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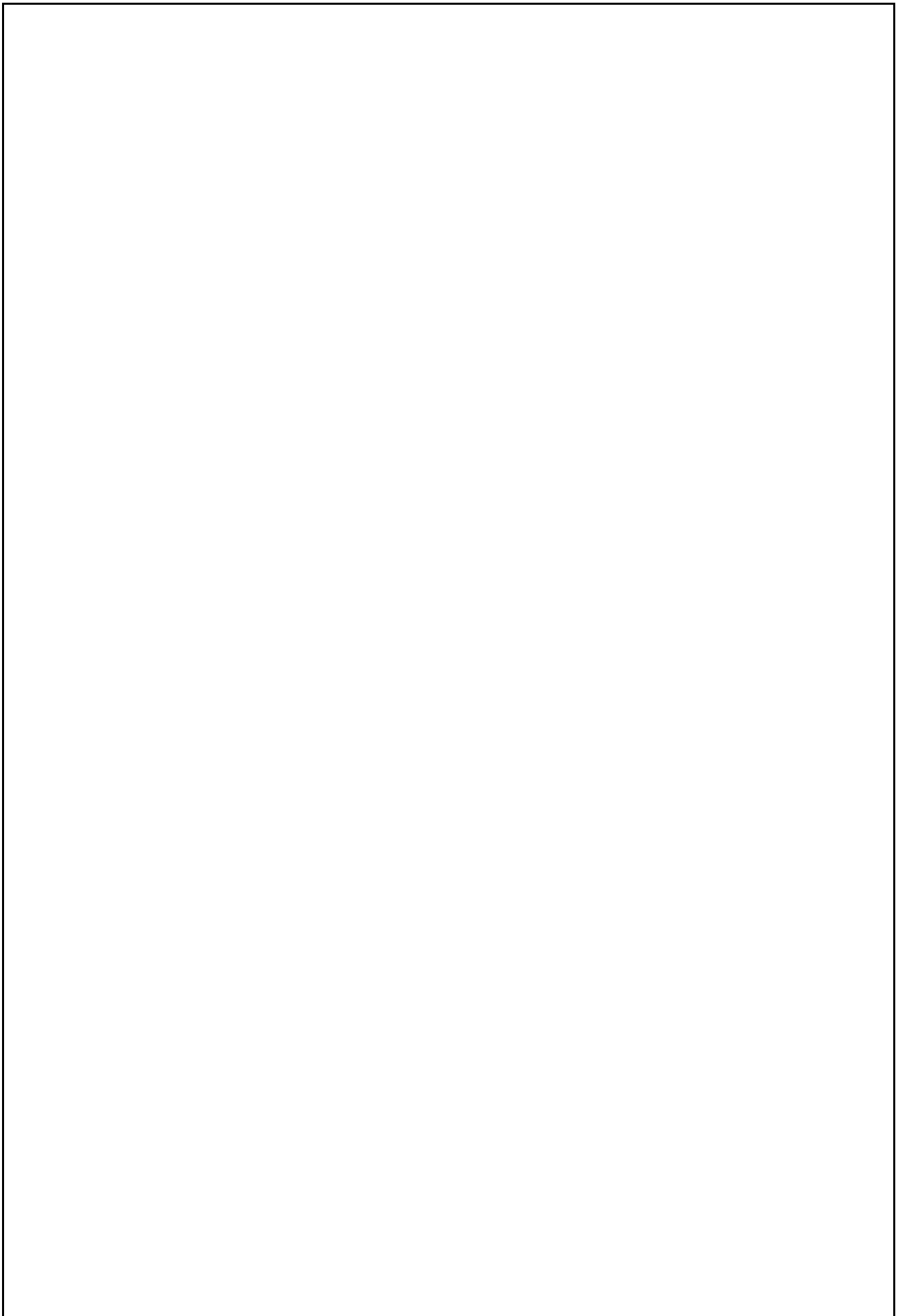
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## **FEMINIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THOMAS HOBBS: A RESPONSE TO CAROLE PATEMAN AND SUSAN OKIN<sup>1</sup>**

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### ***Abstract***

*Thomas Hobbes is an exception among early political scientists in his affirmation of gender equality. Carole Pateman and Susan Okin acknowledge this but maintain that, in the final analysis, his gender egalitarianism is disingenuous. There is certainly cause for suspicion. The history of political theory is replete with misogyny, and even theories that purport to be more egalitarian have had their sexist tendencies exposed on analysis. Such criticisms of Hobbes, however, are misplaced. In this essay, I explore the feminist possibilities in Hobbes's work, and argue that his affirmation of gender equality should be taken seriously. Far from reinforcing patriarchal relations, Hobbesian political theory demands a robust and substantive form of gender equality.*

### **1. Introduction**

Thomas Hobbes is an exception among early contract theorists in his ostensible affirmation of gender equality.<sup>2</sup> Carole Pateman and Susan Okin acknowledge this, but maintain that Hobbesian gender equality is, in the final analysis, a chimera. Okin claims that Hobbes excludes women from political life, and “[assumes] the necessity for male dominance in both the family and society at large.”<sup>3</sup> Carole Pateman is similarly critical: “In the natural state all women become servants, and all women are excluded from the original pact, that is to say all women are also excluded from becoming civil individuals. No woman is a free subject.”<sup>4</sup>

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1 I would like to thank Professors Rebecca Kingston and Joseph Carens for reading earlier drafts of this essay, as well as an anonymous reviewer. My greatest debt is owed to Melissa Rhodes, whose assistance and patience have been invaluable.

2 Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1988), 5-6.

3 Susan Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979), 199.

4 Pateman, *Sexual Contract*, 50.

They skillfully advance this thesis with respect to many thinkers, past and present. In the case of Hobbes, however, their criticisms are misplaced. This essay will argue that Hobbes's political theory does not exclude or subordinate women as Pateman and Okin claim. Their conclusions are based on the failure to appreciate the gender inclusiveness of Hobbes's language, as well as misinterpretations of his state of nature narrative, the basis of equality, and the nature of the person. Reinterpreting these concepts allows for a rereading of Hobbes as a proponent of substantive gender equality.

I begin by defining what I mean by "gender equality," and outlining the reasons Pateman and Okin have for denying that Hobbes is a gender egalitarian (Section 2). The three subsequent sections respond to this critique. Section 3 argues against the claim that Hobbes's use of masculine nouns and pronouns excludes women. Section 4 broadens the argument: Hobbesian gender equality is meaningful, not merely linguistic or hopelessly abstract. The final section will develop a more robust account, arguing that Hobbesian gender equality is substantive, capable of recognizing and accommodating differences between men and women in ways that maintain or promote equality. In other words, *women's equality to men* is not contingent upon *similarity to men*.

## **2. Hobbesian Gender Equality and the Feminist Critique**

For the purposes of this essay, when I refer to Hobbes as a "gender egalitarian," or say that he believes in "gender equality," I mean that his claims about the equality, liberty and rights of *men* also apply to *women* in the same way, and to the same extent. For Hobbes, gender and biological sex are not categories that affect one's moral, political, or social status. Many theorists think that this formal equality is the limit of Hobbesian equality. When merely formal equality is a standard of justice, *equal treatment* may fail to respect individuals *as equals* in any meaningful way.<sup>5</sup> This becomes problematic insofar as it involves

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<sup>5</sup> For example, see Ronald Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985); Jeremy Dworkin, *God, Locke and Equality* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Susan Okin, *Justice*

“treat[ing] unequals as if they were equals” which, as Okin notes, “has long been recognized as an obvious instance of injustice.”<sup>6</sup> The “equal treatment” of men and women can be unjust if a male standard is accepted as normal or natural.<sup>7</sup> I believe that Hobbesian theory recognizes this type of injustice as injustice. It recognizes the relevance of differences—including the differences between men and women—and takes them into account in ways that establish or restore equality. The principle of equality has priority, and insofar as this is the case, Hobbesian equality is *substantive*, not merely formal.

Both Pateman and Okin acknowledge that Hobbes is unique insofar as he posits all human beings as equal, regardless of their sex or gender.<sup>8</sup> In *Leviathan*, he claims that equality is “the natural condition of mankind.”<sup>9</sup>

Nature hath made men so equal in the faculties of body and mind, as that, though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body or of quicker mind than another, yet when all is reckoned together the difference between man and man is not so considerable as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend as well as he. For as to the strength of the body, the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination or by confederacy with others that are in the same danger with himself.<sup>10</sup>

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*Gender and the Family* (New York, Basic Books, 1989). One 20th century example would be the American Supreme Court’s infamous *Geduldig v. Aiello* decision, where the court majority found no discrimination between men and women (which would be unconstitutional), only the unproblematic discrimination between “pregnant women and non-pregnant persons.” See *Geduldig v. Aiello*, 417 U.S. 484 (1974).

6 Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family*, 161-162.

7 Okin, *Justice Gender and the Family*, 10-11. Catherine MacKinnon, “Legal Perspectives on Sexual Difference” in *Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference*, edited by Deborah Rhode. (Binghamton NY, Vail-Ballou Press, 1990).

8 Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 5-6; Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 197-198.

9 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, edited by Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), xiii, 1ff. I follow Curley’s citation method and use chapter and paragraph numbers (in Roman and Arabic numerals respectively).

10 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 1. He goes on to say that men are even more equal when it comes to “the faculties of the mind,” since everyone thinks they are smarter than everyone else, and “there is not ordinarily



The state of nature he envisions includes women on the same terms as men; a fact made evident in his discussion of parental authority:

And whereas some have attributed the dominion [over children] to the man only, as being of the more excellent sex, they misreckon in it. For there is not always that difference of strength or prudence between the man and the woman as that the right can be determined without war.<sup>11</sup>

Pateman and Okin believe that this equality only obtains during the earliest stages of the state of nature; soon afterwards, patriarchy is firmly established. Women are not parties to the original contract and are, as a consequence, subordinate to men in civil society. To support this position they point to Hobbes's use of masculine terms; they also identify the structure of his theory, the logic of his state of nature narrative, and the practical reality of women's subordination to men as further evidence.

### **3. Masculine Language and the Inclusion of Women**

Both Okin and Pateman point to Hobbes's use of masculine terms as evidence that his theory applies to males in particular, not human beings in general. Okin in particular is suspicious of the claim that terms like "he" in canonical works of political philosophy are meant to include both men and women.<sup>12</sup> She calls Hobbes's references to female sovereigns mere "lip service," and accuses him of "present[ing] the family as a strictly and solely patriarchal institution" by nature, without explanation or justification. Any gender-egalitarian claims are contradicted by the rest of his theory, and are presented as merely logical

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a greater sign of the equal distribution of anything than that every man is contented with his share" (*Leviathan*, xiii, 2).

11 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4. A nearly identical passage appears in *De Cive*, 108.

12 Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 5ff. She is extremely critical of contemporary theorists who use ostensibly gender-neutral language without addressing the past and present inequalities between men and women. See Okin, *Justice Gender and the Family*, 10-11.

possibilities.<sup>13</sup> Pateman also dismisses Hobbes's recognition of female sovereigns as a merely logical possibility.<sup>14</sup> In *The Sexual Contract* she writes: "the sovereign is *very unlikely* to be the mother, given his references to 'man' and 'father' and the necessity of securing patriarchal right in civil society."<sup>15</sup> She goes even further in another essay: "[T]he sovereign *cannot* be the mother, given the conjectural history of the origin of the family implicit in Hobbes's argument."<sup>16</sup>

These criticisms are not entirely fair. Though Hobbes (for the most part) writes about *men*, there is reason to believe that *women* are included implicitly. This is suggested by his background assumptions about language, which he explicates in the first part of *Leviathan*:

Of names, some are *proper*, and singular to one only thing, as *Peter, John, this man, this tree*; and some are *common* to many things, as *man, horse, tree*, every of which, though but one name, is nevertheless the name of diverse particular things, in respect of which together it is called an *universal*, there being nothing in the world universal but names; for the things named are every one of them individual and singular.<sup>17</sup>

To say that the word "man," like "horse," is a name "common to many things," suggests that "man" refers to the entire species—i.e., males and females—just as "horse" refers to both male and

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13 Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198-199: "In *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, after a certain amount of lip service has been paid to the idea that the mother or father might logically be the family's sovereign, toward the end of the pertinent chapter of each of these works—though he has provided no reasonable foundation for it at all—Hobbes proceeds to present the family as a strictly and solely patriarchal institution. He says, in fact, that a family consists of 'a man and his children; or a man and his servants; or of a man and his children and his servants together, wherein the father or master is sovereign.'"

14 Carole Pateman, "'God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper': Hobbes, Patriarchy, and Conjugal Right" in *Feminist Interpretations and Political Theory*, edited by Carole Pateman and Mary Shanley (University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 66.

15 Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 47. Emphasis Added.

16 Pateman, "God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper," 63. Emphasis added. The "conjectural history" Pateman refers to will be discussed in greater detail below.

17 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, iv, 6.

female horses. Hobbes's use of the word in *De Cive* confirms this interpretation:

Socrates is a man, therefore also an animal, is valid reasoning and utterly evident, since all that one needs, to recognize the truth of the conclusion, is to understand the word *man*, because *animal* is in the definition of *man*; and everyone supplies the missing proposition, *man is an animal*. *Sophrosonicus is the father of Socrates, therefore also his Master [Dominus]* is also perhaps a valid inference, but not totally evident, because *Master* is not in the definition of *father*.<sup>18</sup>

Master is not in the definition of father. This can only be true if "master" is also excluded from the definition of "man," or, more specifically, "male human being." Fathers can be masters; but Hobbes also claims that mothers can be masters over children and adult men.<sup>19</sup> Mastery is not contingent upon sex or gender.

The inclusiveness of the term "man" in the quote above is even clearer in Latin, the language in which the above passage was first published.<sup>20</sup> Latin contains several words for "man." In the above passage, Hobbes uses the most inclusive: *homo*. "*Socrates est homo*."<sup>21</sup> "*Homo*" can mean *mankind, human being, person or fellow*; it can also simply refer to *one, oneness, sameness* (e.g., as in *homogenous, homologue, homonym, or homosexual*). Over time, as the romance languages evolved, the word came to refer to males exclusively, e.g., the French *hommes* or Spanish *hombres*. The English translators of *De Cive* have followed similar conventions. For example: "All men, therefore among themselves

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18 Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, edited by Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 107. [Referred to henceforth as *De Cive*].

19 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4-7.

20 The first publication of *Leviathan* was in English in 1651. The first Latin edition followed in 1668. Parts of the Latin *Leviathan* may have been written before the English version. See Edwin Curley, "Purposes and Features of This Edition", in *Leviathan*, pages lxxiii-lxxvi.

21 Thomas Hobbes, *De Cive: The Latin Version Entitled in the First Edition Elementorum Philosophiae Sectio Tertia De Cive*, and in Later Editions *Elementa Philosophica De Cive*, edited by Howard Warrender (Oxford [Oxfordshire]: Clarendon Press, 1983), 164.

are by nature equal.”<sup>22</sup> In Latin the phrase reads: “*Sunt igitur omnes homines natura inter se equales.*”<sup>23</sup> The term used is “*homines*,” a variant of the word “*homo*.” Though Hobbes uses the Latin “*homo*” and its variations most often, he uses gender specific words in the appropriate contexts. Below are two examples of Latin passages and their English translations.

**Table 1. English and Latin Terms<sup>24</sup>**

<i>English</i>	<i>Latin</i>
“...in the state of nature, if a <b>man</b> and a <b>woman</b> contract so...”	“Creterum in stat natura, isguidem <b>mas</b> & <b>foemina</b> societatum contrahant...”
“...the legitimate contract of a <b>man</b> and a <b>woman</b> ...”	“Tantum dico, <b>vir</b> & <b>mulieris</b> ad contractum legitimum...”

We can see here the words “*foemina*” and “*mulieris*” refer to females, while “*mas*” and “*vir*” refer to males. The significance of these passages lies in the fact that Hobbes distinguishes both males *and* females from generic human beings, avoiding the more common practice of only differentiating women from men; viewing men as prototypical “persons.”<sup>25</sup>

Though English does not express these distinctions as well as Latin, Hobbes often uses masculine nouns and pronouns to refer to males *and* females. For example, consider his discussion of inadmissible testimony:

[T]he accusation of those by whose condemnation a man falls into misery (as, of a father, wife, or benefactor) [is also inadmissible]. For the testimony of such an accuser, if it be not willingly given, is presumed to be corrupted by nature, and therefore not to be received; and where a

22 Hobbes, *De Cive*, 45.

23 Hobbes, *De Cive: The Latin Version*, 93.

24 See Hobbes, *De Cive*, 123, 102; and Hobbes, *De Cive: The Latin Version*, 166, 146. Emphasis in **boldface type** added.

25 This practice continues in many ways today. Consider the third person plural in French. “Ils” can refer to a group of males, or to a group of males and females, even if there is only one man among countless females. The feminine form “elles” is reserved for females exclusively.

man's testimony is not to be credited, he is not bound to give it.<sup>26</sup>

The term "man" appears in the above passage twice. In the first sentence, the word "man" is not specified further; it could refer exclusively to adult human males. The second sentence, however, refers to "a man's testimony" but lists "a father, wife, or benefactor" as "men" who, under certain circumstances, should not be asked to testify.<sup>27</sup> The term "wife" applies to women unambiguously. A "benefactor" can also be male or female (a fact that would not have been lost on Hobbes given that many patrons of the Enlightenment were wealthy women, including, for a time, his employer).<sup>28</sup>

Yet another example of Hobbes using masculine subject pronouns to refer to women is found in his discussion of childrearing and parental authority:

[S]eeing the infant is first in the power of the mother, so as she may either nourish or expose it, if she nourish it, it oweth its life to the mother, and is therefore obliged to obey her rather than any other, and by consequence the dominion over it is hers. But if she expose it, and another find and nourish it, the dominion is in him that nourisheth it. For it ought to obey him by whom it is preserved, because preservation of life being the end for which one man becomes subject to another, every man is supposed to promise obedience to him in whose power it is to save or destroy him.<sup>29</sup>

Dominion over a child belongs to "him that nourisheth it," but the "him" in question is, more often than not, the child's birth

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26 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiv, 30.

27 I want to thank an anonymous reviewer for clarifying my understanding of this passage.

28 Hobbes had a life-long association with the Cavendish family. At one point Hobbes's master was Christian Cavendish, who inherited her husband's estate upon his death. She proved herself to be an adept manager of the estate, and was involved in political intrigues of the day. For more information see Thomas Hobbes, "Biographical Register of Correspondents" in *The Correspondence of Thomas Hobbes*, edited by Noel Malcolm, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997), 806-810.

29 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 5.

mother, who is necessarily female.<sup>30</sup> Hobbes's preliminary comments on language and his use of Latin suggest a gender inclusive mindset. This suspicion is confirmed insofar as he does in fact use masculine nouns and pronouns in ways that include women. This should not be regarded as an inconsistency or error on Hobbes's part. He acknowledges the gender inclusiveness of masculine terms directly: "though *man* be *male* and *female*, authority is not."<sup>31</sup>

#### **4. Hobbesian Gender Equality is not Merely Linguistic**

The extent and weight of the evidence strongly suggests that Hobbes has both males and females in mind when he makes his more general statements about the equality of "men." This alone distinguishes Hobbes from most other figures in the western philosophical tradition, but merely linguistic gender equality would be blind to most forms of gender-related injustice. Indeed, Okin is extremely critical of contemporary theorists who use ostensibly gender-neutral language without addressing the past and present inequalities between men and women.<sup>32</sup>

[T]he gender neutral alternatives that most contemporary theorists employ are often even more misleading than the blatantly sexist use of male terms of

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30 Notwithstanding biological ambiguities and possibilities.

31 Thomas Hobbes, "Considerations Upon the Reputation, Loyalty, Manners, and Religion of Thomas Hobbes" in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmsbury*, Vol 4. Edited by William Molesworth (London, John Bohn, 1840), 434. I doubt that this is an idiosyncrasy on Hobbes's part. Yet another example of Hobbes using masculine terms in an inclusive way is found in a biblical reference, in which the only humans that could be referred to are Adam and Eve: "The first reproach God made to men is (v.11): who told you you were naked unless you have eaten of the tree of which I told you not to eat?" (Hobbes, *De Cive*, 132). The gender inclusiveness of Hobbes is consistent with the Bible itself: "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:26-28 King James Version). Since beginning work on this essay I have noticed this more and more. For example, in Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, a doctor who has been asked if he can treat the distressed and somnambulant Lady Macbeth says that in cases such as hers "the patient must minister to himself" (Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V, iii, 40-47. Emphasis added). Jeremy Waldron has emphasized the gender-inclusiveness of terms like "man" in the work of John Locke. See Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality*, chapter 2, esp. pp. 24-25.

32 Okin, *Justice Gender and the Family*, 10-13. She calls this strategy "false gender equality."

reference. For they serve to disguise the real and continuing failure of theorists to confront the fact that the human race consists of persons of two sexes. They are by this means able to ignore the fact that there are *some* socially relevant physical differences between women and men, and the even more important fact that the sexes have had very different histories, very different assigned social roles and "natures," and very different degrees of access to power and opportunity in all human societies up to and including the present.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps Hobbes is ahead of his time only insofar as the sexist aspects of his theory are more covert. As noted above, Pateman and Okin believe that his inclusion of women is illusory: it operates only at a high level of abstraction, as a merely logical possibility.<sup>34</sup>

This claim is hard to maintain given Hobbes's conventionalism, which seems to anticipate feminist arguments that would be made in the decades and centuries after his death. To use 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century language, Hobbes believes that the differences and inequalities between men and women are "socially constructed." For example, he describes apparently natural differences between men and women in terms of conditions, and conditioning. Consider his discussion of "weeping":

Weeping...is caused by such accidents as suddenly take away some vehement hope, or some prop of their power; and they are most subject to it that rely principally on helps external, such as are women and children.<sup>35</sup>

Hobbes does not claim that women are innately more emotional and prone to weeping than men; he explains any appearance to that effect with reference to social circumstances. If women and children weep more than adult men, it is because they are more likely to experience the social conditions that occasion weeping.

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33 Okin, *Justice Gender and the Family*, 10.

34 Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198-199. See also Pateman, "God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper," 66.

35 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, vi, 43.

No doubt the proneness to weeping described by Hobbes would be less evident among women warriors or rulers; women who do not rely as much on external help.

Further evidence is found in his discussion of military service. Hobbes claims that women are not expected to participate in military service on account of a "natural timorousness" that can also apply to men.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, there are times when no exceptions or exemptions from military service are permitted "when the defence of the commonwealth requireth at once the help of all that are able to bear arms, everyone is obliged [to fight]."<sup>37</sup> "Everyone" here must include women, given: (a) the gender inclusiveness of the term "everyone;" (b) the gender inclusiveness of Hobbes's language;<sup>38</sup> and (c) Hobbes's belief that warfare and violence were not the exclusive province of men.<sup>39</sup> Convention, not nature, determines whether or not women fight.

Hobbes even believes that the structure of the family itself is contingent rather than natural; genealogical facts do not define the family. He defines family relations in terms of contracts, which, as Pateman emphasizes, are structured by power relations.<sup>40</sup> Sex and gender are not, *qua* sex and gender, relevant. A family in its entirety may even be comprised of men exclusively, or of women exclusively.<sup>41</sup> The family's sovereign can be male or female.<sup>42</sup> Civil law determines the family structure and

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36 "...a man that is commanded as a soldier to fight against the enemy, though his sovereign may have right enough to punish his refusal with death, may nevertheless in many cases refuse without injustice...And there is allowance to be made for natural timorousness, not only to women (of whom no such dangerous duty is expected), but also to men of feminine courage" (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxi, 16). It is likely that Hobbes included himself among the "men of feminine courage." See Hobbes, *Leviathan* edited by C.B. Macpherson (New York, Penguin USA, 1993), 13.

37 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxi, 16.

38 See Section 3 (above).

39 E.g., Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4; *De Cive*, 108. His discussion of the Amazons will be discussed in more detail below.

40 Pateman, *Sexual Contract*, 47-49.

41 A family may be limited to "a man and his servants." His discussion of the Amazons assumes the existence (and hence possibility) of an all-female society. See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4, 15. Cf. Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198 and Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 47.

42 e.g., Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4-8.



any related inequalities between men and women.<sup>43</sup> This is exactly what we should expect given what Hobbes says about the equality of *men*—which is to say, male and female human beings—are conventional, not natural.<sup>44</sup>

That these possibilities are not merely logical is demonstrated by Hobbes's use of concrete examples. One of the most striking examples is found in his references to the *Amazons*, whom he considered an actual historical (rather than a mythological) group. In *De Cive* he writes that: "*women*, in the person of the *Amazons*, did at one time wage wars against their enemies and handled their offspring as they pleased."<sup>45</sup> In *Leviathan* he continues to emphasize the importance of this example.<sup>46</sup> Known as "man-slayers," they waged wars and were often victorious. Nevertheless, according to some ancient Greek sources, they would marry men, and sometimes lived with men as equals or superiors.<sup>47</sup> Hobbes's *Amazons* likely experienced inequality, but it was not defined in terms of sex or gender.

Hobbes does not limit himself to ancient and mythological examples. He makes reference to contemporary female sovereigns when he claims that a woman may be sovereign over her family or commonwealth.<sup>48</sup> "There are," he asserts, "several places today where women have *sovereign power*."<sup>49</sup> It is worth

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43 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4.

44 "The inequality that now is, has been introduced by the laws civil." Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xv, 21. See also *De Cive*, 26.

45 Hobbes, *De Cive*, 108.

46 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4.

47 Herodotus, *The History of Herodotus* Volume 3, edited by George Rawlinson (New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1875), 79 ff. (I confess that my knowledge of the Amazon myth is extremely limited).

48 See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 254 and *De Cive*, 109. His reasoning is similar to Mary Astell's in 1700: "If they mean that some Men are superior to some women, this is no great discovery; had they turned the tables, they might have seen that some women are superior to some men. Or had they been pleased to remember their oaths of allegiance and supremacy they might have known that One woman is Superior to all men in these nations, or else they have sworn to very little purpose." See Mary Astell, "Some Reflections on Marriage" in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, edited by Isaac Kramnick (Toronto, Penguin Books, 1995), 561.

49 Hobbes, *De Cive*, 108. Fathers are typically granted power over their children, "but not always" (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4).

remembering that, by the time the young Hobbes began his studies at Oxford, England had been ruled by sovereign Queens for 50 years.<sup>50</sup>

One might object by arguing that the example of female monarchs evinces an extremely limited form of gender equality. The sovereign is not party to the social contract and is in a state of nature with the members of the commonwealth.<sup>51</sup> Because their power is absolute,<sup>52</sup> the inequality between sovereign and subject transcends any inequalities between subjects:

The inequality of subjects proceedeth from the acts of sovereign power, and therefore has no more place in the presence of the sovereign (that is to say, in a court of justice) than the inequality between kings and their subjects, in the presence of the King of kings.<sup>53</sup>

In other words, gender may structure inequalities between subjects, even though it does not affect the sovereign's authority.<sup>54</sup> The existence of a female sovereign would not, therefore, contradict Pateman or Okin, who (a) acknowledge Hobbes's claim that women are equal in the state of nature, and (b) argue that women are not party to the social contract.

## 5. From Formal to Substantive Equality

Though the case of the sovereign (in particular a sovereign queen) is exceptional, Hobbes's use of this example reinforces his point that inequality is due to convention, not nature. If women

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50 Lady Jane Grey, Mary I of England (not to be confused with her contemporary, Mary I of Scotland, "Queen of Scots"), and Elizabeth I. We should not conclude that any of Hobbes's affirmations of gender equality were intended to ingratiate himself to the powers-that-be for at least two reasons: (1) executive power in England was in the hands of men during all of Hobbes's adult life; and (2) Hobbes would often publish his ideas, though they would incur the ire of the authorities. See Edward Curley, "Introduction to Hobbes's *Leviathan*" in Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, edited by Edward Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), pages viii-lxxvi.

51 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xviii, 4.

52 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xviii, 1ff and xxiv, 6.

53 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxx, 16.

54 Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for bringing this issue to my attention.

were naturally inferior to men, a female sovereign could not be absolutely superior to all of her subjects, if any of her subjects are men. A more serious objection would concede that Hobbes's theory allows for (some) women to be equal or superior to (some) men, but only insofar as they are similar to men. Though it allows for the inclusion and formal equality of women, the theory remains gendered: structured in ways that unfairly favour (most) men at the expense of (most) women.<sup>55</sup> According to Catharine Mackinnon, this is the way our world is actually structured:

Men's physiology defines most sports, their health needs largely define insurance coverage, their socially designed biographies define workplace expectations [...] their military service defines citizenship, their presence defines the family [...] their image defines god, and their genitals define sex.<sup>56</sup>

Even if a natural equality between persons is presupposed, the hierarchy that such a presupposition hopes to avoid can still exist if the particular characteristics of a particular group are treated as universal standards by which all persons are judged. To use one of MacKinnon's examples (above): if excellence in a particular sport is defined in terms of male physiology, then a woman's success in that sport will depend on how similar her physiology is to a man's. Given the differences between male and female physiology, more men than women will "succeed," even if the rules do not explicitly favor men over women. The rules themselves are what MacKinnon calls into question.

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55 Concepts can be called "gendered" if: "lacking any obvious reference to males or females, or to masculinity and femininity, nevertheless are formulated in such a way that their neutral quality and universal applicability are questionable." Carolyn Korsmeyer, quoted in Cynthia A. Freeland, "On Irigaray on Aristotle," in *Feminist Interpretations of Aristotle* (University Park: Penn State Press, 1998), 65.

56 Catharine Mackinnon, "Legal Perspectives on Sexual Difference" in *Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference*, edited by Deborah Rhode (Binghamton, Vail-Ballou Press, 1990), 219.

Hobbes seems vulnerable to this criticism. Sovereign queens have to be similar to sovereign kings.<sup>57</sup> The *Amazons* are an even more striking case: it was said that the *Amazon* woman would cut off her right breast to better facilitate the use of a bow and arrow. (The word "amazon" descends from a Greek word meaning "without breasts" or "breastless"). Thankfully, Hobbesian gender equality need not be purchased at such a high price. Okin and Pateman's disagreement is due to their misinterpretation of three important ideas: the state of nature narrative, the basis of Hobbesian equality and the nature of Hobbesian "persons."

Pateman and Okin view Hobbes's state of nature anthropologically, as a stage in human development that some (but not all) societies have passed through, and which Hobbes posits in an attempt to explain and justify the status quo.<sup>58</sup> The claim that the civil law tends to grant fathers dominion over children because, "for the most part, commonwealths have been erected by the fathers, not the mothers of families"<sup>59</sup> is interpreted as a *justification*.<sup>60</sup> But Hobbes's project is not to justify existing regimes as the result of fair historical processes. Indeed, he claims that "there is scarce a commonwealth in the world whose beginnings can in conscience be justified."<sup>61</sup> As a strictly empirical account, the state of nature narrative is found wanting. It does not adequately account for children, for example.<sup>62</sup> Nor does Hobbes reconcile his claim that women are the first masters in the state of nature with the reality of female subordination.<sup>63</sup> Pateman creates a "conjectural history," that

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57 Male and female monarchs must be similar to his ideal sovereign: the all-powerful *Leviathan*. The term "*Leviathan*" evokes an image of monstrous indestructibility; a power above and beyond all others in society. See Job 41:1-34. King James Version.

58 Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198; Pateman, *Sexual Contract*, and "God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper."

59 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4.

60 Okin claims that Hobbes needs "to justify the prevalent rule of fathers over their families within commonwealths." Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198. Cf. Pateman, "God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper," 70.

61 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, R&C, 8.

62 Pateman, *Sexual Contract*, 46, 48. Cf. Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 110, 198-199.

63 Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198. See also Pateman, "God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper," 63.

modifies the state of nature narrative to explain contemporary female subordination.<sup>64</sup> All of this suggests an interpretation of the state of nature narrative as something historical, anthropological, and empirical. I believe that such an interpretation is misguided.

A literal interpretation of the state of nature is not unreasonable. It is suggested by the text. To make the image of his state of nature seem plausible, Hobbes appeals to the Americas as a place where humans live “with no government at all.”<sup>65</sup> But it is important to bear in mind that his inquiry is into the commonwealth’s “matter, form, and power”—not its origins. He denies that there was ever a state of nature across the entire world.<sup>66</sup> And the “new world” is only one of several illustrative examples. More often, Hobbes refers to the contemporary European context: the state of nature is clearly seen in cases where stable government gives way to civil war.<sup>67</sup> It is also the constant state of international relations,<sup>68</sup> meaning that his statements about men and women contracting in the state of nature are not merely conjectural; such contracts did in fact occur between male and female monarchs.<sup>69,70</sup>

For these reasons I believe that the Hobbesian state of nature and social contract are best viewed as “device[s] of representation” (in John Rawls’s sense of the term).<sup>71</sup> Rawls viewed his hypothetical contract as an “expository device”<sup>72</sup> or “device of representation.” It is useful “for the purpose of self-

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64 Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 49.

65 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 11.

66 “It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time nor condition of war as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world” (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 11).

67 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 11. *Leviathan* was published shortly after the English Civil War. See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Appendix, Chapter III, 538-539.

68 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 12.

69 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 7. See the editor’s footnote.

70 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 10.

71 John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: a Restatement* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2001), 17.

72 Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 19.

clarification" (insofar as it models certain beliefs or intuitions).<sup>73</sup> Hobbes's state of nature models his intuition that peace and security are impossible, unless people are governed by a "power able to over-awe them all."<sup>74</sup> From this foundation, he develops and defends a very specific set of normative requirements, which he calls "the laws of nature": rules that can be agreed upon in order to avoid the war of all against all.<sup>75</sup> These rules appeal, first and foremost, to the concept of equality.

Pateman and Okin also misinterpret the basis of Hobbesian equality, believing it to be an empirical equality based on "the equal ability to kill."<sup>76</sup> This mainstream interpretation<sup>77</sup> is plausible given some of Hobbes's own words. He claims that "the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest"<sup>78</sup> and that humans share an "equality of ability" in that respect.<sup>79</sup> Yet there is a sense in which this is clearly untrue. Some individuals are *more* able to kill than others. There is equality only insofar as the dead—strong or weak, young or old, rich or poor, male or female—are *equally dead*.<sup>80</sup> To achieve the same result, the weak require more allies and/or subterfuge than the strong).<sup>81</sup>

The claim that everyone is equal by nature becomes more plausible if we emphasize not *equal ability* (to kill) but *equal*

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73 Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, 17: "First, it models what we regard—here and now—as fair conditions under which the representatives of citizens, viewed solely as free and equal persons, are to agree to the fair terms of cooperation whereby the basic structure is to be regulated. Second, it models what we regard—here and now—as acceptable restrictions on the reasons on the basis of which the parties, situated in fair conditions, may properly put forward certain principles of political justice and reject others."

74 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 5. See also xiii, 8.

75 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii-xv.

76 Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, 198. See also Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 44-45.

77 "To cite a standard philosophical judgment, equality for Hobbes is really equality of 'threat advantage' (we can all threaten one another equally)". Carole Pateman and Charles W. Mills, *Contract and Domination* (Malden MA, Polity Press, 2007), 27.

78 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 1.

79 e.g., "From this equality of ability ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends" (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 4).

80 Hobbes also believes that each person values their own life as much as any other. One's own life is "equally dear to poor and rich." Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxx, 17.

81 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 1.

*vulnerability* (to be killed). The preservation of life is paramount for Hobbes. His “right of nature” is the right to preserve one’s own life, and his “laws of nature” work toward that end, in part by demanding the preservation of the lives of others.<sup>82</sup> Hobbesian equality ultimately rests upon an equality of *disability*: no one is able to live with complete security; no one is immortal. From this equality of disability, Hobbes derives an equality of *right*: “[No man may] claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend as well as he.”<sup>83</sup>

There is no pre-social or pre-political hierarchy in the state of nature. This starting point is one of absolute equality of right—an equality that should be maintained in civil society.

If nature therefore hath made men equal, that quality is to be acknowledged; or if nature have made men unequal, yet because men that think themselves equal will not enter into conditions of peace but upon equal terms, such equality must be admitted. And therefore for the ninth law of nature, I put this, *that every man acknowledge other [sic] for his equal by nature*. The breach of this precept is *pride*.<sup>84</sup>

One must not act as if they are above anyone else. Nor can one act as if others are beneath them. (The eighth law of nature proscribes words or actions that signal *contempt*).<sup>85</sup> Differences between individuals (e.g., the differences between males and females) do not in themselves justify inequality, even if they occasion actual inequality.

This suggests that Hobbes’s theory does not, as Pateman claims, justify unequal contracts based on the consent (of women)

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82 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiv, 1ff.

83 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 1. The equality of mental ability is also a reason for this equality of right.

84 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xv, 21. The last sentence suggests the importance of this passage to the work in general. Hobbes uses the term “*Leviathan*” to describe “a commonwealth, or State” (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Introduction, 1). In doing so, he alludes to the fearsome sea creature in the Book of Job: “Upon the earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is king over all the children of pride” (Job 41:33-34. King James Version; cf. *Leviathan*, xxviii, 27).

85 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xv, 20.

obtained through coercion (by men). Pateman misinterprets the implications of Hobbes's claim that "covenants extorted through fear are valid."<sup>86</sup> She believes that this is true in both the state of nature and in civil society, but there is an important distinction to be made between the two, and it is not clear that Hobbes approves in either case. Though he holds that "even in commonwealths, if I be forced to redeem myself from a thief by promising him money, I am bound to pay it" he immediately continues: "*till the civil law discharge me.*"<sup>87</sup> These passages imply that the civil law should (or will) intervene to punish the thief, and compensate the victim. Any suggestion to the contrary ignores important parts of his theory, including his ardent commitment to the rule of law.

The ultimate legitimacy of contracts extorted through fear is also called into question in "the condition of mere nature."<sup>88</sup> In this condition, the concept of (in)justice is meaningless,<sup>89</sup> and Hobbes's "right of nature" permits anyone to defend themselves by any and all means they deem appropriate.<sup>90</sup> Covenants in the state of nature are not enforceable, nor are they recommended: "covenants without the sword are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all."<sup>91</sup> This applies to conqueror and conquered alike; both require an overarching power (to enforce contracts) for their own protection. After all, the conquered's promise to submit could be mere subterfuge, the sort of "secret machination" that, on Hobbes's account, the weakest can use to kill the strongest (Perhaps the slave intends to kill his master while he sleeps). Without an overarching power to enforce the contract, both conqueror and conquered are vulnerable. Each has an incentive to re-enter the state of war. Indeed, from a Hobbesian point of view, there was no genuine peace to begin

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86 Pateman, *Sexual Contract*, 44-50; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiv, 27.

87 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiv, 27.

88 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiv, 27.

89 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 13.

90 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiv, 1-4.

91 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xvii, 1-2.



with, "For war consisteth not in battle only" but in "the will to contend by battle."<sup>92</sup>

Hobbes tells us that this war "of every man against every man"<sup>93</sup> can end once those involved agree to common rules to live by, and to transfer their rights to an all powerful sovereign. Pateman believes that women are not party to this social contract. During the state of war, men conquer women through this coercion, women contract with individual men; together, they become, a single "artificial person" wherein the woman's personhood is subsumed under a man's—soon, there are no free women; the artificial persons (conceived of as male-headed families) then come together to form the social contract; women are excluded. This is not, however, consistent with the rest of Hobbes's theory for at least two reasons. First, as we have seen, Hobbes includes male and female human beings under the category "men." More importantly, in Pateman's scenario, the state of nature is no longer a "war of every man against every man." Even though multiple individuals can become part of a single artificial person, they do not cease to be natural persons. (Otherwise there would be *no* persons—not even male persons—in Hobbes's commonwealth, which is itself a single artificial person represented by the sovereign).<sup>94</sup> Thus, the equality of the state of nature as described by Hobbes still obtains, even when one person conquers another and extracts their consent by force. The unequal contracts Pateman envisions are meaningless unless they are made under a civil authority with the power to enforce them, but the only way to establish such an authority is by agreeing to live by the laws of nature, which forbid those very contracts.

According to Pateman and Okin, equality in Hobbes's civil society applies only to men (that is, male human beings). Equality between husband and wife is judged impossible. "Husband and wife cannot govern jointly in the family; there can be one master only and the husband is the necessary 'one person

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92 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 8.

93 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xiii, 8.

94 Artificial persons are discussed in more detail below.

representative' of the family in civil society."<sup>95</sup> Hobbes's theory, however, allows for equal marriage. First, note that when Hobbes claims that "no one can obey two masters," he is referring to dominion over the child, not the child's mother.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, he believes that "covenants that amount not to subjection between a man and a woman" are possible.<sup>97</sup> "[A] man and a woman" may "enter into a partnership [*societas*] in which neither is subject to the power of the other."<sup>98</sup> Though a parent may gain power over their child, this does not necessarily entail dominion over any other adult.

Moreover, both parents can govern jointly, as a one "person." Hobbes distinguishes between two types of person.

*A person is he whose words or actions are considered either as his own or as representing the words or actions of another man, or any other thing to whom they are attributed, whether truly or by fiction.*

When they are considered as his own, then he is called a *natural person*; and when they are considered as representing the words and actions of another, then he is a *feigned or artificial person*.<sup>99</sup>

Though Pateman believes that, for Hobbes, "all women are also excluded from becoming civil individuals,"<sup>100</sup> he refers to the *Amazons* in the singular: "the *person* of the *Amazons*."<sup>101</sup> The *Amazons*, a collection of natural persons, unite to form a civil or artificial person. Pateman's argument here assumes that only one natural person can represent an artificial person. But Hobbes claims repeatedly that the representative can be a "man or [an]

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95 Pateman, "God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper," 69.

96 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xx, 4.

97 Thomas Hobbes, "De Corpore Politico" in *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*, edited by J.C.A. Gaskin (New York, Oxford University Press, 1994), 131. Chapter XXIII, paragraph 5.

98 Hobbes, *De Cive*, 109.

99 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xvi, 1-2. Note that this definition of personhood is very broad, and would obviously include adult women as well as children of a certain age and level of development.

100 Pateman, *Sexual Contract*, 50.

101 Hobbes, *De Cive*, 108.

*assembly* of men;”<sup>102</sup> and, if the representative is an assembly, it may be an “assembly of all.”<sup>103</sup> Given that, as argued above, Hobbes’s “man” includes male and female human beings, and given that men and women can contract as equals,<sup>104</sup> it is reasonable to infer that an assembly of all would include both men and women. By this logic, a woman and a man could, as an “assembly,” form a single artificial person: a unified agent, in which neither is subordinate to the other.<sup>105</sup> The same relationship that holds in an “assembly of all” at the national level could also apply at the sub-national level—in this case the level of the family or couple.<sup>106</sup> Given that Hobbes’s theory applies to both men and women, and given that he demands equality between everyone, even in the face of apparent inequality, we can conclude that these relationships should be characterized, as much as possible, by equality.

In order to be meaningful, however, equality must take into account empirical differences between individuals and groups. Paradoxically, if one wishes to uphold the principle that all human beings are equal, one must recognize and respond to the ways in which they are *not* equal.<sup>107</sup> The primacy of equality for Hobbes, both in the state of nature and in civil society, suggests that differences between individuals should not be *a priori* sources of

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102 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xvii, 13. Emphasis added. See also xxii, 1ff.

103 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xix, 1.

104 Hobbes states this explicitly. I am not assuming that parties to a contract are necessarily equal in any meaningful sense. Some contemporary theorists seem to make this assumption (e.g., see Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality*, 123); many clients of cellular phone companies, for example, do not.

105 Pateman denies this, claiming that “no such unity would be possible if both sexes took part in the constitution of *Leviathan* – there could be no representative figure who could represent the ‘person,’ the bodily form, of both sexes. Men must be represented and their civil unity given literal symbolic personification by one of their own kind” (Pateman, “God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper,” 68). I do not see why this is necessary. Hobbes describes artificial personhood in terms of persons on a stage, not statues. What matters is unity of agency. An individual can therefore “personate” (that is, represent) an artificial person that is physically very different from him (or her) self. For example, “children, fools and madmen” may be “personated by guardians” who are not themselves childish, foolish, or mad. Even “inanimate things (as a church, an hospital, a bridge) may be personated by a rector, master, or overseer”—though these representatives do not share the physical form of the inanimate things they represent. See *Leviathan*, xvi.

106 For Hobbes the family is also an artificial person, a “body politic.” See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxii.

107 Okin, *Justice Gender and the Family*, 10-11, 161-162, and all of chapter 7.

social or political inequality, and that if these differences were to lead to inequality, adjustments must be made in order to (re)establish equality. Hobbes seems to draw this conclusion. We find one example of his willingness to take differences into account in the name of equality (rather than upholding equality only insofar as one is not different from an arbitrarily chosen standard) in the Latin version of *Leviathan*. There, Hobbes argues that *authority* does not depend upon sex or gender. A female monarch has the same absolute power and authority as a male monarch. But this very equality demands different treatment in some circumstances.

But, someone will ask, what if the supreme power is vested in a woman? Does a woman have the power of preaching in church and administering the sacraments?

I know that women are prohibited from speaking in church. [1 Cor. 14:34-35] But that does not prevent a woman who is endowed with sovereign power from being able to appoint men who can speak in church and administer all other matters there, by the authority of the commonwealth, i.e., by her authority. For authority does not take account of masculine and feminine. Therefore, though women cannot perform all offices, still they can appoint those who do perform them.<sup>108</sup>

Once again, this is not an abstract thought experiment or merely logical possibility. Hobbes is referring to actual challenges made to the authority of Queen Elizabeth I.

To allow men but not women to speak in church is not consistent with gender equality, but let us assume along with Hobbes that this is a simple fact, a pre-political reality. Some argue that this difference between men and women means that the sovereign can never be female.<sup>109</sup> Hobbes disagrees: that a woman cannot speak in church does not limit the authority (or possibility) of a female sovereign. Rather, it means that subordinate men must be appointed who can speak in church for her. Empirical differences

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108 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 78a.

109 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 78a. Editor's footnote #53.

that occasion inequality call for *equalization*. The above example is especially interesting because Hobbes is not addressing *just any* difference that could cause inequality, such as providing an interpreter of sign language to communicate with the deaf, or ensuring that buildings are wheelchair-accessible; he is equalizing an inequality that, from a certain point of view, is mandated by God himself.<sup>110</sup>

One might accept that Hobbes's theory demands gender equality and yet still object to my argument by noting that the absolute power of his sovereign makes *change* unlikely if not impossible. Hobbes argues repeatedly that rebellion is never permitted. In fact, the line quoted above to support the argument that Hobbes is not justifying the status quo—that “there is scarce a commonwealth in the world whose beginnings can in conscience be justified”—is offered as a reason why rebellion is *not* justified.<sup>111</sup> He goes so far as to suggest that life under the worst sovereign is preferable to the chaos of the state of nature.<sup>112</sup> Though subject to the laws of nature, the sovereign is the only legitimate interpreter of the laws of nature and the civil laws.<sup>113</sup> Nothing the sovereign does can be called unjust.<sup>114</sup> Bearing all of this in mind, one might object by arguing that even if his theory calls for equality, it proscribes the behaviour that may be necessary to bring it about.

We should not come to this conclusion too hastily. Though he consistently argues against rebellion, his argument is (ostensibly) directed towards political leaders: sovereigns rather than subjects.<sup>115</sup> He also suggests that, should rebellion occur, the

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110 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. King James Version: “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.”

111 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, R&C, 8.

112 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxix, 3; xviii, 20; see chapters xxix, xxx.

113 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxvi, 20ff.

114 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xviii, 6.

115 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxxi, 41: “I recover some hope that, one time or other, this writing of mine may fall into the hands of a sovereign who will consider it himself.”

sovereign is to blame: "when they [commonwealths] come to be dissolved, not by external violence but intestine disorder, the fault is not in men as they are the *matter*, but as they are the *makers* and orderers of them."<sup>116</sup> Rebellion may even be a sign that there was no peace to begin with:

It is true that in a commonwealth where (by the negligence or unskilfulness [sic] of governors and teachers) false doctrines are by time generally received, the contrary truths may be generally offensive. Yet the most sudden and rough bustling in of a new truth that can be does never break the peace, but only sometimes awake the war. For those men that are so remissly governed that they dare to take up arms to defend or introduce an opinion are still in war, and their condition not peace, but only a cessation of arms for fear of one another; and they live, as it were, in the precincts off battle continually.<sup>117</sup>

Hobbes counsels against rebellion, but knows that if people are "remissly governed," rebellion may follow. His theory is an ideal that sovereigns may use to better organize their commonwealths; it also articulates an ideal that can be used by subjects to question and criticize the status quo, despite the accompanying exhortations to avoid dissent and civil war.

## 6. Conclusion

Hobbes's political theory begins with the premise that all men are equal, and that all relevant inequalities are the result of social and political relations; they are not natural. We have seen that he believes in the equality of men and women, and that he includes women in his theory, even when he uses masculine terms. This inclusion and equality is not a merely abstract possibility, akin to Plato's fictional female guardians.<sup>118</sup> Hobbes often demonstrates the possibility of female equality or superiority by pointing to

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116 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxix, 1.

117 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xviii, 9.

118 See Plato, *The Republic*, Translated by G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992), Book V.

instances of its existence. (Gender equality is possible because, at least in some times and places, it *is*). In addition, the gender equality that his theory demands is *substantive*. Differences, including the differences between men and women, cannot justify inequality *per se*. Indeed, Hobbes's ninth law of nature demands that each person regard each other person as an equal, even in the face of actual inequality.<sup>119</sup> As a consequence, differences that would otherwise amount to inequality should be *equalized*. This is how and why he can maintain that a sovereign queen, like a sovereign king, has absolute authority over the church, while also claiming that the bible allows men but not women to speak in church.

This interpretation becomes possible if we accept the argument that Hobbes's use of language is gender-inclusive; and if we reconceive the state of nature narrative, the basis of equality, and the nature of persons (as interpreted by Pateman and Okin). Artificial persons can be "represented" or "personated" by more than one person, leaving room for equality between male and female rulers who govern jointly. Hobbes gives equality priority in his theory, even in the face of actual inequality. As a result, differences that might cause inequality must be addressed to (re)establish equality. Equality is justified through his state of nature narrative. Rather than being an account of the present as the outcome of a just historical process, the state of nature narrative is a device of representation which Hobbes uses to justify his highly egalitarian laws of nature, which in the context of his theory as a whole demand substantive gender equality. Far from justifying the status quo, Hobbes's theory is a powerful tool with which to critique it. Pateman is correct when she says that "rational, free and equal women would not agree to a pact that subordinated women to men in civil society"; but she is wrong to infer from this that women must therefore be excluded from the

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119 Cf. Linda Zerilli, *Feminism and The Abyss of Freedom* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005), 111: "[S]ameness is not what the political principle of equality is supposed to achieve, for sameness, observes Arendt, is 'antipolitical.' Arendt writes, 'the equality attending the public realm is necessarily an equality of unequals who stand in need of being 'equalized' in certain respects and for specific purposes. As such, the equalizing factor arises not from human 'nature' [nor from man's] but from outside.'"

social contract.<sup>120</sup> The fact that they would not agree (as rational, free and equal persons) to the conditions under which they actually live is all the more evidence that those conditions are unacceptable, and that change should be called for. And, as we have seen, Hobbes's theory does not completely forbid the positive action that may be required to bring about changes. The subversive nature of Hobbes's work was recognized by his contemporaries, one of whom called *Leviathan* a "rebel's catechism."<sup>121</sup> I suggest that Hobbesian theory is well suited to the subversion of gender inequality; its lesson for the proponents of equality is: accept nothing less.

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120 Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 48-49.

121 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xxi, 15n22.



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## **WHEN SOCIOLOGY CONTRADICTS PHILOSOPHY: AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE FORBIDDEN MODERN**

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### ***Abstract***

*Contemporary sociologists of religion including Nilüfer Göle, Olivier Roy, and Jose Casanova successfully bring into light the transformed nature of Islamic religiosity from traditional contexts to urban zones in Turkey and Western Europe. Despite their assertion, however, Islamic modernity cannot merely be rooted in readily observable facts and ways of life mostly related to urbanization. Modernity is a phenomenon with philosophical foundations. Therefore, sociological arguments on Islamic modernity must be tempered by the yardstick of philosophical modernity, which is rooted in the early modern era thinker's critique of ancient and traditional Christian political thought. In parallel, it is a mistake to talk of Islamic modernity without an authentic and self-generated critique of the Islamic Civilization. Within this context, the contemporary debate on the status of women in Islamic communities can be the harbinger of a greater philosophical transformation.*

### **1. Introduction**

Political events in the past decade lead various commentators writing on Turkey to a paradoxical conclusion. What was for long thought to be the prime inspiration behind reactionary politics there is now regarded by many as the best chance for the possibility of a liberal polity. Thus, all of a sudden, Islamists are carrying the laurels of liberty and appear to be the true champions of modernity. In contrast, the secular establishment which has been the engine of modernization in Turkey for the

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most part of the past three centuries is now, by and large, frowned upon for its elitist tendencies. At the same time, competing evaluations of the degree and extent of the modernist credentials of the existing regime and its alternatives gain prominence in determining political legitimacy.

Within this context, recently advanced arguments on Islamic modernity in Turkey and Europe gain prominence. However, arguments on Islamic modernity which challenge the established scholarly position on Islamic inadaptiveness are not founded upon a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of modernity. According to Jürgen Habermas, the notion of modernity corresponds to three interrelated traits: these are the rationalization of a given social structure “around the organizational cores of the capitalist enterprise and the bureaucratic state apparatus”, the development of “patterns of socialization that are oriented to the formation of abstract ego identities” that result in the individuation of the growing child, and “the reflective treatment of traditions that have lost their quasinatural status.”<sup>2</sup> It is plausible to argue that arguments on Islamic modernity neglect the significance of the third characteristic trait of modernity, or the reflective treatment of traditions. The debate over the status of women in Islamic communities throughout the world is a case in point. Within this framework, the present study aims to criticize the eminent Turkish sociologist Nilüfer Göle’s thesis on veiled modernity among Islamic women.

According to Göle, veiled Islamic women are not the relics of a tradition that subjects women to servitude but free and independent social agents who experiment with innovative practices that negotiate between modern life, on the one hand, and traditional beliefs and ways of life, on the other. By making their own interpretation of modernity instead of slavishly emulating the Western paradigm, these women define history. By contributing to the making of local or multiple modernities, they

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2 Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, [1985] 1990), 1-2.

escape from being the passive outcasts or the soulless followers of a rigid definition of Western modernity.

## 2. The Status Quo Position

The groundbreaking significance of recently advanced arguments on Islamic modernity may be judged by way of a contrast with the yet dominant perspective on the contemporary state of the Islamic civilization. In his monumental article "The Roots of Muslim Rage," Bernard Lewis first spelled out the compelling slogan of "a clash of civilizations."<sup>3</sup> The idea was later popularized by Samuel Huntington.<sup>4</sup> There Lewis stated that Islamic fundamentalism has two major targets: secularism and modernity. The orthodox interpretation of Islam, its sources, and traditions rule out secularism. The union between religion and politics in Islamic countries can take two separate courses. Either the political and religious leadership are merged in the hands of a single authority, as in the case of the prophet and his early successors, namely the *caliphs*; or the political and communal leadership is liable to the opinions of the clergy, namely the *ulema*, albeit in varying degrees depending upon the existing power configuration between the religious and secular wings of the polity. As such, it is unfair to attribute hostile attitudes towards secularism in the Middle-East and Islamic diasporas throughout the world, ranging from discomfort to outright rejection, merely to religious radicalism or a minority group of fanatics. "The war against secularism is conscious and explicit..."<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the Islamic reaction against modernity has a veiled character to it. "The war against modernity is for the most part neither conscious nor explicit, and is directed against the whole process of change that has taken place in the Islamic world in the past century or more..."<sup>6</sup> Lewis cited the perception of a threat emanating from the contemporary challenge against the patriarchal family structure in Middle-Eastern societies and the

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3 Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *Policy* 17, no.4 (2001-2002): 26. Originally published by *The Atlantic Monthly* in September 1990.

4 Edward W. Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation*, 22 October 2001, 12.

5 Lewis, "Roots," 25.

6 Ibid.

rising demand for democracy at the expense of traditional forms of political rule. Literary critic Edward Said once remarked that Lewis's work is the culmination of a historically entrenched Orientalist tradition in Western scholarship.<sup>7</sup>

With or without secularization, individual liberties, political equality, and democracy, the idea of adopting Western technology and science without corrupting Eastern morals has been held in vogue among Muslim progressives for the most part of the previous two centuries. As Huntington wrote, "Non-Western civilizations have attempted to become modern without becoming Western. To date only Japan has fully succeeded in this quest."<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the chief ideologue of modern secular Turkish nationalism Ziya Gökalp who carried on a thoroughgoing critique of Islam in his *Principles of Turkism* was wary of corrupt Western morals and he promoted Japan as a role model for the emerging Turkish nation-state.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, any defect in the latter's attempt at creating a cultural synthesis would give rise to the subsequent identity crises of the Turkish Republic with possibly devastating consequences. Indeed, historical experience attests to the fact that the progressive Islamic slogan of integrating the best of the two worlds—that is forming a synthesis of Eastern ethics and Western technology—has not produced the desired consequences. Or, it worked in perverse ways, as it happened on September 11. Western technology can be employed for the so-called moral purposes of radical religious interests.

### **3. A Groundbreaking New Argument**

In recent years, several notable sociologists and political scientists writing on Islamic communities throughout the world have come to question the widely held consensus that Muslims are philosophically at odds with the norms, values, and institutions that comprise modernity. Their works recall the paradigm of multiple modernities. The conclusion they point out is advanced as a genuine response to the changing dynamics of

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7 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1979), 315-321.

8 Samuel P. Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993): 49.

9 Ziya Gökalp, *Turkculugun Esaslari (The Principles of Turkism)*, (Istanbul: Inkilap, [1923] 2004), 47, 58.

Islamic communities in various parts of the globe. For the most part, however, their works exhibit an incomplete understanding of what modernity stands for conceptually. Nilüfer Göle is among the most influential of these scholars. Göle's research focuses on women's issues and identity politics in contemporary Islamic communities in Turkey and the European diaspora. Göle's essential position is revealed in her groundbreaking book *The Forbidden Modern* whose self-translated English version appeared in 1996.<sup>10</sup> Since the publication of *The Forbidden Modern*, Göle seems to have further clarified her perspective, but her fundamental position remains unaltered: rising generations of veiled or turbaned Islamic women are essentially modern. The impact of her statement has been enormous in Turkey and is still a major source of public debate and controversy. In her more recent works, including the *Interpénétrations: L'Islam et L'Europe*, Göle shifts her focus to Europe, in general, and to France and Turkey, in particular, in order to counter European cultural anxieties aroused by the presence of Muslim immigrant communities and Turkey's bid to join the European Union.<sup>11</sup>

Göle's criticism of French universalism and *laïcité* is related to her trademark argument on Islamic modernity. For a long time, secularists in Turkey and elsewhere judged that Islamic self-identification and its representative symbols, including the act of veiling for women and growing a beard for men, were a clear sign of traditionalist commitments. This traditionalist commitment was, in its turn, interpreted as having not yet been assimilated into modernity. These people had either not yet encountered modernity or they were dealing with culture shock by a reflexive attachment to their traditional heritage. In contrast, Göle dismisses the modernization theory approach to religious traditions. "The underlying assumption of the argument is that, if modernization and secularization were successful, such 'anomalous reactions' would not occur."<sup>12</sup> Göle's criticism is in

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10 Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996).

11 Nilüfer Göle, *Interpénétrations: L'Islam et L'Europe* (Paris: Galaade Editions, 2005). Similar concerns are voiced in Nilüfer Göle, "Islam Resetting the European Agenda?", *Public Culture* 18, no.1 (2006): 11-14.

12 Göle, *Forbidden*, 9.

line with a prevalent criticism of the modernization theory which distinguishes between durative or chronological time and assimilationist time (the time required to produce full assimilation). At an earlier time, assimilation worked slowly but surely; however, starting with the nineteenth century, improved means of communications facilitated further encounters between different groups, but these encounters did not lead to an increase in the pace of assimilation; on the contrary, they fostered consciousness of particular identities and a reactive commitment to them. Hence, in the era following the communications revolution, the name of the game became differentiation, not assimilation.<sup>13</sup> On this account, contemporary forms of Islamic religiosity and identification are not a deviation from modernity and should not be confused with traditionalism; on the contrary, they are within the purview of alternately a modern or a post-modern resistance movement against aspects of the social and political environment.

In *The Forbidden Modern* and other publications, Göle focuses on veiled Muslim women who are mostly descendants of immigrants from the Turkish countryside, which is known for its inborn conservatism. The great demographic shift began in the 1950's when immigrants from the countryside started to move into urban centers in Turkey and Europe. The process was facilitated with the end of a single party system in 1950, the election of the populist Democrat Party (DP) the same year and the concomitant change in government, the construction of a network of motorways which revolutionized the means of communication there, and the demand for raw labor in the West. Arguably, the peasants of the newly democratized country never felt as free. Today, after five decades of continuous population movements, the resulting make up of urban Turkey is for the most part constituted by immigrant families with a high birthrate. Given their metropolitan living experience, these people are not unfamiliar with modernity, but, at the same time, as

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13 Walker Connor, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?" *World Politics* 24, no. 3 (1972): 343, 344, 350, 351, 352. Huntington, "Clash," 25-26. For a detailed account of the historical phenomenon see, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Ed. (London: Verso, 2006).



underprivileged newcomers, they are strangers to it, and some of them have been less willing or successful than others in integrating into their new environment. Although quite rare, it is not impossible to find veiled Turkish women outside recently urbanized immigrant families. Nevertheless, Göle dismisses the traditionalist country origins of contemporary Islamic religiosity in Turkey and the European diaspora. Only by artificially detaching her subjects from their traditionalist heritage does Göle effectively maintain that outward exhibitions of intense devotion and religious identification by Muslim immigrants are alternatively a modern or a post-modern response to their environment. Thus, the transition from traditionalism to modernity and, then, to post-modernity is compressed within a few decades.

Although problematic, Göle's argument on Islamic modernity or post-modernity is not based upon arbitrary foundations. If economic independence is taken as a yardstick, this change turns out to be quite detrimental to the interests of women. Cut off from the family plot and devoid of education, a significant portion of them are excluded from opportunities for work in the city, while others find employment mostly as domestics. In balance, however, these women often suffer from a loss of power in the nuclear family structure. They become all the more dependent on the male members of the family.

Village traditions lose their meaning and become useless in urban contexts. Some among recently urbanized populations, however, focus their attention to an aspect of their past existence which can rather successfully be adapted to their new environment. Women give up their traditional country costumes, but not to be substituted by Western style clothing which is characteristic of urban Turkey in the republican era. Instead, the Islamic veil or headscarf, also called *turban*, is substituted for the loose headscarf. Hence, they take up conservative costumes prescribed from contemporary centers of religious influence in the Maghreb, Arabia, and Iran.

Göle maintains that the re-Islamization of traditionalist folk in Turkey and the diasporic community in Europe is an immediate consequence of modernity. However, there is a missing aspect in

Göle's analysis of contemporary forms of Islamic religiosity and identification. The problem stems from an inability or unwillingness to distinguish between sociological modernity, which is apparently characterized by urban living and alienation, and philosophical modernity, which is characterized by a skeptical critique of existing norms and traditions. Yet this is not to suggest that modernization necessarily entails a loss of religious attachments.

Charles Taylor, a contemporary political philosopher, questions what is called "the American exception," or the cohabitation of strong religious sentiments and the ethos of modernity. Instead, he proposes to call the unity of modernity and loss of faith as "the European exception."<sup>14</sup> In parallel, Jose Casanova distinguishes among "secularization as religious decline, secularization as differentiation, and secularization as privatization."<sup>15</sup> With secularization as differentiation, Casanova refers to the modern phenomenon of relegating religion to the private realm, thus dissociating it from public life. This, he argues, is characteristic of modernity, rather than loss of religious beliefs *per se*. "The assumption that religion will tend to disappear with progressive modernization, a notion which has proven patently false as a general empirical proposition, is traced genealogically back to the Enlightenment critique of religion."<sup>16</sup> Casanova criticizes theories of modern culture for failing to take into account the proper existence of religion in the modern world.<sup>17</sup> In addition, Casanova observes that in contrast to modern historical trends, religion in the West is currently moving away from the private sphere into the public realm. He calls this the deprivatization of religion, or "the reassertion of old and new forms of 'public' religion."<sup>18</sup> Casanova suggests that when all taken together, these

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14 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 522.

15 Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 9.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid., 33-41.

18 Ibid., 37.

developments can be interpreted as “the coming of postmodernity.”<sup>19</sup>

The theoretical position defended by Taylor and Casanova is foundational for sociologists of religion who defend the Islamic modernity thesis, including Göle. For these scholars, the European tradition of secularism, which is rooted in modern philosophy and the Enlightenment, is not a defining characteristic of modernity per se.

Having tacitly dispensed with the foundational status of secularity for modernity, Göle argues that it is not individually felt inhibitions or conservative community pressure but the Turkish state’s commitment to secularism à la française, or *laïcité*, which excludes the bearers of ostentatiously religious personal identities from public life and civil service. It is on this account that Göle’s influential study on veiled or turbaned students in Turkey is titled, *The Forbidden Modern*. Nevertheless, in that work, Göle cannot escape a certain degree of tension between Islamic modernity and modern womanhood as it is understood in the West. “With the act of veiling women perform a political statement against Western modernism, yet at the same time they seem to accept the male domination that rests their own invisibility and their

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19 Casanova, *Public*, 33. Jürgen Habermas recognizes the reemerging status of religion in contemporary liberal democracies: “Thus it is in the interest of the constitutional state to deal carefully with all the cultural sources that nourish its citizens’ consciousness of norms and their solidarity. This awareness, which has become conservative, is reflected in the phrase: “postsecular society” [K Eder, “Europäische Säkularisierung—ein Sonderweg in die postsäkulare Gesellschaft?”, *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* 3 (2002) : 331-343]. This refers not only to the fact that religion is holding its own in an increasingly secular environment and that society must assume that religious fellowships will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. The expression “postsecular” does more than give public recognition to the religious fellowships in view of the functional contribution they make to the reproduction of motivations and attitudes that are societally desirable. The public awareness of a post-secular society also reflects a normative insight that has consequence for the political dealings of unbelieving citizens with believing citizens. In the postsecular society, there is an increasing consensus that certain phases of the “modernization of the public consciousness” involve the assimilation and the reflexive transformation of both religious and secular mentalities” (Jürgen Habermas, “Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State?,” in Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) and Jürgen Habermas, *Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, ed. Florian Schuller and trans. Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 46-47.

confinement to the private sphere."<sup>20</sup> The nature of this acceptance has a resigned character to it. Indeed, *The Forbidden Modern* covers a variety of group interviews which reflect the discontent of educated and veiled Islamic women who do not or are not allowed to work for a variety of familial and political reasons (there is no obstacle to their employment in the private sector). Overall, however, Göle gives insufficient consideration for projections concerning the transition from traditionalism to modern womanhood characterized by a gradual approach towards moral independence and economic self-sufficiency.

Göle's reference to the theme of voluntarily engaged imagined communities boosts her claim on the modern nature of contemporary Islamic religiosity. These voluntary congregations contrast with the traditional religious community of the faithful, or the *ummah*. "Islam, which has been traditionally a binding force among those who were belonging to a locality, to a particular congregation and to a nation-state becomes a reference point for an imaginary bond between those Muslims who are socially uprooted."<sup>21</sup> In other words, removed from its organic frame of reference, the Islamic religious community in modern urban contexts finds embodiment strictly as a voluntary engagement. Thus, Islamic religiosity is transformed from a patrimonial characteristic to an individual preference. The voluntary and individualistic nature of membership in the transformed religious community fits the pattern imposed by modernity. Indeed, John Locke, the pioneering advocate of religious tolerance and secularism in the early modern era, had defined religious congregations as voluntarily engaged associations.<sup>22</sup> However, as Göle is keen to observe, despite possible voluntary patterns of engagement with the community, Islamic religiosity in contemporary settings is not individuating. "Many will join powerful religious communities."<sup>23</sup>

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20 Ibid, 136.

21 Nilüfer Göle, "Islam, European Public Space and Civility," in *Religion in the New Europe*, ed. Krzysztof Michalski (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 124.

22 John Locke, "A Letter Concerning Religious Toleration," ed. James H. Tully (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, [1689] 1983), 28.

23 Göle, "Islam," 124.

Indeed, the possibility for change of religion could be advanced as a genuine test case for measuring the authenticity of voluntary and modern Islamic religious communities. According to the traditional Islamic conception, the community must harshly punish apostates. At least from a legalistic point of view, Islamic communities in secular countries in Europe including Turkey are exempt from such limitations. However, this is only partially true in practice. Moving across faiths is neither easily said nor done. For example, the notion of liberty of conscience is invoked by Turkish Islamists in order to express their view that a secular society and politics is oppressive for true believers, but the very same people are unwilling to express a liberal sense of regret for the hardships of unorthodox Islamic practitioners and Christian missionaries operating in their country. Most spectacularly, thirty-seven intellectuals in attendance at a mystic Islamic celebration were burnt alive in the provincial city of Sivas in 1993. Only recently, in April 2007, three protestant missionaries in the Turkish provincial city of Malatya were brutally murdered. This was the culmination of a series of similar events directed against apostasy, its agents, and its so-called victims within the past few years. From a sociological point of view, the murderers might be categorized as modern: they were all clean shaven young urban males who wore blue-jeans and who apparently had no qualms about the so-called moral uses of Western technology and products. However, from a philosophical point of view, this is not a satisfactory position.

Olivier Roy, a French sociologist of religion, further elaborates on the concept of imagined Islamic communities in the contemporary era. He argues that contemporary Islamists in modern, urban, and Western or Westernized diasporas are not bound by an attachment to their ancestral communities. This inevitably brings about their alienation from traditions and a subsequent quest for identity construction. In redefining their identities, however, immigrant Muslim youth seek to preserve their differences from the community at large. "Without the actual anchors of a diasporic community to sustain them... they require an imagined community."<sup>24</sup> The adherents of these imagined Islamic

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24 Olivier Roy, "EuroIslam: The Jihad Within?", *The National Interest* 71 (Spring 2003): 68.

communities rely on an authentic and universally applicable interpretation of Islam, which is quite distinct from local bound traditionalism. Roy coins the phenomenon as de-culturation.<sup>25</sup> "Today's religious revival is first and foremost marked by the uncoupling of culture and religion."<sup>26</sup> No doubt, in terms of fostering a sense of community feeling among displaced youth, dissociating culture from religion has a unique advantage to it. Without the encumbrances associated with a particular locality, avenues of access to the religious community are wider than before, and the community itself is more comforting. Indeed, native culture becomes an obstacle against their quest for a true interpretation of Islam. "[E]ither culture belongs to religion and therefore culture is not needed or culture is something different from religion, and therefore must be eliminated because it distracts you from religion."<sup>27</sup>

According to Roy, estrangement from traditions and an attachment to an authentic imagined community is characteristic of radical Islamists today. "Most radicalized youth in Europe are Western educated, often in technical and scientific fields. Very few come out of a traditional *madrassa*, and most experience a period of fully Westernized life, complete with alcohol and girlfriends..."<sup>28</sup> Roy likens contemporary Islamism in Europe to the radical leftist movements of the 1960's: it appears to be the most attractive protest movement for the dissatisfied youth of its day in Europe.<sup>29</sup> Taken in this light, radical Islam is a product of modernity, or, alternatively, it is a post-modern protest movement. However, Roy is at least sober on this account. For him the phenomenon is "the modernity of an archaic way of thinking."<sup>30</sup>

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25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 131.

27 Olivier Roy, "Islam in Europe: Clash of Religions or Convergence of Religiosities?", in *Religion in the New Europe*, ed. Krzysztof Michalski (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 137.

28 Roy, "EuroIslam," 64.

29 Roy, "Islam," 144.

30 Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam* (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), 232.

#### **4. Islamic Women and Modernity, cont'd.**

To what extent are Roy's observations on radical Islamic terrorists applicable to Göle's veiled Muslim women? If male radical Islamists's early lives were complete with girlfriends and booze—what better proof to their modern credentials—should we be able to claim the like for women from at least some of the most liberal Islamic communities in Europe: in other words, do they have the choice to complete their lives with boyfriends and alcoholic drinks? Indeed, the condition of women is a crucial parameter in a wider discussion about change and modernity in Islamic communities. To put it differently, the prospect for change in the overall condition of women is closely associated with the debate on what awaits the Islamic world in the future. Beyond the drama of a particular community, women's issues have emerged as the battleground between forces of change and conservation in the Islamic world. Therefore, arguments on imaginary religious communities and post-modern Islamic responsiveness should not pass examination without considering the case of Islamic women.

Indeed, much has been said about the plight of young Turkish women from immigrant families in Europe. From childhood on they are molded in a family structure that implements a traditional code of family honor and religious values and norms under the watchful eyes of the male members of the family. In fact, Turks in the European diaspora are known to be less open to change than their compatriots in the homeland. This inclination for closing in is explained by a reflex for self-preservation in a strange land. Nevertheless, sociologists including Göle, Roy, and Casanova have a tendency to neglect the extent and role of the external pressures weighing on Islamic women at the expense of their individuality. As Göle acknowledges, even secular Turkish women who are not from traditional religious backgrounds are compelled to give into the ultimately conservative character of their secular country.

Interestingly, Göle's most significant and controversial supporting evidence to her argument on the co-existence of religious self-identification, conservatism, and modernity among Islamic women is advanced through her examination of two who at one

point or another had taken center stage in the national news and the ensuing public debate in Turkey. These are Merve Kavakçı, who was Turkey's first turbaned MP-elect, and Fadime Şahin, who had gained notoriety as the *sheikh's* discreet mistress.

Merve Kavakçı is the one and only turbaned woman to be elected to the Turkish General Assembly. However, she was never able to assume her post in the legislative because upon her entrance to the assembly hall in defiance of the dress code which bans religious symbols including the turban, she met with vehement protests from other members of the assembly. "Her presence enraged secular public opinion as well as members of parliament."<sup>31</sup> Soon afterwards, Kavakçı was stripped of her Turkish citizenship because she had not given official notification of her American citizenship.<sup>32</sup> For some, a *de facto* attempt at altering the republican dress code had failed. For others, it was an example of double standards imposed upon the people by the secular republican establishment.

Kavakçı's expulsion could have been regarded as an act of intolerance by secularists and, thereby, could have taken away from their moral authority, which is partially derived from the modern and liberating credentials of the republic. The moral authority of the secularists is particularly elevated when taken in contrasts with the Islamic alternative, which is associated with gender inequality and repression. Why, then, were the secularists risking their moral capital?

According to Göle's analysis, Turkish secularists' discomfort and anxiety at the time was not due to Kavakçı's attempt at challenging Turkey's secularist tradition, but her very modern and individualist credentials. Kavakçı was born to the family of a Texas *imam*. She became a computer engineer there, and was later divorced from a Jordanian-American. To boot, she was elected to the Turkish national assembly while only at her early thirties. Taken in this light, Kavakçı truly escapes any attempt at

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31 Nilüfer Göle, "Contemporary Islamist Movements and New Sources for Religious Tolerance," *Journal of Human Rights* 2, no. 1, (2003): 26.

32 Ibid., 27.



categorization. According to Göle, she was different from other Muslim women in the Islamic movement and was "socially closer to the Western-oriented secular elites of Turkey."<sup>33</sup> But, for all involved, "she was both a local and a 'stranger.'"<sup>34</sup> Paradoxically, Kavakçı was excluded by that portion of the society which derived its self-justification from the threat of a traditional, quasi-theocratic, and illiberal society.

There is, of course, a symbolic gravity to the case of a female challenger to the republican model of a secular citizenry, one that cannot be matched by the example of a male Islamist. This might partially explain the extent of the reaction against Kavakçı. After all, women were the clear beneficiaries of a secular revolution in a traditionalist Islamic country. "Turkish modernization was an outcome of the Westernism and secularism of reformist elites for whom women's emancipation from the traditional Islamic way of life would pave the way to Westernization and secularization for the larger society."<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the withering away of the traditional headscarf from ordinary life since the early twentieth century is a token of the secular republican accomplishment. Beyond the symbolism of costume, however, fostering the role of women as public citizens and the development of women's rights required compulsory education for girls, civil rights for women including suffrage and public service, and the abolition of Islamic family law which demands a submissive role from women. All of these reforms were imposed in a top to bottom manner with the expectation that an undemanding traditional society would eventually catch up with social and political change.

Then, given the historical evolution of modern womanhood in Turkey, the rejection of secular republicanism by a portion of the regime's female citizenry comes up as a source of grave concern. Göle seems to suggest that the republican elite must develop a more pragmatic approach for dealing with political Islam. However, she recognizes the historical and emotional burden which makes it difficult to accomplish such a feat. Modern and

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 27-28.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>35</sup> Göle, *Forbidden*, 11.

secular Turkish women “are products of an historical, emotional, corporeal fracture with Muslim identity, a fracture with the past which made it possible for them to access modernity,” and adds that, “redeeming the past, renegotiating Islam, would mean for those women losing their rights of freedom and ‘going backwards.’”<sup>36</sup> The prevalent influence of Enlightenment ideas among Turkish modernists, their consciousness of the past, and their ensuing wish and present ability to maintain their historical rights make it next to impossible for them to develop a sympathetic eye towards the Islamist demand for a reinvention of the country’s religious and cultural heritage. For secularists in Turkey, the possibility of modernity without secularism does not stand on convincing grounds.

Göle’s second example of a modern and individualized Islamic woman is that of Fadime Şahin. When the scandal broke out, Fadime Şahin was an undergraduate in her early twenties. As the Istanbul police broke into the house of the *Aczmendi* sect *sheikh* with a crew of reporters and television cameras, she had attempted to hide herself from the gaze of strangers. Later on, the *sheikh* sought to legitimize the affair by claiming an Islamic law marriage between them. (Although widely practiced by religious conservatives in Turkey, *sharia* marriages do not have a legal standing.) However, as Göle narrates, “the girl denied that he had a religious marriage with her and accused the sect leader of abusing her”.<sup>37</sup> This was an opportunity for the mainstream media to reflect upon the hypocritical morality of Islamic extremists in the heavily charged political climate of the mid-1990’s, which ended up with the resignation of the Islamist PM Necmettin Erbakan under pressure from the army and the rest of the secular establishment in 1996. What fascinated Göle was the manner in which Fadime Şahin made her case to the public. She had appeared almost daily on a different television channel. “The public was amazed by her shameless confessions, ranging from speaking while in tears to outbursts of anger.”<sup>38</sup> This was a far cry from the ideal of a traditionally modest Turkish damsel.

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36 Göle, “Contemporary,” 28.

37 Ibid., 25.

38 Ibid., 26.

The case illustrates well the new profile of a Muslim girl and the blurring contours of traditional and modern. The act of speaking up for herself, deciding to become visible to the public eye and voicing her experience, can all be considered as features of a modern individual's conduct...<sup>39</sup>

However, Şahin's story does not end here. In another article published the same year on a similar theme, Göle once more refers to the case of Merve Kavakçı, the turbaned deputy, but this time she completely ignored the case of Fadime Şahin, the *sheikh's* mistress. One might make sense of this omission with a further look at Şahin's life. As it turns out, soon after the incident, which had gained her nationwide notoriety, Şahin shed the Islamic turban and dyed her hair blond. The latter cosmetic preference is an ultimate symbol of Turkish women's desire to look modern, and it is very common among urban Turkish women of all ages. On this occasion, then, Göle's trademark example came to haunt her argument and it was summarily dropped. Turbaned modernity turned out to be a temporary phase on the way to a deeper cultural and moral transformation. (The liberating effect of Şahin's status as a national celebrity might have been a factor. With all the spotlights on her, she had become virtually immune to family pressure.) Şahin's transformation can be interpreted according to the historical pattern of gradual modernization in Turkey: it is quite an ordinary occurrence in urban settings to observe older women of the nuclear family holding on to their traditional roles and costumes but not the younger. Notwithstanding the overall rise of Islamic religiosity in Turkey and the diaspora, a prevalent category of cases like this one remains to be further examined by the critics of the secularization theory.

## **5. Islamic Women and Modern Political Thought**

No doubt, the condition of women in Islamic communities is only a single parameter in a wider discussion about change and modernity. However, the debate on the status of women occupies

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 25.

the publics of the modernizing Middle East and the Islamic diaspora.

Women in Islamic societies have been for the most part suppressed, and this observation rests on undeniable supporting evidence. The most noteworthy is the practice of polygamy, which is legitimized through sacred religious traditions. To boot, polygamy is promised for devout believers in their afterlives. However, if worldly morality is modeled on the superior ideal of the eternal, then it is impossible to conjecture that more than one angel servant is intended for women (despite religious arguments to the contrary). The Islamic dress code for women, which provides for feminine modesty and seclusion through ordering them to cover up with the exception of their faces, hands, and feet, is according to some commentators another outstanding token of the derogatory attitude towards the female figure, and a symbol of the obstacles on the way of attaining gender equality. In contrast, from the start of the movement for modernization in the contemporary Middle East, Muslim men have been more comfortable with adopting Western styles. Thus, one can routinely encounter Muslim men wearing short pants and t-shirts in the company of their wives walking behind them virtually covered from head to toe. In addition, according to Islamic law, testimony by females in the law court has a limited applicability. It takes at least two female witnesses in order to counter the conflicting testimony of one man alone. Leaving traditional religious norms and customs aside, one might as well approach the matter with an eye to contemporary studies on the gender gap: women in Islamic communities are remarkably deprived. Then, whichever perspective is taken, it becomes apparent that Islamic women are the natural audience of the liberating call of modern political thought.

The influence of modern political thought can be liberating for Muslim women in at least two levels. First, for the most part, modern philosophers sought to liberate human passions from the influence of traditional morality. In other words, the moderns' vindication of human passions in the West was an essential part of their critique of ancient and Christian morality. For example, Niccolo Machiavelli, a pioneer of modernity, promoted an amoral

political man who sought to fulfill his desires by any means. "And truly it is a very natural and ordinary thing to desire to acquire, and always, when men do it who can, they will be praised and not blamed; but when they cannot, and wish to do it anyway, here lie the error and the blame."<sup>40</sup> In turn, Thomas Hobbes who laid the foundations of the modern understanding of social and political equality (built on the universality of human passions) promoted a new morality, which was based on rights and law derived from nature and accessible to all reasonable beings. Of crucial significance, Hobbes derived his sense of good and bad, and, right and wrong through the guidance of passions rather than through an innate or abstract conception of reason which is completely free from material influences.<sup>41</sup> Although, for the most part, modern thinkers were not occupied with the notion of gender equality, they set the stage for the ultimately triumphal progress of human equality and the liberation of human passions. There is no doubt that in contradistinction to Christianity, asceticism is not an Islamic value. Historically, Western travelers into the Orient were intrigued by Muslim women, or the hidden wonders of the *harem* (the part of a Muslim house reserved for the residence of women, including the mother, sisters, wives, concubines, daughters, entertainers, and servants). In their eyes, Oriental women were associated with lust and pleasure. However, women in Islamic societies have been for the most part suppressed and sexuality is no exception. Second, from an overtly political perspective, freedom, equality, individuality, and a sense of rights and duties define modernity. The traditionalist ethos of contemporary Islamic societies, which is characterized by authoritarian politics, an emphasis on obedience to the demands

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40 Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 2nd ed., trans. Harvey C. Mansfield (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 14-15.

41 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Revised Student Edition, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 9-62. Later political philosophers including David Hume distinguished between calm and hot passions [David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, Revised Edition, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987) 73-79] and John Stuart Mill between high and low pleasures [John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," in *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill: On Liberty, The Subjection of Women, and Utilitarianism* (New York: Modern Library, [1859] 2002), 242]. There were unqualified exceptions to the pattern including Spinoza and Kant. Nevertheless, the moderns' vindication of human passions is characteristic. In effect, starting with Machiavelli and Hobbes, modern thinkers challenged the Christian conception of withdrawal and asceticism.

of public or religious morality, and the concomitant emphasis on duties to the community as opposed to individual rights contrasts with modernity as it is understood in the liberal or democratic West. Yet, women in Islamic societies bear the brunt of the burden. They are less free and less equal. Whether they accept the prevailing status quo voluntarily or involuntarily is not by itself a sufficient criterion in order to define Islamic women as modern.

The modern philosophers' critique of the suppressive attitude towards human nature in the West may have an appeal for the advocates of women's rights in contemporary Islamic communities. However, the similarities between the circumstances preceding the philosophical revolt called modernity in the West and the established characteristics of the Islamic tradition may be limited, and they should not overshadow a fundamental wisdom: just as modernity in the Occident came about through an acute criticism of the Western tradition, thoroughgoing modernization in the Middle East inevitably depends upon a critical inquiry directed at native cultural traditions. Such an effort aimed at established mores and traditional dogmatism can be no other than an authentic and self-generated intra-civilizational enterprise. For such an endeavor to fulfill its historical mission and potential, it must no doubt reach beyond the vicissitudes of a single gender group.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the end, contemporary sociologists of religion who conduct research on Muslim immigrants in urban Turkey, Europe, and the North American diaspora, including Nilüfer Göle, Olivier Roy, and Jose Casanova, have come to question the long standing scholarly verdict on Islamic inadaptiveness. Their hypothesis about Islamic modernity is for the most part based upon ongoing waves of immigration from traditional communities in the East to the West. Their uprooted subjects enter into an individualized search for new sources of loyalty and identification, commonly referred to as the quest for an imagined community. In some cases, they end up joining radical religious communities. However, contemporary sociologists of religion fail to convincingly authenticate the actual

possibility of an independent quest for spirituality and identification for their subjects.

Indeed, Göle's relative ease in associating non-individuating ends with modern Islamic individuality contrasts with John Stuart Mill's exposition on the fallacy of an argument in favor of selling oneself to slavery. If individual liberty is justified in terms of being the best means to pursue one's well-being, then the liberty to alienate one's own liberty must be self-defeating. "The principle of freedom cannot require that he should be free not to be free. It is not freedom to be allowed to alienate his freedom."<sup>42</sup>

There are partial and paradoxical aspects to Islamic modernity. William Shepard notes that if taken as an ideology, Islam should be considered modern by its very existence because the notion of ideology is in itself a product of modernity.<sup>43</sup> However, Olivier Roy best captures the paradoxical character of Islamic modernity in politics. He sees it as "the modernity of an archaic way of thinking."<sup>44</sup>

Something has to be said about the traditional connection between modernity and secularity, and its critics. Above all, there is the question of the relationship between immigration from traditional communities to industrial and post-industrial urban zones, adaptation to a modern economy, and the possibility of further social and political modernization. Is it possible to conceive of modernity as anything other than a multifaceted process? Will conservative communities who are readily experimenting with change, social upheaval, and the products of modern science and technology in the service of the masses, eventually themselves become noteworthy partners to the modern investigative and creative process? In this context, what is the future of modernity, with its commitment to such basic liberal principles as gender equality and democracy, within

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42 John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty," in *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill: On Liberty, The Subjection of Women, and Utilitarianism* (New York: Modern Library, [1863] 2002), 106-107.

43 William E. Shepard, "Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987): 308, 313-318, 323-326.

44 Roy, *Globalised*, 232.

Islamic communities that have not hitherto contributed to its historical and philosophical evolution?

In recognition of the incomplete theoretical grounding of the argument about Islamic modernity, I argue that urbanization and the appearance of related consumption patterns in Islamic communities is the beginning of sociological modernity. However, the foundations of modernity go beyond a readily perceptible sense of urban alienation; modernity is the outcome of a deep current of intellectual transformation. Indeed, the social, political, and technological innovations that have evolved in the West and are now referred to by contemporary sociologists in defining modernity cannot be isolated from the modern philosophical project, which is characterized by a distinct critique of past moral traditions and religious dogmatism. It is, therefore, a mistake to group secular Muslims, their pious co-religionists who do not have much room for individual choice and unhindered personal development, and well-groomed radical Islamists who believe in the political uses of terror, into the category of people who have managed to achieve an unproblematic synthesis of their high ethical ideals and modernity.

In the end, modernity is not a phenomenon without intellectual foundations. Therefore, sociological arguments in favor of Islamic modernity must be measured by the yardstick of philosophical modernity. Ultimately, a reliable evaluation of the various arguments for and against Islamic modernity must be built upon an endeavor that brings out competing theoretical definitions of modernity. So far, this last perspective has been decidedly lacking and its recovery cannot be left to sociologists alone. Thus, an ineluctable task awaits the students of political thought and philosophy in the future.

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## **POSTMODERN POLITICS AND MARXISM**

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### ***Abstract***

*The article is a critical and introductory analysis of postmodern political philosophy and political sociology in general and postmarxism, a brand of the general postmodern theorizing, as well as a critical review of a postmarxist study, Laclau and Mouffe's, "Hegemony and Socialist Strategy". The postmodern approaches to social and political phenomena, the article shows, can be seen in its rejection of the modern premises, which is accepted by mainstream Marxist theory, that social relations have a centre and base and can be understood and changed scientifically. The postmarxist circles within this general approach, the article shows, reject the validity and significance of class theory and socialist revolution as suggested by the mainstream Marxism.*

### **1. Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Postmodernism**

The most decisive role in the development of structuralism, poststructuralism and finally postmodernism has been played by new French intellectual studies after the Second World War. After the war, France was "still largely agricultural and suffered from an antiquated economy and polity". In the post war period, the country witnessed a rapid modernization process. This was accompanied with interesting developments of social and philosophical theories. Finally, the social and political uprising in 1968 gave a "dramatic sense of rupture" symbolizing old French revolutionary tradition. The turbulent events behind 1968 were student movements and workers strikes. New theoretical studies focused upon "mass culture", "the consumer society", technology, and urbanization. The new social relations were theorized first by the conception of "postindustrial society", which was borrowed

from the USA. Mass culture and consumer society were analyzed through Anglo-Saxon theories<sup>1</sup>. Up to that time, dominant theories in France had been marxism, existentialism and phenomenology. However, semiotics developed by Ferdinand de Saussure in early twentieth century attracted intellectual circles and was first applied to anthropology by Lévi-Strauss. In marxism, Althusser theorized a structural marxism while Lacan studied for a structuralist theory of psychoanalysis of Freud. The terminology was composed of "codes", "rules", "common system", "parts and whole". Structures are ruled by "unconscious codes and rules". Social phenomena were defined by linguistic and structural terms such as rules, codes and system. In theoretical circles, there emerged a "structuralist revolution"<sup>2</sup>.

In structuralist marxism of Althusser, the main aim was to "eliminate the concept of the subject", which was only a "linguistic construct". "[T]he subject itself was constituted by its relation within language, so that subjectivity was seen as a social and linguistic construct". Nonetheless, structural analysis tries to reveal "objectivity, coherence, rigour, and truth, and claimed scientific status for its theories"<sup>3</sup>.

Poststructuralism attacked these scientific premises of structuralism. Structuralism reproduced the "humanist notion of an unchanging human nature" and all universal structures of humanism. Unlike structuralism, poststructuralism accepted a "historical view which sees different forms of consciousness, identities, signification, and so on as historically produced and therefore varying in different historical periods"<sup>4</sup>.

A common point between structuralism and poststructuralism is the rejection of the concept of "the autonomous subject". The latter emphasizes the productivity of language dismissing "closed

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1 Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *Postmodern Theory-Critical Interrogations*, (London, the Macmillan, 1991), 17.

2 Ibid. 18.

3 Ibid., 19.

4 Ibid., 20.

structures of oppositions”<sup>5</sup> and “the instability of meaning”. Thus, it implies a “break with conventional representational schemes of meaning”. Meaning is “produced not in a stable, referential relation between subject and object, but only within the infinite, intertextual play of signifiers”<sup>6</sup>. Poststructuralism seems to suggest an extreme form of relativism rejecting all kinds of claims on objective and universal knowledge, any ontological division between structure and agency, as well as cause and effect or determinant and determined.

As for the development of postmodern theory, we should remember the results of the 1968 events. This last social uprising in Western Europe takes attention to the concrete politics. First of all, student movements produced a debate on the production of knowledge and bureaucratic characteristics of universities. This attention would be theorized by Michael Foucault as an existence between power and knowledge<sup>7</sup>. Theoretical and practical politics was common for many intellectuals, who would be poststructuralist later. Moreover, general interest was on everyday life, subjectivity, differences and social marginality. In this atmosphere, the subject of the Enlightenment, which was “spontaneous”, “rational”, “autonomous”, created an incompatibility in the face of fragmentation and differentiation just like the ubiquity of power. In this context, structuralism and poststructuralism focused upon the constitution of the subjects, subject positions and identities. Lacanian psychoanalysis and Althusserian theory of ideology are produced for the possible solutions to these questions<sup>8</sup>.

In the concrete arena of politics, new social movements which emerged in the United States and Europe were the signs of a “micropolitics” as the “authentic terrain for political struggle”. They imply various sources of power and oppression, which could not be reduced to labor exploitation<sup>9</sup>. “In place of the hegemony

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5 Ibid., 20.

6 Ibid., 21.

7 Ibid., 23.

8 Ibid., 24.

9 Ibid., 24.

of the proletariat, they proposed decentred political alliances<sup>10</sup>. Radical forces of micropolitics entailed "postmodern principles of decentring and difference" by introducing new possibilities of "politicising social and cultural relations, in effect redefining the socialist project as that of radical democracy"<sup>11</sup> as Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*<sup>12</sup> tried to develop.

Postmodern theory, like poststructuralism to a large degree, uses "discourse theory", which "sees all social phenomena as structured semiotically by codes and rule, and therefore amenable to linguistic analysis, utilising the model of signification and signifying practices". Theorists of discourse concern the "material and heterogeneous nature of discourse". Some (like Foucault, for instance) focus on the institutionalization of discourse, the viewpoints and subject positions and their supposed power relations. Discourse is a place of struggle for hegemony and ideology production<sup>13</sup>. But not every postmodern theorist is a "linguistic idealist" for whom everything is reduced to discourse and "whereby discourse constitutes all social phenomena, or is privileged over extra-discursive material conditions"<sup>14</sup>.

An attack on the subject of humanism and privileged status given to linguistics are the common points of structuralism and poststructuralism. However, the scientific claims and premises of the former is the division point for the latter. And, poststructuralism is "a subset of a broader range of theoretical, cultural, and social tendencies which constitute postmodern discourses"<sup>15</sup>. Postmodern attacks on modern science and philosophy produce a "postmodern science", which "refers to a break with Newtonian determinism, Cartesian dualism, and

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10 Ibid., 24-25.

11 Ibid., 25.

12 Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy-Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, (London-New York, Verso, 1992).

13 Best and Kellner, *Postmodern*, 26.

14 Ibid., 27.

15 Ibid., 25.

representational epistemology"<sup>16</sup>. According to postmodern theorizing, we can argue that even scientific knowledge is just a discourse produced by the scientific community who considers itself capable of doing scientific divisions between object and subject, structure and agency, cause and effect.

We can suggest that a postmodern Marxism or postmarxism is impossible since Marxist theory hitherto has been based on determinist realist ontology that assumes that reality exists outside of the consciousness and a dialectical reflection theory of epistemology which assumes that reality is reflected into mind, both of which support the idea that scientific, objective and universal knowledge is possible.

## **2. From Marxist theory to Postmarxism**

Before dealing with postmarxism, I summarize the basic premises of the *classical* Marxist theory, which is wanted to be revised or changed into postmarxism or postmodern Marxist politics and social theory, so that the reader can follow the theoretical strategy of postmarxism.

One of the main purposes of Marxist inquiry is to demystify capitalist social relations. For this, it assumes a fundamental division between substance-essence and surface-appearance, which is assumed as a sine qua non of scientific activity. Appearances in capitalist society are contaminated by the ideas of hegemonic classes in a way that the essence of relations is rendered invisible in the eyes of ordinary individuals. For this, the ideological conception of reality, which is the ideas of dominant class, is fundamentally different from the objective conditions of concrete reality. For this, Marxism distinguishes conception of the social reality, subjectivity, from objective conditions, objectivity. Objective conditions are out of the control of individuals and hence are subordinated by the spontaneity of the social, that is, the law of history and structural laws of change.

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<sup>16</sup> Best and Kellner, *Postmodern*, 28.

These kinds of differentiations have to do with realist-materialist ontology of Marxism where all fundamental divisions of the capitalist social relations are revealed. In this sense, Marxist ontology is based on dichotomies. However, materialist knowledge is completed with dialectics at the epistemological sphere by which dichotomies are transformed into thesis-antithesis relationship. This implies a passage from existence to becoming, a passage from entity to process, from objective reality to the knowledge of this objectivity. The passages as such give a unity of existence and becoming, the very unity of theory and practice, which is called praxis. The unity achieved is a *theoretical* practice or a *practical* theory.

For Marxism, something which is not determined is not existed. In this sense, determinism is opposed to metaphysics, which is speculative in the context of indeterminacy. Existence is possible by determination, but determination is only possible with becoming, which is nothing but a process of change and transformation. This is why materialist ontology must be changed into an epistemology of dialectic materialism in a way that division between ontology and epistemology is accepted only in the methodological purposes and is rejected as an organic division.

In Marxist theorizing, structural analyses tackle with objective conditions which are historically existed, in other words, historically determined. But this historical determination, any structural temporality, exists only within a historical process. Actually, determinacy is ever being processed, so that objectivity can become subjectivity and vice versa. If so, it is such a reciprocity and simultaneity which rejects any organic division between determinacy of existence and resultant becoming. However, capitalist social relations do not permit us to conceive this organic unity of existence and becoming and act in that way. This is what is implied by the concepts of alienation, mystification and fetishism in broad sense. For this reason, organic unity is changed into an organic division within capitalist social relations in a way that organic unity of the base and superstructure, essence and appearance become separated.



However, at this point the question is how essence is revealed and represented, in other words, how the unity of ontological base and epistemological form is realized. But, the question is ill-defined at the very beginning because Marxism deals with what is hidden and what is possible within capitalist social relations rather than trying to discover a continent of fixed and absolute truths. In this sense, Marxism, at the very beginning accepts the social and historical character of truth and truth production in a way that power concentrations within social relations form the acceptability of truths. In this sense, knowledge is inherently ideological, so is science. At this point, it should be accepted that Marxism is also another unity of ideology and science since it tries to produce alternative truth for alternative power concentrations, without which production of knowledge goes back to the sphere of scholastics.

For the same reason, the representation problem changes into the question of correspondence between theory and practice and into the problem of praxis formation. Such a correspondence, reciprocity and unity are dialectic relationships of the internal and external, of the existence and becoming. In dialectics, existence depends upon becoming in a continuous process. For something to be existed it must become in a process of continuity and exactly at this point, contradictory logic of the unity of existence and becoming is witnessed. An existence of a contradictory relationship must exist only by producing itself through a continuous process of dialectics in a way that contradictory relationship continues in an ever changing process. Contradictions are transferred from its original existence to the different plains and this transferring process makes all becoming, and all unity of existence and becoming always contradictory. It is seen that contradiction is something which must be determined at the very beginning of a relationship and continue itself in a dialectic process. If so, the dialectic and contradictory character of existence, a relationship, are the very mediation between ontological and epistemological spheres and sine qua non of a Marxist theory of praxis and the interconnection point of dialectic materialism (epistemology of contradictory relationships) and historical materialism (acknowledgment of the ever transferring processes of contradictory social relationships).

Briefly it can be stated that the mainstream of Marxism requires the so-called dialectical materialism as the analyses of reality and its reflection to mind as well as ever-transference of the contradictions and conflicts into higher and wider spheres of their developments. For Marxists, knowledge and science of "real" is possible and reality demonstrates itself with contradictions and conflicts of the social life. In addition, for political life, there are indeed the sources of conflicts as well as the centers of political life. Hence a revolutionary struggle can be planned and realized in terms of the power centers and the sources of contradictions and conflicts. Postmarxism therefore can be seen not as neo or postmarxism but as a sort of non-marxism, or negation of Marxist theory's ontological and epistemological bases in general.

### 3. Postmarxism

Laclau and Mouffe<sup>17</sup> proclaim that they are "now situated in a post-Marxist terrain". Even though post-Marxism can be used as a description of all recent marxist theoretical development which is directly influenced either by poststructuralist epistemology or postmodern theory in general, we have only one proclamation as such. What Laclau and Mouffe<sup>18</sup> try to develop is a strategic theory of radical democracy, which, for them, could be possible only by going beyond Marxism. Nonetheless, they "remain wedded to many modern political values"<sup>19</sup>.

Postmarxism is a socialist theory derived from by postmodernism-poststructuralism. Its theoretical attempts to produce a strategy for a radical and plural socialism, which is not peculiar only to Laclau and Mouffe, could find out a various insights from the Marxist tradition itself. Sim<sup>20</sup> sums up these Marxist insights, in turn: Lukacs' *History and Class Consciousness*, in which Marxism is seen only as a method rather than a doctrine. Methodology was the single criteria for orthodoxy<sup>21</sup>; t he work of the Frankfurt

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17 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony*, 4.

18 Ibid.,

19 Postmodern, 31.

20 Stuart Sim, (ed.), *Post-Marxism - A reader*, (Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

21 Ibid, 3-4.

School, which does not accept the primacy of economic base and hence shifts the interest from politics and political economy to philosophy, aesthetics; similarly Gramsci's conception of hegemony, argues Sim, "suggests that the realm of ideas can be even more important site of ideological contestation than the strictly economic world of the base"<sup>22</sup>.

Adorno's notion of "negative dialectics" prefigures the *deconstruction* and Derrida's work. Negative dialectics implies that contradiction "resists resolution" and Adorno and Horkheimer's criticisms of Enlightenment is not so far away from those of postmodernists and poststructuralists. *Dialectics of Enlightenment (also the name of their collective study)* could result in the predictions of either universal enlightenment or fascism<sup>23</sup>. In addition, Marcuse's work, *One-Dimensional Man* implies that in the cultural terrain of post-war America, where marxist conception of class was not useful. For Marcuse, middle classes were also the victims of exploitation like working class<sup>24</sup>.

Another conception of postmarxism is suggested by Docherty<sup>25</sup> as a possibility to escape from the results of "totalization and unjust homogenisation"<sup>26</sup> of "grand metanarrative"<sup>27</sup> proposed by Marxism, which is influenced by modernity and Enlightenment. Hence, postmodernism-postmodernism is not a new theory but "after theory".

### *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: a proclamation of postmarxism*

*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* is an explicit proclamation of postmarxism by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe<sup>28</sup>. The book tries to develop a new theory of political strategy for a more democratic and radical socialis. The central conception of this

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22 Ibid., 4.

23 Ibid., 5-6.

24 Ibid., 6.

25 Thomas Docherty, *After Theory-Postmodernism/Postmarxism*, (London and New York, Routledge), 1990

26 Ibid., 214.

27 Ibid., 207.

28 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony*, 4.

politics is erected upon old Russian and Italian questions of hegemony. However, the concept is attributed far more meaning and it is extended from its original contexts to postmodern condition of politics.

The concept of hegemony is the "fundamental nodal point of Marxist political theorisation". "The logic of hegemony presented itself from the outset as a complementary and contingent operation"<sup>29</sup> and "provide(s) ... anchorage from which contemporary social struggles are thinkable in their specificity, as well as permitting us to outline a new politics for the Left based upon the project of a radical democracy"<sup>30</sup>.

Laclau and Mouffe observe that the concept of hegemony belongs to "a context dominated by the experience of fragmentation and by the indeterminacy of the articulation between different struggles and subject positions". It implies "a withdrawal of the category of 'necessity' to the horizon of the social"<sup>31</sup>. In the concrete sense, class action becomes impossible in the face of fragmentation and social struggles lose their class character. The "unity of class" means only a "symbolic unity", which is observed and tired. Instead, Rosa Luxemburg<sup>32</sup>, who proposes "symbolic overdetermination as a concrete mechanism" for the unification of class<sup>33</sup>.

Actually, the question was a split between the theory of Marxism and practice of socialist struggle. This split, which is "a clear symptom of crisis"<sup>34</sup> is responded to first by Kautsky and then Lenin by giving a privileged role to intellectuals<sup>35</sup>. This is the "formation of Marxist orthodoxy"<sup>36</sup>. The Second response was Bernstein's revisionism, which proclaims "the autonomy of political

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29 Ibid., 3.

30 Ibid., 4.

31 Ibid., 13.

32 Ibid., 8-12.

33 Ibid., 11.

34 Ibid., 14.

35 Ibid., 20, 25.

36 Ibid., 19.

from the economic base". His notion of "ethical subject"<sup>37</sup> is a new transcendental subject out of economic necessity, in fact. Berstein, like Luxemburg, saw the importance of the formation of different subject positions, for example citizenship and "nationalisation of working class"<sup>38</sup>.

Another response to the crisis of socialist politics comes from George Sorel's revolutionary syndicalism. Sorel replaces the conception of social class with "blocs", "poles of reaggregation", "elements aggregating and condensing the historical forces". Possible unity of class is translated in to "will of certain groups to impose their conception of economic organisation"<sup>39</sup>. He defines the class unity at the political level rather than the objective system. The war and struggle is the condition of becoming class and hence the place of class identity formation<sup>40</sup>.

However, an adequate answer would come from Antonio Gramsci. He creates a new system from Sorel's conception of "historical bloc" and Lenin's conception of hegemony<sup>41</sup>. He also broke down determinism far more than revisionism and answered the problems of crisis of Marxism with his "war of positions"<sup>42</sup>.

Hegemony emerged "in a historical terrain where contingency arose from the structural weakness of the bourgeoisie to assure its own task"<sup>43</sup> and working class was attributed an alien task. "This anomalous relation was called hegemony"<sup>44</sup>. However, Leninist hegemony means political leadership within the class alliance between working class and peasantry. Unity in the alliance does not affect the class identities because classes have different and even opposite interests. This was an "exteriority of

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37 Ibid., 34.

38 Ibid., 35.

39 Ibid., 38.

40 Ibid., 39.

41 Ibid., 42.

42 Ibid., 36.

43 Ibid., 49.

44 Ibid., 50.

the hegemonic link” and was inherently authoritarian<sup>45</sup>. “Ontologic privilege granted to working class by Marxism was transferred from the social base to the political leadership of the mass movement”. Authoritarian politics emerged from different democratic demands. “A limited actor-working class-was raised to the status of universal class”<sup>46</sup>. What occurs is the transferring of the ontological centrality of the proletariat to the “epistemologic privilege” of “one sector”, who “knows the history”<sup>47</sup>. By doing so, democratic potential of the hegemonic politics was lost in favor of an authoritarian socialism.

For an articulation between democracy and socialism, Laclau and Mouffe suggest the following principles should be accepted: 1) Hegemonic tasks transform the class identities; 2) Politics is not the representation field of interests; 3) Identification between classes and social agents is impossible<sup>48</sup>. Marxist-Leninist theory holds that relations of production are the terrain of class constitution ” and that presence of classes in the political field can only be understood as the “representation of classes”<sup>49</sup> and should be rejected. The alternative should be more democratic, which requires the acceptance of the “structural diversity of the relations” and the unity as the “result of political construction and struggle” rather than that of the “principle of representation” and unity as an “expression of underlying essence”. What should be done on the part of the working class is to “articulate around itself a number of democratic demands” basing upon its own political initiative rather than any privileged structural position<sup>50</sup>.

At this point of the critique of Leninism, Laclau and Mouffe appreciate the merits of Gramsci. He replaces the Leninist notion of political leadership with intellectual and moral leadership. His conception of politics and hegemony implies an articulation ” <sup>51</sup>

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45 Ibid., 55.

46 Ibid., 56.

47 Ibid., 58.

48 Ibid., 58.

49 Ibid., 55.

50 Ibid., 65.

51 Ibid., 65.

and goes beyond the Leninist class alliances<sup>52</sup>. His understanding of leadership entails a "collective will", which is established through ideology as organic cement in the form of "historical bloc". This ideologically organized historical block is embodied within institutions and apparatuses through a number of articulatory principles. By doing so, Gramsci surpasses rigid base-superstructure dichotomy. Nevertheless, leadership is still attributed to the hegemonic class. However, Gramscian ideology is not reductionist due to his perception of "collective will", and "ideological elements articulated by a hegemonic class does not have a necessary class belongings"<sup>53</sup>. Nevertheless, Laclau and Mouffe argue that in Gramsci there is an "ultimate ontological foundation" in class hegemony". This sets "a limit to the deconstructive logic of hegemony"<sup>54</sup>. Whatever his drawbacks are, his socialist strategy as the "war of positions", like "collective will", is not constrained within class struggle and accepts that identities are not fixed but change in process<sup>55</sup>. His concept of hegemony perceives social complexity and the plurality of historical subjects<sup>56</sup> in a way that politics become "articulation". Nevertheless, these all cannot rescue Gramsci from class reductionism<sup>57</sup>.

For a better conception of hegemony, which is the logic of "articulation" and "contingency", Laclau and Mouffe challenge the positive conception of the social by developing their perceptions of "antagonism and hegemony". First of all, they need the term of "overdetermination". But, in its Althusserian usage, they cannot find any "contingent variation" but only "essential determinism". In Althusser's structuralist marxism, "the difference is not constitutive and the social is unified in the sutured space of a rationalist paradigm". Althusser's "rationally unified totality" does

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52 Ibid., 66.

53 Ibid., 67.

54 Ibid., 69.

55 Ibid., 70.

56 Ibid., 71.

57 Ibid., 85.

not give rise to "articulation"<sup>58</sup>. Hence, it is faced with only "simple determination" rather than "overdetermination". In addition, even internal criticism of Althusserian structuralism, as in the case of Hirst and Wooley, could not escape from this fate with their "non-essential character of links uniting the elements of the presumed totality". They replaced "essentialism of the totality" with "essentialism of elements"<sup>59</sup>.

*Articulation and Discourse:* Laclau and Mouffe's attacks towards "reductionism", "essentialism" and "rationally unified totalities" like "object 'society' "<sup>60</sup>, "fixidity" of social identities, "sutured society", "privileged subjects", and so on, can be revealed in their full meanings from their theory of articulation and discourses. Articulatory practice (articulation) establishes a relation among elements giving rise to a "discourse" as a "structured totality". During this articulatory process, elements are transformed into moments<sup>61</sup>. A discursive formation has a "type of coherence", which is close to "regularity in dispersion". It is not "unified" but emerges as "an ensemble of differential positions". Here, "it constitutes a configuration"<sup>62</sup>. Laclau and Mouffe make note that "transformation of elements into moments is never complete" because discursive formation is not a "sutured totality" and already for this reason "contingency" and "articulation" can be possible<sup>63</sup>.

Laclau and Mouffe reject discursive-non-discursive dichotomy since "every object is constituted as an object of discourse" and "specificity" of objects "depends upon the structuring of a discursive field"<sup>64</sup>. What non-discursive is in fact "discursive

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58 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony*;99 and for a critique of such postmodern interpretations of Gramscian theory, see Ercan Gündoğan, "Conceptions of Hegemony in Antonio Gramsci's Southern Question and the Prison Notebooks", *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry*, Vol.2, No. 1 (November 2008), 45-60, in <http://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/newproposals>

59 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony*, 103

60 Ibid., 99.

61 Ibid., 105.

62 Ibid., 106.

63 Ibid., 106-107.

64 Ibid., 108



articulation" as in the cases of organizations and institutions. It is an establishment of a relation between different elements<sup>65</sup>. Actually, what is offered to us is "indissoluble totality" between language and the actions" as in the meaning of Wittgenstein's "language games"<sup>66</sup>. In Laclau and Mouffe's sense, "the practice of articulation", accordingly, "cannot consist of purely linguistic phenomena; but must instead pierce the entire material density of the multifarious institutions, rituals and practices through which a discursive formation is structured"<sup>67</sup>. Here, we understand that in Laclau and Mouffe the base-superstructure dichotomy is completely the same with the linguistic, non-linguistic dichotomy. To them as long as we have such a dichotomy we face reductionism and inevitably, we use a theory of manifestation" , which is the epistemological position of Marxism, in fact. If so, Laclau and Mouffe accept a non-materialist epistemology even though they apply to a sort of realist ontology. For example they say that in Marxism "the field of ideologies", "thought under the concept of 'superstructure'" "was an a priori unity vis-à-vis the dispersion of its materiality, so that it required an appeal either to the unifying role of a class (Gramsci), or to the functional requirements of the logic of reproduction (Althusser)". However, in articulation, there is no "place of constitution prior to, or outside, the dispersion of the articulated elements"<sup>68</sup>.

Discourse "as a relational totality" is "incomplete" and it is "pierced by contingency" like every totality. Similarly, "the "society" as a "sutured and self-defined totality" is not a "valid object of discourse" since "there is no single underlying principle fixing-and hence constituting-the whole field of differences"<sup>69</sup>. This field of differences (identities) cannot be fully fixed because it is the "field of overdetermination". "The social cannot be reduced to the interiority of a fixed system of differences, the pure exteriority is also impossible". Neither "absolute fixidity" nor

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65 Ibid., 107.

66 Ibid., 108.

67 Ibid., 109.

68 Ibid., 109.

69 Ibid., 110-111.

"absolute non-fixidity" is accepted<sup>70</sup>. Although Laclau and Mouffe state that discourse is a "structured totality"<sup>71</sup>, they quiscard the conception of structure in a way that "centre-transcendental signified-...is abandoned"<sup>72</sup>. Here, their discourse theory is far more strengthened since if there is no central, originative and transcendental signified, "everything become discourse" and "the play of signification" is extended infinitely. Similarly, they quote in Derrida, saying that there is no law for the "constitution of structure" but "a process of signification which orders the displacements and substitutions for this law of central presence". Laclau and Mouffe, at this point, attack also towards the concept of "social", which "only exists...as an effort to construct that impossible object", that is, in the "intelligible and instituted forms of a society". Accordingly, discourse is also an attempt but to "dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a centre". It is hegemonic when we have "privileged discursive points of this partial fixation", in other words, "nodal points"<sup>73</sup>. We can argue that Laclau and Mouffe suggest exactly a network type of conception of the social relations in the place of structural metaphors by introducing all two dimensional surface relations through discursivity, nodal points, fixation, articulation. Articulatory practices already construct certain nodal points by beginning from "the openness of the social" and "constant overflowing of every discourse by the infinitude of the field of discursivity"<sup>74</sup>.

*Subject:* Subject as a category is meaningful only in the context of subject positions within a "discursive structure"<sup>75</sup>, which is the "field of a dispersion of subject positions". Nonetheless, despite this dispersion together with detotalisation and decentralisation of certain positions, there emerges an overdetermination, which has "systematic effect"<sup>76</sup>. So, any differentiation with its multiplicity

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70 Ibid., 111.

71 Ibid., 105.

72 Ibid., 112.

73 Ibid., 112.

74 Ibid., 113.

75 Ibid., 115.

76 Ibid., 117.

and heterogeneity is constructed as a system of subordination-domination. For example, sexual differences are overdetermined in the form of sexual division and constructed as a "sex/gender system" and woman is produced as a category. However, this does not imply "there is a single cause of feminian subordination" because there is such a thing as "feminian essence" but "a common element which has strong overdetermining effects in terms of the sexual division"<sup>77</sup>. There is no essence but an "imaginary signification" which results in "concrete effects in the diverse social practices", which are autonomous and unevenly developed social practices<sup>78</sup>.

If so, since there is no essence of the subjects as in the cases of femininity or class, interests are not represented in political practice, but it is political practice which "constructs the interests it represents"<sup>79</sup>. Nonetheless, dispersed subject positions caused by the very absence of society do not permit any consolidation of separate positions because there is a "game of overdetermination among them that reintroduces the horizon of an impossible totality". It is understood that game of overdetermination" is actually the "game" for "the hegemonic articulation"<sup>80</sup>.

*Antagonism:* Laclau and Mouffe argue that Marxism confused antagonism with contradictions<sup>81</sup>. "The dialectics is a doctrine about the essentially contradictory nature of the real, not about the empirical existence of contradictions in reality". In this sense, contradiction does not imply an "antagonistic relation"<sup>82</sup>. They define contradiction as an impossibility in which something cannot be its opposite (it is because A is fully A that being not A is a contradiction). However, antagonism means that "presence of the 'Other' prevents me from being totally my self". Antagonism "constitutes the limit of every objectivity" whereas in contradiction we have "an equally definable relation among

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77 Ibid., 117-118.

78 Ibid., 118.

79 Ibid., 120.

80 Ibid., 122.

81 Ibid., 123.

82 Ibid., 124.

concepts". If there is a limit for objectivity, there emerges an antagonistic relation, which is witnessed as the impossibility of "a final suture". The more interesting definition is that "antagonisms are not internal but external to society" since they "constitute the limits of society"<sup>83</sup>.

For Laclau and Mouffe, identity is "purely negative". "To be something is always not to be something else"<sup>84</sup>. So, we understand from their account that antagonism is related with identities and negativity of identities gives its meaning to social. "The social is penetrated by negativity-that is, by antagonism- it does not attain the status of transparency, of full presence, and the objectivity of its identities is permanently subverted". Constitution of the social stems from this "impossible relation between objectivity and negativity". Exactly at this point, when they consider "the structuring of political space, from the points of view of the opposed logics of equivalence and difference", they observe that antagonisms cannot "totally" "dissolve the objectivity of the social", either<sup>85</sup>. Logic of equivalence refers to the "simplification of political space" while that of difference expands and increase scomplexity, resulting in far more instability and antagonisms. As can bee seen, the logic of difference is dominant in advanced industrial societies where "the proliferation of points of antagonisms permits the multiplication of democratic struggles", which "do not tend to constitute a 'people', and where the political space is not divided into two "antagonistic fields". The logic as such produces "democratic subject positions", which cannot be centralised", a situation, they state, described by "organic crisis" by Gramsci<sup>86</sup>, and which cannot have "clear-cut' politics of frontiers"<sup>87</sup>. In advanced industrial societies, the logic of equivalence which refers to an organic crisis, we see an enwidening of "the field of articulatory practices", which is "the general field of the emergence of hegemony", where "'elements'

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83 Ibid., 125.

84 Ibid., 128.

85 Ibid., 129.

86 Ibid., 130-131.

87 Ibid., 133.

are not crystallised into 'moments' <sup>88</sup>. On the other hand, for hegemony, "articulatory moment is not sufficient" but also, hegemony should be in a "confrontation with antagonistic articulatory practices"<sup>89</sup>, which requires "equivalence and frontier effects"<sup>90</sup>.

Laclau and Mouffe try to reveal a new and radical Gramsci from old Gramsci. His conception of "historical bloc" is interpreted as "a social and political space relatively unified through the instituting of nodal points and constitution of tendentially relational identities". They claim that Gramsci's "historical block" coincides with their concept of "discursive formation"<sup>91</sup>. But, both conceptions of "historical bloc" and "war of positions" must be redefined within an antagonistic and plural terrain of political spaces where we have "a variety of hegemonic nodal points" rather than one centre. There is no single hegemonic centre around which social formation is structured as Gramsci insisted, even though some nodal points may be "highly overdetermined". This "highly overdetermined" nodal points imply "a condensation of a number of social relations and thus, become the focal point of a multiplicity of totalising effects". And, if we have no any centre and we cannot reduce the plurality of social into any underlying unitary principle, there will be "an automosation of spheres and forms of struggle"<sup>92</sup>. In this sense, for Laclau and Mouffe, debate on relative autonomy of the state (or something else) has no validity since relative autonomy conception depends upon the assumption of "sutured society" and of the acceptance of an underlying unitary principle<sup>93</sup>.

However, in the absence of any hegemonic centre in the face of "an autonomisation of spheres and forms of struggle", how do autonomy and subordination become meaningful? They claim that both of them are meaningful if the antagonisms of "hegemonic

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88 Ibid., 134.

89 Ibid., 135.

90 Ibid., 136.

91 Ibid., 136.

92 Ibid., 139.

93 Ibid., 139-140.

practices" "in the field of articulatory practices" are considered. "The autonomy of the state as a whole-assuming for a moment that we can speak of it as a unity-depends on the construction of a political space which can only be the result of hegemonic articulation". But, this hegemonic articulation as a political space is valid only "for the degree of unity and autonomy existing among the different branches and apparatuses of the state". Autonomy is already is "a form of hegemonic construction"<sup>94</sup>.

*New Social Movements:* All conceptual equipment Laclau and Mouffe up to now have tried to develop from their deconstruction (of Leninist tradition and structural marxism) and reinterpretation (of Gramsci) of classical Marxist theory is based on the claim that in advanced industrial societies, political conditions of socialism strategy have completely changed. The very expression of this radical change is seen in the formation of "new social movements". Their all attacks towards class politics come from this definition. Their emphasis on autonomy (emergence of different subject positions), and hegemony, which has no class content any more and is conceived only as "a type of political relation"<sup>95</sup> and discourse as a "structured totality"<sup>96</sup> caused by articulatory processes, and their attempts to detotalise society together with decentralization of class positions from theory and politics are all strategic attempts to theorize new social movements and define the place of such movements in radical democratic politics. However, the concept of hegemony is the central one around which all theory is constructed. The effects of hegemony "emerge from a surplus of meaning which results from an operation of displacement"<sup>97</sup>. Its logic does not account for "the totality of the social" and its formation is not based on the "specific logic of a single social force". Like other forms of power, which are "constructed in a pragmatological way and internally to social, through the opposed logic of equivalence and difference" hegemonic power cannot be foundational (Laclau and Mouffe say

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94 Ibid., 140.

95 Ibid., 141.

96 Ibid., 105.

97 Ibid., 141.

that “power is never foundational”<sup>98</sup>. Hegemony is not caused by “an irradiation of effects from privileged points”<sup>99</sup>. Accordingly, insofar as hegemonic power is not foundational, it also will not constitute a centre. Laclau and Mouffe argue that “The problem of power cannot...be posed in terms of the search for the class or the dominant sector which constitutes the centre of a hegemonic formation, given that, by definition, such a centre will always elude us”<sup>100</sup>.

*Some Remarks:* In Marxist tradition, all attempts to go “beyond Marxism” creates a sort of division between so called orthodoxy and so assumed revisionism. This is not surprising when we consider that Marxism is not only an academic activity but a theory to change capitalist social relations through socialism. As Lenin stated somewhere, all philosophical debates have political results. But, is there any philosophical result of political conditions? I think that Laclau and Mouffe’s book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* can be handled only in this perspective. If we attack towards this notorious proclamation of postmarxism on the ground of reactionary advocating of merits and power of classical Marxism, we have to confront the results of twentieth century socialism and see the impossibility of socialism in the advanced industrial societies at least as imagined in the tradition.

A famous critique of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* came from Geras<sup>101</sup> in his New Left Review article Post- Marxism? The criticism was based upon the definitions of an intellectual move from structural marxism to ex-marxism, which always distorted Marxist tradition in theory in particular. There may have been some problems in practice of the theory but theory itself was not inherently problematic.

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98 Ibid., 142.

99 Ibid., 141.

100 Ibid., 142.

101 Norman Geras, “Post-Marxism?” *New Left Review*, No: 163, (1987 May-June), 40-83 and reply of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, “Post-Marxism without Apologies”, *New Left Review*, no: 166, (1987, November-December).

I think that this sort of criticism repeats the failure of postmarxism in a symmetrical way. Postmarxism theorizes a socialist strategic possibility in a new political environment, which is highly contingent. It is sure that this theorizing attempt would suffer from this contingency and replace "one sided necessitarian logic" with "one sided contingency logic"<sup>102</sup> and even the worst, with an "absolute contingency"<sup>103</sup>. The solution must come from a new synthesis which could theorize contingency through a development of Marxist theory of class and capital accumulation. Otherwise, any critique of postmarxism will be in a reactionary mood without going beyond the correct but unproductive definitions of "new revisionisms"<sup>104</sup>.

Within the internal development of Marxist tradition, spatial phenomena have been the most central question in theory and practice. Newly conceived importance of spatial phenomena does not only rescue the tradition from post-modern attacks of contingency but also demonstrates all clues for the possibility of socialist politics. It is true that first implicit conception of the spatiality of capitalism and of socialist strategy exists in Gramsci's writings<sup>105</sup>. In Gramsci, the southern question does not only imply different interests of rural populations subordinated by the interests of northern urban blocks, but also different political space articulated into the north through an organization of power relations at the national level through a direct mediation of southern intellectual blocks. In addition, in his prison notebooks, Gramsci<sup>106</sup> drops the division of the state from civil society and achieves a sort of cobweb conception of society and the state in

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102 Nicos P. Mouzelis, *Post-Marxist Alternatives- The Construction of Social Orders*, London, Macmillan, 1990); 21-22.

103 Ellen Wood, *Democracy against Capitalism-Renewing Historical Materialism*, (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 52.

104 Ellen Wood, *Democracy*, 256.

105 See article The Southern question in Antonio Gramsci, *Pre-Prison Writings*, ed.: R. Bellamy, Translation: V. Cox, Cambridge University Press, 1994 and its development in - Hapishane Defterleri, Tarih, Politika, Felsefe ve Kültür Sorunlari Üzerine Seçme Metinler, (*Prison Notebooks- Selected Writings on the Problems of History, Politics, Philosophy and Culture*), Translation: K. Somer, (Istanbul, Onur Yayinlari, 1986).

106 Gramsci, *Mapishane Defterleri (Prison Notebooks)*.



which central power of hegemonic class is diffused in to all space of social relations.

Another attempt for the Marxist theorization of contingent social and political environments came from Lefebvre<sup>107</sup>. Lefebvre's "urban revolution thesis" is based upon his theory of "production of space", which explains the survival reasons of capitalism into the twentieth century. Increasing commodification of physical and social spaces and fragmentation of living spaces in the form of core and periphery implies a new form of exploitation and residence points and new conditions of class alliances. However, Lefebvre's theory does not acknowledge industrial base of urban revolution and his spatial conceptions of capitalism are not integrated with Marxian theory of class struggle and capital accumulation. An integration of spatial phenomena into classical Marxism would not be possible until David Harvey's studies on uneven geographical development of capitalism, capitalist urbanization and urban consciousness<sup>108</sup> and finally his works on the postmodern cultural, economic and intellectual condition<sup>109</sup>. His theory of urban class formation and his conception of urban consciousness directly deal with the same questions posed by Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*<sup>110</sup>. Differentiation of social spaces through creative destructive logic of uneven geographical development of capitalism results in ever transferring of fundamental contradictions of capitalism into different spheres of social life. There are some fundamental and derivative forces of class structuration, which does not express itself in the form of class polarization. Actually, the connection point between contingency and Marxian theory of capital

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107 Henri Lefebvre, *The Survival of Capitalism-Reproduction of the Relations of Production*, (USA, Macmillan, [1973] 1976) and - *The Production of Space*, (Oxford, Blackwell, [1974] 1998).

108 David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*, (London, Edward Arnold, 1973); *The Limits to Capital*, (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1982), *The Urbanization of Capital - Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*, (Baltimore, Maryland, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985a), - *Consciousness and the Urban Experience- Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*, (Baltimore, Maryland, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985b).

109 David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity - An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1989) and - *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, (Cambridge and Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1996).

110 *Hegemony*.

accumulation and classes is not seen in the process of urbanization of capital in which neither capitalist class nor working class is seen as the united antagonistic forces. Enemy disappears with and through space.

Urban class alliances emerge to prevent and develop existing assets and positions in the face of production, circulation and realization of capital. Participants of an alliance have plenty of origin and exactly for this reason; an alliance is unstable and vulnerable to the winds of capital circulation. The very need to compete with capital requirements gives the urban class alliance politics a relatively autonomous character. Actually, in this politics, neither economic interests is interested in political form, nor, interests are constructed directly politics. The former reduces politics into economic interests whereas the latter sees politics as a sphere of production of interests.

Furthermore, Harvey's conception of urban consciousness completes his analysis of urban alliance politics. Elements of urban consciousness formation are individuality, community, the state, family and class. It can be seen that class is only one locus of consciousness and organization, which can emerge or not. But this does not mean that classes can have any central position within socialist theory and practice. The fact that workers do not or cannot easily organize themselves as a class will not render socialism classless politics. In addition, any attack upon class politics and any attempt to decentralize working class from socialist theory should recognize the class content of capitalist social relations even if we accept that there is no hegemonic center as Laclau and Mouffe claim. In their analysis, state is not a centre even in their conception of hegemonic articulations. Jessop claims that just as the society is impossible in Laclau and Mouffe, "common juxtaposition between 'state' and 'society' ", or couplet "state - civil society" becomes meaningless<sup>111</sup>. Jessop asks whether the state exists<sup>112</sup>. The answer is positive, but, the state is de-statized, in fact. Because Laclau and Mouffe's deconstructive

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111 Bob Jessop, *State Theory-Putting the Capitalist State in its Place*, (Pennsylvania, University Park, the Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 292-293.

112 Jessop, *State Theory*, 292.

logic often turns into anarchist destruction, there is no institutional analysis<sup>113</sup> of power in their work, either

In their comparison of advanced industrial societies with the periphery of the capitalist world, third world, they use the terms "imperialist exploitation" and "brutal and centralized forms of domination" for the context of the latter<sup>114</sup>. In addition, while Laclau in his *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*<sup>115</sup> clearly explains he accepts the Marxist labor theory of value and definition of capitalism as "a system of production based on wage labour"<sup>116</sup>, he goes on to say that "antagonism is not established *within* capitalist relations of production, but *between* the latter and the identity of the social agents-workers included-outside of them". Antagonism is not "*inherent to the relations of production*"<sup>117</sup>. Laclau's explanation reveals *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy's* main problem and their failure to theorize it: differentiation of production and reproduction spheres and accordingly work-residential differentiation of capitalist urban space; hence the differentiation between primary and secondary exploitation processes<sup>118</sup>. Labor is exploited not only in the work place, but also laborers face various secondary forms of exploitation out of work. Moreover, an individual is not only in the loci of individualism, but also in those of community, family, the state and also class.

The last correction to Laclau and Mouffe's postmarxism can be made as regards with their key concept *antagonism*. In marxism, the term refers to a condition in which any compromise, any consent or patience begins to disappear in a way that a contradictory relation turns into an open war on the eve of a possible critical rupture from accumulated quantity to a new quality. In this sense, any conflict points may become

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113 Mouzelis, Post-Marxist, 25.

114 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony*, 131.

115 Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*, (London-New York, Verso), 1990.

116 Ibid., 221.

117 Ibid., 221.

118 David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital-Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*, (Baltimore, Maryland, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985a).

antagonized provided that contradictory content of the relation destruct the implicit consent. This is why Gramsci defined hegemony as a consent armored by force<sup>119</sup>, which is a completely alien conception to the writers of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*.

#### **4. A Conclusion**

The article has shown that although it is true that social and political relations have a postmodern condition with their uncertainties and contingency, they can be understood by Marxist theory and changed by its acceptance of main exploited classes into socialism through class struggle, on the contrary of a postmarxist suggestion as exemplified by Laclau and Mouffe. Validity and significance of this theory, that is, historical materialism, needs to be reasserted by developing a theory of "historico-geographical materialism" as suggested by David Harvey since the 1970s and Henri Lefebvre. Contingency of postmodern conditions of social and political relations can be understood only by developing much more, such a theory, which points to the spatialized aspects of capitalist relations that are seemingly not understandable and changeable by the mainstream Marxist theory as suggested and implied by postmodern Marxist thought<sup>120</sup>. This challenging theory not only deconstructs the philosophical foundations of the Marxist theory such as dialectics, determinism, and realism but also undermines Marxist politics based on the conception of class interests and class struggle aiming to abolish capitalist class relations through a socialist revolution that starts with the seizure of the bourgeois political power. It is because this theory argues that significance of class interests and class struggle is replaced by the new social and political movements that have no center and coherence. Consequently, a state or centre of political power no longer exists

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119 Gramsci, *Hapishane Defterleri (The Prison Writings)*.

120 For the development of historico-geographical materializm, the reader can apply to my book: Ercan Gundogan, *A Theory of Capitalist Urbanisation: David Harvey*, (Germany,VDM Verlag, 2009) as well as my frequent attempts to develop this theory in, Ercan Gundogan, *Marxian Theory and Socialism in Turkey, A Critique of the Socialist Journal Aydinlik*, (Germany,VDM Verlag, 2009).

to be seized by a socialist class struggle, putting aside a theory that would be based on such a conception.

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## **AVOIDING WELFARE STATE RETRENCHMENT IN FRANCE**

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### ***Abstract***<sup>1</sup>

*France has successfully resisted pressures to retrench its high levels of pension transfers, especially during the financial crisis of the 1970s and the creation of the European Monetary Union in the 1990s and can continue to resist with new labor activation reform. This article classifies France as a Bismarckian welfare state within the parameters of Esping-Andersen's studies, but a Bismarckian welfare state that has proven capable of reform to maintain the basic structure of its system. It analyzes the viability of the pay-as-you-go funding for the pension system and offers solutions on how to keep the current system with the introduction of labor activation policies that include traditionally-excluded segments of the population like immigrants, the elderly, women and youth.*

### **1. Introduction**

France's expensive pension system has repeatedly withstood pressure to reduce its high transfer payments and will continue to do so if certain measures are taken to lower the contribution burden on the working population. Many countries in the same European bloc responded to financial crises during the 1970s and 1990s by undergoing retrenchment policies such as cutting down on services offered or reducing its level of pension transfer payments but France offers a case-study where retrenchment has been successfully resisted and shows no signs of beginning on a large scale. In all of Europe, France is second only to Sweden in the percentage of GDP allotted to social protection expenditure.<sup>2</sup>

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1 The author would like to thank Dr. John Stephens and two anonymous reviewers of the CEU PSJ for their helpful comments.

2 Eurostat, *European Social Statistics* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, European Commission, 2008).

The French system must change in order to ease the strain on the current working population, but from the past examples that will be explained in depth, it is clear that if there is change it will occur on the supply-side of employment rather than lessening the demand for high transfer payments.

This research will show why retrenchment is still very difficult to accomplish in France despite external pressures. First, occupational groups and labor unions hold a substantial amount of power in organizing the public, who is fairly educated on these matters. The French government must convince these groups that new reform is beneficial to them. Second, cutting back on social protection expenditure like pension transfer payments is unfair to the elderly currently on pensions who have contributed to the system their entire working career and expect to receive their contributions back when they can no longer work. There are measures that France and potentially other countries in similar positions can avoid retrenchment.

I will begin by explaining France's history within the Bismarckian welfare system beginning in the late 1800s and the focus on protecting the traditional worker. In the same section, I will show how France incorporating Beveridgean policy after World War II in the 1940s did not completely permanently rid France of its Bismarckian heritage. For example, the financial crisis of the 1970s led France to create policies that protected the traditional worker like lowering the retirement age. I will then move on to discussing pressures in the 1990s that led some European countries to retrenchment. In France, the result was not a retrenchment of the system but an increase in the role of the government to provide a cushion in the economic crisis. Finally, I will suggest increasing the labor supply as the most practical and feasible solution for a country like France that seeks to avoid retrenchment but has an rapidly diminishing working population. The key approach is to synthesize prominent work in the field of Bismarckian welfare systems and demographic and social expenditure statistics into a comprehensive analysis of the French pension system.



## 2. France as a “Bismarckian” Welfare State:

France’s current welfare system can be best understood by looking back into its creation. According to Esping-Andersen’s<sup>3</sup> categorization of the welfare state, France falls into the category of the (geographically) Continental European state with more specifically a Bismarckian welfare system. The original aim of a Bismarckian system is to provide access to jobs and income security for male industrial workers through a “family wage,” which is an income sufficient to support the needs of a nuclear family.<sup>4</sup> Benefits are usually earnings-related and based on work and contribution record. This is a description of the Bismarckian countries that group Germany, France, Belgium, Austria and the Netherlands together as having a common background and helps one to understand the context in dealing with French retrenchment policy and more current reforms.

### 2.1. Creation

The late 1800s brought the introduction of the Bismarckian welfare system, which still exists in France despite the introduction of the policies that introduced more of a universal welfare system in the 1940s. The pay-as-you-go pension system and tiered occupational insurance schemes that still exist are proof of the dependence on the Bismarckian welfare system.

According to Palier, workers in Continental European countries faced similar situations during the period of industrialization (late 1800s).<sup>5</sup> Previously, the family was the source of aid in times of instability, but because of urbanization and the mobility of workers, families were no longer as easily accessible to support workers in times of trouble and increasing number of work-

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3 Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

4 Karl Hinrichs, “A Social Insurance State Withers Away. Welfare State Reforms in Germany – or: Attempts to Turn around in a Cul-de-sac,” in *A Long Goodbye to Bismarck. The Politics of Welfare Reform in Central Europe*, ed. Bruno Palier. (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2006), 4.

5 Bruno Palier, “Continental Western Europe – the “Bismarckian” welfare systems,” in *Oxford Handbook on Comparative Welfare States*, ed. H. Obinger, C. Pierson, F. Castles, and J. Lewis. (Forthcoming), 3-7.

related accidents. Thus, workers organized in occupational groups that could provide some of the basic needs or pressure employers to take the place of the family. In France, these groups were called the "*Société de secours mutuelles*", which were traditionally funded by *Caisses*, a not-for-profit mélange of private and public social insurance bodies. Funding and organizational efforts of the *Caisses* relied more on organizational groups of employers and employees than on the market or the state as was the practice in Liberal and Nordic welfare states. These organizational groups were able to maintain the goal of providing job and income security for the predominately male industrial workers who ran the organizations. In current-day France the *Caisse d'allocations familiales* (CAF) still exists under the Social Security system in a confusing network of public insurance schemes still mostly financed by employee/employer contributions. There are currently 123 different *caisses d'allocations familiales* to choose from, depending on the region one lives in.<sup>6</sup> The government delegates much of the control of social welfare to a semi-private/semi-public sphere while and it requires that everyone be covered by some social insurance scheme.

As a response to the instability of the period of industrialization, Germany spearheaded the move towards increased coverage for previously-employed workers under the rule of Otto von Bismarck (1862-1890). In 1883, 1884 and 1889 he proposed bills on health insurance, accident insurance and old age and disability insurance respectively. These bills were passed, and they began a system of protection for social insurance that was comparatively large and today is at the basis of modern Bismarckian welfare policy. In 1884 he wrote,

The actual complaint of the worker is the insecurity of his existence; he is unsure if he will always have work, he is unsure if he will always be healthy and he can predict that he will reach old age and be unable to work. If he falls into poverty, and be that only through prolonged illness, he will find himself totally helpless being on his own, and society currently does not accept any

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<sup>6</sup> See the CAF website [www.caf.fr/wps/portal/](http://www.caf.fr/wps/portal/) for more information.

responsibility towards him beyond the usual provisions for the poor, even if he has been working all the time ever so diligently and faithfully.<sup>7</sup>

He helped create the prototype of a transfer-heavy welfare state to protect the worker who has been responsibly giving contributions throughout his career.

Bismarck was of a Christian background and that influenced Bismarckian policy to encourage the Church's doctrine of "subsidiary" in the promotion of the family as the basic source of welfare. If one looks at the pillar system of family, market and state, Bismarckian welfare policy tends to put the family on a pedestal and rejects heavy reliance on the market as it tends to be in the Liberal welfare system or on the government as it tends to be in the Nordic welfare system. The best way to follow the subsidiary doctrine was to encourage direct employer-employee relationships and to only provide further aid in more extreme cases. Another result of the subsidiary doctrine is that the entitlements given to a displaced worker assumed that there was one male breadwinner and the transfer payments must cover what the family is used to having him bring into the home. This monetary transfer payment decreased the need for female participation in the workforce and furthermore, the lack of any other sort of welfare like childcare or elderly care forced females to stay out of the workforce.<sup>8</sup>

Directly after World War II, there was a shift in focus in Western Europe to providing a more universalistic welfare policy that affected the Bismarckian countries as well. The *Conseil National de la Résistance* (CNR) was a French resistance group during WWII that coordinated the efforts of French political parties, labor unions and regional resistance groups, with a strong Communist influence.<sup>9</sup> To appease the Communist Party presence, the

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7 To read his entire speech in German, go to:

[www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/en\\_Blatt3\\_k5\\_bsb00018445\\_00000.html](http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/en_Blatt3_k5_bsb00018445_00000.html) (accessed November 30, 2009).

8 Hinrichs, "A Social Insurance State Withers Away. Welfare State Reforms in Germany – or: Attempts to Turn around in a Cul-de-sac," 4.

9 See [www.musee-resistance.com/](http://www.musee-resistance.com/) for more information.

government compiled a plan to create a universal social security program to cover all citizens, regardless of sickness or injury. The French welfare revisions were also influenced by the Beveridge Report that was introduced to the British House of Commons on June 10, 1941. The Beveridge Report concluded that,

Existing provisions were inadequate and unequal. Several of the more serious risks of life were either not insured at all or were, as in the case of funeral expenses, unsatisfactorily insured. Large segments of the population were altogether excluded from the existing social insurance. The period of benefit-payment was in many cases too short and benefits often stopped when the need for them was greatest. In the lower income groups the larger the family the greater was the pressure on subsistence.<sup>10</sup>

The Beveridge Report emphasized the importance of meeting the needs of the entire population without discrimination. The results influenced the social security policy in post-war France.

While the Beveridge Report led to an awareness of the need for universal healthcare and pensions, the actual implementation of social insurance schemes was reliant on separate regional occupational or company-based insurance funds. Palier says that in the late 1980s in France there were over 600 basic pension schemes and more than 6000 complementary pension schemes.<sup>11</sup> Although there was a desire for a more universal and equal pension scheme, it was difficult to move away from different levels within the universal scheme that gave options to people in different occupational groups.

During this time, financing for pension programs in France came over 80% from social contributions through employers and employees, primarily through pay-as-you-go (PAYG) contributions because of the desire (based on subsidiary doctrine) to keep the state out of the picture in the form of direct taxes. The fact that in France pension benefits were known as "deferred wages" emphasizes the point that one earns and contributes his own

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10 Wolman, Leo, "The Beveridge Report," *Political Science Quarterly* 58 (1943):1-10.

11 Palier, "Continental Western Europe – the "Bismarckian" welfare systems."

wages, it is income-related and if one contributed money while working, one deserves to receive it back later.

A PAYG system operates when the money saved through contributions goes directly towards the current individuals who receive benefits checks like the retired or disabled. To make the concept clearer, Krieger compares the most basic PAYG system to the family.<sup>12</sup> The parents share their earnings with their children who are unable to work, and then when the children become old enough to work, they share with their parents when the parents are retired and unable to work. This was the source of the majority of the revenue for social insurance policy.

## **2.2. Fiscal Tensions of the 1970s**

The unemployment problem in France was exacerbated by a high dependency on PAYG contributions which are employment-related (because only those obtaining a regular income can contribute). By the mid-1970s there was an economic crisis due to rising oil prices which resulted in a rise in unemployment and the need for a balanced budget. Unemployment more than doubled from 4.1% of the active population in 1974 to 10.5% by 1987.<sup>13</sup>

The diagnosis was not that of Liberal retrenchment or Nordic activation but to save the industry, and by helping enterprises, the traditionally *male* French workers would be able to find employment easier and could contribute more generously into the PAYG system. The diagnosis was labor supply reduction in order to protect the traditional male worker and ensure him a job that could provide for an entire family. The French government increased the amounts of contributions put into the system in order to balance the budget and avoid welfare benefit retrenchment. The opposite of welfare retrenchment occurred:

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12 Tim Krieger, *Public Pensions and Immigration: a public choice approach* (Northampton, MA, 2005).

13 Bruno Palier, *A Long Goodbye to Bismarck. The Politics of Welfare Reform in Central Europe*. (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, Forthcoming), 11.

there was instead an increase of social protection expenditure in GDP which grew from 19.4% in 1974 to 27.3% in 1985.<sup>14</sup>

In an attempt to solve the crisis caused by the economic downturn in France in the 1970s, France looked to ways of implementing early exit strategies (labor-shedding) especially in the form of earlier retirement to increase profitable employment opportunities for the active younger citizens. The government both lowered the age of retirement and enabled employees to begin receiving some of their retirement benefits earlier according to this policy.<sup>15</sup>

The policies created to address the growing unemployment of the 1970s did not focus on lowering the amount of welfare pensions received to stabilize the budget but mainly focused on protecting traditional employees through job protection strategies and ensuring a source of revenue through social contributions. The retirement policy was extremely successful: 84,000 people retired early in 1975; 159,000 in 1979; 317,000 in 1981 and 705,000 in 1983.<sup>16</sup> As **Table 1** shows, the employment rate for people 65 years old and older is very small, at 1.3% for French citizens compared to 52.3% for those 15 years old and older. In some Bismarckian welfare states like Germany, the numbers of immigrants allowed into the country were restricted for the same reasons, to protect already-employed citizens in the country and to permit them easier access to jobs.

France has evolved along the same dimensions as the rest of the Bismarckian welfare states like Germany, Belgium, Austria and the Netherlands. They have a shared history, especially the Christian doctrine of subsidiary and similar governmental structures that give veto points, or places in the legislative

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14 From the French Ministry of Social Affairs' Service of Statistical Studies and Information Systems, "Comptes de la protection sociale."

15 Palier, *A Long Goodbye to Bismarck. The Politics of Welfare Reform in Central Europe*, 7.

16 J. Bichot, *Les politiques sociales en France au 20ème siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1997), 132.

**Table 1. Employed Population in France according to nationality and age in 2009<sup>17</sup>**

	<i>French</i>	<i>Other Nationalities</i>
<b>Population</b> (in thousands)		
<b>15 years old and older</b>	24,565	1,348
<b>65 years old and older</b>	117	--
<b>Employment rate</b>		
<b>15 years old and older</b>	52.3%	47.9%
<b>65 years old and older</b>	1.3%	--

process where legislation has the opportunity to be contested and blocked by labor unions and employment organizations. These countries created policies based on the Bismarckian method of providing aid to workers in case of an emergency and eventually added Beveridgean policies of universality to provide basic aid to all groups regardless of contributions. Through the 1970s the Bismarckian welfare states all moved into a policy of increased protection for the average worker to enable him to provide for the family. The main method was through labor shedding, or a reduction in the number of low-productivity workers through the means of early retirement, discouraging mothers from working through the lack of extensive service welfare like daycares, and discouragement of immigration.

### **3. Europeanization and the Need to Converge**

The 1990s brought about fiscal tension which also threatened to push the Bismarckian countries towards retrenchment. The main factor was the creation of the European Single Market in 1992 and new stipulations for joining the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) that pushed countries to control the public debt. This was especially a problem for France, a country with a long-lasting problem of debt because of its generous welfare transfers.<sup>18</sup> It seemed as though France had to change its generous welfare payments in order to qualify for participation in the EMU. A country's annual budget deficits could not exceed 3%

<sup>17</sup> Data taken from the statistics website of Insee.fr. Updated November, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> Evelyne Huber and John D. Stephens, *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 206.

of gross domestic product (GDP) and public debt had to be less than 60% of GDP in order to be qualified for the EMU. While France was initially allowed into the EMU, it still has difficulty keeping its budget deficits under 3% of GDP. In 1993 the general budget deficit was 6% of GDP (OECD 2001). According to a 2007 memo by the Council of the European Union entitled "France's government deficit back below 3% of GDP: Council closes procedure" France has been under an "excessive debt procedure" that was opened in 2003 because of a 3.2% debt in 2002 that rose to 4.2% in 2003.<sup>19</sup> Within the Bismarckian welfare states, France consistently has the highest percentage of its budget allotted to social protection expenditure, at 30.6% in 1996 and 30.5% in 2007 (See **Table 2**).

**Table 2. Total Expenditures on Social Protection<sup>20</sup>** (as percentage of the nation's GDP).

	1996	2007
<b>European Union</b> (27 countries)	n/a	26.2
<b>France</b> (Continental welfare state)	30.6	30.5
<b>United Kingdom</b> (Liberal welfare state)	27.4	25.3
<b>Denmark</b> (Nordic welfare state)	31.2	28.9

The first reform made by most countries was to work towards controlling the budget and lowering the amount of welfare distributed in the form of pensions. In France this type of reform was made possible with shifting power in the *Caisses* from private organizations to the State. Any increase in the role of the government generally means easier access to tightening the budget. But Pierson of the *Politics of Retrenchment* would point out that throughout the period of retrenchment France has been able to adjust its social insurance arrangement without compromising its dedication to providing basic social welfare.<sup>21</sup> He says that,

19 See Europa website: [www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/misc/92583.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/misc/92583.pdf)

20 Total expenditures on social protection as % of GDP. Found on the Eurostat website.

21 Paul Pierson, *Dismantling the Welfare State? : Reagan, Thatcher, and the politics of retrenchment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).



There is little evidence for broad propositions about the centrality of strong states or left power resources to retrenchment outcomes. The unpopularity of retrenchment makes major cutbacks unlikely except under conditions of budgetary crisis, and radical restructuring is unlikely even then. For the same reason, governments generally seek to negotiate consensus packages rather than to impose reforms unilaterally, which further diminishes the potential for radical reform. And far from creating a self-reinforcing dynamic, cutbacks tend to replenish support for the welfare state.<sup>22</sup>

Pierson suggests that any budgetary cutbacks in times of a financial crisis will only be temporary because of their unpopularity in a country like France where high welfare transfers like pension payments are standard. Once the system has already been in place, it is very difficult to reverse.

Rather than cutting down on transfer payments offered or transforming the contribution method, French policy increased welfare contributions. According to Martin Schludi, there existed significant concern within the government about the need to reform cost containment measures.<sup>23</sup> The government published worrisome projections about the financial viability of the current PAYG system. It was not a lack of information within the government but the public's strong attachment to pension payments that made it difficult for any large-scale reform. In 1988 the then-Mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac had published reports on the need for reform in financing the French pension system in 1987 but by 1995 when he was running in the presidential elections, he knew to avoid such issues because of strong unpopularity. Because the importance of the pension system had been previously well-established in France, there are "large core constituencies for the welfare state [that] have a concentrated interest in the maintenance of social provision."<sup>24</sup> It

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22 Pierson, *Dismantling the Welfare State? : Reagan, Thatcher, and the politics of retrenchment*, 156.

23 Martin Schludi, *The Reform of Bismarckian Pension Systems: a comparison of pension politics in Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005).

24 Paul Pierson, "Coping with Permanent Austerity," in *The New Politics of the Welfare State* ed. Paul Pierson. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2001).

is easier to fight to sustain currently-existing pension benefits than to fight for a reduction.

France relies on cooperation from the affected interest groups that are invested in the social insurance programs and institutional structure of the French pension system and have strong influence over the voters' preferences. As Vail states, "because the state's insularity has discouraged meaningful negotiation before reforms become law, retrenchment has depended upon elites' legitimization of policies by managing conflict in the public arena."<sup>25</sup> It is necessary for lawmakers to be able to convince interest groups involved that it will not negatively affect them especially in the short-term. There are the medical union groups like the very important *Confédération des syndicats médicaux français* (CSMF) that are successfully able to block legislation that is unappealing because of their almost universal participation by French doctors. The *Caisses* mentioned earlier work closely with the medical union groups and are co-governed by union representatives and business leaders.

The 1993 French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur was the exception. He led a center-right coalition and was able to push forward in the area of reform and retrenchment although far from levels present in Liberal welfare states. This was due to few parliamentary obstacles due to his coalition government, a division that had occurred between doctors' unions and interest groups, a slow diffusion of goals through time, and the appearance of full cooperation with physicians' groups.<sup>26</sup> He was able to pass pension and health reform in 1993, most notably increasing the retirement age to 65, increase in calculation period of pension benefits from 10 to 25 years (this lowers the amount of welfare payments received because it takes the average contribution rates of a wider range of years, including those that are not the most high paid), and trim hospital expenditures. These successes depended on a series of favorable conditions in 1993 and cunning strategy to weaken the opposition.

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25 Mark Vail, "The Politics of French Welfare Reform," *Journal of European Social Policy* 9(1999): 311-329.

26 Vail, "The Politics of French Welfare Reform," 315.

Overall, the pressure in the 1990s to control the French social protection budget was not able to convince the general public that the state needed to drastically change expenditure rates. Once there is already a system of high pension transfers in place, it is very difficult to cut back. By 1993 the government was able to pass some reform due to the success of a coalition government, but the most significant reform was in the area of labor activation and not retrenchment.

#### **4. Employment Activation for Immigrants as a Response to Decreased Funds**

Even with the reforms of the 1990s there is still mounting tension on current workers to provide pension transfers for an ever-growing ageing population. Balladur's attempt to raise the retirement age was able to lower contribution rates for an increased number of workers without having to decrease pension transfers. There are other policies that can achieve the same effect such as encouraging immigration and lowering the minimum wage to encourage employers to hire less experienced workers.

Pierson first lists the need to expand employment opportunities, especially in the area of service employment, as an important way of reform for Bismarckian welfare states.<sup>27</sup> This would take the focus away from a rise in contributions or tax-raised revenue especially in a time of financial crisis and focus more on creating a wide base of active participation by all possible members of the economy. This solution avoids reducing the social insurance expenditures which as mentioned earlier, would be very difficult to do once it is already under full swing in the French system. Today's economic crisis renders employment activation policies more important than ever. Pierson also says that reform is made possible when key actors like labor unions and associations are convinced that the current social insurance policy cannot be sustained. One such way of "social learning" is through events such as a financial crisis when reforms are being explored by administrations in many different European countries.

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<sup>27</sup> Pierson, "Coping with Permanent Austerity," 447.

Demographic changes such as an increase of single-parent families and immigration and a decrease of fertility rates also led a push towards transforming the pension system. Families are less and less likely to be able to rely on one male breadwinner. It is thus necessary to inject these categories of workers (youth, mothers, immigrants, elderly, etc.) into the overall employment. The main pressure for activation comes from the inability of the PAYG system to sustain itself. Tim Krieger says that the PAYG system is turning into an "unfunded pension."<sup>28</sup> His reasoning is that as fertility rates continue to fall in Europe, the active labor-force will not be able to sustain the pension benefits to the ageing that were once available. Fertility rates are relatively high in France compared to most other Western European countries, but they have been consistently below replacement levels for the past few decades while coming closer to the replacement level more recently. A solution must be found in the supply-side of employment.

It is difficult to reform the PAYG system in France because the older generation receiving retirement payments has contributed their entire working-lives. As the fertility rates decrease within France, it will become harder to keep up the rates that the retired generation expects from the contributions they have been making. Another option is the full-funded system which reinvests contributions and returns them in the form of pension transfers to the same worker who contributed. It is an expensive transition for the state to go from pay-as-you-go to the fully-funded system because the currently retired workers need to receive their transfer payments.

#### **4.1. Positive Aspects of the Immigration Solution**

Increasing incentives for immigration could potentially reduce the debt of the PAYG system with minimal expenses. According to Krieger, new immigrants who are fully assimilated by the host country have the value of a new-born child in that without having previously received pension payments, they are willing during

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28 Krieger, *Public Pensions and Immigration: a public choice approach*, 19-49.

their working lifetime in France to provide contributions.<sup>29</sup> This could dramatically reduce the debt, and lead to a reduction of contribution rates when there are more employed workers contributing to the system. On top of that, it has been observed in France that immigrants tend to have more children on average than French citizens, so the fertility rate should also increase. In 1999 the fertility rates of foreign women raised the French fertility rate by 0.07.

In a recent paper published by Anton Hemerijck and Werner Eichorst emphasizing the need for activation of all people of working age, they said that

Priority should be given to problems of participation and integration of migrant groups, whose rates of unemployment in the EU are, on average, twice that of nationals. Integration and immigration policy should have a central place in our discussion about the future of the Continental welfare state, something we failed to do in the past.<sup>30</sup>

If properly integrated, immigrants to France could provide a large increase in contributions to the current pension system. France has already incorporated high levels of immigration as one of its policies of labor activation and resisting an ageing trend, which has resulted in a comparatively successful total fertility rate thus far. France has taken its demographic changes very seriously in its adaptation of policy to counteract the ageing dilemma. Although it is not legal to take ask people their country of origin in a French census, *l'Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques* (Insee) shows a dramatic increase in immigration even just from 1982 at 2.6% of the population acquiring French citizenship after birth compared to 2006 at 4.3%.<sup>31</sup>

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29 Krieger, *Public Pensions and Immigration: a public choice approach*.

30 Werner Eichorst and Anton Hemerijck, *Whatever Happened to the Bismarckian Welfare State? From Labor Shedding to Employment-Friendly Reforms* (Discussion Paper No. 4085 for the Institute for the Study of Labor, 2009) [database online]; available at <ftp.iza.org/dp4085.pdf>, 32.

31 Found at Insee's website: [www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?reg\\_id=0&ref\\_id=NATTEF02131](http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=NATTEF02131) .

## 4.2. Objections to Increasing Immigration as a Solution

One of the major objections to encouraging immigration is that it could cause social dis cohesion.<sup>32</sup> Traditionally, immigration from culturally and linguistically similar countries is the most accepted by members of the host countries. Results can be increased xenophobia, communication barriers, and fear of job competition. There will need to be an increased emphasis on integration of immigrants.

Another negative result of encouraging immigration is the reaction of many governments to practice "return migration."<sup>33</sup> Germany in the 60s and 70s adopted the immigration policy of bringing in large numbers of workers from Southern European countries to boost the economy and it was credited for the boost in population size at the time. Conversely, policies in Germany encouraging return migration soon afterwards could be blamed for the immediate decline in population of the country. France already knows the importance of immigrant labor: in the 1920s when replacement rates were getting very low there was an increase in immigration. Immigration plays a large role in the economy, welfare system, and total fertility rates of a country.

Some opponents of immigration as a solution (Grant, Hoorens, Sivadasan, van het Loo, DaVanzo, Hale, Gibson and Butz) believe that increasing the focus on immigration policy as a type of population policy would slow down the ageing of a population but not necessarily stop it.<sup>34</sup>

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32 D.A. Coleman, "International migration: demographic and socioeconomic consequences in the United Kingdom and Europe," *International Migration Review* 1(1995): 155-206.

33 C. Hohn, "Population policies in advanced societies: pronatalist and migration strategies," *European Journal of Population* 3(1988): 459-81.

34 Jonathan Grant, Stijn Hoorens, Suja Sivadasan, Mirjan van het Loo, Julie DaVanzo, Lauren Hale, Shawna Gibson, and William Butz, *Low Fertility and Population Ageing: Causes, Consequences, and Policy Options* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004), 140.

### 4.3. Other Solutions

The French welfare system could also go in two other major directions: that of the Liberal and Nordic welfare states. But both would be challenging and unnecessary paths to follow especially after decades of following a Bismarckian path. The Liberal system would reduce the transfer payments and encourage more individual savings. As we have previously seen from Pierson's work, this sort of retrenchment is very unpopular and difficult to accomplish. Change of this level would either require currently retired workers to forgo the expected return on their contributions or give the state the financial burden of paying for that generation's welfare payments. The Nordic system is another option. In this case the high transfer payments would be sustained, but there would be less of a focus on the traditional male breadwinner and more women working.

First of all, France has made significant progress in the realm of pro-female participation. Although it falls in the traditional Bismarckian system, it has encouraged female activation through the creation of *crèches*, high levels of paid parental leave, low numbers of work-week hours and many other incentives for both parents to work. Hohn says that the determinants of fertility do not simply rely on the mobility of women and the availability of free day-care and education.<sup>35</sup> In many cases providing more benefits and material goods towards pro-natalist measures actually depress the desire to have children. It leads to a wealthier population as both parents are capable of working but it does not necessarily guarantee a population that wants to spend money on having more children. Promotion of female participation is positive in adding a higher number of people into the contribution system, but can come into conflict with pro-natalist policy. Krieger argues that raising fertility rates as a solution is a very slow process that puts a lot of financial investment into the young child and into helping the family nurture the child.<sup>36</sup> Immigration policy on the other hand does not involve providing

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35 Hohn, "Population policies in advanced societies: pronatalist and migration strategies."

36 Krieger, *Public Pensions and Immigration: a public choice approach*.

high amounts of material goods but rather a moderate amount spent on integration.

## **5. Conclusion**

The objective of this research was to show through France's example that retrenchment of pension benefits in the Bismarckian welfare system is not desired or necessary. The problem remains that the funding for the pension system is becoming depleted with scarcer resources while at the same time financial and European-wide pressures (such as stipulations for joining the EMU) constantly push France towards decreasing its social protection budget. The first part of the article discussed why retrenchment is not desired by the general public. Once a welfare system has introduced high levels of pension transfers, there are interest groups that can activate the population to fight against the removal or reduction of these transfers. In France's case, these groups are very powerful.

The second part of the article discussed why retrenchment is not necessary. Activation policies can reform the current Bismarckian system by encouraging the traditionally excluded populations such as immigrants, youth, elderly and mothers to participate in the workforce. Immigrants that are well integrated into the society provide the greatest source of contribution into the welfare state. With this type of activation policy, the state must make a large effort to integrate and support this group. The OECD in 2009 published three other recommendations for France: to lower the minimum wage, raise the retirement age to keep the experienced working longer, and to loosen government restrictions on hiring/firing.<sup>37</sup> It is logical to assume that lowering the minimum wage and loosening up on restrictions on firing employees will encourage businesses to hire more youth and immigrants who tend to be less experienced and marketable.

France is an interesting case-study because it has been able to withstand financial crises and Europeanization efforts without

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37 OECD, "How to raise the employment rates of youth and older workers." Available at: [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/32/42655601.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/32/42655601.pdf),



significant retrenchment. From France's example we can see that if Bismarckian welfare states could follow similar labor activation measures, they can keep their higher transfer payments and avoid major retrenchment. As shown, it is possible for politicians to have the right atmosphere to pass broader retrenchment reform, but it is quite rare and it is more likely that with certain measures the current system will continue to exist indefinitely. It is important now for politicians and researchers to focus on integrating the traditionally-excluded population into the workforce.

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## **THE EUROPEANIZATION OF UPPER MESOPOTAMIA: CURRENT STATUS OF ITS SOCIETAL STRUCTURE<sup>1</sup>**

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### ***Abstract***

*This study will carry out a three-pronged (socio-economic conditions, the state of civil society and ethno-religious qualities) assessment of the societal structure of Turkey's South-Eastern Anatolian Region (so-called Upper Mesopotamia). In the meantime, an attempt will be made to elucidate the significance of Turkey's Europeanization process for the region, in terms of overcoming the problems of this structure. The basis of the positive impact of the Europeanization process draws upon the partial improvements evidenced in the region's societal structure from 2001 onwards, which resulted from the wave of fundamental reforms being experienced across the nation in line with EU membership.*

### **1. Introduction**

Europeanization has become a fashionable concept especially in the last decade, and though there are varying approaches as to its definition; it may be defined as a very broad and interactive construction process within the European Union (EU) framework. It has been observed that during this process, while supranational, national and sub-national actors interact and meet on common ground and shape a European level governance from the bottom-up,<sup>2</sup> EU norms and policies also physically and normatively reconstruct national and sub-national structures from

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1 I would like to thank the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey for supporting the research study I conducted at the University of Manchester, which also provided the groundwork for this paper. I also would like to thank the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in Manchester and Professor Stefan Berger for providing me the opportunity of working at the University of Manchester.

2 Thomas Risse, James Caporaso and Maria G. Cowles, "Europeanization and Domestic Change: Introduction," in *Transforming Europe*, ed. Maria. G. Cowles et al (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2001), 1-21.

the top-down, and in an increasingly visible manner.<sup>3</sup> This article will attempt to explain the existing characteristics and conditions of the societal structure of 'a distant region', namely the South-Eastern Anatolia (SEA) and show that Europeanization is the most reasonable path toward the realization of desired changes in said characteristics and conditions. Europeanization in this study is meant to convey the second aspect of the concept (top-down). That is to say, Europeanization refers to<sup>4</sup>:

Processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.

As seen, it accommodates changes in normative elements and behavioural patterns as well as institutional and material ones. Within this wide-ranging scope of Europeanization, a normative assessment of the societal structure rather than an institutional one will be analysed here. While examining the societal structure and then Europeanization; socio-economic indicators, the state of civil society and ethno-religious features of the case region will be taken into account. The reasons for choosing societal structure as an analytical basis as well as the SEA as a case will be explained below.

The first reason for choosing the SEA as a case is related to its geography. Once Turkey becomes a member, the ancient and magnificent lands of Mesopotamia that witnessed numerous developments and advances in human history, above all writing, will become one of the regions of the EU, even if by a symbolic part. As it was provocatively used in the title of this study, a map

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3 Robert Ladrech, "Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 32 (Jan. 1994): 69-88; Claudio M. Radaelli, "The Europeanization of Public Policy," in *The Politics of Europeanization*, eds. Kevin Featherstone and Claudio M. Radaelli (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 27-56; Heather Grabbe, "Europeanization Goes East: Power and Uncertainty in the EU Accession Process," *The Politics of Europeanization*, eds. Kevin Featherstone ve Claudio. M. Radaelli (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 303-327.

4 Radaelli, "The Europeanization and Domestic Change," 28.

of the EU that embraces Turkey—which is currently continuing its negotiation process for full accession to the Union—will also include a landscape what can be referred to as the Upper Mesopotamian Region. Considering that the individuals, institutions, rules and practices in Turkey and the region in question will all have to experience the Europeanization process, it would not be so wrong to state that what we are facing, in effect, is the Europeanization of Mesopotamia. We could have chosen to name this study “The Europeanization of Turkey’s South-Eastern Region.” However, the aim underlying our conscious emphasis of Upper Mesopotamia is so the reality that will ensue following Turkey’s probable EU membership may be better understood, and convey that both ordinary EU citizens and experts will experience a sense of being an outsider when they then look at a map of the EU, and they should be prepared for the basic visual and intellectual changes.

Secondly, taking into account its population, size and land area, as well as numerous cultural-religious and socioeconomic factors, Turkey’s Europeanization is, in many aspects, more different and complicated than the experiences of any other nation that underwent the EU accession process. Within this context, the Europeanization of the SEA is significant not only in terms of the region itself, but in terms of both Turkey and the EU. Not just the Kurdish issue, but as this article will also reveal, as “the weakest link” in many ways, the Europeanization level of the region is in fact one of the most considerable indicators of Turkey’s performance in relation to EU membership. Similarly, the degree of Europeanization in what will be the most South-Eastern region of the EU and share borders with Iraq and Syria will be critically meaningful for the EU.

The choice of societal structure as analytical concern also has justifications. As said earlier, the concept of Europeanization implies both institutional-legal and normative-behavioural changes. The former group of changes is a necessary step on the way of integration with the EU. In this circumstance, from an institutional-legal standpoint Turkey has focused more and expedited EU harmonization reforms from 2001 onwards, and as a result embarked on the full accession negotiation process.

Within the context of the National Programme announced first in 2001 and revised in 2003, a total of ten EU harmonization packages have been enacted to date, each comprising numerous significant and extensive legal-institutional changes. The transformation process began with the October 2001 Constitutional changes and the first package (the so-called mini democracy package) that came into force in February 2002; a number of people and institutions have declared them the most important reforms in the history of the Turkish Republic, and they are not far from the truth.<sup>5</sup> These packages include numerous new regulations or changes that are directly or indirectly related to the present study, which cannot all be listed here.

However, the most important and difficult task of EU integration is to change the mentalities, habits and activities of the masses to be consistent with these institutional-legal structures. The success of integration and, in fact, further advancement of the EU project depends on this. The more the process of cognitive evolution or societal learning persists and the knowledge and understanding permeates into and is adopted by the constitutive elements of European society, the closer is the integration.<sup>6</sup> That is why this study, rather than the mentioned institutional-legal changes, will illustrate the existing normative characteristics of the SEA and also explain the initial responses of various societal agents to the process i.e. non-governmental organizations, cultural and religious groups. It will be argued that if these characteristics, which portray a fairly pessimistic picture, are to improve, this can only be realized via further Europeanization. Our fundamental basis for this argument is that as Turkey has accelerated its EU harmonization reforms, and additionally the EU itself has become more visible through its various programmes there, partial improvements and positive responses in societal structure have been observed in the SEA.

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5 Cengiz Aktar, *Avrupa Okumaları* (İstanbul: Kanat, 2003); European Stability Initiative, *Sex and Power in Turkey: Feminism, Islam and the Maturing of Turkish Democracy*, 2007 [article on-line]: available at [www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi\\_document\\_id\\_90.pdf](http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_document_id_90.pdf), last accessed 30 May 2009.

6 Jeffrey T. Checkel, "(Regional) Norms and (Domestic) Social Mobilisation: Citizenship Politics in Post-Maastricht, Post-Cold War Germany," *Arena Working Papers 99/3* (Oslo: University of Oslo, 1999).

On the ground that the country's EU reforms have sped up since 2001, then, the focus of the analysis will mainly be related to this period. However, for making the conditions of the SEA better understood in the reader's mind, some historical information will also be presented to a certain degree. Due to the difficulty in generating quantitative knowledge of normative changes in such a relatively short period and the exceptional circumstances of the SEA, a qualitative approach supported by some selective interviews has been applied. The interviewees were the ones who are taking somewhat an "authority" position in different arenas of societal structure, i.e., civil society, business life. The interviews were conducted face to face in their work place.

The first section includes general geographical and demographic information of the region. In this respect, data are provided to explore the current socio-economic profile of society. The second section illustrates the state of civil society in the region on the basis of volunteer organizations, whereas the following part describes the appearance of societal structure in terms of ethnic, religious and cultural differentiation. While the current situation is depicted, the relative impact of the Europeanization process will also be explained in each section.

## **2. The Geographic, Demographic and Socio-economic Structure of the Region**

Covering the Euphrates and Tigris Basins and the surrounding area and stretching over nine provinces, the SEA also covers three regions according to Eurostat's zoning system, Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS):<sup>7</sup> These regions are TRC1 (provinces of Gaziantep, Adiyaman, and Kilis), TRC2 (provinces of Şanlıurfa and Diyarbakır) and TRC3 (provinces of Mardin, Batman, Şırnak and Siirt). The populations, population densities and land area of these provinces as of the end of 2007 are presented in Table 1.

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<sup>7</sup> Eurostat, Hierarchical List of the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics [database on-line]: available at:

[ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nuts/codelist\\_en.cfm?list=cec](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nuts/codelist_en.cfm?list=cec), last accessed 10 August 2009.

**Table 1: The Geographic, Demographic and Socio-economic Outlook of the South-Eastern Anatolian Region**

<i>Province</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Population Density</i>	<i>Land Area</i>	<i>Socio-economic development index*</i>	<i>Socio-economic development ranking**</i>
<b>Adıyaman</b>	582,762	83	7,606	-0,78	65
<b>Batman</b>	182,131	88	4,659	-0,90	70
<b>Diyarbakır</b>	1,460,714	97	15,204	-0,67	63
<b>Gaziantep</b>	1,560,023	229	6,844	0,47	20
<b>Kilis</b>	118,457	83	1,427	-0,40	54
<b>Mardin</b>	745,778	85	8,806	-0,99	72
<b>Siirt</b>	291,528	53	5,473	-1	73
<b>Şanlıurfa</b>	1,523,099	81	19,336	-0,85	68
<b>Şırnak</b>	416,001	58	7,151	-1,15	78
<b>Total</b>	6,880.493	95.2	76,506	-	-
<b>Turkey</b>	70,586,000	92	814,578	-	-

**Sources:** Data in the first three statistical columns gathered from the web site of Turkish Statistical Institute [database on-line]: available at [www.tuik.gov.tr/jsp/duyuru/upload/adnks\\_Harita\\_TR/HaritaTR.html](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/jsp/duyuru/upload/adnks_Harita_TR/HaritaTR.html), last accessed 14 August 2009. For data in the last two columns: Bülent Dinçer, Metin. Özaslan and Taner Kavasoglu, *İllerin ve Bölgelerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Gelişmişlik Sıralaması Araştırması (Study on the Socio-economic Development Ranking of Provinces and Regions)* (Ankara: State Planning Organization, 2003), 55.

\*This index was calculated based on 58 different indicators, including demographics, employment, education, health, industry, agriculture, construction, finance, infrastructure, et cetera.

\*\* among 81 provinces

According to the same Table, the socio-economic development of the provinces in the region is not at an inspiring level, and with the exception of Gaziantep, situated in the western part of the Region; all other provinces have a negative development index and are very much behind the eighty-one provinces in Turkey. Concerning the indicators of the given index, it can easily be imagined that the region is retarded in many senses. Just a few examples can throw the situation into sharp relief: One out of



every four inhabitants in the region is illiterate (26.8 per cent), and this rate reaches as high as 40.0 per cent among women.<sup>8</sup> While Turkey's GDP per capita was €6500 in 2007 and already much lower than the over €24,800 average of the EU-27,<sup>9</sup> GDP per capita for the region was \$3,389 (€2,800).<sup>10</sup> Another study conducted by the Turkish Board of Statistics based on Eurostat criteria showed that while the poverty line rate was 23.8 for Turkey in 2003, this rate was 35.09 per cent in TRC1 (Gaziantep, Adıyaman, and Kilis), 64.33 per cent in TRC2 (Şanlıurfa and Diyarbakır), and 82.37 per cent in TRC3 (Mardin, Batman, Şırnak, and Siirt).<sup>11</sup>

Further examples of presented data illustrate that the region is quite weak from a socio-economical perspective. Although according to official statistics the unemployment rate in the region was 14.0 per cent and the non-agricultural unemployment rate 15.1 per cent in 2006,<sup>12</sup> those familiar with the region will consider an actual unemployment rate of at least 30 per cent to be much more realistic.<sup>13</sup> As has been the case with every Commission report since 1998, the 2007 Progress Report also includes a separate paragraph on to the region, which confirmed this point:<sup>14</sup> "However, the overall socio-economic situation in the south-east remains difficult. No steps have been taken to develop

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8 Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmens' Association, Eğitim ve Sürdürülebilir Büyüme-Türkiye Deneyimi, Riskler ve Fırsatlar Raporu (Report: Education and Sustainable Development-Turkish Experience, Risks and Opportunities) (Istanbul: TUSIAD, 2006), 75.

9 Eurostat, Europe in Figures 2009, [report on-line]: available at [epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-CD-09-001/EN/KS-CD-09-001-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CD-09-001/EN/KS-CD-09-001-EN.PDF), last accessed 11 October 2009.

10 Turkish Statistical Institute, Regional Statistics, 2008 [report on-line]: available at [tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/Bolgesel/sorguSayfa.do?target=tablo](http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/Bolgesel/sorguSayfa.do?target=tablo), last accessed 03 September 2009.

11 Ercan Dansuk, Mehmet Özmen and Güzin Erdoğan, "Poverty and Social Stratification at the Regional Levels in Turkey," *Türk-iş Dergisi*, 381(April 2008), 22-39.

12 Turkish Statistical Institute, Hanehalkı İşgücü Anketi (Household Labour Force Survey Results)(Ankara: Turkish Statistical Institute, 2006).

13 Ankara Chamber of Commerce, İşsizliğin ve Göçün Coğrafyası Raporu (Report on the Geography of Unemployment and Migration) (Ankara: ATO Press, 2007).

14 European Commission, Turkey Progress Report, 06. 11. 2007, [report on-line]: available at: [ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/turkey\\_progress\\_reports\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/turkey_progress_reports_en.pdf), last accessed 11 July 2009, 23.

a comprehensive strategy to achieve economic and social development in the region and to create the conditions required for the Kurdish population to enjoy full rights and freedoms.”

In spite of these discouraging words, it might be said that the determination to become an EU member has translated into concrete steps to this end in recent years, and as an inevitable outcome of such efforts, state institutions' view of the region and its people has transformed. Normative changes obviously do not occur as quickly as legal-procedural changes. However, the region is now moving from an environment where large portions of society were considered potential separatists and an insecure atmosphere through constant pressure and conflict, to one where the law and human rights are felt to a much greater extent.<sup>15</sup> A number of social and cultural rights that could not be even said out loud in the 1990s have quietly become a part of people's lives (broadcasts in the mother tongue and the freedom to learn this language, regulations made in the area of freedom of thought, the changes made to the Anti-Terror Law, et cetera). Also, the distinction between those who conduct the struggle for rights and freedoms through democratic-legal means and those who do not is drawn in a much more sensitive manner than previously.

The first Martial Law and then the Declaration of a State of Emergency in the region in an effort to prevent terror were intensely felt via military measures and prohibitions since 1980. Finally, it was lifted in 2002, and official figures show that over the next three years, in the provinces affected by these practices, more than a hundred factories and about 4000 small and medium sized enterprises opened and 100,000 people found employment, which is an indicator of normalization. In the same three years, exports from the region climbed from \$812 million to \$2,539 million.<sup>16</sup> The word normalization, as it is used here, refers to the Europeanization of state authority and its functions

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15 Interview with Fidel Balta, General Secretary of the Eastern and South-Eastern Industrialists and Businessmen's Association, which is the umbrella organisation for 13 associations that have a total of 1,135 member industrialists and businessmen from the region (15 September 2008).

16 Zaman Daily, "OHAL kalkınca 100 fabrika açıldı, binlerce kişi iş buldu (State of Emergency was lifted, 100 Factory were Opened," 16 April 2006, 4.

during the membership process, and re-forming itself in line with the reforms made.

Although not yet a tangible economic breakthrough, completion of the South-Eastern Anatolia Project (GAP) that was presented as the grandest investment project in the history of the Turkish Republic, which was planned in the 1970s but often grinded to a halt due to political problems, increased terrorism events, and lack of interest by the administrations in power was indeed considered a priority within the context of such changed conditions. Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan declared that all investments related to the GAP would be completed in five years.<sup>17</sup> This is an integrated project that foresees investments beginning with irrigation and energy-generation plants, followed by other fields including industry, agriculture, education, transportation, and health; once complete, employment opportunities will be created for a total of 3.8 million people, and per capita income will rise by 209 per cent.<sup>18</sup>

Because of the decline of terrorism and subsequent safer environment, it has become easier for native businessmen and even representatives of international capital to invest in these strategically-situated lands with access to Middle Eastern and Asian markets. As a more specific sectoral example, taking into consideration the cultural and tourism assets of the region that have remained untapped up until now due only to security issues, the development potential of the area becomes readily apparent. In fact, the Cultural Heritage Development Programme of the GAP has been developed by the EU in response to this matter and has supported 32 projects in the Region that represent a striking beginning for tourism after the chaotic period of 1980s and 90s. According to Programme Director Michael Jay, there are 558 registered conservation areas and 3,646 cultural heritage assets

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17 Abdullah Karakuş, "GAP Dört Yılda Tamamlanacak (GAP Will Be Completed in Four Years," Milliyet Daily, 11 January 2008, 5.

18 South-Eastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, Latest Situation on South-Eastern Anatolia Project Activities of the Gap Administration, June 2006 [report on-line]: [www.gap.gov.tr/English/Genel/sdurum.pdf](http://www.gap.gov.tr/English/Genel/sdurum.pdf), last accessed 11 June 2009, 2.

in the South-East.<sup>19</sup> About 127,000 tourists in 2006 and 154,000 tourists in 2007 visited Diyarbakır, unimaginable figures in the 1990s.<sup>20</sup>

All these minor steps are the products of Europeanization and reflect the change in recent years. The above explanations also illustrate the potential of the region to overcome existent socio-economic hardships and the weak social structure. What has been missing until now is what Europeanization is slowly instilling here: The establishment of the rule of law and a secure environment; the expression of demands and problems on democratic grounds; and the existence of a state that will plan and execute the relevant societal transformation. If investors believe that this process will continue and safety and stability in the region will be established, then, more and more capital seems to flow to the region.

### **3. The State of Civil Society in the Region**

One of the outcomes of weak socio-economic status or an insecure environment that resulted from concerns about terrorism is that the communal reflexes are slow in developing civil initiatives. As a particular form of society, appreciating social diversity and interaction and able to limit depredations of political power,<sup>21</sup> civil society has a significant place on the way of Europeanization. Civil society is important not only in terms of the process of changing regional and national structures and mentalities in line with EU norms, but also in order to form a societal base on par with Europe that will help achieve a civic-

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19 Michael Jay, "GAP Bölgesinde Kültürel Mirası Geliştirme Programı (The Programme of Developing Cultural Heritage in the GAP Region)," 18 May 2007 [article on-line]: available at [www.e-mardin.com/index2.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=447&pop=1&page=last](http://www.e-mardin.com/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=447&pop=1&page=last) accessed 08 September 2009.

20 Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce, *Diyarbakır in Graphics*, (Diyarbakır: Tasarım, 2009), 17.

21 John A. Hall, "In Search of Civil Society," in *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*, ed. John A. Hall (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 25.

democratic Union.<sup>22</sup> In other words, this is a necessary societal quality in both the top-down, and the bottom-up approaches to Europeanization. The concept of civil society may include diverse dimensions and functions;<sup>23</sup> however, within the context of this study, the current situation in the SEA will be analysed through the voluntary membership and active participation in social organizations.

**Table 2: The Number of and Membership to Volunteer Organizations in South-East Anatolia**

<i>Province</i>	<i>Number of Active Associations</i>	<i>Within-Country Percentage</i>	<i>Number of Members</i>
<b>Adiyaman</b>	349	0.44%	14.269
<b>Batman</b>	150	0.19%	8.365
<b>Diyarbakır</b>	512	0.65%	23.276
<b>Gaziantep</b>	774	0.99%	61.028
<b>Kilis</b>	88	0.11%	3.120
<b>Mardin</b>	184	0.23%	7.661
<b>Siirt</b>	162	0.20%	4.819
<b>Şanlıurfa</b>	505	0.64%	24.219
<b>Şırnak</b>	68	0.08%	2.417
<b>Total</b>	2792	0.35%	149.174

**Sources:** Data in the first two columns gathered from the Office of Voluntary Organizations, Ministry of Home Affairs [database on-line]: available at [dernekler.icisleri.gov.tr/Dernekler/Kurum/IlereGoreDernekSayisi.aspx](http://dernekler.icisleri.gov.tr/Dernekler/Kurum/IlereGoreDernekSayisi.aspx), last accessed 26 August 2009. Data in the last column gathered through electronic correspondence with the Office of Voluntary Organizations, Ministry of Home Affairs.

Figures for non-profits and volunteer associations are presented in Table 2. Although the population in the Region is over 6,880,493, there are as few as 2,792 volunteer organizations

22 For an explanation of the increase of civil society issue in the EU context and for links to official reports about this, see Stijin Smismans, *Civil Society in European Institutional Discourses* (Paris: Cahiers européens de Sciences-Po: 2002).

23 Jerzy Bartkowski and Aleksandra Jasinska-Kania, "Voluntary Organizations and the Development of Civil Society," in *European Values at the Turn of the Millennium*, eds. Wil Arts and Loek Hamlan (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 109-139.

overall and total membership amounts to only 149,174. Still there are a lot of label organisations without any activities and non-active members in these figures according to an authority.<sup>24</sup>

Non-governmental organizations are inadequate not only in number, but also in terms of activities. Because financial resources are limited, knowledge and equipment required generating projects or other activities are insufficient, communication channels are weak, activities are less effective than hoped, et cetera.

Not only in terms of civil initiatives but the societal basis as a whole, one problematic issue related to the EU integration process is the dissemination of information and raising awareness. Europeanization appears to be a process addressed procedurally only within the framework of the negotiation process that is almost completely run by the central bureaucracy. If information is circulated within these constricted boundaries, this occurs in a top-down fashion where only changes and procedures are communicated. Of the thirteen EU Documentation Centres in Turkey, there is not one situated in the region. With the exception of a centre established at Gaziantep University, which actually is virtually inactive, nearly all academic centres working on European studies are found in universities in the western part of Turkey. The two EU Information Bureaus founded under the auspices of the Chambers of Commerce in Gaziantep and Diyarbakır, constitute the only places in the region to access information. All of these issues combine to produce an environment where EU-related knowledge is limited and concepts such as Europeanness and Europeanization are almost never discussed.<sup>25</sup>

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24 Interview with Lezgin Yalçın, Head of Civil Society Development Centre, Local Support Unit in Diyarbakır (23 January 2010).

25 For studies investigating the level of knowledge and awareness about the EU among the public, see Hakan Samur and Behçet Oral, "Orientation of University Seniors from South-Eastern Turkey to the European Union," *European Journal of Social Sciences*, (June 2007): 186-205; Hakan Yılmaz, "Swinging between Eurosupportiveness and Euroskepticism: Turkish Public's General Attitudes towards the European Union," in *Placing Turkey on the Map of Europe*, ed. Hakan Yılmaz (İstanbul: Bogazici University Press, 2005), 152-181.

And now, the Europeanization face of the medallion: Instead of militarist ones, leaning on democratic-legal methods, very important changes have been realized in this process. By changes to the Associations Act, the Foundations Act, and other legislation on different dates from 2001 onwards, Turkey took the legal steps that would bring civil society closer to EU norms and enable it to function better. Unfortunately, there is no statistical data showing the changes in the number of civil society organizations throughout years. However, the Civil Society Index Project, the first and until now the most comprehensive study on civil society in Turkey, demonstrates that since the decline of conflict, the number of civil society organizations has increased over the past few years as well as the amount of financial support from the state and other donors towards such organizations in the region.<sup>26</sup>

Once the role civil society plays in any given country in the Europeanization process became gradually better understood, from 2001 onwards the Union began to implement a Civil Society Development Programme geared toward Turkey that encompasses various sub-programmes. Similarly, programmes that address Turkey as a whole, such as the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, European Union Education and Youth Programmes, Promotion of Cultural Rights, as well as programmes geared specifically toward the Region, either concluded or ongoing, including the Cultural Heritage Development Programme of the GAP, Development Programme of the GAP Region and GAP Entrepreneur Support Centre were all initiated after 2001. These programmes directly or indirectly prepare the grounds for the empowerment of civil society and are run by very different organizations; consequently, none of the relevant EU centres have any documentation on the number of individual benefactors of these programmes or the number of projects being run regionally.

Nonetheless, to offer a few examples, of the thirty-two programmes supported within the context of the Cultural Heritage

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26 Filiz Bikmen and Zeynep Meydanoglu, Türkiye’de Sivil Toplum: Bir Değişim Süreci (*Civil Society in Turkey: A Changing Process*) (İstanbul: Tusev, 2006), 53.

Development Programme of the GAP, almost half were or are still being run by civil society organizations. Civil Society Development Programme endorsed twenty-three comprehensive projects throughout the country between 2003-2005 and two of them were from the region. GAP Rural Development Project supports about ten projects of civil society organizations. Within the context of the Educational and Youth Programmes, since 2004, on average forty to fifty projects run by civil society organizations have been supported each year by Turkish National Agency.

The numbers of the projects should not be underestimated because they have been the first experience of preparing and conducting such projects for most of the civil society organizations. The target areas and societal groups also vary. All these micro or sometimes macro projects are the remarkable first contacts of most of the organizations with international partners or EU organizations. In fact, most of the NGOs tend to acknowledge the EU programmes supporting their weak financial and structural situations.<sup>27</sup>

#### **4. The Ethnic and Cultural Aspects of the Region**

While examining the impact of Europeanisation on the societal structure of the SEA, one critical dimension to be focused on is the situation of ethno-cultural groups in the region. This is because they were part of this structure for centuries. Situated at a place where numerous nations or communities on a North-South or East-West axis have met, mixed, or settled, the SEA therefore boasts a truly multi-cultural history. The circumstances not long ago, in the early twentieth century, clearly illustrate this point. The official 1903 yearbook of the Ottoman Empire shows that the population in the area covered by five provinces in present-day Eastern and South-Eastern Anatolia was 480,737 and that 95,209 people (approximately 20 percent) were members of non-Muslim communities. A higher proportion of these communities were found in urban centres, and played a visible role in nearly all public offices as well as the commercial life in

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27 Interview with Lezgin Yalçın, Head of Civil Society Development Centre, Local Support Unit in Diyarbakır (23 January 2010).



these cities.<sup>28</sup> A lot of things has changed since then. Foreign nations' plans and expectations for the region, wars, killings, relocations, migrations, efforts by the newly formed republic to homogenize and ignore ethnic differences during the process of nation-building, economic hardships, et cetera, all brought the region and its people to the present day, burdened with accumulated problems and a socio-cultural structure much different than before. A review of this historical background is not within the scope of the present study. And a considerable proportion of the population that had somehow resisted the challenges of previous times and tried to stay put until the 1980s, ended up having to migrate due to increased terrorist acts, pressures and economic hardships. By the 2000s, of the mosaic of societies that co-resided in the region for centuries, only a few members of the religious communities, abandoned houses of worship, and deserted villages were all that was left, while those who had resettled in the US or various European countries but still yearned for their native lands, numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

In spite of this trend, many ethnically and culturally distinct communities still remained in the South-East, Arabs, Kurds (Zaza and Kirmanc), Orthodox Syriacs (the Asuri, the Keldani), the Yazidi, Alevi, and Protestants. All of these ethnic or religious communities also form various combinations among themselves and make up numerous, but traditionally and culturally distinct subgroups: for instance, the Sunni Kurds and Alevi Kurds, Sunni Arabs and Alevi Arabs.<sup>29</sup> There is also a very small group of Armenian and Jewish communities in the SEA. Leaving aside the Sunni Arabs, who have no ethnic or cultural problems (demands), and the Alevi, whose problems and status differ from the other groups mentioned and are not limited to the region, a discussion of developments in recent years among the more prominent communities in South-Eastern Anatolia will allow us to return to our main concern here, that is, the societal changes that have occurred as a result of Europeanization.

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28 Mehmet Şimşek, "Milletler Mozaiği Olarak Diyarbakır (Diyarbakır as A Mosaic of Nations)," *Electronic Social Sciences Journal*, 2 (Jan. 2003): 12-19.

29 Baskın Oran, *Türkiye'de Azınlıklar (Minorities in Turkey)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004).

One important point is related to the recognition of those minorities. Turkey has never accepted the notion of minorities based on ethnicity within its borders, only the Armenian, Rum [Greeks of Turkish citizenship], and Jewish communities were granted minority status based on religion in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne. However, some scholars<sup>30</sup> argue that the regulations outlined in the Fourth Harmonization Package (2006) concerning the acquisition of immovable property by community foundations, is in fact an indirect means of acknowledgement. Within the framework of democratization and from the first package onwards, other positive regulations that address the people and communities of different faiths have also been passed.

Because of the optimistic atmosphere that resulted from the speeding up of the Europeanization process after 2001, and in turn, a decrease of tension-based policies and terror in the region, members of many communities have begun to return home, examples of which will be provided below. As it currently stands, although low by overall community populations, the trend of return migration has become visible in a relatively short time, and is perhaps one of the most rapid responses to the EU harmonization reforms.

The Orthodox Syriacs are one of the oldest peoples of Mesopotamia, and although there is no hard data on how many of them are returning to South-Eastern Anatolia, according to one Orthodox Syriac writer's observations, while close to 150 families have migrated back to Mardin and Midyat alone, many others visit their former communities during the summers, rebuilding them and trying to revive a sense of community spirit.<sup>31</sup> The same writer's impressions of Orthodox Syriacs living overseas suggest that although many more would like to migrate back, because economic and security issues have not yet been overcome in the region and problems are evident in the realization of relevant reforms, they refrain from actually doing so. From 2005 onwards,

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30 Ibid., 40.

31 Electronic correspondence with the editor of the widely known Syriac website [www.suryani.com](http://www.suryani.com), Sabo Boyaci (28 February 2009).

Orthodox Syriacs from all over the world have begun to celebrate the *Akitu* festival, one of the oldest traditions on Earth celebrated for over 6,750 years, on April 1<sup>st</sup> in the SEA. The positive impact of the Europeanization process is actually much clearer in the words of an Orthodox Syrian, who attended the festival in 2007, whose father was sent out of the country during the relocation in 1915 when he was two years old, and who had never before visited his father's homeland:<sup>32</sup> "...our grandparents have Turkish identities, our identity is here. If Turkey becomes a member of the EU, I will return to Hakkari with my family."

Similarly, the Yazidi, one of the most ancient religious communities of the Middle East, whose population in the SEA was around seventy to eighty thousand 40 years ago but presently, numbers only in the hundreds after large scale migration have also begun to return home in recent years. Since 2001, although they have not exactly returned home, about 7,000 Yazidi have been trying to renovate their old villages, homes and lands; and instead of hiding their identity as they once did, they are now even establishing their own associations.<sup>33</sup>

The Jewish community used to live especially at Şanlıurfa (Abraham's birth place) due to religious reasons but was forced to migrate around the late 1940s; the fact that lately they have been directly or indirectly purchasing land in this region and making significant investments within the context of the South-Eastern Anatolia Project is again, a recent development. Also, activities organized to strengthen and symbolize inter-religion and cross-cultural dialogue in Şanlıurfa, which is historically an important city for Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, (the opening of Halepli Bahçe—the so-called Garden of Religions, and scientific-cultural events), gained widespread support. The Diyarbakır Protestant Church and Jehovah's Witnesses initiated their activities in the city in 2003, and even won lawsuits filed against the associations they formed.

Another point that needs to be raised in conjunction is the situation of the displaced Kurdish population. Kurds are a primary

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32 Elif Görgü, "Mezopotamya Bahçesine Bahar Geldi," *Evrensel Daily*, 8 April 2007, 4.

33 Haşim Söylemez, "Yezidiler Geri Dönüyor (Yazidis Return)," *Aksiyon Weekly* 594 (2006): 23-26.

component of the region. However, their social, economic, political, legal, and cultural problems have remained unresolved for decades, and in many ways, were not even acknowledged by the state for many years. The issue has become a chronic one, and reached even more tragic proportions when, from the mid-1980s onwards, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) embraced bloody armed conflict as a means to an end, to which the state responded by amplifying its oppressive and harsh measures. One of the measures employed by the state to establish control in the region has been to forcefully displace the populace especially in rural areas; masses of people were displaced from 1984 to 1999, and most intensely from 1991 to 1996. No hard data exists regarding the specific number of these Internally Displaced People (IDP); projected figures vary from 350,000, the official number put forth by the state, to 3-4 million, based on studies<sup>34</sup> conducted by various NGOs, for example IDMC/NRC<sup>35</sup> and TESEV.<sup>36</sup> Regardless of the actual figure, this significant event impacted numerous people and lead mostly to negative outcomes for the displaced people, the region itself, and places where displaced people resettled;<sup>37</sup> moreover, not only did the state refuse to acknowledge it until the late 1990s, but the oppressive and unsafe environment also made it impossible for academic circles or NGOs to address the issue.<sup>38</sup> However, as a result of

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34 IDMC/NRC and TESEV, *Overcoming A Legacy of Mistrust: Towards Reconciliation Between the State and the Displaced*, May 2006 [database on-line]: available at: [www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/resources.nsf/\(httpPublications\)/](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/resources.nsf/(httpPublications)/), last accessed 18 December 2009, 12; Joost Jongerden, "So-called Return Policies: An Analysis of Regional Construction and Dwelling Practices," *Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Yerinden Edilme: Uluslararası İlkeler, Deneyimler ve Çözüm Önerileri Sempozyumu* (Symposium on Internally Displaced People in Turkey and in the World: Principles, Experiences and Solutions), Istanbul (4-5 December 2006), 2.

35 Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre of the Norwegian Refugee Council

36 Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation

37 See that source for an analysis of these outcomes: Betül Altuntaş, "Internally Displaced People from the Angle of Social, Economic and Class-Centred Dynamics," *Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Yerinden Edilme: Uluslararası İlkeler, Deneyimler ve Çözüm Önerileri Sempozyumu* (Symposium on Internally Displaced People in Turkey and in the World: Principles, Experiences and Solutions), Istanbul (4-5 December 2006).

38 Bilgin Ayata, "İnkârden Diyaloga? Türkiye'deki Yerinden Edilmeye Yönelik Ulusal ve Uluslararası Politikalar Üzerine Bir Analiz (From Denial to Dialogue? An Analysis of National and International Policies in Turkey About Internally Displacement)," *Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Yerinden Edilme: Uluslararası İlkeler, Deneyimler ve Çözüm*

pressure by international governmental and non-governmental organizations, and legal regulations passed within the context of meeting EU membership targets from 2001 onwards, this has begun to change. According to official figures, the number of people returning home, as of October 2006, is around 145,000.<sup>39</sup> Clearly, this number is unsatisfactory; the fact that people are returning does not immediately resolve any problems; and the state still has a lot of ground to cover.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, the fact that the resolution of this problem is connected to the resolution of the Kurdish problem is also evident. However, myriad matters in relation to this issue have been overcome, and the return migration process has already begun. The restrictions that were the norm eight to ten years ago no longer apply, and it is much easier to assess and criticize the issue in the dialogue-friendly environment that has formed.<sup>41</sup>

Our aim here is not to paint a pretty picture of return migration. Nevertheless, regardless of how small the figures seem, the fact that communities that were torn away from lands they had inhabited for centuries because of ethnic and religious identities have now begun a process of return migration, is something not to be undervalued. Especially for non-Muslims, the process of return migration is a conscious choice and a desire to revive their values in these lands, in addition, people now have a more optimistic outlook on life; thus, it would not be wrong to assess these developments as a reflection of the Europeanization process. Although there is no concrete date set in the near future regarding Turkey's accession to the EU, the winds of reform blowing since 2001, and the umbrella of peace and security that the process already promises, have established the grounds for these people to take steps to quench their yearning for home.

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Önerileri Sempozyumu (Symposium on Internally Displaced People in Turkey and in the World: Principles, Experiences and Solutions), Istanbul (4-5 December 2006), 1.

39 Zekeriya Şarbak, "Dünyada ve Türkiye'de Yerinden Edilme (Internally Displacement in Turkey and in the World', Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Yerinden Edilme: Uluslararası İlkeler, Deneyimler ve Çözüm Önerileri Sempozyumu (Symposium on Internally Displaced People in Turkey and in the World: Principles, Experiences and Solutions)," Istanbul (4-5 December 2006), 2.

40 IDMC/NRC and TESEV, *Overcoming A Legacy of Mistrust*, 15; Jongerden, "So-called Return Policies," 5.

41 Ayata, "İnkârdan Diyaloga?," 9.

## **5. Conclusion: The Process Has Just Begun**

Turkey embarked on the path leading to the EU (the then EEC) in 1959; signed the Association Agreement in 1963; applied for full membership in 1987; and joined the Customs Union in 1996. Despite this history spanning half a century, we believe that Turkey's actual EU process has begun just recently, with the onset of the new millennium. The determination and will to become an EU member began to surpass mere discourse in earnest for the first time, and was reflected in actions taken. By actions we mean the more democratic and society-centred policies employed in relation to issues that have been considered taboo throughout the nation's history, and assumed to cause great harm should they be approached with a different attitude. During the short period of time where EU reforms have come to the fore and violence and anti-legal approaches have declined, the fact that finally the loss of blood has stopped in the region, economic investments have been realized and people have embraced a trend of returning home, are all beginnings that parallel the new Europeanization process.

It is true that much still remains to be done, that normative transformation is much more difficult than legal-institutional transformation, and that people unwilling to let go of old structures and mentalities resist change. It is also true that in the SEA, which has socio-economic indicators that are lower even than the average values for Turkey, a poor civil society profile, and more problems related to ethno-cultural matters than other regions in Turkey, change will be much more difficult. Nonetheless, the flourishing of the positive atmosphere and developments in just a few years shows that the continuation of this process appears to be the only valid way to resolve the socio-economic and political problems in the region. As the President of the Diyarbakır Bar Association, one of the most important NGOs in the region, said, "Anyone that resorts to a discourse of violence in the region, will lose."<sup>42</sup> Almost all of the research studies conducted in the region reveal that the people of the region desire the expansion of democratic rights and freedoms more

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42 Mehmet Gündem, "Interview with Sezgin Tanrikulu," *Yenişafak Daily*, 23 February 2008, 12.

than any other part of the country.<sup>43</sup> Such beginnings are also signs that the historic lands of Mesopotamia will once again become a multicultural and peaceful region (and very much in line with EU targets) if accession to the EU does actually become a reality, or if a new environment conducive to satisfying ethnic-religious-cultural communities is created through strengthening the Region's socio-economic status via steps to be taken during the membership process.

In this article, a general societal picture of the case region and its linkage with Europeanization has been presented. It has been somewhat a first academic attempt in this way. Due to the long-term risk of violence and lack of academic interest in the region, it was not easy to collect reliable data and find sufficient sources about the topic. However, accepting the peculiar geographical and socio-cultural aspects of the region, it we hope to offer an interesting empirical contribution to Europeanization literature. Just simply imagining the Europeanization of people at the edge of the Middle-East seems to be sufficient for showing the importance of the case. Further research related to the Eastern and South-Eastern parts of Turkey on the same path is also expected to develop this contribution.

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43 Ali Çarkoğlu, "Societal Perceptions of Turkey's EU Membership," in *Turkey and European Integration*, eds. Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe (London: Routledge, 2004), 19-47; Hakan Yılmaz, "Swinging between Eurosupportiveness and Euroskepticism," 152-181.

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## **BOOK REVIEWS**

**Rebecca S. Katz, *The Georgian Regime Crisis of 2003-2004. A Case Study in Post-Soviet Media Representation of Politics, Crime and Corruption (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2006), 362 pp.***

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Two decades after the fall of communism our knowledge regarding the changes that took place in the former Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is still limited. Most information is purely contextual – the main actors involved and their afterwards political or public evolution, or the more or less recent histories of each piece of the communist puzzle. But, we are still unable to mark out accurately the trajectories of the changes in themselves – for example, what were the starting point and the motivations of the masses to support those transformations, at least at the very beginning of the processes. The majority of the bibliography on this topic – including the literature published in 2009 - is covering the changes that took place in the former Eastern communist countries and the former Soviet Union, without offering in-depth and exhaustive scrutiny of each past communist society.

Rebecca S. Katz focuses on the ways in which the 2003-2004 regime crisis in Georgia was reflected in the local English media published in the capital city of Tbilisi, mostly *The Daily Georgian Times*, *Georgia Today*, and *the Messenger* – an extensive list of those newspapers as well as a list of the Internet links are not offered a bibliographical sources at the end of the volume. The author does a qualitative analysis of the representations of politics, crime and corruption in the media. For those unable to go directly to Georgian language media, a considerable amount of information is provided to recompose the local landscape, something not particularly familiar to the average Western reader. The coverage is related not exclusively to conflicts and tense situations, but to daily political and social activity as well. The media reporting of the events is corrected or completed by

the author's personal experience (i.e. work in Georgia for one year in the academic field). In addition, the book includes tables with information regarding the electoral process, financial and economic data, and illustrations from the electoral campaign and the mass rallies. The predictable insufficient familiarity of the reader with the cultural and historical roots of this country is balanced by a special chapter dedicated to the "History of Georgia in the Caucasus", centred on the Soviet and post-Soviet period. The author herself recognizes that the access of the population to the newspapers is limited (p. 123), mostly for financial reasons. In the same time, the author recognizes this viewpoint as limiting the exhaustive coverage of the problems of Georgian society.

The aim of the book is to offer "an interdisciplinary perspective on crime and corruption" (p. 15), without setting a specific theoretical model, through comparisons between Western and Eastern societies, starting from the Georgian case-study. In the final chapter, Katz concludes that the non-critical national self-projection is an obstruction to progress. Honest evaluation of the past is essential in a successful redesign of Georgian society, including in relations with Russia. The arguments developed in the book do not constantly support this standpoint, but could set the beginning for an enriched perception of post-Soviet societies.

Partly, the narrative of the book is constructed around the bridges between the past and the present, how the past is reflected – or not – in the present situation, at the symbolical or political level. Politicization of the historical memory and its place in the current national building process is a common characteristic in many former communist countries. and the selection – not free of immediate political interest - operated as part of the current national building process. In the Georgian example, the author mentions the absence of any historical education within the state university system (p. 23) from the names of streets assigned to writers, poets or artists to the early Menshevik revolutionaries (p.22). Moreover, there is a lack of critical approach to the situation of other minorities living in Georgian territory (pp.25-6) as possible explanation of the inter-ethnic conflicts that followed.

At the same time, comparative approaches are limited and the basis of their construction could be eroded by the lack of relevance of the terms compared. One common comparison is of the standards set by the international community for achieving a successful Georgian transition and what the author considers a setback in terms of transparency and accountability in government during the US presidency of George W. Bush. The author argues that the Patriot Act is a tool used abusively against its own citizens (p. 60) in the context of anti-terrorism policies. In this respect, whenever new democracies follow the American example obstacles occur in their quest for democratic standards. In the Georgian case, the post 9/11 US rhetoric was translated into Saakashvili's 2003 warnings about the danger of a Moscow-led invasion (p. 145). The global lack of a clear definition of terrorism allows abuses against those opposing certain regimes (pp. 179-180). According to the same logic, the presence in Georgia of a company as Halliburton, with past accusations of corruption in the Middle East (based on media reports) is not a step forward in supporting democratic change and public accountability (p. 117) in the former Soviet space.

The critical evaluation of the author is lacking as well when mentioning the imbroglio of public statements, including from Moscow – before and after Saakashvili's presidency, with reference to the role played by the international NGOs and other local organisations in the regime change. In other parts of the book, the author simply restates known things and stereotypes regarding the Western – mostly US – induced regime change, by referring to, without further discussion, the changes from Serbia and Ukraine. Of course, it is out of topic to analyse the patterns of change in those countries, but some critical standpoints are more than necessary as a filter against the mind-laziness of the plot theories, partly tributary to an archaic, propagandist and Soviet-inherited perspective.

Equally, the claim concerning the Western financial institutions' contribution to the widening of the gap between poor and rich (p. 135), is omitting to point out the system problems – common and specific – in some beneficent countries regarding the lack of viable institutions and appropriate anti-corruption legislation.

Another weakness concerns hasty editing, with several misspellings and errors, as the ambiguous mention of the Council of Europe instead of the European Parliament (pp. 278-9).

The cases outlined in the book add to our knowledge of the stages of this course of action and its addition to the bibliography of this geopolitical area is essential. From the point of view of the target audience of the book – scholars, political experts, diplomats and journalists – an increase of information about Georgia it is made available in English and could be used for case-to-case evaluations of various evolutions of the transition process in this country.

**Daniel Smilov and Jurij Toplak (eds.), *Political Finance and Corruption in Eastern Europe: The Transition Period* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 220 pp.**

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One can hardly describe the existing Eastern Europe bibliography on party funding issues as “voluminous”. Of course if an explanation has to be given of this academic “asceticism” several reasons can be given. First, the nature of the problem as one of high “sensitivity” has as its consequence the insufficiency of related information, which is dependent mostly on unreliable journalist sources, and incomplete and uninformative official documents. Second there is a strong reluctance of party functioners and public office holders to share information with party researchers. In this respect the book of Smilov and Toplak *Political Finance and Corruption in Eastern Europe: the Transition Period* is a valuable contribution to the difficult field of party finances and corruption, an area still under-researched in this part of Europe.

The structure of the book is composed of two units: an introductory chapter that opens the discussion by providing different theoretical and comparative interpretations, and ten case-study chapters. Based on a strict organizational matrix these

describe party funding legislation and practices in ten Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia and Ukraine. The exposition of each case-study is identical: Introduction, Description of the Political Finance Model, Analysis of Political Finance Model and Conclusion. In addition, almost every chapter includes a large number of different tables that provide a significant visual and explanatory support to the authors' argument, making easier for the reader to compare different party funding practices. The proposed time framework is the period between the fall of communism 1989-90 and a few years before the first wave of Eastern countries to join the European Union.

Methodologically the case-studies are thoroughly founded on a variety of sources: there are primary sources – interviews with politicians and party functioners, political scientists, public officials and civil servants, as well as secondary ones, based on state laws regulating party functions and funding, Constitutional court decisions, government decrees, party statutes, newspaper and journal articles etc.

In the first chapter of the book, the introductory one, Smilov pays attention to several important issues that find their empirical development in the consecutive case-study chapters. In the very beginning he describes two different models of party finance with strong impact on the functioning of the countries' party systems. The first is the "party-centered" model and the second – the "candidate-centered" one. This first distinction can be observed in all ten case-studies and it is interpreted as underlying one of the most important differences between the Central European and Balkan states (to some degree) on one hand and Russia on the other – the tendency of strong and well-organized party institutions to be created and consolidated in the former as opposed to the predominance of looser forms of party organizations in the latter. In the first case, party funding legislation tries to stimulate the creation and institutionalization of strong structures and organisation and in the second it legislatively "discourages" political parties from consolidation.



Smilov proposes yet another distinction that can be delineated on the basis of an ideologically specified approach: one where a "libertarian model" of party financing is opposed to an "egalitarian" one. Here a distinction between two groups of countries can be drawn again. In the first group Kanev, Enyedi, and Toplak outline an "egalitarian model" which is characterized by an attempt for some degree of financial security to be provided to all political parties (it can be, as it is the case in Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovenia, that the parties subject to state subsidies are all parties with at least 1% electoral support) but at the same time Walecki, Enyedi, Císař and Petr describe state legislative efforts towards imposition of strict party funding regulations (as in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic). In Russia (Gleisner) and Ukraine (Protsyk and Walecki), on the other hand, the practice can be defined as "libertarian", "Generally, [...], parties were allowed to fund themselves as they saw fit." (p. 144).

As problems regarding the political finance legislation and its implementation in Eastern Europe the book outlines the lack of transparency, the lack of a level playing field in political competition and the lack of representativeness of political parties in the region. These three crucial problems are thoroughly investigated within all case-studies on the basis of extensive work with primary and secondary sources.

In regard to the issues of transparency and legality of party funding we can cite Císař and Petr who describe properly the development in Central European countries - "the system in the country [the Czech Republic] has moved from an under-regulated to a relatively well regulated area of activity." (p. 86). The task of securing of a level playing field in political competition is a more acute problem. There are countries (Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia,) where there is a tendency towards strong domination of the ruling party at the expense of the opposition, as Kanev, Treneska and Goati state, and others (Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland) where a more consensus-oriented model can be identified. Another highly important problem, as it was pointed out, is the lack of representatives. In countries as Slovenia, Bulgaria and Poland a gradual shift from the parties' financial dependence on

private donation towards etatization of the parties can be observed as well as signs of a process of "party cartelization". On the other hand are Russia and Ukraine where, according to Gleisner, Protsyk and Walecki, parties are more vulnerable to be "captured" by influential financial groups and "oligarchs" (pp. 202-207).

A weakness of the book is the lack of a concluding chapter - an opportunity for the case studies to be interpreted one more time from a comperativist prospective, and for the theoretical framework to be developed further on the basis of the accumulated empirical funding. Another comment can be made in regard to the case selection. It is a fact with significant value for any further work in the field that some academically under-researched countries are given thoroughgoing presentation by the contributors of the book - such are Bulgaria (Kanev), Croatia (Kregar, Gardašević, and Gotovac), Macedonia (Treneska), Serbia (Goati), and Ukraine (Protsyk and Walecki). However, countries from other European geographical areas, such as the Baltics, are absent. In this respect, at least one of these countries can be covered by a new edition of the book - a suggestion in no sense groundless, I think, when one takes into account Smilov's remarks in the introduction about some intriguing characteristics of party funding issues in countries as Latvia and Estonia.

The book is undoubtedly an important contribution to party funding literature. Describing in detail the process of party funding during the transition period (1990-2001) and being itself an extended source of information that can explain the current political situation in the above-mentioned countries the volume can be, very helpful for academic researchers, students and practitioners.

**Pieter Vanhuyse, *Divide and Pacify: Strategic Social Policies and Political Protests in Post-Communist Democracies* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 190 pp.**

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While the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe was perhaps the launch pad for politicians who wanted to introduce new democratic ideas to their countries, it also brought along with it substantial downsides such as soaring unemployment rates and hyperinflation which caught citizens largely off-guard. After a decade and a half of democracy, the young and promising scholar Pieter Vanhuyse, by offering his perspective on various issues related to post socialist economic transformation of Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic, gives some well-crafted and thoughtful explanations of the collective actions of the population in these countries regarding the shock of unemployment. He examines the reasons behind the lack of protests in these countries despite the high level of unemployment. Considering that the foreword of the book is written by his mentor, the widely-respected Professor Janos Kornai, it is clear from the start that we are dealing with a serious research book.

The carefully constructed introduction and conclusion hint at and introduce the reader to the author's main arguments. The second chapter gives a comparative analysis between the post communist transition periods of Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic as well as one Latin American country and other post communist countries in Europe. Interestingly, the author includes in his analysis a comparison with other democratic (liberal, social or conservative) countries, which paints a picture of the surprisingly peaceful transition for these three European countries on a number of dimensions.

The third chapter provides the reader with the real picture of the threatened workers and farmers' political silence, despite all the potential for large scale protests. So, the focus of the fourth chapter named "Preventing Protests "Divide and Pacify as Political

strategy” is on the strategic role of social policies in preempting the political danger posed by threatened workers, pointing out that the means (strategic policies) used by the countries’ governments to manipulate the work- welfare status of individuals were intended to reduce the capacity for reform losers’ mobilization.

The “divide and pacify” strategy is the core of the plan aimed at splitting homogenous groups of threatened workers into several groups of unemployed (with benefits), some into early and some into disability retirement (the abnormal pensioners). The newly unemployed and “abnormally” retired workers were faced with declining living standards and narrowing social network ties, offloaded onto welfare programs and had stronger incentives to earn private income in the grey economy instead of pursuing public goods through protests.

Chapter five abounds with graphs and charts regarding the poverty, family spending, children and maternity allowances, early pension expenditures, and replacement rates for old age pensions, which helps the parallel analyses on these three countries, and in the sixth chapter the author clearly explains the pathways of Hungary and Poland as opposed to the Czech Republic, which didn’t apply the “divide and pacify” strategy and still obtained low levels of unemployment (remained steady at around three percent throughout the early 1990s), as well as infrequent mass protests.

The book’s main merit is actually closely related with the main argument of the author. By positing that governments could impose a degree of political peace upon the polity through the strategic use of state welfare programs, he offers a ray of hope for countries that are still dealing with large scale of unemployment as a result of the market reforms after the socialism. So, these policies (“Divide and Pacify”) split up formally organized groups of workers simultaneously threatened by redundancy, by keeping some of them in jobs, and by sending some onto unemployment benefits and many others into early and disability retirement.

The focuses of Vanhuysse's research are Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic, but he does not exclude from his analysis Latin American countries and other post socialist European countries, which gives even more value to the project. From an economic point of view, the above mentioned policies often appeared to be very costly or irresponsibly populist. But, it does not necessarily mean that it can lead to system destruction or other bad outcomes, on the contrary, here it happens to shine new light on these "unpopular policies" by stressing the deeper political motives and the importance of being able to acknowledge the wider sociological consequences.

The author is completely aware of the delicacy of the issue, and instead of aiming for creation of some new socio-economic rules, he gives examples of other paths for socio-economic reforms (the Czech example). Showing how only an interdisciplinary perspective can really aid in better understanding an apparently puzzling issue is perhaps the best defensive mechanism in the authors explanations of the phenomenon.

The controversial part of this book is the unusual claim of the author that the grey economy and high budget disbursements were the actual reasons behind the lack of mass strikes and protests in Hungary and Poland. While stating this so clearly and openly sounds a little bit irrational, we must be aware that this is an analysis of the situation as it stands, and not the authors personal beliefs. In order to avoid trends' toward generalization and simplification the readers should have in mind that Hungary was a "Gradualist" transitional country, while Poland was one of the "Shock Therapy" countries and Czech Republic was a so-called "Big Bang" country, choosing a radically different way<sup>1</sup> to deal with unemployment, and in fact managed to become a remarkable industrial power (obtaining rate of passive to active expenditures decreasing from 5 in 1990 to 0,5 in 1993, which

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1 "The Balcerowicz program", practically did not contained a social policy section, but, some of the steps in order to achieve low unemployment rate were: avoiding large scale job losses by developing the labor market, therefore, avoidance of the bankruptcy of the large enterprises, by giving it a sufficient time for adaptation, by providing credits, possibly subsidy, and partly customs policy.

stood the same ratio compared with Sweden – 0,9 and France 2,2 in 1991).

The book is well written, and the reader can clearly understand the author's main goals and perspectives. Although, the easy flowing style and language can also put this book in a danger of misinterpretation of those decision makers willing to use it as an excuse for bad decisions during their governance. It is an informative, concise, and analytical book which deserves every scholar's and political researcher's attention. It is complicated to strictly define reading groups because this is a complex book which encompasses political, psychological, economical, and sociological elements, so students of human sciences can find it very useful. Economists of the post socialist countries and the political decision makers can also use these experiences to review and analyze their own political decisions already implemented in their post socialist societies and its final results. Being nominated for the American Sociological Association's Award for Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship 2006, "*Divide and Pacify: Strategic Social Policies and Political Protests in Post-Socialist Democracies*" comes as a highly recommended research book.

**Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe, *European Culture in a Changing World: Between Nationalism and Globalization* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2004), 270 pp.**

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The tumultuous history of Europe has colourful facets in respect to social, economic, political, and linguistic aspects. *European Culture in a Changing World: Between Nationalism and Globalism* edited by Dr. Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe and published by Cambridge Scholars Press Ltd. London, is a multidisciplinary book that offers a wide range of description in a fascinating way. The book consists of chapters presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> International

Conference of the International Society for the Study of European Ideas (ISSEI) held from 22-27 July 2002 in Aberystwyth, Wales.

Like other conference publications, the book contains a set of chapters presented by eminent scholars, most of whom are affiliated with universities in the United States, Canada, and Europe. It is divided into three sections, *Politics and Economy*, *Philosophy*, and *Literature and the Arts*. Each section comprises on different sub topics in reference to the main conference title, European Culture in a Changing World: Between Nationalism and Globalism. The book has a great emphasis on emerging European political and cultural integration with respect to its long lasting history of art, music, theatre, and literature. It begins with a comprehensive background of the conference and explicit introduction of selected chapters by the editor. The largest portion of selected chapters is the third section, *Literature and the Arts*.

The first section, *Politics and Economy* consists of five chapters dealing with political culture, economic development, nationalism, civil religion, and diversity. In this section, the authors are primarily focused on political economy of the region, nation-state phenomena, self identity, comparison of civil religion and politics, and structural changes in the Estonian economy. In *Philosophy*, the second section, eight chapters that explore the philosophical debate on the conference title. This section provides an insight on human behaviour, political diversity, theology, personal freedom, social transformation, individual perception and psychological orientation towards society, culture, romance, and state mechanism in the European context. Most chapters recount the theoretical and conceptual debate on philosophy of social, political, and cultural issues in the framework of local and global dimensions. The final section, *Literature and the Arts*, consists of nine chapters from well-renowned scholars working on art, media, literature, dance, and theatre in different parts of Europe and the United States. The section illustrates prominent features of art, drama, novels, poetry, and wide range of fiction in order to highlight European culture and social life in various societies. It also contains the conference paper presented by the editor, Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe.

This multidisciplinary book is written in a technical language and chapters are limited to a specific topic as selected for a conference under separate subtitles. Overall structure of the book is very appealing. The introduction is well-descriptive and written in a simple style. It motivates the reader and creates new inquiries about the topics. Overall, the book is both concise and comprehensive, however, the explanations and definitions provided in the text are more theoretical than practical in terms of art and culture. The chapters covering philosophy, music and theatre are quite challenging to the reader without a proper background in the subjects and it might be difficult for such a reader to make it through these chapters without losing interest. To say the book is scholarly is not an exaggeration. Primary readers of the book are authors and academicians in research and education institutions. Paragraphs are well phrased and connected with technical terminologies; nevertheless, jargons are frequently used in most chapters.

Having said that, the book provides in-depth knowledge on European culture and political discourse in the areas of EU by giving certain examples in chapter 2, 3, 6, and 11. Analytically, the title, introduction, and content of the book are more striking than the main text. Some chapters are presented and debated in a somewhat interesting way; especially in the case of Italy's Struggle for a National Identity, possibly the best example of a logical debate with interesting technical arguments. As a general reader, I would like to express that the book presents a diverse range of culture, history, economics, music, arts, drama, theatre, political science, history, and development studies in a unique way. Personally, I would recommend this book to those readers who are looking for a one-stop source to understand the issues in this book more clearly. The book is a good option for acquiring comprehensive knowledge of European culture, art, and politics.

From a reader's view point, starting from introduction to chapter twenty-three, *European Culture in a Changing World: Between Nationalism and Globalism*, offers an interesting journey that passes through all walks of life in order to understand practical life experiences from Europe in a globalized world. The biggest



strength of the book is its diversity of topics, deftly managed by authors who assembled their ideas and connected them to the central theme. The book offers an exposure of life in Europe that shows a colourful picture of European society. The contributions of authors are of high scholarly value, but the collection should appeal to a range of lay readers. The contrasted nature of topics, however, creates ambiguities of concepts and repetition that could become a challenge for general readers. For instance, the chapter on developing countries is one example of such confusions. Despite the loopholes, I found it to be a thought-provoking and a state of the art publication on such a multidisciplinary topic.

Finally, some chapters are sound and easy to grasp by readers without formal background knowledge of the topics, especially general readers and early stage of writers. Opening and concluding paragraphs are written by the editor are comprehensible and guiding. Ezra Talmor's comments on the back cover are also likely to stimulate the reading of this book. All things considered, this reading deserves close consideration.

**Krzysztof Michalski (ed.), *What Holds Europe Together. Conditions of European Solidarity* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 192 pp.**

Author: Natalia Vlas  
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The successive European enlargement waves pose many challenges and accordingly raise new and ever more intense debates regarding the future of the European Union. *What Holds Europe Together* is a collection of writings belonging to a distinguished group of scholars convened by Romano Prodi, the previous president of the European Union, in the spring of 2002, to reflect on "those values particularly relevant to the continuing process of European unification and to advice him on this field" (p.3). It is the first of the two volumes that resulted from the work of these scholars, reunited under the general title: *Conditions of European Solidarity*. The first volume's declared aim

is to address the problems of European identity based on solidarity and to identify those elements that can provide Europe political cohesion in a context where the previous forces that bound Europe together have weakened. The second volume, on the other hand, entitled *Religion in the New Europe*, deals with the role that religion can play in bringing Europe together.

The general premise around which all the contributions to the volume are structured, is that solidarity is the glue that can bind European states together and ensure the survival and success of the Union, which is ever more full of diversity and inequalities. Apart from this idea, however, there is no consensus on either the meaning of solidarity or how this solidarity can be achieved. Some authors (e.g. Bronislaw Geremek) give prevalence to cultural factors in the process of European unification and argue that the best way to overcome national egoisms hindering unification is to see Europe as a shared community with a shared history and common values. Geremek also emphasizes the need to do justice to history by acknowledging the fundamental importance of Christianity in creating this community.

In a similar vein, the elements that used to provide European cohesion in the past 50 years have lost their unifying force and the new challenges Europe faces (European enlargement, demographic trends, changes in the economy and labor market, consequences of globalization and the paradigm shift from the industrial age to the age of knowledge) require new cohesive forces to hold it together. Kurt Biedenkopf argues that these cohesive forces can be found by attaching greater importance to what the EU has in common culturally, using culture in the broadest sense of the word. Moreover, conscious of the tensions caused by a further continuation of a welfare state, especially in the context of EU enlargement to states "where social policy has been highly developed ... and where the capacity of large sections of the population to take responsibility for themselves is highly underdeveloped", Biedenkopf argues that "the strongest bond within the Union is provided by common interests", because "there will be solidarity between the Union's member states only insofar as their interests coincide."

Other authors, like Grabbe, also draw attention to the difficulties of achieving solidarity in an ever expanding EU: "When the community is growing rapidly in ways that the members cannot fully control, their feeling of sharing a common cause begins to diminish", especially when the newcomers in the EU family are poorer and demand the richer members' financial help. Richer EU members will certainly not help poorer ones simply out of idealism and accordingly, the author points to the need of acknowledging that the self interest of rich countries is best served by pursuing common goals. The common destiny of Europeans is the element that can bring the peoples of Europe together, in Grabbe's view.

Kovacs goes to the heart of the problem and explores the different interpretations of "true" solidarity advanced by the two halves of Europe: the romantic "Eastern" one, based mainly on altruistic considerations and the more pragmatic Western one, which is more utilitarian in its orientation. This is also very well illustrated by different contributors in the comments section of the book.

Rupnik explores some of the problems associated with the EU's enlargement towards Eastern Europe (he concentrates on the 2004 wave of integration, like all other contributors, but the arguments are equally relevant today, after the integration of two even poorer states, in the EU: Romania and Bulgaria). Thus, he observes that "the enlargement to the East is a case of asymmetric integration. The asymmetry has facilitated the transfer of norms and institutional convergence, but not a commensurate transfer of resources." He also argues that the EU will not be able to help Eastern and Central Europe in the same manner and on the same scale that it helped Southern Europe, due to the lack of sufficient resources. Secondly, the author argues that the viability of the European social and economic model, which combined competitiveness and solidarity and provided the European Union part of its identity, differentiating it from the American (Anglo-Saxon) model, cannot be taken for granted any more, after the enlargement. The only way to preserve a "European social model", argues Rupnik, is to enlarge it eastwards and the only way to do that is to reform it in the

West – and this requires a redefinition of the meaning of solidarity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Taking all these contributions together, as well as the comments and additions brought by the other participants in the debate, one gets a picture of the status of the academic and political debates regarding the elements holding Europe together. True, there is no consensus on such elements and the diversity of approaches could make cynics wonder if the aims formulated at the beginning of the work are thus fulfilled, but one has to be aware that there are no sure recipes on how to combine all these ingredients so that in the end solidarity is born. Moreover, many of the contributors honestly presented the difficulties and the obstacles in the way of European solidarity and it might be that acknowledging them is the first step in achieving solidarity.

On the whole, the volume brings a valuable contribution to the debates in the field, and by bringing together academics from both western member states and newcomers, it manages to detect the atmosphere in both parts of the EU as well as the inherent differences of approach and expectations. It offers a wide range of opinions and tentative solutions to the problems raised in the book. But probably the main merit of the book is that it signals the fact that the debates regarding the identity politics of the EU did not end with the failed constitutional draft but will resurface again and again with every knock of outsiders at the EU's door.

Accordingly, *What Holds Europe Together* is worthwhile reading for politicians and European bureaucrats, as well as academics, students and the general public interested in the challenges that the European Union confronts with every new wave of enlargement.

**Anastasia V. Mitrofanova, *The Politicization of Russian Orthodoxy: Actors and Ideas* (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2005), 205 pp. + notes, glossary, photos and bibliography.**

Author: Greg Simons  
Uppsala University

The focus of this book is on the ideologies of politicized Orthodox Christianity in contemporary Russia (up until 2005). Various groups are subjected to study and analysis, including fundamentalists, pan-Slavists, neo-Eurasianists, Orthodox Communists and nationalists. The analysis and study of these groups and their ideologies takes a number of different approaches; examining their literature, mass media, music and film. The work not only examines the relationship between and among these varied groups, but their relationship and attitude towards the Russian Orthodox Church and the political establishment of Russia.

Russian organisations, personalities and groups form the focus of the work, although there are some references to these groups working beyond the borders of the Russian Federation, in Belarus for example. The author makes a clear distinction when she talks about what she refers to as groups that use a politicized form of religion that can be based loosely on Orthodoxy, and the official Russian Orthodox Church (with a focus on the Moscow Patriarchate).

This book is somewhat different from a number of previous related works insofar as it does not focus on the political ambitions of the Russian Orthodox Church. Instead the focus is on the much more neglected subject of political movements, with their own eclectic gathering of ideology that may include a version of Orthodox doctrine. However, as the author rightly points out, the use of Orthodox doctrine is very selective on the part of those political movements, including how those doctrines are interpreted. A number of the leaders and members of the fore mentioned political groups, show scant knowledge of Orthodox rites and traditions, which she uses to emphasize a distinction between the political and clerical versions. Mitrofanova therefore

makes the distinction between the Canonical and political versions of Orthodoxy.

One of the significant achievements of this book is the vast amount of research done in to a largely neglected topic. It opens up a lot of information and events, putting them in to an easily understood format, to a wider audience beyond the sphere of those who have a good command of the Russian language. Therefore this book can be easily read and understood by a wide audience of academics, students or those with an interest in the subject area (politicised religion and/or Russia).

Mitrofanova succeeds in realising her stated goals, through demonstrating that political Orthodox movements; are a somewhat specific heterogeneous group that does not practice the canonical version of Orthodoxy 'properly'; the movements are guided less by the Russian Orthodox Church and more by religiously oriented lay individuals; in spite of electoral setbacks by the religio-political movements they are adding to the *Orthodoxization* of Russian political discourse.

The bewildering variety of different groups and their political and religious orientations is made even more bewildering at times by the various alliances of convenience that are made between these groups. But, the author breaks the book into small and easily digestible parts, which enables the reader to comprehend a vast amount of information, which at times seems to be contradictory, due to the nature of the processes described. One of the interesting aspects that was raised is the dilemma faced by these groups, who have formed a sub-culture and are isolationist by nature. The isolationism is designed to protect the group from outside influences, yet this same 'protection' limits their ability to try and influence Russian society.

In the book, Mitrofanova makes a distinction between official religion and groups that use religion as a means of gaining support or legitimacy. The later she describes as being organisations rather than institutions. Towards the finish of the work the author begins a discussion about civil and uncivil religions, creating a division between official religion and other

non-official groups and organisations. Official religions have a tendency to support the state in matters and to try and remain beyond politics when they can. This is often done as a means to maintain a good relationship with the political authorities of the country. Unofficial/uncivil religions tend to distrust and have a problematic relationship or attitude with both the state and civil religion.

Another interesting aspect that was raised by the book was the issue of the insecurity of the leadership of religio-political organisations. They are an outsider, both in terms of acceptance within the clerical and secular worlds. Mitrofanova seems at times to be somewhat mystified by the efforts by some of the key figures in trying to gain legitimacy from whatever means they can. However, the answer seems to be in plain sight, by securing legitimacy they hope to gain acceptance and through acceptance influence. At the end of the day, the function of these groups is to try and sell their ideology to as many people as possible and thereby influence as many people as possible with these ideas.

Overall, the author's arguments and observations, many of which were undertaken in field work and interviewing a number of people in the groups, were not only plausible, but highly interesting. I found the book to be well written, with a wealth of new information. There is also great potential for Mitrofanova and other researchers to develop this work further.

**Robert Belloni, *State Building and International Intervention in Bosnia* (Oxon: Routledge, 2007), 213 pp.**

Author: Lucy Sommo  
University of Bologna

Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country largely defined by the international presence that has dominated the past decade of its existence. The expensive and omnipresent international operation was one of the first of its kind, and its successes and failures have been debated by many. Roberto Belloni adds one of the most recent perspectives on this discussion in his book, *State*

*Building and International Intervention in Bosnia.* The book contains useful information about the current situation in Bosnia and reflections on the changes that have taken place in a variety of sectors since 1995. Belloni looks anew at different aspects of the international intervention in BiH, challenging some commonly held assumptions and offering his evaluation of what worked and what didn't. Perhaps his book's most valuable contribution to the study of Bosnia is the up-to-date information and analysis of many components of the state-building process that offer readers a comprehensive look at the state of Bosnia's development and how it got to where it is today.

The book begins with an explanation of the existing streams of thought surrounding international intervention in weak and divided states. Belloni outlines the historical determinist, strong interventionist and autonomist arguments and explains why these approaches are insufficient. He then lays out something of a middle way, relying heavily on shared sovereignty (Krasner 2004), long term strategies, and grassroots initiatives as a means to better guide international intervention in BiH.

Belloni's primary argument, presented in the introduction, is essentially an analysis of why the work of international agencies has not been entirely successful. He contends that external actors have had multiple, often competing, objectives. They've oscillated between accepting the status quo (ethnic division) and promoting diversity, with an initial bias toward maintaining the status quo, and they have been preoccupied with short-term, visible results. Belloni supports this argument later in the book with extensive empirical evidence taken from a variety of sectors.

A discussion of international intervention as a whole follows the introduction, and then the main body of the book covers several components of the state-building process, namely democracy building, elections and electoral engineering, civil society and the Euro-Atlantic integration that is presumably Bosnia's future. Belloni outlines the evolution of these sectors and uses them as a means to examine the role of international agencies. He analyses the strategies that worked and those that didn't, looks at what went wrong and suggests what can be done better in other post-



conflict areas. Belloni is most certainly to be commended for the reference that these chapters provide. In particular, he delves deeper into the electoral system in BiH than most would dare to go, and leaves the reader with an extremely detailed account of the changes and current status of electoral law and policy, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of electoral engineering.

Belloni does a fine job of laying out the situation on the ground. In his analysis of the possible approaches and strategies of the international intervention in BiH, Belloni promotes those that he finds to be the most compelling, such as shared sovereignty, and convincingly argues why. What he doesn't do enough of, unfortunately, is present many distinctly new ideas to the debate. Given that his book contains some of the most up-to-date information available on the situation in Bosnia, such analysis would have been much appreciated. In addition, some of Belloni's arguments appear to defend both sides of the same coin. For example, he seems to find the international intervention both on the whole positive and yet also the main focus of his complaints throughout the book. He writes that the choices and strategies of the international agencies "contributed to complicating the process of post-war state building" while adding that "international intervention had an undeniably positive impact" (173). While a nuanced interpretation is not a bad thing, as any analysis of Bosnia cannot be black and white, it leaves the reader sometimes wishing that he would be willing to take the leap and commit one way or the other.

When addressing international intervention as a whole, Belloni's most pronounced criticism is the fact that international agencies allowed for and even promoted the status quo in BiH, i.e. ethnic partition (at least in the initial years of following the war). External actors seemed to have chosen this path in the hopes of avoiding ethnic violence and instability, and the consequences can be found throughout the book, particularly in the chapters on refugee return and electoral policy. He argues that the international community stressed the need to protect group rights and in so doing downgraded the importance of individual rights, in effect forcing all citizens to identify and function on the basis of the three peoples principle and allowing for the stagnation of

institutional and other reform. Once this strategy of division in exchange for stability was dropped and local capacity was engaged, the outcome was greater minority returns and no significant increase in ethnic violence as ethnic mixing became more prominent. This issue is part of a larger debate over what the Bosnian state should look like, and to his credit Belloni touches on this question throughout the book.

Belloni's preferred means for a way out of the more intervention versus less intervention debate are some of the most promising available at the moment, in particular shared sovereignty. He thoughtfully illustrates how this approach could be and has been constructive, taking examples and situations from the wide range of information that he presents; including, for example, the Bosnian Constitutional Court. Unfortunately, he does not adequately address the potential downfalls of shared sovereignty. Had he addressed such issues as democratic deficit, given that international officials are not elected and are unaccountable to Bosnians, and dependency, as locals can potentially pass off hard decisions, or at least the blame, to internationals, and then refuted them, his argument for this practice to be used more frequently would have been more convincing.

The case for long term strategies over short term efforts with more visible results is found in the chapter on civil society, although Belloni also extends the argument to other sectors. He describes how the initial work of external actors focused on their own priorities and viewed the country as a blank slate in terms of local capacity. This led to needs being neglected and limited the sustainability of the projects initiated. Belloni welcomes a gradual shift toward support of local initiatives and a greater recognition of the potential contribution of domestic actors.

On the whole, Belloni's book serves as an important update on the situation in BiH more than a decade after the end of the war. The 200 pages are crammed full of useful data presented for the most part in a clear manner and accompanied by careful analysis and interpretation that places them within the broader frameworks of international intervention, state-building, and

nationalist politics. His observations should prove to be very useful for the numerous international intervention projects underway throughout the world.

Belloni adeptly covers four main components of the state-building process in Bosnia-Herzegovina; he uses a variety of examples to show what should have been and could still be done in the country and he evaluates the work of the international actors present. While the introduction of more new ideas would have made his book even more compelling, Belloni convincingly argues for several of the existing alternatives to the generally accepted approaches and policies of international intervention and offers persuasive arguments for why some strategies are more effective than others.

**Yvonne Galligan, Sara Clavero, and Marina Calloni, *Gender Politics and Democracy in Post-Socialist Europe* (Opladen and Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2007) 170 pp.**

Author: Marja Almqvist  
National University of Ireland, Galway

In the year of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, it is timely to look back and contemplate if the resulting transitions in Central and Eastern Europe lived up to the expectations of increased economic, political and social equality for both men and women. Surprisingly not much research has been undertaken on the gendered aspects of these changes, which makes this volume, the first cross-national comparative study of gender and governance in the post socialist countries of the enlarged EU polity, very welcome indeed. The authors explore the persistent under-representation of women in the body politic in ten previously socialist states which gained full membership of the EU in 2006, and ask the question, why the shift to liberal, democratic norms and market economic values which came about through the accession process, has not yet succeed in delivered on its parallel promise of transformation in gender relations?

The study has been well resourced, as part of a wider EU 'Enlargement, Gender and Governance' program. Local research teams in Slovenia, Slovakia, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania and Bulgaria gathered primary statistical data on women's political representation. This material has been supplemented with national case studies and interviews with politically engaged women. One of the central assertions is that, in order to understand the role of gender in the construction of liberal democracies, an analysis has to be made of the dynamic interplay between women's agency, culture and political institutions. This requires a cross-disciplinary approach, which, in this case has been made possible through the diversity of research material collated and analysed for the study.

Across all countries under study it was found that women's mobilization is weak, with issues particularly relevant to women largely invisible on the political agenda. In spite of some high profile successes in 2005 the presence of female legislators stood at 17% compared with the EU average of 22%. With the exception of Slovenia and Estonia, gender equality units are reported to be 'hollow', inadequately resourced and placed at the periphery of government infrastructure and concerns. Overall, the authors conclude that there is a disconnect between women on the ground and governing processes. A failure of communication and collaboration between women's civil society organisations, political women, 'femocrats' in state created institutions and academics are preventing profiling of women's issues. The causes for this state of affairs are found to be the legacy of equality politics under communism, coupled with the emergence of nationalist discourses in the turn towards multi-party democracy. The book presents a succinct and useful analysis of the gender dimensions of both these phenomena. However, the fundamental reason, which appears to span the transition from communism to liberal democracy, is the widely held belief that gender differences are natural, rather than socially constructed. The main barriers to women's engagement with the democratic process are the deep-seated, traditional gender stereotypes that allocate family and domestic roles to women. This point is illustrated by quotes from women parliamentarians active in the region, who describe their struggle to balance domestic and

political duties and to have their voices heard in a male dominated political landscape. The authors' conclusion that 'political women have yet to appreciate the gendered nature of social relations', seems rather dismissive of these testimonies and there is certainly space for more dialogue between post socialists and western European feminists on definitions and engagement with the concept of gender.

The analytical basis for the study is Hannah Pitkin's theory of political representation. Her analysis of the relationship between the Representative and the Represented, contains four interrelated dimensions; Formalistic, Descriptive, Symbolic and Substantive Representation. Using this framework the authors have undertaken a comparative analysis across the ten countries of public attitudes towards women in politics, the presence (or absence) of women's mobilization, women's political representation and the capacity of gender dedicated institutions to create effective dialogue with women's representative organisations in civil society. They find many common trends, but what is perhaps more striking are the differences, which their approach reveals.

The authors are able to demonstrate the dynamic interplay of the Representative dimensions in many cases, but it is through a study of the anomalies that other factors affecting women's political participation begin to emerge, and Pitkin's framework comes under some strain. For instance, in the case of Slovenia, sometimes referred to as 'the Sweden of the South', the proportion of men involved in household and childcare responsibilities is closer to that nation than any other Western European country. Yet women's political representation in parliament from 1989-2005 is third from the bottom of the list of all EU states (just above Hungary and Romania). Thus in the dimensions of formal and descriptive representation women's participation is low, while high ratings of women in the symbolic dimension appears to have enabled substantive action on equality legislation. Further study appears to be required to illuminate this seeming contradiction, but a clue may be found in that Slovenia is the only country included in the study that was part of former Yugoslavia. This may indicate that the understanding and

implementation of gender equality was different under different socialist regimes, and that these differences echo through in transitions.

That ideology matters is clearly illustrated in the case of Poland. At the time of the founding of Solidarity (*Solidarność*) movement in 1980, half of the 10 million members were women. In 1989 women in Solidarity's ruling National Commission founded a Women's Section that mobilized Polish women on a large scale, which was an important force in maintaining the movement's momentum. However they soon found themselves positioned against the National Commission, which was strongly under the influence of the Catholic Church, on the issue of abortion. Accused of factional politics and attempting to destroy Solidarity from within, the Section was dissolved. However many of these women have remained politically active and have campaigned on specific issues such as gender quotas, which have been voluntarily implemented on both the left and right of the political spectrum. This has contributed to Polish women engaging with all shades of political opinion, in some cases active in parties with explicitly anti-feminist agendas, thus illustrating that increased high-profile political activity of women does not necessarily achieving substantive representation on women's issues.

Highlighting some of the topographical differences in the gendered political landscapes of post socialist countries will hopefully inspire further investigation. More in depth comparative work between consolidated democracies and post socialist states, including other countries in SE Europe that have not yet gained membership of the EU, is needed. This must be coupled with in depth case studies on individual countries in order to capture the different historical dimensions of present gender relations. The influence of political ideology and party politics gets a trajectory mention, and more careful analysis is required in this area. The authors acknowledge that this book is an introductory outline of a very large and varied topic. Readers of this book will gain a broad overview of the main themes affecting women's political participation in post socialist Europe, and hopefully it will whet the appetite for further exploration of the many nuances and differences which are also evident in the region.

**Bonnie M. Meguid, *Party Competition Between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 318 pp.**

Author: Rasa Baločkaitė  
Vytautas Magnus University

The troops of discourse, the routes of power, the machineries of political mechanisms... The complexity of contemporary societies and political structures is hard to grasp. In the postmodern world, there is no single underlying principle, there is no such thing as a single order, to paraphrase H. Gottweis (2003) - "the nightmare of modernity." *Party Competition Between Unequals* by Bonnie M. Meguid offers an unconventional gaze to contemporary politics. While many authors refer, within the postmodern condition, to the puzzling lack of sureness, unrest and unease, discourse coalitions, nodal points and the bridges of meaning, Bonnie M. Meguid still works with the classic old vocabulary, and draws surprisingly clear picture of reality. The central focus is on the *niche parties* - the agents of change who challenge the "archetypal" political scheme of *left* and *right*, and bring new issues to the scene. It unveils the trajectories of the niche parties - how they enter political scene, how they act there and finally - how they leave. They "reject the traditional class-based orientation" (p. 3) and go beyond economic demands, they are single issues parties, and their claims hardly fit into current political divisions of *left* and *right*. These are extraterritorial, green, women's, peace and radical right parties.

The phenomenon of the niche parties started 1960, when liberal democracies all over the world experienced an explosion in the number of new parties. "In Western Europe alone, that number has exceeded 250" (p.3). To paraphrase K. Marx's famous dictum - *a spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of niche parties*. The niche parties multiply themselves in innumerable ways, they bring new issues into the light, and do not fit into current political divisions. The solid order melts into air, and the fluxus predominates the scenery. The political loyalty is declining, and voter volatility is on the rise (p.3) - a kind of political and ideological promiscuity. The conventional ways of explaining the

party trajectories are with an institutional approach (a focus on the formal aspects of the political system) or sociological approach (a focus on the resonance of the parties position with particular electorate). In both cases, the parties are predetermined by external forces over whom they have little or no control.

Meguid refers to the limitations of both approaches and breathes new life into political parties – they start acting like independent and intelligent individuals, struggling and competing with each other, considering strategies and reacting to threats. Being alive – it means, beyond other aspects, being able to engage in conflict with others. The author comes to conflict theory approach – power is a zero sum game and the parties struggle with each other for their piece of cake. Some parties are strong and well established, others are small and vulnerable– there is always “the power imbalance between the mainstream and niche parties” (p. 30).

Although liberal models assume that speaking agents occupy equal positions, the symmetry of representation, to quote L. Irigaray (cit. from Butler, 1990, p.22), is hard to achieve. The trouble that was investigated from the perspectives of capitalists and proletarians, men and women, whites and blacks, colonized and colonizers, straight and queer. Now, it is examined in a new light – the political parties - big and small political parties, establishment forces and niche parties. As niche parties bring new issues into political debates, they threaten establishment parties by “stealing” their voters. The latter adopt dismissive, accommodative or adversarial strategies. Parties act like the profit maximizing agents, they estimate the perceived threat and possible costs of the strategy employed. A dismissive strategy is the cheapest, and an accommodative strategy requires high reputation and commitment costs. The stronger the threat, the higher the price to be paid. It is implied that under a strong threat high reputation costs will be paid and old political ideals will be betrayed. The blurred border between liberal democracy and free market sounds like an end of ideology.



To explain the games parties play, the author offers the “modified spatial theory of party interaction – the Position, Saliency, and Ownership theory” (p.16). It is the economics of the politics - the parties’ positions, the importance and exclusivity of their “product”... Once you start gathering support, the position can be stolen, i.e. accommodated by political adversaries. Or, to the contrary, denigrated to some shabby issue. Parties are branding themselves, calculating costs, threatening each other and competing for their market share, and the voter is the consumer’s equivalent. The author systematizes and schematizes the trajectories of niche parties by using case studies from Great Britain, Scotland and France. Chapters are titled: “Stealing the Environmental Title. British Mainstream Party Strategies and the Containment of the Green Party”, “The Enemy of My Enemy Is My Friend”, “French Mainstream Party Strategies and the Success of the French Front National”, and “An Unequal Battle of Opposing Forces. Mainstream Party Strategies and the Success of the Scottish National Party.”

The poetic and provocative titles are sometimes misleading. Content is very heavily loaded with informative and descriptive statistics, informative and descriptive where pure logic is enough to make the claims credible. It is empirically baroque – clear logic disappears in the abundance of empirical details. The selected cases (Great Britain, Scotland and France) represent the societies of late capitalist development. This might be a crucial aspect in theorizing the trajectories of niche parties. As Gramsci has shown in his “Prison Notebooks”, low organic integrity and the failure of the liberal ideology to unite citizens beyond the form of the state (typical for early capitalist development) might lead to endemic distrust towards state institutions, alienation between the state and society, intensification of nationalism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and the rise anti democratic forces, political radicalism and populism in the form of niche parties. Although contemporary societies have had achieved a greater degree of organic unity than Italy of 1920s, Gramscian theory remains relevant for the territories beyond the borders of fully developed capitalism (even within the Western Europe, too).

Another critical remark to this book is the constant and continuous focus on the strategies of the powerful, and the missing link to the strategies of the weak. As many theorists (coming from post colonial, mass communication and culture studies) have shown us, the weak always have their own methods of dealing with challenge; there are always strategies of resistance, practices of disobedience and innumerable ways to react and spoil the games of the powerful. Are niche parties acting like this?

Overall, the book offers brilliant academic intrigue beyond the heavily modernist (i.e. rational and empirical) content. It is a good reading for social scientists and their students, also for policy analysts and policy makers (for those armed with patience only). The goal is fulfilled – the political trajectories of niche parties are clearly highlighted, but the trouble is still fuelling reader's imagination. The book creates the deep sense of unease with the very idea of democracy - are mainstream parties the equivalent of the white male patriarch, dominating the scene and silencing the disobedient members of the family? The mission is completed, but the intrigue continues.

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