specified boundaries, and it has been claimed that the fictional nature of the idea of society has become ever-more apparent as the impact of globalization has increased. The concept of the state goes some way towards meeting the requirement for a more definite object of study, but state power is difficult to disentangle from other powerful influences on social and economic relationships, and a focus on the formal structures of state authority and their legislative and administrative activity is arguably too narrow to provide an explanation of how and why the welfare of populations varies. State-centred approaches have thus been challenged by attempts to capture the way in which states interact in a variety of patterns with the institutions of the market, family, community and civil society, in an attempt to counter the tendency to produce over-simplified generalizations.

The practice of comparative social science will continue to develop as a result of such debates. Already much has changed since the 1950s when the contrast of capitalist, state socialist and underdeveloped societies was employed. This was destined to break down as awareness grew of the increasing diversity present within each of these ‘three worlds’ (Crow, 1997). Esping-Andersen’s identification of three distinct patterns of welfare capitalism illustrates this point nicely, as does the development of further and finer distinctions in response to his ideas, such as the notion that a distinct ‘Southern’ or ‘Mediterranean’ welfare state regime can be identified in countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece (Guillén and Alvarez, 2001; Taylor-Gooby, 2004). The breakdown of the ‘three worlds’ framework has also opened up the possibility of challenging the evolutionary assumption that the more developed societies showed the less developed ones an image of their future. Regarding developments in the field of community action, for example, initiatives taking place in the poorer countries of the South can provide valuable lessons to observers in the richer Northern countries (Connell, 2007). The same rationale underlies the comparison of the institutions of civil society undertaken by Berger and his colleagues in which the countries studied include Chile, South Africa, Turkey, Indonesia, India and Taiwan as well as the USA, France, Germany and Japan from the advanced capitalist world and Hungary from the former state socialist bloc (Berger, 1998). The inclusion of Russia,
South Africa and Hong Kong alongside Japan and Western European, North American and Australasian cases in Alcock and Craig’s (2001) survey of international social policy is further evidence of the broadening of the research agenda in terms of both countries and topics being studied.

In responding to the opportunities and challenges that are emerging in their field, comparative social scientists need to be mindful of why comparison is undertaken in the first place. Baldwin’s strictures against ‘useless typologizing’ are founded on his view that ‘The growing sophistication of welfare state typologizing has left us in a position where the number of categories applied to, and the number of nations in, Europe are approximating to each other’ (1996, pp. 40, 43). In other words, the purpose of comparison is undermined if the main conclusion reached is that every case is unique. The identification of types of welfare state or of society is pursued in order to highlight broad patterns of similarity or difference, with a view to determining the crucial influences on their operation and trajectories. As Mills (1970, Ch. 1) famously argued, it is important to avoid exchanging the shortcomings of ungrounded ‘grand theory’ for the equally unsatisfactory approach of descriptive ‘abstracted empiricism’. Comparison always has a theoretical purpose, and requires the employment of appropriate methods of enquiry.

Theoretical innovations frequently run ahead of the methodological developments that are required to allow them to be tested against empirical evidence, as the current interest in the concept of ‘civil society’ may be taken to show (Howell, 2006). There is as yet no agreement on the most appropriate definition of civil society to use, as Hann and his colleagues note in their criticism of researchers who have ‘tried to operationalize it by counting the number of “non-governmental organizations” and treating this as an index of the health of the society’ (Hann et al., 2002, p. 9). Sklair makes essentially the same point about the global system, the operation of which is in his view obscured by ‘dubious generalization about a host of discrete variables from societies’ (2002, p. 3). The broadening out of comparative research to include concepts such as ‘civil society’ and ‘the global system’ promises to provide a more diverse set of tools with which to make sense of the world and to help overcome dependence on vague formulations about ‘society’ or unduly restrictive definitions of ‘the state’. The response of comparativists to these developments is unlikely to be the abandonment of these two long-established terms, however, since there does not have to be an exclusive choice. A more probable response is that a good deal of comparative research will continue to be framed in terms of ‘states’ and ‘societies’, albeit in modified forms like Esping-Andersen’s ‘welfare state regimes’ into which concept non-state elements were quite effectively incorporated. This outcome can be anticipated on several grounds. One is
that the framework within which data are collected by governments and international agencies will continue to focus on nation-states as prime units of analysis, and the form in which data are available remains an important consideration. Second, a number of theorists consider the argument that globalization has undermined nation-states to have exaggerated the extent of the change, and consequently continue to focus at least part of their attention on them (Mann, 2000). The same point can be made about the continuing utility of the concept of ‘society’ (Outhwaite, 2006). And third, alternatives to the concepts of ‘state’ and ‘society’ have problems of their own that prevent them from being ready substitutes, at least until further work is done on their operationalization. For all of these reasons, ‘state’ and ‘society’ are not about to disappear from the comparativists’ lexicon.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the welfare systems of East Asian societies (Jones, 1993; McLaughlin, 1993; Chan, 1996; Peng, 1996; Goodman et al., 1998; Jacobs, 1998; Lin, 1999; Aspalter, 2001; Walker and Wong, 2005; Chan et al., 2010). However, whether the welfare systems of these societies should be classified as welfare states remains an unresolved, if not a controversial issue, especially in the case of China. Some writers (McLaughlin, 1993; Goodman et al., 1998; Jacobs, 1998) avoid the issue altogether by not directly applying the label ‘welfare state’ to the East Asian welfare systems under study. For example, in the comparative social policy text Comparing Welfare States: Britain in International Context, McLaughlin (1993, p.105) uses the term ‘welfare regime’ to classify Hong Kong. In another book on East Asian welfare systems, the term ‘welfare model’ is preferred to that of ‘welfare state’ (Goodman et al., 1998). Nevertheless, there are exceptions where the description ‘welfare state’ is applied to East Asian societies (Rose and Shiratori, 1986; Chan, 1996; Goodman and Peng, 1996; Aspalter, 2001); and recently, there is more use of the welfare state classification with regard to East Asian welfare systems, especially in the cases of South Korea and Taiwan following the democratization of their political systems (Holliday, 2000; Kim, 2001; Kwon, 2005; Lee and Ku, 2007). However, in the mainstream comparative social policy literature, definitions, theories and classifications of both welfare and the welfare state have been formulated with reference to only a small number of Western industrialized or capitalist countries, which are particularly associated with advanced capitalism and membership of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Hence, this dominant approach to comparative social policy has been described as ‘ethnocentric Western social research’ (Jones, 1993, p.106) and the ‘Anglocentric frame of reference’ (Powell and Hewitt, 1997, p.12). This ethnocentric construction of the welfare state paradigm reflects a Western bias and has the detrimental effect of excluding from comparative analyses not only the state welfare provisions of less
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devolved societies, but also those of some highly developed countries. This exclusion is particularly ironic in the case of the affluent East Asian economies because many of their welfare institutions resemble, and in many cases were modelled on, those found in Western welfare states.

Our argument is not that the governments of East Asian societies are eager to become members of the welfare state club, far from it (Lin, 1999, p.37). They do not regard their welfare systems as welfare states; this is particularly the case with respect to the governments and elites in Singapore and Hong Kong. These two city-states have attained the highest economic prosperity in recent years, second only to Japan in East Asia, in terms of per capita GDP. In these two societies, not only the elites but a majority of the general public as well perceive state welfare as a burden on the economy, a social and economic ‘infection’ that has to be avoided for the sake of economic success (Gough, 2004; Chau and Yu, 2005). In this regard, it is not surprising to see the prevalence of a discourse about Asian values (Clammer, 1985; Berger, 1987) to support the argument for a particular welfare system that is different from that of the West – referred to variously in the comparative social policy literature as Confucian welfare states (Jones, 1993), the Confucian welfare cluster (Lin, 1999), or the Japan-focused East Asian welfare model (Goodman and Peng, 1996, p.216). Of course, science should not be divorced from its cultural and policy context, a stricture that applies as much to Eastern social scientists as to their Western counterparts. However, and this is the crux of our argument, the exclusion of East Asian welfare systems from the mainstream comparative welfare state literature, including especially what are widely regarded as the core texts on the subject (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999), artificially limits the scope of comparative social policy. Moreover, in the absence of a scientific rationale for this welfare state myopia the charge of ethnocentrism is hard to refute. This negation of East Asian welfare systems as welfare states begs the question, precisely what is a welfare state? Although beyond the scope of this chapter, it also reminds us that the term ‘welfare state’ has always been controversial not only in political but also scientific discourse (hence the fact that Titmuss always put it in quotation marks – see, for example, Titmuss, 1958). This controversy is a global one.

By pointing to the similarities between some East Asian welfare systems and their Western counterparts we are not intending to gloss over the cultural, historical and institutional differences between them. (This would be as wrong, as it is to argue that all welfare states currently within the comparative club are all exactly the same in terms of history and institutions.) Our intention is the opposite in fact: we are calling for the inclusion of East Asian welfare states within comparative analyses
precisely so that the similarities and differences between all such systems can be analysed and understood. This requires a readjustment of the long-accepted comparative framework designed by Esping-Anderson (1990) (Holliday, 2000). Hopefully then the similarities and differences will be neither under- nor over-estimated.

Two seismic socio-political events in the past two to three decades that have, among other things, major global implications for social policy and comparative research are the collapse of the former state socialist regimes of the Central and Eastern European bloc and the peaceful transition from an orthodox centrally planned economy to market socialism in China. The welfare systems of both the former state socialist countries and pre-reform China had long been excluded from comparative welfare state analysis because they were non-capitalist regimes and did not belong to the OECD club. However, the welfare systems of these countries had managed to provide for their citizens a wide range of universal entitlements, despite critical claims that their welfare provisions were out of all proportion to their resources and the fiscal capacity of the state (Kornai, 1997). (To some extent in accordance with this critique, following the collapse of state socialism some Central and Eastern European countries experienced a crisis of social protection.) In the case of transitional China, it has managed comparatively well in re-casting welfare responsibility, especially in the urban areas, from a total reliance on the state to the incorporation of individual responsibility by social insurance and forced savings (Wong, 1999; Chan et al., 2008), although it must be emphasized that this applies exclusively to urban areas – in social and economic terms the rural/urban division creates two nations in China. Despite the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989, transitional China has been a relatively stable society, and its welfare provisions, especially the newly installed safety-net system, are likely to have been a decisive factor in this stability.

The newly affluent East Asian capitalist economies, the former Central and Eastern European bloc and pre-reform China all have or had welfare institutions resembling those found in the Western welfare state club but they are not counted as welfare states. It might be argued that all or certain aspects of the state welfare provision in these countries is far below that expected in the fully fledged welfare states, but this would overlook the big variations in quality among the latter and some highly comparable measures among the former. Thus, the exclusion of these countries from welfare state status is not due to the nature of their welfare institutions but, presumably, because they have neither a capitalist economy nor a fully fledged Western parliamentary democracy. If this is true, it tends to confirm our argument that the Western welfare state paradigm is an ethnocentric construction. Their exclusion is not based on the policy content
or institutions of welfare in those countries, but on other institutional requirements that are not concerned with the welfare state per se but rather its cultural, economic and political context.

The main purpose of this chapter is to look closely at the ethnocentric assumptions behind the Western construction of the welfare state. It starts by examining the first assumption underpinning Western welfare states: that they are a capitalist-democratic project. Then we look at the elasticity of the welfare state boundary in the Western construction.

UNDERLYING INSTITUTIONAL ASSUMPTIONS OF THE WELFARE STATE PARADIGM

The Western conception of the welfare state and descriptive studies of welfare state regimes usually neglect non-capitalist or non-democratic societies with state welfare components (Walker and Wong, 1996). Drawing on our original critique one recent analysis describes this ethnocentric bias:

Whenever people from Northern and continental Europe talk about the welfare state, they have the very popular extensive/institutional welfare systems in mind that are predominant in that region of the world. However the new usage of the term ‘welfare state’, in its broader sense that includes residual welfare state systems, has not been accepted by a great number of people in Europe and Asia. (Aspalter, 2001, pp. 1–2)

However, the ethnocentric bias means that the liberal, residual welfare states of the USA, Canada, the UK (in some accounts the UK is a conservative welfare state regime) and the Antipodes are usually regarded as welfare states despite the fact that they deliver minimal benefits (Esping-Andersen, 1999, p. 89), on the basis of need, as a last resort to those who are unable to support themselves through market activities. Hence, it is not the content of the state welfare components or their impact that determines inclusion but the fact that welfare states are premised on two institutional arrangements: first it is a capitalist institution and second, it is embedded in a democratic (that is, parliamentary) institutional structure. So, the state welfare components themselves are not sufficient, according to the Western paradigm, to qualify as a welfare state.

Democracy and capitalism are macro-institutions with their own underlying social principles. Equality of political rights among individuals, regardless of their status and means, is the basic social principle underlying democracy, while capitalism, the economic institution, depends upon the market as the principal method of distributing social and
economic resources. Admittedly, these two macro-institutions have tensions between them. However, they have long been regarded as the two underlying and driving forces that affect the development of the welfare state. T.H. Marshall (1950) was the pioneer in this field with the idea of political citizenship that enables individuals to access a range of welfare benefits and provisions on an equal basis to their fellow citizens. Accordingly, modern citizens are able to attain a decent living standard despite the unequal distribution of market-based incomes (Abrahamson, 1997, p. 148). However, of course, Marshall’s definition of citizenship has been criticized extensively, for example for failing to distinguish between the public and private spheres and, thereby, excluding many women in particular (Pascall, 1986; Williams, 1989; Lister, 1997, 2003; Lewis, 2001). A more recent attempt to understand the assumptions underlying the welfare state and to distinguish its core components was made by Esping-Andersen (1990). He sees the welfare state and the different welfare state regimes in Western democracies as combining a system of stratification and strategies of de-commodification to counteract the unequal and divisive market logic of capitalism.

Some writers (Gintis and Bowles, 1982; Jordan, 1996) also highlight the tension between capitalism and democracy, the two macro-institutions that dominate the development of the welfare state. According to Gintis and Bowles (1982, p. 341) in their reference to Western capitalist economies, the welfare state is located at the interface of two distinct sets of rules, each contradicting the other. The first set of rules relates to the rights of citizens, which extend from the equal political status underlying democratic institutions. The second set of rules covers property rights, which provide a framework for the capitalist market economy. Citizens’ rights are in persistent conflict with property rights. Despite this conflictual relationship between these two sets of rules, the welfare state is regarded by some writers, especially neo-Marxists (O’Connor, 1973; Gough, 1979; Offe, 1984), as fundamental to the very existence of capitalism, because it legitimizes the accumulation function of capital. In one author’s words, ‘The welfare state is [therefore] also the result of capital’s requirements for the reproduction of labour power’ (Ginsburg, 1992, p. 3).

Despite the assumption with regard to democracy that underpins the welfare state paradigm, the most mature democratic capitalist countries were not the first to develop state welfare services (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1982; de Swaan, 1988; Digby, 1989; Esping-Andersen, 1990). For instance, Flora and Heidenheimer (1982, p. 70) suggested that the first batch of countries that initiated the core welfare state programmes, the social insurance schemes, were non-parliamentary regimes in Western Europe such as Austria, Denmark, Germany and Sweden.
In line with the neo-Marxist argument about the need to legitimize the accumulation function of capital, these governments used state welfare to consolidate the loyalty of the working class and compete with a growing and hostile labour movement. Thus, the historical evidence does not support the idea that a democratic political institutional structure is the prerequisite for the development of state welfare programmes. This is exactly the case in today’s East Asian countries and yesterday’s Central and Eastern European Soviet bloc countries where, as argued earlier, similar state welfare institutions are and were established in the absence of Western-style parliamentary democracy.

In terms of inter-institutional relationships, welfare state programmes are usually regarded, in spite of being indispensable, as essentially in an adjunct position to the market economy (Titmuss, 1974, pp. 30–31; Martin, 1990, p. 39). Despite its subordinate position, the welfare state is complementary to the market economy. The key is the fine-tuning of state intervention by the welfare state: it has to rectify market failures but stop well short of eradicating the market system (Walker, 1983; Offe, 1984). The essential feature of this sort of state welfare intervention is to enable any rules of the market system to remain intact; at the same time, it also has to limit the extent of accumulation on the part of capital by redistributing some to the less well off. In other words, the welfare state and the market system have competing aims, but they also have complementary functions.

In this paradigm, the ideal type of welfare state is one that can have the benefits of both macro-institutions: economic growth attained by the market system (the economic institution) with social interests being pursued by state welfare (the state institution). The contradictory nature of these two macro-institutions does not discourage theorists of the welfare state and comparative analysts from looking for good examples of the ideal type. That is to say that the state can assume an extensive and strong role whilst it is complementary to the economy. In the literature of comparative welfare state analysis Sweden has long provided a model of a ‘strong’ welfare state without detriment to the economy (Therborn, 1986, p. 18; Therborn and Roebroek, 1986, p. 327). However, some more recent accounts by welfare state writers and theorists seem to be more cautious about the complementary relation between the two macro-institutions; they acknowledge the trade-off between economic growth and social interest (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Palme, 1999). For example, Esping-Andersen (2001, p. 358) asks the question ‘why would the Nordic social democracies, so dedicated to decommodification, sponsor much weaker employment rights than do the Mediterranean polities, which are not exactly the prototypes of an advanced welfare state?’ By asking this
question, Esping-Andersen sees the contradictory nature of the welfare state regime as more prevalent than the complementary function between the welfare state and the capitalist economic system. Similarly, in China the state occupied an extensive role in the economy in its pre-reform era; now it believes that the state needs to be separated from the economy so that its accumulation function can be activated.

In contrast to the ideal type of the Swedish or Nordic model of the welfare state, the ‘liberal’ welfare states are usually the ideal type at the opposite end of the spectrum, in which the contradictory relationship between the state and the economy is more exaggerated. In this construction, the state and the economy should be operated as separately as possible from each other. In these liberal welfare states the residual public role of the state is assumed to be the public preference. Not only do we find the preference for a residual public role for the state among Western welfare states, such as the Anglo-Saxon English-speaking societies, the USA in particular, but a similarly high regard for state residualism is also witnessed in the world’s freest economy – Hong Kong. Nevertheless, it is necessary to differentiate the rhetoric of such a preference from the reality of welfare systems in which empirical evidence may prove the contrary. For instance, in Hong Kong the state has long occupied a major role with regard to housing, education and health care despite the fact that it is a non-welfare state East Asian economy (Tang, 2000; Wong et al., 2002; Chau and Yu, 2005; Wong, 2008).

The ideal postulate of welfare state regimes on the basis of the relation between the state and the economy seems to confirm the Western ethnocentric bias; it is the advent of Western parliamentary democracy that counts in deciding what is a welfare state. The dominant conceptualization of the welfare state as an adjunct to the market economy, despite the range of differences between the ideal types, looks more like the straightforward rationalization of an existing phenomenon than a scientific judgement based on empirical evidence about the political economy of state welfare. Because it is evident, as illustrated previously, that state welfare could be found in non-parliamentary and non-capitalist societies, so it follows that state welfare programmes are not exclusive to Western-style political democracies.

THE ‘ELASTIC’ WELFARE STATE BOUNDARY

The scientific construction of the welfare state as a democratic-capitalist project has suffered from the bias of excluding non-democratic and non-capitalist societies in comparative analyses. Moreover, the Western ethno-
The ethnocentric construction of the welfare state also has a narrow focus on one single institution, the state, and its role in social policy (Walker, 1984b). The ideal is seen as the institutional-redistributive welfare state, in Titmuss’s (1974) terms, while at the other end is the residual role of alleviating poverty. The former indicates an extensive role played by the state and represents the welfare state to aspire to; while the residual end consists of a weak or minimal role for the state and regards the welfare society as the primary provider of welfare. The supposed continuum between these two roles of the state and, indeed, also the dichotomy between welfare state and welfare society is not necessarily a realistic portrayal of empirical reality. In practice, the welfare state cohabits with the economy and many other social institutions such as the family and a range of private and quasi-private institutions, to form a welfare system. In fact, the coexistence of the welfare state and the welfare society has been referred to as the ‘mixed economy of welfare’ and this concept has been important in social policy analysis for many years (Walker, 1984a; Rose and Shiratori, 1986; Johnson, 1987; Powell, 2007).

The practical coexistence of the welfare state and the welfare society has not stopped the portrayal of the utilitarian or functional role-of-state continuum (or dichotomy) as forming the main theoretical paradigm for classifying Western welfare states. The social administration tradition is a case in point. The classic welfare state is portrayed as having the responsibility ‘for securing some basic modicum of welfare for its citizens’ (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 18–19). This functional social administration tradition dates back to the work of Briggs (1961) and Marshall (1965). For example, Briggs (2000, p. 18) suggested that:

A welfare state is a state in which organized power is deliberately used in an effort to modify the play of market forces in at least three directions – first, by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income irrespective of the market value of their work or their property; second, by narrowing the extent of insecurity by enabling individuals and families to meet certain ‘social contingencies’…which lead otherwise to individual and family crises; and third, by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standards available in relation to a certain agreed range of social services.

This is a typical illustration of the social administration tradition and emphasizes the social democratic roots of this perspective by defining the responsibility of the welfare state in terms of the provision of a range of universal state welfare services. Nevertheless, the social administration tradition has several severe limitations. As noted by Walker (1981, 1983), the tradition’s lack of theoretical framework and especially its optimistic view of the functions of social policy and its narrow focus on state intervention have limited its comparative usefulness. There have been
various attempts to define the welfare state from a more rigorous theoretical perspective. Titmuss (1974) was the forerunner and, in his welfare state framework, the residual, industrial achievement-performance, and institutional-redistributive approaches to welfare were formulated to illustrate the range of welfare state possibilities from selective to universal provision. The subsequent account by Esping-Andersen (1990) is a sophisticated theorization based on de-commodification as the strategy to counteract the extent to which life chances are dependent on market principles and operations. On that basis, three clusters of welfare state regimes were identified: the Anglo-Saxon English-speaking ‘liberal’, the continental ‘corporatist’ and the Nordic ‘social democratic’ welfare states.

Despite the more rigorous than hitherto attempts of the utilitarian or functional approach to theorize welfare state regimes, it still encounters problems similar to those associated with the institutional approach. First of all, what exactly constitutes a welfare state or a welfare state regime is still not precisely defined. It seems that if a society has institutionalized a range of social services and benefits for its citizens, it could qualify as a welfare state or welfare state regime. However, the issue of precision in decisions about eligibility for inclusion as a welfare state is raised when some societies that have a substantial range of institutionalized social services and benefits are not classified as welfare states; the threshold question comes to the fore.

For instance, Japan is still the only non-Western society that is often referred to as a welfare state (Rose and Shiratori, 1986; Lee, 1987; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Peng, 2000; Miyamoto, 2003). It is certainly one of the most successful capitalist economies and also has a democratic polity. More importantly, perhaps, it is a member of the club of the rich countries, the OECD, and therefore has a kind of honorary Western status (it has had close links with the USA since World War II). The case of South Korea is potentially interesting. It was excluded previously from scientific consideration as a welfare state along with the other three ‘little dragons’ – Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. But since it joined the OECD and installed a Western-style democracy it is increasingly referred to as a welfare state like Japan, especially among South Korean scholars (Kim, 2001; Kwon, 2005). Meanwhile the other ‘little dragons’ in East Asia, with a range of institutionalized social services and benefits (Jacobs, 1998), are usually not counted as welfare states. For example, Hong Kong has universal health services, universal and free basic education, extensive public housing programmes and an institutionalized social assistance scheme for its inhabitants (Wong, 2008); all these reflect the ‘basic modicum’ of welfare found in liberal welfare states. However, it is usually excluded from the ‘club’ of welfare states because it does not have
one of the two essential institutional criteria – a Western-style political democracy – despite the fact that it is the ‘freest economy on earth’ (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2002).

Critics might argue that Hong Kong is now part of China again but its exclusion from the welfare state category long pre-dates reunification. A similar case applies to transitional China itself, which lacks a Western-style political democracy and is not a fully capitalist economy. In spite of these two institutional ‘anomalies’ from the perspective of the Western construction, it had managed previously and is still able to provide sufficient social protection to its urban population, albeit with enormous difficulties at the present moment. Back in the pre-reform era, elements of comprehensive welfare were provided through the ‘work-units’ (that is, state-owned enterprises, government bureaus and so on) that could mirror, to some extent at least, the central idea of ‘from cradle to grave’ welfare of the classic perception of the idealized Western welfare state (Walker and Wong, 1996). Even in its reform era, the Chinese government has made tremendous efforts to institutionalize social protection for its urban population. For example, a poverty line, with its accompanying benefit provisions, was first promulgated in 1993 in Shanghai and now covers all urban areas. Despite these advances China was and is not currently perceived as crossing the threshold of the welfare state group.

Second, if we take Briggs’s first criterion – the guarantee of a basic minimum income – to examine the threshold question of the club of the welfare states, we may still find that some well-established Western welfare states do not even cross this basic threshold. It is well acknowledged that the ‘liberal’ welfare states or welfare state regimes deliver meagre benefits, on the basis of need, as the last resort for those who are unable to support themselves through market activities. It is appropriate that this should be the lowest threshold that a welfare system has to cross to be classified as a welfare state. However, in the early 1990s Greece, Spain, France and Italy, four European Union Member States, did not have formal universal rights to minimum income support (Ferrazzi, 1995), and Greece and Italy are still lacking in this respect (European Commission, 2008). It is worthwhile highlighting that France and Italy are usually classified as the continental ‘conservative’ welfare states, a status with a higher level of de-commodification than the ‘liberal’ ones (Esping-Anderson, 1990). If the ‘conservative’ welfare states do not provide a universal social right to social protection to their citizens, it is not surprising to see that the largest ‘liberal’ welfare state, the USA, fares even worse. When the USA reformed its social welfare system and capped the entitlement to social assistance benefits to two years within a lifelong five-year period in its 1996 Clinton welfare reform package, the basic guarantee criterion, as
typically defined by Briggs (1961), was abandoned. Besides, the USA is the only major industrialized nation whose government does not guarantee the right of access to health care in time of need by providing universal and comprehensive health benefit coverage to its people. According to sources, between 16 and 18 per cent of the population lack any form of health service coverage (Navarro, 1992; US Census, 2009). In contrast, Hong Kong is not a welfare state by the Western construction but it has guaranteed social assistance and universal health care. Again this begs the question of ‘what constitutes a welfare state?’

Third, if we apply Briggs’s most stringent criterion – the provision of a range of universal state welfare services without regard to class or status – then perhaps the retreat of the state from welfare provision in many Western societies (Pierson, 2001) in the last two to three decades should deprive many of them of their status as welfare states (Yeates et al., 2011). The case is even more obvious with regard to the application of workfare as the condition for state welfare. The introduction of ‘workfare’ is not confined to ‘liberal’ welfare states, even social democratic ones also apply it to promote active citizenship. Once state welfare is conditional, however, the basic guarantee criterion becomes obsolete. But neither the retreat of the state’s role in welfare over the past decades nor the dire predictions of future austerity seem to have any implication for the status of the Western welfare states as welfare states (Pierson, 2001). Thus, in Western comparative analysis, the rule seems to be: once a welfare state, always a welfare state. In this regard, the elastic nature of the definition suggests that it cannot offer a precise threshold for comparative analysis because apparently it can be stretched to include all reformulations. The main problem of such a definition, therefore, is that it depends on the purposes of the authority using the concept.

Evidently, the welfare state definition is too elastic. A similar view is also voiced by British social policy analysts such as Glennerster (1995) and Powell and Hewitt (1997) on the British welfare state. They see the elasticity of the welfare state threshold as indicating the ‘myth of the classic welfare state’ and ask, for example by Powell and Hewitt (1997, p. 22), ‘at what point does the increase in means-testing or charging signal the end of classic welfare state?’

So, the myth, as it has been referred to, indicates the imperfection of the current welfare state definition at a very fundamental level. In our analysis it also indicates a flaw in terms of the unscientific and unfair exclusion of societies with state welfare programmes from being classified as ‘welfare states’. The foregoing examples of Hong Kong and China in East Asia are cases in point. Also mentioned earlier were the former state socialist regimes of the Central and Eastern European bloc. They managed
to provide comprehensive welfare to their citizens, in one authority’s
verdict, out of all proportion to their resources and the fiscal capacity of
the state. Nevertheless, they had the essential state welfare programmes,
and even in terms of the level of public expenditure, one of them, the
former Yugoslavia, spent 19.75 per cent of its GNP on social spending
in 1981 (Pusic, 1987). This was a proportion of national wealth devoted
to social spending that was higher than many members of the welfare
state club – the OECD countries. Thus, on theoretical as well as empirical
grounds, the elasticity of welfare state definitions makes the Western eth-
nocentric construction of the welfare state open to challenge. On a more
fundamental level, this implies that the terms ‘welfare state’ and ‘welfare
state regime’ lack the rigour that is usually required of a scientific tool for
measuring empirical reality.

Fourth, the use of the effects of state welfare as the main criterion in
defining the welfare state or welfare state regime would encounter practical
problems generated by the complexities of the actual programmes. Taking
Esping-Andersen’s de-commodification effects as a case in point, a state
programme could have both positive and negative effects. For example,
work-based pension schemes also have the effect of commodification as
they require a job (that is, commodified labour) and the contributions of
the worker (that is, market exchange operation and underlying principle)
to the pension fund during their working life. Hence, there will inevitably
be a subjective judgement about awarding a particular society the status of
inclusion as a welfare state or welfare state regime.

Likewise, in the comparative welfare state literature, there has been
so much attention focused on the effect of income maintenance schemes
in terms of de-commodification that the developmental aspect of state
welfare has been overlooked. Perhaps this is the underlying reason for
the exclusion of East Asian welfare systems from the group of welfare
states: they are less generous than their Western counterparts about social
protection programmes against poverty and pay less attention to the
elimination of social inequalities.

Fifth, the construction of the welfare state on the basis of the state’s
social policy effects is vulnerable to the criticism that it is based on too
sector is only one among the ‘mixed economy of welfare’ providers.
Evidently, the state, the private market, the family and the voluntary
sector have provided social services and benefits since the welfare state
was created; and they will continue to do so. The state has to work closely
with other non-statutory sectors in order to satisfy the needs of citizens.
There can be a symbiotic relationship between the state sector and other
non-statutory ones. The narrow focus on the functions and effects of the
state sector tends to neglect the contributions of other non-statutory providers. The current discourses concerning ‘welfare society’, ‘active social policy’ or ‘active society’ (Burchell, 1995; Dean, 1995; Rodger, 2000) indicated a shift in the political and scientific consensus towards a ‘mixed economy of welfare’ (Wong et al., 2002); by doing so, they may help to rectify the longstanding statist bias. In the same vein, the use of the term ‘welfare regime’ instead of ‘welfare state regime’ by Esping-Andersen (1999) also signifies acknowledgement of the contribution of the ‘welfare society’ to welfare. Likewise, the feminist emphasis on the contribution of domestic labour to welfare, the relationship between unpaid work and paid work and welfare (Dominelli, 1991; Langan and Ostner, 1991; Lewis, 1992; Lister, 2003), and Titmuss’s (1958) concept of the social division of welfare should also be welcomed.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that the foundation stone of comparative social policy, the concept of the welfare state, is a Western ethnocentric construction that has seriously hindered scientific inquiry in this field. The description ‘welfare state regime’ overcomes the narrow emphasis of social administration on the activities of the state but this too suffers from the same ethnocentric deficiency. We use the examples of East Asian societies, pre-reform China and the former state socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. A case could equally be made with regard to the welfare systems of many less developed societies, although there will always be a threshold question with regard to some comparative analyses.

In view of the evidence presented here it is tempting to conclude that the term ‘welfare state’ should be abolished from the comparative literature. That is unrealistic because Titmuss’s (1958) early cautions were ignored and now the term is everywhere. In any case it is not clear how helpful that course would be to the comparative endeavour. A more potentially productive line would be to begin to define precisely what is meant by a welfare state, welfare system or welfare state regime for the purposes of comparative analysis. Tentatively we suggest that the scientific construction of the welfare system or welfare state regime should fulfil the following criteria:

- a global perspective, to ensure that non-Western-style democracies and non-capitalist societies are included;
- inclusiveness with regard to modes of distribution and redistribution, to ensure that the full range of possibilities, from selective to universal, are counted;
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- pluralism, to acknowledge the different range and combination of welfare providers in different countries and their distributional and other implications;
- a developmental perspective, to globalize the comparative analysis of welfare systems and recognize that, as well as de-commodifying effects, state welfare has a developmental role.

With regard to the ‘welfare state’, this term should be employed exclusively to refer to the various roles of the state in welfare (Titmuss’s concept of the social division of welfare is particularly relevant to comparative analysis in this respect). Definitions of the welfare state should be clear about the threshold issue and, we suggest, the bottom line should be the guarantee of basic income protection to all of those resident in a society.

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Comparative social policy has witnessed a massive expansion in recent decades as globalization has opened up the space for geographically more diverse cross-national research, allowing larger numbers of countries to become available to research and to ‘know’. At the same time the dominance of Western and Eurocentric assumptions within both policy and research creates the paradoxical situation that in many ways the diversity of our understanding of such complexity is becoming diminished. We take this internationalization of knowledge production, where researchers frequently cross cultural and epistemic boundaries, as a (largely missed) opportunity for a more diverse and culturally sensitive academic discourse. Reliance upon Western conceptual tools within a universalistic approach, we argue, decouples concepts from contexts and leads to decontextualization in comparative social policy research.

In this chapter then, we take a translation perspective to scrutinize some of the key theoretical and methodological issues in comparative social policy. The translation perspective brings back some of the taken-for-granted assumptions into debate and subjects them to more thoughtful consideration. For example, language has been largely dismissed by comparative social policy scholars, and even more so the interplay between language and conceptualization. Translation also sheds some new light on issues such as equivalence of meaning, country selection criteria, conceptualization and contextualization, and issues around research design and methods. Rather than relying on dualistic dilemmas (such as similarities vs differences, quantitative vs qualitative research), we wish to outline a critical and reflexive comparative social policy research agenda based on new methodological and theoretical thinking. We wish to problematize the assumption of a dislocated and decontextualized methodological and theoretical work, and instead map the ways that can allow for multiple sites and forms of knowledge production and academic practices that are more able to elaborate the widely diverse social and epistemic practices that comparative research witnesses. We also share some of the
Concerns of Smelser (2003) about the problems of internationalization of knowledge. As he argues, ‘(t)he vast predominance of comparative social science thinking continues to be generated in the West, and brought to the rest of the world by our own scholarly work and by the mentalities of those from those societies who have learned western social science’ (Smelser, 2003, p. 648; emphasis in original). Translation in this sense seeks ways that can offer equitable dialogue between divergent cultural and epistemic communities, and the possibility of ‘talking back’. Importantly, translation is not just about linguistic practices; it takes us well beyond issues about languages; it is a broader research agenda with sensitivities to culture, context, diversity, inequalities, ethics and politics.

The chapter is in two parts. The first part gives a theoretical mapping of some of the core issues a translation perspective raises for comparative social policy. The second part outlines four key dimensions of a critical comparative social policy agenda – an elaborative approach, sensitivity to standpoint, the necessity for a critical agenda, and a reflexive methodology.

PART 1 ‘TRANSLATION’: THEORETICAL EXPLORATIONS

‘Translation’ as a concept has long travelled from its origin in linguistics and translation studies to a situation in which ‘today an increasing number of scholars are aware of both the conceptual complexity and the politico-ethical significance of translation’, in terms of its ‘complicity with’, or as we would prefer to state, inseparability from ‘the building, transforming or disrupting of power relations’ (Sakai, 2006, pp. 71–2). ‘Translation’ as a concept has thus travelled to various disciplinary fields such as policy studies, cultural studies, anthropology and post-colonial studies. Each field has developed its own emphasis of the notion of translation and in this chapter we focus upon the theoretical and methodological challenges these offer to comparative social policy.

Although there are a variety of interpretations of what ‘translation’ is, common to all has been the assertion that ‘social facts are meaningless outside those situations in which they are manifested. The translation perspective therefore, puts an emphasis on actors being involved in a continuous translation process through which society and our understandings of it are constantly created and re-created’ (Johnson and Hagstrom, 2005, p. 369). Translation as a metaphor, we believe, has important insight into comparative social policy research as a form of knowledge production and as a reflexive practice of people, policies and politics in and across cultures.
For policy scholars, translation is a capturing metaphor of the immense mobility of the policy process; moving/translating from decisions to practices; from normative to practical expression of policy; from research to policy, or, within the rise of the transnationalization of policy, the issue of policy transfer, the travelling of social policy ideas, discourses, policies and institutions from one context to another. As Cowen (2009) puts it, as policies, concepts, ideas, discourses or institutions move they morph. It is this concept of ‘moving and morphing’ that has inspired policy scholars to shed new and critical light on issues such as the policy process and policy transfer. Richard Freeman (2004, 2009), who has taken the translation perspective the furthest in policy studies, argues that translation offers three important insights into the policy-making process. First, the theory of translation highlights the constructed nature of policy; that policy-making is a dynamic and iterative process involving multiple speakers and listeners, writers and readers; it is an act of communication, in which language plays a crucial part. It is in this sense that the translation perspective affords policy-making as a meaning-making and claim-making process (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007). Second, Freeman asserts, translation sheds light on the policy process in terms of the dual processes of ‘representation’ and ‘association’. He argues that ‘what we call translation, or the replacing of terms in one language with those in another, is also a substitution of one set of relationships or associations with another. These may be similar to the original but can never be identical. To translate, therefore, is to make new associations, to reassociate or perhaps to reassign’ (Freeman, 2004, p. 7). This informs a number of crucial agendas central to the understanding of the policy process, such as institutionalization, policy transfer, policy learning, implementation and many more. Finally, translation can also frame our understanding of the policy process in terms of discourses, complex systems and governance. For Freeman, this is where translation is explicitly political; it is, he asserts, discourse that brings power back into the theory of translation – inserting the crucial questions of what gets translated and by whom. For Freeman, since networks are forms of associations, translation is the essential mechanism that binds together and forms systems and governance.

Translation has a strong association with the ‘cultural’, ‘reflexive’, ‘ideational’ ‘constructivist’ turn in policy studies. The translation perspective has, as Johnson and Hagstrom (2005) argue, allowed for a ‘deepened problematization of the policy concept’, challenging assumptions about policy as essentially a mechanical, chronological and rationalistic process. For them, ‘policy is a bearer and generator of meanings’ and policy transfer is ‘an imitation process where meaning is constructed by temporally and spatially disembedding policy ideas from their previous context and
using them as a model for altered political structures in a new context’ (ibid., p. 370). For Johnson and Hagstrom translation is a deeply agentic process, where ‘translators’, or ‘brokers’ play a key role, and in that sense, translation implies a strong sense of agency. They also assert that ‘all translation is local’, and despite all the global processes and influences, translation processes are always anchored in local contexts. As a result, translation emphasizes the specific rather than the general, diversity rather than uniformity, and divergence rather than convergence. For them ‘the translation process often should be regarded as a battle between competing interpretations vying for supremacy’ (ibid., p. 375). In that sense, translation is always a political project, with a need for a critical research agenda to uncover what gets transferred, who gets to translate and who are the losers and winners within a particular policy transfer situation. For Herbert-Cheshire (2003, p. 456), talking about rural policy in Australia, translation is ‘a continuous process through which individuals transform the knowledge, truth, and effects of power each time they encounter them’. For her, the translation perspective allows for the overcoming of the assumed duality of response to state power, namely, compliance or resistance. Instead, she argues, translation implies that ‘contestation and negotiation become the norm as all those enrolled in the actor-network of the policy arena continuously accommodate, re-shape and occasionally reject the will of the state whenever they encounter it’ (ibid., p. 468).

Translation in the hands of policy scholars has also problematized the notion of policy- and knowledge transfer, the travelling of ideas, discourses, policies and institutions. Monaci and Caselli (2005) very insightfully argue that:

the metaphor of translation suggests that the production, circulation and sharing knowledge among different socio-cultural contexts should be analysed by investigating how its users change their cognitive and normative attitudes, stressing the role of the cultural categories of those who ‘en-act’ and bring into being the knowledge transferred to local contexts of application by mobilizing, mediating, distorting, exposing, ignoring and so re-creating it. (Monaci and Caselli, 2005, p. 56)

Indeed, the translation perspective has been remarkably influential in recent years in the field of ‘knowledge transfer’, interested in processes of translation between policies and frontline practices, and between research and policies. The translation perspective has gained such a currency in this field that ‘knowledge transfer’ itself morphs into ‘knowledge translation’ in recent years. This shift signals a move towards softening up the rather mechanistic assumptions about how knowledge or policy travels unidirectionally between the ‘sender’ and the ‘receiver’ and replacing
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the approach of ‘knowledge transfer’ with a more interactive, collaborative, multi-directional and complex approach to ‘knowledge translation’ (Lapaige, 2010). Finally, ‘translation’ also sheds light on important and critical dynamics of transnational policy transfers, in so far as, as Clarke (2005, p. 8) puts it, ‘the Anglophone domination of policy expertise and policy network, the passage of concepts into and out of “Policy English” may be a site of significant articulation and variation’. As we will argue later, the translation into and out of English represents one of the most important invisible ‘black boxes’ in contemporary comparative social policy research. It is this complexity that a focus on translation offers, and that this chapter argues for the importance of, as we seek to develop understandings of social policy in the context of globalization, which this edition takes as its starting point.

For post-colonial scholars translation is a core concept – and is understood both literally and metaphorically – highlighting the power surrounding textual and geographical translation through the often violent restructuring of the worlds (concepts, images, words and practices) of the colonized. Translation here becomes a re-ordering, which makes the colonized more comprehensible and manageable to their masters (Kiberd, 1995). More than this, however, is the sense that what are translated are not only words, labels and images but the colonized person herself – where the colonized self becomes translated into colonial object – servant/person of colour/Latino, and in so doing becoming alienated, displaced from themselves. Rather than translation being deterministic and unidirectional, in post-colonial studies translation is also contested, with the processes of translation inevitably including the possibility of retranslation, of redefining and resisting, of ‘talking back’ to dominant understandings – of taking back the possibility of self-naming. To bring this debate back to the research process, such a perspective calls for the people, both Western and non-Western, who find themselves ‘translated’ as ‘Western researchers’, to become not simply reading subjects, but also writing subjects. Drawing on the work of Barbara Godard, Simon (2000) suggests that research should be understood as writing, ‘extending and developing the intention of the original text’ (Simon, 2000, p.32) – a transformative act where, in the context of the divide between the Global North and South, the need for ‘rewriting’ dominant global understandings is critical.

In drawing upon these different facets of translation, we shall focus upon the implications for the process of comparative research as a practice of knowledge production, and suggest that the range of issues that these different takes on ‘translation’ shine light on call for a reconfiguration of the comparative research process. Comparative social policy is inevitably located in between different languages, diverse geographic locations,
substantive policies and global, national and local scales, including a
diverse set of ‘worlds’ and practices. We argue that the act of comparison
between these diverse worlds that is at the heart of comparative social
policy is inevitably work of social, cultural and political translation.
While, as this introduction has discussed, one might map a translation
turn in the social sciences, we would argue that translation has always
been at the centre of comparative social policy and comparative research.
However, this recent focus on the processes of translation draws attention
to the ways that certain translation practices are complicit with hegem-
onic modernist Eurocentric discourses. We agree with Dale (2006) that
that there are ways that a focus upon comparison, and we would argue,
particular forms of translation it rests upon, has assumed and reinforced
modernity (Dale, 2006). A focus upon translation considers how, within
such intercultural encounters, power operates to determine who gets the
right to name the world and whose language is translated to whom.
A translation framework offers a sensitivity to those processes that
are taken-for-granted within comparative research. Wilson (2001), for
instance, talks about how the massive upsurge in cross-national social
policy data sets and the emergence of ‘mega data’ leads to problems such
as obscuring culture, eliminating cultural and political differences, and
seeing data as culture-free. As she puts it:

Any translation may reinforce the limitations of the original data by ignoring
cultural differences. It may also reinforce unequal power relations by its implicit
acceptance of the position of those who created the data, or those who will be
using them when translated. Ethical questions may arise here since so much of
social policy already deals with deprived groups and as globalisation multiplies
the force of social exclusion. . . . Translations then become contested not on
the grounds of cultural difference, but because they represent manifestations of
contested power relations. (Wilson, 2001, p. 5)

The problematization of this double-edged nature of translation calls
for two lines of enquiry. The first critical project is to map out the ways
that ‘the homogenizing ambition of Anglo-American as a universal lan-
guage serves to embed a form of globalization where translation functions
as a colonization practice, embedding a neoliberal discourse through
monolingualism’ (Venn, 2006, p. 82). This monolingualism, silencing as it
does alternative ways to name the world, confines the possibilities of creat-
ing discursive spaces that can be articulated to challenge dominant under-
standings. At the same time insofar as translation is an inevitable aspect
of any intercultural exchange a process of translation has the potential
to become a contested space, where more sensitive translation practices
might, in contrast, afford new insights and new ways of knowing that
have the potential for different worlds to encounter each other in spaces of mutual recognition, offering additional directions of translation from South to North, from margin to centre, from particular to universal and where dominant discourses might themselves become modified through the process.

This chapter then tacks back and forth between these twin projects that emerge out of a consideration of translation. It is structured around four themes and their implications for comparative research. Taken together they outline a particular direction for comparative research that is elaborative, positioned, politicized and reflexive.

PART 2  TRANSLATION AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS

2a  Translation as Elaboration – New Directions for Comparative Social Policy

Any comparative project must face the epistemological problem of creating spaces where different worlds are able to meet in dialogue. These world-meeting spaces are usually multi-lingual contexts in which language becomes something that actively needs working with. Interestingly, mainstream comparative social policy has paid very little attention to the issue of translation and multi- and inter-lingual work within the research process. This notable silence gives the impression that translation is a priori to the research, and functions solely as a technical matter providing a tool for unified terminology, satisfying the criteria of equivalence of meaning and thereby allowing the research to commence. Translation within this silence becomes an invisible process that the translator/researcher unproblematically engages with. However, we argue that in order to be able to overcome the ‘Anglophone domination’ and ‘Eurocentric assumptions’ within comparative social policy this assumption that translation work takes places a priori to the research process needs to be challenged. As Buist puts it, “equivalence” of meaning is a product of translation, not its prerequisite, and what constitutes “equivalence” has to be negotiated in the process (Buist, 2006, p.366). Buist is arguing that the challenge for comparative research, that is, ‘translating a concept from one cultural context to another cultural context, without distorting the content and meaning of the concept, and without losing valuable and characteristic information through the translation’ (Oyen, 1990, p.9) is best met not through ascribing an intangible conceptual universal in an abstracted form, free of all cultural associations. Rather, such comparisons should
strive to be excessive embodied encounters whereby the degree and form of equivalence is the product of the research process, and where instead of conceptual equivalence comparative work seeks conceptual elaboration that functions through equity of respect (Dale, 2006).

The emergent nature of conceptual comparison offers a radically different directionality for the research process – a direction where conceptual translation is both the outcome and the purpose of research, where comparison does not seek equivalence but rather an elaboration of terms, where each term offers a reflexive mirror to the others. De Sousa Santos (2004) takes this standpoint and calls for translations that allow for mutual intelligibility amongst the experiences of the world (ibid., p. 179). He takes as an example of such a process the translation between the Western concept of ‘human rights’, the Islamic concept of ‘umma’ and the Hindu concept of ‘dharma’ (De Sousa Santos, 1995). This process mutually elaborates, where the understanding of each concept is enriched through its encounter with the others, where, as Price puts it, ‘rather than fixing the definitions, translating a social scientific concept would rework the earlier concept, superimpose itself’ (Price, 2008, p. 355). All too often comparative works fix and ‘lock in’ definitions early on in the research process, which not only delimits the scope of the research, but also excludes potential new insights, limiting what knowledge can emerge. Indeed, often mainstream comparative social policy works with the assumption that conceptual work – definitions of key concepts – comes first and provides the framework within which the research operates. Empirical evidence has to fit within those frameworks, and often information that does not fit within it gets rejected or sidelined. This model implies that the conceptual framework imposes itself on the contexts and the analytic framework somehow sits outside of an understanding of cross-national social policy. Contrary to that, translation sees comparative social policy as a process of conceptual elaboration seeking to create different connections and different forms of comparison where multiple translations of terms between different contexts create depth of meaning. Translation then, collapses the false dichotomy between ‘contextualization’ and ‘conceptualization’, the separation of ‘understanding’ and ‘explanation’ (Carmel, 1999). Concepts are, from this perspective, always located, making conceptual work deeply embedded in context.

An illuminating example of how the conceptual and the contextual can be integrated into a coherent research design is offered by Wrede et al. (2006). In their research looking at eight Western countries’ maternal health care systems, their aim was to problematize the notion of the ‘Western birth process’ and the assumed convergence of institutional arrangements in Western countries, and to study the process, rather than the outcome, of maternity care. They argued that instead of looking at
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macro-level typical outcomes, such as morbidity and mortality of mothers and newborns, the research needs to be able to capture the diversity of different national practices, not least because even similar outcomes can be reached by very different practices. Their methodology had three core aspects. First, the conceptual work was spread throughout the research. They argued that ‘our goal was not simply to find skilled researchers to answer our questions. Rather, we aimed to attract scholars who would help us shape the research questions themselves’ (ibid., p. 2990). Second, they argued that contexts are always multi-dimensional, operating at different levels (macro, meso and micro), and the process of conceptualization involves an approach that works with all the different levels as they are related, but at the same time keeps them analytically separate. They argued, for example, that by researching maternal care, it is not enough just to rely on a single typology like ‘welfare regimes’ as an analytic framework, rather analytic frameworks always need to be more multi-level and multi-dimensional. This means that the research can work at different levels, with different analytical ‘touch-stones’, such as ‘hospital’ as an organization and site of practice, ‘midwifery’, in terms of training, ethos, hierarchical issues within health care, ‘health care funding’, and many more. Finally, they argued that culture matters, as concepts are socially constructed and therefore culture fundamentally shapes understandings and interpretations of policies, institutions and their practices. It is only through this cultural understanding that we can produce socially situated reflexive and locally sensitive knowledge. What they proposed is nothing less than a call for a ‘decentred comparative social policy approach’, in which de-centring is a ‘reflexive sensitivity to the national/local contexts and to the ways in which these shape data’ (p. 2989). Crucially, this research design allows for a new form of knowledge in comparative social policy; rather than creating a taxonomy of models, their research design allows for a dynamic and inclusive understanding and explanation of maternal care in different national contexts.

The iterative process between conceptualizing and contextualizing is also well documented by Quilgars et al. (2009), who in their research on home ownership and security in European societies found that the research process itself was a process of elaborating on and developing an understanding of key concepts. They argued that in comparative research ‘there could be a danger of placing a pre-formed and uni-cultural understanding of some key processes on the research’ (ibid., p. 23), as this has the danger of reinforcing gaps in existing knowledge and lets ethnocentric biases go unnoticed. This may well mean that in the process of conceptualization we already lose a lot of context-specific and context-shaping knowledge. For Quilgars et al. (2009) statistical profiling helped in designing and defining
the concept of ‘marginal homeowners’, which in most countries excluded outright homeowners, while in Hungary, due to the high level of outright yet socially vulnerable home ownership, mortgage-free homeowners were included into the second stage interview sample. The implication is that context-specific features play an important role in research design, not just in terms of research methods, but also in terms of definition of key concepts.

2b Comparative Standpoints

The call to collapse the concept/context dichotomy locates understandings of concepts in the cultural, political and social milieu in which they emerge. Such a location helps us to analyse the ways that a globalized academic discourse can and does create problematic conceptual transfer. The danger, as scholars of neo-liberal governmentality point out, is that processes of ‘naming’, labelling, presenting and inscribing of complex social phenomena within comparative research misrepresent and invisibilize key historical patterns, since these processes involve assembling singularities out of heterogeneous and diverse social processes (Larner and Walters, 2004, p. 499).

An insightful example of this is given by the feminist Widerberg, reflecting on the unproblematic and widespread usage of the term gender:

I saw, when rereading my Danish article, how influenced we Scandinavians have been by the debates and research in the US. Through the internationalization of knowledge and the dominance of the English language as its mediator, we have been made to share understandings to a higher degree than we have been made to share actual social arrangements. We might live in countries and cultures that are quite differently organized, but our intellectual tools are very much the same. (Widerberg, 1998, p. 135)

She takes translation further by arguing that:

when we go deeper, we see that translating understandings of gender from one culture and language to another also implies eliminating certain concepts and contextual understandings expressed in the one language, and introducing instead, in the other language, concepts expressing other (contextual) understandings. ‘Going international’, wanting to participate and be understood in the international feminist debate, thus implies changing the voice as well as the story. However frustrating this issue may be when experienced in the process of translation, there are always insights to be gained, not least about the ‘positioning’ of understandings of gender. (Ibid., p. 133)

Widerberg’s last point is precisely that we should not withdraw from translation just because it silences certain understandings, but that such
processes cannot but reveal the positioning and location of dominant understanding of gender. Even as translation has been responsible for changing the voices and stories she is able to tell, it allows, insofar as other voices can be heard, the limits of dominant understandings of gender to be made visible. This 'positioning' and standpoint is taking us further than arguing that in comparative research the 'observed phenomena are compared against a certain point of reference, which is either explicitly stated or implicitly assumed' (see Clasen, Chapter 4 in this volume, p. 74). There is a wide consensus in comparative social policy debate about the need for more explicit reference points. However, the notion of ‘positioning’ and standpoint calls for a critical understanding of ‘reference points’. It is not just a technical issue of theoretical frameworks or chosen methods, it is a broader call for making the position of researcher more explicit, and to reflect on the situated and political nature of their own knowledge in relation to the studied phenomenon (Saukko, 2003).

For other scholars, linking issues of translation, language and politics ‘invite[s] us to properly define the social policy concepts we use while being aware of their origins and of the normative and political controversies they are likely to generate’ (Beland, 2011, p.12). Beland (2011) shows how unnoticed the fact went, in comparative welfare state research, that concepts such as ‘welfare state’ lack any consensual translation in French, where some prefer to translate it as ‘Etat-providence’, others as ‘Etat-social’, while yet others use the concept of ‘protection sociale’. As Beland argues, the crucial issue here is that each concept has its own distinct social, cultural and political connotations, therefore, it is part of the analytic vigour to understand and reference those connotations, and locate social policy language firmly in the national context in which it is emerging over time. But Beland’s call is not simply a call for ‘context matters’, or ‘history matters’. He argues that translation is a political act; by choosing a concept, we are choosing a ‘construction of the boundaries of state action’. A similar tale is told by Lendvai (2009) on the Hungarian translation of social exclusion, which in Hungarian can be either translated as ‘tarsadalmi kirekeszes’, an active verb, implying that somebody (society, the state, etc.) actively excludes people, implicating the need for state action, or ‘tarsadalmi kirekesztodes’, a passive term, which implies that people or groups happen to be excluded, with a lot less imperative for the state to be involved. Translation then becomes important and directly relevant in terms of deep ideological and policy consequences, which needs to be acknowledged throughout the research process. What standpoint should comparative research have here? Are we able to construct research practices where, for instance, the distinction between ‘tarsadalmi kirekeszes’ and ‘tarsadalmi kirekesztodes’ elaborates understandings of social
exclusion in order to focus on the degree of active exclusion – something that is perhaps less emphasized when discussed in English? By getting rid of the Hungarian terms, collapsing them into a single and just English term of exclusion, we are losing important insight into how social exclusion(s) are understood, institutionalized, made available to national discourses in Hungary and how they get ‘Europeanized’.

2c The Politics of Comparison – Alternative Encounters in a Globalized World

Being infinite, the plurality of knowledge existing in the world is unreachable as such, since each way of knowing accounts for it only partially and from its own specific perspective alone. On the other hand, however, since each way of knowing exists only in that infinite plurality of knowledge, none of them is able to understand itself without referring to the others. . . . The possibilities and limits of understanding and action of each way of knowing can only be grasped to the extent that each way of knowing offers a comparison with other ways of knowing. (De Sousa Santos, 2009, p. 116)

Comparison is never a neutral act. Comparisons inevitably associate, constructing similarities and differences, equivalences and associations. De Sousa Santos, in taking the infinite as his starting point, liberates the possibilities of what can be compared, multiplies the possibility of what can be known and thereby opens up the possibility for critical understandings emerging from new encounters. At the same time, each comparison is inevitably partial, constructed, and thereby humble. From this perspective comparative social policy research is less the creation of a comparative object, and more the creation of multiple overlapping insights.

The comparative act is then not a rational choice based on initial analyses of similarities and difference; it is not simply a methodological issue of country selection – it is a political act that creates certain associations and allows for certain meanings at the expense of others. Comparing is placing a mirror to national social policies and looking at them from the point of view of the other national social policies. This ‘mirroring effect’, means that, for example, if we compare the Hungarian welfare state with the welfare state in the USA we see very different kinds of things than if we compare the Hungarian welfare state with the Swedish welfare state. Comparison and selection criteria matter, because they will give us different reflections depending on what we compare with what. Indeed, depending on the comparison applied in relation to the post-communist welfare states in Eastern Europe, hugely different academic claims have been asserted by even the most prominent scholars. In the context of European integration and EU enlargement, Vaughan-Whitehead (2004),
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for example, argued that post-communist welfare states are ‘weak’, they suffer from ‘an underdeveloped social protection’, ‘have general problems of social cohesion’, and have ‘witnessed some adverse developments in a number of social fields’. He argued that post-communist states are ‘too keen’ to implement neo-liberal reforms in a much more radical way than could be expected from a ‘European’ state, thereby risking the future of ‘Social Europe’ in a newly enlarged European Union (ibid., p. 498). The standpoint applied here is the ‘European welfare states’, whatever that might mean. In contrast, in their influential book Kaufman and Haggard (2008), looking at Eastern European welfare states in comparison with Latin America and East Asia, find that post-communist welfare states compared to the other two regions are characterized by ‘a commitment to universalism’, ‘comprehensive social protection coverage’, and ‘limited liberalization’ in the field of welfare provisions. How is it possible to come to such a radically different interpretation about post-communist welfare states? Just to complicate the picture further, while much of the intra-regional comparative literature on post-communist welfare states has argued for diverse and diverging typologies of post-communist welfare states (Bohle and Greskovits, 2007; Greskovits and Bruszt, 2009; Lendvai, 2011), Kaufman and Haggard (2008) argue that Eastern Europe is a rather homogeneous region and shows substantial convergence as a region, compared with either Latin America or East Asia.

These examples demonstrate how choices of comparison result in different research outcomes. Different understandings are constructed through each comparative act. In this sense, choice of comparison is deeply political, and Eastern European welfare states can become many things: ‘European welfare states’, ‘developing or emerging welfare states’, ‘post-authoritarian welfare regimes’, ‘neo-liberal welfare states’, ‘hybrid welfare states’ and many more. In addition to offering the possibility of a meta-comparative dimension to the research process, comparative choices become decisions that are not only made explicit and open to scrutiny, but also creative and agenda led, emphasizing the political choices of the comparative research process.

2d Translating Method – Research Tools for Equitable Encounters

The sensitivities that our translation framework raises emphasize complexity within the research process. Linguistic and conceptual differences between research sites make the comparative act a journey across epistemological divides, with the researcher placed as an intercultural traveller. The acknowledgement that the researcher, whether doing quantitative or qualitative research is, like the research, located – culturally, socially, or
geographically – allows for such a journey to be one of open exploration. As Price, as a Western researcher, meeting theories that do not emerge so centrally from Anglo-American traditions, writes, ‘I encounter, embrace and am engulfed by other conditions, lives and histories . . . sensing, glimpsing then breathing in other ways of being, availing myself of them’ (Price, 2008, p. 356). Such intercultural research encounters are inevitably mediated through our choices of research methods, and as such, the question of what research tools are suitable in different contexts is critical. From the translation perspective two important questions arise. First, do different contexts require different methods? If yes, what are they? Second, what methods allow for a more equitable translation process? These issues touch upon the necessary research tools that enable us to create and pursue a more sensitive research agenda.

Contemporary comparative social policy is deeply divided between quantitative and qualitative, between exploratory and explanatory research and between variable-oriented or case-oriented comparative works. While we would agree with Wilson who argues that the emergence of massive international databases tends to eliminate cultural variations (as numbers are seen as more or less culture free), and thereby ‘obscures the power relations inherent in the production, translation and use of information’ (Wilson, 2001, p. 319), we are not positioning a translation framework within the qualitative camp. Rather, we take it as an open call to all epistemological, theoretical and methodological approaches. Reflexivity in gathering and working with ‘data’ is an issue in every comparative research. It has also been acknowledged by many scholars, including in this volume, that key methodological issues in mainstream comparative social policy are often either left unaddressed, confined to common sense, left salient or deal with overly rationalistic and technocratic principles. But, the neglect of methodological fine-graining is not just confined to comparative social policy. The sociologist Smelser (2003, p. 650) argues ‘we and our audiences are too hungry for results – in the form of substantive findings’, and within this hunger for results, methodological issues and details often get lost or become uninteresting. Although systematizing the methodological fine-graining is well beyond the scope of this chapter, we feel that there are clear methodological implications in the theoretical issues discussed above, and offer in this section a broad orientation for work in this area.

Although at some level the divide between quantitative and qualitative comparative social policy works is as deep as ever, there is an increasing appreciation of the fact that in capturing important knowledge about people, policies and politics in comparative social policy, there is a need
to enable methods to capture the increasing complexities of the researched phenomena. This methodological challenge is equally relevant for both quantitative and qualitative researchers. As Smelser (2003, p.648) argues:

I believe at this stage of our thinking, most social scientists have come to endorse the valid view that the best methodological strategy in comparative study is to gain a foothold wherever you can. This means relying on multiple kinds of data and methods – quantitative and qualitative, hard and soft, objective and intuitive – and using and weighing all of them in an effort to improve our understandings and explanations.

Such a stance reflects well contemporary developments in comparative methodologies across the social sciences – that is, the rise of various forms of mixed methods and the search for more complex, enriched and reflexive forms of data collection and data analysis. As Smelser (ibid., p.649; emphasis in original) argues, the problem of ‘equivalence of measures’ is a newly recognized issue for many scholars, particularly at the quantitative end of the spectrum:

very seldom should social scientists select and use the same apparent measure in multiple comparative settings. Taking the vast variation of almost everything in the panoply of world cultures and societies, there are few ‘near cases’, and those units thought to be ‘near’ are not really all that near. So the comparative rule of thumb should usually be ‘multiple measures for the same thing’... The paradox is that equivalence of indices is best achieved by seeking different indices for the same phenomenon in different settings.

For Smelser, the proposed way forward is ‘to systematise the context of comparison’ (ibid.), where the context is systematically worked with both at the level of generating indices as well as building explanations. One notable attempt to dialogue the conceptual domain with contextual sensitivities is Ragin’s (2000) so-called ‘fuzzy sets’ approach where case-oriented qualitative work, with dense and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter, is used to ‘calibrate’ quantitative measurements. We are yet to see how these new methodologies travel to comparative social policy work, but one of the many calls of the translation perspective is for more equitable knowledge production and dialogic forms of research – bridging gaps rather than amplifying them – in the way that Ragin’s approach does.

In the call for more equitable and dialogic forms of research, openness and inclusivity are also important. Translation points to the danger of deciding, too early, that you know what something means, and of making decisions that provide closure to the research process. Such closures – whether theoretical or methodological – limit the possibilities of a continued dialogue across and between research sites, ideas and
participants. Where conceptual elaboration is understood to be the outcome of the research the focus shifts to understand ‘how’ the research finds out as much as knowing ‘what’ the research finds out. Implicit within this orientation towards transparency and reflexivity of methodological decisions is that research methods are not strictly procedural, but rather that the research is allowed to shift direction and method as understandings unfold and dialogues develop. Such a shifting of direction and methods is an inevitable part of a dialogic process, where decisions about sampling, what data to collect, how to collect and so on are not within the power of a lone researcher, but respond to the conversations between methodologies, people and ideas.

Translation also calls into question the cultural appropriateness of common research methods. Do interviews, questionnaires or focus groups mean the same thing in different cultural contexts? If we embrace the idea that concepts have meaning and are manifested differently in different contexts, then it follows that our ways of knowing (as researchers) about these concepts will also need to be different. To put it another way, if the architectures of the ways that social ideas are materialized in society differ, then why should we assume that the same methods would help us to elaborate them?

At a deeper level, certain methods may well be inappropriate in a specific context. For instance, to use survey methods or composite index work on gender mainstreaming in Macedonia, where gender mainstreaming is not an indigenous concept, idea, or policy, may well not get the ‘data’ that is needed or produce meaningless data. Utilizing ‘forward and backward translation’ and ‘third party validation’ as methods in multi-lingual quantitative research to ensure that translations have the intended meaning cannot overcome and capture conceptual differences if placed in a survey. In other cases it may well be that before a survey is conducted detailed case studies are needed to fine-tune the survey questions. But method issues are not only confined to quantitative research. ‘Elite interviews’, a common method used in much comparative social policy research, might take very different shape and form in different national and cultural contexts. Often comparative works apply a standardized method framework, where the same numbers of interviews are fixed in each country. This raises the core issue of ‘standardization’ – of what gets standardized across research sites, and why. It may well be the case that standardized methodological procedures (number and types of interviews, say) create an inequality of data. A focus on elaboration suggests that research methods may well need to be different in different countries precisely to afford an equality of understanding. What is called for is less procedural standardization, and more standardization of outcome that ensures each research site is afforded equal scope.
Last, but by no means least, we take writing as part of the research act, where new knowledge and new insights become manifested through new forms of writing. ‘To write well is to make continual incursions into grammar, into established usage, and into accepted linguistic norms’ (Ortega y Gasset [1937] 2000, p. 50, quoted in Price, 2008, p. 351). Such incursions must allow the richness of the concept/context to be made visible, for the normalized research processes to be made transparent, and for the voices silenced through mainstream extractive research practices to be heard. Such writing must become alive with the dialogues of the research process, and embodied cultural richness that has emerged. One example of the ways that the sensitivities of translation can be kept alive within research writing is Buist (2006). In his analysis of the use of the term 文化 as a Japanese translation of the concept of culture, Buist deliberately chooses not to use romanized lettering, as it would ‘inevitably reflect the local variations in pronunciations of the characters’ (Buist, 2006, p. 366). We might go further to suggest that this use of non-romanized lettering within academic writing goes further than being sensitive to variation of pronunciation – it allows the term to remain ‘other’ (to a non-Japanese reading audience), and in so doing resists the temptation to understand 文化 as an equivalent translation of culture. It stands as an invitation – to consider, in an unprejudiced way what the meanings of 文化 are in a Japanese context. It is yet another site in need of thoughtfulness in the research process; how we come to represent both the obvious and the hidden diversity of social policy arrangements across countries, languages and cultures. It is here, where translation becomes a textual work, beyond but alongside all the methodological and theoretical issues discussed in this chapter.

CONCLUSION

Comparative social policy is inevitably located in between different languages, diverse geographic locations, substantive policies, transnational, national and local scales and very diverse sets of ‘worlds’ and practices. We argue that the act of comparison between these diverse sets of worlds and practices that lies at the heart of comparative social policy is inevitably work of social, cultural and political translation. Translation has the potential to open up many of the ‘black boxes’ of contemporary comparative social policy works. How and why do we select countries for comparison? Country selection, as we have argued, is not only a methodological and procedural choice, it is also a political act. By reducing it to the matter of ‘most similar’ versus ‘most different design’ debate hides and pre-empts
discussions on issues such as comparison as mirroring, labelling, naming, issues of partiality, and of ethnocentrism. Language, if it appears at all, is also often seen by mainstream comparative social policy as something to be standardized and validated before the research commences.

But language, and in the context of comparative research, multi-lingual context, are more than just unfortunate and impossible barriers to more effective cross-national research. Working with language more explicitly and more systematically allows us the possibility to enrich our understanding. A focus upon translation, according to De Sousa Santos, offers the possibility of both revealing the hegemonic relation between experiences, and at the same time a reconstruction of this relationship to offer the possibility of mutual intelligibility where the work of translation aims to clarify what unites and separates the different practices in order to ascertain the possibilities and limits of articulation and aggregation amongst them. Importantly, however, our take on translation is not simply a social constructivist call on ‘culture’, or ‘context’ matters. We have taken translation more broadly, as a call for a critical comparative social policy agenda, where hidden methodological assumptions are challenged, where new forms of conceptualization emerge and where the research process as a form of knowledge production and academic practice is scrutinized. The range of issues covered in the chapter, such as elaboration, positioning and standpoints, the politics of comparison, measurements, methods and textual representations all aim to offer sites for re-thinking the roots of the inherently ethnocentric bias in mainstream comparative social policy research. It is perhaps time to overcome this dominant theoretical as well as methodological ethnocentrism and allow new forms of dialogue to emerge.

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PART III

COMPARING AND CATEGORIZING SOCIAL POLICY PROVISION AND REDISTRIBUTION
8 Gender, citizenship and welfare state regimes in the early twenty-first century: ‘incomplete revolution’ and/or gender equality ‘lost in translation’

*Julia S. O’Connor*

The objective of this chapter is to provide an overview of the broad dimensions of the debates on gender, citizenship and welfare state regimes, as they relate to one another, in the literature analysing redistribution and social service production and provision over the past couple of decades. All three are contested concepts and this is particularly true when they are considered in relationship to one another either jointly or in total. The chapter is presented in five sections, the first of which is concerned with the welfare state concept and the cross-national variation of welfare states. It points to the centrality of citizenship rights, especially social rights, in welfare state development. This is followed by a discussion of the gendered analysis of the citizenship as rights and citizenship as obligation traditions, arguing that they are complementary and that both are essential to a realistic and effective analysis of welfare states in terms of the quality of social rights and the bases of stratification on which they are structured. Section 3 focuses on the welfare state regime concept, which has been central to analysis of welfare states during the past two decades and has been the stimulus for highly informative debates on policy formation and outcomes. Section 4 is concerned with the gender-sensitive critique of citizenship and welfare state regimes and points to key issues relating to the pivotal role of the family in the state, market, family triadic division of responsibility for services and benefits, in particular the reconciliation of labour market participation and the care of dependent people, in contemporary welfare states. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the second part of the title, which summarizes two perspectives on the current policy context within which gender, citizenship and welfare regimes are being discussed. *The Incomplete Revolution: Adapting to Women’s New Roles* is the title of Esping-Andersen’s 2009 book and refers to the current institutional adaptation to ‘the new role of women’; ‘lost in translation’ is drawn from the title of Jane Jenson’s 2009 article ‘Lost in translation: the social investment perspective and gender equality’.
1 THE WELFARE STATE OR WELFARE STATES?

State intervention in social policy type activity – that is, as a protection against total dependence on the market for survival – goes back several centuries (Polyani [1944] 1957). The welfare state as we know it today in Western economically developed capitalist countries has been developed primarily in the post-World War II period and is strongly associated with the 1942 British government Beveridge Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services, but the roots of many of the contemporary programmes were planted between the 1880s and 1920s in various Western Europe countries, most notably in Germany during the Bismarck era, hence the contemporary reference to the ‘Bismarckian welfare state’ (Flora and Alber, 1981; Palier and Martin, 2007).

The term ‘welfare state’ is usually used to refer to expenditure on health, education, personal social services and income maintenance programmes such as pensions, unemployment insurance and social assistance or welfare as it is known in North America. These programmes are directed to lessening the impact of market forces on individuals and reflect social rights to certain minimum standards. While the welfare state so defined is a phenomenon of advanced capitalism and as such all developed capitalist economies can be identified as welfare states, it is important to recognize variation in the types of welfare states developed. This reflects the fact that different political choices have been made in different countries in response to the problems of reconciling production and distribution. These differences are reflected in differences in the scope and quality of social rights. One of the key arguments of this chapter is that the range and quality of social rights varies cross-nationally and that welfare state analysis must explain this variation. Our understanding of any particular welfare state is enhanced by analysing how and why it varies from other welfare states, particularly in the range and quality of social rights and the criteria for access to these.

Citizenship rights, in particular social citizenship rights, are central to welfare states. 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 on the basis of citizenship. Contemporary English language discussions of social citizenship rights take the essay ‘Citizenship and social class’ presented by T.H. Marshall in 1949 (Marshall [1949] 1964) as a key source. 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, dates from the eighteenth century with the development of the judicial system and legal rights. Political citizen-
ship, relating primarily to the right to vote and to organize, for example in trade unions, dates from the nineteenth century. Social citizenship, which relates to rights to economic welfare and security, dates from the twentieth century with the extension of the educational system and the development of the welfare state. Marshall identified social rights as essentially different from civil and political rights, which had little direct effect on social inequality. Indeed, he identifies civil rights as necessary to the maintenance of class inequality (ibid., p. 88). In contrast, he saw the extension of social citizenship rights as a process, directed towards the modification of ‘the whole pattern of social inequality’ within capitalist society (ibid., p. 96). 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 political rights.

This 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. For example, women achieved political and civil citizenship rights later than men and the struggle for political citizenship rights preceded the achievement of some civil rights (Walby, 1994). Furthermore, the exercise of all citizenship rights can be influenced by class position (Barbalet, 1988). Despite these limitations Marshall’s differentiation of civil, political and social rights provides the background for the conception of citizenship embodied in much of the welfare state literature, in particular, the comparative analysis literature. But there is an alternative approach to this liberal conception of citizenship. This is the civic republican tradition that highlights obligations and participation in the political system in the interest of the common good (Oldfield, 1990). The civic republican tradition emphasizes civic duty, the subordination of individual interests to that of the common good and the primacy of the public sphere in which the citizen is a political actor. The revival of the civic republican tradition since the 1980s reflects a reaction against what its proponents perceive as the individualism of the liberal citizenship paradigm with its focus on individual rights and the pursuit of individual interests.

2 GENDER AND CITIZENSHIP

Gender refers to the socially constructed structural, relational and symbolic differences between men and women. The concern of gender-sensitive analysis is with ‘how gender is involved in processes and structures that previously have been conceived as having nothing to do with gender’
(Acker, 1989, p.238). It is also based on the recognition that gender and class are produced within the same ongoing practices. ‘Looking at them from one angle we see class, from another we see gender, neither is complete without the other’ (ibid., p.239).

In their original formulations both conceptions of citizenship are problematic from a gender-sensitive point of view. Both make a public–private sphere distinction and locate women in the private sphere with consequences for their citizenship status, rights and participation. This has given rise to an extensive debate on a gender-neutral model of citizenship based on gender equality and sameness as opposed to a model of gender-differentiated citizenship that recognizes gender difference associated with caring and reconciling private and public sphere activities.

2.1 Gender, Citizenship and Rights

Carole Pateman (1989) is one of the strongest critics of the conventional gender-neutral conception of citizenship and builds her critique around the failure of the liberal conception of citizenship to take seriously the significance of the sexual division of labour. The narrowness of the dominant conception of the ideal citizen as full-time worker has implications for the conceptualization of paid work and its relationship to unpaid work. It also has implications for understanding caring work, the rights of those in need of care, and relations of dependence. Pateman’s critique of the public–private divide and the limitations of a gender-neutral or a gender-differentiated model of citizenship and the associated dilemma placed on women in terms of full citizenship rights has been enormously influential in citizenship debates.

The public–private divide is also Ruth Lister’s starting point. Using a tripartite division of the public sphere she analyses women’s position in relation to the paid economy, the state and the polity. Focusing on the implications for citizenship rights and obligations of the sexual division of paid and unpaid labour she concludes that women’s citizenship is restricted in each of the public spheres by women’s position in the private sphere (Lister, 1993). Like Pateman, she points to the limitations of both gender neutrality and gender differentiation – the equality/difference formulation in relation to men and women – and argues instead for a gender pluralism approach ‘in which both women and men are seen as members of multiple groups’ (Lister, 2001, p.323). This requires a move beyond dichotomies, whether equality versus difference, an ethic of justice (or rights) versus an ethic of care (or responsibility), dependence (economic, physical, emotional) versus autonomy, to ‘a gender-inclusive’ model of citizenship (Lister, 2003, pp.93–116). This would combine elements of
both gender-neutral and gender-differentiated approaches to rights and participation in society.

2.2 Citizenship: Obligations and Participation

The problem with much of the analysis of citizenship as obligation is its failure to recognize the barriers to participation. This is particularly true of the New Right and some communitarian advocates of citizenship as obligation who have adapted the civic republican tradition to their own ends. A major consequence of the traditional institutional focus of political analysis has been that women were largely excluded. The recognition of this exclusion, and the associated focus on women's political behaviour, implies a broadening of the concept of political action from 'formal interactions between the citizen and the state' to include the ways in which political space and political alliances are structured through interactions by individuals located in particular social situations 'who interact publicly and privately with each other and the state and other institutions' (Jones, 1990, p. 799). This has implications for the spatial dimension of citizenship, which up to now has been largely institutional and has ignored those political processes associated with movements to transform public consciousness on issues such as sexual harassment, rape and pornography, which 'are examples of a definition of participation that is focused not on government action but on the reclamation of public space itself' (ibid., p. 803).

Defining participation purely in terms of active participation, and/or interest, in parliamentary politics is likely to under-represent the participation of women, particularly in some countries and in some communities in all countries. These indicators do not include participation in the informal political system of social movements and trade unions or participation as client representatives 'in negotiating the content and forms of delivery of their entitlements' (Hernes, 1987, p. 189). Birte Siim has identified these informal political activities as 'power from below' in contrast to participation in formal politics or 'power from above' (Siim, 1988, p. 176). What is being called for in all these critiques of citizenship is movement towards a pluralistic concept of citizenship directed to 'analyse unequal power relations that impede an inclusive politics of diversity and to give voice to those who are underrepresented' (Sarvasy and Siim, 1994, p. 254). A pluralistic conception of citizenship would recognize that 'woman' is not a homogeneous category but is cross-cut by other structural categories including not only class but also age, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, which have implications to varying degrees for level and type of participation in different societies.
The incorporation of gender into the analysis implies a broadening of what constitutes formally recognized political space and participation to take into account power or at least influence from various arenas of political action. This illustrates the importance of social citizenship rights as a facilitator of women’s political mobilization (Hernes, 1987) and the mobilization of other groups typically under-represented in the formal political system of many countries. It also illustrates the mutual interaction of citizenship as rights and citizenship as participation. Social reforms such as access to paid work on equal terms for women and men and the associated services such as child care and parental leave that facilitate labour force participation may be associated with increased political participation. Both Helga Hernes (1987) and Frances Fox Piven (1990) have identified the mobilization possibilities associated with welfare state development in the very different settings of a social democratic and liberal welfare state respectively. The Scandinavian research demonstrates a complex interaction between social reforms and women’s political participation: in Denmark and Sweden social rights to child care and high female labour force participation preceded active political participation and mobilization, whereas in Norway political integration came first and social rights were an effect of this integration (Siim, 1994). Siim argues that ‘social reform without access to politics is an expression of paternalism’ but acknowledges that such reforms in Scandinavia have created the conditions for ‘woman-friendly policies designed by women’ (ibid., p. 292). The concept of ‘woman-friendly policies’ aims to enable men and women to be ‘autonomous individuals and parents’/caring individuals and also incorporates the idea of women’s agency (ibid., p. 301, note 5). Women’s agency is the link between citizenship as participation and citizenship as rights (Siim, 2000).

2.3 Citizenship: Participation, Obligations and Rights

Despite the limitations of the traditional citizenship as rights and as obligation and participation approaches from a gender-sensitive point of view both are essential to a comprehensive understanding of citizenship and to the analysis of men and women’s relationship to the state and public policy. Rights and obligations are not mutually exclusive. The fulfilment of obligations is dependent on rights and the enhancement of rights is dependent on political participation. We need to draw on both traditions but with a clear acknowledgement of the critiques of both that contribute to the re-framing of citizenship as rights and citizenship as participation and the fulfilment of obligations in a mutually reinforcing direction and as a positive contribution to the analysis of welfare state regimes.
3 WELFARE STATE REGIMES AND CITIZENSHIP

The identification of ideal types of social policy regimes is not new – Richard Titmuss identified three ‘contrasting models’ of social policy: residual, industrial achievement-performance and institutional-redistributive in the 1970s (Titmuss, 1974, pp. 30–32). In contrast to Wilensky and Lebeaux (1958), who had pointed to a process of modernization from a ‘residual’, or least developed welfare state, to an ‘institutional’, or well-developed welfare state, Titmuss pointed to the simultaneous existence of the three models and pointed to an ideological basis of difference: policy choice, not level of economic development, determines the welfare system of a particular country (ibid., pp. 132–41). The work of Titmuss on social policy models is still influential but contemporary interest in welfare state regimes was sparked by the work of Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999), in particular his 1990 book *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Social citizenship rights are central to the welfare state regime concept outlined therein. Welfare regimes refer to clusters of more or less distinct welfare states in terms of the level and quality of social rights and bases of stratification on which the welfare state is built. ‘The existence of policy regimes reflects the circumstances that short-term policies, reforms, debates, and decision-making take place within frameworks of historical institutionalisation that differ qualitatively between countries’ (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 80).

Esping-Andersen identified three welfare state regimes: social democratic as exemplified by Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland since the 1960s, liberal as exemplified by Britain, Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and a conservative or status-based regime exemplified by Germany, France and Italy.

The **social democratic welfare state regime** is characterized by an emphasis on universalism, comprehensive risk coverage, generous benefit levels and egalitarianism.³ This entails a strong role for the state as does its integration of social and economic policy and its emphasis on the primacy of full employment.⁴ ‘What is uniquely social democratic is first, the fusion of universalism with generosity and second, its comprehensive socialisation of risks’ (Esping-Andersen, 1999, p. 79). This results in a strong emphasis on the provision of social services and the privileging of care for children and the aged. This in turn is associated with high levels of employment for women particularly in the public sector (Huber and Stephens, 2001).

The **liberal welfare state regime** is characterized by state intervention that is clearly subordinate to the market. It has a relatively strong emphasis on income and/or means-tested programmes, and while there may be a commitment to universalism it is universalism with an equal
opportunity focus. Using the distinction associated with Richard Titmuss (1974, pp. 30–31) it is characterized by a marginalist as opposed to an institutional approach to social policy. Its residualist approach results in a narrow definition of eligibility as reflected in a relatively high level of needs-based social assistance, a narrow range of risks considered ‘social’, a low level of family services and heavy reliance on the market for the provision of services.

The key characteristic of the conservative welfare state regime is the linkage of rights to class and status through a variety of social insurance schemes. There is a strong commitment to the maintenance of the traditional family and social services tend to be provided only when the family’s ability to cope is exhausted.\(^5\)

The three regimes vary in terms of the degree of protection from total dependence on the labour market, that is, de-commodification, the degree to which the organization of services contributes to social stratification and the primacy accorded to the state, the market and the family. Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999) uses the term ‘de-commodification’ to capture ‘the degree to which welfare states weaken the cash nexus by granting entitlements independent of market participation. It is one way of specifying T.H. Marshall’s notion of social citizenship rights’ (Esping-Andersen, 1999, p. 43). De-commodification is central to the welfare state project and the associated historical struggles. Commodification of labour refers to the situation where the individual’s ability to sell her or his labour solely determines her or his access to resources, while de-commodification reflects a level of insulation from the pressures of the labour market and contributes to the ability of workers to resist these pressures. In other words, the citizenship entitlements reflected in social security payments and public services, which to varying degrees in different countries and at different time periods in individual countries are independent of class position, facilitate resistance to the pressures of the market.

The quality of social rights and the issue of social stratification, or the role of the welfare state as ‘an active force in the ordering of social relations’ (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 23), revolve around the criteria for access to, and duration of, benefits. These criteria are means and/or income testing, social insurance contributions and citizenship. Means and/or income testing is the criterion for access to social assistance benefits, that is, access to benefits is based on need. This contrasts with social-insurance-based benefits where contributions, generally related to labour force participation, are the criterion. Citizenship-based access ‘offers a basic, equal benefit to all, irrespective of prior earnings, contributions, or performance’ (ibid.). The extent to which benefits based on any of the three criteria afford protection against dependence on the
labour market for survival, that is, are de-commodifying, depends on the level of benefits and the extent to which they insulate the individual from market pressures. The difference between means tested social assistance and social-insurance-related contribution has been identified in several studies. Both systems are associated with social divisions. Means and/or income testing is associated with the identification, and potential stigmatizing, of recipients based on demonstration of need. The social insurance model is associated with divisions related to income and/or occupational status. The citizenship criterion can also be associated with the creation and/or maintenance of social divisions. Specifically, low levels of citizenship-based benefits are likely to be associated with the purchase of additional private protection by those with ample resources.

All welfare states make use of the three criteria of eligibility but to varying extent. In the social democratic welfare state the citizenship criterion is pervasive, the liberal welfare state is characterized by a strong emphasis on means-tested programmes and the conservative/status-based welfare state regime is characterized by a variety of class- and status-based social insurance schemes. Each of these criteria for eligibility is reflected in a particular form of stratification.

Welfare state regimes differ in the primacy they accord to the state, the market and the family: the social democratic regime relies heavily on state provision to meet social needs and the state espouses full employment as an integral part of the welfare state and is relatively active in its generation and maintenance; the liberal regimes relies relatively heavily on the market and the conservative/status-based regime, with its commitment to the principle of subsidiarity, relies heavily on the family. A good example of these differences is child care, although there is variation within regimes (Leira, 2002). Taking Sweden and Denmark as exemplars of the social democratic regime, public child care provision is high, facilitating high female labour force participation. In the liberal regimes of the USA and Canada, female labour force participation is also relatively high but the majority of working parents with child care responsibilities are dependent on market solutions. In Germany, an exemplar of the conservative regime, female labour force participation has historically been low, reflecting the reliance on the family for child care.6

The welfare regime concept as outlined by Esping-Andersen sparked an enormous and productive debate that is still continuing on welfare state regimes and the classification of welfare states within this framework (Abrahamson, 1999; Arts and Gelissen, 2002; Kauto, 2002). While it has inspired considerable innovative work on the comparative analysis of welfare states it has been the subject of some criticism, for example, in relation to the inclusion of countries within the liberal regime and the
exclusion from consideration of several Southern European countries (Castles and Mitchell, 1992; Leibfried, 1993; Ferrera, 1996). As a consequence of the fact that all welfare states are unique when examined in detail disagreement in the classification of particular countries is not surprising. Despite differences in nomenclature there is broad agreement on the following clusters: social democratic/Scandinavian/Nordic, liberal/residual/marginalist, conservative status-based/continental/corporatist. It is now acknowledged that a fourth cluster – the Southern European welfare regime model – must be added. This refers to the welfare states of Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy. This ‘Southern model’ is characterized by a fragmented income maintenance system with certain elements of marked generosity, for example in pensions, but significant gaps in social protection, a low degree of state penetration in the welfare sphere, a strong reliance on the extended family for care services, the persistence of clientelism and patronage systems but the development of significant, if partial, national health systems on universalistic grounds (Ferrera, 1996). Guillén and Matsaganis (2000) reinforce the argument for a unique ‘Southern model’ in their analysis of Greece and Spain in the context of membership of the European Union. The 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the European Union have given rise to extensive discussion of the already identified welfare regimes in terms of analysis of the social policy institutional structure of the more recent members of the EU (e.g., Aiginger and Guger, 2006; Aspalter et al., 2009; Hacker, 2009).

The most developed critique of the welfare state regime concept, especially the Esping-Andersen formulation, has been made by scholars interested in a gender-sensitive welfare state analysis; in particular, feminist analysts.

4 WELFARE REGIMES, GENDER, CLASS AND CITIZENSHIP

The gender-sensitive critique of welfare regime analysis is inherently linked to the conception of citizenship underpinning that analysis, that is, the focus on the citizen as paid worker in the public sphere. This critique overlaps and echoes the gender-sensitive critique of the liberal conception of citizenship rights. It is strongly linked to the critique of de-commodification, and highlights the need to recognize the potential of the welfare state as a mechanism of gender stratification and the need to give due prominence to the family in the state–market–family dynamic in policy orientation and service provision. These critiques turn on the essential need to recognize that in each of these dimensions the impact of
policy may affect women and men in different ways. They are concerned with how relations between the public and private spheres are conceptualized and how the issues of caring and dependency are addressed with particular, but not exclusive, reference to participation in the labour market. This has given rise to the identification of clusters of countries conforming to particular gender and caring regimes, which to varying degree cross-cut the welfare state regimes identified above (Sainsbury, 1999; Strell and Duncan, 2001; Pascall and Lewis, 2004). One of the earliest and the most influential of the gender-sensitive classifications is that built on the concept of the ‘male-breadwinner regime’ outlined by Jane Lewis in 1992. This and developments of this stream of analysis are addressed in section 4.2. First, it is informative to look at the critiques of de-commodification and the development of the concept of de-familialization.

4.1 De-commodification, Caring and De-familialization

De-commodification, as reflected in pensions and unemployment insurance, for example, is a central protection for both men and women in the labour force. The critique of this concept by gender-sensitive analysts is centred on the recognition that the primary concern for many women is not de-commodification but commodification as reflected in labour market participation and the services necessary to facilitate this if they are engaged in caring for dependent people in the private sphere. Furthermore, if in the labour market, the concern for social rights is likely to focus not just on pensions and unemployment insurance but also on provision for caring activities. This does not imply that caring is not relevant to all workers; it merely acknowledges the reality of the widespread gender division of caring. Recognition of these facts implies a need to incorporate into welfare state analysis the relationship between unpaid and paid work and how full-time caring for dependent people in the family is compensated. This means that analysis of de-commodification must be accompanied by analysis of services that facilitate labour market participation. Services related to ‘the organization of daily life’ may facilitate or hinder labour force participation (Hernes, 1987, p.47). Policies relating to the length and flexibility of the working day, availability of child care and facilities for caring for other dependants, employment and pay equity, maternity and parental leave, training and re-training services facilitate, or make difficult, the reconciliation of participation in the labour market and caring for dependent people in the private sphere.

The critique of de-commodification brings into sharp relief the need to recognize analytically the pivotal role of the family in the state, market, family triadic division of responsibility for the provision of services. In
considering benefits the division in provision between state and market is readily recognizable because of the monetary values assigned to such benefits as pensions. Yet, the family is a crucial site of social welfare in all welfare states but caring for dependent people within the family is not assigned a monetary value and its contribution tends to be taken for granted. In discussing the needs of those with caring responsibilities Ann Orloff refers to the capacity to form and maintain autonomous households, that is, ‘to survive and support their children without having to marry to gain access to breadwinners’ income’ (Orloff, 1993, p. 319). Welfare states vary in the extent to which this is achieved and whether it is achieved through measures facilitating access to the labour market and enhancing the quality of employment and/or through generous social provision for those caring full-time for dependent people (O’Connor et al., 1999, pp. 146–56). The key issue is the extent to which social citizenship rights for adults are individualized as opposed to derived through another family member’s entitlements.

The concept of de-familialization has been used to address the limitations of the de-commodification concept and to analyse the centrality of care in welfare state analysis. McLaughlin and Glendinning identified de-familialization as ‘about the terms and conditions under which people engage in families, and the extent to which they can uphold an acceptable standard of living independently of (patriarchal) “family” participation’ (1996). The importance of de-familialization is acknowledged by Esping-Andersen in response to feminist critiques of his (1990) outline of welfare state regimes (1999, pp. 35–46). He uses the term to capture policies ‘that maximize individuals’ command of economic resources independently of familial or conjugal reciprocities. It is, like the concept of de-commodification, empirically more a matter of degree than of an “either-or”’ (p. 45). He concludes that de-familialization facilitates the commodification of women and opens the possibility for de-commodification. While this is undoubtedly so, de-familialization is a complex concept, broader in scope than facilitating commodification of women. This is reflected in Lister’s reference to upholding ‘a socially acceptable standard of living, independently of family relationships, either through paid work or through social security provisions and either inside or outside a couple relationship’ (Lister, 2003, p. 172). The complexity of the de-familialization concept is well-captured by Leitner and Lessenich (2007), who point out that it has a social and economic dimension and must be analysed from the perspective not only of the care giver but also the care recipient and that its relationship with ‘independence’ is ambiguous (p. 249). It is important to note that financial independence/autonomy is not the obverse of dependence and does not lessen the importance of
interdependence. The conditions for interdependence are services and benefits that meet the citizenship rights of all parties to the relationships in question. Leitner and Lessenich focus on the care of children but the issues identified are equally pressing in relation to other vulnerable groups with caring needs.

Building on earlier work, their own and others, Saraceno and Keck (2010) identify a three-fold conceptualization of intergenerational policy, that is, policy towards children and older people, in the 27 EU countries: familialism by default; supported familialism; and de-familialization, ‘when individualisation of social rights...reduces family responsibilities and dependencies’ (p.676). These policy approaches are a continuum and in practice a combination of all three is evident in all countries and as might be expected individual countries may adopt one policy approach towards children and its opposite for older people. In addition, the gender impact of supported familialism (as in maternity and parental leave) may differ depending on the particular policy measure used to achieve it (e.g., maternity and parental leave may vary in duration, level of payment and whether there is a mandated father’s component). Furthermore, de-familialization may be achieved through public provision and/or third sector assistance but also through the market with different resource demands on the individual and different distributional consequences. Based on an extensive range of indicators, Saraceno and Keck conclude that there is only one clear-cut cluster within the EU27. This includes the Scandinavian countries and France and is characterized by a high degree of de-familialization with regard to children and older people but also supported familialism for young children. At the other extreme, in the familialism by default cluster, are Italy, Spain, Greece, Poland, Latvia, Bulgaria and Slovakia (p.692). While other clusters can be identified they are less clear-cut than these two. It is noteworthy that analysis by Knijn and Smit of EU member states in relation to discourse on family life, gender relations and employment suggests that welfare regime differences may be lessening when countries are faced with new social risks (Knijn and Smit, 2009, p. 513).

The cross-cutting of de-commodification and familialization and commodification and de-familialization and the consequences of particular types of service provision in relation to child care are illustrated by Leira (2002, Table 2.1, p.42). She identifies paid parental leave and cash benefits for child care as familialized while the parents’ labour is de-commodified; in contrast, child care either through cash benefits for extra-parental child care or through public child care provision allows for parents’ labour to be commodified and child care to be de-familialized.

While de-commodification and de-familialization each yield significant
insights into institutional frameworks and policy choices and while each is equally relevant to men and women, their combination is essential to a comprehensive welfare state analysis and illustrates the importance of linking state, market and family, and in some welfare states the voluntary/third sector, if we are to achieve a gender-sensitive welfare state analysis.

4.2 From Male-breadwinner to ‘Adult-worker Model Family’ or to Varieties of ‘Dual-earnership’ Models?

In an influential article in 1992, Jane Lewis (1992) argued that the idea of the male-breadwinner family model has historically cut across established typologies of welfare states and that the model has been modified in different ways and to different degrees in different countries. Services facilitating the labour force participation of women were absent or very limited in strong male-breadwinner states, such as Britain and Ireland, up to the 1990s whereas they were relatively well-developed in weak male-breadwinner models such as Sweden. This reflects the fact that weak male-breadwinner states are relatively successful in solving the issue of valuing caring work – women are compensated at market rates for caring work, which is typically unpaid, or paid at very low rates, in strong male-breadwinner states. This difference is reflected in levels of public provision of child care and care for other dependent people and also in the payment rates for those, mostly women, who carry out this caring within welfare states. The male-breadwinner model in its pure form never existed, that is, women were not totally excluded from the labour market and totally dependent on male breadwinners for survival. Yet, all countries reflect elements of this ideology and it underpinned social policies, which assumed female dependency on a male wage, and family law in the late nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century. The fact that some women were always obliged to work outside the home to achieve family survival was not acknowledged.

Lewis (2001) argues that in the late twentieth century there was a shift in several economically developed countries to the ‘one-and-a-half-earner family’ and in some – she identifies Sweden and the United States – to an ‘adult-worker model family’ where it is assumed that all adult workers are in the labour market (ibid., p. 163). While this is potentially more favourable to women than the male-breadwinner model the realization of this potential depends on appropriate policies to recognize care work, policies such as maternity and parental leave and child care. Sweden implemented such policies, the United States did not. Whereas the Swedish universalist welfare state grafted on citizenship rights to recognize ‘difference’ associated with child-bearing, child and other care activities, the residual US
welfare state grafted on the equal *citizenship obligation* of participation in the labour force irrespective of caring requirements on to its residual welfare state and associated residual entitlements. Lewis traces a shift towards an adult-worker family model in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom from the late twentieth century but points to considerable inconsistencies between labour market policies pushing towards participation on the one hand and the income maintenance and care policies, or the implementation of these, which would facilitate full participation on the other hand.

The adult-worker model rests on the assumption of individualization but several analysts demonstrate that individualization is pursued and achieved to greatly varying degrees in different welfare states and point to incompleteness of individualization in terms of policy development (Knijn, 2003; Lewis and Bennett, 2003; Ostner, 2003). For example, Ostner identifies ambiguities and “partial” individualization or de-familialization via part-time employment” in Germany (Ostner, 2003, p. 52). Knijn (2003) characterizes the Dutch situation as ‘moderate individualisation’, reflecting stronger emphasis in some policy areas than in others; in particular, “the adult worker” principle has been fully introduced only in respect of lone mothers’ (p. 63). Based on an analysis of evidence on social policy reform in several EU15 countries13 from a gender and family perspective Daly (2011) identifies ‘concurrent moves in several directions’ and argues that ‘[r]ather than an unequivocal move to an individual worker model . . . a dual earner, gender specialised, family arrangement is being promoted’ (pp. 1–2). The result is an effective encouragement of a one-and-a-half-earner family arrangement rather than an adult-worker model.

In its Gender Brief the OECD (2010) concludes that the “‘dual-earnership” model has become the norm’ in the majority of OECD countries but this reflects a very mixed picture. Based on 2007 data, at least 50 per cent of couple families with children aged 0–14 in 13 OECD countries are characterized by full-time dual-earnership; these are Finland, Portugal, all of the 2004 Eastern European EU accession countries except the Czech Republic (49 per cent) and Hungary (45 per cent), and probably the USA but the data do not make a distinction between full- and part-time employment there or in Japan (see Table 8.1).14 In Sweden and France 41 per cent of couple families with children aged 0–14 are full-time dual-earner families, while 35 per cent of such families in Sweden and 24 per cent in France have one parent working full-time and one working part-time. It is important to note that these countries, especially Sweden, are characterized by ‘long’ part-time work, that is, between 20 and 30 hours per week and Sweden has one of the highest rates of full-time equivalent female employment in the EU27 (see last column of Table 8.1).15
Table 8.1  Employment patterns among couple families with children aged 0–14, 2007 and FTE female employment rate 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Both Parents Full-time</th>
<th>One Parent Full-time, One Parent Part-time</th>
<th>One Parent Full-time</th>
<th>Neither Parent in Employment</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Full-time Equivalent Female Employment Rate (15–64) Employment Rate 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>45.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>64.8</td>
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<td>20.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>26.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
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<td>34.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>41.7</td>
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<td>15.5</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU25 average</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>49.9 (EU27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>72.1(^b)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>50.4(^b)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD32 average</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
a. Countries ranked within EU15 excluding Denmark and Ireland, EU12 and non-EU OECD by levels of full-time employment of both parents.
b. Data for Japan and the USA do not distinguish between full- and part-time employment.

In contrast, ‘one-and-a-half-earner households, though increasing over time, is the most usual arrangement only in a few countries: Austria, Germany, Switzerland, the UK, and in particular the Netherlands’ (OECD, 2010, p. 11). Over 60 per cent of women with 3–5-year-old children in couple families in these countries work less than 30 hours per week – the figure is almost 82 per cent in the Netherlands (Eurostat, 2013).16

It is important to set these patterns of cross-national variation of dual-earnership in the context of the consistent evidence of within-nation variation by education. In each of these countries there is a significant percentage point difference between the labour market participation patterns of those women with tertiary education and those completing at the upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education levels in favour of the former. In 2009 for the EU27 the employment rate for women aged 20–49 with tertiary education and two children under 6 was 79 per cent while that for those with upper secondary and non-tertiary post-secondary education and two children under 6 was 61 per cent. There was a similar difference for the EU15 country average (Eurostat, 2013).

Clearly, the male-breadwinner model has been replaced as the dominant pattern in economically developed countries at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century. Yet, while the ‘dual-earnership’ model may be the norm for couple families with dependent children in most EU and other OECD countries, this reflects varying patterns of employed–carer combinations cross-nationally and within countries by education and associated occupational status. Despite the emphasis in public policy on increasing the employment rate, in particular the employment rate of women over the past several decades in EU and OECD countries,17 the clear evidence is that high employment rates of women are achieved through a range of combinations of employment and family life in couple households with dependent children. These are the result of historical policy choices and the options available in terms of services to reconcile employment and family life, in particular, child care, parental leave and flexibility in employment conditions and the constraints on accessing these. They are also the result of cross-national variation in parental preferences as is demonstrated by Lewis et al. (2008) in their analysis of 2004–05 European Social Survey data.

5 ‘INCOMPLETE REVOLUTION’ AND/OR GENDER EQUALITY ‘LOST IN TRANSLATION’?

In evaluating theories of the welfare state it is important to bear in mind that ‘if a theory focuses upon a particular factor as historically impor-
tant, then the empirical manifestations of that factor become important, and they are singled out for investigation’ (Alford and Friedland, 1985, p. 398); in this process other factors are excluded or glossed over. This may be true of political and/or social and/or economic factors, of state-centred or society-centred factors. The glossing over of gender and race in welfare state analysis was almost universally true up to the last couple of decades of the twentieth century. There is considerable evidence of change, particularly in relation to gender. This change is in response, at least in part, to the very considerable amount of gender-equality-oriented analysis that has now become available, a small part of which has been referred to in this chapter. It is reflected in the range of social indicators now considered standard and in the recognition that, where relevant, a gender breakdown of social indicators should be the practice norm. In policy terms it is reflected in gender equality agencies in most states and a focus on gender equality in supranational organizations such as the EU and the OECD, although this is sometimes framed within the range of factors to be examined in ‘doing better for families’ (for example, OECD, 2011). While gender sensitivity is increasingly informing a wider range of welfare state analyses, gender equality is still a work in progress, more so in some countries than in others, and progress on the achievement of policy commitments in some areas is modest to say the least (see, for example, European Commission, 2012 and OECD, 2010).

‘The incomplete revolution’ is Esping-Andersen’s characterization of the fact that the change in women’s roles has not ‘come to full maturation’ (2009, p. 1); he argues that while female labour force participation ‘sets the stage’ it ‘does not define, the revolution’, which would imply ‘decisive ruptures with the way that women and men go about their lives’ (emphasis in the original) and a gender-equality equilibrium is achieved (p. 172). Essentially he argues that this will require the disappearance of the current social class difference in ‘new marriage, fertility, divorce, employment and not to forget, home production patterns’. He identifies the Nordic countries and North America as ‘the ideal typical images of what is crystallizing throughout the world’. The welfare state is the ‘powerful exogenous trigger’ to combat the inequalities that result from the incomplete revolution (ibid., p. 173). Such a welfare state would reflect a social investment approach focused on the prevention of poverty and the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage through a strong focus on investment in children, the employment of mothers, ‘the single most effective bulwark against child poverty’, and lifelong learning (Esping-Andersen, 2009, pp. 9–10).

Jenson (2009) is highly critical of the social investment paradigm, which has become highly influential since the mid-1990s, for what she identifies
as a sidelining of the equality claims of adult women in favour of children. While gender awareness is evident in the social investment perspective she points out that this does not carry through to gender egalitarian strategies, rather she argues that ‘something has been lost in the translation of egalitarian feminism into the gender awareness that infuses the social investment perspective’ (Jenson, 2009, p. 472). It is noteworthy that in arguing for the need to move towards a ‘new gender-equality equilibrium’ Esping-Andersen bases his claims explicitly on efficiency grounds rather than gender equality grounds (Esping-Andersen, 2009, pp. 173–4). One of the messages of this chapter is that these are not mutually exclusive objectives.

The contrasting messages of an ‘incomplete revolution’ in relation to women’s roles and the ‘loss in translation’ of the gender equality message reflect some of the key issues considered in this chapter and highlight the need to reflect on some of the key messages. These include the ongoing importance of Acker’s insight that looking at ongoing practices ‘from one angle we see class, from another we see gender, neither is complete without the other’ (Acker, 1989, p. 239). In some contexts neither is complete without race, disability, age or sexual orientation.

While de-commodification or protection from forced participation in the labour market irrespective of health, age, disability, care-giving requirements and the availability of suitable employment is a significant citizenship right for both men and women, it needs to be enhanced by the right to services facilitating access to the labour market and enhancing the quality of employment and affording/facilitating not only personal autonomy but the conditions for interdependence, particularly the interdependence of carers and dependent people. A key concept in this more encompassing analysis is de-familialization. While de-commodification and de-familialization each yield significant insights in social policy analysis, their combination is essential in the analysis of the cross-cutting patterns that characterize contemporary welfare states.

In conclusion, gender, citizenship and welfare state regimes continue to be contested concepts but they are now the subject of intense theoretical and empirical analysis that is yielding significant insights into the comparative analysis of welfare states, in particular the variation in the range and quality of social rights. Analyses considered in this chapter indicate that any one welfare state regime may encompass a number of policy regimes depending on the policy areas under consideration. Not only do welfare state regimes differ in the primacy they accord to the state, the market and the family, the primacy accorded particular policy areas may vary in a particular welfare state.

This increasing variation adds to the complexity of the analytical demands particularly in comparative analysis. On the positive side an
extensive body of high-quality cross-national research on political, social and employment policy issues, which is not only gender sensitive, but much of it gender equality focused, has become available.\(^\text{19}\) In addition, essential improvements have been made in the area of social indicators and in the associated comparable data available on cross-national databases. These will facilitate the effective examination of policy outcomes, not just policy commitments.

NOTES

1. Knijn and Kremer (1997) use the concept of ‘inclusive citizenship’ to capture the equal importance of paid work and care and the reciprocity of care-giving and receiving.
2. In the 1980s the New Right argued for the primacy of work obligations over rights that should be contingent on the fulfilment of these obligations (for example, Mead, 1986). The communitarians, for example Etzioni (1993), argued for a re-balancing of duties and rights. Each of these positions has informed policy debates in the intervening period particularly in liberal welfare states although to varying degrees depending on political orientation.
3. It is noteworthy that Esping-Andersen (1999, p. 78) reserves the social democratic classification for the post-1960s welfare states in the Nordic countries. Their roots were, with minor exceptions, liberal dating back like Britain to nineteenth-century poor relief but there were elements of universalism relatively early.
4. Welfare and employment policy in the social democratic welfare state has consistently been couched in terms of ‘productivism’, that is, ‘maximizing the productive potential of the citizenry’. This is different from ‘workfare’, which implies conditionality of benefits. ‘Productivism’ implies that the welfare state must guarantee that all people have the necessary resources and motivation to work (and that work is available) (Esping-Andersen, 1999, p. 80).
5. The conservative/status-based welfare regime is sometimes identified as the continental [European] welfare regime because of the countries it characterizes. It is also sometimes referred to, for example by Liebfried (1993), as Bismarckian. This reflects its historical origins and the influence of the insurance-based and corporatist elements characterizing the Bismarckian tradition.
6. Female labour force participation as reflected in the full-time equivalent rate (FTE) increased in Germany relative to other EU countries over the past decade. Germany’s FTE for women 15–64 was 45.5 and ranked 19th in the EU27 in 2004. In 2010 it ranked 16th with the UK with a rate of 50.9 per cent (see 2010 and 2011 reports on Progress on Equality between Women and Men, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm). During this period there has been ‘substantial progress’ in extending subsidized child care facilities for children under three and a new parental allowance act came into force in 2007. This reduced the period of payment from three years to one with an additional two months if the second parent takes leave as well. Its objective is ‘to improve the labour market attachment of women’ (Plantenga and Remery 2009:58).
7. I concentrate on the welfare regime typology formulated by Esping-Andersen (1990) but other typologies have also been formulated, for example Leibfried (1993) identifies four social policy regimes in the European Community: Scandinavian, Bismarckian, Anglo-Saxon and Latin Rim. The first three are similar but not identical to the social democratic, conservative/status-based and liberal regimes respectively as identified by Esping-Andersen. The welfare state is identified as the employer of first resort (mainly for women) in the Scandinavian regime, as the compensator of first resort in the Bismarckian regime, as the compensator of last resort in the Anglo-Saxon countries.
The Latin Rim regime covers the Southern peripheral areas of the European Union and is characterized as a ‘rudimentary welfare state’ – this characterization is disputed by Ferrera (1996). Korpi and Palme (1998) use the institutional structure of old age pension and sickness cash benefits as the basis for a welfare state typology. Based on these transfer payments arrangements they identify five institutional variants: targeted, voluntary state-subsidized, conservative (corporatist), basic security and encompassing. These models reflect different views of the relative role of markets and politics in redistribution. While this typology provides a differentiation of the Esping-Andersen typology it is consistent with it although based exclusively on transfer payment arrangements. Consequently, it has less general applicability particularly in relation to services, which are of increasing importance in welfare regime analysis.

8. There is a huge body of gender-sensitive research on dependency and care-giving; see O’Connor (1996, Chs 2 and 3) for an overview; Lewis (1998).

9. Also see Orloff’s (1993) ‘capacity to form and maintain autonomous households’ outlined above.

10. Saraceno and Keck (2010, p.693) note that ‘the leave instrument, which is the cornerstone of supported familialism in the case of children, exists in only a few countries – Austria, Belgium, Germany and Italy – in the case of care for an old relative and is mostly unpaid’.

11. Knijn and Ostner (2002) point out that ‘[a]s a practice supported by welfare state policies, the male-breadwinner model only developed in the twentieth century in most European countries, while some countries never fully introduced the breadwinner logic (for example, Finland and France)’ (p.150).

12. The second major issue related to unpaid work, namely, its division between women and men has not been addressed in any welfare state but the introduction of ‘use it or lose it’ paternity leave segment recognizes this issue for employed parents (Ray et al., 2010).

13. Policy in France, Germany, Sweden, Ireland, UK is the main focus; some references are also made to Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Italy and Spain.

14. Despite high dual-earnership for the 20–49 age group with young children in some Eastern European countries, in particular Poland and Slovakia, their low female employment rate for the 55–64 age group, 26 and 22 per cent respectively compared to 38 per cent in the EU27 and 56 per cent in Finland, results in an overall relatively low female employment rate – 53 per cent in 2009 (Eurostat – Data Explorer ‘Employment rate of adults by sex and age groups; http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu; accessed 14 December 2012).

15. Sweden’s full-time equivalent female employment rate in 2010 was 62, compared to the EU27 rate of 50 and was equalled only by Finland (European Commission, 2012, p.35).

16. Seventy-seven per cent of employed women were in part-time work in the Netherlands in 2010; the next highest percentage in the EU27 was 46 per cent in Germany. The female employment rate in the Netherlands increased from 52 per cent in 1992 to 64 per cent in 2000 and 71 per cent in 2010. It is noteworthy that the Netherlands also had the highest rate of part-time work by men in 2010 at 25 per cent relative to an EU average of 9 per cent and a Swedish rate of 14 per cent; Denmark at 15 per cent was the next closest to the Dutch male part-time employment rate (European Commission, 2012, p.35 and Eurostat, 2013). Visser argues that the Dutch ‘one-and-a-half-earner family’ model was not the result of deliberate policy but ‘the outcome of “bottom-up” pressure and accommodating policy changes’ linked to the late increase in married women in the labour force and the absence of child care provision (Visser, 2002, p.23).

17. Increasing the employment rate of women has long been an objective in the EU and a target of a 60 per cent female employment rate for women was identified in the Lisbon Strategy in 2000. A more ambitious target employment rate of 75 per cent of 20–64-year-old men and women by 2020 is identified in Europe 2020, the EU’s growth strategy. Yet, the 2010 target had not been achieved in the majority of EU countries by 2009 even when the range of labour market attachments is taken into account; further-
more, the rate decreased in some countries between 2007 and 2009 coinciding with the recession (Eurostat, 2013).


19. Much of this research was funded through the EU Framework 6 research programme, for example, FEMCIT Gendered Citizenship in Multi-cultural Europe: The Impact of the Contemporary Women’s Movement (http://www.femcit.org/); RECWOWE, Reconciling Work and Welfare in Europe (http://recwowe.vitamib.com/); QUING, Quality in Gender + Equality Policies (http://quing.eu).

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Structured diversity: a framework for critically comparing welfare states?

Norman Ginsburg

This chapter explores the idea of ‘critical’ comparison of welfare states. Here the term ‘critical’ implies a focus on the performance of welfare states in both mitigating and reinforcing social injustices and inequalities. A critical perspective does not assume that the welfare state is necessarily a progressive force for social justice and equality. It holds the welfare state up to critical scrutiny, which here will be confined to reviewing its impact on the social divisions of class, gender and ‘race’. The concept of ‘the welfare state’ is equated here with the social policy regimes developed in the rich nation-states of the West after World War II, which also embodied the normative idea of the state as a progressive social force. This was, of course, a particularly prominent ideology in the West during the Cold War, when the Soviet regime claimed a more egalitarian ideology at least with respect to class and gender. Today a critical perspective is aligned with the social movements that have challenged and resisted injustice and inequality, while at the same time defending the elements of the welfare state that have advanced their cause.

There are three broad approaches to comparing welfare states, all of which are useful for critical comparison – functionalism, path dependency and regime analysis. Functionalism suggests that there are deep and unyielding socioeconomic forces or structures fundamentally shaping the development of welfare states. In relation to critical analysis these forces are hostile to social justice and equality. They might be labelled capitalist neo-liberalism or economic globalization in relation to class, patriarchy in relation to gender, and white supremacism in relation to ‘race’. Path dependency suggests that welfare states are fundamentally shaped by particular historical and institutional forces within nation-states. For critical analysis, the social movements of the working class, of women’s liberation and of anti-racism are obviously central. While these movements have a massive international dimension, their social policy activism is necessarily concentrated on national, regional and local struggles. Regime analysis (or the ‘power resources’ approach) is something of a halfway house between functionalism and path dependency, which differentiates different models of welfare capitalism, where social policies and/or welfare outcomes are
similar among a group of nation-states, often shaped by common elements of path dependency or the power resources of leading groups. Much scholarship has been expended in the past 30 years on the exploration of regime analysis in relation to class and gender aspects of welfare states, though much less so in relation to ‘race’.

‘Structured diversity’ is merely a term to encapsulate the notion of critical comparison of welfare states, drawing on all three approaches outlined above. ‘Diversity’ here indicates the particularities of different welfare states ‘structured’ by (or shaped by) path dependency, notably by their social movements; but ‘structured’ also refers to the power structures behind the key social divisions of ‘race’, class and gender already referred to above. The idea of ‘structured diversity’ derives from sociological ‘structuration’ theory and from neo-Marxian understanding of the dialectical relationship between structure and agency, or between capitalism and the working class movement. Critical structuration theory has not, as yet, been applied explicitly to analysing the historical sociology of social policy and welfare activism, because ‘agency’ has been predominantly conceptualized as the individual human subject, rather than humans acting collectively.

Iris Marion Young (2000, p. 95) neatly describes the connection between the individual human subject and critical power structures thus: ‘a person’s social location in structures differentiated by class, gender, age, ability, race, or caste often implies predictable status in law, educational possibility, occupation, access to resources, political power and prestige . . . one reason to call these structural is that they are relatively permanent’. Welfare states may be more or less successful in tackling structural injustices, which may be more or less prominent in particular national contexts, but there are social structures critically confronting them all.

Obviously, class, ‘race’ and gender are not the only dimensions of oppression and injustice in the West, but they are arguably the most universally experienced, and are resisted by long-established social movements. In recent decades ‘new’ social movements challenging injustice on the basis of sexuality, age and disability in particular have made very significant impact on social policy regimes across the Western world. Nevertheless, the origins of the welfare state can surely be traced to the emergence of class injustice and of the labour movement as industrial capitalism flourished across the Western world in the nineteenth century, closely followed by the first wave of the women’s movement towards the end of that century. Modern movements against racism have an even longer history of course, reaching back to the struggle against slavery, colonialism and segregation. Fiona Williams (1989, pp. xiii–xiv) established the view that critical analysis of social policy is built around understanding how three ‘organizing principles of welfare’ – Work, Family, Nation – articulate with
the interconnected social divisions of class, gender and ‘race’ respectively, as elaborated in Williams (1992, pp. 210–12) and summarized in Table 9.1.

In the twenty-first century there are those who argue that the welfare state has contributed to the withering away of ‘race’, class and gender divisions. Yet the persistence of these structures of inequality and injustice is manifest in the policy discourses and in cross-national data across the rich states of the West, which we will now explore briefly, taking each social division in turn, before considering an overview of all three.

### CLASS

Class analysis is an elusive creature in the comparative social policy field – it looms very large and yet it is only explicitly mentioned in neo-Marxist contexts. Unlike ‘race’ and gender it is not explicitly addressed by anti-discrimination legislation and policy. This is due to both problems of definition and to mainstream political discomfort with the concept. But class analysis actually dominates contemporary academic discussion of comparative social policy in the form of the regime analysis initiated by Esping-Andersen (1990). He examined the effectiveness of state pensions and benefits in mitigating the effects of commodification, the basic principle of capitalism that forces most people (the working class) into complete dependence on wages from paid work in a competitive labour market – the principle of Work in Williams’s (1989) schema. He found, unsurprisingly, that de-commodification was greatest in those states with the strongest political representation of the labour movement.

**Table 9.1 Key concepts informing a critical, structured diversity approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Concept</th>
<th>Social division</th>
<th>Power structure</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Critical perspective(s)</th>
<th>Social policy principle</th>
<th>Critical social policy processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Capitalism</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Labour movement</td>
<td>Socialism</td>
<td>(Waged) work</td>
<td>Commodification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Patriarchy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s movement</td>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Autonomization; familization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
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<td>Institutional racism</td>
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<td>Imperialism; white supremacism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-racism; anti-colonialism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitanism</td>
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<td>Political discomfort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination legislation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commodity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Familization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional racism</td>
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At first sight this approach lumps almost everyone into the working class, but the dispersion of wages and the differential risk of unemployment in the real world mean, of course, that the welfare state becomes more critically important for those on average and below average wages, and those at greater risk of unemployment. For critical comparativists, therefore, class analysis involves juggling two somewhat different meanings of the term ‘class’ – the broad Marxian conception as outlined above and the notion of class as structured socioeconomic inequality. As Crompton (2009, p. 16) puts it: ‘Unequally rewarded groups are often described as “classes” [which] are not characterized by any formal, legal distinctions; rather they summarize the outcome, in material terms, of the competition for resources in capitalist market societies’. In Marxian terms, this recognizes the stratification of the working class, which means that some workers are much better protected against the basic risks of commodification (loss of income due to sickness, old age, unemployment, caring etc., plus homelessness, inadequate education/training etc.) than others.

Hence, despite a host of limitations, a basic parameter for comparative class analysis of social policy is income inequality. The very fact that data on income inequality are collected by nation-states and then collated by the EU, OECD and the UN reflects pressure from social democrats and organized labour to illuminate and to mitigate the tendency for capitalism to generate enormous welfare disparities. Table 9.2 gives the index of income inequality scores for OECD states in 2000 based on disposable household income adjusted for household size. The first column compares the dispersion of household incomes after the taxes, benefits and pensions system have done their work. However, it does not include non-cash occupational benefits, which are extremely important in some states, most notably South Korea and Japan.

Roughly speaking this data confirms Esping-Andersen’s celebrated typology – the social democratic states (including all the Nordics) have the lowest income inequality, the liberal states (including most of the Anglosphere) have the highest income inequality, with the conservative states in the middle. The welfare state is, of course, not only constituted by the tax-benefit system, it also includes publicly funded services. Marical et al. (2006) computed the impact of public services (health, education, social housing, social care) on income inequality. This demonstrated unsurprisingly that such provision ‘significantly narrows income inequality’ but ‘does not generally lead to major changes in country rankings’ (Marical et al., 2006, pp. 41–2) as shown in column 2 of Table 9.2. When public services are taken into account, Esping-Andersen’s original typology of welfare regimes rooted in class inequality stands up remarkably well (see Esping-Andersen and Myles, 2009, pp. 653–5) with the four Nordic
states at the top, but the liberal (Anglophone) states do significantly better than the Southern European states, reflecting the latter’s comparatively low commitment to public social services. One of the clearest comparative differences is that the commitment of Denmark, Sweden and Norway to ‘other services’, primarily child care and elder care, makes a much more significant impact on class inequality than elsewhere. However, it has to be
noted that income inequality is significantly worsened in the Nordic states if consumer spending taxes are taken into account (OECD, 2008b, p. 6).

As Wilkinson and Pickett (2009, p. 27) remark ‘it would be nice to have lots of different indicators of the scale of hierarchy in different countries – to be able to compare inequalities not only in income, but also in wealth, education and power’ but the data simply do not exist at the moment, though the UN Human Development Index data are certainly moving towards that goal. Nevertheless, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have used a wealth of data to suggest that a wide range of health and welfare problems are more prevalent in states with higher income inequality, and, by implication therefore, greater class inequality. They use a different measure of income inequality based on UN data for 23 states – the income gap between the richest 20 per cent and the poorest 20 per cent, which puts Japan as the most equal state, but otherwise produces a similar pattern to that above. They found a direct correlation between income inequality and their Index of Health and Social Problems with the Nordic states and Japan at ‘the healthy end of the distribution’ and the USA, Portugal and the UK at the opposite end. The same was also largely true of the 50 individual states making up the USA. Perhaps the most important conclusion from Wilkinson and Pickett’s work is that class inequality in income is linked to the extent of the social problems that the welfare state has to address including crime, mental and physical ill health. So the case for a class redistributive welfare state is not a moral one, it is a functional one – states with less class inequality have less pressing social problems.

Obviously, as Wilkinson and Pickett (2009, p. 176) explain, the comparatively egalitarian North Western European states at the top of the table ‘get their greater equality . . . through redistributive taxes and benefits and a large welfare state . . . Japan gets it from a greater equality of market incomes, of earnings before taxes and benefits’. The welfare state is clearly an important element in moderating class inequality overall, but the fundamental source of class inequality lies in the inequality of ‘market incomes’, that is, income predominantly from gross wages and salaries but also from self-employment and property, a topic that goes well beyond our scope here.

The power structure behind class division has gained in strength over the past three decades with the development of economic globalization and the influence of neo-liberalism, alongside the declining power of the labour movement both in the workplace and in the political sphere. This has been aptly described and dissected by Gamble (2006) as the era in which capitalism has been ‘unleashed’ after the decade of crisis from the late 1960s when the ‘Golden Age’ of the post-war welfare state boom first wobbled. This can be mapped simply in terms of the increases in market
and net income inequality. From 1985 to 2005 market income inequality rose by 12 per cent across the 30 OECD states, while net income inequality (post-tax-benefit) rose by 9 per cent (OECD, 2008b, Figure 5).

More positively in terms of a comparative class analysis, the proportion of GDP devoted to public social expenditure has held up remarkably well in the era of neo-liberalism and economic globalization from 1980 to 2005 despite the enormous pressures to reduce it across all the welfare states. See Table 9.3.

Overall public social expenditure levels have converged moderately in an upward direction. Starke et al. (2008, p. 993) comparing 1980 with 2002/03 identified ‘a remarkable stability in the degree of de-commodification over time’ and ‘no evidence of a strong and uniform Americanization trend’ (ibid., p. 995) and certainly no ‘race to the bottom’. The relatively high

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<td>1 Sweden</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 France</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Austria</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Denmark</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Germany (West)</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Belgium</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Finland</td>
<td>18.0</td>
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<td>8.1</td>
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<td>8 Italy</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Norway</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 United Kingdom</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<td>12 Spain</td>
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<td>21.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
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<td>13 Netherlands</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>−3.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Greece</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Switzerland</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Czech Republic</td>
<td>16.0 (1990)</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Japan</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 New Zealand</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Australia</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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<td>20 Ireland</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Canada</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 United States</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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ranking position of some of the conservative regimes suggests the maintenance of universal social insurance benefits and pensions for all classes has continued, though the Netherlands bucks the trend. Otherwise the rank ordering conforms reasonably well with Esping-Andersen’s original typology.

GENDER

Gender is obviously a major social, structural difference underpinning social policy. A critical perspective suggests that welfare states embrace fundamental and unjust gender differences in access to formal welfare, in responsibility for informal welfare and in meeting women’s basic needs and human rights, notably reproductive rights, protection from violence and child maintenance. Reflecting the growing influence of feminism and the women’s movement since the 1960s, recent decades have seen major progressive shifts in gender and family policies, accompanied by a flowering of related social science scholarship. The concept of ‘patriarchy’ is appropriate to describe the power structure that resists women’s equality and rights, despite its undoubted limitations as explained by Hunnicutt (2009, p. 559) who suggests that ‘thinking about patriarchal systems as “varieties in movement” steers us clear of essentialist, rigid and solid ways of thinking about social structures’. These varieties not only include different nation-states and different family cultures, but also the various particular issues raised across the range of social policy – in employment, child care, adult social care, health care, education, criminal justice and so on.

Feminism conceives the welfare interests of women from two different angles, one focusing on women’s autonomy as individuals, and the other focusing on transforming patriarchy in the family, and this is reflected in cross-national analysis of the operation of patriarchy in social policy. ‘Family’ can certainly be regarded as the basic social policy principle shaping women’s lives, because welfare states continue to be based upon assumptions about family obligations to provide care and welfare, and about women’s primary role in fulfilling those obligations. The first approach suggests that the diversity of welfare states is structured essentially by the extent to which a state facilitates women’s ‘autonomization’, that is, their ‘capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household’, that is, ‘to survive and support their children without having to marry to gain access to breadwinners’ income’ (Orloff, 1993, p. 319). O’Connor et al. (1999) deployed an autonomization perspective in a comparative study of four ‘liberal’ states. They argued that both ‘economic’ and ‘bodily’ autonomy are essential to undermining patriarchy and developing the
autonomous personhood of women. Hence for their concrete analysis as indices of economic autonomy they cited ‘women’s access to and status in paid employment’, as well as state cash benefits that support and/or relieve women of some of the burden of informal care. As a parameter of bodily autonomy they used reproductive freedom, specifically abortion rights. The empirical analysis draws out the significant path dependencies of policy and its impact in the four states, while demonstrating that these liberal regimes have a distinct gender dimension that ‘is most immediately evident in the privileging of the market over provision through the state’. This is evident in key areas of need such as child care and abortion services, which are largely privately purchased, and maternity leave and parental care rights, which are not underwritten adequately if at all as legal entitlements. The implication of this analysis is that gender autonomization, particularly in the liberal states, is severely constrained by the marketization of services and the absence of adequate care rights. The shift to ‘gender sameness’ in the labour market has reinforced class differences among women, so that only higher income earners can achieve something close to gender autonomization.

Unfortunately the autonomization approach has not really been applied to comparison of a broader range of nation-states as yet. One perhaps rather simplistic way of assessing autonomization is to examine the situation of lone mothers, because ‘the conditions of lone mothers…affect married mothers as well, for they reflect something of what their “exit options” would be’ (Orloff, 2009a, p. 327). Using Luxembourg Income Study data for the mid-2000s for 12 states, Kim and Choi (2010, Table 4) suggest that the poverty rate among single mother households (based on net disposable income, 50 per cent of the median) ranges from 42.0 per cent in the USA to 4.5 per cent in Denmark, and that on this parameter Esping-Andersen’s original typology of welfare states comes through very clearly.

The second approach starts from the family rather than the individual woman, and, in particular, from the ‘traditional’ patriarchal, male breadwinner household, which obliges women to offer ‘full-time’ informal, unpaid care to their husbands, children and other dependent kin. The diversity of welfare states is marked by the extent to which they have moved away from preferring the male breadwinner model towards supporting either no particular family form or a more modern form, usually the dual-earner/dual-carer model. If no particular family form is preferred this implies that policy might support women in having a real choice between being a lone mother, and/or being a full-time carer (maternalism) as an alternative to what has become the ‘preferred’ dual-earner/dual-carer model. ‘Defamilization’ (or de-familialization) has been used to
describe the extent to which policy facilitates provision of services, benefits and entitlements that relieve mothers (and other family members) of some of their unpaid caring obligations. Defamilization of itself may not be in women’s interests if it simply entails the stress of juggling paid employment with caring responsibilities and the costs of purchasing and accessing good care services. There is a lively debate among feminist writers on these issues, reflecting fundamental dilemmas and difficulties in determining what are women’s best interests, or indeed whether all women have the same interests. Gornick and Meyers (2009), for example, argue strongly for the ‘gender symmetry’ of the dual-earner/dual-carer model. They are keen advocates of paid family leave, regulation of parental working time, and early childhood education/care services, which, as they demonstrate, are most fully developed in the four Nordic states, and to a lesser extent in France and Belgium. Orloff (2009b) challenges that view head on, sceptical about the appropriateness and feasibility of such a policy model for liberal states, particularly the USA, in which private sector provision, entitlements through employment and expectations of ‘free’ life choices for women are so predominant. Lister (2009, p. 268) maps out the achievements of the Nordic states as a glass half-full, half-empty in which ‘some women are closer to a women-friendly Nordic Nirvana than others’ such as minority ethnic women, lone mothers, victims of male violence, and those whose partners do not do their share of caring.

Plantenga et al. (2009) have developed an EU(25) Gender Equality Index, based on the gender symmetry principle, and specifically on the extent of equal sharing of paid work, money, decision-making power and time in the mid-2000s. The three Nordic states (Finland, Sweden and Denmark) came out top and five Southern European states (Italy, Spain, Malta, Cyprus and Greece) came bottom, but otherwise there was no clear correlation with Esping-Andersen’s typology. The authors conclude that ‘full gender equality is a long way off’ with women today combining paid and unpaid work ‘with great difficulty’ (ibid., p. 32).

Obviously, since the 1970s in all the welfare states, more mothers have been taking up paid employment, obliging them to look to partners, employers and the state (as well as close relatives) for support in providing care for children and other dependants. This ‘commodification’ trend has been supported, rhetorically at least, by most governments and by the European Commission in fulfilling their commitment to gender equality. It is also quite widely believed that economic growth is linked to the further activation of working mothers, as reflected, for example, in the EC’s Lisbon Strategy of 2000 (Lewis et al., 2008, pp. 21–2) and the OECD’s advocacy of ‘work–family life reconciliation’ measures (Mahon, 2009, p. 194). But the shift away from the male breadwinner model has taken
place to very different extents across the West and is only near comple-
tion in the Nordic states. This is reflected in and reflective of the diver-
sity of parental leave and ‘early childhood education and care’ (ECEC)
provisions, which are obviously both critically important in facilitating
a dual-earner/dual-caregiver model, allowing some meaningful choices
for parents about returning to work and sharing care. Ray et al. (2010)
compared the generosity and gender equality dimensions of parental leave
policy in 21 nation-states. Sweden scored best, followed by Finland, Greece
and Norway, though the impact of the Greek legislation was limited by not
covering small business and informal employment, a comparatively large
sector of the Greek economy, which also applied to the other Southern
European states who scored well. The low scorers were Canada, Ireland,
New Zealand, Japan and Switzerland. So, on this particular parameter the
Nordics with the exception of Denmark shone, while many of the liberal
states did poorly, though the USA was an average performer.

Regarding ECEC, UNICEF (2008) produced an evaluation of 25
countries using OECD data from the early 2000s, which used a set of
ten benchmarks (minimum standards) as parameters. It reveals an enor-
mous diversity of provisions, but unsurprisingly the Nordic states with
France were in a class of their own at the top of the league table, with
the USA, Australia, Canada and Ireland at the bottom. Another recent
cross-national survey of ECEC in 2006 collated by Plantenga and Remery
(2009) is confined to 30 European states, demonstrating also the enormous
diversity of provision within the EU(27) in terms of quality, funding, user
costs, social inclusion as well as coverage. To give just one example, at
age 3 up to the mandatory school age Belgium ranks highest with almost
100 per cent use of formal care arrangements, compared with the lowest,
Poland at 28 per cent. But preschool child care is provided as a ‘social
right’ only in Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

This brief and selective excursion into the gender dimension of the struc-
tured diversity of welfare states suggests that while patriarchal aspects
remain formidable, the modern women’s movement has had some success
in developing social policies that challenge gender inequality and tradi-
tional patriarchy based on the notion of the male breadwinner. The shift
towards the dual-earner/dual-caregiver model is increasingly supported by
social policy across the rich states of the West, albeit in very diverse ways
and at very different paces. Although different parameters reveal some
different cross-national patterns and despite the limitations of the avail-
able data, it is plausible to argue that a modified Esping-Andersen regime
typology holds up reasonably well. The Nordic social democratic states
have used public services and benefits and social legislation to move more
significantly towards a comparatively class egalitarian gender equality. In
the liberal, Anglophone states, policy has encouraged private and occupational measures that have reinforced class inequalities, while at the same time moving more slowly towards gender symmetry. Among the conservative states, there is a fairly clear division between defamilist, pronatalist policies in France and Belgium generating more significant shifts to gender symmetry than the more maternalist policies of Germany and Italy. There are, of course, huge path dependencies and regional differences underlying such assertions. If gender autonomization is introduced as a dimension for evaluation, the picture becomes much more complex and limited in terms of cross-national data and research.

‘RACE’

The role of social policy in both furthering and mitigating racial and ethnic divisions is evidently a hugely significant, structural dimension for critical analysis. Yet it is almost impossible to define a single power structure responsible, as it were, for racial injustice – European colonialism and the Atlantic slave trade are solid historical examples, but clearly cannot capture the full breadth of the matter. Critical race theorists in the contemporary era cite ‘white supremacism’, raising difficult issues about who and what is ‘white’. The concept of racism is conventionally used to include ethnic injustices, based on culture rather than physiognomy, including the classic examples of anti-semitism and anti-Roma sentiment. Also the movements that have challenged racism have, of course, been many and various historically and today. Compared with the labour movement and the women’s movement, the notion of a single movement for race equality does not quite accord with historical or contemporary reality. Yet the defeat of US segregationism, Nazi anti-semitism and South African apartheid were three momentous twentieth-century ‘movements’ that overturned racist social policy regimes. ‘Anti-racism’ has to some extent become an element of the mainstream policy consensus, but it is only a part of the fabric of contemporary movements for a non-racial, multi-ethnic cosmopolitan society. The great diversity of racialization processes and racisms clearly pose enormous difficulties in trying to develop cross-national analysis. This is compounded by the fact that there is little or no systematic comparative data to draw upon, largely because of path dependency issues of both definition and denial. In respect of the latter, most European states do not facilitate research and data collection on ‘race’ and ethnicity, justified by republican, universalist values, most notably in France. For all these reasons and more, ‘race’ and ethnicity have had much less prominence in the cross-national analysis of social policy literature than class and gender.
Some aspects of ‘race’ regimes have been amenable to some cross-national analysis of social policy, most notably post-war immigration, citizenship and settlement policies. By the 1970s many of the Western welfare states had experienced considerable inward labour migration, involving the more or less permanent settlement of racialized minorities. Policies were strongly path dependent, shaped by historical and political traditions of nationhood, the particular Nation principle of social policy coming to the fore – the idea of the welfare states as an exclusionary national community. Nevertheless, three reasonably distinct models could be identified, which, following Joppke (1999), can be described as settler, exclusionary and post-colonial. The settler regimes accepted without much difficulty the notion of immigration leading to permanent settlement and assumed long-term assimilation and naturalization, sometimes facilitated by the state through policies of ‘prescribed multi-culturalism’. Commonly cited examples of settler or classical immigration regimes include the USA, Canada and Australia, and possibly Sweden, though, of course the conceptions of nationhood in each case are enormously divergent. At the other extreme, the exclusionary regimes did not conceive of themselves as countries of immigration, seeing migrants as guestworkers and/or temporary residents, and being resistant to the reality of long-term settlement. Here the conception of nationhood is built upon a relatively unyielding notion of an ethnic community. Commonly cited examples of exclusionary regimes include former guestworker states such as Germany, Austria and Switzerland, as well as Japan. Post-colonial regimes recruited labour from colonies and former colonies, conceived in many respects as a continuation of colonial relations in a domestic context. This suggests full citizenship in formal terms but maintains powerfully racialized, institutional discrimination within social policy processes, not least in immigration control itself. Frequently cited examples of post-colonial regimes include France, the UK and the Netherlands. The French republican tradition implied the full assimilation of post-colonial migrants as citizens; the British ‘arms length’ approach to its former colonial subjects implied more pluralistic notions of ‘integration’ or ‘multi-culturalism’.

Focusing on immigration control policy and practice up to the 2000s, Cornelius et al. (2004) found little evidence of convergence among 11 OECD states, but distinguished three reasonably distinctive regimes – the ‘classic’ (USA, Canada, Australia), the ‘reluctant’ (Germany, France, UK, Netherlands) and the ‘recent’ (Japan, South Korea, Italy, Spain) though without specific attention to racialized aspects of policy. This is a more contemporary and more global typology, which will undoubtedly be relevant for future comparison.

These different historical and cultural paths continue to have a profound influence in shaping contemporary policy processes and discourses,
though their distinctiveness has probably faded somewhat in recent decades for a number of reasons. First, post-colonial and guestworker labour migration were brought to an end by more restrictive and racialized immigration policies in North Western Europe, passed in response to rising unemployment and violent racism in the 1970s. Second, the post-colonial regimes acknowledged more fully the reality of permanent settlement and addressed assimilation/integration through the formal enfranchisement of established minority ethnic communities into the welfare state. Such processes also became more prominent in the exclusionary regimes in the 1990s and 2000s, changes that were often a response to increasingly effective political mobilization of minority ethnic communities. Third, from the late 1980s onwards ‘new’ and more diverse forms of migration emerged, at least in Western Europe, made up of both asylum seekers/refugees and migrant workers. These developments were prompted by the renewed demand for labour, particularly in the wake of the long economic boom of the 1990s, alongside the increasing numbers of political migrants fleeing brutal regimes and war zones for the promise of human rights in the West. Meanwhile, in the settler countries beyond Europe, governments pursued increasingly selective management of economic migration, accompanied in the USA at least by continued informal labour migration, particularly from Mexico.

Attempting cross-national comparison of the exclusion and/or integration of minority ethnic and racialized groups, and the role of social policies thereupon, is clearly fraught with methodological and data collection problems. However, recent scholarship suggests that the typology of immigration/citizenship policy regimes outlined above continues to have some explanatory value. Heath (2007) with collaborators in ten states (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany [West], the Netherlands, Sweden, Britain and the USA) collated national data on disadvantages in the labour market in the 1990s experienced by second generation descendants of migrants. This is particularly useful in focusing on people who have settled permanently and are presumably fully enfranchised in the welfare state, discounting some of the effects of migration itself. Unemployment rates were substantially higher for people of non-European descent, compared with those of European descent whether of recent migrant origin or not, with the exception of people of Chinese and Indian origin who experienced relatively lower unemployment. Hence Caribbeans in Canada, Britain, France, the Netherlands and the USA and Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in the USA have unemployment rates two to three times higher than those of European descent (ibid., p.641). In Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands, Turks and Maghrebins experience even higher unemployment rates, ‘coming at
the bottom of their ethnic hierarchies’, while in the USA, Canada and Australia indigenous/involuntary minorities (Native Americans, African Americans, aboriginals) are worst off, with unemployment rates double or more than those of European descent. Heath also examined ethnic penalties in the labour market, defined as the extent of disadvantage in both getting employment and in joining the ‘salariat’ (occupational attainment) for those with comparable educational attainment (i.e., filtering out differences in educational attainment). For the second generation of non-European descent in the settler societies (Canada, Australia, the USA) ethnic penalties are generally low with the exception of employment for people in the USA of Dominican, Caribbean, Mexican and Puerto Rican origin. For Britain and Sweden there are ‘significant ethnic penalties . . . with respect to unemployment, not access to the salariat’ (ibid., p. 657). In the other countries studied (Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands) there were significant ethnic penalties on both fronts ‘on a scale that we simply do not see in the classic immigration countries’ (ibid., p. 658).

Indigenous/involuntary minorities in the USA, Australia and Canada experience substantial ethnic penalties on both fronts (employment and joining the salariat), but for other minorities of non-European descent there appears to be less labour market disadvantage in the settler societies – the classic immigration states – compared with the West European exclusionary and post-colonial states, with Britain and Sweden occupying a middle position. One can speculate that several fields of social policy – immigration, citizenship, integration, anti-discrimination, employment – have helped to shape these differences, as well as education of course. In particular, the classic immigration regimes have tended increasingly towards a selective and managed process for aspiring migrants, while the exclusionary regimes more often sought migrants for dirty, difficult, dangerous and lower paid jobs. Essentially, economic migrants were considered as settlers from the start in the classic immigration states, and considered as temporary and soon to be returning in the exclusionary states – a difference that lingers on and whose long-term effects continue to be felt down the generations. It is noteworthy that the so-called ‘liberal’ welfare states appear to perform better in this arena than the so-called ‘conservative’ welfare states. However, reviewing the evidence on labour market integration of the second generation, Kalter and Granato (2010, pp. 376–7) counsel against premature regime analysis, while acknowledging that selectiveness of migration policies does seem to be a highly significant factor.

There have been several other recent, cross-national studies of policy and outcomes on issues relating to ‘race’ and ethnicity, but mostly con-
Koopmans (2010) examined three aspects of the socio-economic integration of ‘immigrants’ in eight West European states – labour market participation; residential segregation; the ethnic proportion of the prison population. It is suggested that Germany, France, Austria, Switzerland and the UK have been significantly more successful in integrating immigrants on these parameters than the Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden. Koopmans (ibid., p. 22) concludes, controversially, that the poor performance of the latter may be explained by the openness of their more multi-cultural social policy regimes which has paradoxically ‘often turned [immigrants] into passive welfare-state clients’. This study may illustrate the problems of developing regime analysis in this field using quite particular parameters, such as ‘immigrants’ and residential segregation, which may be quite contextual and path dependent.

Joppke (2008, p. 4) suggests ‘a convergence toward more liberal citizenship laws and policies, especially in Europe’. In the 1990s this took three directions: entitlement to citizenship for the second and third generation; easier naturalization with lowered residence time requirements, less emphasis on cultural assimilation, less discretion; increasing tolerance of dual citizenship. He concludes that there is ‘no overall “European model” of citizenship legislation, and that it is impossible to group. . .countries into internally coherent clusters with similar citizenship regimes’ (ibid., p. 40). However, since 9/11 he observes a ‘co-existence of seemingly contradictory trends, one towards liberalization and a second . . . toward new restrictions . . . European states are restrictive above all toward non-integrated Muslim immigrants’ (ibid.).

In North Western Europe before 9/11 it was asylum seekers who were perceived as ‘suspect’ spongers on the welfare state, prompting a convergent range of policy measures designed to exclude asylum seekers from Fortress Europe, and, if resident, to exclude them from the welfare state. After 9/11 it was also long-settled Muslim communities who became widely perceived as dangerous Others, so that anti-Muslim racism rapidly moved into social policy. Measures included stronger citizenship requirements with higher language requirements and integration tests; new restrictions on family unification and would-be spouses; headscarf bans in schools and beyond; ‘ethnic profiling’ in policing. All these measures, too numerous and path dependent to be detailed here, have been legitimated by anti-terrorist and integrationist discourses. Yet the bombings in London in 2005 were perpetrated by well-integrated young Islamists, British citizens who were not immigrants. Thus, Fekete (2009, p. 1) argues ‘the nativism of extreme-Right and anti-immigration movements [has been] written into European immigration, asylum and national security laws’. Amidst the convergence towards the new anti-Muslim racism in
social policy in Europe, it is probably impossible at this stage to find any regime clusters amidst all the divergent, path-dependent policies being promulgated. Certainly the concept of ‘Nation’ and of racism inscribed in the heart of social policy is as prominent in the 2010s as it was in the twentieth century.

The comparative dimension seemingly focuses attention on the descendants of post-World War II racialized migrants, setting aside the experiences of earlier migrant generations, indigenous minorities and involuntary migrants. In particular, mention has to be made of the experiences of African Americans. American exceptionalism as a formidable example of path dependency is widely debated, but the USA is certainly exceptional among the rich states of the West in having ‘race’ consistently at the forefront of its domestic social policy for so long. It has been argued that slavery, Jim Crow (segregation era policy) and the prison in the contemporary era could be seen as an ‘African American welfare state’ (Pimpare, 2007). It is no coincidence that the gradual incorporation of African Americans into the ‘white’ welfare state in the post-World War II decades has been accompanied by a ‘white backlash’ against redistributive public social expenditure and a massive increase in the criminalization and incarceration of African Americans. At the same time, because of the consistent pressure of the civil rights movement, the USA has led the world in developing anti-discriminatory social policy in the form of affirmative action, contract compliance and related legal machinery. As other rich Western states have become multi-racial more recently, it seems that both positive and the negative features of policy in the USA are developing along not dissimilar lines in these states, as implied, for example, by Kalter and Granato (2010) and Lieberman (2005).

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter has sketched out some of the ways in which major power structures – capitalism, patriarchy, white racism – and the resistance to them have shaped social policy in the rich welfare states of the West. There are clearly convergences in the ways in which these deeply entrenched structures, and the social movements challenging them, have changed over the decades since the welfare state emerged. The unleashing of capitalism and the decline of the labour movement have generated increased class inequality and a weakening of the universalism and collectivism underpinning the welfare state – a certain amount of re-commodification of the working class has taken place. The shift towards the dual-earner/dual-carer family model, supported with some ambivalence by the women’s
movement, has led to some defamilization and development of the welfare state in key areas including elder care, child care and parental leave, not to mention control of fertility, and violence against women. Direct white racism has retreated under pressure from the civil rights movement and the painful transition to multi-racial national identities in Western Europe, shifting the focus to challenging the deeper structures of racialized exclusion in civil society and in the welfare state. These convergences are accompanied by strong path dependencies at the levels of the nation-state and below – the diversity of social policy responses to structural pressures seems as profound as ever, despite the impact of convergent forces like the European Union and economic globalization. Regime analysis continues to illuminate the complexities involved in cross-national social policy analysis, demonstrating, unsurprisingly, that the social democratic model continues to challenge class and gender inequalities more successfully than elsewhere. The liberal model pursues a more marketized and class-unequal approach to gender, while the conservative model is bifurcated between familist and defamilist paths. In terms of ‘race’ and ethnicity, regime analysis suggests tentatively a distinction between the liberal model in which inequalities are less entrenched over the generations for the descendants of racialized immigrants, compared with conservative and social democratic regimes that preside over more entrenched racialized exclusion. Social policy regimes continue both to mitigate and undermine injustices of class, ‘race’ and gender, reflecting the particular balance of political forces and discourse at a particular time and place, which creates structural diversity.

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Previously regarded as a highly specialized and even exotic activity, comparative inquiry in the field of social policy has now become commonplace. Mirroring the accessibility of global information, and the ease with which people travel and communicate internationally, publications on international social welfare now appear regularly, international content is increasingly incorporated into local journals and textbooks and students are routinely exposed to developments in other countries. Several new journals dedicated to international social welfare have also been established. These developments reflect a rapidly expanding interest in international social welfare in many parts of the world and especially Europe and North America where comparative inquiry has been vigorously pursued.

However, comparative social policy inquiry still faces many challenges that have not been adequately recognized or addressed. One problem concerns the way the field has been defined and shaped by scholars in the Global North. This has resulted in what may be called a ‘mainstream’ approach that focuses almost exclusively on government welfare provision and uses a Western ‘welfare state’ perspective to conceptualize the field. Mainstream social policy writers have paid little attention to discourses emanating from other regions of the world that focus on indigenous welfare phenomena and define social welfare in ways that differ significantly from the mainstream welfare state approach. By ignoring these discourses, they have missed an opportunity to broaden and enrich the comparative perspective. In addition, the uncritical adoption of the welfare state approach by many scholars in the Global South has impeded the emergence of a multi-faceted perspective that recognizes hybridity, incorporates diverse insights and promotes a truly global understanding of social welfare.

Another problem is that mainstream comparative social policy inquiry has neglected normative concerns, preferring instead to pursue classificatory and explanatory activities. Normative references in mainstream welfare state studies are seldom made explicit and have accordingly failed to provide an adequate basis for social policy formulation. Similarly, because these implicit normative preferences reflect the dominance of
Western ideas, they are of limited use in assessing social welfare challenges in societies where different cultural and social traditions are valued. Nevertheless, they pervade the field and exert a subtle but decisive influence in determining what is desirable in terms of policy formulation and implementation. This is unfortunate in view of the urgent need for appropriate normative frameworks that can address the persistence of global poverty, deprivation and oppression.

These issues have been raised before but they deserve to be more extensively debated. Alternative discourses about social welfare emanating from non-Western societies should be recognized and accommodated. This requires a greater knowledge of indigenous social welfare perspectives, a receptivity to cognate fields such as anthropology, development studies and cultural (including post-colonial) scholarship, as well as a greater appreciation of the activities of the international development agencies that have exerted considerable influence on social policy thinking in the Global South. Comparative social policy inquiry can also be enhanced by being cognizant of policy innovations in other parts of the world.

One innovation of this kind is social development that emerged in the developing countries of the Global South in the years following World War II and has since been actively promoted by the United Nations and other international agencies. However, the social development discourse has been largely ignored by mainstream Western scholars. By focusing on the social development approach and considering how it addresses first, issues of indigenization, and second the need for a normative framework that can address global social needs, this chapter hopes to contribute to a broadened vision for comparative social policy. It also considers social development’s potential to contribute to the emergence of a one-world perspective that does not depend on the emulation of Western approaches.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND DEFICIENCIES OF COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

Writing in the mid-1980s, Catherine Jones (1985) identified a handful of books that were explicitly devoted to the subject of comparative social policy. They included pioneering descriptive accounts of statutory welfare provision in Western countries such as Britain, France, the United States and Sweden (Rogers et al., 1968; Jenkins, 1969). Since then a large number of books about social policies in other parts of the world have been published. In addition to Europe and North America, many non-Western countries have been included. These include nations as diverse as China and Hong Kong (MacPherson and Wong, 1995; Tang, 1998), Japan
Building on country case studies and cross-national comparisons, comparative social policy scholarship has produced a number of typologies and conceptual approaches that have sought to comprehend different welfare systems and explain the causal determinants of state welfare engagement. The construction of welfare taxonomies has been a major preoccupation in mainstream comparative social policy. Abstracted from Wilensky’s and Lebeaux’s (1965) pioneering depiction of social welfare in the United States as evolving from a residual to institutional approach, many comparative social policy scholars, beginning with Titmuss (1974), have augmented or redefined the residual–institutional dichotomy. These include important typologies by Furniss and Tilton (1977), Mishra (1984) and Esping-Andersen (1990). Despite numerous criticisms of their inadequacies, taxonomies continue to feature prominently in mainstream comparative social policy scholarship; indeed, since the publication of Esping-Anderson’s typology, a significant amount of comparative scholarship has been devoted to typological activity.

The typological preoccupation in Western comparative social policy has accompanied the subject’s extensive engagement with explanatory theory. Mainstream comparative social policy scholarship has for many years sought to analyse the complex factors that appear to be causally associated with the rise in public social expenditure and the expansion of government social programmes during the twentieth century. In addition to complex factor analyses that have sought to investigate the statistical correlates of welfare effort (Cutright, 1965; Aaron, 1967), a number of theoretical accounts of the reasons for the expansion of government welfare provision have been published. As numerous studies have shown, these include functionalist, Marxist, pluralist and other interpretations (Midgley, 1997; O’Brein and Penna, 1998; Kennett, 2001; Powell and Hewitt, 2002; Myles and Quadagno, 2002; Lavalette and Pratt, 2006). Although none provide a definitive explanation of the determinants of welfare effort, this scholarship reveals the impressive degree of analytical sophistication the subject has achieved.

Since the 1980s, comparative social policy inquiry has also been concerned with the way governments in various parts of the world have reduced social expenditures and retrenched welfare programmes. The nature of the trend has been subjected to a great deal of scrutiny and while some scholars are persuaded that there is a ‘crisis’ in government welfare
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(Mishra, 1984; Munday, 1989; Pierson, 1994; Goldberg and Rosenthal, 2002), others are not (Alber, 1988; Castles, 2004). Nevertheless, a good deal of comparative social policy scholarship has focused on this issue, and many writers have pointed to the increasing influence of neo-liberal ideology that they believe has prompted many governments to reduce public expenditures, impose more demanding eligibility requirements and require recipients of income benefits to engage in paid employment (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Peck, 2001; Taylor-Gooby, 2001; Gilbert, 2002; Goldberg and Rosenthal, 2002; Timonen, 2003). The ambiguous concept of globalization has also been employed by several comparative social policy writers to examine this issue (Mishra, 1999; Yeates, 2001; George and Wilding, 2002; Swank, 2002). The recent global recession and the sizable debts incurred by a number of Western countries will no doubt generate many more studies on the future of government involvement in social welfare.

CHALLENGES FOR MAINSTREAM COMPARATIVE INQUIRY

As these examples reveal, mainstream comparative social policy has produced a substantial and significant corpus of knowledge. However, as has been argued already, the field faces numerous challenges. One challenge concerns the way the dominant discourse of mainstream scholarship is infused with a particularistic, Western perspective that reflects a long-standing preoccupation with government welfare and an implicit commitment to welfare state thinking. As was argued earlier, little attention has been paid to alternative discourses, such as those emanating from the Global South that utilize different cultural traditions, values and assumptions to respond to social welfare challenges. Similarly, the contributions of other fields of academic inquiry that address social welfare issues from other disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives have been largely ignored.

Neglectful of these alternative perspectives, mainstream comparative social policy scholarship continues to use Western theories and conceptual frameworks to categorize, analyse and explain social welfare institutions around the world even though it is unlikely that analytical inquiry into social welfare phenomena in culturally different societies can be effectively pursued by relying exclusively on Western constructs and theories. The use of these preconceptions to determine the subject matter of comparative inquiry fails to ask appropriate questions or to address the most pertinent realities of non-Western countries. Because of its failure to understand
indigenous welfare from the perspective of the ‘other’, mainstream com-
parative social policy often fails to properly comprehend welfare phenom-
ena in the world’s many different cultures and societies.

The problem is revealed by the apparent lack of familiarity among
mainstream comparative writers of social policy research in non-Western
nations. Jones’s (1985) survey of the literature, which was mentioned
earlier, revealed the extent to which comparative social policy scholarship
at the time focused almost exclusively on the Western industrial nations.
Although a number of important books on social policy in the Global
South had by then been published, they were not cited. They include
Livingstone’s (1969) formative account, which dealt with a number
of critical social policy issues at the time, and an important study by
MacPherson (1982), which used the insights of international structuralist
theory in development studies to offer a critical assessment of social policy
in what was then referred to as the Third World. Subsequent accounts
focusing specifically on the Global South (Hardiman and Midgley, 1982;
MacPherson and Midgley, 1987; H. Jones, 1990) also attracted little
attention in mainstream comparative social policy circles. Although it
is true that Western comparative scholars are today more aware of the
publications of their colleagues in other parts of the world, relatively few
references to this literature are made. Indeed, some mainstream scholars
still believe that research into social policy in the South is limited and
underdeveloped. A recent account of ‘welfare states’ in Latin America,
East Asia and Eastern Europe (Haggard and Kaufman, 2008, p. 1) incor-
rectly asserts that the study of social policy in the developing world is of
‘recent vintage’.

Another problem is the widespread use of Western taxonomies, and even
the ‘welfare state’ construct, to classify government welfare programmes
in the Global South. Although the notion of a ‘welfare state’ is of dubious
validity when characterizing Western nations, it pervades mainstream
comparative social policy discourse with unhelpful results. For example,
comparative accounts of what are sometimes referred to as the East Asian
‘welfare states’ reveal the extent to which Western constructs fail to eluci-
date complex realities. Of course, it is questionable whether East Asian soci-
eties such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia can or should
be classed as ‘welfare states’. Several of the region’s political leaders, most
notably Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, have publicly denigrated Western
welfarism (Lee, 2000) and at a more analytical level, Walker and Wong
(2004) (see Chapter 6 of this volume) believe that the welfare state con-
struct is not only of limited value when seeking to understand social policy
in East Asian countries but that its ethnocentric bias impedes a proper
assessment of the role of government welfare in the region.
Western welfare typologies have also been used to study social policy in the East Asian region but again, these typologies have not been particularly helpful. For example, the frequent use of the residual construct to characterize social policy in Hong Kong has been questioned by scholars such as Chow (1998) who points out that while state welfare in Hong Kong does have residual features, it also has institutional features. Midgley (1984) reached the same conclusion almost 15 years earlier in his discussion of the territory’s social security policies. Similar difficulties have been encountered by attempts to build on Esping-Anderson’s typology and to identify a unique East Asian welfare model. While some scholars have happily classified the East Asian societies into one or more of Esping-Andersen’s categories (Aspalter, 2001), a careful assessment by Goodman et al. (1998) concluded that there is, in fact, no distinctive East Asian welfare model. Although an attempt to expand Esping-Anderson’s typology by creating a fourth, East Asian ‘productivist’ welfare category has enjoyed some popularity in mainstream comparative circles (Holliday, 2000) it has not captured the complexities of social policy in East Asia. The result of these and other taxonomic exercises is a muddle that hardly enhances comparative knowledge of social welfare in this region of the world.

Another example of the problematic way mainstream ideas have been used in comparative social policy inquiry is the adoption of Western explanatory theories to account for the evolution of statutory welfare programmes in different parts of the world. While these theories may illuminate social policy development in Europe and other industrial nations, it is questionable that they provide plausible interpretations of the determinants of welfare effort in the Global South. Indeed, attempts to test the veracity of these theories have produced inconclusive results that also reveal the complexity of the field. For example, studies of the evolution of social security in Latin America, which have used these theories, have reached quite different conclusions. While Mesa-Lago (1978) believes that interest groups theory best explains social policy development in the region, Malloy (1979) is persuaded that a state-centred approach is more plausible. Similarly, Midgley’s (1986) account of the factors responsible for the growth of government welfare in the East Asian ‘tiger’ economies concluded that established Western theories offered few helpful explanatory insights. Another example is Tang’s (1998) account of the expansion of state welfare in Hong Kong, which found that no established theory provided a satisfactory explanation of the territory’s social policy development. However, these limitations have not prevented social policy scholars in the Global South from using these theories to explain indigenous realities. One example is Ku’s (1995) reliance on Marxism to provide a
paradigmatic basis for analysing government social welfare in Taiwan. Although the author’s use of theory is impressive, the role of culture and other indigenous factors are given little attention.

A major problem is that Western welfare state theories have failed to recognize the role of European imperialism in the evolution of social policy. This is a serious omission since it is difficult if not impossible to understand how and why social policy evolved in the Global South over the last century without referring to the colonial experience. Accounts of this legacy feature prominently in other social science analyses that have used the insights of international structuralism as well as post-colonialism to comprehend contemporary realities in many parts of the modern world. Mainstream social policy scholarship has been largely oblivious to this work and also to the contribution of social policy writers who have used these insights to explain social policy development. As noted earlier, one of the most significant was MacPherson’s (1982) application of international structuralist theory to analyse social policy in the developing countries. The pioneering work of Mair (1944) and the subsequent application of the insights of post-colonialism to the analysis of social welfare by Midgley (1998) have been largely ignored. Hopefully this omission will be addressed as the critical role that Western imperialism played in the development of social welfare in the Global South is more widely recognized (Midgley and Piachaud, 2011).

As was argued earlier, a related problem is the failure of mainstream comparative social policy to vigorously engage with normative concerns. Mainstream scholarship has been remarkably indifferent to normative and practical issues, preferring instead to pursue typological and explanatory interests. However, to be fair, it should be recognized that many comparative scholars have examined and regretted the shift from collectivist institutionalism to neo-liberal individualism, which has had a negative impact on social welfare in many countries. Nevertheless, while these accounts do evoke normative issues, these remain implicit, and offer few if any proposals that can effectively challenge neo-liberal hegemony.

The preference for European welfare statism has also established an implicit, international normative standard against which the welfare policies and programmes of non-Western countries are evaluated. Consequently, accounts of non-Western welfare systems by both local and international scholars are often critical or even apologetic if local approaches do not comply with this standard. It is not uncommon for social policy scholars in other societies to complain that the public welfare systems of their countries do not conform to the European ‘welfare state’ ideal. Even studies that do not seek explicitly to compare local welfare provision against the idealized Western ‘welfare state’ standard often
make implicit normative comparisons revealing the inadequacies of local welfare institutions (Ramesh, 2000).

The way mainstream comparative social policy scholarship has focused almost exclusively on state welfare institutions when seeking to assess welfare phenomena in other countries has resulted in the neglect of the many other institutional mechanisms that contribute to the well-being of individuals, families, communities and societies around the world. As feminist scholarship has shown, the preoccupation with state welfare provision in mainstream social policy studies has failed to explicate the contribution of women and familial forms of caring to social welfare (Dominelli, 1991; Sainsbury, 1996; Daly and Rake, 2003). Similarly, the contribution of non-formal, ‘traditional’ institutions that play a far more important role in meeting social needs than government social programmes in non-Western societies has also been ignored. It is unfortunate that a rich body of normative as well as analytical research into these welfare institutions, generated largely by anthropologists, remains beyond the scope of mainstream comparative social policy scholarship (Midgley, 1994; von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann, 1994; van Ginneken, 1999; Midgley and Hosaka, 2011).

Of course, this is not to suggest that comparative social policy inquiry should ignore government social welfare provision. The state is a major contributor to social welfare and its contribution obviously requires attention and analysis. But to focus exclusively on state welfare, as most mainstream comparative social policy scholars have done, is to offer a partial and inaccurate account of the many complex factors that contribute to human well-being in different cultures and societies. Since these institutions play a particularly significant role in non-Western societies, comparative scholarship should be cognizant of their role.

The widespread use of external normative standards originating in mainstream Western thinking to assess welfare outcomes in non-Western societies has impeded the development of normative theories that can facilitate the formulation of appropriate social policies based on their indigenous cultural and social realities. In fact, much mainstream comparative inquiry is detached from the type of advisory endeavour that practical social policy formulation requires if it is to generate humane responses to pressing global social needs. There is an urgent need for comparative social policy to contribute in practical ways to the formulation of policies and programmes that incorporate indigenous welfare approaches and accommodate social, cultural and economic differences. Because social policy is an applied field, it is not unreasonable to suggest that mainstream comparative inquiry should be more directly involved in practical matters. While analytical and explanatory activities need not be abandoned, the
persistent problems of global poverty, hunger, exploitation, conflict and oppression demand normative frameworks that can provide a basis for appropriate social policy-making.

SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Half a century ago, at the end of World War II, governments in many parts of the world broke with conventional laissez-faire beliefs and began more confidently to direct economic affairs and expand a range of social provisions designed to promote the well-being of their populations. In the industrial nations, enhanced state intervention was closely associated with post-war reconstruction while in the developing nations government engagement was closely linked to the struggle for independence from European imperialism. Nationalist movements, which had gathered strength before the war, now aggressively asserted the right to national self-determination. While this trend was resisted with bitter consequences by some of the imperial powers, it did not halt the inexorable struggle for freedom from foreign domination. In some regions of the world such as Latin America, which had secured independence from European rule many decades earlier, the struggle for self-determination found expression in greater efforts to assert national autonomy and modernize economic production.

It was in this context that the idea of development gained a new vibrancy. Drawing on nineteenth-century social evolutionary ideas as well as older beliefs about the possibility of progress and the ability of human agency to shape the future, the independence movements embraced economic planning and sought to address the pressing problems of mass poverty and deprivation that characterized their societies after what the imperial powers claimed was a period of progressive and ‘civilizing’ rule. For various motives, some of the metropolitan powers supported these efforts. Focusing chiefly on territories without sizeable settler colonies, they provided aid and technical assistance to support the development planning initiatives of the nationalist independence movements. Many of these movements were inspired by European socialism, believing that state direction of the economy, centralized planning, nationalization, public welfare provision and other forms of intervention would promote economic and social progress.

At the time, poverty and deprivation among the indigenous population was widespread. While European settlers and colonial officials enjoyed a high standard of living, local people suffered from debilitating commu-
nicable diseases, high rates of infant mortality, low life expectancy and widespread illiteracy. Although some colonial administrations had established education and welfare provisions in the years preceding the war, access to health, education and social services was limited. Missionaries were historically responsible for running hospitals and clinics, for managing schools, and for providing residential social welfare services to those with physical disabilities, the destitute elderly, orphans and others. However, the hospitals, clinics, schools and welfare facilities operated by the missionaries catered for only a small proportion of those in need (Macpherson, 1982).

With independence, many of the new nationalist governments implemented a statist approach to development, they introduced economic planning, established new nationalized industries, invested in infrastructure and expanded the limited social services previously introduced by the colonial administrations. Many of their leaders had been inspired by the rapid growth of the public social services in the industrial nations and were committed to extending the social service to cover many more people. However, it was clear that rapid economic development would be required to generate the funds needed to increase social provision on a significant scale. Accordingly, it was widely believed that economic development should be given the highest priority and that consumption should be deferred (Livingstone, 1969). Although economic planners argued that development should be an overriding goal, some political elites sought to balance economic and social objectives. In addition, the policy of deferring consumption was seldom realized largely because of grassroots political pressures for access to modern health and educational services.

It was in this context that limited welfare services were introduced by the governments of the newly independent states (Hardiman and Midgley, 1982; MacPherson, 1982). In some cases, existing colonial welfare provisions were augmented and generally this involved the creation of social insurance and provident funds for civil servants and workers in regular wage employment coupled with social assistance and residential care for the urban poor. The introduction of social welfare services for the urban poor was closely associated with professional social work (Midgley, 1995). Social work had achieved recognition as a ‘modern approach’ for dealing with social problems and although it had previously been introduced into India, South Africa and several Latin American countries, several metropolitan governments assisted in the creation of professional training opportunities, and in the development of governmental and voluntary agencies that would employ social work professionals.

Social work played an important role in the formulation of the social development approach. However, the realization that individualized
Casework treatment could not address the problem of mass poverty and its associated ills of hunger, ill health, illiteracy and landlessness facilitated the introduction of community-based interventions that sought to mobilize local people to meet social needs and engage simultaneously in productive income-generating economic activities. Known as community development, these community-based activities fused with other social interventions to comprise an approach that the British Colonial Office in 1954 dubbed as social development (United Kingdom, 1954). The new term was used to connote the linking of social welfare with the overriding commitment to economic development that then characterized nation building in the Global South.

Social development was actively promoted in the British colonial territories but, with the waning of European imperialism, the United Nations assumed international leadership (Midgley, 1995). The organization actively promoted economic planning in the newly independent developing countries and provided technical assistance for this purpose. It also encouraged social policy development. In the early 1950s, United Nations officials subscribed to the widely held view that professional social work should be introduced to the developing countries to meet the need for modern social service provision. However, it also recognized that community development should form an integral part of the social services, particularly in the rural areas where the majority of the population resided. Accordingly, remedial social work services were emphasized for urban areas while community development was given greater priority in the rural areas.

In the 1960s, the United Nations reassessed this approach and it gradually began to place more emphasis on macro-development policies that integrated national economic policies with social welfare provisions. Governments were encouraged to transcend social work and community-based interventions, and refocus the activities of their central planning agencies to attain social objectives. In terms of this approach, which was known as ‘unified socioeconomic development’, development plans would seek to raise standards of living, improve health conditions, increase access to education and address the problems of inadequate shelter especially in the informal urban settlements. Economic growth achievements would no longer be measured exclusively in terms of per capita income growth or industrial investments or increases in exports but in terms of social outputs such as employment creation, improvements in nutrition, gains in health status and increases in literacy and school enrolments.

Together, the community-based and centralized planning approaches formed the core of the social development agenda. Although they coexisted uneasily, these twin perspectives provided a normative basis for
social policy in many countries of the Global South. The United Nations played a key leadership role in promoting the adoption of this broader approach to social development. In addition to the vigorous promotion of social development in the Economic and Social Council, and the adoption of numerous resolutions by the General Assembly, the organization convened international meetings and conferences and provided technical assistance to member states. These activities facilitated the adoption of social development in many countries. Many Western nations supported these efforts through their own aid programmes and, in addition, other multilateral organizations such as the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the World Bank also promoted social development ideas.

By the 1960s, government-sponsored community-based projects concerned with social and economic improvements were commonplace throughout the developing nations of the Global South. The community development approach was also adopted in health care and became a primary mechanism for promoting health and nutritional improvements in many countries. At the same time, national planning agencies created social sectoral programmes concerned with health, education, housing and social welfare services. In addition, social planners skilled in promoting social development goals were recruited and trained. Social indicators were refined and widely adopted to measure the attainment of social development goals (Hall and Midgley, 2004).

While social development exerted a pervasive influence in the Global South, it was not universally adopted or always effectively implemented. In many developing countries, social development policy was incremental and haphazard and in others, serious economic difficulties, ethnic and political conflict as well as corruption impeded its implementation. In some countries, social development coexisted uneasily with other approaches. Indeed, the welfare state approach, which advocated the adoption of European-style social services, remained influential. In addition, international economic difficulties and increased developing country indebtedness weakened the ability of governments to expand social provision. These problems were exacerbated in the 1980s by the diffusion of neo-liberal ideas emanating from Britain, the United States and some other Western countries. As the International Monetary Fund and World Bank became increasingly committed to neo-liberal ideology, structural adjustment programmes were imposed, national planning agencies were dismantled or debilitated, social expenditures were curtailed and social programmes retrenched. These factors undermined the social development project.

As a result of these events, a new approach to social development
emerged. Instead of social development being directed by government planners and community development workers, the field was soon dominated by aid officials, international development experts and consultants. Funded by international donor agencies and Western governments, social development became the purview of local non-governmental organizations and community groups that now manage a variety of local development projects. Today, many social development projects supported by international donors are concerned with health, family planning and literacy, and many are directed at poor women. Indeed, gender issues now feature prominently in social development practice. Many non-government organizations also implement local income-generating projects especially through micro-enterprises. Social development personnel are also involved in large-scale economic development projects to ensure that the ‘human factor’, as it is called, is taken into account when large-scale transportation, hydroelectric and industrial projects are constructed. They are employed to assess the social impact of these projects, and to appraise and evaluate projects, and to undertake stakeholder and gender analyses.

Believing that social development efforts had been weakened by neo-liberalism and become increasingly fragmented and ineffective, the United Nations sought to reinvigorate the social development approach. In 1990, it published the first of a series of reports on what was now called ‘human’ rather than social development (United Nations Development Programme, 1990). The publication of these reports was accompanied by political efforts to again promote social development ideals on an international scale. These steps were a prelude to the convening of the World Social Summit on Social Development at which, the organization hoped, member states would reaffirm their commitment to social development.

The World Summit was held in Copenhagen in March 1995 and was attended by 186 government delegations including 117 heads of state, with the noticeable exceptions of President Clinton of the United States and Prime Minister John Major of Britain. It resulted in the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration, which committed the world’s governments to achieve eight major goals. These included, among others, the eradication of poverty; the promotion of full employment and sustainable livelihoods; and the achievement of gender equity. The Declaration also emphasized the role of governments in promoting universal access to education and health and mitigating the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes that had been adopted in many developing countries as a condition for international aid (United Nations, 1996).

Although the Copenhagen Declaration was accompanied by a Plan of Action designed to ensure that policies and programmes to achieve these
goals were implemented, progress was slow and in 2000, when the United Nations General Assembly met in New York at what was dubbed the Millennium Summit to review the implementation of the Declaration, the results were uneven. Many countries had failed to adopt poverty eradication strategies and economic adversity had slowed employment generation in many countries. As a result of budget cuts, access to the social services had been curtailed and in some parts of the world such as Sub-Saharan Africa, economic and social conditions had deteriorated. In many countries, the challenge of gender discrimination had not been adequately addressed. In addition, several countries, noticeably in East Asia and Latin America, were seriously affected by economic crises associated with international speculative finance capitalism. Indeed, meetings of the World Trade Organization attracted more media attention than the Summit meeting.

On the other hand, the Copenhagen Declaration created an agenda for social policy at the global level. In 2000, at the Millennium Summit, the Declaration was reformulated as the Millennium Development Goals. The Summit set specific targets that would, it was hoped, be met by 2015. They include halving the incidence of absolute poverty, achieving universal primary school enrolment, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment, reducing child mortality and the incidence of AIDS and other communicable diseases and improving maternal health. While the attainment of these goals is ultimately the responsibility of individual governments, they are pursued within an international framework of collaborative policy formulation and implementation that ultimately transcends national activities. At a United Nations meeting in 2010 to assess progress in achieving these goals, it was agreed that while much progress had been made, the record was still decidedly mixed and that much more needed to be done if these goals were to be reached by 2015 (United Nations, 2010). Although the poverty rate had fallen significantly in East Asia, and especially China, poverty in many parts of Africa and South Asia remained widespread. Considerable progress had been made in achieving primary school enrolments, but maternal and child health still posed a significant challenge. This was true of other areas such as gender equality and the reduction of communicable diseases as well. Nevertheless, despite economic upheavals in many parts of the world, the devastating effects of the recent global recession, and violence and political oppression in some countries and regions, the trend towards improved social conditions that has taken place globally since the middle years of the last century has continued. Much of this has been achieved through the implementation of social development policies and programmes.

Efforts to ensure social development’s vitality have also continued
at the academic level. Its essentially pragmatic prescriptions have been augmented by attempts at theory building and various conceptual formulations of social development ideas have appeared. The populist, community-based approach that provided the foundations on which social development thinking emerged in the 1950s, was subsequently enhanced by the incorporation of radical community action. More recently, social capital theory has been incorporated into social development theory. These ideas have since been formalized, giving social development an intellectual identity and coherence. The statist version of social development that emerged in the late 1960s was variously conceptualized as the unified socioeconomic planning approach and the Basic Needs approach (Miah and Tracy, 2001). A more recent development is a pervasive interest in local entrepreneurship and the promotion of micro-credit and micro-enterprises by which poor people can engage in economic activities (Remenyi and Quinones, 2000; Rainford, 2001; Werhane et al., 2010). Although this approach reflects the influence of neo-liberal thinking, it has fused with the populist, community development tradition to promote cooperative, community-based enterprises that involve larger numbers of people.

Attempts have also been made to synthesize these different perspectives into a unified ‘institutional’ approach that recognizes the role of governments, communities and markets in the promotion of well-being in the context of economic development efforts. Rather than treating these different normative positions as antagonistic, some admittedly optimistic proponents of social development such as Midgley (1995) contend that it is possible to integrate their respective approaches so that all contribute to a comprehensive and sustainable process of development in which social and economic interventions are purposefully linked and harmonized. However, the need for economic development remains paramount. For the proponents of social development, economic growth is a vital dynamic in the production of social welfare. But many social development experts recognize that a distinctive type of economic growth that maximizes employment, spreads benefits widely and invests in human capabilities is needed. This requires state intervention, participation and redistribution. Of course, this approach is antithetical to the neo-liberal perspective that requires a reduction in government social spending and a reconstructed role for government that creates opportunities for entrepreneurs to pursue profits without hindrance, and a faith in a trickle down effect, which, it is claimed, will of its own accord bring prosperity to all.

An important element in the conceptualization of social development is an emphasis on ‘welfare productivism’. Since social development ideas were first implemented in community-based interventions in the Global
South more than 50 years ago, the need to link social welfare interventions with economic development activities has been emphasized. Although direct transfers to those facing particular needs were not discounted, it was widely believed that local social needs could best be met through engaging in local economic activities. However, it was also believed that social interventions should not only be compatible with economic activities, but productivist in their own right. The notion of social investments that enhance individual, family and community capabilities has since been stressed by many scholars (Sherraden, 1991; Midgley and Tang, 2001). Of course, these ideas are not new. Many years ago, Schultz (1981) showed that anti-malaria campaigns in India and Sri Lanka in the 1950s not only reduced mortality and morbidity but increased agricultural production.

As will be recognized, the ideas attending social development have been controversial and have been contested both within the development community and by proponents of alternative normative perspectives, particularly neo-liberalism and post-modernism. Neo-liberals view social development’s statism as antithetical to economic progress while post-modernists regard social development’s commitment to social change and progress as just another failed meta-narrative arising from Enlightenment thought. For the anti- or post-development school, which has drawn extensively on postmodernist thinking, the very idea of progress is anathema (Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997; Munck and O’Hearn, 1999). However, it is precisely because social development comprises one of many alternative discourses in comparative social policy that its approach needs to be recognized and comprehended and its potential application examined.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: INDIGENIZATION AND NORMATIVE RELEVANCE

The preceding discussion of social development and its relation to comparative social policy is intended to serve an illustrative rather than informative purpose. It shows that social development comprises an alternative discourse about social welfare at the international level that, together with other discourses, deserves to be recognized and understood in mainstream inquiry. The fact that the 1995 Copenhagen World Summit and the 2000 Millennium Summit were attended by the heads of state of the vast majority of the member nations of the United Nations suggests that social development is not a peripheral activity but that it represents many voices that should be heard and embraced by Western social policy scholars. In addition, the comparative study of social welfare can be enriched by recognizing and accommodating the social development approach.
However, social development is only one of many discourses about social welfare that are relevant to comparative social policy. It has been noted already that feminist scholarship has generated a discourse that, in the form of a critique of mainstream thinking, has revealed the need for a broadened vision of social welfare based on social care and familial institutions. Similarly, post-colonial studies provide insights that can inform a long-standing concern with issues of immigration, cultural identity and racism in social policy scholarship in the industrial nations. The field of development studies also has much to offer comparative social policy inquiry. Although attempts have been made to bridge the gap between social policy and development studies (Hall and Midgley, 2004), the two fields remain quite distinct even though they share a common commitment to poverty eradication, the expansion of social provisions and a recently renewed commitment to social protection. By paying attention to these and other discourses, the challenges facing comparative social policy inquiry can be addressed. As has been argued already, the lack of both indigenization and appropriate normative frameworks that can inform efforts to respond to pressing social needs are major limitations of mainstream comparative inquiry. Social development is concerned with both issues. Its roots are indigenous to the Global South and it gives expression to a body of normative theory that seeks to address the serious social problems facing hundreds of millions of people around the world.

Social development has been cognizant of indigenous influences and, despite its modernist roots, may be regarded as a distinctly ‘Third Worldist’ approach to social welfare. Although the initial impetus for social development came from expatriate colonial officials involved in establishing social welfare programmes, they recognized that urban-based remedial interventions that relied on professional expertise and bureaucratic social service provision were of limited relevance to the problems facing the majority of the population located in the rural areas. Their alternative community-based approach revealed an understanding of the importance of agrarian life in the Global South as well as the importance of community networks and cultural commitments, both of which are often based on indigenous family institutions. The participatory emphasis in community development drew on culturally institutionalized patterns of mutual aid and created an intervention that made limited use of professional and bureaucratic provisions. The emphasis on self-determination and cooperation, which formed an integral element of community development, was also highly compatible with indigenous culture. In some countries such as India, community development was directly influenced by Gandhi and Tagore’s indigenous approaches. The state interventionism that subsequently became prominent in social development think-
ing also had an indigenous aspect, harmonizing social policy with the nationalist populism that characterized the ideology of the anti-colonial, independence movements.

By being cognizant of the way indigenization can inform the comprehension of welfare institutions in other societies, mainstream comparative social policy scholarship can become more sensitive to cultural realities and transcend its current preoccupation with typological categorization and speculation about the origins and functions of state welfare. Fortunately, there are indications that mainstream scholarship is moving in this direction. For example, recent accounts of the evolution of social welfare in Ireland and Sweden have utilized insights of this kind, placing far more emphasis on the role of culture than before (Gould, 2001; Peillon, 2001). Similarly, although criticized, Jones’s (C. Jones, 1990, 1993) exploration of the role of indigenous culture in East Asian welfare transcends conventional approaches and fosters a more incisive account of cultural dynamics. More recent studies that explicitly address the role of culture in shaping welfare institutions are especially helpful (Chamberlayne et al., 1999; van Oorschot et al., 2008).

Social development is also overtly normative. It is more concerned with articulating value assumptions and formulating responses to social problems than with categorization and explanation. While the normative engagement of social development writing may be viewed by some social policy scholars as a second-order activity that should follow analytical endeavour, social development proponents believe that pressing global problems demand solutions based on appropriate and workable normative theories. Unlike much mainstream comparative social policy scholarship, social development has energetically sought to explicate normative assumptions and policy prescriptions. The willingness of social development proponents to declare normative preferences should inspire those engaged in mainstream comparative scholarship to explicate their own implicit preference for Western welfare statism. The tendency to assume the moral superiority of welfare statist position has resulted in a failure to affirm normative commitments and to articulate a defensible normative position. This has impeded efforts to confront the continuing diffusion of neo-liberalism. It has also impeded the formulation of a reconstructed neo-institutional position that can meet the neo-liberal challenge. By ignoring the normative implications of other approaches, mainstream scholarship has not exploited its potential to contribute to an effective reformulated normative conceptualization of state welfare engagement that may challenge neo-liberalism.

The productivist commitment in social development offers a potentially viable response of this kind and counters neo-liberal claims that social
expenditures impede economic development. As noted earlier, there is a wealth of evidence to show that social expenditures that invest in human capabilities promote economic growth (Midgley and Tang, 2001, 2008). They also have positive redistributive implications (Midgley, 1999). Investments in human capital are today regarded as essential components of economic development and social capital generated by community interventions has the same effect. By utilizing this evidence to demonstrate that social expenditures can promote economic growth and promote social prosperity, social policy scholars could provide a normative alternative that progressive policy-makers could use to repackage conventional welfarist ideals.

Wider challenges arising from civil conflict, oppression, ethnic hatreds and gender and other forms of contemporary discrimination also require an effective response. Mainstream comparative social policy has not addressed these endemic problems, preferring instead to focus on conventional state welfare provision. However, conventional social service programmes have little relevance to those whose daily lives are characterized by violence, brutal oppression and perpetual suffering. They are irrelevant to African villagers who do not know whether they will be slaughtered by marauding gangs of militia funded by political leaders from different ethnic groups, or to slum dwellers on the outskirts of Latin American cities who scavenge in landfills for their subsistence, or to Palestinian families who cower in terror as Israeli tanks demolish their neighbourhoods, or to impoverished Asian families who live in oppressive feudal conditions and are compelled to sell their children into debt bondage. The current situation in Syria dramatically illustrates this argument. While it is obviously desirable that comparative scholars should be concerned with typological and explanatory activities, these pressing problems also demand attention.

Finally, a familiarity with the social development perspective can promote the goal of formulating a one-world approach to social policy. Although the literature on this issue is still underdeveloped, debates on internationalism are still framed in terms of mainstream welfare state criteria except that the role of international organizations rather than national governments is now more frequently emphasized (Deacon et al., 1997; Mishra, 1999). While these debates touch on issues that are relevant to social development to a greater extent than before, they nevertheless perpetuate conventional welfare state preoccupations and fail to recognize the heterogeneity of welfare institutions and the diverse ways in which these institutions have been conceptualized and analysed by scholars working outside the mainstream.

A truly global perspective on social policy must accommodate diverse discourses. It has been argued already that social development is only one
of many discourses that provide insights into the complex and diverse realities of social welfare around the world. The construction of a truly one world perspective cannot legitimately proceed by seeking to impose one approach to conceptualize global social policy. Nor can it use only one interpretive mode to understand the complex reality of social welfare in the world’s many diverse societies. Similarly, attempts to subsume this reality within a unitary normative perspective such as Western welfare statism (or neo-liberalism) are meaningless. Instead, efforts to promote the emergence of a one world social welfare perspective should begin by recognizing the claims of many discourses, assessing them in a discursive dialogue and ultimately promote hybridity based on relative rather than absolute criteria. This does not deny the need for absolute standards relating to the alleviation of suffering, oppression, the eradication of poverty and the assertion of freedoms but it should recognize that these goals may be achieved through different institutional mechanisms in different social, economic and cultural contexts. In this way, a much more flexible conceptual framework that promotes a fusion of diverse positions and fosters the adoption of a truly one world approach may emerge. By recognizing social development’s contribution to comparative social policy, this goal may be furthered.

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INTRODUCTION

My aim in this chapter is to reconceptualize the welfare regime paradigm developed within Northern social policy studies to understand the nature and diversity of social policies in the South. Midgley (Chapter 10) has rightly criticized the relevance of the welfare regime paradigm to social policy dilemmas in much of the world, so this approach may seem perverse and will need defending. The intention is certainly not simply to ‘apply’ it to the South, but to radically recast it. My basic reason is that it offers the way out of a classic dilemma in understanding social policy and social development across the world. By developing a variegated middle-range model it avoids both over-generalization and over-specificity. A regime approach can recognize, on the one hand, the commonalities across the countries and regions of the South, while on the other hand identifying systematic qualitatively distinct patterns within the South. It can also provide a bridge between thinking about social policy in the North and the South, without imposing Northern frameworks and solutions on the rest of the world.

In adopting a regime approach we are placing ourselves within the historical-institutional school of social research. This attempts to steer a middle way between teleological or functionalist approaches (both modernization and Marxist) on the one hand, and post-modern approaches emphasizing uniqueness and diversity on the other. It integrates structures and actors within a framework that promises a comparative analysis of socio-economic systems at different stages of development and different positions in the world system. Similarly, it seeks to reconcile the rival ‘structural’ and ‘actor’ approaches within development sociology (Long and van der Ploeg, 1994). We recognize that structures are socially constructed, reproduced and changed through the actions of people in real time, but that, at given points in time, actors occupy different interest and power positions within structures, generating different goals, levels of autonomy and clout.

The chapter is in three parts followed by a conclusion. First, it introduces the ‘welfare regime’ paradigm initially developed to understand the
post-war welfare states of the West. Its underlying assumptions are revealed and shown to be manifestly inapplicable to much of the less developed, the developing and the transitional worlds of the South and the East. Second, two alternative ideal-type models are constructed: an informal security regime and, very briefly, an insecurity regime. The third section then tests this model by presenting the results of a cluster analysis of 65 developing countries at the turn of the millennium. This identifies proto-welfare states at one end of the spectrum and insecurity regimes at the other, but finds a wide range of informal security regimes in between. To maintain a clear distinction between the three ideal-type regimes, and these real-world regimes, I shall use the generic term ‘social policy regime’ to refer to all of them.

THE WELFARE REGIME MODEL

A welfare regime is an institutional matrix of market, state and family forms, which generates welfare outcomes. According to Esping-Andersen (1990), welfare regimes are characterized by (1) different patterns of state, market and household forms of social provision, (2) different welfare outcomes, assessed according to the degree to which labour is ‘de-commodified’ or shielded from market forces and (3) different stratification outcomes. The last component provides positive feedback: the stratification outcomes shape class coalitions, which tend to reproduce or intensify the original institutional matrix and welfare outcomes. ‘Existing institutional arrangements heavily determine, maybe even over-determine, national trajectories’ (Esping-Andersen, 1999, p. 4).

Esping-Andersen (ibid., Table 5.4) identifies three welfare regimes in advanced capitalist countries with continual democratic histories since World War II: the liberal, conservative-corporatist and social-democratic. He summarizes their characteristics as shown in Table 11.1.

This welfare regime paradigm has spawned an immense amount of empirical work and has attracted volumes of critical commentary and theoretical reworking, which can be divided into the following critiques (Gough, 1999):

- The identification of just three regimes and the allocation of countries between them is disputed. For example, it has been argued that Australia and New Zealand are not liberal, that the Mediterranean countries are different from North European countries and that Japan cannot be encompassed in such a ‘Western’ framework.
- In concentrating on income maintenance and labour market practices it overlooks critical social programmes like health, education
and housing that do not conform to these welfare regime patterns and that, further, may reveal that national patterns of social policies are programme-specific. For example, ‘liberal’ Britain still retains a universal National Health Service.

- In defining welfare outcomes in terms of de-commodification – insulation from market forces – it ignores other components of well-being, in terms of autonomy and need satisfaction, and other sources of ill-being.
- In concentrating on class analysis, it ignores other sources of stratification such as religion, ethnicity and gender.
- In particular, the effects of the gendered division of labour and household forms are ignored at all three levels (social programmes, welfare outcome and stratification effect).
- In emphasizing the reproduction and stability of class coalitions, social programmes and welfare outcomes it cannot handle dynamic changes and shifts in welfare regime (such as took place in Britain in the 1980s).
- In focusing on domestic institutions and coalitions it ignores the growing constraints of the global political economy and the growing role of supranational institutions.

This debate has encouraged modification of the regime approach even in its OECD heartlands. It is not our intention to review these criticisms

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<td>Marginal</td>
<td>Subsidiary</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare state:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant locus of solidarity</td>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant mode of solidarity</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Kinship Corporatism Etatism</td>
<td>Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of de-commodification</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>High (for breadwinner)</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal examples</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Germany, Italy</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Esping-Andersen (1999, Table 5.4).
systematically here but three issues should be considered and incorporated before we proceed.

First, the dominant emphasis on labour markets and social protection programmes is related to the reliance on de-commodification as the measure of welfare outcomes. But modern welfare states also deliver health and other social services designed to ameliorate harm or suffering caused by illness, accident and frailty – what Bevan (2004a) calls ‘life processes’. A major result in the West is a sprawling ‘health state’ (Moran, 1999), with interests, institutions and dynamics of its own. Second, the modern state undertakes human investment and self-development through education, training, work experience and allied programmes. Heidenheimer (1981) contends that the early development of the mass education state in the USA provided an alternative path of social development to the welfare states of Europe. More recently, interest has grown in the OECD in ‘active’ alternatives to traditional ‘passive’ welfare programmes. Room (2000) interprets these activities as ‘de-commodification for self-development’, thus linking them conceptually to Esping-Andersen’s original framework. Third, another important failure of Esping-Andersen’s original idea of welfare regime, in the eyes of many, was its blindness to gender. The fact that women undertake the vast bulk of unpaid labour across the developed world, that this establishes a gendered division of labour embracing paid work, that caring duties reproduce inequalities between men and women within households and that this in turn entails a sharp split between the public and private spheres of social life – these social facts are now impinging on the analysis of welfare regimes. Disputes continue, however, on whether welfare regimes as defined above map closely onto such gender differences (see O’Connor et al., 1999).

In what follows I shall extend the idea of what I will call here social policy regimes to incorporate provisions that ameliorate harmful life processes and invest in human capacities. In developing countries these may well extend beyond traditional health and education services. Furthermore, we shall assume that gendered life processes shape the welfare mix, welfare outcomes and stratification effects in all regimes.

In my view this framework (incorporating these prior modifications) offers a useful starting point for studying social policy in development contexts for four reasons. First, the welfare regime approach is precisely concerned with the broader ‘welfare mix’: the interactions of public sector, private sector and households in producing livelihoods and distributing welfare: a dominant theme in the development literature. Second, it focuses not only on institutions but outcomes – the real states of well-being or ill-being of groups of people. Third, it is a ‘politi-
cal economy’ approach that embeds welfare institutions in the ‘deep structures’ of social reproduction: it forces researchers to analyse social policy not merely in technical but in power terms, and this has much to offer. Fourth, it enables one to identify clusters of countries with welfare features in common; it holds out the promise of distinguishing between groups of developing countries according to their trajectory or paths of development.

To tap this potential, we must first stand back and distil its essentials. We contend that the following nine elements are integral to the welfare regime paradigm (Gough, 2004a):

1. The dominant mode of production is capitalist. There is a division of labour based on the ownership or non-ownership of capital; the dominant form of coordination is ex post via market signals; the technological base is dynamic, driven by a never-ending search for profit.
2. A set of class relations is based on this division of labour. The dominant form of inequality derives from exploitation by asset owners of non-asset owners.
3. The dominant means of securing livelihoods is via employment in formal labour markets; conversely, the major threats to security stem from interrupted access to labour markets (and from ‘life processes’).
4. Political mobilization by the working classes and other classes and ‘democratic class struggle’ shape an inter-class ‘political settlement’.
5. There is a ‘relatively autonomous state’ bounded by the structural power of capital but open to class mobilization and voice and able to take initiatives on its own behalf.
6. These factors, together with inherited institutional structures, shape a set of state institutions and practices that undertake social interventions. This state intervention combines with market and family structures and processes to construct a ‘welfare mix’.
7. This welfare mix de-commodifies labour to varying degrees (and provides social services and invests in human capital).
8. Together the welfare mix and welfare outcomes influence the definition of interests and the distribution of class power resources, which tend to reproduce the welfare regime through time.
9. Within each regime, ‘social policy’ entails intentional action within the public sphere to achieve normative, welfare-oriented goals.

Every one of these elements must be examined when our attention turns from the North to the South.
THE INFORMAL SECURITY REGIME

This section develops the idea of an informal security regime, drawing heavily on the work of my colleagues Geoff Wood (2004) and Pip Bevan (2004a, 2004b; see also Gough and Wood, 2004; Wood and Gough, 2006). I summarize this work here by starkly contrasting each of the nine elements of the welfare regime framework above to an ideal-type informal security regime model.

First, the division of labour is not uniquely determined by a capitalist mode of production. On the one hand, other forms of production persist, develop and interact with capitalism: direct production of food and other goods and services, employment in informal labour markets, the cultural resources of communities, kin connections, smuggling and other illegal activities and so on. The social formation is more variegated and over-determined. On the other hand, external capitalism (international market forces and transnational actors) heavily influences the environment of these political economies. The capitalist world system and its actors are, of course, not without importance in understanding advanced capitalist countries, but in the South there is a lack of congruity – the world system does not necessarily transform them into developed capitalist social formations.

Second, and related to this, two other forms of domination bulk large alongside exploitation: exclusion and coercion. Exclusion refers to processes of ‘shutting out’ certain categories of people from major social forms of participation (such as cultural activities and political roles) on the basis of their ascribed identity. A wide range of exclusionary practices – closure, monopolization and opportunity hoarding – are alternative sources of disadvantage. Coercion refers to ‘all concerted application, threatened or actual, of actions that commonly cause loss or damage’ (Tilly, 1999, p. 36). It can vary from discrete threats to the full-scale destruction of people and communities. In much of the developing world, economy-based exploitation relations are interwoven with other systems of inequality and domination.

Third, the idea of livelihoods replaces that of labour markets. Individuals and families use diverse strategies to make a living, involving various types of labour. Standing (2000) distinguishes, alongside wage labour: sharecropping, peasant agriculture, tribal cultivation, nomadic pastoralism, artisans, outworking, family working and bonded labour. In addition, migration for labour, petty trade, begging and petty crime also coexist. The modern peasant moves between different forms of employment and ways of life; in Kearney’s (1996) term they are ‘polybians’, akin to amphibians moving between aquatic and terrestrial environments. Another important
The difference from the ideal modern capitalist model concerns the lack of a clear division between production and reproduction and the significance of ‘non-productive’ activities, including investment in social networks.

Fourth, political mobilization takes different forms. Class power resources and mobilization can no longer be privileged. Ethnicity, region, religion, caste, age groups, clan or kinship groups and other interpersonal networks can all form the basis of identity and mobilization. In Parsons’s (1951) terms, ascribed status remains as important as achieved identity. The complexity of sources of identification, and the existence of excluded groups outside the political system altogether, confound or preclude the emergence of political class settlements. Political stability reflects political equilibrium rather than a negotiated compromise.

Fifth, ‘states’ are at best weakly differentiated from surrounding social and power systems. Political relationships are particularistic and diffuse, are based on interpersonal obligations, mix together economic, instrumental and political elements of exchange, yet are premised on deep inequalities in power between patrons and clients (Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984, pp.48–9). This patron-clientelism engenders a widespread form of political incorporation of subordinate classes. The result is a dependence of the powerless on relationships that may offer a measure of security in the short run but prevent their longer-term liberation and ability to enhance their security and welfare. In Wood’s phrase (2001), they are ‘adversely incorporated’.

Sixth, the institutional landscape of the welfare mix becomes problematic. At one level, a wider range of institutions and actors are involved in modifying livelihood structures and their outcomes. At the domestic level, ‘communities’, informal groups and more formal NGOs figure as informal actors and add a fourth institutional actor to the state–market–family trinity. More important, all four elements have important counterparts at the supranational level: outside economic actors such as transnational corporations or semi-illegal traders; international governance organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO, the arms of powerful nation-states such as the USA and international aid bodies; international NGOs. Even the household sector has an international dimension, through migration and remittances. Thus, a broader ‘institutional responsibility matrix’ emerges as shown in Table 11.2.

But the complexity does not stop there. The informal security model does not presume the degree of institutional differentiation of the classic welfare regime model. On the contrary, the different institutions do not operate independently of each other in terms of rules and pervading moralities. Self-interest is not confined to the market realm, loyalty to the family realm and group interests to the political realm. Instead there is
permeability. Behaviour is frequently not different when acting within the state, the market, the community or the family. As Wood (2004, p. 58) puts it: ‘Markets are imperfect, communities clientelist, households patriarchal and states marketized, patrimonial and clientelist’.

Seventh, ‘de-commodification’ becomes even less suitable as a measure of welfare outcomes than in the OECD world. The very notion of de-commodification does not make sense when economic behaviour is not commodified and where states and markets are not distinct realms. As already argued, the goal and measure of welfare needs to expand to take on board protection against ‘life processes’, amelioration of exclusion and active investment for self-development. More than that, the fuzzy distinction between development and welfare and the wider range of threats to security (such as from violence and physical insecurity) entail nothing less than an audit of basic and intermediate need satisfaction (Doyal and Gough, 1991, Ch. 8).

Eighth, the notion of path-dependent development has a broader applicability. Countries dependent on overseas aid or NGO-based provision or remittances from migrant labour or clientelist networks will develop group interests and alliances that may act to continue and extend the private benefits these generate. Even societies with persistent civil and cross-border wars may organize livelihoods and develop forms of collective provision that adapt to war and reproduce through time. However, the vulnerability of poorer countries in the face of an uncontrollable external environment undermines path dependency and frequently replaces it with uncertainty and unpredictable change. The likelihood of stable political settlements is also undermined – instead, unstable political equilibria are more common.

Last, the very idea of social policy as a conscious countervailing force in Polanyi’s sense (Polanyi, 1944), whereby the public realm subjects and controls the private realm in the interests of collective welfare goals, is thrown into question. Social policy in the West is based at some level on the idea that behaviour in one sphere can be successfully deployed to modify behaviour in another sphere. More specifically, mobilization in civil society can, via the state, impose collectivist values on the pursuit of

Table 11.2 Components of the institutional responsibility matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Supranational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Domestic governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Domestic markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Civil society, NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household</td>
<td>Households</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11.2 Components of the institutional responsibility matrix
individual interests in the market (and the family). Like Ulysses tempted by the Sirens, citizens and voters voluntarily chain and restrict their ability to pursue their short-term desires in the pursuit of longer-term collective needs (Elster, 1979). However, if permeability rules and the principles of different domains ‘contaminate’ each other, then social policy cannot act as an independent countervailing force, or will reinforce privilege, private short-term gain, exclusion or domination. In this situation ‘all are prisoners’ (Wood, 2000).

The net result of these nine features of the peasant analogue is an ‘informal security regime’, as far removed conceptually from the original idea of a welfare regime as in reality. Table 11.3 summarizes these contrasts.

We should stress that the above account of the informal security regime is an ideal-type counter-position to what is after all an ideal-type welfare state regime model. Nevertheless, this now establishes two poles between which we may range real-world countries and regions in the present epoch. This is our goal in the next section.

However, we are not finished yet. For there is a third ideal-type regime where neither formal nor informal security obtain: an insecurity regime. According to Bevan (2004a, 2004b), this is characterized by chronic conflict and exterminatory wars, ‘vampire’ states, shadow states and absent states, mobilization via militarization, wide gaps in institutional responsibility, absent social policies and extreme suffering. In this (non-) ideal-type, chronic insecurity is the norm and social policy is the province of humanitarian aid regimes.

MAPPING INFORMAL SECURITY REGIMES

Is there any evidence for this regime model, and how should we research it? Esping-Andersen writes: ‘The linear scoring approach (more or less power, democracy or spending) contradicts the sociological notion that power, democracy, or welfare are relationally structured phenomena. . . . Welfare state variations . . . are not linearly distributed, but clustered by regime types’ (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 26). For this reason, Miriam Abu Sharkh and I have regarded cluster analysis as the most suitable method to test these arguments (see for full details and arguments Abu Sharkh and Gough, 2010).

To map welfare regimes we need data on at least two of the dimensions originally theorized by Esping-Andersen: the welfare mix and welfare outcomes. The welfare mix describes the entire pattern of resources and programmes that can act to enhance welfare or security in a nation-state. However, to operationalize this across the non-OECD world
### Table 11.3  Ideal-type welfare and informal security regimes compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant mode of production</th>
<th>Welfare Regime</th>
<th>Informal Security Regime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominant social relationship</td>
<td>Capitalism: technological progress plus exploitation</td>
<td>Informal economies within peripheral capitalism: uneven development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant source of livelihood</td>
<td>Exploitation and market inequalities</td>
<td>Variegated: exploitation, exclusion and domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant form of political mobilization</td>
<td>Access to formal labour market</td>
<td>A portfolio of livelihoods, including subsistence, cash crops, self-employment and informal employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State form</td>
<td>Class coalitions, issue-based political parties and political settlements</td>
<td>Diffuse and particularistic based on ascribed identities: patron-clientelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional landscape</td>
<td>Relatively autonomous state</td>
<td>‘State’ weakly differentiated from other power systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare outcomes</td>
<td>Welfare mix of market, state and family</td>
<td>Broader institutional responsibility matrix with powerful external influences and extensive permeability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path-dependent development</td>
<td>De-commodification plus health and human investment plus poverty/exclusion</td>
<td>Adverse incorporation, insecurity and exclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of social policy</td>
<td>Liberal, conservative and social democratic regimes</td>
<td>Less autonomous path dependency: patron-clientelism and external influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Countervailing power based on institutional differentiation</td>
<td>Less distinct policy mode due to permeability and contamination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social policy regimes in the developing world

is exceptionally difficult, not least because of lack of data. Thus, we could find no valid, reliable and comparative measures of: privately provided pensions and services (except for health purchases); community and NGO-provided welfare; the role of households and wider kin groups, except for overseas remittances; and little on the role and influence of transnational actors, except aid donors. Given this unfortunate fact, we are reduced at this stage to inferring the nature of informal and insecurity regimes from the data that are available.

To capture the extent of state responsibility for critical social resources, we use two pairs of variables covering expenditure/revenues and service delivery. The latter reflects the concern of Esping-Andersen that public expenditure is a poor indicator of welfare regimes. We must perforce rely on this, given data inadequacies in developing countries, but we are able to complement it with information on public service outputs (to be distinguished from welfare outcomes below). The first pair is:

- public spending on education and health as a share of GDP;
- social security contributions as a share of total government revenues (as a proxy for provision of social insurance benefits).

The second pair is:

- immunization against measles: a fairly restricted social policy target;
- secondary school enrolment of females: a higher, more extensive output target.

To represent international aspects of the welfare mix we have measures of two external transfer flows:

- official aid;
- remittances from overseas migrants.

To measure welfare outcomes we wanted to use the classic human development indicators of life expectancy, literacy and poverty. However, because of doubts about the reliability of poverty estimates we relied on the first two indices:

- life expectancy at birth;
- the illiteracy rate of young people aged 15–24 years.

We use cluster analysis to map the patterns of these variables for 65 non-OECD countries in 2000 (Abu Sharkh and Gough, 2010).
techniques, research design, list of countries included and major results are all reported in this article, so will not be repeated here. This analysis generates eight country clusters, which can be ordered according to the distances of their final cluster centres from the OECD welfare states (see Table 11.4). The cluster with the highest scores for public expenditure, public provision and welfare outcomes is labelled A. Most remote from this cluster are clusters G and H. The main findings for the year 2000 are summarized in Table 11.4.

The main findings are as follows. Countries in cluster A exhibit some characteristics of Western welfare states and may be labelled proto-welfare states. They share in common relatively extensive state commitments to welfare provision and relatively effective delivery of services plus moderately extensive social security programmes and superior welfare outcomes (by, it must be stressed, the standards of the non-OECD world). In a further cluster analysis of revenue sources, we also find these are the only countries that rely on substantial social security contributions (Gough and Abu Sharkh, 2011). Apart from Israel and Costa Rica, this cluster comprises two distinct geographical zones and historical antecedents: the countries of the former Soviet Union and its bloc members and the relatively industrialized countries of southern South America. Both developed European-style forms of social protection policies in the middle of the twentieth century, and both suffered degradation of these in the late twentieth century through the external imposition of neo-liberal programmes.

Cluster B exhibits the second-best level of welfare outcomes and social service outputs yet with low levels of state social spending (and low reliance on external flows of aid and remittances). This interesting combination suggests that security and welfare outcomes are enhanced by fast-growing average incomes and/or by other domestic, non-state, informal institutions. This combination is found in three major world regions: (1) China and most countries in East Asia from Korea through Thailand to Sri Lanka (except Indonesia, which dropped out of this group in 2000 having suffered most from the 1997 crisis); (2) the remaining countries of South and Central America not in cluster A; and (3) some countries in Western Asia (Iran, Turkey and Tajikistan).

Cluster C comprises mainly low-middle income countries distinguished by great reliance on remittances from abroad, which account for 9 per cent of gross national income on average and that constitute an informal functional alternative to public transfers. It comprises small countries in the Caribbean and Central America, plus Ecuador, Morocco and Sri Lanka.

In Southern and East Africa (South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Kenya) a distinct cluster D exhibited in 2000 relatively extensive public social policy (in both expenditures and outreach and
Table 11.4  Cluster means and country membership, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Identifier</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of countries</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid per capita/</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>12.05</td>
<td>27.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers’ remittances/</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public expenditure on health + education/</td>
<td>9.35</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>8.63</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>5.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social contributions/</td>
<td>29.46</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, secondary, fem. (% gross)</td>
<td>91.99</td>
<td>76.05</td>
<td>63.64</td>
<td>59.70</td>
<td>29.70</td>
<td>28.27</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunization, measles (% of children &lt; 12 mo.)</td>
<td>90.50</td>
<td>89.19</td>
<td>92.86</td>
<td>76.40</td>
<td>62.80</td>
<td>65.14</td>
<td>58.40</td>
<td>78.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11.4  (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Identifier</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth, total (years)</td>
<td>72.32</td>
<td>69.57</td>
<td>70.30</td>
<td>44.17</td>
<td>53.74</td>
<td>56.90</td>
<td>46.32</td>
<td>41.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy rate, youth total (% aged 15–24)</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>13.39</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>35.57</td>
<td>48.21</td>
<td>27.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Argentina  Bolivia  Dominican Rep  Botswana  Cameroon  Bangladesh  Benin  Mozambique
Belarus    Chile      Ecuador  Kenya      Namibia    Congo, Rep.  Ethiopia  Guinea-Bissau
Brazil     China      Colombia  El Salvador  South Africa  Ghana     Nepal     Rwanda
Bulgaria   Costa Rica  Iran      Jamaica    Morocco    Tanzania  Pakistan  Senegal
Costa Rica  Croatia    Kazakhstan  Korea, Rep.  Nicaragua  Sri Lanka  Papua N.G.  Togo
Croatia    Estonia     Estonia   Malaysia   Mexico     Moldova   Botswana  Togo
Estonia    Israel      Israel    Mexico     Nigeria    Morocco   Côte d’Ivoire  Togo
Europe     Lithuania   Lithuania  Mongolia   Mexico     Morocco   Guinea-Bissau  Togo
Lithuania  Peru       Paraguay   Mongolia   Mexico     Morocco   India     Togo
Moldova    Paraguay    Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Peru       Phillipines  Phillippines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Philippines Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Poland     Paraguay    Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Portugal   Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Romania    Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Russia     Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Tunisia    Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Ukraine    Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Uruguay    Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo
Venezuela  Phillipines  Phillipines  Mongolia   Mongolia   Morocco   India     Togo

literacy levels), but with poor health outcomes, due in large part to the HIV-AIDS pandemic.

Cluster E comprises another small group of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, plus Indonesia, which ‘fell’ from cluster B in 1990 due to the severe effects of the 1997 crisis. This is a heterogeneous group with relatively high foreign aid, low rates of girls’ schooling but paradoxically high levels of youth literacy.

Cluster F, with at its core the countries of the Indian sub-continent – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal – exhibits high levels of illiteracy and low numbers of females in secondary education. They boast a plethora of targeted social programmes and informal security mechanisms, but, the absence of effective schooling, health and social protection policies coupled with highly gendered outcomes, according to such indicators as the population sex ratio, betokens high levels of insecurity among the mass of the population.

Clusters G and H, mainly countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, exhibit low and in some cases falling life expectancy alongside relatively weak states with low levels of public responsibility, indicated both by spending levels and social outputs, and higher dependence on overseas aid. The prevalence of poverty is also high and persistent.

Thus, we find a highly variegated pattern of welfare and illfare systems across the Global South. We conclude that different groups of countries in the developing world face divergent threats to human well-being and divergent potentials for social policies to mitigate these. In Central and parts of Eastern Europe and parts of South America, despite serious erosion of their traditional welfare systems, we see a potential for new forms of social citizenship. These cluster A countries may be labelled proto-welfare states. In much of Sub-Saharan Africa, what social programmes there are have been eroded and submerged beneath a rising tide of human need. Clusters G and H remain zones of high insecurity and illfare, resembling our insecurity regime. However, the existence of a distinct informal security regime is less certain. It stretches over seven of our clusters and is much more variegated. Some states are relatively successful, other close to failing:

Successful ISRs  Cluster B combines relatively good welfare outcomes and social service outputs with remarkably low levels of state social spending and low levels of external flows (aid and remittances). This interesting combination suggests a successful informal security regime. Countries in this group are mainly but not always low-middle income, with high growth rates, but are relatively undemocratic and unequal. However, the degree of variation within the cluster is rather high, and culturally and historically it is a disparate group. There are several factors that might
explain their good performance, as well as the existence of effective informal security mechanisms (which we cannot independently measure). In countries like Chile and Korea, with social protection systems mandated by governments but administered privately, the mandated contributions of employers and employees will not figure as government expenditures or as social security contributions. Such countries would probably be identified as proto-welfare states if our data were more sensitive. Moreover, in several East Asian countries levels of welfare are likely to be enhanced by ‘developmental states’ with considerable infrastructure capacity to pursue agricultural and industrial policies but that do not develop traditional social policies. The welfare-enhancing impact of the state extends beyond traditional social policy – or at least our indicators of it. In a study of East Asian countries I followed Holliday (2000) in characterizing these as examples of a ‘productivist social development regime’ (Gough, 2004b).

**Failing ISRs: high illiteracy** First, there is the high illiteracy cluster centred on the Indian sub-continent: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal (not Sri Lanka). It is a notable and robust finding across a wide range of variables and k-numbers that South Asia is always differentiated from East and South East Asia, most notably due to its illiteracy, especially among women. Though these countries boast a plethora of public programmes and informal security mechanisms, the absence of effective schooling, health and security policies coupled with highly gendered outcomes, according to such indicators as the population sex ratio, betokens high levels of insecurity among the mass of the population. But these are by no means failed states – several now post high growth rates and India is proclaimed as a future economic giant.

**Failing ISRs: high morbidity** A second cluster emerged in 2000 in Southern and East Africa, comprising South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Kenya. These are high spending – high taxation countries (tax revenues average no less than 23 per cent of GDP) with good outreach and literacy levels. But they suffer from high levels of mortality and morbidity (Gough and Abu Sharkh, 2011). This will be due in part to the HIV/AIDS pandemic; but it may also reflect current high levels of inequality and the recent racist structures of social policy.

If we examine societal correlates of these different clusters certain patterns emerge (Abu Sharkh and Gough, 2010). Economic development is important: there is a clear gradient in income per head as we move down the regime alphabet. While the average income of cluster A is close to upper-middle income, the ISR clusters range from lower-middle income to
borderline low income (using World Bank categories). *Income inequality* does not vary in a linear way across the welfare regime types; rather it is an inverse U-shaped relationship. Clusters B and C are significantly more inegalitarian (as is the distinctive Southern African cluster) than group A and group F centred on South Asia.

The Gurr indicator of *democracy* records a global spread of democracy between 1990 and 2000, such that by 2000 there were no evident linkages between democratic practices and clusters. Within the informal security regimes, cluster C scores moderately well on democracy and welfare, D and E on welfare but not democracy, F on democracy but not welfare. The imposition and rapid spread since 1990 of Western models of, at least nominally, democratic practices, has undermined any previous correlations with regime type. Put another way, in 2000 there appears to be no significant link at the cluster level between civil-political and social rights.

Turning to cultural variables, the effects of cultural diversity on economic development have been extensively studied using measures of ‘ethno-linguistic fractionalization’ (ELF). Our research shows least cultural diversity among the proto-welfare states of cluster A, and most in cluster F. Most of the differences in ELF scores between clusters is significant, supporting the hypothesis that high cultural diversity within nations is associated with weak institutionalization of mechanisms of welfare.

Finally, we consider the influence of historical factors on emerging welfare regimes by applying Therborn’s four ‘roads to modernity’ (Therborn, 1992). The four routes are: (1) the first, West European route, which later embraced Eastern Europe and Russia; (2) the ‘settler societies’ of the New Worlds including both North and South America as well as Australasia and southern Eastern Africa; (3) the colonial zone of remaining Sub-Saharan Africa and much of Asia; and (4) the countries of ‘externally-induced modernization’, where nominally independent states in the face of Western pressures undertook autonomous strategies of development (including such nations as Japan, China, Thailand, Egypt and Turkey). We allocated countries to these four groups using the *Times Concise Atlas of World History* as a basic source (Barraclough, 1982) and cross-tabulated the results. This shows that the countries in cluster A are all members of the first two routes to modernity: Central and Eastern Europe and Latin American ‘settler’ countries. The most successful ISR clusters (B and C) embrace all four routes and display no clear historical background; however, all the countries of ‘externally-induced modernization’ are in cluster B (China, Korea, Thailand, Iran and Turkey). Cluster D comprises southern African settler countries and adjacent territories. The remaining clusters E–H with poorer welfare outcomes have all had a history of Western colonization.
CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has sought to adapt and apply the welfare regime approach, developed to provide a comparative analysis of social policy and welfare outcomes in the OECD region, to the developing world. The cluster analysis in the last part provides some support for our theoretical framework, but also reveals more complexity. At the two extremes, the existence of proto-welfare states and insecurity regimes is confirmed. Indeed, their most significant and persistent correlates are the least tractable: historical path of development and internal cultural diversity. However, the ‘middle’ concept of informal security regimes requires unbundling. All ISRs have in common lower-middle income per head and low levels of state expenditure on welfare. But they vary greatly, for example in democracy ratings and historical antecedents. These contribute to a wide spectrum of welfare outcomes ranging from the creditable to the very poor; in sum, from successful to failing systems of predominantly informal welfare.

The very idea of welfare states and welfare regimes entails the conscious imposition by public actors of collective values and choices on unplanned market outcomes. Thus, it might be concluded, ‘globalization’ fatally undermines the prospects for further welfare regime development across the world. And indeed this is a recurring theme in much contemporary literature. Yet, as regards the North, evidence to back up this assertion is remarkably thin. On the contrary, the conclusion of comparative studies of OECD countries is that global pressures are effectively mediated by the different welfare regimes: common pressures generate distinct policy reactions according to the domestic pattern of institutions, interests and ideas. Nation welfare regimes appear to be resilient in the face of transnational forces (Swank, 2002).

Yet it would be quite Panglossian to assume that the same conclusion can be drawn for the South. Indeed, many are pessimistic. Deacon (2000), for example, concludes that the preconditions to build cross-class political coalitions are fatally weakened by the opportunities available to Southern elites and middle classes to ‘exit’ from national social policies and programmes. It would take another chapter or more to address this question. Yet, our approach offers some support against this dystopian scenario. It is likely that, across much of the world, nation-states will remain crucial sites of contestation, including contestation over social policies. But actors will not contest them under circumstances of their own choosing. It makes no sense to apply a ‘one-size-fits-all’ model to analyse the nature of social policy and social development across these countries and regions, let alone to conceive and promote alternative social policies.
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PART IV

THE RESEARCH PROCESS
Cooperation in the social sciences between researchers from different cultural backgrounds is never straightforward or unproblematic. The difficulties of crossing cultural boundaries are accentuated when language barriers also have to be overcome. The European Research Area, launched in 2000, affords a particularly fertile terrain in which to analyse the comparative research process, due to the great diversity of economic, political and socio-cultural contexts contained within its borders. These differences are reflected in research traditions, which, in turn, impact on working methods. Whereas the natural sciences are dealing with concepts and language that are common, if not universal, the object of study for social scientists is socially constructed. Concepts therefore need to be located and understood within the national, regional, local and disciplinary contexts that produce them, and within which policy is formulated and implemented.

This chapter focuses on the ways in which the cultural and linguistic knowledge and experience of researchers impact on their approaches to comparative studies that cross national boundaries. It examines disciplinary traditions, theoretical and methodological issues, the choice of countries for comparison, as well as the practicalities of working in international teams. Attention is also devoted to the ways in which the research process and its outcomes are monitored and evaluated, involving an appraisal of the linkages made between research and policy.

UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH CULTURES

Within the Western world, differences have been identified at the epistemological level between three dominant ‘intellectual styles’ of research: Saxonic, Teutonic and Gallic. Although his depiction is not based on hard data and the aim is to represent ‘ideal types’ in the Weberian sense, Johan Galtung (1982) has drawn a useful distinction between the three styles by focusing on how different research tasks are performed. He identifies four sets of tasks: those involving the exploration of paradigms (what kinds of phenomena exist); empirical tasks associated with the description of phenomena; theoretical tasks carried out by researchers
in the quest for explanation; and the commentary they produce on the performance of tasks by other intellectuals. The emphasis attributed to each task serves to characterize members of the three major research communities. For Galtung, the Saxon style is strong on data collection and facts but weaker on the philosophical basis and theory formation, whereas the Teutonic and Gallic intellectual styles are more cerebral. The Anglo-American social science tradition, as it is also termed, which extends to the Nordic fringe of Europe, is generally considered to be empirical, while the continental European tradition, especially in Germany and France, and also in Southern European countries, is more philosophical.

Within his classification, Galtung makes a further distinction between the American variant of the Saxon style, founded on large-scale statistical analysis, but where individual units are not investigated in any detail, and the British variant with its emphasis on case studies, ideographic history and social anthropology. Both approaches share the conviction that knowledge rests on documentation. Within the cerebral styles, Galtung distinguishes between a Teutonic variant, with its ‘search for the axiomatic pyramid that facilitates the much honoured pursuits of Zurückführung and Ableitung’, and the more complex Gallic variant, involving ‘pyramidal exercises couched in highly embroidered, artistic forms of expression where elegance plays a key role as a carrier of conviction power’ (Galtung, 1982, p. 26, author’s italics). Here, data are for illustration rather than confirmation.

Examples abound to show that Galtung’s broad-brush classification is undoubtedly overstated. However, it serves a useful purpose in drawing attention to an issue that is often disregarded when embarking on multinational projects: the need to take account of the research cultures within which team members are trained and operate. Galtung argues that the emphasis placed by the Teutonic style on different theoretical options is associated with dissent and disharmony between researchers and, therefore, leads to divisiveness, whereas the Saxonic approach lends itself to dialogue between researchers based on consensus.

At the time when Galtung was writing in the 1980s, he was associated with the European Coordination Centre for Research and Documentation in Social Sciences in Vienna, which funded large-scale multinational social science projects, involving East and West European countries with very different political and economic regimes. As Michel Lesage (1987, p. 1) argued from experience of the same organization, East–West comparison was a difficult and delicate task due to ideological differences and the lack of reliable source materials, which created problems in cooperating across the ideological divide. Again from the Western standpoint and while working at the Vienna Centre, Ralph Kinnear (1987, p. 9) commented on ‘differ-
ences in the assumptions and preconceptions which the researchers adopt because they are the product of a particular ideological context’. During the Soviet era, social science researchers were severely constrained by the Marxist view of social and economic phenomena. Kinneir (1987) has shown how the problems of interference from the researcher’s background were easier to overcome in East–West research in disciplines such as geography and anthropology where the major aim of researchers was to understand societies other than their own. By contrast, economists were reluctant to compare countries across East–West boundaries and, if they did so, tended to view the East from the standpoint of the West and without paying attention to diversity as an object of study in its own right. The major differences in research cultures between East and West generally militated against anything other than a pragmatic approach to cross-national comparisons. The studies undertaken were, consequently, generally confined to the collection of vast amounts of disparate descriptive data, which did not allow for meaningful comparative analysis or interpretation with reference to the socio-cultural environments from which they were derived. The end of the Cold War and the development of plans for enlargement of the European Union to the East in the 1990s provided a new impetus for researchers from Central and Eastern Europe to participate in European projects. They were exposed to formidable challenges as they sought to build international class research infrastructures, adapt to multiple Western mindsets and construct cross-cultural alliances within European networks.

While considerable effort was expended to prepare researchers in former Soviet states for the epistemological leap from East to West, less attention has been paid to the barriers to effective cooperation between neighbouring countries within the European Union. Jean Tennom’s (1995) analysis of differences in cultural backgrounds between French (Gallic style) and British (Saxonic style) researchers, to take one example, shows that Franco-British cooperation is far from unproblematic. He argues that the very different research traditions and contexts of British and French researchers inform their approaches to international cooperation. In a similar vein, Pierre Joliot (2001), the grandson of Pierre and Marie Curie, contrasts the state-protected, introvert and closed French research environment with the competitive liberal environment of the United States of America, which stimulates outward and inward geographical mobility. The status of civil servants conferred on the 11 000 researchers employed by the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) in France at the turn of the twenty-first century afforded them protection from external interference, allowing them to concentrate on fundamental research, theoretical and conceptual work, and the production of new knowledge. Although, increasingly, they too have been exposed to competitive
pressures, CNRS researchers were not, hitherto, required to take account of the major economic, political and social concerns of the day. Nor were they obliged to attract external funding to be able to engage in research on topics of their own choosing. In a situation where evaluation did not directly determine funding, they lacked the incentive to disseminate their findings widely through international publications.

British researchers, by contrast, have long been driven by the market demands of productivity, ‘maximum output for minimum input’, as Tennom (1995, p. 275) expresses it, forcing them to become entrepreneurs. They were, and remain, more likely than their French counterparts to concentrate on applied, policy-relevant research and the user interface and to avoid theoretical excursions and intellectual adventurousness. They operate within a context where researchers are expected to be publicly accountable and where tax payers must be seen to receive value for money from their investment. In Britain, researchers know that their performance is being constantly monitored, assessed and called into question, which tends to encourage them to adopt an instrumental approach to their work, maximizing opportunities to cooperate with industry and other potential funders and engaging with end users in the policy arena.

Although the barriers created by the cultural background of researchers are rarely insuperable and may be an interesting object of study in their own right, they can lead to delays and misunderstandings. Many of these problems might be avoided if members of international teams were more explicit about one another’s culturally and linguistically determined assumptions and mindsets. Researchers who have experience of working on cross-national projects and are aware of the barriers to effective cooperation due to differences in intellectual styles are careful to develop networks within which consensus can be achieved on the basis of shared objectives and compatibility of approach. If coordinators do decide to constitute a team of researchers representing different intellectual styles, it is usually in the knowledge that the confrontation of different research cultures can be a source of fruitful dialogue rather than dissent, particularly if participants are encouraged to discuss methods and materials at all stages of the project design, data collection and analysis, and if they are able to respect diversity and bring new perspectives to the topic.

**DISCIPLINARY TRADITIONS IN COMPARATIVE RESEARCH**

Galtung’s different intellectual styles are to some extent reflected in disciplinary preferences for particular research designs. Much of the com-
comparative research undertaken in the early post-war period, especially the large-scale studies carried out by political scientists in the United States, in line with Galtung's broad-brush Saxonic style, aimed to track and map the development of socio-political and economic phenomena across the world. The intention was to produce generalizations, often from the North American experience, that were assumed to be universally applicable. The theory was grounded in the assumption that universal characteristics could be identified in social phenomena, independent of a specific, cultural context (Rose, 1991). Following in this tradition, Harold Wilensky and Charles Lebeaux (1965) used regression analysis of welfare effort and economic development to test grand theory about the logic of industrialism, arguing that Western societies would undergo the same evolutionary process and ultimately converge.

By contrast, the culturalist approach, which also developed in the United States, focused on national uniqueness and particularism, and cross-cultural contrasts and differences. In line with Galtung's second Saxonic variant, culturalism, as practised in Britain, has drawn heavily on ethnographic accounts to illustrate diversity and divergence rather than similarity and convergence (Chamberlayne and Rustin, 1999).

Following on from the neo-evolutionists (for example, Parsons, 1966), again in the United States, a body of theory developed that took account of the efficiency of different societies in adapting to evolutionary advances. It was argued that general theories could be formulated if the diversity and mutual interdependence of social structures is recognized and if phenomena are situated in relation to their spatial and temporal locations. The assumption was that systems are not unique and social reality may be partly explained by phenomena extrinsic to the system, enabling more general or universal factors to be identified (Przeworski and Teune, 1970). Pursuing this line of argument, researchers from the British Saxonic tradition applied the approach in disciplines such as organizational behaviour (Lammers and Hickson, 1979) and industrial relations (Hyman, 1998) to demonstrate the effect of the national context on the object of study. Their purpose was to determine the extent to which generalizations can be made from the theoretical models and hypotheses they are seeking to test empirically.

Adaptations and developments of these three approaches to cross-national comparisons can be found among researchers who are the product of the Gallic and Teutonic intellectual styles. In his analysis of Western European welfare states since World War II, Peter Flora (1986) from Germany, for example, combined a configurational analysis of institutional variations, where countries were considered as cases, with analysis of empirical data to test specific hypotheses. He argued that basic
structures themselves change and lead to new processes. He concluded that the development of welfare states was long term and irreversible, but that institutional variation was persistent and would continue to be fundamental in determining solutions to the challenges posed by low or no growth economies.

The so-called ‘societal’ approach was perhaps most fully articulated in the cerebral Gallic style by Marc Maurice (1989) and his co-workers in industrial sociology in France. They stressed the importance of analysing the relationship between the macro and the micro, implying an interaction between a plurality of causal factors, on the basis that actors cannot be separated from structures and vice versa, since they are all socially constructed.

Societal analysis has proved to be particularly valuable for cross-national comparisons in social policy. This is an area where, as Jochen Clasen (1999, p. 3) has pointed out, in the latter part of the twentieth century, the large-scale correlational approach (American Saxonic) was progressively declining in favour of cross-national case studies (British Saxonic), which place greater emphasis on understanding the policy process. Deborah Mabbett and Helen Bolderson (1999) support the view that the analysis of regime analysis can be most fruitfully pursued through case studies, arguing from their own work that the multi-dimensional modelling tradition of social welfare systems does ‘not survive confrontation with the complex detail of actual arrangements’, while case studies can ‘yield generalizable theoretical insights’ (Mabbett and Bolderson, 1999, pp.47, 50). Case studies in social policy (for example, Heclo, 1974) have long demonstrated the value of the concept of path dependency in analysing the constraining or enabling effect of decisions made in the early state of a policy or institution on the future choices available to policy-makers.

More recently, interest in the case study approach and in the concept of path dependency has been stimulated among social policy analysts by the acceleration of the European integration process and by the need for the applicant states to meet the economic, social and political criteria laid down for membership. Governments in East and West have found a new incentive to look for opportunities for cross-border learning, requiring a discriminating and contextualized analysis of the relationship between macro- and micro-level structures.

LANGUAGE BARRIERS TO CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISONS

Whatever their disciplinary orientation, British researchers do, as Tennom (1995) acknowledges, have the immense advantage over other national
research communities of possessing a lingua franca, which facilitates their participation in the international arena and explains their frequent leadership role in European research networks and projects. Another characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon research culture, which is increasingly being adopted by the Nordic states and the Netherlands, as well as by countries like Portugal, is the need to publish in internationally refereed journals. Here too, British researchers have what might be considered an advantage over other countries because of their language and training. In conjunction with financial and academic pressures, these factors may help to explain the relatively high ranking of British social science research, as measured by international performance indicators derived from the publications indices in use in the 1990s (Adams et al., 1998). Publication ratings are calculated from databases originally established by the Institute for Scientific Information in the United States for bibliographic searching, and are generally acknowledged to have a strong bias towards Anglo-American English-language literature. The impact factor of individual articles thus reflects the extent to which different research communities have sought to internationalize their output by publishing in English-language journals, thereby increasing the chances that their findings will be widely read and cited. In the social sciences, the work of Dutch, Finnish and Swedish researchers, who routinely publish in English, is, for example, much more widely read beyond national borders than work in French, German or Spanish (Husso et al., 2000).

In social science disciplines, monolingual speakers of English are, however, at a disadvantage. Researchers whose native language is English, tend, as in the natural sciences, to believe that the concepts transmitted through their language are universally understood. The difficulty that many social scientists encounter in studies that cross linguistic boundaries, as argued by Edmond Lisle in the 1980s, is that:

> language is not simply a medium to carry concepts. It is itself the very matter of scientific observation and discourse. When we study a particular country, we are examining it with the only instruments available, namely a conceptual system and set of ideas produced within and by the society we are investigating, reflecting its history, its institutions, its values, its ideology, all of which are expressed in that country’s language. By definition, that overall system and those concepts have no exact equivalents in other societies. When we engage in cross-national comparative studies, therefore, we have to find the nearest approximation. (Lisle, 1985, p. 24)

Lisle goes on to argue that research on different societies that is confined to using English results in loss of information and inaccuracy since English cannot accurately express all the concepts and ideas generated in other cultures and conveyed in other languages. Approximation may, he
suggests, result in misinterpretation. The thought processes and mindsets underlying different modes of expression (French is more abstract and Cartesian than English) imply that different approaches and interpretations are being called into play.

The development of a European Research Area within the European Union and the extension of its boundaries to Central and Eastern Europe undoubtedly created a new openness to the rich variety of cultures and languages that it contains. At the same time, it reinforced the dominance of British researchers as project coordinators, and of English as the working language of trans-European networks and teams, but without dispelling the impression that British researchers are insular and not fully committed to the European concept. Even if project members are fluent in two or three languages, it is unlikely that researchers involved in multinational projects will have an equal command of all the languages concerned, particularly when few European projects or networks in the social sciences are limited to only three or four language communities. It is axiomatic that researchers who can operate in only one language will have to rely on intermediaries to provide them with filtered and selective access to other cultures.

The cultural baggage of researchers shapes not only their formulation of the research question and the theoretical assumptions underlying it, but also the choice of data with which they will be working and their interpretations of findings. The researcher’s cultural environment is usually considered to be less problematic in projects dealing with description and large-scale quantitative data, where language is primarily seen as an instrument for obtaining facts. In multilingual projects, it cannot, however, be assumed that the facts collected represent the same reality. Not only linguistic but also conceptual equivalence is needed to ensure that questionnaires and interview schedules accurately reflect the intentions of their designers (Harkness, 2003). Translation of survey instruments has to be aimed at expressing questions in such a way that the stimulus has an equivalent meaning and purpose and provokes an equivalent reaction in different societies. Good translation practice must, therefore, direct effort towards achieving conceptual equivalence rather than lexical comparability by close scrutiny of the context within which language is used and develops.

The unit of expression is not necessarily the same across languages, as exemplified in the field of welfare where, for example, the denotations and connotations of vocabulary for different benefits vary considerably from one national context to another within the European Union. These variations have been illustrated by the comparison of family allowances and child benefits in EU member states (Hantrais, 2004, pp.122–7),
the concept of flexibility in Western and Eastern Europe (Wallace and Cousins, 2001), and residualism and universalism in welfare systems (Mabbett and Bolderson, 1999, p. 47). Many key concepts in social policy at EU level are contested: poverty line, social exclusion and inclusion, training, unemployment, part-time work, parental leave, lone parenthood, caring and take-up of benefits (Brown, 1986; MacGregor, 1993; Hantrais, 2004). In the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, the experience of transition showed how important it is to take account of within-country changes and to revisit earlier data, since their reliability and interpretation was often called into question, especially in areas where concepts are politically and ideologically charged, as, for example, with unemployment (Kutsar and Tiit, 2000).

If the aim of a study is to describe and map benefits systems in different countries and provide a detailed account of entitlements, as in the annual publications on social protection produced by the Mutual Information System on Social Protection in the European Union (MISSOC) for the European Commission, it is not too difficult to characterize national benefits systems. For the purposes of comparison, however, the advice given by Richard Titmuss (1967, p. 57) in the 1960s still holds, namely that national social policies should be treated ‘not by discussing the details for this or that country, but with the aid of concept and models, principles and goals, and in terms of categories of benefits, contributions and users’. The most meaningful units of analysis, he suggests, should be ‘classes of benefits, kinds of entitlement, patterns of utilisation, and differences in goals and objectives’ (ibid.). In qualitative studies involving fine-grained analysis, the ability to understand the way these units are socially constructed and expressed through language is critical in gaining a proper understanding of other cultures, their defining characteristics and their identities.

SELECTING COUNTRIES FOR CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

Proposals submitted for European funding are required to involve at least two different member states or one member state and one associated state. The European Commission has also generally tended to try to ensure that ‘less favoured’ member states are well represented, and it set out to assist candidate countries to become part of the European Research Area. The reasons given by project coordinators for selecting particular mixes of countries for projects in the social sciences are often pragmatic rather than having a scientific basis (Hantrais, 2009, pp. 9–11). In view of the cultural, disciplinary and linguistic issues raised above, coordinators often prefer to
draw on existing networks and partners with whom they know they can cooperate. A more scientific justification may be the interest of a particular geographical mix in the context of the development of welfare regimes. The choice of countries may be intended to illustrate the possible effects of diversity in provision, or to uncover examples of good practice, for instance by comparing the situation in EU member and applicant states.

The number and mix of countries and the variables selected have several consequences for the research process and for the findings. The number affects the depth of analysis: the broader the country coverage, the greater the likelihood is that generalizations can be drawn from the findings but that only a small number of within-country variations and contexts can be examined. The smaller the number of countries included, the greater the contextual detail, and the easier it is to be consistent in specifying and applying concepts and in using qualitative evidence. Findings will differ depending on the mix of countries and the variables selected. As already suggested, projects that include EU member states from Central and Eastern Europe are likely to come up with different results from those that confine their coverage to other regions in the Union. A country that appears to be an aberrant case in one grouping may be closer to the mean in another cluster.

According to the principle of ‘variable distance’, developed by Georg Simmel (1980), the distance from the object under observation affects the way it is observed. The long-distance perspective can be exemplified by the large-scale quantitative studies in political science coordinated from the United States, the socioeconomic projects of the Vienna Centre or European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin, the European Commission’s reports on demographic trends, employment and social protection across Europe, based on Eurostat data, and also the information provided by national correspondents for the European Commission’s observatories. Of necessity, these accounts are often confined to description; their purpose is to provide snapshots of situations in a large number of different countries at a given point in time or for selected variables over time.

By contrast, a ‘close-up’ comparison of a social phenomenon within a country may reveal differences attributable to region, class, age, gender or ethnicity, for example in population ageing, levels of poverty or access to social entitlements, which may not be apparent when aggregated national-level data are being compared from a distance. The close-up view allows identification of subnational variations that may result in greater similarities being found across countries than within them. Although most social policies are framed at national level, they are often implemented at local level, providing scope for regional disparities, as exemplified by minimum
income, welfare to work policies or the provision of child and elder care. What emerge as significant differences within and between countries may pale into insignificance when the EU member and applicant states are compared to the less developed world.

The contours of the long-distance view may also change over time. Just as earlier waves of EU membership from the North and South altered the European ‘mean’ and changed territorial boundaries, further enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe again changed the shape of the Union, creating new cultural boundaries that have to be crossed and leading to new intellectual alliances. In the past, Central and Eastern European countries tended to be considered as a block because they shared in common their experience of the Soviet regime. The close scrutiny to which they have been subjected since transition reveals, however, that their social development during the Soviet era, and subsequently, has been very different. Estonia, for example, which forcefully opposed Soviet rule, moved rapidly towards the Nordic social model, as typified by Finland, despite the strong German influence on its higher education system and research culture. By contrast, Poland’s strong religious base and intellectual traditions aligned it more closely with the Mediterranean countries and Ireland, as illustrated by its social policy stance.

**LINKAGES BETWEEN RESEARCH AND POLICY**

Analysis of research cultures suggests that differences in intellectual styles and disciplinary backgrounds impact on the ways in which the relationship between research and policy is conceptualized and expressed. Again the United Kingdom and France can be taken to exemplify two diametrically opposite approaches to this relationship. British social scientists almost routinely build a policy dimension into their research proposals. They are generally required to be familiar with the policy agenda of their ‘customers’ or ‘end users’, and to identify a policy forum where they will disseminate their findings. In France, by contrast, the social science research community demands that its intellectual freedom and independence should be respected and that its work should not be constrained or tainted by political interference, even though researchers rely on government departments for funding support, and they launch research initiatives with a policy focus. French researchers expect to be able to adopt a critical stance and to choose the extent to which they engage with the policy process. Hitherto, the European tradition was believed to be closer to the French model but, progressively, the drive for public accountability has resulted in the requirement that the policy dimension of European-funded
research should be made explicit and that research should inform policy debates.

This shift was formalized when the European Commission announced the creation of a European Research Area in 2000. A major objective was to increase the international impact of the European research effort by strengthening the relationship between research activities and policies. Already between 1995 and 1999, some 250,000 transnational cooperation links had been established, but the Commission was looking for something more. It wanted to encourage closer intergovernmental consultation over science policy as a means of removing obstacles to the free movement of researchers, knowledge and technologies in Europe. The intention was to coordinate the implementation of national research programmes at EU level. The link between research and policy is clearly articulated: it is legitimate to use public funds to support research activities if the findings are of public benefit, the more so if research makes a contribution to the implementation of public policies or helps to resolve the problems confronting society. Another important principle legitimating public funding of research is the added value of European cooperation: it should produce economies of scale by creating critical mass, by bringing together complementary expertise and by underpinning EU priorities and interests.

Although researchers undertaking European-funded research projects are increasingly aware of the need for the policy relevance of their work to be made more explicit, the ways in which the policy dimension is incorporated into projects are variable. Cross-national social science research projects may help to improve understanding of socioeconomic change among policy actors. They may provide a tool, for example in the form of a database, which can be used to support policy analysis and policy development. Large-scale quantitative projects may be looking for causal linkages between variables to support particular policy options. Research may serve to heighten awareness of the possible implications of socioeconomic change for policy, or identify policy as an explanatory factor in change. The aim of the research may be to evaluate policy measures, to look for examples of good practice or improve the efficacy of policy responses (Hantrais, 2009, Ch. 6).

The growing importance attributed to policy relevance creates a further complication in what is already an immensely complex process by highlighting the ideological dimension in comparative social policy. The main obstacle to East–West comparisons in sociology in the 1980s was the politicization of the discipline, which was considered as part of the establishment process. Researchers therefore had to engage in self-censorship and regulation if they wanted to avoid losing their political patronage (Kinnear, 1987). Alain Desrosières (1996) has shown how differences
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in political and institutional styles influence national statistical systems and, consequently, data collection and the interpretation of findings. He characterizes Britain by its empiricism and relatively uncodified system, described as ‘political arithmetic’. German legalism, by contrast, has rooted statistics in the formal description of states, while French centralism has resulted in a high level of legitimacy being attributed to statistical institutions, which was also the case in Spain during the Franco era.

The relationship between researchers and policy actors is not always easy to manage. Bruce Stafford (2001) suggests that it should not be taken for granted that policy-makers always welcome research-based evidence. As he points out, policy-relevant research may contain both ‘good’ and ‘bad’ news. The findings from commissioned research may be politically embarrassing or call into question power relations in the policy process, as demonstrated by the reactions of governments to findings that appear to undermine policies on sensitive issues such as unemployment or poverty. Policy actors may resist changes that researchers recommend on the basis of their evidence. Researchers and policy actors may be working to very different time horizons and agendas. For political actors the painstaking analysis of past trends is only of academic interest, whereas researchers may be reluctant to draw hasty conclusions from their observation of current trends or speculate about future developments on the basis of headline statistics. Policy actors are likely to be more concerned about whether they have got a policy right, with an eye on the next elections and the reactions of the media. Researchers may prefer to devote their efforts to unravelling a methodological or theoretical point with a view to securing the next refereed journal publication.

The extent to which meaningful dialogue has developed between researchers and policy actors at different levels (local, national and international) and in different disciplines is not easy to determine. The onus would seem to be on researchers to initiate an exchange of views and to bring their findings to the attention of policy-makers. Researchers who have mastered the skills needed to operate effectively in international networks that cross research cultures may find that they are also well equipped to cross the boundaries that separate researchers from policy actors.

THE CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISONS

This chapter has illustrated the ways in which the cultural and linguistic knowledge and experience of researchers affect their approach to
comparative studies across cultural boundaries. It has shown how research and disciplinary traditions, theoretical and methodological issues, the choice of countries for comparison, as well as the practicalities of working in international teams can shape the research process and influence findings and dissemination strategies. Questions have been raised about the motivation of researchers in undertaking cross-cultural comparisons and, more especially, in joining multinational teams, when the effort involved does not always seem to be commensurate with the rewards. It is most probably easier to work with partners who share the same assumptions, objectives and perceptions, and adopt similar working practices, than it is to communicate across ideological and intellectual divides, whether they are national or disciplinary.

To a much greater extent than in the past, social science researchers in Europe have been forced by the advent of the European Research Area and the incorporation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to follow the model of the natural sciences by forming large-scale multinational consortia (critical mass). They are actively encouraged to seek external funding and build an international dimension into their research. In return, they are exposed to the pressures of accountability and productivity, and required to demonstrate policy relevance and added value through research cooperation. The evidence provided in the present chapter suggests that the ensuing challenges for social scientists within Europe are considerable, not least because language and culture are at one and the same time the object and medium of study. The inability to understand other languages and cultures can serve as a selective and exclusionary mechanism, determining membership of teams and working arrangements, and ultimately the interpretation of findings.

The rewards for those who rise to meet the challenge of crossing cultural boundaries are also considerable. Far from resulting in cultural levelling, the opportunity exists for researchers to develop new insights, knowledge, understanding and awareness of cultural diversity, to learn from the exchange of information and experience and, thereby, to contribute to the development of an international research area.

NOTE

1. In recognition of the centrality of research in a knowledge-based society, the aim of the European Research Area is to increase the impact of European research efforts and, thereby, prevent Europe from falling behind the United States. The objective is to strengthen the coherence of research activities and policies conducted in Europe by coordinating activities at national and EU level (Commission of the European Communities, 2000).
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13 Cross-national qualitative research methods: innovations in the new millennium

Steen Mangen

This chapter investigates some of the most significant innovative developments in the past decade in qualitative methods that cross cultures and languages. As in the first edition, the research addressed is largely confined to the European Union and mostly published in the last five or so years. Necessarily selective, it reviews recent literature on problems and resolutions for managing cross-national investigative frameworks and contributions that have been concerned with the management of multilingual data. After a brief review of well-established methods of data collection it examines innovations exploiting the near limitless possibilities of web-based and electronic sources, as well as a stable of qualitative strategies derived from set theoretic methods that are arguably the most important – and certainly some of the most debated – of recent years.

Defining the cross-national is less problematic than delimiting the qualitative. The former is not a method per se but an approach that incorporates cross-cultural space and, often, time. However, qualitative research cannot simply be defined as the non-numerical, although much of this research deals with spoken, written or visual material. Over 20 years ago Howe (1988), in an influential paper, dismissed a rigid positivist–interpretivist cleavage as redundant in what some were seeing as a ‘post-positivist turn’. This, for him, opened up opportunities for fruitful, innovative quantitative-qualitative methodologies driven largely by pragmatic considerations. More recently, Brannen (2005) has rejected the idea of a crude division between interpretation of meaning as being qualitative and positivist observation and measurement as quantitative for being epistemologically over-simplistic, since in interrogating their data and how it has been collected researchers of both traditions need to approach their task reflexively. Moreover, for her, both may be engaged in attempts at generalization, though in the case of the qualitative the ambition is theoretical generalization rather than a statistical referent to defined populations. These sorts of arguments are marshalled in pressing the case for ‘mixed methods’, which are discussed later. This being said, though by no means exclusive to the qualitative approach, beyond merely
literal reportage, many qualitative researchers seek the higher ambition of systematically confronting and integrating their personal role within the research act and how it shapes the data produced. Reflexivity is therefore a paramount consideration in qualitative investigation, as too is the concern with agency and the accounts by the subjects of their experienced worlds (Mason, 1996). Ragin (1999) offers a further distinction between the two methods as situated in the adoption of either case-oriented or variable-oriented research strategies and the research goals they inform and are informed by. These issues are taken up later in this discussion.

CROSS-NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Cross-national analytic frameworks have to accommodate the interaction between the unit and the level of analysis. The ‘ladder of abstraction’ proposed by Sartori (1978) has informed our understanding of the difficult decisions to be made in attempts to manage the adverse relationship between the intention or connotation that is rich in contextualization but with potentially limited transferability and extension or denotation with attendant dangers of ‘conceptual stretching’ (see Seung-yoon, 2008; Sartori, 2009).

Much recent cross-national research is directed towards disaggregating ‘whole systems’ and to investigating connections between sub-systems. Thus, policy sectors or policy effects on social dimensions such as race and gender may significantly compromise conventional institutionally based ‘welfare regime’ distinctions (Svallfors, 1997). The practical scope for disaggregation and re-aggregation of many kinds of data has been considerably expanded by the growing availability of a large range of computer-assisted qualitative data processing methods that are suitable in multi-lingual contexts.¹

Computer-assisted approaches do at least permit retention of the source data with the possibility of relatively easy retest facility but other strategies for moving between different levels of aggregation expose the cross-national researcher to problematic issues of interpretation. National teams producing broadly parallel research output are commonly employed and this has the advantage of a relatively rapid generation of data and, in addition, can provide invaluable contextualization to aid the interpretation of the material (Middlemiss Lé Mon, 2010). However, there may be considerable risks of explanatory ‘slippage’ in the cross-national collation process through a loss of control of the raw data. Quilgars and colleagues (2009) complain that the cross-national synthesis of material can compromise the degree to which individual country teams retain command of analysis,
with the consequent loss of depth and nuance. Their comparative study of housing, though it relied on a developed common analytical framework, nonetheless had to accept the loss of analytic sensitivity to nuance and context as an acceptable trade-off to facilitate comparison. Projects that rely on well-established and proven networks of researchers offer some purchase. Kvist and Saari (2007), for instance, address the concept of Europeanization by drawing together material from 11 parallel studies that were a product of a tightly drawn protocol permitting the cross-national compilers to interweave analysis at different levels to produce a reasonably articulated speculative model.

Nonetheless, beyond these relatively practical concerns of project management there can be profound problems in manipulating data from one level of analytic abstraction using material derived from another. Stiller and van Kersbergen (2008) reflect on the resulting problems of interpreting causal mechanisms when such data are the product of potentially conflicting theories. They address the issue of ‘matching’ of data and the hypotheses they stimulate and question whether what often seems to be the uncritical integration of individual elements from very different research designs into a single framework can be theoretically justified or whether what is produced is a set of perplexing and disparate hypotheses. These authors urge more attention to the matching of hypotheses derived from highly abstract and more empirical levels since cause and effect may be situated on different levels of abstraction.

These sorts of problems are compounded in research contexts, as is common, involving small-N samples. It is typical of qualitative comparative research that a variety of factors conspire to expand the range of variables included, whilst holding constant the sample of countries or localities. There is a risk that we cope by resorting to established classificatory models, a product of one specific line of enquiry but progressively stretched for use in others. A well-trodden path in order to limit these problems has been to opt for a ‘most similar’ sample design (Przeworski and Teune, 1970). Certainly, much of the research at the cross-national level reported here has adopted this design. ‘Most similar’ country or systems sampling may offer premiums for testing specificity and different outcomes, with perhaps the inclusion of ‘within-group’ deviant cases to expand explanatory capacities. Most similar designs may also be indicated if one is interested in policy diffusion among near neighbours or ‘families of nations’ if policy diffusion is the object of study (Anckar, 2007). In addition, it may cope better with problems of functional, conceptual and contextual equivalence.

However, whilst it may permit holding constant as many extraneous variables as possible, the most similar design – at least at the level of
cross-country analysis – is necessarily limited by the number of states in the world, so it is impossible to keep all possible explanatory factors constant (Anckar, 2008). Moreover, data management problems may arise due to high intra-class variation: in other words, how to cope with very different ostensible ‘sames’ (Johnson and Rake, 1998; Nissen, 1998). Kennett (2001) is concerned that most similar sampling –at least in the European context – is too comfortably settling into an over-reliance on by now ‘standard’ welfare typologies that are too narrowly bounded and present dangers that objects of sampling not conforming to preconceived suppositions will be neglected. It should be added that a focus on the subnational level may offer wider potential for increasing sample size and, moreover, in many policy contexts is a more relevant sampling device.

Research employing the ‘most different’ design within this chapter’s frame of reference is focused on sub-systems and testing for universality in terms of similar outcomes or evidence of broad policy diffusion among more distant countries. The ‘most similar’–‘most different’ framework assists case selection for the stable of methods known as qualitative comparative analysis (Rihoux, 2006; De Meur and Gottcheiner, 2009). Finally, Anckar (2007, 2008) discusses a means of minimizing the problem of the small-N samples but many variables in cross-national research through the use of serial two- and three-country comparison and pairs of paired countries. For example, in a two-country comparison, one may introduce a third country comparator that is matched on some of the key independent variables. This will significantly expand the comparative potential use of many sets of units rather than one set in research that aims at exploring relations between several variables.

ISSUES OF LANGUAGE

Language is the most emblematic of problems of delimited contextualization in qualitative research. Recent literature has tended to stress that multi-lingual contexts offer opportunities as resources for reflexivity and cross-cultural mapping and are not something that should be viewed as a constraint in determining meanings. Hermans (2003) has argued for ‘thick translations’ to curb reductiveness, not a single best rendering but those that offer access to a range of valid interpretations of meaning both for those engaged to implement the research and the end reader of it. Accordingly, Bahovec and Hemmings (2004), reporting on the ‘travelling concepts’ project, examine how context structures discourse, in their case feminist concepts that are the product of different intellectual traditions and associated conceptual histories. Bemoaning the lack of detailed analy-
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sis of how translation can systematically compound the problems of conceptual stretching, they propose that the resort to ‘concept clusters’ that force us to expand our thinking might offer advantages. Broadly similar resolutions are promoted by Middlemiss Lé Mon (2010) who reports the problems of linguistic and associated management of a cross-national project concerned with religion and the welfare state. Relatively new concepts that, for example, have gained recent currency in the Anglophone world can be problematic. She cites the problems of linguistic equivalence of elements of new public management as an example. For her it is the perplexing issue of the ‘why not’ in equivalence of key terms like these and others to do with church organization that became an interesting pursuit in researching the evolving roles religion is assuming in different cultural and political contexts.

Problems of translation, of course, ultimately depend on the nature of the research problematic. Some research agendas will address less problematic subjects than those that, for example, are concerned with very personal or culturally sensitive factors like emotions, sexual behaviours or religious belief. Of course, researchers endorsing a constructivist perspective see translation as more socially and culturally contingent and emphasize reflexivity. In this perspective the issue of power relations and whose language and discourse is the effective voice, and the resultant conceptual hegemony, are the objects of critical research endeavour (see, for example, Wilson, 2001).

Temple and Young (2004) discuss these hierarchies of language power and how, on the face of it, there can be no neutral technicist position. The power of translation, they insist, critically is a function of how and when it is integrated into the research design, for there may be many opportunities for subversion of meaning. For them, early Anglophone reduction of material in many research settings will undermine the potential for productively investigating nuanced relations between language and culture. This loss will be particularly acute for non-English collaborators as data are subsequently processed through an Anglophone lens. But, equally, they rob the English language partners of chances to integrate other interpretive perspectives into the research at a later stage. Such problems are rarely frankly confronted, not least in research write-up. And they are typically compounded by the fact that the final text reaches the wider research community only in English and thus – eternally in print – ‘writes out the terms on which it was produced’ (ibid., p. 164)

Issues of power may be equally in evidence in the decisions about whether and for how long to engage third party translators or interpreters in the research act. Researchers able to undertake their own translation have some benefits, but that does not avoid the problems of interpreting
meaning through too narrow a socio-cultural lens. On the other hand, Middlemiss Lé Mon (2010) found that relying on native speakers was almost a hindrance in the project she reported, as unproblematic translations and linguistic equivalence were often assumed. Temple and Young (2004) are concerned with how prominent a role third party translators should be afforded. They argue the case for their retention throughout all research stages through to write-up(s). This is because interpreters and translators should be treated reflexively as ‘cultural brokers’ of meanings rather than neutral transmitters of unique meaning. As with the principal investigators in a project there is a need to confront the ways in which their social worlds impact on the styles of translation they offer.

CHOOSING AMONG METHODS

‘Mixed Methods’

Many cross-national qualitative projects attempt to some extent to exploit mixed methods, if only to illuminate contextualization by means of statistical reportage. Ultimately, of course, the decision to try to accommodate data produced by qualitative and quantitative methods will depend on the nature of the project and the quality of both kinds of data that can be assembled. It goes without saying that it would be nonsensical to mix cross-national data on (say) emotions that are a product of a crudely positivist ‘life as a five-point scale’ approach with materials derived from intensive interviewing relying on an interpretive analytical framework. But, beyond that, opting to mix methods carries risks as well as opportunities, which demand careful assessment. There has been considerable recent research output evaluating the pros and cons of employing ‘mixed methods’ particularly in terms of whether the mixing extends to the paradigmatic level and with what consequences.

Those subscribing to the validity of mixed methods include Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) who insist that distinctions between the approaches are more of degree than of kind and, as such, represent something of a continuum. In fact they go further and assert that single method research represents a threat to social scientific advance. Their line of argument is broadly that put forward by Howe (1988) who, largely on bottom-up pragmatic grounds, rejected the idea of incompatibility of competing positivist quantitative and interpretivist qualitative epistemological paradigms. He examined what the quantitative and qualitative mean at the level of data, research design, analysis and interpretation. They are simply ‘what works’ in practice and experience in terms of providing valuable additional evi-
Paradigms must prove their worth with regard to how they inform and are informed by research methods: it is a two-way ‘grounded’ relationship between method and paradigm. If they do, there is little danger of violation through mixed methods. After all, quantitative researchers also engage with ontologically qualitative concepts. Also among proponents is the more contingent position taken by Brannen (2005) who addresses the issues in relation to the various phases of the research act and the different considerations that may apply at each stage. Combining methods can lead to four possibilities: corroboration; elaboration; complementarity; and contradictions or conflicts of findings. However, she cautions that simply collapsing data derived from different methods cannot be assumed to produce a unitary reality.

For Mahoney and Terie (2009), unquestioning embrace of mixed methods underplays critical paradigmatic differences. Comparative historical research, for example, originates in a different problematic – principally addressing the case-oriented specific ‘causes of effects’, focusing on sufficient causation. By comparison, research relying heavily on quantitative methods primarily interrogates the population-oriented ‘effects of causes’ and employs an average effect conception of causation. Beyond preliminary statistical contextualizing profiles, then, there may be real concerns about the extent to which it is possible to integrate data sourced from one with the other. Stiller and van Kersbergen (2008, p. 141) similarly insist that studies combining variable-oriented quantitative and case-oriented qualitative data must confront the serious problems of how to understand and manage the mixture of material produced that, in amalgam, has no firm theoretical grounding. In particular, this relates to the issue of ‘matching’: how to convincingly reconcile loosely connected hypotheses from contrasting and even conflicting theoretical perspectives.

**Surveys**

Survey methods in international settings, whilst frequently the only means of obtaining data, have to confront problems of differential response rates cross-nationally. Snowballing may go someway to offset this as a pragmatic means of reaching more respondents through third parties, especially where research relates to sensitive subjects. A novel management strategy has been the use of the internet. Holge-Hazelton (2002), for example, discusses its employment in developing online links with a sample of diabetic patients in an investigation of their ongoing self-perceived predicaments.

Commonly, surveys rely on questionnaires. Their advantages lie in the ability to test variants of the schedule, and to engage in forward and
backward translation, with obvious advantages in terms of contributing to the establishment of acceptable levels of inter-rater reliability. Yet, there are several considerations to bear in mind in their use in comparative research. Consent to respond to informal questionnaires can vary significantly among cultures and sub-cultures, a reluctance to comply having been reported, for example, in the case of former totalitarian regimes such as Russia (Chubarova, 2002). Questionnaires may also be the victim of subtle differences in cultural specificity: questions may not convey the same meaning, with implications for the range of responses elicited, especially if they are restricted to fixed formats.

Approaches to overcoming problems of translation rely on well-established, albeit at times technicist, methods of forward and backward translation to determine linguistic, semantic and cultural equivalence. Here research management issues typically revolve around a cost–benefit assessment of opting for one or several of sequential, parallel or simultaneous translation processes. Serra-Sutton and Herdman (2001) argue the case for translations undertaken either by professionals or bilingual translators whose mother tongue is the target language to assess equivalence, supported by ‘expert’ verification, either through focus groups or panels, with the aim of reconciling differences in order to arrive at an agreed third version. For their part, Dean and colleagues (2007) promote an improved version of the question appraisal system (QAS) for pretesting research instruments that they argue could well be the most cost-effective solution in many investigative settings. The QAS is a coding system for highlighting aspects of questions that are likely to result in response errors and it offers means of assessing and alleviating potential language and cross-cultural problems. They cite issues of idiom and vague references to time as particularly prone to lack of reliability. They argue that their new version of the existing QAS99 at the very least offers monoglot researchers a tool to anticipate questionnaire problems that may, otherwise, only come to light at the stage of its administration.

Interviews

In cross-national terms there are three overarching considerations in opting for semi- or relatively unstructured in-depth interviews: the degree of intrusiveness and, as already discussed in relation to questionnaires, response equivalence and linguistic competence. For the rest, problems can arise from different cultural sensitivities to consenting to supplementary tape recording, although extensive note-taking during the interview can also be distracting. For many research themes prior consultation of extensive contextual material is also indispensable. Few international
projects rely on an entirely unstructured method, although biographical techniques, briefly discussed below, may come close. Whatever their format, in-depth interviews are time consuming – other things being equal, with implications for sample size – and raise ethical questions about expectations of time devoted by the respondents. On an associated theme, Bampton and Cowton (2002) assess the benefits and limitations of interviewing by email.

The biographical approach to intensive interviewing offers significant purchase in comparative frameworks through its focus on unravelling linkages between individuals and welfare processes internationally. This stems directly from the appreciation of the plurality of experiences, agency and, critically, reflexivity. A commendable series of investigations derives from the ‘SOSTRIS’ project, which examined individuals’ confrontation of a range of risks arising from socioeconomic transformations in seven EU countries (Chamberlayne et al., 2000). However, there is, as the authors acknowledge, the limitation that certain types of respondents and certain types of research topics could not be reached by this approach.

General issues of the treatment of language have been discussed earlier, but here suffice it to say that the non-native interviewer working in a second language is likely to be in a more passive position than a native and must confront the stress involved in exposing lack of linguistic or cultural competence. The potential for these ‘distortions’ in data collection should be factored into the analysis.

**Vignettes**

Vignettes present brief case scenarios from fictional or true life predicaments and have been increasingly used in cross-national research to introduce a quasi-experimental dimension. Among many advantages cited are flexibility in the pre-determined degree of refinement and specification of detail, and a less intrusive method for respondents in terms of eliciting information on their own personal situations. This might ensure a higher response rate (see, for example, Schoenberg and Ravdal, 2000). Quilgars and colleagues (2009) report on an eight-nation study of housing security that employed a two-stage research exercise where qualitative methods were subsequently introduced to elaborate on observations derived from the quantitative first stage. Part of this second stage involved the use of four simple vignettes to investigate different aspects of housing security and insecurity to permit flexibility of responders’ views. Results indicated that the use of the vignettes worked acceptably well in all the sampled countries although they conceded there was a real risk of a loss of effective recording of nuance in the variety of views expressed.
The limitations of vignettes may accrue from artificially narrow, perhaps stereotypical, specification of predicaments. Moreover, cross-national research frameworks may demand adaptation in the depiction of representative cases to suit national circumstances, with the potential loss of comparability (for further discussion see Warman and Millar, 1996; Johnson and Rake, 1998). Problems might also arise from respondents’ reluctance to make assessments due to a lack of specificity about what can be perceived by them as artificial situations (Schoenberg and Ravdal, 2000). On the other hand, there is some evidence that vignettes may work best with professional respondents sharing similar cross-national practice cultures (Soydan, 1996).

**Documentary Research**

This is one of the least intrusive, relatively cheap and eminently flexible methods: one can set one’s own research pace; re-consult; re-analyse and disaggregate for sensitized content analysis. The prime consideration in interpretation is the social contexts in which documents are produced since this material is, by definition, selective in total coverage, highly edited and structured to serve specific purposes related to under whose aegis they are produced, an issue made all the more important by the growing use of locally sourced ‘grey literature’. Effort in a wider contextualization of such material, including attempts at corroborating the evidence derived, is therefore paramount. Typical strategies have relied on using such material in combination with data derived from complementary interviews. Mangen (2004) provided a recent elaboration of this strategy in an investigation of urban regeneration in Europe that employed a structured range of interviews with officials and clients of urban planning services, in part relying on ‘snowballing’.

Computer scanning and software packages have developed rapidly in the last decade permitting the rapid incorporation and management of large volumes of multi-lingual hard-copy material. Furthermore, in the contemporary environment of scarcer research funding, limiting opportunity to exploit many expensive methodologies, electronic resources and the internet may offer great potential. Where projects relate to local or national policy-making, for example, these investigative means are likely to be among the most cost-effective and feasible. However, the caveats about online documentation discussed above in terms of aegis, coverage and selective editing apply perforce.²

Whiteside (2007) has exploited recent electronic advances in historical documentation resources in her investigations of unemployment policy. She selected for comparison two cities that were key pioneers in this field:
Liverpool and Strasbourg. The latter offered the additional advantage of being in Alsace-Lorraine and, accordingly, of affording in her study period (with the transfer of sovereignty) a supplementary Franco-German comparison. Whiteside (2008) employed similar archival methods to examine how the concept of unemployment was simultaneously formalized in Britain and France at the end of the nineteenth century, albeit in distinct political contexts. I return to other documentary techniques in the next section.

NOTABLE CONTEMPORARY METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to methodologies that in my personal judgement are among the most innovative in the last decade or so.

Web-based and Electronic Resource Methodologies

National and local newspapers have become a readily available (and often free) online documentary resource, substantially increasing the feasibility and reducing the costs of cross-national research. Koopmans and colleagues (2005) examine electronically derived newspaper stories, not so much in terms of content per se but in the reporting of claims-making by, for or against ethnic minority groups. The primary data derive from one national newspaper for each of the five countries in their study (UK, France, Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland) and were selected for being broadly functionally equivalent. The papers were sampled at regular time-points in order to survey new events occurring in a period up to two weeks prior to publication. The total study period covered six years. In addition, a range of German and British newspapers of different political persuasions were compared in order to assess the cross-national representativeness of the data from the primary newspaper source base. The content of claims was subject to detailed coding by a trained team. Their coding frame is available on request and the methods are detailed in the appendix to their book. Clearly, as the authors concede, the claims examined are only those considered newsworthy in the selected newspapers and the sort of coverage that fits their production values. This being said, the researchers defend their approach as having addressed a well-elaborated critique of bias reported in the research literature and as having reached acceptable levels of reliability and validity. Koopmans and Statham (2010) have further developed their claims-making methodology in a study of Europeanization in seven countries. Here ‘claims-making’ is framed in a
multi-level context. Seven policy areas are incorporated, including immigration, pensions and education. In this study, reliance on electronic newspaper resources was complemented by large-scale interviews with media actors, politicians and interest groups.

Similar methods have been used by Dolezal and co-authors (2010) but in their case within a narrower focus on ‘church–state’ impacts on Muslims in a ‘most similar’ countries research design (Switzerland, Austria and Germany). One quality newspaper available via electronic sources in each country was surveyed within an overall period of ten years. Thematic keywords were examined and relational core sentences detected as the unit of content analysis. They found that, above all, it is relations between the state and faiths that predict the differential opportunity structures in which Muslim claims are endorsed or rejected and critically explains why these most similar countries deliver different outcomes.

**Case-oriented Studies: Set Theoretic Methods**

Case-oriented studies allow the researcher to retain a wide range of factors in the analytic model and, by privileging causal linkages, offer valuable purchase for hypothesizing in international contexts. Case approaches allow for the existence of complex causal relations where the patterning of observations may assume different forms depending on the specific case (Anckar, 2008). Stiller and van Kersbergen (2008) suggest that another advantage of the approach is its ability to deal more effectively than in the variable approach with the ‘matching’ problem’, discussed earlier, because it relies on what they term ‘thick descriptions’, which may be more sensitive to the conceptual framework than are narrowly delimited variables.

Case-oriented ‘qualitative comparative analysis’ has been among the principal innovations in cross-national research in the past two decades, although this stable of methods remains the object of much debate. Here only a very rudimentary outline of the methods is introduced.³ Ragin (1987) declared his purpose in developing the original ‘crisp set’ formulation of ‘qualitative comparative analysis’ (csQCA) as being to banish the methodological black box evident in many qualitative case studies. His is a formal configurational comparative method determined by set theoretic conditions. His starting position is that ‘sets’ rather than ‘variables’ are the most appropriate unit of analysis since they make explicit the membership criteria and, thus, have classificatory consequences (Ragin, 2008). He stresses that case selection is theoretically driven rather than depending on sampling of defined populations as in variable-oriented methods. Ragin’s overarching ambition is to disentangle necessary and sufficient conditions that are determined by set theoretic inclusion (Ragin, 1999).
QCA accommodates complex causation rather than relying on single ‘best fit’ causation, since different causal pathways may be relevant in distinct ways yet may result in the same outcomes (see Rihoux, 2006). The original formulation is qualitative in the sense that observations have the dichotomous quality of either being fully in (value 1) or being fully out (value 0) of membership of the set, irrespective of whether the at-source data is numeric or non-numeric. Ragin subsequently expanded on the original Boolean methodology by proposing a probabilistic method in the form of ‘fuzzy sets’.

Ragin’s approach has been heavily criticized for implying that scientific respectability comes from quantitative emulation: from quantifying the qualitative. Indeed, he originally claimed that QCA was a ‘middle way’ strategy between case- and variable-oriented methods (for further discussion see Rihoux, 2006). The act of quantifying risks serious dilution of meaning, as was certainly the case in the original formulation of QCA. Goldthorpe (1991, 1997) was an early critic, rejecting the Boolean stipulation, which, of necessity, reduces complex social phenomena to sets of fully in or fully out membership by forcing dichotomization of fundamentally non-dichotomous data. The resultant measurement bias means the loss of the opportunity to consider theoretically important, though for this method problematic, data. In practical research terms, to execute such decisions makes strong assumptions on the accuracy of the data, which have to be coded dichotomously, raising difficult questions about the determination of threshold points (Scram Stokke, 2004). There have also been extensive criticisms of the causative assumptions on which the stable of methods relies. Monroe and Gold (2004), for example, are critical of the potentially nonsensical conclusions that could be derived from a strict application of necessary and sufficient conditions, citing the example of a habitual heavy drinker who varies the spirits but always drinks soda as a mixer. Strictly speaking, QCA logic would implicate soda as a necessary and sufficient condition for the resultant hangover. Yet, of course, this line of argument ignores Ragin’s insistence that in QCA case selection must be theoretically informed. However, it does point to the limitations of the methods in research settings – and there are many in cross-national contexts – that are unable to call on a firmly established theoretical foundation.4

Partly in response to these sorts of criticisms Ragin and other proponents of his set theoretic approaches have elaborated on the original formulation. Thus, multi-value (mv) QCA relaxes the stipulations to allow for more than a present–absent dichotomy and to allow for measurements of three or more categories, although these multi-value measurements ultimately retain Boolean 0 or 1 dichotomy in the final analysis. The main
advantage of mvQCA according to its proponents is that it copes better with the problem of contradictory configurations where cases with the same explanatory characteristics produce different outcomes. However, they concede that there has been very little debate about the logical status of this innovation. Moreover, it has been much less employed in research projects than the other QCA methods (Cronqvist and Berg-Schlosser, 2006; Rihoux, 2006).

By comparison the original crisp set QCA has now been substantially displaced by the still evolving ‘fuzzy-set’ method (fsQCA). Rather than Boolean 0, 1 deterministic calculations this innovation depends on probabilistic criteria to specify sufficient and necessary conditions, permitting gradations of partial set membership. Whereas the csQCA treated difference in kind, the fuzzy set approach can incorporate both differences in kind and of degree (Ragin, 2000). Calibrated membership can range from simply more than two (that is, more than the original crisp position) to theoretically at least a continuum. Accordingly, beyond the fully in (1) and fully out (0) specification, the quality of calibration is of quintessential importance – firm theoretical grounding is arguably even more vital here than in the original method since each gradation point and the ‘cross-over’ (0.50 dividing ‘more out than in’ and ‘more in than out’ of set membership) must be theoretically informed. Calibrated measures must have a status determined relative to some external standard and it follows that problematic issues of validity and reliability can arise in both within- and between-country calibration exercises. Ragin cites the example of ‘state of development’: calibration for the set would need specification of scores in terms of, say, GDP that is being accepted as qualifying for full set membership and a level that excludes it from the set (Ragin, 2008; see also Olsen and Nomura, 2009).

There has been considerable debate in the literature about the advantages of fsQCA over other established methods. Katz and his colleague (2006) maintain that for some research questions other techniques are more appropriate. As an example they cite large-N studies concerned with the ‘effects of causes’ rather than the ‘causes of effects’, which might benefit from the application of regression models. Moreover, the requirement to be strongly theoretically embedded poses a major limitation in so many areas of cross-national research. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the empirical studies reviewed later depend on highly aggregated welfare state theorizing and well-established datasets. Seabright (2005) is concerned that the subsequent relaxation of the assumption that all relevant factors had been included essentially converts QCA to an application of regression analysis with its attendant weaknesses of assuming that association reflects causation, given the omission of potentially important
influencing factors. For him, the QCA stable is not a stand-alone methodology and its analytic benefits may be more fully evident if employed alongside existing techniques. In fact, this is what several of the studies that are discussed later have attempted to do.

In reply to these sorts of criticisms, Rihoux (2006) stresses that there are different logics at play: QCA privileges configurations of necessary and sufficient conditions, while regression aims to test the significance of each variable. Given this fact, there is no ambition to supplant regression analysis (see also Kvist, 2006). Ragin himself has conceded that researchers interested in interpreting the importance of unique social phenomena may be better served with conventional ideographic case-oriented methods. Alternatively, if they wish to identify broad patterns to test and refine theory or to make predictions, variable-oriented methods would be indicated (Ragin, 2000).

**QCA: Empirical Studies**

Rihoux (2006) has reviewed the range of studies applying QCA techniques and finds that there is a marked variation in sample size. Most studies are pitched at the meso or macro level such as policy fields, collective actors, organizations and so on. Very few have applied the methods to micro-level data. The studies reviewed below are those relevant to cross-national social policy research and present a clear exposé of methods employed.

Most primarily depend on at-source numeric data, though some also combine at-source non-numeric material. Thus, while QCA would seem to offer much for cross-national research, in order to gauge its full potential there is an urgent need for more research output that is a product of collection, management and interpretation of at-source qualitative data.

As mentioned earlier, few relevant studies have applied mvQCA. One of the more interesting is an investigation of prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in Africa by Cronqvist and Berg-Schlosser (2006). They illustrate its use by comparing the results with those of csQCA and multiple regression. A series of regressions revealed ‘Protestant domination’ of a country as the strongest single factor in determining outcomes. When compared with csQCA, mvQCA produced more finely graded differences of cases of low, medium and high mortality. In an exploratory study of factors in poverty reduction, Olsen and Nomura (2009) compare findings employing fsQCA with those of csQCA and regression analysis. While the latter suggested that economic growth is the sole contributor to the outcome, the results of both fsQCA and csQCA illustrated that more than one causal condition conjuncturally was working together to bring about an outcome of poverty reduction. Importantly, more than one set of such conjunctural
causes exist that could lead to improvement in the income of the poor. Vis (2009), in a fsQCA investigating necessary and sufficient conditions for welfare state reform, identifies the necessary conditions for triggering unpopular measures as a deteriorating socioeconomic situation, whilst in the case of what she terms ‘not unpopular’ measures it is an improving political situation. However, both necessary conditions are only sufficient in combination with other identified factors she identifies. Nelson (2006) employs csQCA, fsQCA and OLS regression as parallel analytical techniques in a study of means-tested minimum income policies. He argues that the strengths and weaknesses of the three methods are essentially complementary. The only institutional feature supported by each of the three different analyses employed was the degree of income security provided by social insurance. However, both QCA and OLS indicated that a fragmented social insurance system is negatively associated with the level of minimum income protection.

Kvist (2006, 2007) is the researcher most associated with the combination of ideal-type methodologies and fsQCA, which he argues is well suited to studying conformity to ideal types as it can identify ideal-type membership as well as the degree of fuzzy set partial membership. He examines welfare state change, both within-regime changes of degree and changes of kind indicating transfers to another welfare regime. He concludes that his study demonstrates the utility of fsQCA for diversity and change in welfare state transformations.8 Employing Kvist’s ideal-type approach, Seung-yoon Lee (2009) uses csQCA to research shifts in social risks in a sample of 18 countries. She narrows her concept of risk to one that satisfies all three necessary conditions that she specifies: threat to basic living standards AND a structural problem AND has a social impact. fsQCA enabled her to examine both changes in type of risks (difference in kind) and the changes conforming to the specified ideal type (difference in degree).

Katz and colleagues (2006) investigated the potential for applying fsQCA to the difficult area of assessing outcomes in ‘global civil society’ using well-established international indicators. They found that Sweden was an outlier in the relationship of economic globalization and global civil society. Following strict set-theoretic logic, one could conclude that economic globalization is not per se a necessary condition for global civil society. However, by using set probabilistic rather than absolute criteria for necessity the authors concluded that the hypothesis that economic globalization is a necessary condition for global civil society is supported within a 95 per cent confidence level in 29 out of 30 countries examined. In a particularly helpful detailed elaboration of the fsQCA method and of the problematic decisions that had to be made, Cebotari (2010) also employs international datasets to examine ethno-political protest among
long-standing minority groups. The project reports the necessary and sufficient conditions shaping the consistency of protest as an outcome.

Finally, Denk (2009) has developed an approach that he claims works with all three varieties of the QCA approach. He presents ‘comparative multi-level analysis’ as a new methodology for small-N samples. This comprises a stepwise grouped comparison with a multi-level structure, to facilitate incorporation of factors on different analytic levels. Cases are grouped according to systemic similarities and then intra-group comparisons are made.

CONCLUSION

The last decade has witnessed a considerable effort in advancing new research methodologies that supplement those now well established. Among the most innovative have been the three closely linked methods of qualitative comparative analysis most closely associated with Charles Ragin. csQCA has given way to newer formulations, although mvQCA has been infrequently applied and the fuzzy set version is still work in progress and there must remain issues about valid calibration in many contexts that cross-national qualitative research addresses. This being said, especially when employed in combination with other techniques, this research is unravelling the complex systemic and sub-systemic relationships within and between welfare states.

Web-based and electronic sources are widening horizons for the collection of qualitative material. The growing availability of multi-lingual qualitative software offers important potential for its processing, sometimes with limitless opportunities for disaggregation, re-aggregation – and at rapid speed. The result is that, in many research contexts, qualitative material is not only instantly accessible but is also relatively cheap to assemble. These advantages not only extend to contemporary, but increasingly to historical sources. Finally, multi-lingual qualitative packages widen our capacities for managing – and retaining – data in the languages of source, thereby offering valuable possibilities for the effective exploitation not only of conventional forward and backward translation but also ‘thick translation’, concept clusters and pair-wise comparative analysis.

NOTES

1. For an overview of software available see http://caqdas.soc.surrey.ac.uk/. QSR NVivo is widely used for multi-lingual texts and is particularly adaptable in coping with
non-European scripts. Welsh (2002) discusses the benefits and problems of using NVivo. She examines reliability and the problem of interrogating texts due to a panoply of synonyms as well as searching for the variety of ways of phrasing the same sorts of ideas. She concludes that while NVivo may in some contexts assist in grounded theorizing, it, like other software, is less useful in addressing issues of validity and reliability of the thematic ideas produced by data analysis. Byrne (2009) weighs up the advantages of NVivo for the creation of case nodes. Among new content analysis software is ‘Yoshikoder’, a cross-platform multi-lingual content analysis programme (http://yoshikoder.org/). Lowe (2009) discusses its potential for what he terms ‘classical’ content analysis defined as measurement of word frequencies, keywords-in-context, building content dictionaries, and so on. Its benefit is that it works on any operating system.


4. Ragin acknowledges that strictly necessary and sufficient conditions are extremely problematic to arrive at in many research contexts. He proposes that the fuzzy set logic copes with these situations by relying on ‘quasi-necessity’ and ‘quasi-sufficiency’ (see Ragin, 2008, p. 108).

5. TOSMANA (Tool for Small-N Analysis) and fsQCA software packages for QCA methods are available on the web (www.tosmana.org/) (www.fsqca.com). TOSMANA has been judged as the more user-friendly and offers advantages in terms of visual presentation and flexible threshold setting (see Vink and van Vliet, 2007; Olsen and Nomura, 2009).

6. Nelson (2006) discusses the problems of valid calibration arising in the application of fsQCA where data do not have a natural upper or lower delimitation. He reports that researchers basically have relied on three methods for assigning membership: subjective judgements, parametric functions or non-parametric methods.

7. Further details of publications employing and promoting various forms of QCA are available at www.compasss.org.

8. Yet, the worked example of calibration provided by Kvist (2007) raises perplexing questions about the precision of the scale. For example, in his calibration of generosity of welfare benefits he allocates a fuzzy score of 0.75 for welfare systems that are ‘fairly generous’ and a fuzzy score of 0.60 translates to ‘more or less generous’.

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Cross-national qualitative research methods


14 Quantitative methods with survey data in comparative research*

Jaak Billiet

INTRODUCTION

Social scientists are interested in societies in which individuals live, and in social networks and institutions. They believe that these contexts have an influence on individual characteristics, attitudes, choices and behaviour. There is a long-standing tradition of cross-national research, especially in comparative political analysis in which political systems (e.g., nations) are analysed as cases or used as context. In the most general terms, comparative social research refers to research designs by which data from different societies and/or cultures, and/or data from particular societies and/or cultures at different time periods, are collected and compared (Allardt, 1990, p. 183). In the 1960s and 1970s a flow of handbooks and readers in comparative research with special attention to comparisons of large-scale units were published. Methodological problems related to aggregate data had a prominent place among academics at that time (Scheuch, 1966). The term ‘human ecology’ won general acceptance in the social sciences. In its broadest sense, the term was intended to cover all varieties of research on the adjustment of human beings to their environments. Other central issues discussed at that time were cross-national archiving, international cooperation in the organization of facilities and the development of techniques for quantitative analysis of data measured at several levels (Dogan and Rokkan, 1969, pp. 1–4).

Several issues are still questions of the day, but the nature of research questions that ask for comparative quantitative analysis has been drastically changed due to the availability of comparable micro-data collected in many countries. The last two decades are characterized by an explosion of large-scale cross-national surveys that are repeatedly held in many countries, and that are made available via data archive services.¹ These surveys are aimed at studying variations in individual behaviour, attitudes and choices, in relations between these, and explaining these by differences and similarities in characteristics of the context. Some of the data archive services also offer databases with measurements of country-level variables. It is sometimes believed that comparative observations of this
kind can replace direct experiments by altering the context-related circumstances of a series of observations (Dogan, 2004, p. 324). However, as Allardt noticed, ‘there is not a single social science comparative study which has succeeded in any strict manner in complying with the rules of scientific experiments and the canons of John Stuart Mill’. The attempts, however, to base empirical comparative social studies on a quantitative tradition with roots in the rules of scientific experiments have been fruitful and helped to raise and formulate many core problems of comparative research (Allardt, 1990, pp. 183–4).

The growing attention being paid to the cross-national context is obvious. The proportion of articles using cross-national datasets is increasing in journals such as the *European Sociological Review* (ESR). Research papers often deal with social policy outcomes of welfare states. The research interest in cross-country comparisons and in explanatory models that try to combine micro-level data with cross-national context or aggregate data is apparent. These days comparative designs are prevalent in PhD dissertations, in conferences and in training courses all over Europe. This increased interest in the academic community goes hand in hand with the growing number of cross-national datasets.

Well-known examples of these data sources are the European Value Survey (EVS), which since 1981 is repeatedly held over nine-year time intervals (more than 47 European countries/regions in 2008–09); the World Value Survey (WVS), which was organized for the first time in 1990 (every five years; 56 countries worldwide in 2005–08); since 1985 the yearly organized worldwide International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) (47 countries in 2010); the biennial European Social Survey (ESS) (32 European countries in 2010), which began in 2002. Apart from these general surveys, regular surveys are organized for specific populations or on specific topics: the European Household Panel Survey (EHPS) in the 1990s (all EU member states); the Income and Living Conditions Survey (EU-SILC) in the EU member states since 2005; the Generations and Gender Panel Survey (GGP); and the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) since 2004 for the 50-plus population (13 countries in 2008–09).

The European Commission, the European Science Foundation, and the European Research Council are steadily making substantial financial resources available for the central coordination of recurrent European-wide surveys, for the creation of large research infrastructures for the social sciences, and for analysis of the data. The advancements made in comparative research in the last two decades do not take away from the fact that cross-national surveys still have to deal with considerable scientific challenges, both in terms of methodology and the theoretical assumptions behind them.
This chapter starts with a conceptual overview of generic research designs in quantitative comparative research. In view of the clear trend just described, our focus is mainly on designs that made use of cross-country survey data collected at the micro-level in combination with macro-level data. Designs that only made use of country-level data are discussed insofar as they use data derived from micro-data. Next, major conceptual (and epistemological) problems in cross-national quantitative analysis are discussed from the viewpoint of theoretical validity of the conclusions. These problems deal with the micro-link and the causal- ity claims in the mainstream analysis method (multiple regression). The focus moves then to the strengths and weaknesses of designs in which the interaction between macro- and micro-data is decisive. The discussion is devoted to the main challenges of these designs: the micro–macro link in hierarchical models, estimation problems in case of small-N at macro-level, and appropriate alternatives when hierarchical models are not appropriate.

The concrete methodological challenges of (non-)response and measurement quality in comparative surveys are finally discussed from the overarching viewpoint of equivalence (Jowell, 1998). The quality aspects handled cover the equivalence of samples, response rates, measurement scales and translations of questions. Our discussion of response and measurement quality is for several reasons based on experiences with ESS. Familiarity of this chapter’s author with the ins and outs of the ESS, and with what is going on backstage, offers a unique opportunity for a realistic account of the actual state of comparative survey methodology. Moreover, with 36479 registered users and 23028 downloaders from 224 countries in 2011, ESS became one of the most popular surveys in Europe among academics. It has resulted in an exponential increase of joint ventures, cooperation and communication between researchers from all countries.

The main reason, however, for choosing the ESS as a reference in the measurement part of this chapter is its unusual methodological rigour (see Jowell et al., 2007, pp. 4–9; Stoop et al., 2010). The methodological decisions in each ESS round are fully documented. Round after round of considerable resources are spent to obtain the highest possible quality in cross-national survey measurement. The difficulties, problems and challenges that are met in this endeavour concerning measurement error, defective translations and failing response rates may therefore be generalized to all cross-national survey research projects that are not able to mobilize so many resources. The obstacles and deficiencies met in ESS are not just specific accidents but are likely to overshadow all comparative surveys.
In the literature, one can find several classifications of comparative studies according to variety of criteria used: origin of the data (primary versus derived), level of the units of analysis, purpose of the comparisons (similarities or differences), treatment of societies, level of the dependent variable, and focus of the analysis (Scheuch, 1968, p. 200; Dogan and Rokkan, 1969, pp. 4–10; Allardt, 1990, p. 185). The latter will receive the greater part of our attention since it offers the most complete overview.

One way of classifying studies combines the level of units of analysis (individuals versus territorial units) with the origin of the data (primary versus derived). It goes back to the analysis of ‘The American Soldier’ by Kendall and Lazarsfeld (1950, pp. 195–6). This classification applies to all studies in which lower and higher units are involved. Data at any lower level are candidates for aggregation, and characteristics of any higher level may be used as context on the condition that the measured concepts are valid and theoretically meaningful. Dogan and Rokkan (1969, pp. 4–5) distinguish four possible combinations, each referring to a specific kind of data: personal data, global attributes, context data and aggregate data.

Another classification of studies is proposed by Erwin Scheuch (1968, pp. 176–209) and starts from the idea that virtually all quantitative comparative studies (in the 1960s) took nations as historical units and made both propositional and descriptive comparisons. Following this reasoning a classification is proposed crossing the purpose of comparison by the nature of society as a variable. These days, quantitative researchers prefer analyses with sets of variables per country, and not with complete entities as ‘packed’ variables (Scheuch, 1989). They are thus more variable oriented than case oriented.

The studies that are discussed further in this chapter are all captured by the classification of ‘the level where the dependent variable is measured’ (individual versus territorial) by the ‘focus of analysis’ (Dogan and Rokkan, 1969, pp. 6–9) (Table 14.1). The distinction according to the origin of the data (primary versus derived) is now within each cell, which actually results in a three-dimensional classification and is therefore more complete than the previous typologies. The distinction individual/territorial is still used because it is most useful in comparative cross-country research, but one can also use the general abstract terms lower and higher level to make the classification more general.

Let us now consider each of the four combinations. Type I studies are not very useful in cross-national comparative research since no data from the higher (territorial) level is directly related to the study. When derived
measures are used at the territorial level this is exclusively because direct individual measurements are not available. Individual variations are analysed by means of variations of the derived measures between higher-level units. There is a strong warning against these studies since the well-known paper by Robinson (1950) because of the possibility of faulty inferences to relations at the individual level (ecological fallacy). We do not discuss this kind of study further here.

Comparative studies of Type II are exclusively interested in variation at territorial level, for example, cross-country variation. The measurements are primary (global attributes) or derived (aggregate data). It is often theoretically meaningful to study correlations between characteristics of territorial units, or to explain the variations at territorial (or group) level by explanatory variables at the same level. Many studies in the domain of urban ecology are examples of this type, and apply ecological factor analysis, multiple regression and causal modelling, or make typologies of territorial units (for these studies see Dogan and Rokkan, 1969, pp. 299–456). Early cross-national research on country-level welfare polity outcomes also belong to this type (see Shalev, 2007a). We only refer to studies of this type as far as survey data are used to obtain measures of higher-level variables (e.g., Smits et al., 1998).

Type III comparative ‘macro–micro’ studies are most common in the

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**Table 14.1 Level of dependent variable by focus of analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Focus of Analysis</th>
<th>Interaction of two levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I.                          | *Either:* individual data (e.g., from surveys) treated without reference to the territorial contexts  
Or: territorial aggregate data used to analyse individual variations | III. *Either:* individual data used jointly with contextual data of territorial units  
Or: aggregate/global data used to test interaction between levels |
| Territorial unit            | II. Aggregate/global data for territorial units used to describe and account for variations at territorial level | IV. *Either:* joint use of individual/aggregate/global data to test *sources of change* in territorial structure  
Or: aggregate/global data used to test *interaction* between levels |

*Source:* Dogan and Rokkan (1969, p. 6).
last two decennia since large-scale cross-sectional surveys were organized across several countries. These studies focus on interactions between individual-level variables and primary (global data) or derived (aggregate data) measured variables at the higher level, which is often the country level. The availability of survey data for several countries stimulated the adoption of hierarchical linear models that were, since the mid-1960s, applied in the sociology of education (see Coleman et al., 1966) where school achievement of students was explained by the (direct or derived measured) characteristics of classes and schools. After explanatory models are built with individual measured data, context variables or variables from higher levels are entered in order to reduce unexplained variance. Kalmijn’s study (2010) of differences in the effects of divorce on well-being in which both individual-level measurements and country-level measurements are used is a typical example of this type of study.

Type IV studies in the ‘level of dependent variable’ by ‘focus of analysis’ classification have much in common with the previous type. The difference is twofold. First, the explained variable is now a characteristic of the higher (or territorial) level. This design will be therefore called a ‘micro–macro’ design. Second, these studies include longitudinal data of both cross-sections and panels in order to explain changes at the higher level, which is the focus of these studies. The study by Smits et al. (1998) on openness of societies to vertical mobility is an example of this type of study.

THEORETICAL VALIDITY IN COMPARATIVE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

In standard works that appeared more than three decades ago, there was a nearly exhaustive discussion on the methodological and epistemological problems of Type II comparative studies (see Dogan and Rokkan, 1969). Focus was on the interplay between theory and empirical analysis (Deutsch, 1969, pp. 19–40). The very restrictive viewpoint of Robinson (1950) on ecological fallacy has been discussed by two representatives of the great Finnish school of social ecology in that period (Allardt, 1969, pp. 41–52; Valkonen, 1969, pp. 53–68). They considered the classical warning against ecological fallacy merely as an occasion for developing new approaches in which variables from different levels are combined without falling into the trap of faulty theoretical conclusions when derived measurements are used. Scholars such as Allardt (1990, p. 188) and Scheuch (1966, pp. 138–54) argued that aggregate measures can contribute to the development of empirically sustained macro-theories when such measures are consciously employed. The real issue underlying the
discussion of ecological fallacy is the relation between the grouping criterion and the types of inference intended when using aggregate measures.

Dogan and Rokkan (1969, pp. 17–18) considered Robinson’s critical warnings against level-by-level discrepancies as an occasion to study and understand these, and to develop new research strategies with interactions between variables at two (and even more) levels. These ‘new’ strategies are these days fully realistic given the availability of survey research and other facilities for measurements at the individual (micro-) level in Western democracies. The disposal of data from official statistical services for data archiving and distribution also facilitates these multi-level designs. There is, since the 1990s, no longer a need for a forced choice between aggregate or individual measurements. It is now possible to combine ecological analysis with survey research in different ways. Scheuch (1966, pp. 133–256) also made a strong argument for the inclusion of context variables in the analysis of survey data at the individual level – which is the current common practice – because it allows the combination of the ‘greater relevance of cross-level theorizing with the greater rigor of so-called direct measurement’. The ‘obsession’ by ecological fallacy turned into a warning against ‘individualistic fallacy’. Social scientists should not generalize micro-data findings about individual behaviour without controlling for characteristics of the immediate social, cultural and political contexts.

Macro-level Analysis with Direct and Derived Measures: The Micro-link

Let us now focus on the analysis of country-level data with both direct measures and derived measures (e.g., aggregate survey data). Can we trust correlations between aggregate measures and other country-level data in view of inferences to causal mechanisms at the macro-level? This question has been discussed in a paper on the limits of macro-quantitative analysis in social science research entitled ‘A Crazy Methodology?’ (Kittel, 2006). The arguments developed are based on a judgement of the science philosopher Nancy Cartwright (2002), and apply to cross-national quantitative research in which hypotheses are tested about the relations between variables that are measured at the macro-level in view of causal explanations and predictions of social phenomena using econometric (regression) models. Several sampling and measurement problems that are discussed in the measurement part of this chapter are held responsible for the unstable results of this research (Kittel, 2006, p. 649), but the main observation made by Kittel is epistemological and conceptual: policy variables lack the necessary micro-foundation for finding regularities at the macro-level.

The explanation of macro-phenomena by other macro-phenomena, independent of the level where these are measured (direct or derived)
is questionable if one accepts the view that in the social sciences causal relations between macro-phenomena must be supported by a micro-link. This link expounds theoretically how the explanatory macro-phenomena are related to micro-level behaviour, and how aggregation of micro-phenomena to the explained macro-phenomena must be understood (Bunge, 1997). This idea, which is typical of ‘methodological individualism’ in sociology, has received much attention in the social sciences as Coleman’s ‘bathtub’ model (1990), also named the ‘Coleman diagram’. This scholar tried to formalize how social change occurs by drawing a trapezoidal figure. The idea behind this is simply that society is constituted by the interaction between individuals but cannot be reduced to it. As a consequence, in Coleman’s view, the explanation of phenomena at the macro-level by other phenomena at the macro-level is only possible by showing what effects the macro-phenomena have on the choices and actions of individuals at the micro-level, and how these actions and choices lead to the explained macro-phenomena. Institutions and other social phenomena play a key role in the analysis, but these phenomena must be grounded on the preferences and actions of individuals. Group-level phenomena are never simple aggregations but rather complex dynamic multi-level phenomena (Oakes, 2009, p. 364). In this view (causal) explanations of macro-level variables by other macro-level variables are problematic because the intermediate complex steps at lower levels, the micro–macro transitions, are not tested (Kittel, 2006, pp. 654–5). The micro–macro transition incorporates forms of social action, social choice and social movements.

Is the micro-foundation of the macro-variables really necessary in all analysis at macro-level? It depends on the theoretical meaning of these macro-variables and the theory behind it. The micro-foundation of macro-level variables is required when these variables refer to forms of social action, social (or collective) choice and social movement or when aggregate measures based on micro-data are used.

Take, for example, the well-known cross-national study of educational homogamy by Smits et al. (1998, 2000) in 65 countries. Several hypotheses about social processes at the macro-level are tested. The dependent variable ‘educational homogamy’ has been measured at the micro-level with survey data and transformed by aggregation into an indicator of a concept at the macro-level named ‘openness to vertical mobility’ of societies. The theoretical link between the derived variable ‘educational homogamy’ and the intended concept ‘societal openness’ is clearly explained. Societies in which many marriages took place between persons belonging to different social groups can be considered more open than ones in which few socially mixed marriages occur (Smits et al., 1998, pp. 264–5). This link is based
on the studies of Lipset and Bendix on social mobility (1959) and Kalmijn (1991) on status homogamy.

The call for serious reflection on the ‘bridging’ problem in comparative analysis highlights the need for a substantive theory and arguments about the causal mechanisms at the macro-level. One should argue why such models are used and what the assumptions are. Why are relationships between variables at the macro-level expected, and how to explain these theoretically? It suggests that the lack of strong and stable estimates in comparative analysis does not only relate to measurement problems or sampling problems but also to the theoretical validity of the concepts and theories of which hypotheses are derived.

**About the Causality Claims in Multiple Regression Analysis**

Explanatory comparative studies that apply multiple regression models consider country variables as complex networks and assume a ‘causal mechanism’. Some of these studies are rather simple and constrain the effects of the ‘causal’ variables to be identical across countries and stable over time. Causal dynamics are, however, likely to vary across countries and one should not assume that the causal effects of any given explanatory variable are constant over the time period covered by the data (Pontusson, 2007, pp. 327–8). Other designs are complex and incorporate the concept of ‘causal heterogeneity’. These designs combine time-series data of a number of countries and apply several variants of regression analysis in order to explain a target variable (e.g., policy outcomes). The explanatory variables are then regarded as a multi-layered context with a variable start and speed of change (Lynch, 2006; Shalev, 2007a, p. 264; Falleti and Lynch, 2009). Some studies (e.g., Huber et al., 1993) include country and time-varying components, and use a two-step estimation strategy. Griffin et al. (1989) also propose a two-stage strategy in which time series parameters are estimated in a first step. Western (1998) follows a different one-step strategy in order to avoid bias in the time-series estimates, and proposes Bayesian hierarchical models to present a picture of causal heterogeneity.

The attempts to estimate parameters for complex causal processes into one or more steps of a regression analysis are to a certain extent a reply to Przeworski and Teune (1970) who argued in favour of careful comparison of cases in their specific context. These scholars tried to make causal inferences by applying the ‘most similar system design’ and the ‘most different system design’. Ragin (1987) and Abell (2004, 2009), however, argue that conventional quantitative variable-centred explanatory models fail to accommodate causal complexity. This brings us to the question of whether
it is ‘naturally’ possible to test hypotheses about causal processes with multiple regression (MR) models.

The limits and alternatives to multiple regression are discussed in a special volume of *Comparative Social Research* that appeared in 2007. Michael Shalev (2007a, 2007b) reviewed well-known studies (e.g., Esping-Andersen, 1990) on the effects of institutional, political and economic variables on welfare outcomes. Shalev argued that MR is a far too blunt an instrument if the aim is to identify the crucial causal mechanisms that lead to variation in welfare outcomes. MR renders the cases invisible and hinders understanding of the causal mechanisms since these mechanisms are reduced to correlations and regression coefficients in the context of general linear models. This general linear conception of reality is a very reduced way of imagining social processes. The problem is, according to Shalev, not that MR does not have technologies for dealing with complexities but because such techniques are difficult to employ or impose a steep statistical penalty due to the small-N problems, they are rarely used (Shalev, 2007a, pp. 263–4). Simpler ‘low-tech’ approaches such as tabular representations, tree diagrams, clustering techniques and even qualitative analytical procedures for small-N might, however, be used as substitutes or at least as companions to regression analysis (ibid., pp. 271–6).

Esping Andersen (2007) agrees with the latter idea but is not convinced that these methods will yield more analytical insight. MR estimation on small numbers of country samples indeed easily violates the basic key assumptions of MR (monotonic linear effects, statistical independence, the absence of selection bias and conditional independence). It is therefore not very useful to identify the strength of statistical relationships, but MR has other feasibilities when it is used as a diagnostic tool aimed to detect violations of the basic assumptions. The real valuable information in MR with small-N lies in the residual plots, and not in the identification of causal mechanisms. One can easily detect the cases that do not fit with the assumed hypothetical model (Esping-Andersen, 2007, pp. 336–7). This refers to the ‘Popperian’ device: it is not possible to confirm causal hypotheses but only to reject them.

The event that the cases are not completely independent of one another when they consist of sub-groups of countries belonging to a common geo-political region (e.g., Nordic countries) violates a basic assumption of MR, but it is possible to test the independence assumption and to correct for it. The selected cases often do not represent all cases that theoretically belong to the intended population, or relations between the explanatory variables and the explained variable are spurious because relevant control variables are missing. MR has, however, the potency to be a powerful and efficient method when it is used for diagnostic purposes and when the
number of cases is large enough (Esping-Andersen, 2007, pp. 337–41). Two main conditions for causal inference are (1) a well-specified causal theory and (2) the availability of real longitudinal or quasi-experimental data.

Previous discussion on the micro-link was mainly focused on designs in which only (direct or derived) macro-variables are analysed. Developments in the last two decades are more complex and combine country-level variables with longitudinal micro-data (panels or cross-sections) on poverty, economic insecurity, income, skills, social policy preferences, political behaviour and all kinds of social attitudes (e.g., the Luxembourg Household Income Study, ECHP [European Community Household Panel], EU-SILC [EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions], ESS, EVS). Examples of such studies are Dewilde and Uunk (2008) or Van Damme et al. (2009). Kittel (2006, p. 648) explicitly stated that the arguments developed in ‘A Crazy Methodology?’ do not apply to this kind of comparative cross-level research. To my mind, however, it is clear that macro-level variables in explanatory models for micro-level variables are also not exempt from a theoretical micro-link, but there are also challenges of another kind.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS WITH SURVEY DATA

The approach of Coleman et al.’s (1966) study on educational opportunities11 was a strong argument to leave exclusive macro- or micro-level analysis behind to the benefit of what we know now as multi-level analysis with hierarchical models (Oakes, 2009, p. 4). This approach initiated the further development of multi-level modelling (Bryk and Raudenbush, 1992; Snijders and Bosker, 1999), and becomes the mainstream design in cross-national research with cross-national survey data. The higher-level variables (at country, region or municipality level) are considered as context variables that explain variations in the relations between lower (micro-) level variables. It is assumed that the context influences individual characteristics, attitudes, choices and behaviour. The relevant context consists often of country characteristics that are represented by both direct and derived measured variables. The context variables are time-varying variables when comparable measurements at several points in time for the context level units are available.

Multi-level Analysis: The Problematic Micro–Macro Link

What are the implications of applying models that are developed in the field of education to cross-national research? In studies on educational
attainment researchers focus on the effects of the school or class context on performances and the choices made by students. The cross-level link between class (and school) characteristics and variables measured at the micro-level (teachers, students) is not very problematic in these studies. The cross-level link is theoretically very well documented and grounded. Moreover, the large number of cases at group level makes random selection at that level easily possible. In the field of school sociology the researcher can rely on random samples with many cases at both the context and the individual level. The context level itself is often multi-layered (schools and classes) and individual data are often repeated measurement among students (e.g., De Fraine et al., 2007). Multi-level regression analysis was, and is, a success story in the sociology of education because of these opportunities.

How different is the situation in cross-national comparative research? The insufficient number of non-randomly selected cases at the macro-level is problematic from the viewpoint of parameter estimation. Moreover, the large theoretical distance between the variables and measurements at higher and lower level is a serious threat to the validity of the conclusions. The risk of making errors of abstraction is very real in cross-national research when the plausibility of the micro–macro link is not guaranteed. Researchers often rely on existing administrative databases that are not compiled with the aim of answering specific theory-based research questions about relations between individual-level variables and outcomes. Available direct context variables are frequently not tailored to the needs of a specific study. As a result, context effects on the attitudes, choices and behaviour of individuals appear at times far-fetched and nothing other than theoretical constructions. Researchers seem to rely at times on pre-existing indicators when they formulate their hypotheses rather than on self-developed (and measured) indicators based on theoretical concepts.

Even well-developed quantitative analyses that are successful in accounting for a significant part of the variation in the phenomena of interest (e.g., Erikson et al., 1979) still tell us rather little about what is going on at the level of social processes and actions that underlie the interplay of the variables (Goldthorpe, 1997). There are too many blind spots since relevant intervening variables are missing or are theoretically invalid because the adequate indicators are not available. The incapacity to ‘understand’ the relations (or effect parameters) between the explanatory variables and the explained variables is an argument for some comparative researchers to propose a mixed-method strategy in which statistical analysis is combined with intensive case study analysis (Lieberman, 2005). In this approach, the case selection for in-depth research is guided by prior statistical analyses that provide direction for focused case studies,
comparisons and testing hypotheses that are generated from small-N research. According to Lieberman (2005, p. 450), an integrated strategy (or nested analysis approach) will enable researchers to assess the plausibility of the observed statistical relations, to generate theoretical insights, and to improve the prospects of making valid causal inferences.

**Multi-level Analysis: Estimation Problems**

According to the proposed classification one can distinguish macro–micro and micro–macro situations in cross-level interaction. Multi-level methodology has mainly focused on a macro–micro design. In these studies a dependent variable measured at the lower level is explained (or predicted) by variables measured at this level or at a higher level (Type III). In micro–macro multi-level studies (Type IV) the dependent variable defined at the higher group level is explained (or predicted) by explanatory variables measured at the same level and a lower level (Croon and Van Velthoven, 2007, pp. 45–6). In the past, these data were often analysed by aggregating the individual data to a variable at the higher level, and the analysis was then completely carried out at the macro- (or group) level (Type II). This is ‘macro-level analysis’. Contrary to this, in micro–macro multi-level modelling not only the measurement part but also the analysis includes two (or more) levels.

Statistically oriented scholars argue that micro–macro regression analyses result in biased parameter estimates when they are carried out with aggregate (derived) measures at the higher level without corrections for the parameters. This is the case particularly when sample sizes are small at the individual level. This is so because variances and covariances of the aggregated variables not only reflect between-group variation but also within-group variability, which is not accounted for. Croon and Van Velthoven (2007) propose a latent variable multi-level model that uses the best linear unbiased predictors for analysing data from micro–macro situations.12

Researchers engaged in macro–micro research are not only interested in between-country differences but in explaining by means of context variables the within- and between-country variation, and change over time in attitudes, choices and behaviour of citizens. They can increasingly utilize large within-country samples (micro-data) in combination with macro-data as is the case in ESS. The samples of citizens are nested within countries. In the majority of these cases hierarchical models (Raudenbush and Bryk, 1992) or random coefficient models (Kreft and de Leeuw, 1998) are employed for the study of context effects. Software developments in the domain of covariance structure modelling have made it relatively easy
to estimate multi-level structural equation models (MSEM) (Muthén, 1994). The integration of latent variable modelling within a multi-level framework makes MSEM particularly promising for cross-national attitude research (see Cheung and Au, 2005).

Multi-level studies are often based on non-random samples of approximately 20 countries. Both selection and small numbers of cases (countries) are dubious when the purpose of analysis is not exploration but the estimation of regression parameters in a variable-oriented approach to comparative research. Theoretically driven selection of cases is a defendable attitude from the viewpoint of case-oriented comparative analysis, but it deviates from the idea of random selection behind the applied MR models. The principle of random selection is also infringed when the selection is forced by the fact that the selected countries are the only available ones, as is often the case. Studies have shown that a much larger sample size than 20 at the group level is needed to obtain reliable and stable results (Hox and Maas, 2001), especially when both measurement and structural models are jointly estimated. A Monte Carlo study to assess the estimation accuracy of MSEM with small group sample sizes, with ESS data as a point of departure, indicates that a group sample size of 20 does not guarantee accurate estimation at all in the case of combined measurement and structural models (Meuleman and Billiet, 2009).

What are the alternatives when it is not possible to obtain much higher-level units (e.g., countries) in a study? One possibility is, if theoretically relevant, the use of regional rather than national entities in order to increase the number of higher-level units. If regional analysis is not an option, researchers might fall back on less sophisticated and more robust tools that do not rely on the estimation of many parameters. Certain non-parametric tests or simple graphical techniques might provide more insight in the relations under study than an MSEM. This is in line with an earlier suggestion (see Abell, 2004; Lieberman, 2005). Some scholars move in the other direction and try to overcome the instability and bias in the standard errors by means of sophisticated statistical procedures such as bootstrapping or re-sampling (Feskens and Hox, 2011, p. 354).

**Alternatives for Multi-level Modelling**

One may move to multi-group comparisons when unreliable estimates are likely because of small-N, or in the case of simultaneous tests of measurement models and structural relations to multi-group structural equation modelling (MGSEM) (Meuleman and Billiet, 2011). This approach combines the assessment of cross-cultural comparability of the measurement scales with equality tests of the latent means and the structural relations.
between the latent variables. By constraining certain measurement model parameters at the micro- (respondent) level to be equal across countries, the various levels of equivalence between groups can be tested. This is an attractive approach when one needs to model respondent-level variation, and when the focus is on differences and similarities in micro-level explanatory regression models between countries and not on the direct estimation of effects of context variables. Graphical methods (Meuleman et al., 2009, pp. 359–62; Meuleman, 2011, pp. 300–305) or qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) (Ragin, 1987; Rihoux, 2003) are useful when one wants to explain these differences at the group (or country) level.

MGSEM is a fixed effects model, which means that it takes each group or country as given and the set of countries as the complete universe. MGSEM is less parsimonious than MSEM but it provides more detailed information of differences between countries. A random effects model such as MSEM treats the countries as a sample from a larger population instead of estimating a different parameter value for each country. It assumes a (normal) distribution of parameter values and estimates the means, variances (and covariances). In MSEM, differences between countries can be modelled using country-level characteristics but research findings suggest that multi-group comparisons have a higher power to detect differences between countries (Hox et al., 2010).

Recently, latent class modelling (LCM) has come into use. In LCM a number of latent classes is postulated (and tested), each characterized by their own structural model. This approach is analogous to MGSEM with the latent classes replacing the groups (or countries). LCM attempts to identify latent classes of similar respondents as the basis of a set of observed indicators that measure a latent variable Y. It is, like MGSEM, a fixed effects model but with fewer classes than countries since differences between countries are modelled as differences between a smaller number of groups. The latent classes are primarily based on the equivalence of the micro-level measurements. Similar to the MSEM approach, it is possible to add explanatory variables that explain variations in the measured latent (class) variable (Hox et al., 2010).

THE CHALLENGE OF COMPARABILITY AND EQUIVALENT MEASUREMENT

One of the leading scholars in comparative social research in the 1960s (Scheuch, 1968) started his review of publications on cross-cultural surveys with doubts about the definite progress in research methodology and practice. He concluded that published research at that time did ‘not
show a neat pattern of continuous ascent to ever higher levels of methodological sophistication’ (ibid., p. 176). Nevertheless, he believed that there was progress, although in a somewhat frustrating way because despite some technological discoveries the major progress was in the increasing awareness of the real sources of difficulties in comparative surveys. Where the methodological achievements during the last two decades are concerned, one cannot come to that conclusion concerning the methodological sophistication. It is easy to indicate cumulative progress in, for example, the domain of sampling, the study of non-response bias, the understanding of measurement error and ways of controlling for it, and sophisticated analyses that met the assumptions in substantive theoretical models. One can best illustrate this by examples of the methodological decisions that were taken in the European Social Survey, and by a critical reflection of the progress made. Scheuch’s statement about the increasing awareness of the real sources of difficulties still holds, however, and is even more true in view of the considerable growth of comparative surveys in that period. Many more countries, cultures, languages, respondents, researchers, research institutes and research cultures are mobilized, resulting in a proper understanding of the many difficulties and problematic aspects of comparative surveys. The more methodologists are involved in issues such as non-response (bias), measurement error and tools for analysis, the more that increasing methodological sophistication goes hand in hand with a growing awareness of the long way one still has to go.

High standards and optimal comparability, as well as the evaluation and improvement of response, have from the outset been a very important focus in the ESS (Jowell et al., 2007, pp. 6–9). The comparability of the obtained samples and measured concepts between sub-groups always causes problems for surveys, but these are major obstacles to success in cross-national surveys. The credibility of comparative quantitative surveys depends on the principle of equivalence (Jowell, 1998, p. 169). Concern for comparability covers all stages in the research process in cross-national research: the design and implementation of random samples in all participating countries; questionnaire construction; the translation process and the documentation of it; response enhancement during the fieldwork stage; estimation of and adjustment for non-response bias; the study of measurement error of the obtained measures. In view of correct interpretation of the data by future users, it even relates to the collection of events and contextual information in the participating countries, and the transparency, documentation and easy access of the data files. The whole enterprise that is performed by several task forces and research teams can only succeed thanks to a firm coordination of the whole18 in accordance
with the basic rules for cross-national survey research that are set up by Jowell (1998, pp. 173–6). Let us now focus on some of these aspects.

**Equivalence of the Planned Country Samples**

The principle of equivalent samples does not mean that selection probabilities must be equal in all countries. It means that all samples are random samples in the sense that each selected sampling unit in the sample must have at least a known and non-zero selection probability (Lynn et al., 2007). Equivalence of samples also does not mean that the sample designs are identical in all countries. Different designs are acceptable: direct and multi-stage samples of individuals, household samples and address samples, or combinations of these. In order to be able to implement probability samples in all participating countries and to obtain selection probabilities for all selected cases in all countries, a special ESS sampling task force prepared the sampling designs and sampling plans with the national coordinators, in particular in countries where no tradition in random sampling existed (Lynn et al., 2007). Full information about the selection probabilities of all sampled units by itself does not guarantee comparability between countries, since depending on the kinds of sample, there may be differences in the standard error estimates because of sample design effects (Gabler et al., 2006). In order to overcome this threat to inequivalence of differences in sampling designs, design weights are assigned to all selected units (Häder and Lynn, 2007). The sampling files required to compute the design weights are in each round delivered by most countries, but, for example, in Round 3, three countries could not deliver these files (Stoop et al., 2010, p. 55). The severe norms are thus not always met, but the work on sampling is nevertheless clearly innovative and a major step forward in comparative cross-country surveys.

**Equivalence of the Obtained Samples**

The norm for ESS response rates was by the preparatory methodological committee set to 70 per cent, and a severe definition of the response rates according to international standards was applied (AAPOR, 2006). The logic behind the target response rate of 70 per cent was, first that several countries could have even higher response rates, second that fixing this norm could reduce the differences in response rates and third that it should be used as a beacon to guide the countries round after round in the right direction. All measures taken to obtain high response rates are described in Stoop et al. (2010, pp. 49–6). See Table 14.2.

What is the real situation after four rounds? According to the analysis
of the call record data at country level (N = 20), in Round 1 the highest response rate was 79.5 per cent and the lowest 32.5 per cent. Eleven countries obtained response rates higher than 60 per cent. The mean response rate for 20 countries was 60.3 per cent. The dispersion expressed in standard deviation from the mean response rate was 12.6 points. Two rounds later in 2006 the average response rate for 24 countries increased to 62.5 per cent (about the same as in 2004) with a standard deviation of 7.9 points, but in the fourth round (2008) there was a decline in average response rate among 30 countries (61.9 per cent) and an increase in standard deviation of 2.2 points (SD: 10.1) compared with the previous round. The highest response rate in Round 4 was 81 per cent, the lowest 42.7 per cent. Seventeen countries obtained response rates over 60 per cent but on the other hand six other countries had response rates lower than 50 per cent (Matsuo et al., 2010a). The figures of the latter rounds show that it is extremely difficult to obtain repeatedly high response rates in countries that performed well in previous rounds (compared with the country rates for other surveys), despite unusual efforts. The difference in response rates can lead to non-response bias, even in the case that the bias would be invariant over countries, which is an unrealistic hypothesis.

Exploring the variance in country-level response rates is only one way to assess response quality. It may be more fruitful to draw lessons from it. The extensive contact form to fill in by the interviewers about each attempt they made to contact and convince each sampled unit is a major source of information about successful strategies that are used. The strategies are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>Round 2</th>
<th>Round 3a</th>
<th>Round 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean %</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest %</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest %</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># more than 60%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N (countries)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Country with largest response rates is missing in Round 3.

Source: Figures based on the analysis of the call record data (see Matsuo et al., 2010a).
extensively documented (see Stoop et al., 2010, pp. 115–203). Measures that contributed most to the obtained response are the instruction to realize at least four contact attempts at different daily periods, and refusal conversion. A review of past ESS rounds learned that on average the response rates at country level would be 6 to 7.5 percentage points lower when all countries had stopped contact with respondents after precisely three contact visits (Billiet and Pleysier, 2007, p. 60; Matsuo et al., 2010a, p. 59). In some countries more than 450 original refusals are interviewed but the numbers of converted refusals (named reluctant respondents) are much smaller in most countries. The increase in response rates ascribed to refusal conversion is substantial (+/–10 percentage points) in a number of countries but in general the improvement is rather moderate (for example, the mean is 3.32 with standard deviation of 2.89 in Round 3). A more useful consequence of refusal conversion is its potential for estimating the direction of bias.

**Non-response Bias Estimation and Adjustment**

The variation in obtained response rates across countries is still too high despite the considerable investment in response enhancement through extended interviewer efforts, especially in countries that had low response rates (see Stoop et al., 2010, pp. 115–60). One should, however, not concentrate excessively on high response rates since there is no clear-cut relationship between response rate and non-response bias (Groves, 2006). All depends on how much and on what variables respondents and non-respondents differ. Some scholars argue that rather than aiming for high response rates one should try to minimize non-response bias. This is theoretically a nice device but minimizing bias in an equivalent way in more than 20 country samples is even more problematic than enhancing response rates. Whereas a response rate is a relatively straightforward target, aiming for minimal bias will be difficult to implement in practical fieldwork protocols. Non-response bias can vary substantially across variables and countries. Moreover, it is often very difficult to assess non-response bias as it requires either population information with respect to the core variables of a survey, or similar information about the non-respondents. Both are rarely available in surveys on opinions, attitudes and values. In cross-national surveys the situation is even more complicated than in a single country situation.

Is the improvement of response quality in the sense of equivalence of samples and response rates then a lost battle in cross-country research? No, it is possible to proceed in two ways. First, one can try to detect traces of bias and use this information in view of a correct interpreta-
tion of excessive country differences. Second, it is possible to adjust the samples in order to obtain estimates that are clear of artificial differences. Both approaches assume additional information from (samples of) non-respondents. ESS applied several approaches for bias detection and adjustment:

- **Post-stratification**: this is comparison between the obtained samples with the population distributions of variables of which the joint distribution is documented in population statistics (age, gender, education etc.). Bias is estimated for a large number of variables by comparing the weighted with the unweighted samples (Vehovar, 2007). This approach is only meaningful when the target variables correlate substantially with the post-stratification variables, and when the post-stratification variables covary with the non-response mechanism.

- **Comparison of cooperative respondents with converted (reluctant) refusals** (Billiet et al., 2007): the underlying assumption is that reluctant respondents have more in common with the final refusals than cooperative respondents. Using information from reluctant respondents is often the only option to find out about possible bias.

- Other ways of studying bias focus more directly on the characteristics of the non-respondents and on the differences between respondents and non-respondents in the gross samples. The call record data in the ESS datasets contain several possibilities. For all selected sampling units observational data has been observed about gender, age and characteristics of housing and neighbourhood. Moreover, in a number of cases some information about a small set of questions is obtained at the moment of the back-checks of respondents and refusals. After the data collection of Round 3 surveys are organized among the non-respondents in four countries with a small set of questions that were previously found to be sensitive for bias. Cooperation was obtained from 25 per cent to 55 per cent of the non-respondents. The response propensities are then estimated in explanatory models and the samples are weighted using response propensity weights (Matsuo et al., 2010b).

What can be learned from the ESS experience with strategies to obtain the equivalence of samples and response? Let us start with an unfavourable conclusion. Attempts to reduce the variance in cross-country response rates increases survey costs considerably and are not very successful. The trend to obtain stable response rates at costs of higher effort, or even to realize lower response rates, is not only due to increased motivation
or readiness of respondents to cooperate but also pertains to the limits of standardization of human behaviour. ESS possibly encounters the limits of imposing rules for standardizing the behaviour of thousands of human beings involved in the data collection (national coordinators and their assistants, officers of survey organizations, interviewers and respondents\(^2\)), in a large number of countries characterized by different survey cultures, and with only weak means to sanction deviations from the rules. This is, however, only one side of the coin. The ESS experience also learned that there are several possibilities to react appropriately to the challenge of obtaining comparable data. After several rounds of ESS the knowledge necessary for designing country-specific random samples is now worked out. Researchers are now more familiar with survey methodology in countries where there was no prior tradition, and many fieldwork organizations are now acquainted with higher norms for data quality. From this point of view, ESS is not a competitor with other social surveys but much more a facilitator of higher-quality surveys.

It is possible to obtain information about the direction and size of bias in the participating countries by comparing the different methods used. We learned that under the assumptions made, non-response bias is most of the time small in both the social background variables that are documented in the population statistics and in the attitudinal variables. Among the social background variables, education level seems most sensitive to bias. The ratios between weighted samples (post-stratification) and unweighted samples for belonging to the lower-middle of the higher educated is in most countries in the range of 0.85 to 1.70, but it sometimes exceeded the range 0.50 to 2.00. This may have consequences on target variables that covary substantially with education. The usual suspects of bias are attitude questions dealing in the domain of ethnocentrism and political attitudes. There the differences between weighted and unweighted samples seldom show changes that exceed 5 per cent in the mean score.\(^{21}\) There are also factual questions effected by non-response such as the estimated number of members in the household, newspaper reading and membership of voluntary organizations. One of the problems for cross-national research is that the bias is not a priori in the same direction for all countries and it is not possible to generalize it. As a consequence, when the aim is comparing countries (e.g., country means) then it is strongly recommended to apply some of the methods for adjustment for bias in cross-national surveys. If the focus is on testing of explanatory models, then the situation is somewhat more comfortable. In ESS, until now, we did not detect serious changes in parameters of explanatory (regression) models, even for the most suspected (latent) variables (ethnic threat and trust in politics) and even in countries with high non-response rates (Billiet et al., 2009,
pp. 18–20; Matsuo et al., 2010b; Stoop et al., 2010, pp. 219–29). This rather encouraging conclusion about the relations between variables does not relieve survey researchers from taking the eventuality of non-response bias seriously since one cannot conclude a priori that the findings are not affected. It is wise to perform extra checks on bias each time that new surprising findings come up.

**Measurement Equivalence of Concepts**

To develop its core questionnaire, the ESS used a range of design techniques that are likely to lead to comparable measurements. Most of these techniques are also used during each round when developing the rotating modules. These techniques include expert papers by substantive specialists, multi-disciplinary specialist review, consultation with the national coordinators about both intellectual and cultural concerns, and the use of the Survey Quality Predictor (SQP) program to estimate reliability and validity of items. After questionnaire drafts prior to the main data collection of each round, two large-scale two-nation quantitative pilot studies are held followed by extensive data analysis to examine item non-response, scalability, expected factor structure and correlations. Split ballot multi-trait multi-method (MTMM) experiments are carried out. The latter are also included in the main stages of fieldwork for selected questions. The MTMM experiments allow for both improving questionnaire design and post hoc amendments to correct for differential measurement error between countries (Stoop et al., 2010, p. 53).

It is also important for the measured concepts to have the same meaning in different countries, and that the response scales used are comparable. Bias emerging from bad translations, defective response scales in attitude items and incomparable demographic variables is often more serious than non-response bias in terms of the size of effects on response distributions (see the example in next section). What measures are taken to obtain equivalent measures and how successful is this from the viewpoint of comparative research? In order to obtain comparable measures, ESS is primarily based on an input harmonization model where questions are designed and built from scratch rather than relying on existing national sources and harmonizing their output later. ESS seeks to obtain cross-national optimal comparability through a combination of uniformity whenever possible and desirable, and differing approaches within each country when uniformity is not optimal. Concerning the questionnaire, a hybrid approach is therefore adopted. Countries are required to ask the same questions and provide respondents in every country with identical stimuli but an identical grammatical structure is not required (Stoop et al., 2010, pp. 51–2).
Equivalence in Translations

In the awareness that defective translations are a major threat to comparability (Scheuch, 1968; Allardt, 1976, pp. 227–39), the ESS has sought to make this a priority. The English source questionnaire gets translated not only into every participating country’s first language, but also into languages that are spoken as a first language by more than 5 per cent of its population. Several countries thus have to translate the source questionnaire into multiple languages. To help with the translation process potentially ambiguous or unclear words or phrases are annotated in the source questionnaire with a brief description of their intended meaning in the context of the module of questions. Translators are guided by a detailed protocol specifying a five-step translation procedure, the so-called TRAPD procedure (Harkness, 2003, 2007) consisting of parallel translation (T) by two translators, review (R), adjudication (A), pre-testing (P) and documentation (D). It is a committee-based approach, thus helping to avoid the subjective impact of a single translator. The process is meticulously documented so that subsequent analysts may refer back to the decisions made. Countries that share a language (such as France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland) are encouraged to consult with one another during the process, but not necessarily to harmonize their finished questionnaire (Stoop et al., 2010, p. 53). As happened with other specifications these guidelines are not meticulously applied in all cases as is shown below with an example of the questionnaires in Danish in Round 1.

The ESS translation procedure does not insist that the question should have the same grammatical structure as the source questionnaire or that ‘direct word equivalents’ of key terms are used. Such an approach would be harmful to the measurement quality of the translated questions since the question formulation might be extremely long or awkward whilst a less direct translation could better convey the same meaning to respondents mirroring that in the English source questionnaire. This may have consequences for equivalent measurement if not carefully applied and cause substantial differences of conclusions between countries, as is clearly demonstrated in the following example.

Take the following pair of items D23 and D24 on immigrants who commit serious crime or any crime in the English source language:

**D23** If people who have come to live here commit a serious crime, they should [1] be made to leave.

**D24** If people who have come to live here commit any crime, they should [2] be made to leave.
(Five point scales: completely disagree 1–completely agree 5.)

[1] ‘Should’ in D23 and D24 has the sense of ‘must’.

In a report prepared for the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC, Vienna) on the immigration module in ESS Round 1 the mean scores for these two questions were published (Coenders et al., 2005, p. 98). The highest scores were obtained in Hungary and the lowest in Denmark, indicating that Denmark was the most tolerant country concerning immigrants who committed crimes. The Danish government was at that time supported by a nationalist party (Danish People’s Party) and a tough policy was pursued towards immigrants. In some Danish newspapers spokespersons of the DPP blamed EUMC for manipulating the figures. We were asked by EUMC to find out what the reason was for this seemingly tolerant attitude the Danish had towards crime committed by immigrants. A strange pattern of both questions was observed: 77.2 per cent of the Danish respondents wanted immigrants to leave after they had committed a serious crime (D23). This was a higher percentage than in 11 other countries, included Norway and Sweden, but lower than (the country-level) average for ESS as a whole (79 per cent). The response, however, to the subsequent question on any crime was completely different. It was much lower than the preceding question (only 12.0 per cent), as one might expect, but also considerably lower than in all other countries (average 51 per cent). The contrast between the two questions (64.2 points) was in Denmark 2.3 times larger than the averages in the other countries. How was this possible? A contrast between the two questions was expected but not an interaction effect of this size between response, question order and country. One could normally expect a comparable contrast between countries, which was clearly not the case for Denmark.

We assumed that there was a translation problem in question D24. Question wordings were compared for the three countries with comparable languages (Norway, Sweden and Denmark), with the help of a native speaker. It was discovered that in contrast with Norway and Sweden, in Denmark a different term was used for crime in D23 and D24.24 Forbrydelse means ‘crime’ and in the three countries was used in question D23 with the adjective ‘serious’. In Norway and Sweden, the same term was used in question D24 with the adjective ‘any form of’, but in Denmark another term ‘lovovertrædelse’ with the same adjective. Lovovertrædelse means ‘any kind of law violation associated with minor crime’ (violation of traffic rules included). In the Danish translation, the contrast (context effect) is boosted (in English ‘any form of light crime’) compared with Norway and Sweden, and with the other countries in ESS. The translation error was afterwards detected in an equivalence test of the whole set of
ethnic threat items. Measurement invariance of the slope and intercept of item D24 has to be rejected for the Danish sample.

This example teaches us how useful it is to follow ‘Ockham’s razor’ device, and first consider hypotheses about translation or method effects each time that serious differences in responses between countries are found, and not to start to develop substantive hypotheses. It also underlines the necessity of having the questionnaires in all fielded languages available for all users as in the case of the ESS documentation.

The Equivalence of Demographic and Socioeconomic Variables

The comparability of questions between countries is not only hampered by differences in the meaning of verbs in questions but also by differences in classifications and practices between countries. This is particularly the case for the demographic and socioeconomic variables that are used in official statistics. Studies on the measurement of income (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Warner, 2006), the levels of education (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Warner, 2007), the concept of ‘private household’ (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Warner, 2009), ethnicity (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Warner, 2010) and occupational status (Ganzeboom and Treiman, 2003) show that the categories used in quantitative comparative research are not completely comparable. Identical labels often cover different realities dependent on the country. Some of the measurements used are still defective in cross-country comparisons despite the enormous investment of social scientists in this matter (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Wolf, 2003).

Special attention has been paid to educational attainment because of its wide use, its theoretical importance as a covariate of many variables, and because of its capacity as a post-stratification variable in weighting (Vehovar, 2007). In the first four rounds, ESS used a simplified version of the International Standard Classification of Education 1997 (ISCED-97), which was subjected to critical reflection in the context of PhD research (Schneider, 2009, 2010). The consistency of the reclassification of national education variables into the comparable variable in ESS was considered, and how much explanatory power of educational attainment is lost by harmonizing the national variables using occupational status as the criterion was explored. What steps in the harmonization process affect the results most strongly was also explored. An alternative way of simplifying the ISCED-97 was proposed (Schneider, 2009). As a response to the recommendations from an ESS Quality Enhancement Meeting on education the ESS has from Round 5 onwards (end 2010) moved from its seven-category target ISCED-based measure for respondents’ highest level of education to a more detailed ISCED coding with up to 25 codes.
However, not all of these codes apply in all countries. An additional seven-category target variable named EISCED (European Survey version of ISCED) will be mapped from the new detailed ISCED measure. This approach has required a substantial amount of time and resources for all parties involved (experts and central coordination team) and extensive consultation of the participating countries. As a consequence of the new approach, national instruments with more detailed categories have been set up for all participating countries. This is an example of trying to obtain functional equivalent measures instead of nominal comparability by means of some variation in the number of questions and categories over the countries26 (Schneider, 2010).

Measurement Equivalence Tests

The assessment of measurement equivalence is essential in the case of multiple indicators that are designed for measuring latent variables in several cultural groups, as is the case in cross-national research where micro-data on attitudinal variables play a crucial role in comparative analysis (Van de Vijver, 2011). Examples of variables are political alienation, attitudes towards immigrants, religious involvement and values that are all in the core module, and thus in each ESS round. In these cases there is also a time dimension. Concepts should not only be shown to be equivalent between nations but also over time. The requirement of measurement equivalence also holds for a number of multiple indicator variables in the rotating modules but the procedures to ensure equivalent measurement, or to control for it after data collection, are somewhat different.

Formal equivalence tests are available in the case of multiple indicator variables. Most models used are multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA) and multi-group structural equation modelling (MGSEM) for indicators that are metric or that might be conceived as metric after some transformation (Billiet, 2003). Multi-group latent class models are designed for categorical scaled indicators (Kankaras et al., 2011). ESS applied mainly MGSEM in the assessment of equivalence.27

Equivalence tests start with inspection of configural equivalence of measurement models in the sense that the indicators that are designed for measuring a concept are all related in more or less the same way to the concept in all the countries, and that the indicators are not too strongly related to other concepts. This is based on the classical idea of convergent and discriminant validity of Campbell and Fiske (1959). This first inspection is done by means of exploratory factor analysis. This already gives an early idea of possibly problematic indicators. In the next step the focus is on formal tests of equivalence. By applying MGSEM metric and scalar
invariance of the corresponding indicators of the concepts measured in all groups may be obtained. Instruments show *metric* (or measurement unit) equivalence if their measurement scales have the same units of measurement, but a different origin. Metric equivalence is found when a source of bias creates an offset in the scale in one or more groups, but does not affect the relative scores of individuals within each cultural group. Scalar or full score equivalence assumes an interval or ratio scale in all cultural groups. If (and only if) this condition is met, direct cross-cultural comparisons can be made. It is the only type of equivalence that allows for the conclusion that average scores obtained in two cultures are different or equal (Van de Vijver, 2011, pp. 6–9) in a very strict meaning that one can compare not only latent means but also differences in means between each pair of countries (or groups).

It must be admitted that this very strict use of interval or ratio level measurement, which requires invariant intercepts of the corresponding indicators in the measurement models of all groups, is not always necessary in comparative social research. Much more relevant is the invariance of slope parameters since this is a requirement if one wants to compare correlations and regression parameters of latent variables (and concepts) between countries. It is possible to rely on partial invariance when three or more indicators are used per concept (Davidov et al., 2008; Meuleman et al., 2009; Meuleman and Billiet, 2011). It is also important to adopt a methodological attitude that is most fruitful in comparative research and that is not obsessed by the will to obtain metric and scalar invariant measures for all concepts in all countries at any cost, for example by deleting defect indicators or even by dropping countries from the comparisons. It is always possible to distinguish between clusters of countries that show internal invariance in the measurement but that are not invariant compared with other clusters. This finding in itself might be very relevant and can require more in-depth analysis about the reasons for invariance. After all, invariant indicators are not just errors but are vehicles of information about cultural diversity. Isn’t this a real aim of comparative research?

What strategies are used in ESS in the assessment of measurement invariance? One should make distinction between the core module and the rotating modules. Configural equivalence of the concepts in the core module was, on the occasion of the first round, explored in two bilingual pilot studies (each with more than 400 respondents), and was after first release explicitly formally tested by MGSEM. Some measurement error was found and was reported or adjusted. Further analysis was done in a number of methodological and substantive studies (Davidov et al., 2008; Meuleman et al., 2009). New concepts in the rotating modules were tested in the pilot studies preceding each new round following the expectations
of the question design teams about the relations between indicators and concepts. Systematic testing of the concepts used in both core and rotating modules in all countries and further methodological work was done by Saris et al. who applied methodological innovations on measurement error and designed a procedure to reduce the enormous amount of work related to MGSEM (Saris and Gallhofer, 2007; Van der Veld and Saris, 2011).

Our experience with the latent variable ‘religious involvement’ provides a convincing example of the relevance and absolute necessity of measurement equivalence testing before substantial analysis is executed and conclusions about relations are made. Turkey participated in ESS Round 2 with 24 European countries. Religious involvement has been measured by three indicators:

C13  *Regardless of whether you belong to a particular religion, how religious would you say you are?*

(0 = not at all; –10 = very religious)

C14  *Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services nowadays?*  
(Reversed: 0 = never; –7 = everyday)

C15  *Apart from when you are at religious services, how often, if at all, do you pray?*  
(Reversed: 0 = never; –7 = everyday)

A quasi-metric invariant model for all countries but one with excellent measurement quality was obtained by MGSEM (factor loadings >0.94). Our analysis makes clear that only one seriously deviating factor loading was present for Turkey. The non-invariant parameter C14 for Turkey reveals that religious involvement is conceived very differently in Turkey than in the other ESS countries. This can be explained by the fact that Turkey is the only country where the population consists predominantly of Muslims. The low factor loading for C14 (0.26) indicates that attending religious services is hardly related to religious involvement in Turkey. In Islam, it is not customary for females to attend religious services, but this does not prevent them from being religiously involved (Meuleman and Billiet, 2011, pp. 187–9).

Overlooking the inequivalence of the measurement of religious involvement in Turkey has serious consequences when one studies the relationship between gender and religious involvement. In multiple regression in all European countries the effect parameter of gender (men = 1; women = 0) on religious involvement is significant and negative, indicating that women are more religious than men. But in Turkey, the effect parameter
is positive, which means that women are less religious than men. This is clearly a wrong conclusion caused by the inequivalent measurement of religious involvement. If one verifies carefully the separate indicators, then one discovers that the women in Turkey feel more religious than the men, and that the women pray more, but that they do not attend public religious services as much because these services are a men’s domain (Meuleman and Billiet, 2011, pp. 189–93). Consequently, an equivalent substitute for attendance at religious services is needed for Muslim samples.

TO CONCLUDE

There are several designs used in quantitative cross-national comparative studies. Not all of these rely on micro-data collected by means of large sample surveys. In the 1950s and 1960s in cross-national comparative macro-level studies the measurements used were only exceptionally derived from sample surveys. In most cases the aggregate variables were computed on the basis of official statistics. Some of the characteristics of these studies are discussed in this chapter, but the focus of the largest part of it was on measures derived from sample surveys, both as aggregate measures in correlational analysis at the country level and as micro-level data in the context of hierarchical (multi-level) models. The increased use of comparative surveys was made possible since the start of pan-European and even world-wide data collection programmes.

Broadly taken, three kinds of problems or challenges are discussed in this chapter. First, theoretical and conceptual problems that deal with epistemological problems. The problems discussed there deal with the so-called Coleman diagram (‘bathtub model’) about the micro-foundation of relations between concepts of the macro-level. It is clear that these considerations are most serious when social science researchers adhere strongly to methodological individualism. A second challenge deals with the causal claims of the mainstream analysis method (MR), but it goes one step further and it affects the concepts of ‘causal mechanisms’ and ‘causal heterogeneity’. Ways are proposed to deal with it within the framework of MR but the need for a shift in approaches because the limits of quantitative analysis are met is most marked here. Characteristics of these alternative approaches are in-depth analysis of selected cases (Ragin, 1987; Rihoux, 2003; Lieberman, 2005) or the use of narratives in order to disentangle causal mechanisms (Abell, 2004, 2009).

The proposed shift to qualitative approaches after statistical analysis to complement quantitative analysis by in-depth case studies is in line with Allardt’s (1990) ideas on the sequence of these approaches in comparative
research. This scholar already stated three decades ago that, contrary to commonly made assumptions, there are good grounds for arguing that an increased use of qualitative data is a sign of maturity of social research. Traditionally, it has been assumed that qualitative studies are best at the explorative stage of a project, and then ought to be followed by quantitative studies in order to provide really useful information. Allardt (1990, p. 183) concluded in the light of his experience from many comparative studies that it is more reasonable to argue that it should be the other way around and that it would be fruitful to reverse the order of the two types of research. By means of quantitative data and multivariate analyses researchers are able to explore the phenomena studied, to forward broad hypotheses, to test these, interpret the results and confront these with theoretical expectations derived from theories about social interaction in context. It is, however, clear that at the end many blind spots in the social mechanisms are not clarified by correlational analyses, and that many ‘why’ questions are insufficiently answered. In order to make the results and interpretations informative, and provide more insight and understanding, the quantitative studies have to be followed by qualitative ones by which one can dig deeply and thoroughly into the subject matter. A cyclical approach to the sequence of qualitative-quantitative methods seems, however, more fruitful. It is very likely that the insights obtained by an in-depth study of selected cases lead to the formulation of hypotheses that might be tested in a multi-case–multi-variable context with data that are already collected or that can be collected in further research. That way, findings from in-depth case studies can guide designs of subsequent large quantitative studies.

The second category of problems discussed are more directly focused on comparative cross-country analysis with survey data. An aspect that is related to the already discussed Coleman diagram, the problematic micro-link, is now concentrated on the theoretical distance between variables at macro- and at micro-level, included the meaning of indicators measured at a lower level for measurement of higher-level variables. Further, estimation problems because insufficient numbers of cases at macro-level are discussed and alternatives are proposed, not only when the number of cases (at the higher level) is too small but also when the research questions are much better tackled by these alternative approaches (e.g., multi-group comparisons). Some of the ‘rules’ for comparative research developed by Jowell (1998) that are mentioned below relate to this discussion.

A third category of problems was assembled around the concept of ‘equivalence’. The crucial role of this concept in comparative quantitative research has been extensively discussed with the procedures applied in ESS as a prototype. Every researcher who is familiar with the sensitivity
of social survey data for method effects is certainly convinced of the necessity to minimize error in the measurements, or when this is not possible, to provide possibilities for measuring method effects and take these into account. Most of the procedures used in ESS for obtaining comparability by equivalent measurement are inspired by ten practical rules developed by Jowell (1998, pp. 174–6) in a paper entitled ‘How Comparative is Comparative Research?’ These rules deal with many of the challenges and problems discussed in the last part of this chapter and are a must for every social researcher who plans to engage in cross-national comparative research.

NOTES

* Dedicated to Sir Roger Jowell.
1. Examples are Norwegian Social Science Data Services (Bergen), GESIS: Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (Cologne), Centre d’Etudes de Populations, de Pauvreté et de Politiques Socio-Economiques/International Network for Studies in Technology, Environment, Alternatives, Development CEPS-INSTEAD (Esch, Luxembourg), UK Data Archive (Essex); European Data Center for Work and Welfare (EDAC.wowe; Tilburg University, Netherlands and Institute for Social Research SFI, Denmark).
2. The average number of papers in ESR that are based on data of more than eight countries increased from 0.64 per issue in the 1991–2000 period to 1.5 per issue in 2001–10. Each issue contains one or two of these studies since 2003. A substantial number of these studies analyse data from International Social Survey Programme, World Value Survey, European Value Survey, European Household Panel Survey and European Social Survey. A search of *Sociological Abstracts* (2011) with key words *multi-level*, *two-level*, *random coefficient* learns that the number increased from 0.35 per 1000 in 1985 to 7.12 per 1000 in 2010. Of course these are not all cross-country studies but it gives an idea of the increased popularity of the combination of variables from lower with higher level. One should also notice that not all studies that combine data from the lower level with context data apply multi-level analysis.
3. An indicator of this is the overwhelming success of the Summer School on cross-national comparisons of the European Science Foundation network programme Quantitative Analysis in the Social Sciences (QMSS 1 and 2). No less than 150 pre- and post-doctoral researchers from research institutes all over Europe applied for the course and training on multi-level research and cross-country comparisons in 2011.
4. The ESS Central Coordination Team was in 2005 awarded the European Descartes Prize for its pioneering work on innovations in comparative measurement and for setting the standards in the domain of comparative surveys.
5. For example, the variation in state expenditures in the function of political, social and economic country characteristics.
6. For example, changes in smoking rates can only be explained by understanding the actions of individual smokers and non-smokers and their interrelationships in the context of laws and social norms (Oakes, 2009, p. 4).
7. This is the total number of educationally homogeneous marriages of the partners controlled for differences in the educational distributions of husbands and wives (Smits et al., 1998, p. 270).
8. The methodological problems in this study are not conceptual or theoretical but related to measurement validity. Large numbers of survey data are used that are collected in
Quantitative methods with survey data in comparative research

more than 60 countries over a long period (between 1971 and 1983) for measuring one state of the dependent variable. Compared with today’s practice in social surveys, only minor attention has been paid to equivalent measurement (response quality and measurement quality).

9. This is a reason why pooling cross-section and time series observations is not a defensible alternative because pooling denies differences in correlation structures underlying cross-sectional and time-series variation (Pontusson, 2007, pp. 326–7).

10. In their study on the differences in welfare state outcomes in social and Christian democracies these authors take into account changes in the constitutional structure of countries over time.

11. The study included some 645 000 schoolchildren, nested within 60 000 schoolteachers in 4000 public schools. Coleman tried to estimate the independent effect of school funding and social context on academic achievement of students. Technological background is a complex variable measured in three categories.

12. It is shown that this model yields unbiased estimates of the parameters of the between-group model that are free of the within-group variability (Croon et al., undated).

13. Unacceptable amounts of parameter and standard error bias are present for the between-level estimates. Statistical power for detecting a significant between-level structural effect is seriously lacking unless the standardized effects are very large (≥0.75). The required group sample sizes depend strongly on the specific interests of the researcher, on the expected effect sizes, and on the complexity of the model (Meuleman and Billiet, 2009, pp. 50–55). Some guidelines that are quite robust for varying cluster sizes and intra-class correlations are presented in this study.

14. This is possible when the measurement models with many indicators per latent (structural) variable are not estimated together with the structural multi-level model.

15. Multi-level bootstrapping in the context of structural equation modelling is, however, not a simple procedure to implement.

16. It is important to notice that the scores on the dependent variable in the graphical displays are not simple group means but the intercepts of the (multiple) regression functions that are estimated within each country at the micro-level. These intercepts are the predicted values on the dependent variable for respondents with score zero on all explanatory variables, and thus represent group means that are adjusted for differences in the composition of the population.

17. LCM is an application of latent class analysis (LCA).

18. Information of the central research teams and task force can be found on ESS web page: http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/.

19. In the sense that one can compute the selection probability of each sampled case.

20. The total number of sampled individuals in ESS Round 4 is about 93 800 of which more than 58 000 were interviewed.

21. One should realize that this is an underestimation of bias since only social background variables are used as weighting variables, and these are often weakly related to the target variables.

22. Take, for example, the likelihood of serious bias among female single parents with a job and with children in a comparative study about life conditions across European countries.


24. D23: ‘Hvis mennesker, der er kommet for at bo her, begår en alvorlig forbrydelse, skal de udives af landet’.


26. Three countries needed three or more questions and the number of categories is in the range of ten to 26.

27. In most studies, measurement equivalence has only been tested for micro-level measurements, but when the same latent variables are measured at both the individual and the group level (group averages), equivalent tests are performed at both levels in order to
find out whether the factor loadings for each latent variable are invariant over levels (Marsh et al., 2009, p. 790).

28. This was the case of an indicator where the endpoints of a scale were interchanged in one country.

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PART V

THEMES AND DEBATES
15 Child poverty and child well-being in comparative perspective
Jonathan Bradshaw

INTRODUCTION

Without comparison we cannot know how well our children are doing or how much better their well-being could be. This was illustrated when writing the concluding chapter of the *Well-being of Children in the United Kingdom* (Bradshaw, 2011). It was clear from the evidence in the book that generally the well-being of children had improved in the UK over the last 20 years or so – child poverty had fallen, child health had mostly improved, educational attainment and participation had improved, so had housing conditions, crime, play facilities, child care, and there was even evidence that subjective well-being and mental health had improved. Out of 48 indicators, 36 had improved, four had deteriorated and for eight there was no clear trend. One might have been tempted to conclude that all was well with British children – until forced to take account of the comparative evidence. The comparative evidence shows that the state of British children is still dire. Out of 42 comparative indicators the UK came in the bottom third of the international distribution in 19, the middle third in 15 and the top third in only eight. The UK was doing comparatively badly on material well-being indicators (poverty), health and health behaviours, education participation and some aspects of housing. So the conclusion was that although most aspects of well-being had been getting better, we had been starting from a very low base and still had a long way to go to be as good as we could and should be.

Until quite recently the focus of much of the comparative analysis of children was focused on child poverty and almost exclusively on child income poverty. Now, thanks mainly due to the efforts of the UNICEF Innocenti Centre in Florence, there has developed a broader conceptualization of child well-being, which includes child poverty but also encompasses a number of other domains of life that affect children. The OECD has published a multi-dimensional index of child well-being (OECD, 2009). The European Union has initially added deprivation to its portfolio of social inclusion indicators and more recently has tentatively explored using multi-dimensional child well-being indicators (TARKI,
There is also a gathering host of academic and independent researchers developing the field of comparative study of child poverty and child well-being associated with the International Society for Child Indicators and the academic journal *Child Indicators Research*.

This chapter will start by reviewing the most up-to-date data on child income poverty. It will then explore the problems with income as an indicator of poverty and review the attempts being made to develop measures of child deprivation. It will then present the results of some of the attempts to broaden comparative study in child well-being. It will conclude with a discussion of some of the challenges facing the comparison of child poverty and child well-being. One of the challenges and a limitation worth acknowledging at the start is that it is very difficult to present a global picture of child poverty and child well-being. The best attempt to do so is the UNICEF report *State of the World’s Children* (2011). The UNDP Human Development Index is being developed to include a wider variety of indicators, but it has not yet been applied to children. The World Bank’s World Development Index also contains a considerable amount of useful data but children are not the unit of analysis. So with some exceptions much of the evidence in this chapter will relate to rich countries.

**CHILD INCOME POVERTY**

The comparative study of child income poverty (in rich countries) is reliant on three main sources:

- The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) collects micro-data from national governments every five years or so and makes it available for analysis. The latest data available are for around 2005 and for many countries there are data going back to around 1974. LIS is extending its coverage to middle income countries. *LIS Key Figures* publishes income poverty rates at the 40, 50 and 60 per cent of median thresholds and for lone parents and couples at 50 per cent of the median. LIS also gives access to the micro-datasets for registered researchers to analyse online.

- OECD collects child poverty data from its members using a standard framework every five years or so. The latest collection is from around 2005 (OECD, 2008). Child income poverty rates using 40, 50 and 60 per cent of the median thresholds are published. Also, child poverty gaps (how far children are below the poverty threshold) and child poverty rates using deprivation indicators are available.

- A better and more up to date source of comparative data on child
poverty is now derived from EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). EU SILC is the main source of data for the EU Social Inclusion Indicators and is being used to monitor the new EU 2020 poverty targets. The commonly agreed indicators now include:

- at-risk-of-poverty rates at different thresholds (40, 50, 60 and 70 per cent of the national median equivalized household income);
- an at-risk-of-poverty gap (for the 60 per cent threshold);
- an at-risk-of-poverty rate ‘anchored’ at a point in time (for the 60 per cent threshold);
- a persistent at-risk-of-poverty rate;
- a material deprivation indicator – lacking at least three or four out of nine deprivation items.

SILC data for 2009 is available for all 27 EU countries plus Norway, Iceland and Switzerland and it is being collected for most candidate and pre-candidate countries. A wide range of the latest data is available on the Eurostat website including an online tabulation tool. 5

The 2009 survey included a special module on child poverty and child well-being. Extensive analysis of child poverty using SILC has been undertaken (Bradshaw and Chzhen, 2009; Tarki, 2010, 2011; UNICEF, 2012).

The main headline indicator of child income poverty is a relative one, which presents the percentage of children living in households with equivalent net income less than a threshold related to the national distribution. Net income is after direct taxes and cash benefits (but not indirect taxes and services in kind). In the OECD the preferred threshold is 50 per cent of the median and in the EU it is 60 per cent of the median, though both publish poverty rates using other thresholds. The equivalence scales used to adjust income to household needs is also different – the OECD and LIS use the square root of the number in the household while the EU uses the modified OECD equivalence scale. There is a huge and arcane literature arguing the technicalities of income poverty measures. Suffice it to say the choice of income definition, the threshold and the equivalence scale make a difference to the outcome. For example, the UK does much better in the OECD child poverty league table than it does in the EU league table.

Figure 15.1 shows the headline EU ‘at-risk-of-child-poverty rate’ using the 60 per cent of median threshold and the modified OECD equivalence scale for 2009 (income data 2008). Child poverty varies from 10 per cent in Iceland to 32 per cent in Romania. It also shows on the right-hand axis the poverty gap – the average percentage difference between the income of those below the poverty line and the poverty threshold. In general, the higher the poverty rate the higher the poverty gap but Slovenia, Czech
Republic, Slovakia and Spain have higher gaps than expected and Ireland, Malta, Hungary, the UK and Luxembourg lower gaps. A discrepancy between rates and gaps may be an indication of the effectiveness of social protection. Countries with comparatively high gaps may have inadequate coverage of social protection and those with comparatively low gaps may have adequate coverage but levels below the poverty threshold.

SILC provides a consistent series on child poverty from 2005 and the worrying finding from this is that child poverty rates increased in about half of the EU countries between 2005 and 2009, including all the Nordic countries, Germany, France and Greece. It is also possible to compare the child poverty rates with the pensioner and population poverty rates. In 2009 the child poverty rates were higher than the pensioner poverty rates in about half the countries in the EU and higher than the population poverty rate in all countries except Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Norway and Slovenia. This indicates that these countries are most successfully protecting their children against the normal poverty levels in their countries.

SILC enables an analysis of the factors associated with child poverty. Child poverty rates are associated with the educational level of the head of the household, the work intensity of the household, the number of children and the age of the youngest child. Child poverty is higher in lone parent families in all countries. In most of the older richer EU countries the majority of poor children live in urban settings – the exceptions are Finland, Greece, Ireland and Sweden. But that is not the same for the

![Figure 15.1 Percentage of children in households with equivalent income less than 60 per cent median and the average percentage gap between the income and the poverty threshold](image-url)
new EU countries (except Cyprus) where most poor children live in thinly populated rural settings. In all the old EU countries except Ireland the risk of poverty is higher for children in migrant households. There are heavy concentrations of child poverty in migrant households in Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, Greece, Cyprus, Belgium, Austria and Denmark. Migrants are even a majority of poor children in Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg.

However, policy is also obviously a very important determinant of the child poverty rate. Figure 15.2 compares the impact of transfers on the child poverty rate. The child poverty rate before transfers is the poverty rate that would exist if there was no cash or tax benefits for children and they relied just on income from the market. Countries are ranked by the percentage reduction in their pre-transfer child poverty achieved by transfers. It is a measure of the effort that they make. So, for example, Austria and Latvia have rather similar child poverty rates but Austria makes much more effort, reducing its child poverty by 64 per cent compared with Latvia reducing its by only 36 per cent.

### CHILD DEPRIVATION

The problem with the analysis so far is that it has used a poverty threshold of 60 per cent of the national median. This threshold is very different in different countries. The threshold ranged from €1297 in Romania to
€20 242 in Norway in 2009. Furthermore, 60 per cent of the median is much closer to the median in the poorer countries than it is in the richer countries. Thus, we are hardly comparing like with like. These thresholds may be too low in poor countries, excluding households who are deprived and are finding it difficult to make ends meet. For example, in Bulgaria, out of those not included as poor on the 60 per cent of median income threshold, 55 per cent of children live in households finding it difficult or very difficult to make ends meet and 46 per cent of children lack three or more of the EU deprivation items. In contrast, in the rich countries very few of the non-income poor are subjectively poor or deprived. Similarly, there is also evidence that the relative threshold may be too high in rich countries. For example, the child poverty rate for Austria is 14 per cent using the 60 per cent of median threshold but if those who are neither deprived of any item nor have difficulty making ends meet are removed, the child poverty rate would be 7 per cent.

One solution to this is to take a fixed median income threshold across the countries. One possible threshold is 60 per cent of the weighted median for all the countries or €8855. This gives a very different picture – less than 2 per cent of children are poor in Luxembourg, Norway and Iceland but more than 90 per cent are poor in Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. An alternative to this arbitrary threshold would be to take a threshold based on a budget standard expressed in purchasing power parities as Bradshaw and Mayhew (2010) have explored.

However, instead of using an income threshold a better and more direct measure of non-relative child poverty can be obtained by using indicators of deprivation. The Indicators Sub-Group of the EU Social Protection Committee began to explore the possibility of adding a deprivation-based measure to the so-called Laeken Indicators of social inclusion in 2008. They commissioned Guio (2009) who explored the deprivation indicators in EU SILC (2005).

She distinguished between a set of five indicators of economic strain. The household could not afford:

- to face unexpected expenses;
- one week annual holiday away from home;
- to pay for arrears (mortgage or rent, utility bills or hire purchase instalments);
- a meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day;
- to keep the home adequately warm.

And a set of four indicators of durables. The household could not afford (if it wanted to):
● to have a washing machine;
● to have a colour TV;
● to have a telephone;
● to have a personal car.

A set of five housing indicators (she did not include the sixth housing indicator, which was not adopted until 2008). The dwelling suffers from:

● leaking roof/damp walls/floors/foundations or rot in the window frames;
● accommodation too dark;
● no bath or shower;
● no indoor flushing toilet for sole use of the household;
● lack of space (defined as an insufficient number of rooms compared with the number of persons);
● spending more than 40 per cent of income net of housing costs on housing.

Having undertaken exploratory analysis, Guio concluded that the economic strain and durable indicators could be treated as a single deprivation index, but the housing indicators should be excluded because they covaried less with the other domain variables. Her index has since become the standard used in comparative analysis of SILC and the Social Inclusion Indicators include the proportion lacking three or more items and the new EU 2020 social exclusion target includes those lacking four or more items. Figure 15.3 presents the proportion of children living in households lacking three or more and four or more of these deprivation items. It can be seen that the distribution of countries is much more attenuated, with very low child deprivation rates in the rich EU countries and much higher deprivation rates in the poor EU countries.

Figure 15.4 shows that there is a stronger association between subjective poverty (the proportion of children living in households having difficulty or great difficulty making ends meet) and deprivation than there is with relative income poverty.

International comparison of deprivation is still to be developed. There is no generally accepted index of child deprivation, though work is being undertaken by UNICEF (2012), and others on the special module included in EU SILC (2009) may produce one. Meanwhile, there are a number of other sources of child deprivation data worth noting:

● the UNICEF State of the World’s Children contains data on:
  – under-5 mortality rate;
A handbook of comparative social policy

- infant mortality rate;
- neonatal mortality rate;
- GNI per capita US$;
- life expectancy at birth;
- total adult literacy rate;
- primary school attendance percentage.

Source: Own analysis of EU SILC (2009).

Figure 15.3 Percentage of children 0–16 in households lacking 3+ or 4+ deprivation items

Figure 15.4 Association between subjective poverty and deprivation and income poverty
• It also publishes additional indicators covering health, nutrition, education, HIV/AIDS, the economy, demography, women and child protection. There is no attempt to combine these indicators into an index but the under-5 mortality rate is highlighted with a league table.

• Save the Children (2008) has developed ‘an index combining performance measures specific to children – primary education, child health and child nutrition’. Or, to be more specific:
  – net non-enrolment ratio in primary education (per cent);
  – under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 births); and
  – underweight children under 5 years (per cent).

• The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)\(^6\) survey covered 69 countries in the 2009 sweep. PISA is not a poverty survey; however, it is possible to use the survey to derive an eight-item deprivation index. The OECD (2009) has used four or more of these items as an indicator of deprivation for OECD countries.

• The Health Behaviour of School Children (HBSC)\(^7\) survey covered 41 countries in 2005/06. It is also not a poverty survey but there is a Family Affluence Scale based on car ownership, bedroom occupancy, holidays and home computers. This is used in the most recent survey report (Currie et al., 2008) to analyse variations in health outcomes and behaviour by family affluence.

• Gordon et al. (2003) from the University of Bristol have developed a child poverty index based on the percentage of children lacking access to eight domains:
  – severe food deprivation – children whose heights and weights for their age were more than –3 standard deviations below the median of the international reference population, that is, severe anthropometric failure;
  – severe water deprivation – children who only had access to surface water (e.g., ponds, rivers or springs) for drinking or who lived in households where the nearest source of water was more than 15 minutes away;
  – severe deprivation of sanitation facilities – children who had no access to a toilet of any kind in the vicinity of their dwelling, including communal toilets or latrines;
  – severe health deprivation – children who had not been immunized against any diseases or young children who had a recent illness causing diarrhoea or acute respiratory infection (ARI) and had not received any medical advice or treatment
  – severe shelter deprivation – children living in dwellings with five or more people per room (severe overcrowding) or with no flooring material (e.g., a mud floor);
severe education deprivation – children aged between 7 and 18 who had never been to school and were not currently attending school (no professional education of any kind);
severe information deprivation – children aged between 3 and 18 in households that do not possess a radio, television, telephone or computer.

They have applied it to many developing countries, producing results derived from Household Budget Surveys or Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys. Similarly, Alkire and Santos (2010) have been developing an index of acute multi-dimensional poverty as background work for the UN Human Development Index. It has not been elaborated for children but contains data on:
- education: schooling and enrolment;
- health: mortality and nutrition;
- living standards: electricity, sanitation, water, floors, cooking fuel, assets.

CHILD WELL-BEING

Child well-being is generally understood to be multi-dimensional. Poverty and deprivation are important indicators of child well-being but they are not all that concerns child well-being. What matters to children and affects their lives includes many other domains of their life. McAuley (2010) has identified four major influences on the concept of child well-being. These are the following:

- Children’s rights as set out in the UN Charter on the Rights of the Child and also in the European Human Rights Charter. Included in the UN Charter is the clause that says that ‘the primary consideration in all actions concerning children must be in their best interests and their views must be taken into account’ (my emphasis).
- The so-called new sociology of childhood, which argued that childhood should be treated as a stage in life with its own value, and not just as a passage towards adulthood. Thus, the well-being of children in childhood should be the main focus of attention, not just how successful as adults they become – well-becoming. Indeed, well-becoming could be in conflict with well-being.
- The ecological perspective on child development, which located the child in the context of the family, friendship networks, school, neighbourhood and the family’s place within the community. Well-being is influenced by many dimensions; it is multi-dimensional. What
matters to children is not just how well they do at school, or what their health is like, or how they get on with friends, but all of these things and more.

- The new science of happiness has been mainly applied to adults and has roots in hedonic psychology and self-assessed evaluations of quality of life. Economists such as Layard (2005) have argued that increasing wealth beyond a point does not necessarily result in improved happiness, that happiness or life satisfaction should be the focus of endeavour in our societies, not wealth, and that inequity associated with market competition does not enhance society. More recently in *The Spirit Level*, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have argued that inequality in society is actually harmful. These ideas have spread to the study of children and to an increasing preoccupation with what makes for a good childhood (Layard and Dunn, 2009).

The study of child well-being is not new. Ben Arieh (2010) finds ‘State of the Child’ reports were being published as early as the 1940s. He lists some major developments in the child indicators movement:

- a shift from preoccupation with physical survival and basic needs to development and well-being;
- a shift from negative indicators of problems and failure to positive indicators that hold societies accountable for more than the warehousing of children;
- incorporating child rights perspectives that focus on the child;
- a shift from well-becoming to well-being;
- a shift from traditional domains such as education and health to new domains such as life skills and civic involvement;
- a shift from an adult to a child perspective – focusing on children lives;
- a new focus on data at the local level;
- the development of more policy-oriented indicators.

He also discusses a trend towards producing single composite indices, the use of the child as the unit of observation and the emerging importance of subjective measures.

UNICEF was the pioneer of child well-being indices. Professor Andrea Cornia, working at the UNICEF Innocenti Centre in Florence, began to be anxious about what was happening to children in rich countries and UNICEF eventually published a book on the well-being of children in industrialized countries (Cornia and Danziger, 1997). This work led in
turn to a series of Innocenti Report Cards comparing aspects of child well-being in OECD countries. However, the first overall comparative index of child well-being was a comparison of EU countries (Bradshaw et al., 2007a). The essence of UNICEF’s approach was that the index was multi-dimensional, based on children’s rights as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, with an assumption that what children think and feel is important, and it attempted where possible to use the child as the unit of analysis rather than the household or the family. It also gave as much priority to indicators of child well-being as well-becoming and it tried to focus on outcomes not inputs and use direct rather than indirect indicators.

Bradshaw et al. (2007b) then did the work for the UNICEF (2007) Innocenti Report Card 7, which caused a great stir in the United Kingdom because it came bottom. The results of that are summarized in Table 15.1.

In 2009, Bradshaw and Richardson updated the EU comparisons for the 29 EU countries. This index took 43 indicators from the most up-to-date survey and administrative sources and summarized them into 19 components before combining them into seven domains. It can be seen in Table 15.2 that only the Netherlands performed in the top third of countries on all domains and Lithuania was the only country to perform in the bottom third of countries on all domains.

Then the OECD (2009) undertook a similar analysis, but cut the domains rather differently and excluded subjective well-being and children’s relationships. Although the OECD did not produce a league table, it is easy to estimate one, presented in Table 15.3. In this case no countries came in the top third of the distribution on all domains and only Mexico came in the bottom third on all domains (with data missing).

All of these indices, using slightly different combinations of variables, give a very good comparative picture of the average well-being of children. Innocenti Report Card 9 (UNICEF, 2010) is the first to attempt an index of the dispersion of child well-being. This based on three domains:

- material well-being:
  - disposable income;
  - possession of educational items;
  - housing living space.
- educational well-being:
  - reading;
  - maths;
  - science.
- health well-being:
  - self-reported health;
Table 15.1  UNICEF Report Card 7, child well-being league table

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dimensions of child well-being</th>
<th>Average ranking position (for all 6 dimensions)</th>
<th>Dimension 1 material well-being</th>
<th>Dimension 2 health and safety</th>
<th>Dimension 3 educational well-being</th>
<th>Dimension 4 family and peer relationships</th>
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Table 15.2 An index of child well-being in the European Union 29

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*Source:* Bradshaw and Richardson (2009).
### Table 15.3 OECD child well-being index

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<th>Housing and environment</th>
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Source: Derived from OECD (2009).

These data can be used to explore variations in child well-being comparatively. First, Figure 15.5 compares the relationship between overall child well-being and the at-risk-of-income-poverty rate for EU countries. There is an association – child poverty explains about half of the variation in child well-being – but there are a number of countries above the line, achieving higher levels of well-being than you would expect given their child poverty rates, and also countries below the line not achieving the well-being that you would expect given their relative poverty. This is, of course, another reflection of the limitation of the relative poverty measure.

*Figure 15.5*  The association between child well-being and child poverty

– healthy eating;
– vigorous physical activity.

Source: Own analysis.
A very similar relationship exists between child well-being and inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient) (see Figure 15.6). This was one of the pieces of evidence used by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009).

It can be seen in Figure 15.7 that there is a relationship between overall child well-being and GDP per capita. Thus, the well-being of children is higher in richer countries. However, there are some interesting outliers with, for example, the Netherlands and Slovenia with higher well-being than you would expect given their GDP and the UK and Latvia with lower well-being than you would expect given their GDP.

There is also evidence that those countries spending more on families with children are achieving higher levels of child well-being. Figure 15.8 shows that spending explains about 36 per cent of variation in child well-being in EU countries. But again there are outliers, with, for example, the Netherlands getting more ‘bangs for bucks’ and the UK getting less than you would expect.

When UNICEF published Report Card 7 the Daily Mail (a right-wing red top in the UK) blamed the position of children in the UK on parental
breakdown. It can be seen in Figure 15.9 that there is no evidence to support this, at least on the basis of comparative data. There are a number of countries with high proportions of children living in broken (single parent or step-parent) families but who nevertheless have high child well-being. This suggests that it is not family form that determines child well-being, but the way countries respond to changing family patterns.

Finally, there is argument in the literature about the status of subjective well-being. OECD (2009) left out subjective well-being from its index on the grounds that it was not policy salient – it was not confident that governments could influence subjective well-being. In my opinion this is wrong – there are lots of ways that governments can and do try to influence subjective well-being, and there is evidence in the UK that the subjective well-being of children has actually improved over the least 20 years or so, though we do not fully understand how this was achieved (Bradshaw and Keung, 2011). But there is an argument that subjective well-being or life satisfaction is not just one domain of well-being, to include alongside health, education, poverty and so on; it is better seen as the product of those domains. Thus, the key indicator is what children feel about their
lives. This issue has been explored in more detail elsewhere (Rees et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2011). Figure 15.10 shows that there is a strong relationship between overall well-being and subjective well-being, in this case measured by the proportion of children with scores above the average on Cantril’s ladder of life satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

There are many challenges facing the comparative science of child poverty and child well-being. Among them are the following facts:

- We don’t have consistent income or consumption child poverty data for countries beyond the LIS, OECD and EU families. The World Bank publishes data on some developing countries but not with the child as the unit of analysis.
- In my view comparisons of poverty rates based on relative national poverty thresholds are flawed. They may be valuable as national...
poverty statistics but we are hardly comparing like with like using relative thresholds. They are very difficult to shift away from as poor countries like them because they produce lower poverty rates. Rich countries like them because they avoid emphasizing the inequalities between nations and the possible obligation to do more about those inequalities (within the EU).

- There is a welcome recognition that deprivation measures are a more direct measure of poverty, especially their adoption as a target in the EU 2020 strategy. But the EU has not yet established a child deprivation measure, though work is going on to establish one using the special module on child deprivation in the EU SILC (2009). LIS faces a challenge in incorporating middle income countries, partly because income as a measure of command over resources is particularly unreliable in rural economies with large informal sectors, but also because many of the micro-datasets it will be using do not have consistent deprivation questions and there is much work to be done to develop consistent and comparable deprivation indices.

\*Source:* Own analysis.

**Figure 15.9  Child well-being by percentage of children living in broken families**
Comparison of child well-being across nations is inevitably episodic, partly because they are very reliant on data derived from the OECD PISA surveys every three years and the World Health Organization Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (WHO HBSC) surveys every four years. The coverage of countries is limited: PISA covers only OECD countries and though Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) and Trends in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) cover some other countries it is impossible to merge findings from these sources. HBSC does not cover a number of important countries in the OECD (Australia and New Zealand) and also covers rather few middle-income countries. There are also difficulties in getting direct access to HBSC data.

Not all the domains of well-being are represented with comparable data. Thus, for example, there is no useful comparable data on children in substitute care and children as victims or perpetrators of crime.

PISA covers 15-year-olds and HBSC 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds and there is some good data on health at birth and infancy from administrative sources, but the middle years of childhood are underrepresented in the child indicator sets.

Source: Own analysis.

Figure 15.10 Child well-being by life satisfaction
Then there is the knotty problem of weighting – at present most well-being indices apply equal weighting to indicators to form domains and domains to form an overall index. Some (for example, OECD, 2009) argue that it is inappropriate to combine domains to represent overall well-being. However, this does not get over the problem of deciding how to combine indicators to represent domains. In practice, equal weighting seems to be quite robust – when other weighting regimes are applied it makes little difference to the overall rankings. But more work needs to be done on weighting.

Given all these technical challenges and the difficulties involved in comparing children across nations the question arises – is all this effort worthwhile? ‘The true measure of a nation’s standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they were born’ (UNICEF, 2007, p. 1). As was said in the introduction we cannot know how well a nation attends to its children without comparison. In the next decades our economies and social protection arrangements are going to be coming under intensive pressure as a result of population ageing. There is reason to be anxious that children will lose out to the elderly in the competition for scarce resources. This would be a grave mistake as children are our future. More effort needs to be devoted to comparisons of child poverty and child well-being.

NOTES

7. See http://www.hbsc.org/.

REFERENCES


INTRODUCTION

How do we construct the housing question from a comparative perspective? How do we begin to map out variations over space and time in the processes that shape patterns of housing provision and housing inequalities? This chapter offers an introductory exploration of these issues. Initially, it outlines a general framework for understanding some of the special features of housing as a focus of social policy and government intervention. It then proceeds to define the nature of the contemporary housing policy debate, primarily but not exclusively in (post-) industrialized societies and outlines how this debate can be approached for purposes of international comparative research.

THE NATURE OF HOUSING AND THE CONTEMPORARY HOUSING POLICY DEBATE

Unlike policy areas such as education, health or social security, housing provision is most typically dominated by market processes in construction, use and exchange. Moreover, housing as a physical entity is immobile, generally durable and encompasses wide variations in style and function. As a social creation and in its everyday use it is intimately local and the key site of daily routine and family life. At the other extreme, investment in housing and the flows of funds into and out of the residential sphere have significant macroeconomic ramifications. Housing is both global big business and the private sphere of the home. It is pivotal to social status, processes of social and spatial segregation, and daily social interaction as well as a key sector in capitalist economies. Indeed, the state of the residential property sector is typically perceived to be a bellwether of the general health of national economies. A depressed housing market is likely to be associated with a general downturn in consumer and business confidence and symptomatic of wider economic problems. An upturn in property prices may be bad news for aspiring home owners but it generally signals and reflects a more optimistic economic environment. Indeed, various studies have indicated that a downturn in residential property values may
impact more severely on the wider economy than falling stocks and shares (e.g., IMF, 2003, pp. 14–15).

After the turmoil of the global financial crisis of 2008, this may seem self-evident. But until relatively recently most analysts tended to be more concerned with the impact and influence of economic changes (say incomes) on housing markets rather than on impacts in the opposite direction. As more households became home owners, as housing equity accumulated during periods of house price inflation and as more investment poured into residential sectors there was increasing interest in the housing market as a major economic driver, especially in relation to consumption. Moreover, particularly over the decade preceding the 2008 crash, the housing market in many countries seemed to offer a degree of security amidst de-industrialization, volatile stock markets and uncertain pension futures. In 2005, in a special report on ‘the global housing boom’, The Economist (2005) noted ‘the increasing importance of house prices in the world economy’ (p. 73) and that ‘the housing market had played such a big role in propping up America’s economy that a sharp slowdown in house prices is likely to have severe consequences’ (p. 75).

We shall return to that prescient observation later. The key point to be made is that housing markets have moved to the centre stage of debates about the health or otherwise of the global economy, or in the current, post-economic crisis context, it might be more accurate to say that housing markets are thoroughly embroiled in debates concerning the future of neo-liberal capitalism. The dramatic slump in property prices in 2007/08 was preceded a decade earlier by the Asian Financial Crisis. That left much of the Asian region struggling to escape the aftermath of a financial crisis occasioned in great part by unregulated and over-exuberant investment in residential property development.

It is instructive, perhaps, that this chapter on the contemporary housing question has become so quickly enmeshed in the financial aspects. The discourse of booms and busts, positive or negative equity and the more arcane terminology of financial innovation that is now so pervasive is symptomatic of the more deep-seated transformation in the way housing is provided, and whose interests have become dominant. The housing policy debate and our conceptions of housing have become infused with the language of financialization. And it is a debate in which the interests of home owners and mortgage financiers have taken precedence over traditional housing welfare issues. Concerns with the homeless, the poor in need of some form of subsidized housing and with addressing the basic provision of adequate, affordable shelter for those unable to compete in the housing market have been sidelined. Why is this?

We can point to a number of factors that explain the tone of much of the
contemporary housing policy debate. First, governments in varying economic circumstances and of varying political persuasion fully embraced individual, mortgage-financed home ownership as the most appropriate form of provision for the majority of households. Second, home ownership meshed most comfortably with neo-liberal economic doctrines and with fiscal pressures associated with the global competitiveness. Third, the rise of home ownership has meant that it has become in many national contexts the housing tenure of the majority, or at least the housing tenure of those with the greatest political and economic bargaining power. Fourth, and related to the previous point, those most in need of non-profit, social or public housing are usually poorer households on the margins of formal employment. They are typically a disorganized and fragmented grouping of those with limited political muscle in the so-called knowledge-intensive labour markets of the twenty-first century. Here, we are referring to minorities, often ethnic minorities, in core capitalist economies or to the disposable labour of large swathes of Asia and Latin America. Fifth, and as intimated above, the health of the residential economy has become increasingly important in what Boyer (2000) referred to as ‘property owning regimes’ – capitalist economies fuelled by spending power rooted in stocks, shares, bonds and housing equity. Mainstream political economy has now recognized the significance of residential assets in shaping political, social and economic landscapes. For example, work by Schwartz, Seabrooke and others (see, for example, Schwartz and Seabrooke, 2008) places the structure of housing finance systems at the core of their conception of different forms of ‘residential capitalism’. They argue, inter alia, that ‘housing finance systems can connect people to global capital flows and interest rates in a more direct way than tax systems, public debt, or employment’ (p. 242). The particular relevance of this body of work to social policy is that it reconnects to earlier debates associated with Kemeny and Castles, which focused on the connections between levels of home ownership and the nature of welfare systems (Kemeny, 1978, 2005; Castles, 1998), essentially, an argument that societies with high levels of individual home ownership have poorly developed welfare states. In this new formulation, however, home ownership is now embedded in the financialized world of securitization and derivatives.

Returning to house price movements, it is evident that key economic indicators such as retail sales and small business start-ups are intimately connected with the undulations of property prices. The effects of soaring or falling residential property values ripple positively or negatively through macroeconomies. And unsurprisingly, the price paid by governments for the promotion of home ownership and the retreat from state intervention in housing provision is a loss of direct control and leverage. This becomes
apparent when housing markets plunge into recession and home-owning households plead in vain for their governments to ‘do something’.

The financial aspects of housing, housing as exchange value and investment, have become therefore increasingly dominating influences in the housing policy debate. This trend is part and parcel of an apparently less benign world in which inequalities in wealth and income have been resurgent. The neo-liberal era, certainly since the 1980s, has seen widening income inequality. Intra-country inequality rose sharply in the late 1990s and, if anything, worsened in the 2000s (Cornia and Court, 2001; *The Economist*, 2010). This divergence of opportunity structures was particularly evident, in countries such as the USA and the UK, as tax regimes became less progressive and the demand for skilled labour rose relative to unskilled (Cochrane, 1993; Castells, 1998). These divergent trends in income and wealth were also strongly evident in the major cities of the capitalist core (see, for example, Hamnett, 2003). However, it is the rise of China that has had the major transformative effect on overall patterns of inequality. In the reform era of marketization and ‘opening up’, millions of people have been lifted out of poverty, thus reducing the overall pattern of global inequality. At the same time, China now has one of the most unequal income structures and least affordable housing markets.

Temporally, we can detect a strong shift from the shape of housing policy of the post-World War II period in which the public sector was an important force in addressing absolute housing shortages and unacceptable housing conditions and opportunities. And spatially, the most evident patterns are ones of segregation and division, of concentrations of impoverished and disconnected communities paralleled by a trend towards defensive and defended communities of the rich (Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Atkinson and Flint, 2004). Between those two extremes lie the middle masses in varying states of relative economic security. This is, of course, a broad-brush description of the shape of housing and housing policy across the world but it is our starting point and one echoed by the various cross-national assessments by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT). For example, in its 2010 report on the state of the urbanized world it observed that in contrast to the post-war period, few countries now provided government-supported housing to a wide cross-section of their populations. It may be argued, of course, that in many countries public housing provision on a broad scale is no longer necessary but the social consequences appear to have been generally negative. ‘The unwillingness to subsidize “unproductive” investment in housing is a consequence, at least in part, of the pressures felt by governmental leaders from perceived global competition; it has led to heightened segregation and inequality in housing provision around the
world’ (UNCHS, 2001, p. 39). In its end of decade assessment, UNCHS (2010) highlighted the continuing, if slowing, progress of urbanization worldwide – an urbanization characterized by complex and growing divides and divisions in which the right to decent housing remained key. Whilst many countries have made substantial progress in providing better quality housing, the world’s slum population has continued to grow by around 10 per cent annually. In that sense, globally, the housing problem is getting worse not better.

CONSTRUCTING THE HOUSING QUESTION COMPARATIVELY

It has often been said that housing is an essentially local issue. In the European context, it has been stressed that the pursuit of a common European housing policy is not only complex but also inappropriate (European Union, 1989). On the principle of subsidiarity, housing matters are best left to lower tiers of government that have the knowledge of local housing needs and requirements and of the shape of local markets to deal most effectively with housing matters. Certainly, in physical terms, dwellings are uniquely located. However uniform the design or layout, no one dwelling is exactly the same as another. Even in the apparently homogeneous environment of somewhere like Hong Kong with its blocks of pencil-thin skyscrapers, floor level and view distinguish one flat from another. People will often have subtle preferences that favour one property rather than another. Residential property markets may well be major elements of contemporary political economy, impacting globally on production and consumption, but housing is also an intensely intimate ingredient of our social life. Where we live, what we live in, who we live with, who lives beside us and how secure we feel in our residential surroundings are of utmost importance to our sense of well-being, belonging and identity (Savage et al., 2005). The house as home connects in a myriad of ways to all the other elements of everyday life. To be homeless is to be extensively disconnected and, in most cases, profoundly excluded from the social norms of the majority. In comparative terms these norms will inevitably vary as will definitions and experiences of homelessness. But we should have at the forefront of our analysis this pivotal role of housing as the receptacle for most of our material goods and many of our activities and memories. Major inequalities in housing provision thus resonate throughout social structures and social relations and it is for this reason that housing has so often been at the forefront of popular struggles for social justice (Castells, 1983).
In more general terms, when we are exploring housing issues comparatively both within and between nation-states, we need to take account of what will be a unique mix of ‘local’ ingredients. These will include the nature of the dwelling stock, dwelling quality, policy histories, institutional structures, demographic patterns, cultural norms and levels of affluence. For example, in one society there may be a rapidly ageing population living mainly in city apartments with a substantial public rented sector and a relatively underdeveloped mortgage finance system. This will present a very different set of policy issues and possibilities compared with a demographically younger society with a predominance of home owners living in family houses in suburbs with high levels of residential mobility and where employers are important providers of direct and indirect subsidies. This is not to say that there are such stark contrasts between actually existing housing systems but there are strong path dependencies in the options available to policy-makers. The dwellings produced and the policies pursued in one epoque will heavily circumscribe the shape of policies in the next.

One obvious example of this path dependency relates to privatization policies. The strong dose of neo-liberalism that began to impact on social and housing policy in the early 1980s promoted disinvestment in direct state provision and the sale of publicly owned dwellings to sitting tenants, other private individuals or to private companies. Both Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher were strong advocates of such policies. However, the UK had a long history of direct housing provision by local authorities and a substantial stock of high-quality dwellings occupied by a large swathe of the British working class. There were attractive dwellings to sell and tenants who could afford to buy them. By contrast, US policy enthusiasm could not overcome the reality that their state housing represented minority provision for overwhelmingly poor, ethnic minority households. There were simply insufficient dwellings to sell, they were not attractive assets and tenants could not afford them. There can, therefore, be a convergence of policy discourse in very different contexts and with quite divergent outcomes.

Similarly, whilst there is a strong relationship between space standards and per capita income there is no necessary connection between GDP per capita and levels of individual home ownership. In Europe, Switzerland and pre-unification West Germany still have relatively low levels of individual ownership. The explanation lies in a particular policy and institutional mix that has not favoured mortgaged purchase to the same degree as in many other affluent (post-) industrial societies (Kemeny, 1995).

The housing question is constructed therefore in distinctive ways over space and time. There are both sharp contrasts and striking similarities
between the issues at the forefront of housing debates today and the policy preoccupations of the immediate post-war period. Perceptions depend on one's vantage point. Is our perspective on the contemporary housing question framed around a Birmingham, UK in 1951 or a Chongqing, China in 2011? What unifies these two locations is that they are quintessentially urban, and housing problems are primarily urban problems. This is not to diminish the significance of poor conditions and poor housing opportunities in more rural areas. But the majority of the world’s population now live in cities. Those cities are growing larger and more dominant. And as we move further into this century, housing policies in terms of design, location and quality are inevitably and increasingly connected to issues of environmental sustainability and quality of life. Governments in a variety of contexts and with different levels of resources face growing problems of overcrowding, traffic congestion, environmental pollution and energy conservation. Over half a century or so we can point to a significant degree of continuity in the nature of the housing question. Essentially, it has been associated with progressive but geographically uneven urbanization.

It is geographical unevenness in urbanization that means that the housing question looks very different in parts of Asia, Latin America and Africa than it does in Europe. There are sharp contrasts in understanding of how post-war housing issues have been transformed if we see them in relation to the UK or China – or Europe as opposed to Sub-Saharan Africa. From a Western perspective it has become a discourse of quality, gentrification, affordability and relatively settled urbanism. If housing problems remain they are either problems faced by poor minorities or associated with the vicissitudes of property markets – the booms and busts that produce winners and losers. However, in somewhere like Chongqing, there is a massive and growing absolute shortage of housing, poor living conditions and a large floating population of migrant workers without welfare rights. As Smith (2000) observed, seeing urbanization, industrialization and proletarianization as processes that happened some time ago is something of a Western conceit. Indeed, urbanization and proletarianization are now happening on a greater scale than ever. From a global perspective, it is the exponential growth rather than the reduction of the number of people living in urban slums that has been a defining feature of the housing landscape of the last half-century (UNCHS, 2010).

There are, therefore, rather different problems of mature urbanization in, say, Northern Europe as opposed to the exploding cities of Asia and South America. In the former there are particular problems associated with the ageing residential infrastructure of a previous industrial era and the task of retrofitting for a more carbon-constrained future. Processes
of redevelopment continue to have significant impacts on the social morphology of contemporary cities. However, in many of the rapidly growing cities of the so-called developing world rural–urban migration remains the dominant force for urban growth with associated street homelessness, shantyism and with serious problems of environmental health. The accelerated pace of urbanization and the commercialization of land markets in these parts of the world involve new pressures of eviction and displacement of vulnerable populations (see, for example, Pacione, 2001 for an extended discussion of these issues).

Thus, while housing standards in the core capitalist countries have improved markedly over the last half-century or so the continuing reality for millions across the globe is subsistence living, marginality and severe housing deprivation. In that sense a globalized picture of the contemporary housing question is not so different from one that would have been painted a century ago. The largest and fastest growing cities are no longer in Europe or North America but the movement of populations from rural areas into expanding cities with attendant changes in lifestyles, social practices, work environments and living conditions remains at the core of housing problems and debates.

The remainder of this chapter will concentrate mainly on issues of shelter and inequality associated with mature urbanization. In general terms the housing problems associated with older cities do not derive from rapid population expansion but from internal pressures of the expanding numbers of households and from more brutal competition for the prime residential space between the increasingly affluent and the increasingly disadvantaged (Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000).

The housing infrastructure of these older cities is facing new pressures of demography, competition for space between social groups and changes in working patterns and practices. The social and technological infrastructure required for the new informational age collides with a built environment constructed for a different set of social and economic conditions (Graham and Marvin, 2001). This tension between the fixity of the built form and the fluidity and volatility of social and economic change is not novel (Harvey, 1978). The residential sphere is in a continual state of recomposition. In the mature cities of the (post-) industrialized world the pressures on the housing stock derive from changes in labour markets, demographic ageing, changes in social behaviour and a new set of economic conditions that threatens to compromise existing housing institutions and practices. For the purposes of this chapter three particular issues stand out for further examination: social change and economic uncertainty; demographic ageing; housing commodification and social disadvantage.
Social Change and Economic Uncertainty

Residential property markets have become more volatile as general economic conditions have become less stable. The last few decades have seen more financial crises in which over-investment in property has often been centre stage. It is in this context that the conventional fissions between those who rent and those who own have become more blurred over time as many societies have seen a growth in individual home ownership. The development of more accessible forms of mortgage finance, state assistance to gain access to home ownership via low-cost loans or other indirect forms of financial aid and various privatization policies has involved a recruitment of households in a wide variety of economic circumstances. Mortgaged home ownership (to be distinguished from more historically rooted traditional forms of often rural home ownership) has come to encompass wider cross-sections of populations. In Great Britain, for example, home ownership grew by some 18 percentage points between 1970 and 1999 – from an essentially middle-class tenure to a form of provision that catered for the mass of the population. At the same time, the conditions that had fuelled the growth of home ownership in the post-war period gradually gave way to a rather contrasting set of circumstances. Put simply, a minority tenure associated primarily with younger households in relatively secure forms of white collar and professional employment in conditions of real income and GDP growth became a mass tenure of households moving across the life course in the context of greater social and economic uncertainty and volatility. Two points should, however, be emphasized at this juncture. First, we should be cautious about exaggerating the extent of this transformation in the UK or elsewhere (for example, see Doogan, 2009 for a sceptical view on contemporary change). The home-owning casualties of income or job loss or of severe housing market busts have in the main been relatively limited (so far). Nevertheless, housing problems that have in the past been primarily associated with the rental tenures have increasingly spilled over into home ownership. This has been evident in a number of countries where at different times there have been rising possessions, mortgage arrears and in the most extreme cases, homelessness. Whereas in the past social policy in housing has typically been preoccupied with assisting access into residential property ownership, the emphasis has now turned to issues of sustainability in relation to home ownership. Policy enthusiasm for ever higher levels of home ownership is now muted to say the least. It is now recognized that property ownership can create vulnerability rather than security and that the flow of movement between renting and owning is not necessarily all one way. Moreover, in many countries such as the UK and the USA the
home ownership sector is getting smaller, reversing decades of continuing if uneven growth.

In macro terms, across a number of societies, there is a complicated mix in the housing sphere of asset accumulation, asset devalorization, social and spatial exclusion and state withdrawal. A previous narrative of modernization and class mobility, in which rising affluence and a widening of employment opportunities, often associated with public sector employment, fuelled a middle-class expansion of home owners and has been transformed into a more confused and uncertain scenario. In Japan, for example, a long-standing period of asset deflation, employment loss and restructuring and an associated fall in property values has coalesced with, and provoked, new social divisions and cultural transformation. What Hirayama (2001) refers to as the previous ‘social mainstream’ of male-breadwinner households, corporate employment and family home ownership was a significant layer of the social glue of post-war Japanese society. The high price of Japanese housing had necessitated high household debt but in a situation where for the ‘social mainstream’ the salary levels of secure jobs rose with seniority, those debts were assumed to be manageable over a lifetime’s employment. In an economic environment where secure work and rising incomes cannot be assumed, rather different social configurations emerge. For example, rising female participation rates are partly fuelled by the necessity to maintain mortgage payments because of reduced or absent male earnings in the household. But that process is only one element in the increased role of women in the labour market. Similarly, more affordable housing enables groups previously excluded to access home ownership – most notably professional single women. The crisis in home ownership in these ways acts to transform previous gender relations.

Intergenerational relations also come under pressure. One cohort of ageing home owners has accumulated significant household wealth. At the other end of the life course, new entrants to the housing and labour market confront fewer job opportunities, less assured income progression and may adopt quite contrary housing strategies through choice or constraint. This is most evident in the falling levels of residential property ownership among younger Japanese and across many European societies (Forrest and Hirayama, 2009). Thus, on the one hand, youth are becoming more independent in their attitudes and social norms. On the other, and Japan is not exceptional, there is increasing dependence of a younger generation on the accumulated assets of their parents or grandparents. This tension between dependence and independence is evident among China’s youth. There are growing middle class aspirations for home ownership but most face unaffordable house prices in the major cities such as Shanghai and
Beijing unless they can draw on parental resources (Forrest and Izuhara, 2009). In London, the global financial crisis of 2007/08 appears to have made little difference to the size of deposit required to get on the property ladder, around £40 000 on recent estimates (Williams, 2010). Few individuals or households are in a position to save this kind of sum without recourse to parents.

The severity and longevity of the recession in Japan and its distinctive social structure have made these transformations and tensions particularly notable in that society. However, in many societies the process of departure from the family home is being delayed and compromised. A long period in which each successive generation gained housing independence at an earlier age is, at least to a degree, in reverse (Datamonitor, 2003). Reduced state benefits for young people, longer and more financially onerous periods in full-time education, more precarious and lower earnings for those lacking the necessary skills and qualifications and housing opportunities more determined by market processes all combine to make the transition from youth to adulthood more problematic.

The particular impacts of social, economic and policy changes on the housing opportunities of young people point to a more general set of issues and relationships that are important in considering contemporary patterns of inequality and disadvantage in housing. Different cohorts in any population encounter different social, policy and economic environments in terms of housing opportunities. These cohort effects vary over both space and time. We can contrast, for example, a cohort entering the housing market under conditions of real income growth, strong state intervention, growing employment opportunities and high house price inflation. This cohort will then progress across the life course, encountering a distinct set of economic conditions and policy change. Under those conditions of entry one might expect a generally strong upward trajectory in their housing careers. Opportunities for house purchase might have been complemented by a relative abundance of public or non-profit housing, accommodating many of the housing needs of both low- and middle-income households. With direct and indirect financial support for both renters and purchasers, the risks of job loss or unexpected and damaging changes in financial or personal circumstances for this cohort are mitigated by a relatively high degree of security in housing.

We can contrast the experiences of this cohort with a group further back in the convoy. They may encounter a less benign environment with greater competition for jobs, a more uneven pattern of income growth within and between employment sectors, less state assistance for both renting and purchase within a general ethos of financial stringency and state cutbacks
and a property market that rapidly goes from boom to bust. Under those conditions, the prospect is of a more fragmented and unpredictable pattern of housing histories and trajectories, greater social and spatial divisions and less secure housing circumstances to mitigate adversity in other aspects of life. These contrasting sets of circumstances describe the kind of differences that are associated with cohorts that moved through housing systems during the period of general economic expansion of the 1960s and 1970s and a later cohort that has experienced the more deregulated, privatized and deflationary recent decades. There are, of course, major variations between societies, with similar cohorts passing through very different policy regimes and economic transformations. Nevertheless, it is as important to consider division across cohorts rather than simply within cohorts of the same generation when analysing contemporary patterns of housing inequality.

More specifically we can contrast an era where the conditions for the promotion of individual home ownership involved relatively affluent households experiencing rising real incomes, high inflation and job security, with the more recent era in which a more competitive, neo-liberal global capitalism has exerted downward pressure on inflation and state social expenditure, has been generally hostile to public sector employment, and sought a less regulated and less protected labour market. As has become abundantly clear, these are not the ideal conditions for home ownership. Home ownership has thrived in periods of employment stability and growth, high inflation and expanding public sector employment – fuelled by tax breaks and subsidized low-cost schemes. In such circumstances, borrowing is cheap and debts are quickly eroded through general inflation. Dymski and Isenberg (1998) contrast the ‘golden age’ with the ‘global age’ as being centrally about the breakdown of the varying social contracts that were brokered by governments in the post-war period. These social contracts encompassed ‘methods of providing adequate housing stock’ and ‘a set of housing finance mechanisms, including government transfers, subsidies and financial instruments and institutions for accumulating savings or taking on debts’ (p. 220). As they emphasize, each nation solved the problem of maintaining housing supply and providing affordable and available finance in unique ways. The most prominent examples of these ‘Fordist’ institutions were the major state providers of indirect and direct housing assistance such as British local authority council housing, the Japanese Housing Loans Corporation, the Hong Kong Housing Authority or the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Such institutional forms have, however, rapidly shrunk or been abolished under the neo-liberal onslaught. Somewhat paradoxically, it is the Hong Kong Housing Authority that seems to have been least affected by
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neo-liberal doctrines – paradoxical, because it might have been expected that it would be in Milton Friedman’s free market paradise where public sector housing would be under greatest threat. The explanation for this has a number of aspects. For the purposes of this chapter, all that needs to be said is that public sector housing in Hong Kong is embedded in a very different institutional, political and social context than was council housing in Britain in the 1980s – demonstrating the value of comparative research in exposing the different meanings of apparently common labels and different causes and consequences of policy change.

Overall, however, it can be said that the social contracts of the past have given way to more diffuse and fragmented social arrangements in which risks are being increasingly individualized. In housing terms, Dymski and Isenberg usefully differentiate between entry risks, tenure risks and re-entry risks (p. 223). These risks tend to be associated with different life-cycle stages and to involve different forms of financial risk. The general point is that we have seen individual household exposure to all three areas of risk accentuated in recent years as social housing safety nets have been eroded and other forms of housing assistance have been withdrawn from home owners.

Demographic Ageing

Almost all societies are ageing. Demographic compositions vary and the pace of ageing varies but the trend is common and unambiguous. While historical and contemporary responses of market and state institutions to housing needs and problems have been enormously varied, demographic change presents a relatively common backcloth for policy development. The statistics are striking. The combination of fewer children and longer lives is producing major shifts in demographic structures. Writing at the end of the 1990s Fukayama (1999), for example, observed that ‘Some countries, like Spain, Italy, and Japan, have fallen so far below replacement fertility that their total population in each successive generation will be more than 30 per cent smaller than in the previous one’ (p. 39). At the global level, it is projected that the population aged 60 or over will rise from its current level of around 700 million to some 2 billion by 2050. As a percentage of the world’s population, this represents an increase from 11 to 22 per cent (Bloom et al., 2010). It is Japan that will remain the most extreme case of societal ageing. In the next 40 years it is projected to have a population more than 25 per cent smaller, with 40 per cent aged over 65 (The Economist, 2010). Regionally, however, it will be Europe that is most affected by these changes. By 2060 a third of the population of the EU-27 is expected to be aged 65 or older, with Southern European
countries such as Greece and Spain having the older populations (Thorns, 2002; Commission of the European Union, 2009). These trends have major implications for, inter alia, labour supply, pension and social security arrangements and for intergenerational dynamics and relations (Commission of the European Union, 2005).

Housing policy-makers in the post-war period were faced with a rather different demographic scenario in which a severe absolute shortage of housing meshed with a baby boom and a rapid increase in the need for family housing. In the contemporary world, falling birth rates, greater longevity and diversity of household structures and the ageing of the large cohorts of the post-war baby boomers place new pressures on housing systems. These pressures include issues of design and adaptation for the very elderly (the post-1918 boom generation), different locational priorities for households when children leave home and as they enter or near retirement, the costs of maintenance and repair of dwellings and the differential resources available to an ageing and longer-living generation. It is this latter issue that is of most relevance to us. And it is relevant in a number of ways. For most households their dwelling is their principal cost and, for home owners, their principal asset. The housing circumstances of the older generations also impact on their younger counterparts. Parents who are relatively well housed may provide an important resource for their children, either directly as somewhere to live if independent accommodation is unattainable or indirectly through cash gifts and loans to enable that independence to be achieved. Conversely, children may find their parents in need of their direct or indirect assistance in housing terms. Where government resources are less freely available to provide assistance for disadvantaged households, the family becomes a more important safety net.

An ageing population enters retirement with a highly differentiated portfolio of resources to draw upon. Some will have generous occupational pensions, significant savings and valuable, appreciating dwellings. Others will be life-long renters, dependent on small private or state pensions or social security and have virtually no savings. Moreover, as the ageing population itself ages, it is inevitable that an increasingly higher proportion will be female. The prospect is therefore of rising gendered poverty in old age given the generally weaker financial position of women in the labour market (and thus beyond) and the prospect of depleted incomes with the death of a male spouse. These asset portfolios have been thrown into further disarray in the wake of the 2007/08 financial crisis in which the value of pensions, savings and properties have all been compromised. The direct and indirect impacts of the crisis were not confined to younger households with a mortgage. Some elderly home owners have
been faced with a significant devaluation of their housing assets combined with a loss or reduction of other income streams.

The broader consequences of societal ageing on housing inequality will depend on the particular mix of institutional arrangements in place. As in any area of social policy, there is no inevitable determinacy of demographic change. Secure, low-cost and high-quality rental options may be available. The overall proportion of relatively affluent home owners in a population may be substantial. Mortgages may have been paid off and housing costs will be minimal. Social security and pension provision in old age will also vary.

While the most prominent fault lines of housing inequality in old age are most likely to remain between those who own and those who rent, poverty and disadvantage will not map neatly onto such a divide. In the UK, for example, the growth of home ownership, which was particularly marked from the 1950s to the 1990s, has meant that the level of residential ownership has steadily risen in the older age groups. Even if recruitment into home ownership is falling among younger households, the rate of elderly home ownership will continue to rise as baby boomers age. The increase will be particularly marked among those aged 80 and over (Forrest and Leather, 1998). Moreover, the number of older, single-person home-owning households aged 80 or over will rise significantly, the majority of which will be women. A similar trend can be observed in the USA where ageing home ownership among elderly households serves to mask the extent to which home ownership rates are falling in the younger cohorts. A striking feature of the USA is also the way in which race cross-cuts demography, housing tenure and housing wealth. Stated simply, it is the white population that is ageing rapidly, they are disproportionately home owners and their properties are disproportionately valuable (see, for example, Shapiro, 2004).

Burrows (2003) examined the relationships between poverty and housing tenure in Britain and found that whilst the incidence of poverty was higher in the rental tenures, the absolute numbers were greater in the home ownership sector. This was a function of the sheer size of the home-owning population. His research did not highlight old age as a particular dimension but outright owners (who are most likely to be older households) accounted for some 15 per cent of households in poverty. The incidence of poverty among home owners is particularly associated with those with a manual socioeconomic background, black and ethnic minority groups, lone parents and the divorced and separated. As a more diverse home ownership sector ages, the incidence of poverty among ageing home owners will inevitably increase with the need for new, tailored policy responses.
Moving Targets: Housing Commodification and Social Disadvantage

Much of this chapter has concentrated on difficulties associated with access to and survival in the home ownership sector. Historically, however, housing problems have been associated with the rental sectors. This emphasis on mass home ownership reflects the shifting terrain of the housing problem. In the pre- and immediate post-war period the ‘problem’, certainly in the European context, was most closely associated with private landlords and private landlordism. This is understandable since it was the majority tenure. The last half of the twentieth century, however, saw a decline of private rental sectors in many countries paralleled by the rise of other forms of provision in the forms of social renting and mortgaged home ownership. The extent of the decline and the growth of alternative tenures varied substantially between nations. But lack of investment and deteriorating housing conditions, deficiencies in institutional capacity to respond to rising expectations and rapid urbanization, difficult landlord–tenant relations, policy and subsidy support for other forms of provision and more attractive forms of investment all contributed to the sector’s decline. The UK was one of the extreme examples. Private renting accommodated more than half of all households in 1951 but just over 7 per cent in 1991. In other countries, the downward trajectory may have been less steep but the direction of change was similar. Private landlordism was widely seen as an anachronism, a feudal hangover that was on its way out. In 2011, a different kind of global financial hangover has rather reshaped trends and expectations and private landlordism is seeing something of a revival. Indeed, it may well be the fastest growing tenure in some countries. This development will be returned to in the concluding section.

The changed political and economic climate of the post-World War II world combined with the necessities for extensive reconstruction and upgrading of the housing stock saw greater support for direct state intervention in the housing market. The particular housing policy pathways pursued by different governments in the capitalist core countries of Western Europe, North America and Australasia require, however, detailed exploration beyond the scope of this chapter. For example, Harloe’s (1995) examination of the rise and fall of social renting shows how the shaping of housing policy is embedded in specific political, economic and institutional circumstances. These varied conditions explain the uneven growth and varied forms of social rental sectors and the relative importance and survival of private landlordism. In this context we can contrast, for example, the former West Germany and the Netherlands. In the mid-1990s both were notable for having a majority of households in the rental tenures. However, 74 per cent of German tenants were in the
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private sector whereas 78 per cent of Dutch tenants were in the social rental sector (Freeman, 1997). But such crude labels conceal complicated definitional problems that are discussed elsewhere in this book. It is, for example, debatable how private a rental sector is when a significant level of government subsidy and regulation is involved – as was the case in West Germany’s post-war private rental sector arrangements. Nevertheless, the general direction of change through most of the post-war period was from a situation in which households paid rent to a private individual or company to one in which an increasing proportion of households pay off a mortgage borrowed from a bank, insurance company or specialist housing finance institution. In addition, and in parallel, social or public rental sectors have in some contexts provided significant rental opportunities on a non-profit basis.

These developments can be understood theoretically as a progressive shift from one form of market-based provision (private rentier capital) to another (mass home ownership). At this level of abstraction, it can be argued that the role of direct state intervention in housing can be seen as performing an enabling and facilitating role during this process of transition (Harloe, 1995). Empirically, this process of commodification (Forrest and Williams, 1984) or re-commodification (Harloe, 1981) can be seen in the post-war expansion of public rental sectors in the European context at a time when the social and economic institutions were not capable of delivering home ownership to the majority of the population. Subsequently, as conditions changed, processes of privatization and deregulation signalled the maturation of this new form of mass provision and the progressive demise of mass public housing. Harloe (1995, p. 6) in his discussion of developments in Europe and the USA refers to this ‘golden age’ of direct state intervention in housing in the following terms:

The third, relatively decommodified form of large-scale provision, social rented housing, was seen as the product of a relatively brief period, notably the years after the Second World War, when the private rental market’s inability to provide mass housing was already well advanced (and made worse by the effects of war), but when the necessary economic and other conditions for the growth of mass home ownership were still absent from the societies in question.

Over time, therefore, disadvantage rooted in income, gender, ethnic and class inequalities has been overlain on a shifting terrain of housing provision. Housing poverty has at different times been most strongly associated with residual private rental sectors, residual public or social rental sectors and has now spilled over into mass home-ownership sectors.

This takes us to the 2007/08 global financial crisis in which home owners and mortgage markets were at the centre of the drama, in relation to both
cause and consequence. It also takes us back to earlier remarks concerning financialization. There had been financial crises before and there had been home ownership casualties before. However, the most recent crisis was deeper and more pervasive and has raised fundamental questions about the sustainability of home ownership for some groups of households and how and where states should intervene when there is severe market failure. It was already evident from previous crises that governments that have promoted more market-oriented housing forms of provision can find themselves relatively powerless when a price bust sends values tumbling. When negative equity hit the economic heartland of the UK in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the government soon found itself up against the boundary of legitimate and feasible intervention. Home owners demanded solutions and policies but little could be done other than wait for more benign market circumstances. Similarly, when home owners in a similar predicament took to the streets in Hong Kong in the late 1990s with placards proclaiming ‘Save Us From Negative Equity’ the only response was to progressively cut public housing and subsidized home ownership. The developers may have benefited but some home owners were still waiting for prices to recover some years later (Fung and Forrest, 2002).

The so-called financial tsunami was on a quite different scale with major institutional casualties in the housing finance sector and widespread household stress. The threat of systemic collapse forced governments to bail out banking sectors but with some minor exceptions, home-owning households were left on their own. It is neither appropriate nor possible to delve much further into the background to the sub-prime/credit crunch debacle given the broad focus of this chapter (see, for example, Friedman, 2009; Stiglitz, 2009; Wade, 2009). From a comparative perspective, the key point is that the impact was highly uneven within and between different housing markets. The explanations for this unevenness lie in a combination of social, economic and institutional factors and require a path-dependent perspective (Forrest and Yip, 2011). Moreover, the severity or otherwise of the impact does not map neatly onto ‘welfare regime’ or ‘residential capitalism’ (Schwartz and Seabrooke, 2008) type schema or more simple measures of degree of commodification such as the level of home ownership. For example, there was not a common liberal, Anglo-Saxon experience – the Australian or New Zealand experience contrasts with that of the UK or the USA. What can be said, at least in housing market terms, is that it was European countries that were most directly affected by the immediate fallout from the sub-prime crisis and credit crunch. The impacts in Asia and Australasia were generally indirect and less severe. Even Japan fits this pattern as the most recent crisis merely exacerbated an already depressed and vulnerable housing market rather than provoking a
new crisis. Whilst it is not the case that all European housing systems were heavily immersed in securitization, it is certainly the case that Asian ones were not.

What is generally evident is that a set of new risks and vulnerabilities have been exposed, particularly in home ownership markets where mortgages have become most extensively commodified through securitization and associated financial products. Stated simply, the solution to the affordability problem is evidently not more liberal lending to households that are unlikely to be able to repay the loan. All this raises new issues for governments for whom the promotion of home ownership has been the pivotal element of housing policy. It also exposes governments to the political impacts of widespread mortgage payment defaults among home owners or a rise in homelessness among former owners. Arguably, such developments have more damaging political repercussions than similar plights associated with poorer renters.

Against this background it is evident that housing and social welfare policies in countries with dominant home-ownership sectors will increasingly have to address issues of social and economic stability for home owners in general rather than being targeted on first-time purchasers or those seeking to buy. The physical deterioration of older established owner-occupied areas is also a growing problem. Policies to dispose of public housing in countries such as Great Britain, Northern Ireland and in many former state socialist societies (Hegedus and Struyk, 2005) produced a sharp rise in the home-ownership levels, in the number of low-income home owners and, typically, in the number of properties with substantial repair and maintenance problems. The coincidence of these developments will inevitably lead to pressure for new policy interventions in the future. Indeed, the existence of large numbers of poor home owners in low-value, poorly maintained properties was an evident policy issue, with significant expenditure implications, when the EU became a group of 27. Many of the new member states were former state socialist societies in which there had been a mass transfer of the responsibilities and risks of property ownership from the state to individual households. There are also the risks associated with changing climatic patterns and, it seems, more frequent, ‘natural’ disasters. Accelerated urbanization and rampant commodification have combined to produce more home owners living in vulnerable coastal locations.

Outside increasingly differentiated and higher risk home-ownership sectors are the deeply entrenched pockets of poverty most closely associated with, but not confined to, rental sectors. This can be perceived as the traditional housing problem of poor people unable to access mainstream housing. Previously, privatization programmes, build for sale policies and
low-cost access schemes enabled many poorer households to gain home ownership status. But the promise of progressive recruitment to home ownership has been compromised by decades of neo-liberal policies. These subsidized routes into home ownership were generally victims of the new market orthodoxy, and the sub-prime crisis put paid to the alternative, market-driven route into home ownership.

Those households unable to access home ownership may end up channelled into downgraded forms of public housing provision, often in badly serviced, high-rise, peripheral locations. Alternatively, they face prolonged intergenerational sharing or low-quality, overcrowded private renting. These excluded spaces take different forms over time and societies. Wacquant (2008) describes a process of ‘advanced marginality’, of cities experiencing a new era of urban outcasts. A decade earlier Castells (1998) referred to a ‘fourth world’ and ‘multiple black holes of social exclusion throughout the planet’. While whole areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America fell within the scope of his description he emphasized that they were ‘present in literally every country, and every city, in this new geography of social exclusion. It is formed of American inner city ghettos, Spanish enclaves of mass youth unemployment, French banlieues warehousing North Africans, Japanese Yoseba quarters, and Asian mega-cities’ shanty towns’ (p. 164).

The housing issues are, of course, very different for workers being drawn into the factories of Asia or Latin America, often women moving from rural areas, than for their disadvantaged counterparts in the generally affluent, industrialized world. But proletarianization and de-industrialization are two sides of the same coin with different geographies – low-quality dormitories in one location and deterioriating housing estates in the other. As always, poor housing in poor locations is merely a symptom of wider processes of disadvantage and discrimination and of the shifting tides of capital accumulation.

In de-industrialized, service-sector-intensive economies it is difficult to see where new opportunities will arise for those with the least marketable skills. Sections of populations face growing housing disadvantage because they confront housing sectors that have become more market based in conditions of falling real incomes. These developments have created major challenges for policy-makers in many countries. The policy trend in countries such as Britain and France has been to seek ‘joined up’ interventions, with housing provision being part of a wider set of policy initiatives in which employment creation, educational investment and improvements in health and the general environment are all part of the regeneration strategy. Unfortunately, the creation of employment opportunities is usually swimming against the tide of global economic trends. Jobs fail to
The contours of the housing question appear, the housing stock continues to deteriorate and such areas become policy-intensive special cases full of state, quasi-state and voluntary organizations – progressively devoid of shops, banks and the other retail infrastructure of mainstream economic life.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This chapter has attempted to provide an overview of the changing contours of housing inequalities and disadvantage. It has stressed the need to appreciate the specific policy, institutional, cultural and economic contexts for housing provision and housing opportunities in particular societies when cross-national research is being undertaken. It has also highlighted some key ‘drivers’ of housing policy change, particularly the ageing of societies and the more fragile relationship between the promotion of home ownership as a common policy goal and the shifting economic fortunes of national economies and the global economy. Residential housing has been at the centre of major financial crises, notably in Asia in 1997 and in the European/North American version a decade later. At the time of writing, the impacts of the most recent and most serious crisis are still rippling through national economies – and posing serious questions for housing policy-makers and for the neo-liberal model that has dominated for the last three or so decades. It would be premature and extremely unwise to talk of post-home-ownership societies and a crisis of neo-liberalism. Nevertheless, home ownership has clearly lost some of its sheen, and particularly among younger and lower-income buyers. Private renting is back in fashion, at least to a degree. Even state housing provision, albeit in new forms, is making something of a comeback, notably in countries such as South Korea, which has embarked on an ambitious new build programme. The global financial crisis woke up some governments to the need for social safety nets in which low-cost, secure housing is a critical element. The Economist (2011) captured the new mood in a special supplement titled ‘Bricks and Slaughter’ in which it refers to the increasingly dangerous and risk-prone nature of residential property as an asset.

In this higher-risk context new fault lines are emerging in relation to housing experiences and housing opportunities – between generations, between classes, between places and between the very rich and the rest. These fault lines are, however, shaped in socially distinct ways by particular policy regimes, cultural traditions and institutional histories. While the policy orthodoxies of global players such as the IMF and the World Bank have produced some commonality in policy responses to contemporary housing needs and inequalities, it remains the case that housing policy
remains overwhelmingly national or even local in character. It is also the case, however, that the scale and volatility of financial flows is producing new challenges for national governments. Even after the recent depreciation of residential property, it has been estimated that in the ‘rich world’ this asset class is still worth some $52 trillion dollars (The Economist, 2011).

Governments will face different housing challenges that will include the problems generated by both rapid depreciation and appreciation of property values, deeply entrenched enclaves of housing poverty in many Western cities and the environmental and social impacts of rapid urbanization in Asia and Latin America. For any comparative analysis of housing inequalities and policy the imperative is to fuse an understanding of the ‘global’ with a subtle and nuanced account of the ‘particular’. That demands an analytical approach that identifies the key drivers of social change with a sensitivity to factors such as family and cultural tradition, institutional linkages and the historical evolution of housing policy debates.

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INTRODUCTION

The global economic crisis that was triggered by the collapse of financial institutes in the USA and Europe in 2008–09 poses great risks to the livelihood of vulnerable people in the world. While people in the North are faced with tough economic prospects, citizens in many developing countries are exposed to high economic and social risks. In middle income countries firms tightened their business activities, which led to workers being laid off. Jobs have been lost not only in the manufacturing and construction sectors, but also in tourism and services. Regarding the poor in the least developed countries (LDCs) including land-locked and small island countries, their livelihood had already worsened following the rise in food and oil prices in 2007 before the global economic crisis took place. The global economic crisis poses a further serious threat that could derail the progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals in the LDCs.

In relation to East Asia, it is the second crisis in just over ten years, following the East Asian economic crisis in 1997–98. Despite hefty social and economic costs, the East Asian countries hit by the previous crisis, such as Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and to a lesser extent Hong Kong and Singapore, came back with strong economic recovery and better social protection systems (Kwon et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the current economic crisis is different in nature from the previous one in many ways. One of the most obvious differences of the current crisis is, first, that it did not originate from East Asia. The epicentre of the crisis was at the heart of global capitalism: global financial institutions on Wall Street. In the previous East Asian economic crisis those severely affected countries in the region could hasten their recovery by exporting goods and services to the vibrant markets in North America and Europe. In contrast, given the weak consumer demand in these markets in the coming years, export to those markets is weaker and, therefore, an export-oriented strategy may not be as effective a path out of the crisis as it was previously. In order
to avoid the situation of prolonged economic downturn, East Asia needs strong endogenous economic drivers for recovery.

If the economic downturn lasts a long time it will hit the most vulnerable hardest since their coping mechanisms for economic and social risks are limited in choice and short in duration. Given that poor people in East Asia had been hit by food and fuel crises in 2007 before the global economic crisis, their coping mechanisms of livelihood were already significantly weakened. Without adequate policy responses to enable the poor to cope with social risks, it is feared that the progress made in poverty reduction in East Asia will be lost.

The immediate social impacts of the current economic crisis vary widely across East Asia and within each country. Those countries with strong economic links with the US and European economies have been affected immediately while the countries with economies less exposed to global economic risks have not felt the immediate impacts as strongly. For example, economic conditions in Singapore and Hong Kong have previously shown great sensitivities to economic fluctuations of the US economy, and were the first group of economies to feel the financial crisis. Another example is the Korean economy. As liquidity fell short of the demand in the financial market in the USA in an effort to deleverage borrowings in late 2008, many international investors withdrew their money from the Korean market, which put strong pressure on the exchange rate of the Korean currency. Such immediate impacts on these economies alerted those governments, who produced a series of stimulus packages as policy responses. China also reacted swiftly since its economic interest is very much linked to the fluctuation of the US economy. These countries seem to be better prepared now than ten years ago (Mehrotra, 2009).

In contrast, the developing countries such as Laos PDR and Myanmar did not experience the immediate impacts of the global economic downturn, which led to lukewarm responses from their governments. Nevertheless, considering the scale of the crisis at the global level, there is little room to be complacent about the social impacts of the economic crisis on the poor in developing countries. Migrants originating from these countries and working abroad will remit smaller amounts of money and many of them may lose work and have no other option but to return home. More importantly, these small and poor countries lack effective instruments to influence global economic fluctuation.

As the impacts of the economic crisis vary, policy response for social protection should also be different in accordance with each country’s social conditions and administrative capacity. In some countries, policy efforts to establish an institutional structure for social security might be a good solution, but in others short-term but immediate support such
as cash transfers could be introduced for those acutely in need. In other words, social protection in the wake of the global downturn should address the country-specific needs while addressing universal human needs. In this context, this chapter will examine the social protection mechanisms in East Asia from a comparative perspective and seek to find out the policy lessons that can improve their ability to provide the poor and vulnerable with adequate protection.

In terms of the scope of analysis, this chapter will select four East Asian countries that represent different sets of countries in the region. First this chapter will discuss the case of the Republic of Korea. As in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, Korea has a welfare system that includes a range of social insurance and assistance programmes. It also belongs to the group of countries with relatively high levels of per capita income (US$21 530, see Table 17.1). In the previous East Asian economic crisis in 1997–98, Korea was one of the hardest hit countries but responded to the crisis with social policy reform that strengthened the welfare system. This chapter will look into whether the social policy programmes that were instituted during the last East Asian crisis helped Korea deal with the current global economic crisis effectively.

The second country under study is China, a fast growing economy but with an inadequate social protection system. While China has reduced poverty at an impressive speed, inequality has been deepened between regions, different hukou holders, farmers and urban people. We will look

Table 17.1 Economic social indicators of the four East Asian countries (in 2007, 2008, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GNI Per Capita (current US$)</th>
<th>HDI Ranking 2009</th>
<th>Life Expectancy</th>
<th>Child Malnutrition (% under 5) 2007</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>Male: 59</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>14 562 008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>2 940</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Male: 71</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1 324 655 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1 880</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>Male: 69</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>227 345 082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>21 530</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Male: 77</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>48 607 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

into the social policy responses to the inequality in China as well as to the
global economic crisis.

Third, this chapter will examine social policy evolution in Indonesia. Indonesia is one of the low-middle income countries with a population of 100 million people. It was one of hardest hit countries during the East Asian economic crisis but responded with a range of assistance programmes including cash transfer programmes. There have been many policy evolutions involving cash transfer programmes.

Lastly, we will pay attention to the social protection system in Cambodia. The country is one of the poorest countries in the region with little social policy provision, like Laos PDR and Myanmar. The country’s ranking in the Human Development Index stands at 137th, and belongs to the group of least developed countries (Table 17.1). We will discuss the policy challenges and options for Cambodia in the context of the global economic crisis.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In carrying out this analysis it is necessary to elaborate the framework that can deal with a range of social protection systems faced with different economic risks in East Asia. The analytical framework should be able to take into consideration characteristics of social protection systems in the least developed countries as well as relatively rich countries. At the same time it can be useful to guide strategies for social protection for those countries with limited resources and weak institutional capacities. In other words, the framework can indicate the developmental trajectories of the social protection system for the countries in East Asia. This chapter will look into two dimensions of social protection in order to elaborate an analytical framework that can incorporate the diversity in social protection.

First, we will consider the institutional dimension of the social protection. Traditional social policy programmes such as pensions, health care and income maintenance require sophisticated institutional frameworks that could only be established over a long period. For example, most public pension programmes require a complex institutional set up. Participants need to contribute to the scheme for a long period, in many cases 20 years, to be eligible for pensions. Collecting those contributions and keeping the records for more than 20 years would be a great administrative challenge for many governments in developing countries. To provide pensions to those eligible would require the same level of administrative capacity. Further, there must be a viable arrangement of financial investment to maintain the value of pension funds. Establishing these
institutional frameworks can be a part of the development process since they will provide citizens with social protection in a stable manner.

For this reason, it is imperative for all developing countries to establish such welfare state institutions as part of the development process, but placing too much emphasis on those instruments in the short and medium term would not be a good policy orientation because those institutions will miss large sections of vulnerable people in most developing countries. The social policies with complicated institutional configurations tend to include only formal sector workers and government employees. Yet, the large portions of the population in the developing countries, not to mention LDCs, are farmers in agriculture, workers in informal sectors and daily labourers in urban centres who are not easily covered by the formal institutions.

Migrants from rural areas searching for work in cities also constitute a large section of the population outside of the formal institutional arrangement. These workers and their families are most vulnerable to economic fluctuations and their coping mechanisms for economic and social risks are short in terms of duration and limited in terms of options.

Institutional pre-conditions for social policy provision have been long subject to the debate in relation to targeting and universalism. In the development of social policy in Europe, for instance, public assistance programmes based on strict means tests gave way to universal programmes, as the former were considered to stigmatize the recipients. In the context of developing countries, targeting and universalism debates have a strong link with institutional arrangements of the social protection system. Targeting of social provision has been promoted by some of the international financial institutions, such as the World Bank, on the grounds of efficiency (Mkandawire, 2005). Nevertheless, such an argument did not take into account the challenges that face most developing countries in the delivery of social provision. According to Peyre Dutrey’s survey, targeting programmes in Latin America hardly reached the poorest people while benefits fell into the hands of people who were not eligible to receive them (Peyre Dutrey, 2005). He pointed out that the reason for the failure of targeting was the lack of institutional capacity in developing countries to implement it.

However, nor could universal provision solve the problem by itself, although it is one of many options. For this reason, it is necessary to create social policy instruments that can be implemented without sophisticated institutional settings. Public works, cash transfer, food subsidies and free health care are short term and institutionally light, but could be effective instruments for social protection in this context. In some countries, these social protection programmes have been developed and proved to be
effective, while not so in others (Leisering, 2009). It is important to consider in what ways these social protection measures could be effective in the development context.

The second dimension that this chapter will incorporate into the analytical framework is the timing of response to social risks. The conventional social policy instruments are designed to provide social protection when the eventual contingencies actually take place. Examples are unemployment benefits provided to those who have lost their jobs, and health care services given to those who are ill. They are protection ex post. In contrast, there are alternative designs of social protection that aim to help people to maintain their economic skills and social capabilities so that they do not fall into a situation in which they need social protection ex post. For example, vaccinating children before they get infected from viruses is a case in point in health care. Providing new skills training to the people in order to enable them to stay in the labour market would be a good way to protect them from the vagaries of a market economy. These are instruments of social protection ex ante. The earned income tax credit, which provides income support for those who work in the labour market but earn little, is an example of the social protection ex post.

Combining these two dimensions of social protection we will be able to analyse different instruments of social protection in different contexts (see Figure 17.1). Social policy programmes that can be placed

![Figure 17.1 Analytical geography of social protection](image-url)
in quadrangle A are pensions, health care insurance (minus preventive care service), unemployment benefits and targeted poverty assistance programmes. They provide social support after the contingencies take place based on sophisticated institutional arrangements. In quadrangle B we can place programmes such as earned income tax credit and child grants such as the Sure Start programme in the UK. These programmes require sophisticated institutional settings while aiming at social support ex ante. In quadrangle C are social programmes that are institutionally light and intended to provide social support before the contingencies take place. Some form of public works projects, conditional cash transfer and vaccination programmes are examples of this type. In quadrangle D, we can place programmes that provide social support to those hit by social contingencies without requiring substantial institutional set up. Typical examples belonging to quadrangle D would be emergency relief for those hit by social and natural disasters. In the context of natural disasters, the institutional arrangements working effectively prior to the disasters may easily fall into functional disorder. For this reason, the instrumental design of social policy that would not require only limited institutional back up would be critical in such conditions. Another example of this type is South Africa’s Old Age Pensions programme. This programme requires only simple institutional back up (it requires no contributions prior to pension payments) and provides income support to those who fall into poverty in old age.

The analytical framework capable of dealing with such diversity is quite important, considering that the East Asian region includes a host of countries differing in levels of economic and social development. The region includes countries ranked among the world’s wealthiest (Japan) and poorest (Myanmar and North Korea). Politically, the region includes both stable and fragile democracies and dictatorships. The Confucian heritage of many states in the region contrasts with other predominantly Moslem countries. These contrasts, as much as the widely (though not universally) shared experiences of rapid economic growth and rising inequalities, shape the needs, challenges and provisions of social protection across the region, and the kinds of responses that can emerge in different political, social and cultural contexts.

Further, the composition of social protection and the institutional configuration of the welfare states vary greatly: there are clear institutional differences in social policy between Northeast and Southeast Asian countries as a number of studies have already pointed out (Goodman et al., 1998; Gough, 2004; Ramesh, 2004). Social insurance schemes form the main contours of the welfare state in Northeast Asian countries such as Korea and Taiwan, while provident funds have been the anchor of the
welfare programmes in some Southeast Asian countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia (Kwon, 2005).

Based on the analytical framework combining dimensions of institutional configuration and the timing of responses to social risks, this chapter has selected four countries for the analysis: Korea, China, Indonesia and Cambodia. It is clear that these four countries could not cover all social protection issues arising from East Asia but that they can provide a good sample of the ‘welfare geography’ of the region (Cook and Kwon, 2008). Korea is a sample case of the relatively advanced welfare states in East Asia, China represents transition systems while Indonesia and Cambodia provide cases for the middle income and poor countries respectively. The chapter will attempt to locate the countries’ programmes in the analytical space we have discussed and in particular will examine policy responses in the wake of the global economic crisis and find out how those responses have changed the welfare geography in East Asia.

**KOREA: CONSOLIDATING THE DEVELOPMENTAL WELFARE STATE¹**

The social policies in Korea that were introduced since the 1960s were geared for economic development and covered only a narrow section of the population. The author has argued that the notion of the developmental welfare state can capture such characteristics of Korea’s welfare system well (Kwon, 2005). Within the developmental welfare state, the structures of social policies are predominantly composed of social insurance programmes. People were required to pay contributions prior to entitlement to social benefits. As a result, only selected groups of people, particularly people with formal employment, had access to social protection, leaving the vulnerable section of the population outside the system. To avoid a demand for universal entitlement, the state did not provide funding for welfare programmes, but enforced the rules, formal and informal, that regulated the payment of contributions for social benefits by companies and their employees. The social insurance programmes were operated by quasi-governmental agencies, working at arm’s length from the government, but not, strictly speaking, a part of the government.

From our analytical perspective Korea’s developmental welfare state was set for a highly institutionalized system and intended to provide protection ex post. In this system, it was inevitable that a vulnerable section of the population was left outside the social protection system. As we have discussed, people in the informal sectors such as urban labourers, small-scale self-employed, unemployed and the elderly were not protected
by the formal institutions of social welfare. In the development of the welfare state in Korea, there were social pressure groups, some forming strong advocacy coalitions for more inclusive social policy, which argued for strengthening social protection for the poor and the vulnerable. Nevertheless, the efforts did not prevail before the crisis of 1997–98.

At the time of economic crisis, it became clear that the developmental welfare state could not cope with the social challenges of economic downturn. In particular, the developmental welfare state was not able to tackle high unemployment (see Table 17.2). Faced with a severe economic crisis, the Korean government quickly implemented social policy reforms that would enhance social protection for the vulnerable. From our analytical perspective, the Korean responses were set for universalization of the social welfare system. In other words, it strengthened the institutional settings so that those left outside before now could be brought into the system of social protection.

Of the reforms introduced after the East Asian economic crisis the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee (MLSG) is worth our particular attention. This new social assistance programme provides income support and training to the poor in a radically different manner. It is entirely funded by the government (shared by the central and local governments), replacing the previous assistance programme, which was very limited in terms of the scope and the level of benefits. The poverty line the MLSG set up is much higher than that utilized by the previous programme. It also provides benefits to poor people if their income is below the poverty line regardless of their age and family conditions. Under the previous social assistance programme, the poor aged between 18 and 64 were not eligible for benefits and those having family members who were supposed to help them were not eligible. The MLSG introduced new ex ante protection programmes: training programmes for job skills, public work projects and community services.

Despite all these changes, the welfare state in Korea maintained strong characteristics of the developmental welfare state in the sense, first, that

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the welfare reform was carried out to meet policy demands following labour market reform; second, that human capital investment such as training and capacity building was the most important rationale, particularly with respect to the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee and Employment Insurance Programme. To capture such continuity and change, in short, it can be said that the developmental welfare state in Korea has moved toward an inclusive developmental welfare state (Kwon, 2005). The emerging structure of the welfare state after reform comprises five social insurance programmes (Industrial Accident Insurance, National Health Insurance, National Pension Programme, Employment Insurance Programme and Long-term Care Insurance3), one social assistance programme (the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee) and three public pensions programmes for special categories of people such as civil servants, private school teachers and military personnel.

The global economic downturn triggered by the sub-prime mortgage crisis in the USA hit Korea in 2008 as it did other East Asian countries. As shown in Figure 17.2, economic output fell sharply in the second half of 2008. The impacts of the global economic downturn came through various channels. The volume of exports slowed down as Korean exports to the US and European markets began to stagnate from 2007, but it was international capital in the Korean finance market that experienced the most frantic activities in the second half of 2008, particularly short-term money market investment. Attempts were made to withdraw investment from the Korean market as deleveraging was taking place in the USA and Europe. Opportunistic speculation on the exchange rate of the Korean currency also put the Korean economy under further pressure. Volatility in the financial market reminded policy-makers and the public at large

![Figure 17.2 GDP growth rate in Korea](image)
of the East Asian economic crisis ten years previously. Still, a full-blown economic crisis never materialized in Korea as feared. The currency swapping deal with the Japanese and US governments eased the pressure on the exchange rate while the high exchange rate reduced the volume of imports and increased exports, which also turned out to be useful for shaking off the fears of crisis.

The Korean government responded to the economic downturn with a special budgetary package in April 2009, an equivalent of 12 per cent of the consolidated government budget of the previous year, which was extraordinary in size. The package included various programmes including financial support for the small and medium-size firms to create new jobs with regular contracts and to install new equipment, and emergency grants to local governments. It also included income support for those people with income just above the poverty line (up to 20 per cent above the poverty line), and a public works programme designed for young people.

The Korean government called the public works projects for the people just above the poverty line the ‘Huimang’ project (dream project). It was set up to create about 250 000 public (temporary) jobs, and it would be implemented by local governments. The jobs ranged from forestry work and local maintenance work to care for the disabled. Participants received payment for their work averaging the equivalent of about US$750 per month.

Overall, the employment situation in the labour market did not go into deep crisis as in the 1997–98 Asian economic crisis. Figure 17.3 clearly shows the magnitude of the differential between the two economic crises. While the economic impact of the global economic crisis was not so great in the Korean context, there is another underlying reason for such a difference. Ten years ago, the government was more geared to carrying out the reforms necessary to make the labour market more flexible, which

![Figure 17.3](image_url)

Source: Online data from National Statistical Office.

**Figure 17.3** Trends in employment rate in Korea (to previous quarter) (%)
resulted in a sharp increase in unemployment (see Table 17.2). In contrast, responding to global economic crisis, the government put efforts into retaining existing jobs and creating new employment in the labour market, and temporary employment through public works.

Another contrasting feature is that a range of social policy instruments were already in place to provide social protection, while ten years previously the welfare state was not equipped with adequate instruments to implement policy measures. For instance, in the global economic crisis, the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee and the Employment Insurance Programme, which had been in operation for some years, have provided an institutional framework for government policy. Figure 17.4 shows that the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee responded to the economic recession. There was a sharp increase in the number of benefit claims after late 2008. During the time of the Asian economic crisis, such social assistance was not available.

In relation to social protection for the unemployed, the Employment Insurance Programme responded to the changing situation in the labour market. Table 17.3 also compares the figures of those who received unemployment benefits in the two economic crises. At the start of the Asian economic crisis, only 7.8 per cent of unemployed people were able to receive unemployment benefits. Only after extraordinary efforts did the figure creep up to the level of 33 per cent in 1999. In the current wave of rising unemployment, the same figure was much higher than in the previous crisis, showing the existing policy framework worked reasonably well. For instance, at the end of 2009, 40.7 per cent of the unemployed received unemployment benefits. Although we cannot be certain that the social protection provided was as adequate as one might expect, it can be said that the existing framework of the welfare state responded to the changing economic situation.

**Figure 17.4 Trends in MLSG claims during the economic crisis**

*Source:* Im (2009).
China has become one of the latest success stories of economic development in East Asia. It has managed economic growth of around 9 per cent per annum, with growth accompanied by substantial declines in poverty (see Table 17.4) for the last three decades. Nonetheless, China still has large numbers of people in absolute poverty. It has also undergone rapid structural change, in terms both of urbanization and thus high rates of labour movement out of agriculture, and demographic ageing (Cook and Kwon, 2008).

On top of the rapid structural changes, Chinese people have witnessed a sharp increase in inequality. Inequality in China has a multi-faceted character: between regions, income groups and industrial and agricultural sectors. As China astutely started economic development in the strategic regions such as southeast coastal areas, people living in those chosen areas benefited most, while those living in the regions with agricultural and other primary sectors of production, mostly inner regions of China,

**Table 17.3  The trend in unemployment benefits in Korea (benefit coverage<sup>a</sup>) (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2007&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2008&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2009&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Notes:*

a. Benefit coverage refers to proportion of people receiving unemployment benefits among the unemployed.

b. The figures refer to the end of the year.


**CHINA: TOWARDS THE HARMONIOUS SOCIETY?**

**Multiple Layers of Inequality**

China has become one of the latest success stories of economic development in East Asia. It has managed economic growth of around 9 per cent per annum, with growth accompanied by substantial declines in poverty (see Table 17.4) for the last three decades. Nonetheless, China still has large numbers of people in absolute poverty. It has also undergone rapid structural change, in terms both of urbanization and thus high rates of labour movement out of agriculture, and demographic ageing (Cook and Kwon, 2008).

On top of the rapid structural changes, Chinese people have witnessed a sharp increase in inequality. Inequality in China has a multi-faceted character: between regions, income groups and industrial and agricultural sectors. As China astutely started economic development in the strategic regions such as southeast coastal areas, people living in those chosen areas benefited most, while those living in the regions with agricultural and other primary sectors of production, mostly inner regions of China,

**Table 17.4  Poverty incidence in China (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than US$1</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than US$1.25 per day</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than US$2 per day</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

were left behind. From these underdeveloped areas people migrated to cities in the southeast area. People were not allowed to move to other regions without official permission before the reform. Following the reforms in the late 1980s, the Chinese government, to supply cheap but hard-working labour to the fast growing industries, stopped the migration control. People started to move from rural areas to cities and from inner regions to southeast coastal regions where the special economic zones were established.

Nevertheless, China has maintained the *hukou* system, a household registration system that divides people into holders of urban residency and those with rural resident registration. The gap between administrative regulation and the reality of migration left a system of dual residency in cities. Even for people who all live in the same city they have different levels of access, according to their *hukou*, to job opportunities and other entitlements to social benefits. For this reason, the *hukou* system has created serious inequality in social protection. In other words, the system has created inequality between urban and rural people within a city.

To fully understand the social impact of social inequality, it is necessary to go back to the transition process from the socialist system of welfare to the welfare system under a market economy. The transition process was undertaken by provincial governments under the direction of the central government. Urban and rural areas followed different paths. The programmes set up for the urban residents during the transition to the market economy had three categories of social policies: social insurance programmes including pensions, health care and unemployment financed by the contributions from employers and employees; social assistance programmes providing minimum incomes (including Minimum Living Standard Guarantees for the urban residents) financed by local authorities; and various social services such as personal social services (Lin, 2009).

In the rural areas there was also restructuring in the welfare system. Before the reform, the main social protection system was in fact based on collective farmland. Through the reform the farmland was distributed to individual farmers. At the same time collective responsibility for social risks was considerably weakened. In terms of health care, before the reform a cooperative health care system based on rural collective bodies was the main provider. So-called ‘bare-foot doctors’ symbolized the system, which proved to be an effective basic health care system (Sen, 1999). This health care system was also dismantled as the rural cooperative system based on collective farmland was dismantled. With respect to social assistance, the ‘Five Guarantee Households’ system survived the rural reform of collective farmland despite its much scaled-down form. The ‘Five Guarantee Households’ system ensured that rural communes
were required to provide ‘Five Guarantees’ including food, clothing, fuel, education and burial expenses to the farmers in extreme need, who had no kin to care for them or who were too old, too young or too sick to support themselves. After the reform of rural collectives the local authorities found it difficult to continue to provide support to the Five Guarantee Households (Guan, 2005).

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the urban social protection system continued to take shape while the old system was rapidly dismantled. In the rural areas new social protection did not emerge, even though the old collective-based system disappeared. The reason for the uneven development in the social protection system was clear: the uneven economic development between regions. In the urban areas, the local authorities, employers and urban residents (i.e., resident permit holders) who were responsible for financing most social welfare programmes were able to finance the programme with their growing economic resources, while rural areas did not have such resources. The government did not put capital investment into social infrastructure such as hospitals, schools and care centres in rural areas. This was partly because the Chinese government was urban biased in social investment, inter alia, due to the political concern about civil unrest in urban areas (Cook and Kwon, 2008). Further, people who were economically productive migrated to urban areas.

Since the basis of the social protection system was local it is necessary for ordinary people to have a local hukou in order to get benefits from the social welfare programmes. Theoretically, those with hukou in rural areas have claims on their home communities, while those with urban hukou have claims of access to social benefits of urban communities. The uneven economic development and social protection reform together with this administrative system created multiple layers of inequality in China. According to Lin’s report, social security expenditure for urban residents per capita took 15 per cent of GDP during 1991–2001, but for the peasants the figure was 0.2 per cent (Lin, 2009, p.260). In terms of participation rates to various social insurance programmes, most urban residents had joined at least one of the social insurance programmes, but only a small number of rural residents were covered by at least one social insurance programme: 13 per cent in small towns and 2 per cent in villages (Zhu, 2005).

Policies for the Harmonious Society

From 2005, the Chinese government indicated an important shift in policy orientation, emphasizing social harmony instead of unfettered commitment to economic development. President Hu Jintao’s idea of the ‘harmonious society’ was officially endorsed by the Central Committee
of Communist Party and the State Council of the Chinese government in 2006 (Washington Post, 12 October 2006). It was an effort to address serious levels of inequality created during the rapid economic development. It is fair to say that the new policy paradigm was not just political rhetoric without real policy effort. From 2004 to 2009, No. 1 Documents jointly issued by the Chinese government and the Communist Party, which provide basic guidelines for the policy programmes during the year, were concerned with economic and social conditions of farmers’ lives: Farmers Income (2004); Improving Agricultural Production Capacity (2005); New Countryside Scheme (2007); Consolidating Foundation of Agriculture (2008); and Promoting Steady Agricultural Development and Facilitating Farmers’ Incomes (2009).

The new development strategy that the Chinese government took was to promote productivity in the agricultural sector so that economic development could be achieved in rural areas and regions that had been left behind in the previous decades. It would alleviate the severe development gap between regions and income inequality between rural and urban people. There were also policy efforts to put in place basic social services, schools and hospitals in rural areas. Most notable examples are the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee in rural areas and the New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme.

In July 2007, the Chinese government issued a directive on the Minimum Living Standard Guarantee for Farmers. This directive demanded that the provincial governments should provide their county governments with necessary financial resources to guarantee farmers a minimum standard of living. It also placed a strong emphasis on transparent processes for selecting beneficiaries. In a way the directive did not introduce any new programmes but was intended to make the existing programme effective and transparent.

In 2009 the Chinese government also attempted to strengthen the New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme launched in 2003 in order to provide more effective health care to farmers. It demanded that the medical cooperative increase the level of reimbursement of health care cost up to ten times farmers’ income in local areas. It also required the medical cooperative to set up a plan to consolidate their financial conditions and to control fees for health services. Most importantly the government tried to provide effective health care to migrant workers. The New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme should allow the migrant workers to come to their home town and benefit from health care services. The government also required the cooperatives to establish arrangements with hospitals.

When the global economic crisis hit the Chinese economy, the government launched a 4 trillion yen emergency package to boost economic
activities in the domestic market. In the package all economic and social measures were not new; the above-mentioned initiatives for social protection were included. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the emergency package provided the Chinese government with the opportunity for establishing an overall perspective on policy for the harmonious society. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao pointed out that the emergency package must be in line with overall government policy and added that coherency would be the key to success, in an interview on CCTV February 2009. He enumerated four main contents of the package: first, increase in domestic demand by tax reduction; second, industrial restructuring; third, promotion of R&D as the basis for future growth; and lastly reinforcement of the social protection system.

How successful is the policy for the harmonious society? The New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme could provide a good example. A study commissioned by the research network Social Protection in Asia reports good news and bad news on China’s New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme (Yi et al., 2009). As Table 17.5 shows, the coverage of the scheme expanded dramatically. Based on the panel survey of the nationally representative 2000 sample, the study reported that all rural villages participated in the scheme while more than 90 per cent of the rural population participated in the scheme. Nevertheless, the scheme falls far short of providing adequate health protection. The reimbursement rate was less than 15 per cent of the health care cost on average, and it fell even further in relation to severe illness (ibid.).

In contrast to the great effort to enhance the living standards of the rural people it is not clear whether China will abolish the *hukou* system in order to reduce inequality among people living in urban areas with different *hukou*. In 2010, it was reported that there were 167 million migrant workers living in cities more than six months without a resident permit. Large numbers of policy-makers and commentators in China seem to agree that the *hukou* system should be abolished but there is no consensus on how to do it. For example, Kong argues that the Chinese government is not prepared to abolish the system (Kong, 2010). He estimates that 1.65

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**Table 17.5 Coverage of the New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages covered</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals in villages covered</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Modified from Yi et al. (2009).
trillion yuan would be necessary every year to ensure all migrant workers had the same access to social welfare.

As the East Asian economic crisis provided a momentum for strengthening the welfare state for some countries such as Korea and Taiwan, the current global economic crisis spurred the Chinese government effort to modernize the social protection system. The development of the social protection system in recent years seems to have more to do with political and economic concerns rather than social. For this reason, the social protection system for the urban resident was a policy priority. From our analytical perspective the Chinese transition from a socialist to capitalist market was about the reform of the institutional configuration of the system. There were few programmes aimed at strengthening individuals’ ability to cope with social and economic contingencies, that is, social protection ex ante. This is probably because the Chinese economy has experienced uninterrupted economic growth for the last three decades and such policy efforts were not in great need since economic opportunities were abundant. Now, experiencing multiple layers of inequality, the Chinese government took a great step toward a more equal society, namely the harmonious society. China has used welfare policies in maintaining political support and legitimacy for the ongoing reform process, managing the costs of restructuring and incipient social unrest (Kwon, 2005) and now it emerges that the new policy focus is on farmers and migrants. It reaffirms the policy rationale of maintaining political stability to ensure continued economic growth.

Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the recent developments have not produced significant progress in terms of social protection and equality. The Minimum Living Standard Guarantee both for urban and rural residents is reportedly inadequate to guarantee minimum living standards in a realistic sense (Gao et al., 2007). The New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme has not been able to provide effective coverage in terms of geographical coverage. In order to produce effective social outcomes, these social policies should be further strengthened and elaborated on in the future.

INDONESIA

Indonesia’s income level (of approximately $1880 per capita, US$ 2008) places it alongside the Philippines, and well above the low-income Mekong sub-region countries of Laos PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam. Before the economic crisis Indonesia recorded rapid economic growth but it was one of the hardest hit countries at the time. Its political and social
impact was longer and deeper than in most other countries (although the depth and severity is disputed – see Feridhanusetyawan, 2000). During the economic crisis, for example, Indonesia experienced a series of mass riots and changes in political power. After a few years it was subsequently hard hit by a major natural disaster (the tsunami) in 2004. Combined with political instability and internal conflict there emerged a social and political acceptance that social protection mechanisms in Indonesia could play an important role not only in protecting the poor but also in managing political tensions in a new democracy.

The country was unprepared for the East Asian economic crisis, safety net mechanisms were inadequate and the response was slow and largely ineffective and may even have exacerbated the situation. Before the crisis, only civil servants and formal sector workers were covered by the limited programmes: Taspen (government employees’ retirement benefits) and Jamsostek (the formal sector workers’ programme for industrial accident compensation, retirement benefits and health care). Jamsostek covered employees in workplaces with more than ten people. Social protection for informal sector workers who were more than 60 per cent of the employed was left outside social policy before the crisis (Tambunan and Purwoko, 2002).

During the crisis, the Indonesian government provided emergency relief for the poor people who struggled to meet daily living. A year after the East Asian crisis, Indonesia began to introduce new social policy measures. The first initiative came from the IMF reform package of June 1998, which included a package of safety net programmes. In the government budget of that month, however, the main social expenditures were devoted to fuel and electricity subsidies – not well targeted at the poorest groups (Feridhanusetyawan, 2000, p. 156). A subsequent readjustment of the programme combined four key elements designed to help protect the pre-crisis poor, as well as those made poor as a result of the crisis, through a fourfold strategy: (1) ensuring the availability of food at affordable prices, (2) supplementing purchasing power among poor households through employment creation, (3) preserving the access of the poor to critical social services, particularly health and education and (4) sustaining local economic activity through regional block grant programmes and the extension of small-scale credit (Suryahadi et al., 2006).

It is worth noting that important characteristics emerged in Indonesia’s response in order to help the poor and the near poor cope with the social risks during the crisis. Although there were subsidies for food, health and education, the emergency programme had a clear focus: maintaining the potential for future livelihood as well as meeting the immediate need. In other words, these subsidies were intended to be social protection ex ante.
It is true that they could be regarded as social protection ex post since these programmes were provided to the people who had already fallen into poverty, nevertheless it should be pointed out that they were intended to provide the capability to deal with future risks.

Development of the Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes

During the implementation the programmes underwent significant modification. The subsidy programmes were based on a light institutional arrangement as one of their main missions was to respond quickly to social contingencies during the economic crisis. Once the emergency situation passed, a number of criticisms arose of these programmes’ inefficiency and ineffectiveness. People who were not eligible received benefits while those in need did not receive them. In 2001 the government introduced a new programme aimed at reducing the general fuel subsidy but providing more targeted subsidies to the poor. The subsidized rice programme was maintained, but changed its name to ‘Rice for the Poor’ in an effort to discourage the non-poor from obtaining benefits. In July 2005, the scholarship programme for primary and junior secondary schools was dramatically changed to a block grant programme provided to schools instead of poor students. Schools that receive this grant can use the funds for any school operational costs, excluding teacher salaries and school construction activities, with priority given to assisting students from poor families.

The health card programme has also continued but with changes in its management. Originally, in line with the decentralization policy instituted in 2001, the government transferred authority to manage this programme to the district level. However, with the enactment of a new Social Security Law at the end of 2004 the government recentralized the management of the programme under a state-owned health insurance company and renamed it the ‘Health Insurance for the Poor’ programme.

In October 2005, due to the hike in international oil prices, the government of Indonesia increased domestic oil prices by an average of 120 per cent. To cushion the negative impact of this policy on the poor it launched a one-year direct cash transfer (*Subsidi Langsung Tunai*; SLT) programme, providing a supplementary income of Rp 100,000 (around US$11) per month per eligible household, determined via a proxy means test. This fund was distributed quarterly to 14.9 million poor households in the first round of distribution, increasing to 19.2 million households in the subsequent rounds. Initial assessment of the implementation of the direct cash transfer programme was not encouraging. Leakage to those not eligible and under-coverage of the poor both took place although these were not
Global economic downturn and social protection in East Asia

as high as expected (SMERU, 2006). The state administrative system was not able to deliver the direct cash programme, which often led to protests and sometimes violent clashes between people and police.

In 2007 new conditional cash transfer programmes were introduced as pilot programmes in 47 districts and cities. ‘Conditions’ for cash are mainly in two strands: health-related conditions and educational goals. First, pregnant women and mothers of young children (under 6 years old) in poor households can receive cash transfer on condition that they take care of unborn babies’ and young children’s health and nutrition. Second, poor households with children age 6–15 years old can receive cash transfer on condition that they attend school. By attaching these conditions these programmes became more social protection ex ante.

In the wake of the sudden rise in fuel and food prices in 2008 the Indonesian government reinstated the unconditional cash transfer programme to ease the economic difficulties of poor households. It targeted 19.1 million poor households with subsidies for seven months from 2008. The amount of money transferred is equivalent to US$11 per month for seven months payable in two instalments. With the ten-year experience, the implementation of the programmes, such as targeting and monitoring, has been much improved. The implementation involves the Ministry of Social Affairs, the main ministry responsible for the programme, the Ministry of Communication and Information, which distributes cash to poor households through post offices, and provincial and district governments, which select the eligible poor households. It also involves a range of field workers such as civil society members, volunteers and community social workers. The better targeting involves the Indonesian government regularly updating the data of the beneficiaries through the Central Statistic Board (Sunusi, 2009).

Indonesia’s cash transfer programmes exhibit diverse characteristics from the perspective of our analytical framework. Thus, they can be located in different positions in our analytical space. While unconditional cash transfers are assistance programmes ex post, conditional cash transfer programmes aim to help poor households to accumulate children’s future capability in terms of health and education, that is, social protection ex ante. Despite such diversity these cash transfer programmes are commonly provisional assistance programmes in nature. When the government considers it appropriate they can be implemented at one point in time and phased out later. Taking advantage of such flexibility the Indonesian government appeared to respond swiftly with cash transfer programmes during the global economic crisis. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there were continual improvements in the institutional arrangements of these transfer programmes.
CAMBODIA

Cambodia faces very tough economic and structural challenges in common with other low-income countries in the region. The Cambodian economy is still predominantly based on the agricultural sector and has a small but young population. It is ranked 131 out of 177 countries in the world on the 2007 UNDP Human Development Index. As in Table 17.6, 25.84 per cent of the population live below the poverty line of US$1.25 a day. Malnutrition in rural Cambodia is widespread. Nevertheless, during the last decade Cambodia achieved high economic growth and impressive poverty reduction, taking advantage of economic opportunities created by global economic integration. From 1998 to 2007, its average economic growth recorded on average 9 per cent and the population under the poverty line was reduced significantly, with the bulk of national income generated by garment and tourist industries (Hun, 2009).

In relation to the global economic crisis in 2008 the Cambodian economy did not suffer the direct effects of crisis since the sectors linked to the global market in the Cambodian economy were still very small. The rural economy, where 91 per cent of the poor live, has not benefited from the recent economic growth and was not directly affected by the economic downturn in the global market. Nevertheless, it was feared that Cambodia would be affected in the longer term. In particular, workers will be facing a risk of high unemployment including migrant workers employed abroad, mostly in neighbouring countries such as Thailand. In the event of a reduction in migrant workers’ remittances this will lead in turn to declining incomes of those families and loss of jobs. Migrant workers from Cambodia would be adversely affected as competition even for unskilled jobs increased. In addition, as Cambodia imports almost all of its modern medical supplies, the rise of health care costs caused by the depreciation of the foreign exchange rate was damaging for the already vulnerable population.

However, it was rise in food and oil prices in 2007 that hit the Cambodian economy and the livelihood of the Cambodian people hard. Cambodia

Table 17.6  Poverty ratio in Cambodia as percentage of the population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People on US$1.25 a day</td>
<td>40.19</td>
<td>25.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People on US$2 a day</td>
<td>68.20</td>
<td>57.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

imports 100 per cent of its oil and only 25 per cent of the total population are connected to the electric grid (United Nations in Cambodia, 2009). The Cambodian government launched various policy measures to respond to the price hike in commodity markets. In 2008, the government removed a ban on pork imports to avoid inflation in food prices, and increased the salary for civil servants (an extra 40 billion riel in total). In addition, the UN World Food Programme provided 3000 million tonnes of rice to support the Cambodian government’s efforts, yet the effects of those measures would inevitably be limited because of the small scale of the projects. For this reason, the Cambodian government seemed to adopt a strategy to strengthen the economic ties with other major developing countries such as China and Thailand. It has also attempted to increase development collaboration with regional partners such as ASEAN, Japan and Korea.

In terms of social protection, the Cambodian government committed more resources towards priority sectors of education, health, rural development and agriculture. The notable social protection schemes that have been operational in Cambodia are a kind of conditional cash transfer programme. First, Targeted Assistance for Education of Poor Girls and Indigenous Children was introduced, funded by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction. The programme was intended to provide the equivalent of US$45 to poor households with students at the lower secondary schools. Second, the Cambodian government launched the Education Support System, which was intended to provide cash assistance to poor households with secondary school students in the poorest communes. It started in 2005 and about 100 schools participate in the scheme.

Although these schemes have been effective in encouraging poor households to send their children to school the overall effects are limited because of their small scale. From the perspective of our analytical framework these measures are more provisional than institutional in terms of policy structure. They have both ex ante and ex post characteristics but it seems unrealistic to expect that such small-scale programmes without an institutional basis will enhance human capital for the future.

From the discussion above, we can draw out a stylized welfare geography in our analytical framework (Figure 17.5). Since Korea has now established programmes ex ante and ex post with highly institutionalized structures, the welfare system occupies both quadrangles A and B. The size of the circle reflects the relative size of the welfare state. In contrast, although Indonesia has both programmes ex post and ex ante, they are provisional in nature: the welfare system is located in quadrangles C and D. China has two circles in quadrangles A and D, reflecting its current situation, while
theCambodian systems is located in D since it has small provisional programmes that are ex post in nature. As mentioned, further research will be necessary to confirm this stylized picture of welfare geography.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined how East Asian countries responded to the global economic crisis in 2008 in relation to social protection. Since the current global economic crisis was the second one following the previous East Asian economic crisis, the policy programmes that the chapter has examined were set in the context of development over the last ten years. For this reason we began with answering the question of to what extent the social protection systems that had been instituted in the late 1990s were effective in dealing with social contingencies arising from the global economic crisis. We approached this analysis using the analytical framework of welfare geography that considers institutional dimensions and the timing of social contingencies that individuals are faced with. The chapter selected four countries as a representative sample of East Asian countries: Korea, China, Indonesia and Cambodia.
Among the four countries Korea has established the most comprehensive social protection system. It was the East Asian economic crisis that provided the momentum for the rapid development in the social protection system. The chapter argues that the system worked effectively in providing income support and unemployment insurance to those who were in need in the wake of the current global economic crisis. In dealing with the global economic crisis the Korean government placed policy emphasis on job retention rather than new social protection systems. Nevertheless, the social protection has been strengthened in the areas of social protection ex ante such as training and skill enhancement.

In the context of the global economic crisis the Chinese policy response was the most impressive in terms of the speed and scale. It was very swift and active both in terms of economic and social policy. As did the Korean government ten years ago, the Chinese government took advantage of the current economic crisis to strengthen the social protection system. In fact the new policy paradigm for the harmonious society was already embarked on before the economic crisis, and social policy seemed to be used as an effective measure of not only economic recovery but also political legitimization. Inequality between regions and rural and urban residents had been the most important political concern for the last six years. There have been noticeable efforts to enhance the living standard of farmers and migrant workers in urban cities. Programmes such as the New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme are a case in point. It is true that these programmes should be improved to provide effective social protection. From the perspective of our analytical framework, Chinese policy seems to be concentrated on the institutionalization of social protection. At the same time there are few policy programmes that are intended to provide social protection ex ante.

The Korean and Chinese experiences during the two economic crises, as we have observed, were that the governments took them as an opportunity to strengthen social protection. The underlying rationale was either economic (to transform the economy to the more technology-oriented) or political and social (to reduce social inequality and political tension). Nevertheless, it is true that the ‘productive welfare’ that was promoted by President Kim of Korea and the ‘harmonious society’ of President Hu Jintao of China reflect the policy rationale of their governments. The crux of the matter is that there have been important changes from the policy paradigm of the ‘economy’ first to one that is concerned with social welfare.

The cash transfer programmes in Indonesia constitute a new innovation in development of social policy in East Asia, though they can be found in other regions such as Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. They only
require a simple institutional structure and can provide social protection to those affected by economic crises or natural disasters. In other words, they are effective social protection ex post. As Indonesia tried to make these cash transfer programmes efficient and effective they became conditional: conditional cash transfer for education and health care. Often these conditions are thought to be stigmatizing in affluent societies. However, in contrast, these conditions seem to give the poor the opportunity to cope with the crises, either economic or social. Nevertheless, it does not lead us to conclude that these programmes have been effective although there have been policy efforts to enhance them. To make the conditional cash transfer an effective ex ante social policy it will be necessary to implement other programmes such as training and health care programmes.

The Cambodian case shows another side to the social protection systems in East Asia. With the exception of a small number of programmes for the bureaucrats such as sickness and severance payment benefits, there are few programmes that qualify as social policy programmes in textbook terms. Emergency measures such as food rations and oil subsidies were implemented during the price hike in 2007–08. For Cambodia it is one of the critical development challenges to establish some form of social protection system. Institutionally light programmes that can give the poor the opportunity to cope with the possible social contingencies are what are required in the short term. Over the longer term it will be necessary for Cambodia to prepare social insurance such as pensions and health care programmes, but other East Asian countries should share their experience and resources with Cambodia and with for that matter other less developed countries in the region.

Final remarks on the analytical framework are required. To locate the social welfare programmes it is necessary to develop a certain kind of index on institutionalization and timing of contingencies and protection. Whilst this is beyond the scope of this chapter what we have demonstrated is the use of the analytical framework as an approach to understanding diverse systems of social protection. This preliminary analysis shows that it has great potential as a guide for analysis of future work.

NOTES

* The research that this chapter is based on is work by the author with Sarah Cook, ‘Economic development and social protection in East Asia’, an unpublished working paper in 2010. Further research was carried out with an SNU Research Grant for New Faculty Members in 2008. Thangavel Palanivel at the UNDP Regional Centre at Colombo strongly urged me to rework the research in the context of the global economic crisis in 2008. Thanks are due to Sarah Cook and Thangavel Palanivel. The
research is currently extended to a larger project on ‘Social protection in East Asia’, supported by the Korea Research Foundation’s Global Research Network Programme (NRF-2010-220-B0027). Usual caveats apply.


2. The developmental welfare state refers to the welfare state where elite policy-makers set economic growth as the fundamental goal, pursue a coherent strategy to achieve it and use social policy as an instrument for attaining that goal. In other words, the developmental welfare state comprises a set of social policies and institutions that are predominantly structured for facilitating economic development.

3. A new social insurance programme that has been implemented from 2008 is long-term care insurance. The basic structure of the programme is social insurance, which collects contributions from citizens and provides care services to the elderly over 60 who require long-term care and are having difficulties in active daily living. Old people who want the long-term care service are interviewed by social workers who assess their needs. Once their requests are approved they can use care services either in their home or in care institutions. Care services are provided by providers who have contracts with National Health Insurance. Service users are also required to pay co-payments.

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INTRODUCTION

The globalization of crime needs to be examined not only as a feature of objective changes in the nature of criminal behaviour and threats, but also as an aspect of changes in the approaches that are used to combat or to study crime. Globalization presents or exacerbates a series of difficult choices for national and international policy-makers. In turn, policy decisions (and non-decisions) help shape globalization. Arguments referring to the globalization of crime influence a variety of local, national and international interventions. Social actors involved include politicians, administrators, police forces and the secret services – and the media. But we should not forget the part played by commercial organizations such as banks and businesses, and (where it comes to illegal immigration) by airlines and lorry drivers. Because crime, crime control and criminology are so interrelated, attention must also be given to the discourses of practitioners and criminological experts whose responses help shape the problem of crime. This chapter will first say something about what is meant by globalization and offer an outline of possible links between globalization, crime and crime control. It will then discuss the rise and implications of ‘globalizing criminology’ and conclude with some consideration of the implications for social policy.

THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBALIZATION

The changing nature of crime means that it is becoming impossible to formulate the response to crime in purely national terms. Within the European Union, for example, Justice and Home Affairs has now become a key component of the European Union’s ‘Third Pillar’ activities. In particular, organized ‘transnational’ crime, terrorism and illegal immigration have become central political issues for the EU as well as for the other G-8 most powerful industrialized countries. The terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, as well as the continuing response
to that attack, mean that there is now nothing metaphorical about talk of waging a ‘war on crime’. The need to defend societies against such threats has tended to dominate most discussions of the globalization of crime. Without denying their significance, however, my purpose in this chapter will be to show the need for an agenda of research that also ranges more widely. After all, even responses to domestic crime are more and more shaped by what is done elsewhere (see e.g., Jones and Newburn, 2006; Johnson and Zimring, 2009; Nolan, 2009; Pakes, 2009; Crawford, 2011; Melossi et al., 2011).

The various developments referred to as globalization are the subject of an enormous literature (see earlier chapters of this *Handbook*) and refer to current complex and contradictory processes regarding the overcoming and reconfiguring of economic, political and cultural boundaries. But sometimes talk of globalization confuses trends towards internationalization, Americanization and Europeanization that it would be better to distinguish. Moves to greater unity within the ever enlarging European Union or the signing of the NAFTA can be seen both as a sign of globalization and as a reaction to it. In some respects, globalization can also be seen as no more than the latest stage in the expansion of capitalism and the spread of ‘modernity’. Certainly, little of what is ascribed to globalization in relation to crime or anything else is totally without precedent. There have been other periods, such as the early years of the twentieth century, that witnessed widespread levels of concern about international drug traffic, accompanied by xenophobia about foreign threats (though Britain and Holland were amongst the countries then accused of profiting from the trade). As far as crime control is concerned it is enough to think of the spread of Beccaria’s ([1764] 2008) ideas about punishment in the eighteenth century, or the flurry of international exchange visits in the nineteenth century to compare styles of prison building.

Globalization should also not be seen as a homogenizing juggernaut. Even those processes that encourage homogenization have objective and subjective aspects that do not always coincide. If globalization sometimes produces similarities and convergence of behaviour and ideas, it also often presupposes and even heightens differences (Nelken, 1997). Economic globalism may speak of the import, largely US inspired, of neo-liberal conceptions of the free market and community responsibilization backed by an authoritarian state, whereas legal globalism, largely UN inspired, unveils a contrary vision of universal human rights delivered through social democracies (Muncie, 2011). While globalization can make it more difficult to draw political and moral boundaries it may also create all the more need for them. Crime and crime control are therefore of interest not least because of the important and often fundamental role they play in

For many scholars globalization requires students of criminal justice to shift the focus of their attention from the nation-state (Sheptycki and Wardak, 2005; Aas, 2007; Larsen and Smandych, 2008; Pakes, 2010a, 2010b). On the other hand, others argue that nation-state and more locally based justice practices continue to shape or resist ‘global’ trends (Beirne, 2008; Muncie, 2011; Savelsberg, 2011). An important current debate in comparative criminal justice revolves around explaining variation in prison rates as a result of differences between countries in their kinds of political economy. The claim is that higher numbers in prison go together with the embracing of neo-liberal social policies (Whitman, 2005; Cavadino and Dignan, 2006; Nelken, 2010a; Downes, 2011); there is a strong link here to the ideas about the harmful effects of social inequality as demonstrated by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009). Put another way, however, it could also be argued that what these writers are describing are not so much intrinsic policy differences in the way states choose to deal with marginal citizens but differential ways of responding to a similar transnational trend. Neo-liberalism would then be treated as an index of the weakening of the nation-state, and a force for breaking down barriers between states. Being influenced by this trend means they have fewer resources to regulate what goes on inside their boundaries, including certain options in dealing with their marginal populations. What is clear is that globalizing processes can have different – perhaps even opposite – meanings and outcomes in different local – or glocal – contexts (Muncie, 2011; Nelken, 2011a; Savelsberg, 2011). It should also be remembered that neo-liberalism is not the only transnational trend to affect incarceration rates. Differential response to increases in (economic and other) migration means that many of the places least influenced by neo-liberalism (such as the countries of Southern Europe) are those most likely to incarcerate a higher proportion of immigrants (Solivetti, 2010).

Globalization in the sense of growing convergence is not inevitable, and talking about it as if it is may often be part of a political strategy. There are already some early signs of a return to economic protectionism, and many national, regional and cultural identities are growing stronger. Resistance movements objecting to decision-making by dominant states, corporations and NGOs have already acquired large followings. On the other hand, even those ‘no global’ groups most committed to fighting the evils of globalization are forced, or choose, to adopt many of the techniques and logos developed by globalizing companies. If we wish to plan interventions that can limit the negative effects of globalization we need to construct theories of the middle range aimed at showing how crime-related
phenomena are affected by and affect larger trends. Globalization leads to changes in opportunities for crime control as well as crime, and thus, depending on methods and circumstances, may or may not increase or reduce crime. The nation-state may indeed be weakened by globalization but it is also strengthened by reacting to global crime threats. At the same time, ‘resistance’ to globalization (and not only globalization) may itself involve criminal behaviour or otherwise serve to increase crime.

GLOBALIZATION, CRIME AND CRIME CONTROL

Globalization involves changes in the relevant boundaries we need to consider. Criminological problems such as cybercrime, financial crime, ecocrime and crimes against humanity, it is argued, cannot be analysed from a traditional comparative perspective, because their scope and effect are truly global. Although they are committed at a certain geographical place they have consequences that do not remain limited to a certain country or region (Van Swaaningen, 2011). At a level below that of the state we witness the ‘glocalization’ of local safety policies. But it also changes the meaning of space itself. People increasingly live in a realm of ‘scapes’, networks and flows rather than within geographical boundaries (Appadurai, 1996; Aas, 2007; Shearing and Johnston, 2010). Greater contacts through trade, travel and communication can give rise to new types of crime such as those connected to transnational organized crime or to sexual tourism. More commonly, however, globalization affects the way more ordinary crimes can be committed, and has implications for the levels and distribution of such crimes.

Increased legal trade helps camouflage the growth in illegal trade. And illegitimate business as much as legitimate business can gain from customs frontiers being eliminated (as in the EU or NAFTA). Globalization in manufacturing and service industries involves the specialization and integration of differentiated units that can involve legal and illegal businesses alike. Where markets expand, but other legal barriers persist, this allows businesses more opportunities to shop around for more favourable regimes of regulation so as to have impunity for what would be white collar crimes at home. On the other hand, too often it is only the criminogenic aspects of opening up markets that are discussed. It is rarely noted that the same developments can also reduce some opportunities for organized and professional criminals. For example, the abandonment of internal custom barriers means that there is less chance for lucrative schemes of smuggling, contraband and subsidies frauds within the EU. And market opportunities can weaken the hold of local organized crime monopolies (Nelken, 1997).
One important way globalizing trends contribute to crime is by exacerbating the differences between more or less economically successful or favoured countries (those in the centre of capitalism as opposed to those on the periphery) as well as between different regions, different cities and even, or especially, parts of cities (Davis, 1990). In its impact on developed societies, globalization can be seen as an aspect of the decline in Fordist methods of industrial production and trade, linked to the relative exhaustion of the home market for Fordist goods (Taylor, 1999). The loss of the manufacturing base and the possibility of finding substitute work is an important variable in the chain of crime causation. It explains the reduced opportunities, ghettoization, marginalization and social exclusion that provide both the conditions and alibi for much crime.

According to Taylor, as industrial areas decline there is less factory work for young men and much of the part-time work that becomes available is deemed more suited to women. This leads to a crisis in masculinity, the gender order and parenting. With so many women working there are also fewer people around to exercise surveillance and provide unpaid voluntary work in and for the community. As locally based social control declines, property crime and black economy activity increases and escapist routes of alcohol and drugs become tempting (Taylor, 1999). On the other hand, there are also those fortunate enough to benefit from the better economic opportunities presented by globalization. These typically seek to safeguard their families in bubbles of security in defined areas of housing and shopping that are fortified against the risks posed by those members of the population who have been displaced from the economy by processes of global change (Bottoms and Wiles, 1996).

A key feature of crime and crime control in the current phase of globalization is the frequently cruel attempt to increase the circulation of goods and money whilst blocking the transfer of people from less favoured to more favoured countries. From the 1970s onwards international police collaboration and databases have been overwhelmingly focused on blocking illegal immigration. Newspaper reports tell us that immigrants who enter without permission have been drugged and sent back like parcels from France; would-be immigrants have died in their hundreds in the straits of water off Southern Italy and Spain; and others have suffocated hiding in container lorries trying to reach the UK.

In Continental Europe the growth of irregular immigration has led to an increase in registered crime but, even more important, to considerable changes in the make up of the officially classified criminal population outside and inside prison (Ruggiero et al., 1995). The offences for which immigrants are convicted are often connected with the irregularities of immigration itself. Otherwise their crimes usually involve small-time drug
dealing, which is often the only way immigrants can pay their passage (Geopolitical Drugs Watch, 1996). They are also convicted for other (relatively) low-level offences for which most locals would normally be able to avoid prison with the help of competent lawyers and the benefits that the penal process offers to those with a stable address and other guarantees. But there are, it must be said, also many examples of more serious crimes in which immigrants are well represented, both as perpetrators and as victims (Freilich et al., 2002). Attempts to expel or extradite offenders often fail because of difficulties of identification and lack of collaboration from home countries. Meanwhile, the existence of a large number of irregular immigrants willing to accept work at any price puts enormous pressure on regular immigrants to continue to accept poor wages and conditions.

There are also less obvious, and perhaps more auspicious, ways in which globalization affects crime. Crime is not always simply the product of globalization – it can itself be a factor in producing globalization. Sometimes globalization helps bring offences into existence. The laws against what is aptly named ‘insider trading’ were introduced at the time of the so-called ‘big bang’ liberalization of the London stock exchange. They were required so as to maintain the impression of predictability and trustworthiness of the globalized City of London once it was opened up to outsiders. Globalization here led to the criminalization of behaviour, which not long before had been considered as acceptable, or at least containable within acceptable limits, as long as it was confined to ‘insiders’. On the other hand, one of the most perplexing issues of the American-induced international financial crisis from 2008 is the lack of pressure to create transnational regulatory bodies to prevent a recurrence.

What may be termed ‘globalizing moral panics’ about crime problems range from paedophilia to political corruption. These anxieties may not necessarily have any common denominator but their very existence is significant of the way crime reconstructs moral boundaries beyond the nation-state. This is also demonstrated by the creation of International Criminal Courts, such as the War Crimes Tribunal at The Hague, and now the permanent court based at Rome (though for the present these courts have only narrow jurisdiction and the Rome court does not yet enjoy the support of important states such as the USA). The attempt to defeat human trafficking, as in the 2000 Palermo Protocol, represents an example of an international response to a global social problem. But empirical research shows not only that such agreements are interpreted and used inconsistently in different countries but also that national priorities over immigration control or the regulation of sex work continue to be predominant (Nelken, 2011b).
Many of the trends associated with globalization have direct consequences for crime policy. This is true most obviously of the ‘hollowing out’ of the state, the privatization of public services and the emergence of the so-called ‘two-thirds society’ with its quota of surplus labour force. As economic actors become more independent of the nation-state this reduces the tax base, and the locus of political decisions, including those to do with crime control, moves up to the super-national level or down to regional and local levels. There is a reconfiguration of the responsibilities for crime control between government and civil society, between state and non-state actors, and between the public and private spheres (Crawford, 1997). The retreat from Keynesian economics goes together with the abandonment of ‘penal welfarism’ and the growth of popular punitiveness towards street crime (Garland, 2000).

The globalization of crime control is often thought to mark the decline of the nation-state or at least the need for it to pool sovereignty. But the opportunity to respond to organized crime and terrorism can also offer a way of (re)legitimating the nation-state and even of reversing neo-liberal policies. This can be seen in the American reply to the Al Qaeda attack on the centre of international finance in New York and military headquarters in Washington on 11 September 2001. The renationalization of airline security and the creation of the Department for Homeland Security are only two of the most obvious manifestations of the re-found central-ity of the federal state. On the Continent, crime has gained new salience as a social issue as compared to its well established role in elections in most English-speaking countries. The promise to provide greater security against crime and incivilities – which is connected, rightly or wrongly, with immigration – has been a crucial determinant of voting in national elections in Italy, France, Germany, Holland and Belgium. Holding prisons are being constructed for unwanted immigrants, and second-generation immigrants become targets for public order policing.

Much the same can be said for the way globalization is pushing the development of communications technologies. Technology plays an increasingly important part in facilitating crime, but it also has at least as much of a role in stopping it. New forms of information technology that construct flows and exchanges in cyberspace serve both as a support for crime and an environment for crime beyond boundaries. The Internet spreads knowledge of crime techniques and facilitates the possibilities for organizing or committing crimes (news reports concentrate on paedophilia, money laundering, terrorism, bomb making, violent racism and hate crimes or even hacking, but the major risk still arises from the age-old crimes of theft and fraud). As important though, the same technological progress that facilitates crime beyond boundaries can also be used for
purposes of crime control. Governments increase their surveillance of international traffic through ECHELON and other unaccountable forms of listening devices.

Cryptography is used by governments even more than by criminals. More and more criminals are traced through their incautious use of mobile phones. And the relatively few sites of child pornography offer an excuse for censorship of the many more sex sites (Wall, 2002). It is unclear how social control will develop in this area. The initial euphoria over the unregulated communal togetherness that could be created in virtual space has largely dissipated. But the possibilities for individuals to forge virtual relationships have certainly expanded and, in general, though these relationships may sometimes be abused or abusive, so-called ‘netizens’ bring with them their existing normative values rather than treat the net as a moral wilderness. We may also witness increasing examples of informal control and regulation by, in, and for the ‘virtual community’. As shown by the censorship imposed by countries like China, as well as the controversy over the revelations about high-level political communications on Wikileaks in 2010, where state interests are at stake we can expect ever more efforts to control what becomes public knowledge.

THE SPREADING OF GLOBALIZING CRIMINOLOGY

To what extent is a global ‘gaze’ on crime threats possible and is it desirable? How can such a perspective avoid the risks of ethnocentrism or relativism by which what purports to be global is in fact local? Images of American types of crime, and crime control, circulate ever more widely. ‘Miami Vice’ pistols are sold in Warsaw, the most violent slum in Abidjan is called Chicago, and so on. But the same applies to the influence of ways of talking about crime amongst the elites. Globalization appears to be helping to produce an increasingly administrative and technocratic approach to crime from which few experts seem willing to dissent. The 1990s saw a major campaign concerned with the menace of ex-communist transnational organized criminals, shared not only by sympathizers with the American secret services (who were in search of a new role) but even by leading critical sociologists such as Manuel Castells in his description of what he calls ‘The Perverse Connection; the Global Criminal Economy’ (Castells, 1998). In the 2000s, for mainstream writers this threat has been replaced with that from Muslim fundamentalists. But others place their stress on international war crimes or genocide (Hagan and Rymond-Richmond, 2008).
For many writers the key fact about globalization is the enormous opportunity it is creating for business and organized crime. Locally based criminal justice systems, it is said, struggle to keep up with this challenge and perhaps are always destined to be behind. There is a long list of so-called transnational crimes. These include terrorism, espionage, including industrial espionage, theft of intellectual property, fraud, criminal bankruptcy, infiltration of legal business, drugs and arms trafficking, aircraft hijacking, the international wholesaling of pornography and prostitution, smuggling and trade in children, women, immigrants, bodily organs, cultural artefacts, flora and fauna, nuclear materials and cars; counterfeiting, crimes related to computer technology, international fraud and other financial crimes, tax evasion, theft of art, antiques and other precious items, piracy, insurance fraud, crimes against the environment, trade in endangered species, and internationally coordinated racial violence. Radical conclusions are drawn from this challenge. The legal institutions of the world, it is claimed, are still bound to the nation-state but the forces of coercion are transnational; existing state-based legal systems therefore cannot protect citizens from the new authoritarian threat provided by transnational organized crime. According to this view the globalization of crime thrives on the inability of the criminal law to globalize.

Although they are given much less publicity, it is also possible to find some consideration of opposing concerns. The claim here is that police forces are in fact using these worries about transnational crime to forge non-democratically accountable alliances. America has long given a lead by exporting its war against drugs and terrorism, but the attempts by the European Union to organize police cooperation in the absence of European-wide parliamentary accountability is another good example. Even before the events of September 2001, European Community members individually and collectively had already developed a ‘fortress’ mentality. One author argues that it is by looking at the enforcement practices of the transnational law enforcement enterprise that we can best come to understand the political form of the emergent transnational world system (Sheptycki, 1995; see also Nadelmann, 1993; Anderson and De Boer, 1994).

For every set of activities aimed at controlling global threats there are two narratives that can be told. One stresses the noble fight of the state and/or NGOs to extend the scope and reach of human rights (e.g., Naim, 2005), the other the extent to which controllers selectively exploit the problems of given victim groups for their own interests (e.g., Van Schendel and Abraham, 2005; Nordstrom, 2007). Research shows that police forces reach their own consensus on the main categories of criminality that need to be pursued even though the criminal law has not been harmonized. The
powers and techniques demanded or taken in order to deal with the threat of major forms of organized crime often end up being used against more low-level or local forms of criminality (Sheptycki, 2002). Often they are adapted to keeping out those immigrants who in the present economic climate are once again assumed to be surplus to requirements. It is noticeable that illegal immigration is always now included alongside drugs and terrorism as a major threat against which ‘Fortress Europe’ needs to be defended.

But the effects of globalization on criminology (and vice versa) are not limited to the problem of international and transnational crime. Economic and political developments are also promoting a trend towards a European or even worldwide homogeneous understanding and control of more ordinary and conventional crimes such as mugging or burglary (Van Dijk, 2007). This ambition is not in itself unprecedented. Many criminologists have long believed that they were pursuing what was in principle a universalizable science. What is significant is the continuation of this endeavour even after the alleged discrediting of Enlightenment or Marxist meta-narratives of progress, when many practitioners of the social sciences have come instead to embrace ‘the interpretative turn’ towards cultural studies. Perhaps crime, like the discourse of rights or victimization with which it is, of course, connected, has assumed such prominence precisely because of the relative decline of more Utopian ideologies? Increasingly, human rights are promoted as (in more than one sense) universal panaceas in matters as different as corruption, gender violence and human trafficking (Merry, 2006; Nelken, 2010c, 2010d, 2011b).

An important example of globalizing criminology (and not only because of its auspices) is provided by the recently published United Nations’ sponsored global survey of crime and crime control (Newman, 1999). The survey displays impressive scope and ambition, offering not only to distil the ‘best practice’ implications of criminological research but also to summarize the results of an international victim survey of the views and experiences of no less than 155,000 victims in 54 countries. It starts out by seeking to prove that the crime problem is experienced more or less similarly everywhere. Worldwide, it says, opinion polls show the crime problem to be a concern second in importance only to unemployment. And – crucially – it argues that people are worrying about the same things. The evidence for this is found in an alleged worldwide ‘almost perfect correspondence in ranking of crimes’ as reflected in similar ideas about the seriousness of car theft, robbery with a weapon as compared to robbery without a weapon and so on (ibid., p. 28). Its vision for a (re)ordered world depends on this premise – what it calls ‘crime as a universal concept’.

This sort of globalizing criminology draws on the whole world for its
Globalization, crime and comparative criminal justice

data. We are told, for example, that ‘over a five-year period two out of three inhabitants in big cities will be victims of crime at least once’. Much the same explanations of crime, it is proposed, can be applied to both poor and rich countries – and this forms part of a determined effort to reappraise the link between crime and modernity. It used to be thought that a growth in levels of property crime was the inevitable price to be paid for modernization. But the UN report claims that the level of theft in less economically developed countries, especially in large towns, has been underestimated (because where people do not trust the police they report less). The report argues therefore that increasing the level of affluence in poorer countries would indeed lead to less crime. The exceptions are where rich and poor live alongside one another, or where affluence leads to more going out at night and hence, just as in more developed societies, increases the risk of exposure to crime. The message is mainly optimistic. In richer countries there is more violence than was thought and this is rising. But property crime is beginning to decline because the market for small consumer goods is saturated, and it is more difficult to move electrical items such as televisions that have now become larger. Crime is also being discouraged by privately arranged security (whereas developing countries have less money to pay for this).

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL POLICY

Without denying the value of the UN report as a ‘synthesis’ of knowledge about crime it is important to see how this sort of work seeks not only to document but also to produce ‘global facts’. Nothing is said about preventing the harms caused by the boardrooms of company directors or the practices of corrupt politicians. Even the apparently objective task of gathering comparative statistics without ulterior purpose can itself have an independent effect on systems of criminal justice (Von Hofer, 2003). But those responsible for organizing large-scale cross-national victim surveys also deliberately deploy their findings as much as a tool for achieving social change than as a search for understanding variability. The political goal, which is now seen to be applicable on a worldwide scale, is the need to increase the status of the victim and especially that of ‘repeat victims’. The views of victims are assumed to be not only the appropriate basis for determining how well police and other aspects of the criminal justice system are operating but also the measure of how they should be made to operate.

But there is a key ambiguity in the recommendations put forward by some globalizing criminologists (Newman, 1999; Van Dijk, 2000,
2007). On the one hand their arguments could be seen to strengthen the nation-state. After all, what is mandated is the universal introduction of the Western model of the criminal justice state. The appropriate way of dealing with crime is taken to be ‘policing plus prevention’, a well-organized mix of public policing public, private crime prevention and community initiatives. The global penal gaze offers a ‘top-down’ mixing of the older rehabilitative approach with more ‘state of the art’ advice about crime prevention. As the UN report puts it, ‘promoting social control and responsibility, investing in youth and family, breaking the cycle of violence, city action and innovative policing have become synonymous with best practice in crime reduction’ (Newman, 1999, p. 220). But although the report describes a range of projects that it is claimed will work effectively in reducing crime, there is strangely no discussion of the many reasonable sounding interventions that do not in fact work. Nor does it hint at the difficulties even the most economically developed societies have in organizing unbiased and effective methods of evaluation so as to be able to distinguish the one from the other.

As with other types of international aid efforts the impression given is that organizing an appropriate response to crime is much like setting up a successful health or road system. Perhaps because of the diplomatic requirements of United Nations sponsorship there is no discussion of the problem of state crime, or the participation or collusion of governments in the crimes of their citizens (Friedrichs, 1998; Cohen, 2001). There is also no acknowledgement of the ambiguous role of states in politically, ethnically, religiously or otherwise deeply divided societies. No allowance is made for the intensely political stakes in the construction of consensus for criminal justice interventions, whether, as in the past, against the ‘dangerous classes’, or, as now, against immigrants and ethnic minorities. Reading the UN report it is easy to forget that what is good for some may not be in everyone’s interest. Private sector involvement in crime prevention is seen as only a good thing. No problems are raised about potentially conflicting public and private interests, the danger that private security tends to go only to those who can pay for it, or that those who supply it may have a vested interest in increasing rather than reducing fear of crime.

On the other hand, and at the same time, there are many ways in which this sort of globalizing criminology potentially undermines the sovereignty of the state. The UN report speaks in the name of victims and their priorities for crime control rather than in terms of the state’s claim to monopoly authority as regulator of disputes. The state is not being encouraged to ‘govern through crime control’ but rather to improve its services to victims. More generally, the report presupposes that states need to accept the requirements of the United Nations as a supranational body.
and the universal criteria and standards it claims should be applied. The
use of criminology in the report is intended to make a given transnational
political programme seem natural and universal. As in the attempted
imposition of worldwide standards against under-age labour or sexual
exploitation many would consider the projects in themselves of value, even
if often unrealistic. But, whatever its good intentions, we need to recognize
that the globalizing penal gaze, like the related discourse of human rights,
is also part of a scheme of world governance.

Like so many purported examples of universally applicable ideas,
globalizing criminology presupposes Western (and even what are largely
Anglo-American) models of criminal justice and discourses of criminol-
ogy. But the USA and even Europe are hardly models of success when
it comes to crime control and these societies themselves have sometimes
looked to less economically developed ones for approaches to crime more
rooted in the community. There is much more to be done in learning
from the different forms taken by crime and crime control in other places
(Nelken, 1994, 2010a). To make progress in this direction we will need to
avoid the opposing errors of assuming either that other societies are – or
should be – necessarily like ours, or presupposing that they are – and
always will be – inherently different (Cain, 2000). Notwithstanding the
obstacles, this will also require the promotion of social policy as a dialogue
by which it is possible to listen to, and not only instruct, ‘the South’ (De
Souza Santos, 1995).

Many writers do see globalization as eroding the state’s monopoly over
criminal justice (Drake et al., 2009; Muncie et al., 2009), but it would
be premature to say that the nation-state has had its day as a source of
ordering (Loader and Walker, 2007). Nation-state boundaries typically
coincide with language and cultural differences and represent the source
of criminal law and criminal statistics. The imposition of a common legal
code and the common training of legal officials form part of attempts
to achieve and consolidate national identity. And ‘borders’ continue to
play important instrumental and symbolic roles, not least in responding
to immigration. On the one hand, sovereignty has become more difficult
to exert in fiscal matters. On the other, we have recently been seeing a
process of de-globalization after the economic crisis beginning in 2008
and national states were obliged to step in to avoid financial meltdown in
the markets. Even if we accept that the state is losing its centrality it does
not follow that what happens in the field of criminal justice necessarily
follows this general logic. The criminal law continues to be a powerful
icon of sovereign statehood and the state persists as a key site where the
insecurities and uncertainties brought about by (economic) globalization
are expected to be ‘resolved’. The state may ‘act out’ in responding to some
crime problems precisely because it has lost power elsewhere (Garland, 1996). For Waquant, likewise, neo-liberalism has gone together with the emergence of stronger states in the way they deal with the poor (Waquant, 2009a, 2009b; but see Nelken, 2010b)

Changing forms of social and economic exchange both reflect and produce changing forms of interdependence. If economic links and exchanges are now global we might expect there to be a ‘moral’ basis that makes this worldwide interdependence possible and that it furthers (Durkheim [1893] 1997). Hence globalization could contribute to a new international solidarity, as seen perhaps in the strengthening of international criminal justice, the increasing role of international human rights and the way that, by helping victims of human trafficking, as well as the victims of sex tourism abroad, nation-states are increasingly extending protections to non-nationals. On one view this increased protection for victims abroad could be taken as a sign of a broadened definition of who counts as a ‘neighbour’ – one result of the way television has made our conscience global. On another we might dismiss this as more of an emotional reaction to the health and other dangers represented by returning sex tourists. From a neo-Marxist perspective, globalized exchange is too often itself a form of disguised exploitation; businesses and others find ways to avoid of criminal penalties in the ‘space between the laws’ (Michalowski and Kramer, 1987), whilst international bodies impose neo-liberal recipes and financial straightjackets as the price for loans and assistance (Klein, 2008).

Globalization is thus best treated as a Janus-faced phenomenon whose effects are not easily classified as either ‘good’ or ‘bad’ – also because globalization can communicate the knowledge that can be used to help counteract its bad effects. According to Sally Merry, the application of global protocols to reduce violence against women gains in legitimacy insofar as it is not enforced by dominating (and colonialist) nation-states but rather emerges in a fragmentary international agreement as a result of attempts at mutual persuasion. But it still faces a number of conundrums. It is difficult to find a way of both respecting cultural differences and protect women from violence. For such agreements to be accepted locally their implications for changing the status quo must be carefully disguised or blunted. But international support depends on credible programmes for social change, and those governments and courts least able or willing to help protect women’s rights are those where such assistance is most needed (Merry, 2006).

We have seen in this chapter that the phenomenon of crime and the way it is studied are undergoing important changes in the context of globalization. But we have also emphasized that much talk about the globalization
of crime also serves ideological ends. In a world in which resources are distributed so unequally, the wealth and freedoms of the better off are – and, even more, are often seen to be – connected by action and inaction to exploitation and suffering elsewhere. The current focus on the world threat from terrorism is only the latest example of how talk of the globalization of crime tries to conceal this. Some time ago one astute commentator prophesied that international terrorism would take the place of human rights as a central concern because terrorism can be presented as the ultimate abuse of human rights (Gearty, 1996, p. xviii). If we are trying to make the world safe for all we need to ask, against whom? Globalizing criminology is above all trying to make the world safe for the ways of life of advanced capitalist societies – so we need to ask, safe to do what? In practice, whether or not this is acknowledged, the struggle against crime at the international, national, subnational or local level regularly overlaps with the attempt to maintain privilege and tame diversity.

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